# Georgi Plekhanov

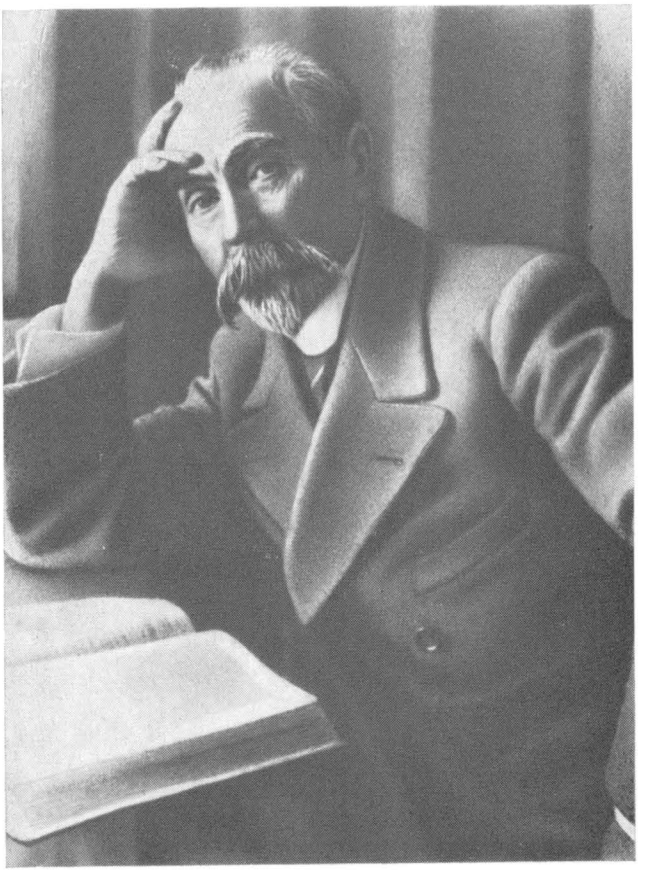
## *Selected Philosophical Works*

Plekhanov

I

# Georgi Plekhanov

## *Selected Philosophical Works*



Т. Шевченко

INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY
OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
OF THE USSR



# Г.В.Плеханов

## Избранные философские произведения

**В ПЯТИ ТОМАХ**

**Том I**

ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО
ПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ ЛИТЕРАТУРА
МОСКВА

# Georgi Plekhanov

## *Selected Philosophical Works*

IN FIVE VOLUWES

**Volume I**

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This five-volume edition includes the most important and valuable of Plekhanov's works on philosophy.

The first three volumes contain works written in the defence and substantiation of Marxism in the course of the struggle against Narodism, revisionism and Machism. In the fourth are Plekhanov's best works on Russian philosophy and social and political thought, and the fifth consists of works on literature and art.

The texts of these works have again been checked with the extant manuscripts in Russian or other languages kept in Plekhanov House, the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library in Leningrad, and with publications which appeared during the author's lifetime.

Each volume is provided with an introductory article, notes of a factual character and name and subject indices.

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# PLEKHANOV'S ROLE IN THE DEFENCE AND SUBSTANTIATION OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

Georgi Valentinovich Plekhanov, the first Russian Marxist, was one of the world's greatest thinkers and publicists. His activity in the Russian and the international arena in the eighties and nineties of the last century gave the world outstanding works on the theory and history of Marxism. In his works he defended, substantiated and popularised the teachings of Marx and Engels, developed and gave concrete expression to questions of Marxist philosophy, particularly the theory of historical materialism: the role of the popular masses and of the individual in history, the interaction of the basis and the superstructure, the role of ideologies, etc. Plekhanov did much to substantiate and develop Marxist aesthetics.

His best works on the history of philosophical, aesthetic, social and political thought, especially on the history of materialism and of philosophy in Russia, are a valuable contribution to the development of scientific thought and progressive culture.

Lenin ranked Plekhanov among the socialists having the greatest knowledge of Marxist philosophy. He described his philosophical works as the best in international Marxist literature.

"The services he rendered in the past," Lenin wrote of Plekhanov, "were immense. During the twenty years between 1883 and 1903 he wrote a large number of splendid essays, especially those against the opportunists, Machists and Narodniks."* Plekhanov left a rich philosophical legacy which to this very day serves to defend Marxist theory and the aims of the proletariat's struggle against reactionary bourgeois ideology.

* * *

Plekhanov began his social, political and literary work at the end of the seventies, when the revolutionary situation in Russia was maturing.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 358.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, which had just ended, inflicted many hardships on the Russian people. It brought to light the incurable ulcers of the autocratic and landlord system, tyranny, lawlessness and widespread corruption, bad supply of the army and other vices in the military administrative machine. All this added to the indignation of the popular masses, who were cruelly oppressed by tsarism, the landlords and the capitalists.

By this time capitalism had already come to dominate in Russia's economy. After the 1861 Reform, feudal relations of production were gradually replaced by bourgeois relations. Capitalism asserted itself in industry and penetrated increasingly into the countryside, where it led to stratification of the peasantry. The expropriation of the peasants from their lands formed an army of unemployed wage-workers for industry and for landlord and capitalist agriculture. The survivals of feudal relations in agricultural production, which were fostered by the system of autocracy and landlordship, and the elements of natural economy which still existed in separate areas of the country, held up the growth of the productive forces. Capitalism made its way slowly and with great difficulty in agriculture and left the landlords in their dominant position there for many decades. After the Reform, small, low-productive, privately owned peasant economies predominated in the countryside, and Russia was still mainly agrarian.

The development of capitalism combined with the all-powerfulness of the landlords exacerbated the growing antagonism between the working masses and the ruling classes.

The bulk of the peasantry was doubly oppressed—by feudalism and by capital; they suffered from land hunger, survivals of feudalism and capitalist exploitation; ruin and misery were their lot. As a result, the peasant movement against the landlords, which had subsided somewhat in the late sixties, started to grow again in the middle of the seventies.

The working class, too, was in a condition of great hardship. Unbridled capitalist exploitation, low wages, the absence of legislation on labour protection, the ban on the institution of workers' organisations, arbitrary police rule—all this led to unrest and spontaneous outbreaks among the workers. The middle of the seventies saw the appearance of the first workers' organisations—the South Russian Workers' Union and the Northern Union of Russian Workers—which attempted to organise to some extent the spontaneous working-class movement.

At that time the working-class movement in Russia was developing independently of the revolutionary Narodnik trend which set up the Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom) organisation and was then dominant in the Russian emancipation

movement. In the seventies, Narodism was influenced by the revolutionary-democratic ideas of Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov. Despite the limitations of their outlook, the revolutionary Narodniks played a great part in the country's emancipation movement. They fought selflessly for the emancipation of the peasants, for the abolition of the autocracy and the privileges of the nobility, and tried to rouse the peasants to revolt against the tsarist government. The culminating point in the revolutionary Narodniks' struggle against tsarism and the landlords in the seventies and early eighties was the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) movement. The heroism of the revolutionaries in this movement and their unstinting devotion to the people received high praise from Marx and Engels, who noted that a revolutionary crisis was growing in Russia and that the centre of the revolutionary movement had begun to shift to Russia. In 1882, they stressed in the preface to the Russian edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (which Plekhanov translated): "Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe."*

In the period following the Reform, the Russian revolutionaries extended their contacts with the West European revolutionary movement. In the half century, beginning about the middle of the nineteenth century, revolutionary Russia closely observed the development of progressive theoretical thought in the West and learned from the experience of the West European working people's struggle. Progressive Russians studied the works of Marx and Engels; the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was published in Russian in 1869 and the first volume of Marx's *Capital* in 1872. Russian revolutionary Narodniks—P. Lavrov, H. Lopatin, V. Zasulich and many others—kept up a lively correspondence with Marx and Engels on questions of economic and political development in Russia, the Russian emancipation movement and the ideas of socialism.

In the first years of his public activity, G. V. Plekhanov took part in revolutionary Narodnik organisations.

Plekhanov was born on December 11, 1856, in the village of Gudalovka, Lipetsk Uyezd, Tambov Gubernia. His father, Valentin Petrovich Plekhanov, belonged to the gentry and had a small estate; his mother, Maria Fyodorovna (a relative of Belinsky), held progressive views and had a great influence on her son. On finishing the military school in Voronezh in 1873, Plekhanov studied for a few months at the Konstantin Cadets' School in Petersburg and entered the Mining Institute in 1874.

In 1876, he joined the Narodnik circle "The Rebels", which

* K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 100.

later merged with Zemlya i Volya. He was one of the organisers of the first political demonstration in Russia, which took place in 1876 on the square in front of the Kazan Cathedral in Petersburg with Petersburg workers taking part for the first time. At this demonstration Plekhanov made a fiery speech indicting the autocracy and defending the ideas of Chernyshevsky, who was then in exile. From then on Plekhanov led an underground life. The Petersburg Public Library (now Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library) became his alma mater where he took refuge to study.

The young Plekhanov was a passionate admirer of Chernyshevsky and Belinsky, whom he considered as his true masters and tutors. He was amazed at the ideological wealth of Belinsky's articles and was inspired to fight for the people by Chernyshevsky's noble works and revolutionary heroism. It was not fortuitous that Plekhanov later devoted a number of his writings to the activity and works of those outstanding representatives of Russian revolutionary democracy, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Herzen and Dobrolyubov.

In the early years of his activity Plekhanov was one of the theoreticians of Narodism. He twice "went among the people" as a Narodnik agitator to prepare a rising, for he believed in the possibility of transition to socialism through a peasant revolution. At the same time, he took a great interest, as he put it, in the "working-class cause". He conducted study groups for working men, spoke at workers' meetings and helped to carry out strikes, published articles and correspondence in the journal *Zemlya i Volya,* wrote leaflets on the major outbreaks and strikes among the workers and called on the working people to fight. Plekhanov's close association with the Russian workers proved extremely fruitful, for it prepared him to understand the historical role of the working class in the revolutionary movement. The thorough study he made of Marxism and of the experience of the working-class movement in Western Europe enabled him in the early eighties to understand clearly this role of the working class and to go over to the standpoint of the revolutionary proletariat.

In the early eighties, following the assassination of Alexander II by members of Narodnaya Volya led by Andrei Zhelyabov and Sophia Perovskaya, years of reaction set in with the reign of Alexander III. The wave of revolutionary Narodnik terror was crushed. In the nineties, Narodism degenerated to a liberal trend professing conciliation with the tsarist government and renunciation of the revolutionary struggle.

Plekhanov was arrested twice in 1877 and 1878 for his revolutionary activity, and increasing persecution compelled him to emigrate in 1880. By 1882-83 he had become a convinced

Marxist, and in the late eighties he established personal contact with Frederick Engels.

The first Russian Marxist organisation—the Emancipation of Labour group—was founded in Geneva in 1883 by Plekhanov, Zasulich, Deutsch, Axelrod and Ignatov. Its aim was to spread scientific socialism by means of Russian translations of the works of Marx and Engels and criticism from the Marxist standpoint of the Narodnik teachings prevailing in Russia. The Emancipation of Labour group laid the theoretical foundation of Russian Social-Democracy and greatly promoted the growth of political consciousness among progressive workers in Russia.

Lenin noted that the writings of the Emancipation of Labour group, "printed abroad and uncensored, were the first systematically to expound and draw all the practical conclusions from the ideas of Marxism".*

In April 1895, Lenin went abroad to establish contact with the Emancipation of Labour group in order to unite all the Russian Marxists' revolutionary work. His arrival was of great importance for the Russian working-class movement. For the first time the Emancipation of Labour group established regular contact with Russia.

While in emigration (in France, Switzerland and Italy) Plekhanov, who had made the dissemination of Marx and Engels' revolutionary ideas the work of his life, was extremely active as a publicist. He also delivered lectures and wrote papers on various subjects. As early as 1882 he translated Marx and Engels' *Manifesto of the Communist Party* into Russian; in 1892 he translated and published for the first time in Russian Engels' pamphlet *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* with his own commentaries; he also translated the section "Critical Battle against French Materialism" from the sixth chapter of *The Holy Family* by Marx and Engels.

As early as the beginning of the eighties Plekhanov wrote his outstanding works on the theory of revolutionary Marxism, which provided study and educational material for Marxists in Russia.

M. I. Kalinin, a pupil and colleague of Lenin, recorded Plekhanov's role in that period in the following vivid words:

"In the period of gloomy reaction, at a time when the rank-and-file worker was obliged to overcome great difficulties and make tremendous efforts to obtain even primary education, illegal publications written by Georgi Valentinovich were already circulating among the workers.

"These works opened up a new world for the working class, they called on it to fight for a better future and taught the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 247.

fundamentals of Marxism in plain, simple form accessible to all; by unshakable faith in the final victory of the ideals of the working class they bred the assurance that all obstacles and difficulties on the road to those ideals would be easily swept away by the organised proletariat."*

Plekhanov occupied a prominent place and received international recognition among the West European and American socialists in the late eighties and early nineties of the nineteenth century as a great theoretician of Marxism and an authoritative figure in the international working-class movement. For a number of years he represented the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International, which he kept informed of the state of affairs in Russia. He also took an active part in the work of the German, Swiss, French and Italian Socialist parties and in the work of the Congresses and the Secretariat of the Second International.

He wrote numerous articles on Russian and international themes, critical reviews which in their aggregate embraced a broad range of subjects on politics, economics, philosophy, history, literature and art. These appeared mainly in illegal publications in Russia and in the socialist press in Germany, Bulgaria, France, Switzerland, Italy, Poland and other countries.

Plekhanov's criticism of anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism was of great importance in the ideological struggle for the revolutionary principles of the international working-class movement.

At the beginning of the eighties, when Bakunin's anarchist theories considerably influenced educated youth in Russia, Plekhanov came out against anarchism and its adventurist tactics. But in his criticism of anarchist views he failed to throw light on the question of the attitude of the proletarian revolution to the state or of the state in general, for which he was criticised by Lenin.

Not a single West European Marxist raised the banner of the fight against Bernsteinianism, but Plekhanov did. He also criticised the opportunism of Millerand, Bissolati and other socialists. His struggle in Russia against the opportunist trend of Economism and the bourgeois travesty of Marxism, "legal Marxism", is well known. He did no little to unmask the socialist-revolutionaries, too, particularly their individual terrorist tactics.

During the struggle against anti-Marxist trends in the eighties and nineties, Plekhanov gave great attention to the dissemination of the ideas of scientific socialism and Marx's economic teaching. He characterised scientific socialism by opposing it to the utopian socialist systems of Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier, and the petty-

* *Izvestia Petrogradskogo Gorodskogo Obshchestvennogo Upravlenia* No.40, 12 June (30 May), 1918.

bourgeois socialism of Proudhon, the Narodniks, anarchists and others. His *Augustin Thierry and the Materialist Conception of History, On Modern Socialism, Scientific Socialism and Religion, Foreign Review, Preface to Four Speeches by Workers, Home Review* and other writings, not to speak of his widely known works against Narodism, anarchism, Economism, Bernsteinianism and Struvism, show how thoroughly he studied questions of scientific socialism.

In the works which he wrote against the bourgeois opponents of Marxism, Plekhanov analysed the social substance of the views held by the classics of bourgeois political economy—Adam Smith and David Ricardo—and defended Marx's economic teaching, especially singling out his revolutionary teaching on surplus-value and capital.

Plekhanov played a great role in the life of the older generation of Marxists. His authority was enormous in revolutionary circles in Russia.

From the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, capitalism entered a new period in its development—the period of imperialism, the period of revolutionary upheavals and battles—which called for a reconsideration of old methods of work, a radical change in the activity of the Social-Democratic parties, and an all-round creative development of the Marxist theory as applied to the new historical conditions.

Although he remained an active figure in the international working-class movement and defended and substantiated Marxism, Plekhanov did not clearly grasp the character of the new historical epoch; he was unable to disclose its laws and specific features, to generalise the new experience acquired by the working-class movement or to arm the working class with new theoretical conclusions and propositions. Lenin was the man who was destined to fulfil this historic task and to raise Marxism to a new and higher stage.

In 1903, after the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, Plekhanov became a Menshevik. His desertion to the Menshevik standpoint and his inconsistency in Marxist theory and practice at that time were determined in no small degree by the influence of reformism, which was widespread in the working-class movement in Western Europe. Plekhanov supported Menshevik views, fought against Lenin and the Bolsheviks on paramount political questions of Marxism—the role of the proletariat in the revolution and its tactical line, the attitude to the peasantry, the appraisal of the 1905 Revolution, the question of the state, etc. Plekhanov's serious theoretical mistakes in philosophy and his deviation from consistent Marxism on a

number of questions were connected with his falling off to Menshevism in politics.

But although Plekhanov held Menshevik views on basic questions of politics and the tactics of the working class, he nevertheless advocated the maintenance of the Party, and from 1909 to 1912 he opposed liquidationism and stood for the underground organisation of the Party, supporting Lenin in his struggle for the Party.

Plekhanov opposed the conference of liquidators in August 1912. Lenin stressed this and wrote that Plekhanov said outright that the conference was attended by "*non-Party* and *anti-Party* elements".*

From 1908 to 1912, when the Bolsheviks led by Lenin waged a resolute fight against Machism, Plekhanov was the only theoretician of the Second International to write against Bogdanov and Lunacharsky and expose Shulyatikov, the vulgariser of materialism, and others. It was at that time that he wrote his valuable work *Fundamental Problems of Marxism.* Plekhanov severely criticised Croce, Mach, Avenarius, Petzoldt, Windelband, Rickert, Bergson, Nietzsche and many other bourgeois philosophers and sociologists, and defended the philosophical foundations of Marxism. During this period he defended the materialistic and emancipatory traditions of progressive Russian philosophical thought against the *Vekhi* people and "religious seekers". But after 1912 he became a supporter of "unity" with the liquidators. Lenin wrote: "...it is a pity that he is now nullifying his great services in the struggle against the liquidators during the period of disorganisation, in the struggle against the Machists at the height of Machism, by preaching what he himself cannot explain: Unity with *whom,* then? ... and on *what* terms? "**

During the First World War Plekhanov adopted a social-chauvinist standpoint. After the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 he returned to Russia after 37 years in emigration and went to Petrograd.

Having been many years abroad, Plekhanov was out of touch with the Russian revolutionary movement. On his return to Russia he was a captive to the social-reformist and social-chauvinist theories of the Second International and was unable to understand the intricate concatenation and peculiarity of social development in Russia. We know how he attacked the course for a socialist revolution, steered by Lenin. In his appraisal of the future of the Russian revolution he proceeded from the Second International dogmas of the necessity of "economic conditions" for socialism

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 36, p. 195.

** *Ibid.,* p. 277.

gradually to mature, of an alleged obligatory "high level" of culture for the transition to socialism, and so on. He held that the revolution in February 1917, being a bourgeois revolution, was to be the beginning of a long period of capitalist development in Russia. That was why he had a negative attitude towards the Great October Socialist Revolution, seeing it as a "violation of all the laws of history". But, although he continued to deny the necessity for an immediate socialist revolution in Russia, he did not fight against the victorious working class and Soviet power. He died on May 30, 1918, in the Pitkäjärvi Sanatorium in Finland and was buried in the Volkovo Cemetery in Petrograd, near the graves of Belinsky and Dobrolyubov.

* * *

The spread of Marxism in the working class and among progressive intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century was hindered by the penetration of bourgeois, anti-Marxist theories in the working-class and revolutionary movement. In the West the struggle against revolutionary Marxism was waged not only by bourgeois idealist and eclectic professors (e.g., Brentano, Sombart, Schulze-Gävernitz) but by their followers, the theoreticians of the Second International, Bernstein, Kautsky, Höchberg and others, too. In Russia, where the works of Marx and Engels were then little known in the original, attempts to "criticise" Marxism from the bourgeois standpoint, to debase and discredit it openly or covertly, came not only from the official ideologists of the landlord and monarchic state and liberal bourgeois professors, but also from the liberal Narodniks, and then from the legal "Marxists" and the Economists.

Great, in the circumstances, was the importance of Plekhanov's Marxist writings of the eighties and nineties, which were published in Russia as well as abroad and in which the ideas of Marxism were defended and their lofty scientific and revolutionary content substantiated and brought to light.

In his boundless faith in the victory of Marxist ideas, Plekhanov courageously and fearlessly opposed all kinds of "critics" and distorters of Marxism. He was the first in Russia to give a Marxist analysis of the erroneous views of the Narodniks, to oppose the Marxist outlook to the utopias of Narodism and to show the historic role of the working class of Russia, thereby dealing a severe blow to Narodism.

Plekhanov's work, *Socialism and the Political Struggle* (1883), was highly appraised by Lenin, who called it "the first profession de foi of Russian socialism". Besides a sharp criticism of idealist social theories, it gives a brilliant characterisation of the scientific

socialism of Marx and Engels, brings out the profound meaning of the well-known Marxist proposition "Every class struggle is a political struggle", and speaks of the necessity of combining the revolutionary struggle in Russia with correctly understood scientific socialism.

This pamphlet of Plekhanov's was translated into Polish and Bulgarian in the nineties of the last century.

Besides *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* his subsequent works, *Our Differences* (1885) and *The Development of the Monist View of History* (1895), also cleared the way for the victory of Marxism in Russia and were the most important theoretical works of Russian Marxists in that period.

In these writings Plekhanov provided the first creative application of Marxism to the analysis of economic conditions in Russia after the Reform and showed the immediate needs of the Russian revolutionary movement and the political tasks of the Russian working class. He laid bare the reactionary essence of the so-called socialist views of the Narodniks, which had nothing in common with scientific socialism.

In *Our Differences* Plekhanov continued the criticism of the theoretical doctrine of the Narodniks as a whole and particularly of their economic "theory" and their erroneous views on the peasant question in Russia. Lenin, in his *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats,* called Plekhanov's *Our Differences* the "first Social-Democratic work" of a Russian Marxist. Engels gave a high appraisal of it.

*The Development of the Monist View of History* (1895), one of Plekhanov's best Marxist works, was written in London, where he went after being deported from France in 1894. Lenin wrote that it "had helped to educate a whole generation of Russian Marxists".

There are other books by Plekhanov akin to *The Development of the Monist View of History* by their theme. They are: *Essays on the History of Materialism,* which was written in 1894 and published in Stuttgart in 1896 in German and had enormous success abroad, and his work *For the Sixtieth Anniversary of Hegel's Death* (1891), also first published in German and described as excellent by Engels, and other philosophical works of later years.

*The Development of the Monist View of History* appeared legally in Russia under the pseudonym Beltov. Because of the censorship, Plekhanov gave the book, as he put it, the "purposely clumsy" name "monist" without indicating which conception of history—the materialist or the idealist—was meant. The book was translated into a number of foreign languages and soon became widely known. Engels wrote on January 30, 1895: "George's book

has been published at a most opportune time." On February 8, 1895, he wrote to Plekhanov: "In any case, it is a great success that you were able to get it published *inside the country.*"

In this book Plekhanov dwelt mainly on questions of the materialist conception of history. In a polemic with the liberal Narodniks Mikhailovsky, Kareyev and others, he set himself the task of exposing the idealism of subjective sociology.

These works of Plekhanov and others of that period clearly reflect his great Marxist erudition and his profound knowledge of the history of philosophic and social thought. They reveal the historic preparation of Marxism on the basis of past progressive social thought, its sources and component parts, and shed light on major problems of dialectical and historical materialism, political economy and scientific socialism. By his fight against various forms of idealism, particularly positivism and Kantianism, and also "economic" materialism, Plekhanov contributed much that was new and original to the argumentation of Marxist ideas, and gave concrete expression and development to propositions of Marxism.

Plekhanov's best works of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties—the flourishing period in his theoretical work on Marxism—before Lenin founded the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, are included in the first volume of this edition of his *Selected Plilosophical Works.*

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In fighting against idealism, metaphysics and the reactionary utopias of Narodnik "socialism", Plekhanov defended materialism in philosophy and history and disclosed the objective nature of the laws governing social development and the dialectics of the historical process.

He considered it his main task first and foremost to explain the proposition that Marxism was applicable to the historical conditions in Russia.

The main question in the Narodnik economic theory was that of the non-capitalist development of Russia, whether Russia "must" or "must not" go through the "school" of capitalism.

The subjective Narodniks maintained that Russia was following a road of her own and that as capitalism was "artificially transplanted" into Russia, it was accidental and a decline, a retrogression, for the "exceptional" Russian economic system. It was therefore necessary to "hold back", to "stop" the development of capitalism, to "put an end to the breaking up" by capitalism of the traditional foundations of Russian life. This Narodnik position was reactionary and aimed in essence at preserving survivals of feudal relations.

Advocating the impossibility of capitalist development in Russia, the Narodniks attempted to distort the ideas of Marx and his followers in that country. Mikhailovsky, for example, stated that Marx had applied his historical scheme uncritically to Russia and that the Russian Marxists were just as uncritically copying those "ready-made schemes" of Marx and ignoring facts pointing to Russia's "exceptional road", distinct from capitalism. Mikhailovsky, Vorontsov and others maintained that Marxism as a theory was applicable in a certain degree to the West European countries only, but completely inapplicable to Russia.

In opposition to the Narodnik appraisal of Marxism, Plekhanov convincingly proved that Marxism was fully applicable to the economic and political conditions in Russia.

In order to bring out all the fallacy of the Narodnik economic theory, Plekhanov compared the conditions of capitalism's rise and its historic role in the West with the conditions of its development in Russia, ascertained the general preconditions for the development of capitalism in various countries and hence drew the conclusion that it was a mistake to oppose Russia to the West. He showed the untenability of the Narodniks' myth about the "special" character of Russian economic development. Plekhanov gave a profound Marxist analysis of the economic relationships in Russia since the Reform and of the capitalist road of development of town and country in his book *Our Differences*. This work is full of historical facts and statistics describing the various fields in the economic life of Russia. It shows very well the penetration of foreign capital into Russia, the ever-growing dependence of small handicraft industry on commercial capital, the process of proletarianisation of the craftsmen and the transformation of small handicraft production into a domestic system of large-scale production. "Capitalism is going its way," Plekhanov wrote, "it is ousting independent producers from their shaky positions and creating an army of workers in Russia by the same tested method as it has already practised 'in the West'."*

Plekhanov was just as convincing when he revealed the penetration of capitalism in agriculture too, the disintegration of the "foundations of the peasant *mir*"—the village commune (*obshchina*).

The Narodniks, who were fighting capitalism from the petty-bourgeois standpoint, saw the village commune as an indestructible stronghold, a universal remedy for all the evils of capitalism and the basis for the socialist transformation of Russia, allowing capitalism to be bypassed. Idealising the pre-capitalist forms of life, they were completely mistaken in their appraisal of the actual

* See this volume, p. 235.

situation and they argued, Plekhanov said, like metaphysicians, who do not understand the dialectic contradictions of life. They kept talking about a supposed "popular" production, free from inner contradictions, and regarded the people as a kind of rigid mass. They considered historical phenomena metaphysically, apart from their actual development and change.

The Narodniks refused to notice the weakening and disintegration of the village communes. In *Our Differences* Plekhanov showed by facts that these communes displayed indubitable vitality as long as they remained within the conditions of natural economy. They began to disintegrate, not under the influence of circumstances outside and independent of them, but by virtue of inner causes, of the fact that "the development of money economy and commodity production little by little undermines communal land tenure".*

Plekhanov was profoundly convinced that Russia was developing along the road of capitalism not, as the subjectivists thought, because of the existence of any external force of mysterious law driving her on to that road, but because there was no actual internal force that could divert her from that road. "*Capitalism is favoured* by the whole dynamics of our social life," he wrote.

The principal conclusion to be drawn from the analysis of Russian reality was that large-scale private capitalist production in Russia was expanding and developing unceasingly while the Narodnik illusion of a supposed "popular production" and the other utopian outlooks were being shattered by life itself.

In his works Plekhanov proved that "by the inherent character of its organisation the rural commune tends first and foremost to give place to bourgeois, not communist, forms of social life...." The commune's "role will be not *active,* but *passive;* it is not in a position to *advance* Russia on the road to communism...."**

Plekhanov's greatest historic merit was that besides investigating the paths of Russia's economic development he provided a Marxist solution to the question of the class forces and the character of the class struggle in Russia. It was typical of the Narodniks to idealise the "people"; they considered the peasantry as the main revolutionary force and ignored the role of the proletariat. Plekhanov was the first in Russia to oppose to their utopia the doctrine of the historic role of the Russian working class in the emancipation struggle.

The Narodniks' position was based on the erroneous idea that industry was hardly developing in Russia and that consequently the inconsiderable worker stratum was not increasing.

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* See this volume, p. 246

** *Ibid.*, p. 336.

Plekhanov showed by convincing arguments why the revolutionaries should rely precisely on the proletariat, the growing force in society, connected with the most progressive form of production, big factory production, and not on the peasantry, who, although they were more numerous, must inevitably divide, as commodity production developed, "into two hostile camps—the exploiting minority and the toiling majority".*

Plekhanov was the first in Russia to prove that the working class was to play the chief role in the impending Russian revolution. "The initiative in the communist movement can be assumed only by the working class in our industrial centres, the class whose emancipation can be achieved only by its own conscious efforts."**

This conviction that Plekhanov had of the historic future of the working class of Russia was clearly illustrated in his speech at the 1889 International Working Men's Socialist Congress in Paris. He then proclaimed: "The revolutionary movement in Russia can triumph only as the revolutionary movement of the workers. There is not and cannot be any other way out for us! "***

To the vulgar economists, who attached to the political organisation of society an utterly negligible significance, he opposed the Marxist proposition that wherever society is split into classes the antagonism between the interests of those classes necessarily leads them to struggle for political domination. It is, therefore, a mistake to recommend that the workers should fight only in the economic field and to ignore the political tasks of the working class. That, Plekhanov argued, is nothing but the line of renouncing revolutionary class struggle, revolution and socialism. The class, political struggle against tsarism and the bourgeoisie is the only way to fulfil the task of the historical emancipation of the working class. This struggle culminates in revolution, the most powerful manifestation of the class struggle and the means of achieving the social and economic transformation of society.

Plekhanov contested the Narodnik utopian conception that Russia was on the very eve of a socialist revolution. The Narodniks proceeded from the view that there was no bourgeoisie in Russia and that, therefore, the bourgeois revolution would pass her by, but that the Russian peasantry showed a propensity to communism and that, therefore, conditions were favourable for a popular socialist revolution. In Plekhanov's opinion, socialism was impossible without the economic preconditions. The impending revolution in Russia could only be a bourgeois one. In his early

* See this volume, p. 279.
** *Ibid.*, p. 336.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 405.

works Plekhanov gave serious attention to the peasant question and thought it indispensable for the workers, who were eventually to win political freedom, to carry on revolutionary work and spread the ideas of scientific socialism among the peasantry.

But as he maintained that the peasantry as a class was breaking up, Plekhanov failed to take into account the fact that one of the primary tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia was to fight for the abolition of landed proprietorship and that the peasantry was destined to play an enormous progressive role in that fight.

In his very first works Plekhanov speaks a number of times of the passivity, the political apathy and conservatism of the peasantry. This error showed that he underestimated the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and as a result he subsequently fell into the erroneous Menshevik interpretation of the peasant question and of the Social-Democrats' attitude to the peasants.

At the beginning of the eighties, when the revolutionary proletarian movement in Russia was still in its embryonic stage, Plekhanov was a brilliant champion of Marxism. For its time the programme of revolutionary activity which he set forth in *Our Differences* was a considerable step forward in the fight for the spreading of Marxism in Russia. The members of Blagoyev's, Tochissky's and Brusnev's Social-Democratic circles who were then doing practical work in Russia and maintained contact with the Emancipation of Labour group highly appraised Plekhanov's works and drew attention to their significance in spreading revolutionary theory during the period of disorder and vacillation. They requested that the pamphlets (*Our Differences* and *Socialism and the Political Struggle*) be sent in "as large quantities and as soon as possible".

The vital requirement of that time was the elaboration of a programme for the Russian Social-Democrats. Plekhanov wrote two draft programmes, in 1884 and 1887. The first contained a number of erroneous propositions: the recognition of individual terror, the cult of "heroes" and other Narodnik survivals. The Marxist circles (of Blagoyev and others) in Russia pronounced it unsatisfactory. The second draft was more correct. It said that the aim of the Russian Social-Democrats was the complete emancipation of labour from the oppression of capital by the transfer of all means and objects of production to social ownership, which would be possible only as a result of a communist revolution. In his article "A Draft Programme of Our Party", Lenin expressed the opinion that there were elements in Plekhanov's draft which were

absolutely indispensable for the programme of a Social-Democratic labour party.*

Plekhanov's *Socialism and the Political Struggle* and *Our Differences* fulfilled a great historic task. It was under their influence that the first Russian Marxists turned their eyes and their hopes towards the working class, tried to develop its class self-consciousness, to create its revolutionary organisation—the party—and aimed their work at helping the working class to rise to the fight against the bourgeois and landlord regime. Plekhanov pointed out "the task of the Russian revolutionaries—the foundation of a revolutionary working-class party".** But not until the middle of the nineties did the formation of a revolutionary Marxist party become possible.

In the last ten years of the nineteenth century a new period in the history of Russian Marxism opened, when the merger of two great forces—the working-class movement and scientific socialism—took place. This new period in the development of Marxism in Russia is inseparable from the name of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and from the work of the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class which he founded and which was the embryo of the Marxist party of the working class in Russia.

* * *

The significance of Plekhanov's activity as an outstanding Marxist philosopher in the field of theory is not limited to his masterly application of a number of basic propositions of Marxist theory to the historical conditions of Russia or to his defence and substantiation of Marxism in the fight against its enemies.

In his philosophical works Plekhanov endeavoured to defend, substantiate and popularise all Marx and Engels' new contributions to philosophy. The greatness of dialectical and historical materialism, Plekhanov stressed, consists in its having overcome the limitations of metaphysical materialism and idealism and explained all aspects of human life.

Plekhanov proclaimed that "the appearance of Marx's materialist philosophy was a genuine revolution, the greatest revolution known in the history of human thought".*** He considered Marx's materialist philosophy as the inevitable and natural result of the development of the whole history of social thought, as a higher stage in the development of philosophy; he saw Marx's revolu-

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* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 232.

** *Ibid.*, p. 264.

*** See Vol. II of this edition (*Karl Marx's Philosophical and Social Outlook*).

tionary outlook as the reflection of the class interests of the proletariat.

Plekhanov mainly directed his attention to the propaganda of historical materialism and disclosed its real content; this was a vital necessity of the time, for the bourgeois opponents of Marxism both in the West and in Russia tried to debase historical materialism to the level of vulgar "economic" materialism and replace it by all sorts of non-scientific theories—racism, Malthusianism, the theory of "factors", the geographical theory and others, or else they passed over in complete silence the materialist conception of history formulated by Marx.

In his *Development of the Monist View of History*, Plekhanov polemised against Mikhailovsky, "who had not noticed" Marx's historical theory and, moreover, tried to hush up Marx's masterly ideas for the benefit of subjectivism. Plekhanov showed that many experts on history, economics, the history of political relations and the history of culture knew nothing of Marx's historical materialism and yet the results that they had achieved obviously testified in favour of Marx's theory. Plekhanov was convinced that there would be many discoveries confirming that theory. "As to Mr. Mikhailovsky, on the other hand, we are convinced of the contrary: not a single discovery will justify the 'subjective' point of view, either in five years or in five thousand."*

Plekhanov repeatedly wrote that the materialist conception of history formulated by Marx was one of the greatest achievements of theoretical thought in the nineteenth century and an epoch-making service rendered by Marx. Nobody before Marx had been able to give a correct, strictly scientific explanation of the history of social life. Marx was the first to extend materialism to the development of society and he created the science of society.

At the same time Plekhanov stressed that the materialist conception of history, while being one of the paramount achievements of Marxism, is only a part of the materialist outlook of Marx and Engels. It is a mistake to see the "most important element of Marxism" in historical materialism alone. The materialist explanation of history presupposes the materialist conception of nature.

Plekhanov clearly and convincingly demonstrated the organic unity of Marx's philosophical, sociological and economic theories, the close interconnection of the basic propositions of Marxism, and described Marxism as the integral, coherent revolutionary world outlook of the proletariat.

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* See this volume, p. 661.

The striving to single out the most important in the phenomena of social life, their material basis, is in striking evidence all through Plekhanov's exposition of Marx's materialist views of human society and its history. It is from this standpoint that he analyses the philosophical views of materialists before Marx, the utopian socialists, the nineteenth-century French sociologists and historians, the views of Comte, Spencer, Hegel, the Bauer brothers, Fichte, Weisengrün and others, and underlines that Marx's masterly discovery—the materialist conception of history—corrects the radical error of the philosophers and sociologists before him, who proceeded from idealist premises in their analysis of society.

Plekhanov shows that Marx's materialist scientific explanation of the social-historical process derives from one single premise: the objective basis of social life, the economic structure of society.

Plekhanov thoroughly substantiates the Marxist conception of the laws governing society. He is interested in the way the question of the laws of social development is posed in the teachings of Marx's historical predecessors, the eighteenth-century French materialists and the nineteenth-century utopian socialists. He stresses that, despite certain isolated materialist guesses, they remained idealists in their conception of history and were unable to grasp social development's objective necessity and conformity to law and hence to reveal the roots of the ideas motivating human activity. Plekhanov showed that it was Marxism that first made a scientific investigation of the historical process. Marxism revealed the objective nature of the laws of history, which work with the force of natural laws and with unrelenting necessity; he showed that changes in social relations, often unforeseen by man but necessarily resulting from his activity, take place in accordance with definite laws of social life.

People's activity, their ideas and views do not depend on chance; they are subordinate to the laws of historical development, and in order to discover those laws, Plekhanov wrote, the facts of humanity's past life must be studied with the help of Marx's dialectical and materialist method. Only he who understands the past, who sees the succession and connection between historical events, their conditionality and not a chaos of fortuities, can foresee the future.

Plekhanov assessed very highly the role of dialectics in the life of society. The dialectical method, applied to social phenomena, he pointed out, has worked a complete revolution. "We can say without exaggeration that we are indebted to it for the understanding of human history as *a law-governed process.*"*

This means that the qualities of the social environment depend

* G. Plekhanov, *Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, p. 129.

just as little on the will and consciousness of man as those of the geographical environment, Plekhanov said. He emphasised Marx's thought that it is incorrect to look for the laws of society in nature.

Plekhanov, it should be noted, did not leave uncriticised the even now widespread pseudo-scientific bourgeois "theories" which apply biological laws to society and thereby reduce social progress to biological evolution. He derided the positivists, the social-Darwinists, all those who dreamed of reforming social science by means of natural science, by the study of physiological laws. He called them utopians. People who consider society from this standpoint, he wrote, find themselves in a blind alley, for physiology, biology, medicine and zoology are unable to explain the specific sphere of social development.

Plekhanov showed and emphasised the distinction between Marxism and Darwinism. Darwin succeeded in solving the question of the origin of vegetable and animal species, whereas Marx solved the question of how the various forms of social organisation arise. If Darwin was inclined to apply his biological theory to the explanation of social phenomena, Plekhanov wrote, that was a mistake. Therefore, when Plekhanov himself wrote in his *Development of the Monist View of History* that Marxism is Darwinism applied to social sciences, he was obviously using an unfortunate expression which by no means reflected his actual opinion of the relation between Marxism and Darwinism.

The objective laws of material production, the laws of the class struggle—these are the key to the understanding of the inner logic of the social process, and of the whole wealth and variety of social relations. It is here that the causes of social phenomena must be sought. Plekhanov explains that other phenomena of social life—ideology, for instance—are also governed by their specific laws. For the materialist, the history of human thought is a law-governed and necessary process. The train of human thought is also subject to its own particular laws. Nobody will identify, say, the laws of logic and those of commodity circulation. But Marxists do not consider, as the idealists did, that we can seek the ultimate cause, the basic motive force behind the intellectual development of mankind, in the laws of thought. The laws of thought cannot answer the question: what determines the afflux and character of new impressions? These questions can be elucidated only by analysing social life and its reflection in man's consciousness.

Plekhanov's defence of Marxist determinism against voluntarism is important in principle. Marx considered the history of human society as a necessary law-governed process and at the same time as the product of human activity. The objective and subjective

sides of social life are interdependent. Historical necessity does not preclude freedom of action in man. In studying the objective conditions of the material existence of mankind, Marxists thereby study the relations between people, and also their thoughts, ideals and strivings. The subjective voluntarists' assertion that man's will and activity are entirely free and independent of social conditions is untenable. In practice the will is only "apparently" free; the idea of complete freedom of will is an illusion. Freedom of will does not exist of itself—it is a result of the knowledge of historical necessity, knowledge of the laws of progress. The freedom of the individual, Plekhanov holds, consists not only in knowing the laws of nature and history and being able to submit to those laws, but also in being able to combine them in the most advantageous manner.

It is just as erroneous, Plekhanov said, to seek the motive force of historical development outside the practical activity of human beings. Bourgeois historians and sociologists attempted to ascribe to Marxism an absolute metaphysical determinism, maintaining that, according to Marx, historical necessity works of itself, without any human participation, for inasmuch as the working of objective necessity is recognised, no room is left, they say, for free human activity.

Plekhanov completely exposed that falsification of Marxist views and refuted the standpoint according to which historical necessity works automatically: he proved that it is human activity which makes history.

He skilfully refuted the assertions that people are subject to an iron law of necessity, that all their actions are predetermined, and so on. "No ... once we have *discovered* that iron law, it depends on us to overthrow its yoke, it depends on us to make *necessity* the obedient slave of *reason*,"* Plekhanov writes, quoting Marx.

Not only does dialectical materialism teach that it is absurd to revolt against economic necessity, it shows how that necessity must be made use of practically. It thus rejects the fatalist point of view and proclaims the great and insuperable force of human activity, of human reason, which, once it has come to know the inner laws of necessity, strives to transform reality and make it more rational. "People made and had to make their history *unconsciously* as long as the motive forces of historical development worked behind their backs, independently of their consciousness. Once those forces have been discovered, once the laws by which they work have been studied, people will be able to take them in their own hands and submit them to their own reason. The service rendered by Marx consists in having dis-

* See this volume, p. 666.

covered those forces and made a rigorous scientific study of their working."*

Plekhanov made it clear that historical materialism's task consists in explaining the sum-total of social life. However, in order to explain the whole historical process consistently, one must remain true to the Marxist principle of first finding out the very foundation of social life. According to the theory of Marx and Engels, that basis is the development of the productive forces, the production of material wealth. But in order to produce, people must establish between themselves certain mutual relations which Marx called relations of production. The sum-total of these relations constitutes the economic structure of society, out of which all other social relations between people develop. From the standpoint of Marxism, the historical progress is determined, in the final analysis, not by man's will, but by the development of the material productive forces. Their development leads to changes in the economic relations. That is why the study of history must begin with the study of the state of the productive forces in the country concerned, its economy, out of which social psychology and the various ideologies develop.

In the fight against idealism Plekhanov refuted the assertions made by Mikhailovsky and Kareyev that "the efforts of reason" play the decisive role in the development of the productive forces, the means of production, in the process of creating and applying the instruments of labour. He showed that the very ability to produce tools is developed in the process of action on nature, in the process of winning the means of subsistence. By acting on nature, man changes his own nature. "He develops all his capacities, among them also the capacity of 'tool-making'. *But at any given time the measure of that capacity is determined by the measure of the development of productive forces already achieved."***

The indissolubility, the unity of the interrelations between the productive forces and the relations of production which Marx established, is called by Plekhanov the basic cause of social progress. He clearly sees the dialectics of their development in the fact that relations of production are the consequence, and the productive forces the cause. But the consequence in turn becomes a cause, the relations of production become a new source, a form of development of the productive forces.

Plekhanov also elucidates, although he not infrequently overestimates, the influence of nature—a natural, and, as he puts it, most important precondition of human history—on the develop-

* See this volume, p. 428.

** *Ibid.*, p. 593.

ment of society. Thus, in his early works, particularly in *The Development of the Monist View of History,* he noted that social relations have an infinitely greater influence on the process of history than natural conditions. In *Essays on the History of Materialism*—another of his earlier works—he wrote that the mutual influence of the productive forces and the relations of production is the cause of social development, which has its own logic and its own laws, independent of the natural environment, and that this inner logic "may even enter into contradiction with the demands of the environment". He speaks in the same spirit of the indirect influence of climate, of the fact that the historical destiny of peoples does not depend exclusively of the geographical environment, for "geography is far from explaining everything in history". The relative stability of the geographical environment compared with the variability of the historical destinies of peoples, Plekhanov writes, confirms this conclusion. This means, he goes on, that man's dependence on his geographical environment is a variable magnitude which changes with every new step in historical development. He was also correct in asserting that the geographical environment promotes or hinders the development of the productive forces. And yet even in these early works Plekhanov slips into formulations which show that he exaggerates the role of the natural, geographical environment—he explains the condition of the productive forces by the features of the geographical environment. This was a concession to the so-called geographical trend in sociology.

In his *Development of the Monist View of History,* he treats population as an integral clement in social progress, whose growth, however, is not the basic cause of that progress. He quotes Marx's proposition that abstract laws of reproduction exist only for animals and plants, whereas the increase (or decrease) of population in human society is determined by its economic structure.

In his works of the eighties and nineties, Plekhanov gives a Marxist solution to the question of the role of the popular masses and of the individual in history in connection with the elucidation and substantiation of the historic role of the proletariat in the revolutionary class struggle. In 1898, he devoted a special work to the subject. But even in his earlier works he criticised the anti-scientific theories of Lavrov, Tkachov, Mikhailovsky and other Narodniks on the role of "heroes" in history. Following the Bauer brothers, they professed subjectivism in the conception of history, ignored the role of the popular masses and of the classes in history, and considered the intelligentsia as an independent social force supposedly playing a primary role in the development of society; in their view, the masses are in-

capable of conscious and organised activity; they can only subordinate themselves to and blindly follow the "heroes".

The Narodnik ideologists held that historical progress is accomplished exclusively by critically thinking individuals, as a particular and higher variety of the human race. The critically thinking individual was a "hero", the one who carries along the "crowd", as contrasted to the "hero". The crowd, as the Narodniks see it, is "a mass alien to every creative element, something in the nature of a vast quantity of ciphers, which acquire some positive significance only in the event of a kind, 'critically thinking' entity condescendingly taking its place at their head".* Elsewhere, Plekhanov noted that the Narodniks give the name crowd to millions of producers out of whom "the hero will mould whatever he considers necessary".** This was the extremely harmful cult of the individual, of the "hero", who stands above the masses.

In one of the variants of *Essays on the History of Materialism,* Plekhanov gave a remarkable explanation of the harm done by the cult of historical personalities. The actions of these people are not infrequently considered as the cause of great historical movements. "It is in this way that the roles of 'Moses', 'Abraham', 'Lycurgus' and others assume the incredible proportions which amaze us in the philosophy of history of Holbach and all the last century 'enlighteners'. The history of the peoples is turned into a series of 'Lives of Illustrious Men'." That is why "religion, morals, customs, and the entire character of the people are represented as having been formed by one man acting according to a pre-considered plan. Thus there remains no trace," Plekhanov says, "of any idea of social science, of the laws on which man depends in historical development". This point of view, he noted, has nothing in common with science.

Since the Narodnik ideologists as a rule did not trust the masses and recognised only the "single combat" of isolated individuals with the autocracy, they went over, as Plekhanov pointed out, to the pernicious tactics of individual terror, which retarded the development of the revolutionary initiative and activity of the working class and the peasantry. The unsuccessful attempts to wage the struggle against tsarism by the efforts of individual heroes alone, divorcement from the popular masses, led the Narodniks to still more serious errors and made them evolve towards liberalism. Clearly realising the harmfulness of the cult of the individual, of "heroes", for the development of a mass revolutionary movement, Plekhanov was not content with

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* See this volume, p. 583.

** *Ibid.*, p. 739.

criticising the political and theoretical bankruptcy of the Narodnik ideologists' views on this question and deriding their immense conceit; he at the same time set examples of profound understanding of the Marxist teaching on the laws of social development and the role of the masses and of individuals in history.

Mikhailovsky, the "Achilles of the subjective school" Plekhanov wrote, imagines that Marxists "must only talk about 'the self-development of the forms of production and exchange' ". "If you imagine," Plekhanov said to the Narodniks, "that, in the opinion of Marx, the forms of production can develop 'of themselves', you are cruelly mistaken. What are *the social relations of production?* They are relations between men. How can they develop, then, without men? "* It is the working masses, Plekhanov maintains, who advance the development of production.

While, in the view of the subjectivists, Plekhanov wrote, the hero operates and the producer co-operates, the Marxist view is that the producers do not co-operate, but operate. The development of society is achieved only by the operations of the producers themselves.

He proved by examples from social life that history is made by the masses, the millions of producers, not by "heroes" according to their caprice or fantasy. "It is not the utopian plans of various reformers, but the laws of production and exchange, which determine the now continually growing working-class movement."**

The subjectivists attribute to outstanding individuals deeds which only the masses can accomplish; not individuals, but the popular masses, the classes, play the decisive role in historical development, in Russia's social reorganisation. The subjectivists and the voluntarists, Plekhanov wrote, cannot rise from the acts of individuals to the acts of the masses, to the acts of whole social classes. The Narodniks, like the bourgeois sociologists, are inclined to see in the political activity of great people the chief and almost only mainspring of historical development. They give too much attention to the genealogy of kings and leave no room for the independent activity of the popular masses.

The attention of historians, Plekhanov wrote, must be centred on the life of the popular masses. The people must be the hero of history, he emphasised. The real history of a country is the history of the people, the history of the citizens. "...No great step can be made in the historical progress of mankind, not only without the participation of people, but even without the participation of the great majority of the people, i.e., of the *masses.*"***

* See this volume, p. 658

** *Ibid.*, p. 430.

*** G. Plekhanov, *Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, p. 210.

Plekhanov noted that: "So long as there exist 'heroes' who imagine that it is sufficient for them to enlighten their own heads to be able to lead the crowd wherever they please, and to mould it, like clay, into anything that comes into their heads, the kingdom of reason remains a pretty phrase or a noble dream. It begins to approach us with seven-league strides only when the 'crowd' itself becomes the hero of historical action, and when in it, in that colourless 'crowd', there develops the appropriate consciousness of self."*

The greatness of Marx's philosophy, Plekhanov wrote, consists in that, unlike many other philosophical trends, which have doomed man to inactivity and passive acceptance of reality, it appeals to his power of creation. Marx called to activity the proletariat, the class which has a great historical role to play in modern society. It is to it, the proletariat, the revolutionary class in the full sense of the word, that the Marxists appeal. The proletariat uses Marx's philosophical theory as a reliable guide in its struggle for emancipation. This theory infuses into the proletariat an energy hitherto unequalled. The whole practical philosophy of Marxism amounts to action. Plekhanov called dialectical materialism the philosophy of action.

But in attributing decisive significance in historical development to the action of the masses, Marxism is nevertheless far from denying the role of the individual in history, from reducing it to nil.

An outstanding individual, in indissoluble contact with the masses and expressing their interests and aspirations, may in definite historical circumstances play a great role in society by arousing heroic self-consciousness in the masses; by his progressive activity he accelerates the advance of society. Hence "...the development of knowledge, the development of human consciousness, is the greatest and most noble task of the thinking personality. 'Licht, mehr Licht! '—that is what is most of all needed.... One should not leave the torch in the narrow study of the 'intellectual'. ...Develop human consciousness.... Develop the self-consciousness of the producers".**

The significance of an outstanding individual's social activity, Plekhanov stressed, depends on how correctly that individual understands the conditions of development of society, and is determined by his nearness to the people, to the progressive class. But no great man can impose on society relations which no longer conform to the condition of the productive forces.

Thus Plekhanov brilliantly criticised the idealist cult of the

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* See this volume, pp. 667-68.
** *Ibid.*

individual in the middle of the nineties and explained the Marxist teaching on the role of the people and of the individual in history. Plekhanov's Marxist works still help in the fight to eliminate the remaining survivals of the cult of the individual.

Substantiating the paramount role of the people in history, Plekhanov sought to prove that only the revolutionary movement of the people, of the working class, could overthrow a political monster such as Russian autocracy and lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the triumph of socialism. This was of great importance to the Russian emancipation movement, in which Blanquist and anarchist ideas were being spread in the eighties. Plekhanov defended the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat in *Socialism and the Political Struggle, Our Differences* and other works. He pointed out that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the first act, the sign of the social revolution. The task of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only to destroy the political domination of the bourgeoisie, it is also to organise social and political life. "Always and everywhere," he noted, "political power has been the lever by which a class, having achieved domination, has carried out the social upheaval necessary for its welfare...."*

When he later adopted Menshevik views, Plekhanov, while not openly renouncing the Marxist principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, let himself be influenced by reformist constitutional illusions and evaded the answer to concrete practical questions in the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Among the highly important questions of historical materialism which Plekhanov worked out, a prominent place is given to the question of the rise and development of ideology, the origin of forms of social consciousness and their interaction, the question of the relation between the political and ideological superstructures and the economic basis, and so on.

Just as there is nothing rigid, eternal and invariable in nature, so, in the history of social life, changes in the mode of production are accompanied by changes in ideas, theories, political institutions and the like—i.e., in the entire superstructure. All this is the historical product of the practical activity of people.

In his works Plekhanov devoted his main attention to defining how the development of the forms of social consciousness depends on material production. He criticised in great detail the idealist theory of "self-development" of ideologies, and the notion that the general condition of intellects and morals creates not only the various forms of art, literature and philosophy but

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* See this volume, p. 73.

also the industry of a given period, the social environment. Plekhanov convincingly explains that only the materialist conception of history can find the real cause of a given condition of both intellects and morals in the production of material values.

In the interaction of society and nature people produce material values and create the economic basis on which arise the political system, psychology and ideology. The very direction of intellectual work in society is determined in the final analysis by people's relations in production. This materialist thesis does not reject cases of other countries' ideological and political influence on the policy and ideology of the country in question. Plekhanov supplements the study of the interrelations between economy and ideology within a country, the elucidation of the dependence of political and ideological development on the economic structure of society, with the study of foreign influences on the cultural development of one people or another. "The French philosophers were filled with admiration for the philosophy of Locke; but they went much further than their teacher. This was because the class which they represented had gone in France, fighting against the old regime, much further than the class of English society whose aspirations were expressed in the philosophical works of Locke."* This means that foreign influences cannot do away with the main thing, the fact that the features and peculiarities of the social ideas in a given country are explained in the final analysis by the fundamental inner cause of its development—the degree of development of its own economic relations.

No less convincing is Plekhanov's argument in favour of the Marxist proposition on the reverse influence of the forms of superstructure on the economy. The dependence of politics on economics does not preclude their interaction, the influence of political institutions on economic life. The political system either promotes the development of the productive forces or hinders it. The reason why a given political system is created is to promote the further development of the productive forces. If the political system becomes an obstacle to their development it must be abolished.

In societies based on exploitation, the ruling and the subject classes are opposed to one another in the production process. The relations between classes, Plekhanov explains, are first and foremost relations into which people enter in the social process of production. The relations between the classes are reflected in the political organisation of society and the political struggle. This struggle is the source from which the various political

* See this volume, p. 634.

theories and the ideological superstructure arise and develop. Only by taking into account and studying the struggle between the classes can one come to understand the spiritual history of society, and draw a correct conclusion that in societies divided into classes there is always a dominant ideology, which is the ideology of the dominant class.

Plekhanov's indisputable services include his brilliant refutation of the untenable idea, nevertheless obstinately ascribed to Marxism, that economic conditions determine spiritual life wholly and entirely (and not merely in the final resort), and that any theory can be deduced directly from a given economic condition. This vulgar fiction which describes Marx's historical materialism as "economic materialism" was spread at the end of the nineteenth century by Mikhailovsky and other subjective Narodniks and bourgeois sociologists in the West.

Mikhailovsky is wrong, Plekhanov wrote, to think that Marxism knows only what belongs to economics, that it "*breathes only with the string*". Marx never considered the economic development of a given country separate from the social forces which, arising from it, themselves influence its further direction. As regards the development of ideologies, the best experts on economic development will at times find themselves helpless if they have not a certain artistic sense which enables them to understand, for example, the complicated process of the development of social psychology and its significance in the life of society, its adaptation to economics, its connections with ideology. The great writers Balzac and Ibsen, Plekhanov noted, did much to explain the psychology of the various classes in modern society. "Let's hope that in time there will appear many such artists, who will understand on the one hand the 'iron laws' of movement of the 'string', and on the other will be able to understand and to show how, on the 'string' and precisely thanks to its movement, there grows up the *'garment of Life' of ideology*."*

Marx, Plekhanov argued, never denied the very great importance of politics and ideology (moral, pilosophical, religious and aesthetic concepts) in people's life. But he first of all determined their genesis, and found it in the economic relations of society. Then he investigated how the economic skeleton is covered with the living flesh of social and political forms and finally—and this is the most interesting, the most fascinating aspect—how human ideas, feelings, aspirations and ideals arise and develop.

Plekhanov showed the relative independence of ideological development, thus refuting the illusion of the absolute indepen-

* See this volume, p. 659.

dence of ideology, an illusion so characteristic of bourgeois ideologists and revisionists. The process by which the ideological superstructure arises out of the economic basis goes on unnoticed by man. That is why the link between ideological and economic relations, the dependence of the former upon the latter, is not seldom lost sight of, the former are considered "self-sufficient" and ideology is erroneously regarded as something which is independent by its very essence. The relative independence of ideological development is explained, Plekhanov emphasises, first of all by continuity in the development of each ideological form. This relative independence is shown by the fact that the ideologists of any class adopt an active attitude to the legacy of ideas from the preceding age and use the achievements of previous generations. "The ideologies of every particular age are always most closely connected—whether positively or negatively—with the ideologies of the preceding age."* The moment material and spiritual labour part, and opposition arises between them, special branches of the division of labour in spiritual production appear. The ideologies become, as it were, segregated in relatively independent fields with the inner tendencies peculiar to their own development. The existence of these phenomena proves that the relative independence of ideologies is a reality, a historical fact.

It is an error, Plekhanov writes, to attribute to Marxism the thought that the content of all of a given society's ideas can be explained directly by its economic condition. Ideas which arise in one and the same society often play completely different roles.

Plekhanov's profound thoughts on the role and significance of ideas in the development of society are of enormous interest to this day. In the eighties and nineties of the last century the Narodniks, whose utopian ideals were completely out of touch with real life, greatly harmed the revolutionary struggle of the masses by asserting that ideas and theories are independent of economic, social life. Exposing the subjectivism of Mikhailovsky and others, Plekhanov gave an independent and original development of the Marxist teaching on the role of ideas and theories.

Ideals may be lofty or base, correct or erroneous. From Marx's point of view, Plekhanov noted, ideas, ideals are always the reflection of the material conditions of people's existence. The only correct ideal is that which corresponds to the aspect of economic reality which tends towards progress. The metaphysician thinks that if a public personality must base himself upon reality it means that he should reconcile himself with it. But the

* See this volume, p. 642

materialist and dialectician points out that life in a class society is antagonistic. The reactionaries base themselves on a reality which is already obsolete, and yet in it is being born a new life, the future reality, to serve which means to contribute to the victory of the new.

Marxists attribute great importance to ideas, ideals, although this is challenged by the Narodnik sociologists. Ideas become a great power, but on the indispensable condition that they are able to embrace and reflect reality, the course of history, the relations between the classes. Only in that case are they invincible and do they promote progress. In the opposite case they act as brakes to social development. A class and its political party may be called revolutionary only if they express the most progressive trends of society, are vehicles of the most advanced ideas of their time, if they determine the tasks of the social struggle.

Plekhanov called revolutionary ideas "dynamite" which "no other explosive in the world can replace".*

Plekhanov, being a Marxist, never tired of calling for the fulfilment of the great ideals of scientific socialism. He stressed the exceptional role of revolutionary theory in the proletariat's class struggle. "For without revolutionary theory," he wrote, "there is no revolutionary movement in the true sense of the word."** He called for the dissemination among the masses of the progressive ideas advanced by the most progressive social forces, and this he saw as a very great factor of progress.

However, Plekhanov did not apply these views consistently in practice. Later, when he became a Menshevik, he underestimated the subjective side of the revolutionary movement, minimised the role of the revolutionary party and belittled the reverse influence of social consciousness on economics, the role of ideas in the development of society.

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At the end of the nineteenth century and later, when the bourgeoisie were conducting a campaign against Marxism and its philosophy, the materialist Plekhanov's resolute defence of the philosophical principles of Marxism—Marxist materialism and dialectics—was of immense importance. He showed that the ideological bourgeois reaction was fighting under the flag of philosophical idealism and eclecticism. In the final analysis, he saw the social basis of that campaign against materialism in the

* See this volume, p. 90.
** *Ibid.*

bourgeoisie's fear of the revolutionary proletariat entering the historical arena.

In defending the just cause in philosophy Plekhanov exposed idealism in its various forms—Berkeleianism, Humism, Fichteism, Kantianism, Schellingism, Hegelianism and the subjective sociology of the Narodniks—and proved that idealism is akin to religion.

His resolute attacks on the landlord-bourgeois reaction, which slandered dialectical materialism and strove to exclude it from the general course of philosophy's progressive development, were particularly valuable.

Plekhanov showed the conditions in which dialectical materialism arose and disclosed the continuity in the development of materialist philosophy.

The main thing in Plekhanov's historical and philosophical conception was to fight idealism and to bring out the materialist tradition in philosophy. However, his works contain no clear formulation of dialectical materialism's conception of the object of philosophy.

Plekhanov defends dialectics, traces its development in the history of philosophy, and studies and investigates the numerous systems and schools of the various philosophical trends.

At the same time he shows how the bourgeois historians of philosophy give an idealist twist to the views of the materialists, falsify the history of materialism and try to pass over materialism in silence. He draws attention to the unscientific way in which bourgeois scholars expound the history of philosophy in the spirit of vulgar filiation of ideas, that is, simple consecutiveness of philosophical systems, ignoring the connection between the history of ideas and the history of society. At the same time he demands that continuity in the development of ideas be taken into account, that the connection between the different philosophical systems and schools and the philosophical theories of the past be borne in mind.

From the standpoint of dialectical materialism Plekhanov endeavoured to trace the continuity of the materialist ideas and also what distinguishes dialectical materialism from pre-Marxian materialism and from Hegel's philosophy. This was of great value, for in the eighties and nineties socialist literature often failed to give a clear idea of the difference between dialectical materialism and the preceding materialist systems. More than that, Marx's views were often confused with those of Holbach and of Helvetius. The weak sides of metaphysical materialism were attributed to dialectical materialism. On the other hand, dialectical materialism was professed to be a fragment of Left Hegelianism.

Plekhanov saw the continuity and the connection between the dialectical and the pre-Marxian materialists mainly in their defence of materialism. He traces the genesis of materialism from Heraclitus, Democritus, Spinoza, French materialists and Feuerbach. However, he committed an inaccuracy in calling Marx's materialism a kind of Spinozism. But it would be incorrect to think that Plekhanov was thus identifying dialectical materialism with Spinoza's philosophy. He was merely underlining the materialist basis of the link between the philosophical teachings of Democritus, Spinoza, Feuerbach and Marx. This link, he thought, was expressed in the fact that these thinkers resolved the basic question of philosophy materialistically and proved the primacy of the material over the ideal.

The point of departure of Plekhanov's *Development of the Monist View of History* is the clearly expressed view that the way the basic question in philosophy is resolved serves as the dividing line between materialism and idealism.

Plekhanov spread the basic proposition of materialism that being determines consciousness; he tirelessly opposed every sort of "synthesis" of materialism and idealism, i.e., dualism. Being, nature, such is the primary basis, the original element which determines all aspects of life.

All most important trends of philosophic thought, Plekhanov says, can be classified under materialism and idealism. Although besides them there were nearly always some dualist systems, which considered spirit and matter as separate independent substances, dualism was never able to give a satisfactory answer to the inevitable question of how these two separate substances having nothing in common can influence each other. Any kind of synthesis of the materialist and idealist points of view, Plekhanov shows, leads to eclecticism. It is impossible to understand the nature of historical phenomena from the standpoint of dualism, for dualism is always eclectic. To explain this thought Plekhanov says: "Of course, the eclectic can unite everything in his mind. With the help of eclectic thinking one can unite Marx not only with Kant, but even with the 'realists' of the Middle Ages. But for people who think consistently the illegal cohabitation of Marx with the philosophy of Kant must appear as something monstrous in the fullest sense of the word."*

Plekhanov attributes a particularly great role in the history of materialism to the eighteenth-century French materialists. To idealism he opposes the French materialists' conception of consciousness as a "natural phenomenon", a quality of matter, and shows their resolute fight against the idealists, who ex-

* See this volume, p. 465.

plained consciousness by supernatural forces, etc. Plekhanov analyses the ethics of the French materialists, shows how progressive it was for its time and defends these materialists against accusations of "immorality" by the vulgar bourgeois historians of philosophy. Highly assessing the French materialists' fight against the church and religion, he shows at the same time how limited, bourgeois, their views were. However, it is mainly the historical views of the pre-Marxian materialists that capture Plekhanov's attention. He dwells in great detail on the French materialists' attempts to explain by the conditions of social life why definite ideas and morals prevailed in society; at the same time he emphasises that, being entangled in unsolvable contradictions, the French materialists did not overcome the idealist view of history.

In a polemic with bourgeois historians of philosophy, Plekhanov defended Feuerbach's consistent materialism in his conception of nature and disclosed the resemblance between Feuerbach's philosophical views and those of the French materialists, saw the limitations of Feuerbach's philosophy resulting from his underestimation of dialectics and also from his lack of a materialist view of history. However, in appraising the philosophy of Feuerbach, Spinoza and the eighteenth-century French materialists, he did not sufficiently underline their typical limitations—their mechanistic, contemplative outlook, and so forth.

Plekhanov wrote that the Marxist philosophy—dialectical materialism, the most outstanding philosophical system—is monistic. Materialism alone correctly explains the phenomena of nature and of human society. Even in the field of psychology, the science which studies mainly mental phenomena, "we work with greater success when we accept nature as the *primary* element and consider mental phenomena as necessary consequences of the motion of matter".*

Marxist materialist philosophy is consistent in the way it deals with the basic question of philosophy. While holding that the outside world is primary, it at the same time considers it as developing and changing.

In his notes to Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy,* Plekhanov explains highly important propositions of dialectical materialism—the eternity of matter, the basic forms of existence, motion, space and time. He refutes the Kantian subjective idealist conception of space, time and causality.

Motion is an inalienable quality of matter. Matter needs no supernatural prime mover to set it in motion, to produce what

* G. Plekhanov, *Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. VIII, p. 139.

we call sensation, thought. Modern materialism, i.e., dialectical materialism, is the only consistent and the most progressive system of philosophy; it agrees with the data of natural science and is alien to mysticism.

Plekhanov gave a Marxist explanation of questions of knowledge. The point of departure of knowledge is the outside world. Our notions and conceptions of objects and phenomena of the outside world have an objective content.

The material is the basis of the psychic, the ideal. Thought does not exist outside man, it is a function of the brain, the result of nervous and psychic processes.

In his notes to Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach* and in his own *The Development of the Monist View of History,* Plekhanov criticises the agnostics—Hume, Kant and others—who denied or doubted the knowability of the outside world.

The existence of the outside world, Plekhanov wrote, is beyond doubt. My impressions are the result of the action of outside objects on me and, therefore, they correspond and cannot but correspond to the mutual relations of the things outside us. Hence the knowledge of an object is always knowledge through the intermediary of the impressions which the object makes on us. Sensation, perception of objects outside us, is the basis of knowledge.

Plekhanov said, in complete agreement with Engels, that the Kantian and Humist teachings of the unknowability of the outside world are best refuted by experience and industry; "every experiment and every productive activity of man represents an *active* relation on his part to the external world". Science proves that a large number of phenomena can be foreseen and brought about. This means that it is also possible to foresee the effects that will be produced on us by "things in themselves". But if we can foresee some of the effects that can be produced on us by "things in themselves", Plekhanov convincingly wrote, that means that "at least some of their properties" are known to us. And if some properties of things are known to us, we are not entitled to call those things unknowable.

In a number of works, mainly in *The Development of the Monist View of History,* Plekhanov gave a brilliant exposition of the Marxist teaching of objective truth. He clearly linked the acknowledgement that the outside world is knowable with the acknowledgement that man's knowledge can provide objective truth. Answering Mikhailovsky, Kareyev and other subjectivists who categorically denied the existence of objective truth and asserted that all that satisfies our demand for knowledge is true, i.e., that truth is subjective, Plekhanov said: truth is found, not

in the sphere of subjectivity, but as a result of all-round consideration of the objective relations of reality.

Objective truth, he says, summing up his argument, is the correct reflection of reality. Outside us there exist objects and phenomena, their properties and relations. The only true views are those which correctly reflect the aspects of reality and these relations; views which distort them are erroneous.

The denial of the objectivity of truth by the subjectivists on the grounds that life develops through contradictions is untenable, Plekhanov wrote. The presence of contradictions in life does not disprove objective truth but only leads to it. However, the road to knowledge is not a straight one. The contradictions of life force us to consider reality in a more profound and all-round manner, as a result of which our knowledge of the world becomes more correct; they provide objective, absolute truth which no further development of knowledge, no further contradictions can do away with.

This emphasis on the possibility of knowing absolute truth expressed confidence in the unlimitedness of human knowledge, the assurance that human thought would not stop half-way in its striving to know the world, that new discoveries would supplement and confirm Marx's brilliant theory as new discoveries in astronomy supplemented and confirmed Copernicus' discovery. At the same time one must draw attention to a certain confusion of which Plekhanov is sometimes guilty in questions concerning the theory of knowledge. An example is his agreement with Hume's words that man must have belief in the existence of the outer world. Lenin called this remark absurd and said the "word 'belief' (taken from Hume), although put in quotation marks, discloses a confusion of terms on Plekhanov's part".*

A more serious error in the field of the theory of knowledge was the proposition that our sensations are hieroglyphs, which Plekhanov formulated in 1892 in his notes to the first edition of the translation of Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach.* This meant that the sensations produced in us by the action of various forms of matter in motion do not give an exact reflection of the objective processes which give rise to them, are not images of the outside world. Only conventionally do they pass on to us the links between phenomena of the objective world. "Our sensations are in their way hieroglyphs which inform us of what is taking place in reality. The hieroglyphs do not resemble the events conveyed by them."** This error on Plekhanov's part showed to a certain extent the influence of Helmholtz.

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 14, p. 141.

** See this volume, p. 480.

Later, Plekhanov represented things as though he had made only a mistake in terminology, in words, and understood "all the awkwardness of that inexactness". However, Lenin considered it necessary to point out that mistake as a departure from Engels' materialistic formulation, a concession to agnosticism.

Notwithstanding individual serious errors made by Plekhanov in the field of philosophy, the history of Marxist philosophy is greatly indebted to him. He unmasked unscientific and reactionary idealist outlooks, disclosed the untenability of the views of the vulgarisers who distorted Marxist philosophy, criticised the confusion of the eclectics and positivists and defended the correctness of dialectical materialism.

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Plekhanov was an ardent defender of materialist dialectics, which he skilfully applied to social life, correctly considering it as an achievement of Marxist philosophic thought. He saw in it the great and the new which, combined with the masterly discovery of the materialist conception of history, distinguishes Marx's materialism from the teachings of materialists before him. Plekhanov brings out the various aspects of materialist dialectics and brilliantly expounds the theory of development, the correlation between evolution and revolution, leaps, etc. In this connection he shows the opposition between Marx's dialectical method and Hegel's, and considers the role of Hegel's idealist philosophy as one of the theoretical sources of Marxism.

Plekhanov elucidated questions of materialist dialectics in the eighties and nineties of the last century in a number of works: *A New Champion of Autocracy, or Mr. L. Tikhomirov's Grief* (1889)—his first detailed defence of materialist dialectics; *For the Sixtieth Anniversary of Hegel's Death, The Development of the Monist View of History, Essays on the History of Materialism,* works on Belinsky and Chernyshevsky, articles against Bernstein, Struve and other revisionists.

Plekhanov called Hegel a titan of idealist philosophical thought. He considered the restoration of the dialectical method a great service on his part. Hegel's speculative philosophy, for which reality is the product of the development of the Absolute Idea or the world spirit, was superior to metaphysical materialism by the fact that it worked out the dialectical method. Hegelian philosophy, Plekhanov noted, exalted the dialectical method. Hegel explained phenomena of reality from the point of view of their coming into being, development and destruction. "*All that is finite,*" Plekhanov said, quoting Hegel, "*is doomed to self-destruction.*"

Many of Hegel's opponents did not notice the progressive innovatory kernel of his dialectical method—his teaching on development—because of the reactionary shell of his philosophic system. Hegel had a fruitful influence on scientific thought of his time. Plekhanov explained this very well. He showed that Hegel's dialectics was a progressive step compared with metaphysics, in spite of the appeal to the Absolute Idea, and that Hegel rendered great services to human thought. At the same time Plekhanov gave a popular exposition of Marx and Engels' proposition on the contradiction between method and system in Hegel and disclosed the idealism and mysticism with which Hegel's philosophy was permeated. He wrote about the conservatism of Hegel's system which contradicts the idea of development, the dialectical method. While Hegel's dialectical method demanded development, his reactionary system, Plekhanov wrote, aimed at justifying the German reactionary state at that time. It tried to prove the "perfection" and "eternity" of the social system then existing in Germany.

Plekhanov saw as one of the limitations of Hegel's dialectics the fact that it was turned towards the past only. "Philosophy always comes too late," Hegel writes, and only takes cognizance of what has already been accomplished. Of course, Plekhanov notes ironically, philosophy cannot vivify a decrepit, obsolete social system. But must this process of the rise of the new really remain for ever hidden to philosophy? Only dialectical materialism, Plekhanov emphasises, overcomes this extreme. Hegel's idealistic dialectics is incompatible with and alien to materialism. In Marx's philosophy it has been changed into its direct and complete opposite.

"*Karl Marx* said quite rightly of himself," Plekhanov wrote in his *For the Sixtieth Anniversary of Hegel's Death,* "that his method is the complete opposite of Hegel's method" inasmuch as Marx, being a materialist, did not understand dialectics in the same way as Hegel, who was an idealist.

Unlike Hegel's idealist dialectics, which maintained the spontaneous motion of pure thought and denied in substance the development of nature, the development of matter, Marxism turns dialectics right side up, basically transforms it and frees it from the idealistic hazy cover in which it was enveloped in Hegel.

We sometimes meet in Plekhanov expressions which indicate that he was not critical enough towards Hegel's philosophy, but this must not be exaggerated. His merit lies in his brilliant and convincing opposition of the Marxist dialectical method to Hegel's idealistic method.

Plekhanov emphasised that the dialectical method and materialism are indissolubly united in Marx and Engels' philosophy. That

is why the most distinctive feature of modern materialism is its dialectical method. Therein lies its substantial distinction from the old, metaphysical materialism of the eighteenth century. In materialism the modern doctrine of development finds its firm basis. Plekhanov called Marx's method the most revolutionary of all methods ever applied. Marxist dialectics is an indispensable instrument of knowledge by means of which the contradictory tendencies in the development of nature and society are disclosed.

In this connection a large place in Plekhanov's works is devoted to bringing out the radical difference between dialectics and metaphysics, two different methods of studying and approaching reality. Marx's dialectics, unlike metaphysics, studies phenomena in their contradictory development, in their immediate connection and interdependence, in continual and eternal motion.

In accordance with the dialectical method—the only scientific one—Plekhanov considered metaphysics historically, in connection with the development of knowledge. He brought out the scientific untenability and reactionary nature of the metaphysical standpoint, which denies contradictions, leaps and upheavals, and recognises only quantitative changes. Metaphysicians are exponents of the vulgar theory of evolution and introduce into their teaching a considerable admixture of conservatism, distorting the very theory of development.

The point about the metaphysical view of the world, Plekhanov says, is that it recognises only quantitative changes in things and phenomena. For the metaphysician, development assumes the form of a gradual increase or decrease in the dimensions of the object studied. Similarly, by destruction he understands only the gradual decrease of a phenomenon until it becomes quite imperceptible. But gradual increase and change cannot account for the appearance or disappearance of objects.

It was Marx who first explained and showed the substance of the dialectical method. Plekhanov elucidates the dialectics of the transition of quantitative changes into qualitative ones by a break in the gradual process, by leaps and revolutionary upheavals, and concentrates the fire of his criticism on the limitations of the evolution conception.

Answering the renegade L. Tikhomirov—a former Narodnik—who denied dialectical development and "forcible upheavals", leaps in nature and society, and maintained that in "the scientific sense" one may speak only of a slow "change in the type of a given phenomenon", Plekhanov proved that dialectics does not overlook the indisputable fact that one and the same uninterrupted process goes on at all moments of the change, but in that process there emerge a number of conditions under which the gradual change must necessarily lead to a leap.

For socialists armed with the dialectical method, Plekhanov wrote, revolutions are just as necessary elements in the process of historical development as evolutions.

Thus, substantiating the dialectical doctrine of leaps, Plekhanov shows that nature refutes the views of the metaphysicians at every step by displaying contradiction in phenomena and breaks in gradual development, or leaps; all the more do transitions from quantity to quality, leaps, take place in society.

Plekhanov analyses with great skill the dialectical process of the transition of quantity into quality, the process of motion by leaps, making use of many facts of human history. Every leap is prepared by the preceding development. It cannot take place without a sufficient cause which lies in the previous course of social life. In his articles, particularly those against Tikhomirov, and in the first decade of this century those against Struve, Plekhanov gives a correct general theoretical interpretation of the working of the law governing the transition of quantity into quality and inversely.

Plekhanov explains in a way accessible to all the law of the unity and struggle of opposites. Every development is caused by internal contradictions, is the result of the interaction of opposite sides. The contradictoriness of every phenomenon means that it develops of itself and out of itself the elements which sooner or later will put an end to its existence, will turn it into the opposite of itself, for everything develops through contradictions, through the struggle of opposite forces. That is the great eternal and universal law of the contradiction between the old and the new, the law of the overthrow of the form rising from a given content as a result of the further growth of that content itself. This law governs the development of nature and of society.

The study of development as the dialectical contradiction in processes and phenomena of reality did not, however, lead Plekhanov to understand the law of the unity and struggle of opposites as the basic law in dialectics. Although he recognised that law, Plekhanov did not consider it as the essence of dialectics. He held that the distinctive feature and the axis of dialectics was development in the form of leaps. That was why Lenin, who highly assessed Plekhanov's defence of Marx's dialectical method, repeatedly noted that he did not pay enough attention to the law of the unity and struggle of opposites, the most important law of the objective world and of knowledge. Lenin also noted that in expounding the laws of dialectics, Plekhanov, in his wish to popularise them, reduced them to an aggregate of examples and did not devote due attention to dialectics as the theory of knowledge in Marxism.

Plekhanov's work at the end of the eighties for a correct understanding of the law of "the negation of negation" is of considerable value. He attacked those who distorted that law because they

saw in it only the manifestation of Hegel's notorious "triad"; he opposed Mikhailovsky, for instance, who, clinging to Marx's mode of expression, reduced Marxist dialectics to Hegel's "triad". It was in the universal law of the negation of negation that Plekhanov saw the principle, the specific feature of dialectics which shows the interdependence between what is coming into existence and what is disappearing. He resolutely defended Marx against accusations of formalism, of following Hegel's "triad" and so forth. He showed how unfounded were assertions that Marx's brilliant foresight of the outcome of capitalist development was based on the "triad". The "triad" never played the role of proof in Marxism. Marx's dialectics brings out the contradictory tendencies existing in development not *a priori,* but on the basis of the factual study of reality. The strength of historical materialism consists not in references to the "triad", but in all-round scientific investigation of the historical process. Only thus can one obtain a "living understanding of all the real qualities of an object", Plekhanov said, emphasising the hostility of Marxist dialectics towards abstract schemes.

* * *

Plekhanov's works in defence of dialectical and historical materialism are brilliant in style, full of polemic ardour and profound in their content; they are a treasure of Marxist literature. They expound in an original form many basic problems and propositions of Marxist materialism and dialectical method, of the materialist conception of history and of Marxist philosophy as a whole.

Plekhanov's Marxist works were directed against philosophical reaction and obscurantism and aimed at the political and social reorganisation of Russia and the emancipation of the people of Russia and other countries from social slavery and oppression. They served the dissemination of proletarian internationalism and the establishment of close ties between the revolutionary movement in Russia and in Western Europe. That is why they still maintain their significance in modern times.

That is why Lenin pointed to the necessity of studying Plekhanov's philosophical works and insisted on their being republished and included in the "series of compulsory manuals of communism".

*V. FOMINA*

# SELECTED PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

VOLUME
I

# SOCIALISM AND THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE

## PREFACE

The present pamphlet may be an occasion for much misunderstanding and even dissatisfaction. People who sympathise with the trend of *Zemlya i Volya*[1] and *Chorny Peredel*[2] (publications in the editing of which I used to take part) may reproach me with having diverged from the theory of what is called Narodism. The supporters of other factions of our revolutionary party may be displeased with my criticism of outlooks which are dear to them. That is why I consider a short preliminary explanation necessary.

The desire to work *among the people* and for the people, the certitude that "the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves"—this *practical* tendency of our Narodism is just as dear to me as it used to be. But its *theoretical* propositions seem to me, indeed, erroneous in many respects. Years of life abroad and attentive study of the social question have convinced me that the triumph of a spontaneous popular movement similar to Stepan Razin's revolt or the Peasant Wars in Germany cannot satisfy the social and political needs of modern Russia, that the old forms of our national life carried within them many germs of their disintegration and that they cannot "develop into a higher communist form" except under the immediate influence of a strong and well-organised *workers'* socialist party. For that reason I think that besides fighting absolutism the Russian revolutionaries must strive at least to work out the elements for the establishment of such a party in the future. In this creative work they will necessarily have to pass on to the basis of modern socialism, for the ideals of Zemlya i Volya do not correspond to the condition of the industrial workers. And that will be very opportune now that the theory of Russian exceptionalism is becoming synonymous with stagnation and reaction and that the progressive elements of Russian society are grouping under the banner of judicious "Occidentalism".

I go on to another point of my explanation. Here I will first of all say in my defence that I have been concerned not with persons but with opinions, and that my personal differences with this or

that socialist group do not in the least diminish my respect for all who sincerely fight for the emancipation of the people.

Moreover, the so-called terrorist movement has opened a new epoch in the development of our revolutionary party—the epoch of *conscious political struggle* against the government. This change in the direction of our revolutionaries' work makes it necessary for them to reconsider all views that they inherited from the preceding period. Life demands that we attentively reconsider all our intellectual stock-in-trade when we step on to new ground, and I consider my pamphlet as a contribution which I can make to this matter of criticism which started long ago in our revolutionary literature. The reader has probably not yet forgotten the biography of Andrei Ivanovich Zhelyabov[3] which contained a severe and frequently very correct critical appraisal of the programme and activity of the Zemlya i Volya group. It is quite possible that my attempts at criticism will be less successful, but it would hardly be fair to consider them less timely.

*G. P.*

Geneva.
October 25, 1883

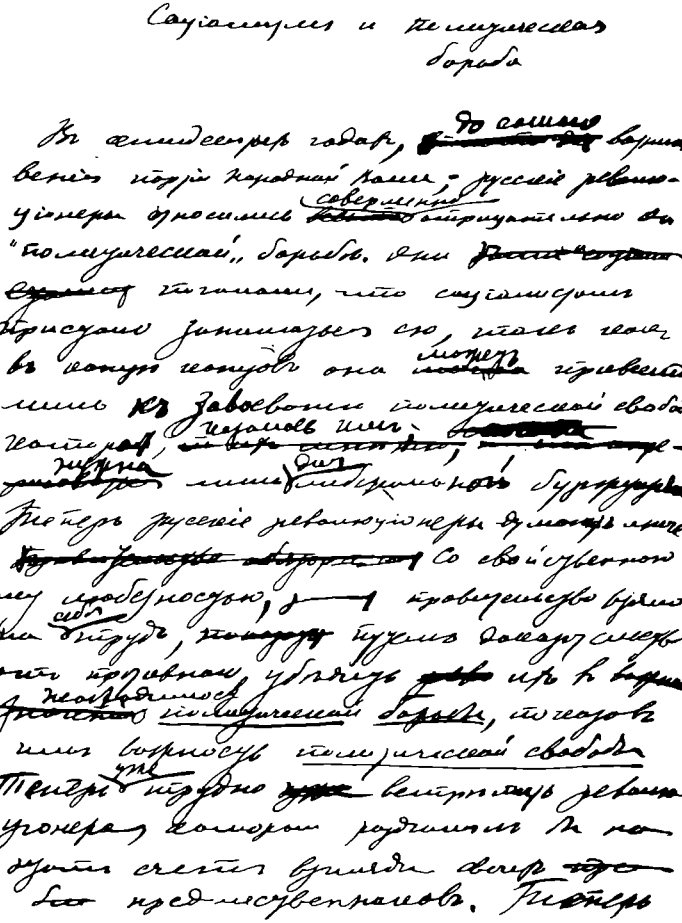
Every class struggle is a political struggle.
*Karl Marx* [4]

Since the Russian revolutionary movement finally took the path of open struggle against absolutism, the question of the socialists' political tasks has become the most vital and most burning question for our party. Because of it people have drifted apart who had been attached to each other by many years of joint practical work, because of it whole groups and organisations have fallen to pieces. It can even be said that all Russian socialists have temporarily been split into two camps supporting diametrically opposite views on "politics". Extremes were unavoidable in this matter, as always in such cases. Some considered the political struggle as almost tantamount to betrayal of the people's cause, as a manifestation of bourgeois instincts among our revolutionary intelligentsia and a defilement of socialist programme purity. Others not only recognised that struggle as necessary, they were even ready, for the sake of its imaginary interests, to compromise with the liberally-minded oppositional elements of our society. Some even went to the extent of considering any manifestation of class antagonism in Russia as harmful for the present. Such views were held, for instance, by Zhelyabov, who, as his biographer says, "imagined the Russian revolution not exclusively as the emancipation of the peasant or even (? ) the workers' estate, but as the political regeneration of the whole Russian people generally".* In other words, the revolutionary movement against the absolute monarchy merged in his imagination with the working class's social-revolutionary movement for its economic emancipation; the particular, specially Russian task of the present hid from view the general task of the working class in all civilised countries. The difference could not go any farther, a break became inevitable.

Time, however, smoothed out extremes and resolved a considerable number of the disputed questions to the satisfaction of both sides. Little by little all or nearly all recognised that the political struggle which had been taken up must be pursued until a

* See the pamphlet *Andrei Ivanovich Zhelyabov*, p. 10.

broad emancipation movement in the people and society destroyed the edifice of absolutism as an earthquake destroys a poultry-house, if Marx's forceful expression can be used here. But to very many of our socialists this struggle still appears as some kind of forced compromise, some temporary triumph of "practice" over "theory", a mockery by life of the impotence of thought. Even the "politicians", in justifying themselves against the reproaches showered on them, avoided all appeal to the basic propositions of socialism, and referred only to the incontestable demands of reality. At the bottom of their hearts they themselves apparently also believed that political tendencies were by no means suited to them, but they consoled themselves with the consideration that only in a free state could they let the dead bury the dead and, renouncing all political considerations, devote themselves wholly to the cause of socialism. This vague conviction sometimes led to misunderstandings that were not without their curious side. Analysing the speech of "the Russian guest" at the Chur Congress[5] and attempting to justify itself against the allegation that it dabbled in politics, *Narodnaya Volya* noted, among other things, that its supporters were neither socialists nor political radicals, but simply Narodovoltsi.[6] The terrorist organ presumed that "in the West" the attention of the radicals was absorbed exclusively by political questions while the socialists would not have anything to do with "politics". Anybody who knows the programmers of the West European socialists understands, of course, how erroneous such an idea is as far as the enormous majority of them are concerned. It is well known that Social-Democracy in Europe and America never maintained the principle of political "abstention". Its supporters do not ignore "politics". Only they do not consider the task of the socialist revolution to be "the regeneration of the whole people generally". They try to organise the workers into a separate party in order thus to segregate the exploited from the exploiters and give political expression to the economic antagonism. Where in our country did they get the certitude that socialism calls for political indifference—a certitude which is in glaring contradiction with reality? Schiller's Wallenstein tells Max Piccolomini that human reason is broad, whereas the wolrd is narrow, so that thoughts can live at ease together in the former while there are harsh clashes between things in the latter. Must we say that in our brain, on the contrary, concepts of things which in practice not only get on very well together, but are utterly unthinkable without their mutual connection, cannot live side by side? To answer that question we must first of all make clear the conceptions of socialism which our revolutionaries had during the epoch when political tendencies arose among them. Once convinced that these conceptions were erroneous or backward we shall consider what place is given to the political struggle by the doctrine which even its bourgeois opponents do not refuse to call *scientific socialism*. All that we shall have to do then will be to make in our general conclusions the corrections which are inevitable when we consider the various pe-



The first page of a draft of the manuscript of *Socialism and the Political Struggle*

culiarities of the contemporary state of affairs in Russia—and our subject will be exhausted; the political struggle of the working class against its enemies belonging to one historical formation or another will finally reveal to us its connection with the general tasks of socialism.

## I

Socialist propaganda has enormously influenced the whole course of intellectual development in the civilised countries. There is hardly a single branch of sociology that has not felt its impact in one sense or another. It has in part destroyed old scientific prejudices and in part transformed them from a naïve delusion into a sophism. It is understandable that the influence of socialist propaganda must have affected the supporters of the new teaching still more powerfully. All the traditions of previous "political" revolutionaries have been ruthlessly criticised, all methods of social activity have been analysed from the standpoint of the "new Gospel". But as the scientific substantiation of socialism was complete only with the appearance of *Capital,*[7] it is easy to understand that the results of this criticism have by no means always been satisfactory. And as, on the other hand, there were several schools in utopian socialism which had almost equal influence, little by little a kind of medium socialism, as it were, has been worked out, and this has been adhered to by people who did not claim to found a new school and were not among the particularly zealous supporters of previously existing schools. This eclectic socialism, as Frederick Engels says, is "a mish-mash of such critical statements, economic theories, pictures of future society by the founders of different sects, as excite a minimum of opposition; a mish-mash which is the more easily brewed the more the definite sharp edges of the individual constituents are rubbed down in the stream of debate, like rounded pebbles in a brook".* This medium socialism, the same author notes, still reigns in the heads of most of the worker socialists in England and in France.** We Russians could add that exactly the same mish-mash reigned in the first half of the seventies in the minds of our socialists and represented the general background against which two extreme trends stood out: the so-called *Vperyod* group[9] and the Bakuninists.[10] The former showed a tendency towards German Social-Democracy, the latter were a Russian version of the anarchist faction of the International. Differing very greatly from each other in almost all respects,

* See *Entwicklung des Sozialismus,* S. 18.[8]

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] *Now Marxism has definitely triumphed in France;* its basic propositions are acknowledged, in a more or less distorted form, even by "opportunists" of Jaurès' camp.

the two trends were at one—strange as that is—in their negative attitude to "politics". And it must be confessed that the anarchists were more consistent in this respect than the Russian Social-Democrats of the time.

From the anarchist point of view the political question is the touchstone of any working-class programme. The anarchists not only deny any deal with the modern state, they go so far as to exclude from their notions of "future society" anything that recalls the idea of state in one way or another. "Autonomy of the individual in an autonomous community"—such has been the motto of all consistent supporters of this trend. We know that its founder—Proudhon—in his publication *La Voix du peuple*[11] set himself the not quite modest task "to do as regards the government" (which he confused with the state) "what Kant did as regards religion"* and carried his anti-state zeal so far as to declare that Aristotle himself was "a sceptic in matters of state".** The accomplishment of the task he had set himself was very simple and followed, if you like, quite logically from the economic doctrines of the French Kant. Proudhon was never able to imagine the economic system of the future otherwise than in the form of commodity production, corrected and supplemented by a new, "just" form of exchange on the basis of "constituted value". For all its "justice", this new form of exchange does not, of course, preclude the purchase, sale or promissory notes which go with commodity production and circulation. All these transactions naturally presuppose various contracts and it is these that determine the mutual relations between the transacting sides. But in modern society "contracts" are based on common legal standards compulsory for all citizens and safeguarded by the state. In the "future society" everything would supposedly proceed somewhat differently. Revolution, according to Proudhon, was to abolish "laws", leaving only "contracts". "There is no need for laws voted by a majority or unanimously," he says in his *Idée générale de la Révolution au XIX siècle,* "every citizen, every commune and corporation will establish their own particular laws" (p. 259). With such a

* See *Confessions d'un révolutionnaire.* Preface, p. 4.[12]

** To what extent Aristotle was "a sceptic in matters of state" is obvious from the first chapter of the first volume of his *Politics,* in which he says that "the state is the most accomplished form of community", that its purpose is "the supreme good", and that it is therefore a phenomenon "natural in the highest sense of the word, and man is an animal predestined by his very nature to the state form of community". (Book I, Chap. 1, §§I-XI of the German Sussemil edition of 1879.) The author of *Politics* is just as much a "sceptic" in questions of state as Proudhon in questions of commodity production; the former could not imagine any other, higher form of community, the latter did not suspect that products could be distributed among the members of society without taking the form of commodities.

view of the matter, the political programme of the proletariat was simplified to the extreme. The state, which recognises only general laws compulsory for all citizens, could not even be a means for attaining socialist ideals. Making use of it for their aims, the socialists only consolidate the evil by the rooting out of which "social liquidation" should begin. The state must "decline", thus affording "every citizen, every commune and corporation" full freedom to decree "their own particular laws" and to conclude the "contracts" which they require. And if the anarchists do not waste time during the period preceding the "liquidation", these "contracts" will be concluded in the spirit of the *System of Economic Contradictions*[13] and the triumph of the *Revolution* will be assured.

The task of the Russian anarchists was simplified still more. "The destruction of the state" (which little by little replaced in the anarchist programme its "decline" recommended by Proudhon) was to clear the way for the development of the "ideals" of the Russian people. And as communal land tenure and organisation of crafts into artels occupy a very prominent place in these "ideals", it was presumed that the "autonomous" Russians of democratic origin would conclude their "contracts" not in the spirit of Proudhon's reciprocity but rather of agrarian communism. As a "born socialist", the Russian people would not be long in understanding that mere communal land tenure and communal ownership of the instruments of production do not guarantee the desired "equality" and would be forced to set about organising "autonomous communes" on completely communist foundations.

The Russian anarchists, however—at least those of the so-called rebel shade—bothered little about the economic consequences of the popular revolution they preached. They considered it their duty to remove those social conditions which, in their opinion, hindered the normal development of national life; but they did not ask themselves which road that development would take once it was freed from external hindrances. That this peculiar refashioning of the famous motto of the Manchester School, laissez faire, laissez passer, to make it look revolutionary, precluded all possibility of seriously appraising the contemporary condition of our social and economic life and did away with every criterion for determining even the concept of the "normal" course of its development—this did not occur either to "rebels" or to the "Narodniks" who appeared later. At the same time it would be utterly hopeless to attempt such an appraisal as long as Proudhon's teachings remained the point of departure of our revolutionaries' considerations. The weakest point of those teachings, the point in which they offend logic, is the concept of commodity and of exchange value, i.e., those very premises on which alone the cor-

rect conclusions about the mutual relations of the producers in the future economic organisation can be based. From the standpoint of Proudhon's theories no special importance attaches to the circumstance that contemporary Russian communal land tenure by no means precludes commodity production. The Proudhonist has no inkling of the "inner, inevitable dialectics", which transforms commodity production at a definite stage of its development into ... capitalist production.* And that is why it did not occur to his Russian cousin to ask himself whether the divided efforts of "autonomous" persons, communes and corporations would suffice for the struggle against this tendency of commodity production which threatens one fine day to supply a certain proportion of the "born" Communists with "honourably acquired" capitals and to turn them into exploiters of the remaining masses of the population. The anarchist denies the creative role of the state in the socialist revolution for the very reason that he does not understand the tasks and the conditions of that revolution.

We cannot enter here into a detailed analysis of anarchism in general or of Bakuninism in particular.** We wish merely to point out to readers that both Proudhon and the Russian anarchists were completely right from their point of view when they raised "political non-interference" to the position of main dogma in their practical programme. The social and political composition of Russian life in particular, it seemed, justified the negation of "politics" which is compulsory for all anarchists. Before entering the field of political agitation the "*inhabitant*" of Russia has to become a *citizen,* i.e., to win for himself at least some political rights, and first of all, of course, the right to think as he pleases and to say what he thinks. Such a task amounts in practice to a "political revolution", and the experience of Western Europe has clearly "shown" all anarchists that such revolutions have not brought, do not and cannot bring any benefit to the people. As for

* See *Das Kapital,* 2. Auflage, S. 607-08.[14]

** Let us simply remind our reader of the objection made to Proudhon by Rittinghausen. "Power, government and all its forms," said the tireless propagandist of the theory of direct popular legislation, "are only *varieties* of the *species* that is called: *interference by society in people's relations with things and, consequently, with one another....* I call on M. Proudhon to throw into my face, as the result of his intellectual labour, the following conclusion: 'No, there must be no such interference by society in people's relations with things and, consequently, with one another! '" See *Législation directe par le peuple et ses adversaires,* pp. 194-95. Rittinghausen thought that "to pose the question in this way means to solve it", for "M. Proudhon himself admits the *necessity for such interference*". But he did not foresee that the pupils would go much further than the teacher and that the theory of anarchy would degenerate, finally, into a theory of "social amorphism". The anarchists of today recognise no interference by society in the relations of individuals, as they have repeatedly stated in certain of their publications.

the consideration that the people must be educated politically by taking part in their country's public life, that could not be put into practice, if only for the reason that the anarchists consider, as we have already seen, that such participation is not education, but perversion of the popular masses: it develops in them "belief in the state" and therefore the tendency to statehood, or as the late M. A. Bakunin would have said, "infects them with its official and social venom, and, in any case, distracts them at least for a short time from what is now the only useful and salutary matter—from revolt."* And at the same time, according to the philosophy of history of our "rebels", it appeared that the Russian people had shown its anti-state tendency by a whole series of large and small movements and could therefore be considered mature enough politically. So down with all "dabbling in politics"! Let us help the people in its anti-state struggle. Let us unite its dispersed efforts in one revolutionary stream—and then the awkward edifice of the state will crash, opening by its fall a new era of social freedom and economic equality! These few words expressed the whole programme of our "rebels".

In this sketchy review of the programmes of the different groups of Russian revolutionaries we must not forget that the views according to which "all constitutions" were only more or less unprofitable contracts with the devil, as old F. H. Jacobi put it—such views, we say, were typical not only of the Narodniks and anarchists. If the reader knows about Frederick Engels' polemic with P. Tkachov,** he will probably remember that the editor of *Nabat,*[16] who disagreed with the Bakuninists on the question of practical struggle, was in perfect agreement with them on their basic views about the social and political condition of our country. He looked at it through the same prism of Russian exceptionalism and the "inborn communist tendencies of the Russian people".*** Like a genuine Blanquist[17] he did not deny "politics", of course, but he understood it exclusively as a plot whose purpose is to seize state power. This purpose, it seems, occupied the whole field of vision of our Blanquists of that time and led them to many contradictions. To remain consistent they had to admit that their activity could be useful to the cause of progress only in the exceptional case that the blow they dealt would not deviate a hair's breadth from its target. If their planned seizure of power is a failure, if their plot is discovered or the revolutionary government is overthrown by the liberal party, the Russian people, far from

*See M. A. Bakunin's extremely interesting and typical pamphlet *Science and the Vital Cause of the Revolution.*

** See "Offener Brief an Herrn Fr. Engels".[15]

*** To be persuaded of this one needs but to compare the "Letter to Frederick Engels" just referred to with Bakunin's pamphlet quoted above.

winning anything, will risk losing much. The last of the supposed cases is particularly disastrous. The liberals will establish a strong government which will be far more difficult to fight than modern "absolutely absurd" and "absurdly absolute" monarchy, while "the fire of economic progress" will destroy the radical bases of the people's life. Under its influence exchange will develop, capitalism will consolidate itself, the very principle of the village commune will be destroyed—in a word, the river of time will wash away the stone from which the communist heaven is within hand's reach. In cases of failure the Russian Blanquists would be bound to do terrible damage to the cause of popular emancipation and thus fall into the tragic position of William Tell, who had to risk the life of his own son. And as they have hardly distinguished themselves by the skill of the mythic Swiss "seditionary", the Russian people would not shout to them:

*Shoot! I fear not!* [18]

if it adopted their view on the "radical bases" of its life and had been invited to give its opinion about their programme.

Such a narrow and hopeless philosophy of Russian history was bound to lead logically to the amazing conclusion that Russia's economic backwardness was a most reliable ally of the revolution and that stagnation was to be blazoned as the first and only paragraph of our "minimum programme". "Every day brings us new enemies, creates new social factors hostile to us," we read in the first, November, issue of *Nabat* for 1875. "Fire is creeping up to our state forms, too. Now these are dead, lifeless. Economic progress will stir life in them, will breathe into them a new spirit, will give them the strength and the fortitude which they have so far lacked", and so forth. But if Joshua succeeded, as the Bible relates, in stopping the sun "for ten degrees", the time of miracles has passed and there is not a single party which could shout: "Stop, productive forces! Do not move, capitalism! " History pays as little attention to the fears of revolutionaries as to the jeremiads of reaction. "Economic progress" does its work without waiting for the anarchists or the Blanquists to put their intentions into practice. Every factory founded in Petersburg, every new wage-worker employed by a Yaroslavl handicraftsman strengthens the "flame of progress", which is supposed to be fatal to the revolution, and consequently decreases the probability of popular victory. Can such a view of the mutual relations of the various social forces in Russia be called revolutionary? We do not think so. In order to make themselves revolutionary in substance and not in name alone, the Russian anarchists, Narodniks and Blanquists should first of all have revolutionised their own heads, and to do so they should have learned to understand the course of historical develop-

ment and been able to lead it instead of asking old mother history to mark time while they laid new, straighter and better beaten roads for her.

The *Vperyod* group understood the immaturity and erroneousness of the outlooks just expounded, and there was a time when it could have obtained dominating intellectual influence among our revolutionaries. That was the time when practical experience had shaken the foundations of the old anarchist Narodism and all its supporters felt that their programme needed to be seriously reconsidered. Then a consistent criticism of all its theoretical and practical principles could have made the impending turn in the movement still more decisive and irrevocable. The *Vperyod* group could most conveniently have undertaken that criticism; maintaining almost entirely the standpoint of the Social-Democrats, they were completely free from all Narodnik traditions. But in order to be successful, their criticism should *not have condemned, but elucidated and generalised* the vital requirements of Russian life which were more and more driving our revolutionaries on to the road of political struggle. And yet the *Vperyod* group rejected "politics" just as resolutely as the anarchists. I admit that they did not think socialism to be incompatible with interference in the political life of the bourgeois state, and they fully approved of the programme of West European Social-Democracy. But they presumed that in the modern state "founded on law" the possibility of openly organising the working class into a political party of its own is bought at too high a price—by the final victory of the bourgeoisie and the deterioration of the workers' condition corresponding to the epoch of capitalism. They forgot that in appraising this situation one must take into account not only the distribution of the national income, but also *the whole organisation of production and exchange;* not only *the average quantity* of products consumed by the workers, but also the *form* which those products take*; not only the *degree* of exploitation, but also, in particular, *its form*; not only *the fact of the enslavement* of the working masses, but also *the ideas* and *concepts* which emerge or may emerge in the head of the worker under the influence of this fact.** They would hardly have agreed that the factory worker was bound to be more receptive to socialism than the temporarily bound peasant; still less would they have admitted that the transition, for instance, from natural economy to money economy increases the possibility

* i.e., whether they appear as commodities or are directly consumed by the producer's family, his master, and finally, the state, without ever reaching the market.

** We request that it be borne in mind that we are talking not of the editorial board of the journal *Vperyod,*[19] but of the supporters of that publication working in Russia.

of a conscious movement of the working masses for their own economic emancipation. The philosophical and historical parts of Marx's teaching remained for them an unread chapter in their favourite book; they believed too much in the omnipotent influence of their propaganda to seek support for it in the objective conditions of social life. And like the socialists of the utopian period, they held that the whole future of their country, including the social revolution, could be achieved by that propaganda. Posing the question in this way, they could have said with the anarchists, parodying Proudhon's well-known saying: la révolution est au-dessus de la politique. But that was just the reason why they could not get our movement out of the state of inertia it had got into at the end of the seventies owing to the rejection of all political struggle, on the one hand, and the impossibility, on the other, of creating a working-class party of any strength under contemporary political conditions.

The honour of giving new scope to our movement belongs beyond dispute to Narodnaya Volya. Everybody still recalls the attacks that the Narodnaya Volya trend drew upon itself. The writer of these lines himself belonged to the resolute opponents of this trend, and although he perfectly admits now that the struggle for political freedom has become a burning issue for modern Russia, he is still far from sharing all the views expressed in Narodnaya Volya publications.[20] That does not prevent him, however, from acknowledging that in the disputes which took place in the Zemlya i Volya organisation about the time of its split,[21] the Narodnaya Volya members were perfectly right as long as they did not go beyond our practical experience. That experience was already then leading to amazing and completely unexpected conclusions, although we did not dare to draw them precisely because of their unexpectedness. Attempts at the practical struggle "against the state" should already then have led fundamentally to the thought that the Russian "rebel" was compelled by the insuperable force of circumstances to direct his agitation not against the state generally, but only against the *absolute* state, to fight not the idea of state, but the idea of bureaucracy, not for the full economic emancipation of the people, but for the removal of the burdens imposed on the people by the tsarist autocracy. Of course, the agrarian question lay at the root of all or nearly all manifestations of popular dissatisfaction. It could not be otherwise among an agricultural population, where the "power of the land" is felt in absolutely the whole make-up and needs of private and social life. This agrarian question kept crying out for a solution, but it did not rouse *political* discontent. The peasants waited calm and confident for this question to be solved from above: they "rebelled" not for a redistribution of the land, but against

oppression by the administration, against the excessive burdens of the taxation system, against the Asiatic way in which arrears were collected, and so on and so forth. The formula which applied to a large number of the cases of active protest was the "legal state", not "Land and Freedom" (Zemlya i Volya) as it seemed to everybody at the time. But if that was so, and if revolutionaries considered themselves obliged to take part in the scattered and ill-considered struggle of isolated communes against the absolute monarchy, was it not time they understood the meaning of their own efforts and directed them with greater purposefulness? Was it not time for them to call all the progressive virile forces of Russia to the struggle and, having found a more general expression for it, to attack absolutism in the very centre of its organisation? In answering these questions in the affirmative, the members of Narodnaya Volya were only summing up the revolutionary experience of previous years; in raising the banner of political struggle, they only showed that they were not afraid of the conclusions and consciously continued to follow the road which we had taken although we had an erroneous idea of where it led to. "Terrorism" grew quite logically out of our "rebelliousness".

But with the appearance of Narodnaya Volya, the logical development of our revolutionary movement was already entering a phase in which it could no longer be satisfied with the Narodnik theories of the good old time, i.e., a time innocent of political interests. Examples of theory being outgrown by practice are not rare in the history of human thought in general and of revolutionary thought in particular. When revolutionaries introduce some change or other into their tactics or recast their programme one way or another, often they do not even suspect what a serious test they are giving the teachings generally acknowledged among them. Many of them indeed perish in prison or on the gallows, fully confident that they have worked in the spirit of those teachings, whereas in substance they represent new tendencies which took root in the old theories but have already outgrown them and are ready to find new theories to express them. So it has been with us since the Narodnaya Volya trend consolidated. From the standpoint of the old Narodnik theories, this trend could not stand criticism. Narodism had a sharply negative attitude to any idea of the state; Narodnaya Volya counted on putting its social-reform plans into practice with the help of the state machine. Narodism refused to have anything to do with "politics"; Narodnaya Volya saw in "democratic political revolution" the most reliable "means of social reform". Narodism based its programme on the so-called "ideals" and demands of the peasant population; Narodnaya Volya had to address itself mainly to the urban and industrial population, and consequently to give an incomparably larger place

in its programme to the interests of that population. Briefly, in reality, the Narodnaya Volya trend was the complete and all-round denial of Narodism, and as long as the disputing parties appealed to the fundamental propositions of the latter, the "innovators" were completely in the wrong: their practical work was in irreconcilable contradiction with their theoretical views. It was necessary completely to reconsider these views, so as to give Narodnaya Volya's programme singleness of purpose and consistency; the practical revolutionary activity of its supporters had to be at least *accompanied* by a theoretical revolution in the minds of our socialists; in blowing up the Winter Palace we had at the same time to blow up our old anarchic and Narodnik traditions.[22] But here, too, the "course of ideas" lagged behind the "course of things" and it is still difficult to foresee when it will catch up at last. Unable to make up their minds to break with Narodism, the new group was obliged to have recourse to fictions which brought with them at least a semblance of a solution of the contradictions inherent in their programme. The idea of Russian exceptionalism received a new elaboration, and whereas previously it had led to the complete rejection of politics, it now turned out that the exceptionalism of Russian social development consisted precisely in economic questions being and having to be solved in our country by means of state interference. The extremely widespread ignorance here in Russia of the economic history of the West provided the reason why nobody was amazed at "theories" of this kind. The period of capitalist accumulation in Russia was contrasted with the period of capitalist production in the West,[23] and the inevitable dissimilarity between these two phases of economic development was cited as a most convincing proof of, first, our exceptionalism and, second, the appropriateness of the "Narodnaya Volya programme" determined by that exceptionalism.

Need it be added that our revolutionary writers, like the majority of Russian writers generally, considered the "West" from the standpoint of the Jewish boy in Weinberg's well-known story. To this poor schoolboy the whole world seemed as though it were divided into two equal parts: "Russia and abroad", notable points of distinction existing for him only between these two "halves" of the globe, but "abroad" seemed to him a completely homogeneous whole. Russian writers, propagandists of "exceptionalism", introduced only one new thing into that clever geographical classification: they divided "abroad" into East and West, and, not stopping long to think, began to compare the latter with our "glorious state", which was ascribed the role of a kind of "Middle Empire". The historical development of Italy was thus identified with that of France and no distinction was seen between England's economic policy and Prussia's; Colbert's activity was lumped

together with Richard Cobden's and the peculiarly "patriotic" physiognomy of Friedrich List was lost in the crowd of "West European" political economists who followed Turgot's advice and tried "to forget that in the world there are states separated by frontiers and organised in different ways". Just as all cats appear grey and resemble one another perfectly in the dark, so the social relations of the various states in the "West" lost all distinction in the reflected light of our exceptionalism. One thing was evident: the "Franks" had already "gone bourgeois" long ago, whereas the "brave Russians" had preserved the "primitive" innocence and were advancing to their salvation as a chosen people along the road of exceptionalism. To reach the promised land they only had to keep unswervingly to that path of exceptionalism and not be surprised that the Russian socialists' programmes contradicted the scientific principles of West European socialism and sometimes their own premises!

A typical sample of the fictions quickly thought out to conform Narodnaya Volya's practical programme with Narodnik theories was the famous prophecy that if only we managed to achieve universal suffrage, 90 per cent of the deputies in the future Russian Constituent Assembly would be supporters of the social revolution. Here the theory of our exceptionalism reached the limit beyond which it was threatened with ruin by plain common sense. The Narodniks of the "old faith" firmly held to their dogma of exceptionalism but all the same admitted that this exceptionalism still needed some finishing touches. Some found that the Russian people still had a too embryonic bump ... sorry! —feeling of bravery and independence; others strove to put the exceptionalist sentiment of the Russian people into practice in the form of a no less original revolutionary organisation. But they all equally acknowledged the necessity for preliminary work among the people. Narodnaya Volya went further. In the leading articles of the very first issues of its journal it began to develop the thought that such work is, first, fruitless ("wasting our energy beating about the people like a fish on the ice"[24]) and, secondly, superfluous, because 90 per cent of the deputies sympathising with the social revolution are more than enough to carry out the aspirations of the Russian Narodniks. Narodnaya Volya's programme could not have given itself a Narodnik character otherwise than by carrying to absurd extremes all the typical features of the Narodnik world outlook.

This is what constitutes the negative service of the fictions of Narodnaya Volya. They aroused the critical thought of the Russian revolutionaries by presenting to them in an exaggerated form the "exceptional" features of their Narodnik programme. But one can hardly say anything about the positive service of these

fictions. They temporarily strengthened the energy of the fighters, who needed a theoretical foundation for their practical work, but, being strung hastily together, they did not stand the slightest impact of serious criticism, and by their fall they compromised the cause of the struggle waged under their banner. Having dealt the death-blow to all the traditions of orthodox Narodism by its practical activity and having done so much for the development of the revolutionary movement in Russia, Narodnaya Volya cannot find a justification for itself—nor should it seek one—outside modern scientific socialism. But to adopt this new standpoint it must make a thorough review of its programme, for the theoretical errors and gaps in that programme could not but give it a definite one-sidedness in practice.

Before saying in which sense this review must be undertaken, let us endeavour, according to our plan, to elucidate scientific socialism's attitude to the political movements of the working class.

## II

But what is scientific socialism? Under that name we understand the communist teaching which began to take shape at the beginning of the forties out of utopian socialism under the strong influence of Hegelian philosophy on the one side, and of classical economics on the other; the teaching which first really explained the whole course of human cultural development, pitilessly shattered the bourgeois theoreticians' sophisms and, "armed with all the knowledge of its age", came out in defence of the proletariat. This teaching not only showed with complete clarity how unsound scientifically are the opponents of socialism, but pointing out the errors, it at the same time explained them historically and thus, as Haym once said of Hegel's philosophy, "tied to its triumphal chariot every opinion it had defeated".[25] As Darwin enriched biology with his amazingly simple and yet strictly scientific theory of the origin of species, so also the founders of scientific socialism showed us in the development of the productive forces and their struggle against backward "social conditions of production" the great principle of the variation of *species of social organisation.* We hardly need to say whom we consider as the founders of this socialism. This merit belongs indisputably to Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, whose doctrine stands in exactly the same relation to the modern revolutionary movement in civilised humanity as, in the words of one of them, advanced German philosophy stood in its time to the emancipation movement in Germany; it is its *head,* and the proletariat is its *heart.* But it goes without saying that the development of scientific socialism is not complete and can no

more stop at the works of Engels and Marx than the theory of the origin of species could be considered as finally elaborated with the publication of the principal works of the English biologist.The establishment of the basic propositions of the new teaching must be followed by the detailed elaboration of questions pertaining to it, an elaboration which will supplement and complete the revolution carried out in science by the authors of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party.** There is not a single branch of sociology which would not acquire a new and extraordinarily vast field of vision by adopting their philosophical and historical views. The beneficial influence of those views is already beginning to be felt in the fields of history, law and so-called primitive culture. But this philosophical and historical aspect of modern socialism is still too little known in Russia, and therefore we do not consider it superfluous to quote a few excerpts here, in order to acquaint our readers with it in Marx's own words.

Incidentally, although scientific socialism traces its genealogy "from Kant and Hegel", it is nevertheless the most deadly and resolute opponent of idealism. It drives it out of its last refuge—sociology—in which it was received with such delight by the positivists. Scientific socialism presupposes the "materialist conception of history", i.e., it explains the spiritual history of humanity by the development of social relations (among other things under the influence of surrounding nature). From this point of view, as also from that of Vico, "the course of ideas corresponds to the course of things", and not inversely. The principal cause of this or that make-up of social relations, this or that direction in their development, is the condition of the productive forces and the economic structure of society corresponding to them. "In the social production of their life," says Marx,** "men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum-total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Later, Messrs. the "critics of Marx" reproached us, the "orthodox", of revolting against every attempt to develop Marx's views further. The reader sees that I showed no tendency to such a revolt. But it goes without saying that, as a pupil of Marx who understands the great significance of his theory, I had to revolt against every attempt to replace some propositions of Marxism by old, long obsolete bourgeois "dogmas". And I fulfilled that obligation to the best of my ability.

** See *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekon.*, Vorwort, S. IV-VI. [26]

consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.... Legal relations as well as forms of state are to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life, the sum-total of which Hegel, following the example of the Englishmen and Frenchmen of the eighteenth century, combines under the name of 'civil society', that, however, the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy.... At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed.... No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself.

"Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation."

It is now understandable why Marx and Engels reacted with such scornful derision to the "true socialists" in Germany at the end of the forties,[27] who adopted a negative attitude to the German bourgeoisie's struggle against absolutism, "preaching to the masses that they had nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by this bourgeois movement".[28] The historical teaching of Marx and Engels is the genuine "algebra of the revolution", as Herzen once called Hegel's philosophy.[29] That is why Marx and Engels sympathised with "every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things"; and for the same reason they warmly sympathised with the Russian movement, which made Russia, as they said, the vanguard of the revolution in Europe.[30]

But despite all their clarity and unambiguousness, Marx's views gave occasion for many misunderstandings in the field of revolutionary theory and practice. Thus, it is often said in our country that the theories of scientific socialism, are inapplicable to Russia because they have their root in West European economic relations. To Marx's teaching is attributed the absurd conclusion that Russia must go through exactly the same phases of historical and economic development as the West. Influenced by the conviction that

this conclusion is inevitable, more than one Russian philosopher, familiar neither with Marx nor with the history of Western Europe, entered the lists against the author of *Capital* and accused him of narrow and stereotyped views. This, of course, was tilting at windmills. Our Don Quixotes did not understand that the history of West European relations was used by Marx only as the basis of the *history of capitalist production,* which emerged and developed precisely in that part of the world. Marx's general philosophical and historical views stand in exactly the same relation to modern Western Europe as to Greece and Rome, India and Egypt. They embrace the entire cultural history of humanity and can be inapplicable to Russia only if they are generally untenable. It goes without saying that neither the author of *Capital* nor his famous friend and colleague lost sight of the economic peculiarities of any particular country; only in those peculiarities do they seek the explanation of all a country's social, political and intellectual movements. That they do not ignore the significance of our village commune is revealed by the fact that as recently as January 1882 they did not consider it possible to make any decisive forecast concerning its destiny. In the preface to our translation of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Geneva, 1882)[31] they even say explicitly that under certain conditions the Russian village commune may "pass directly to the higher form of communist common ownership". These circumstances are, in their opinion, closely connected with the course of the revolutionary movement in the west of Europe and in Russia. "If the Russian revolution," they say, "becomes the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that both complement each other, the present Russian common ownership of land may serve as the starting-point for a communist development." (*Manifesto of the Communist Party,* VIII.) It will hardly occur to a single Narodnik to deny that the solution of the village commune question depends on such a condition. Hardly anybody will assert that the oppression by the modern state is favourable to the development or even to the mere maintenance of the commune. And in exactly the same way hardly anyone who understands the significance of international relations in the economic life of modern civilised societies can deny that the development of the Russian village commune "into a higher form of communist common ownership" is closely linked with the destiny of the working-class movement in the West. It thus turns out that nothing in Marx's views on Russia contradicts the most obvious reality, and the absurd prejudices concerning his extreme "Occidentalism" have not the slightest trace of reasonable foundation.

But there is another misunderstanding which directly concerns a question interesting us—the significance of political struggle in

the reorganisation of social relations—and takes root in an erroneous understanding of Marx's view of the role of the economic factor in the human cultural development. This view has often been interpreted by many in the sense that the author of *Capital* attributes only the slightest importance to the political structure of society, considering it as a secondary detail not worth attention and which, far from being the aim, cannot even be a means of fruitful activity. Even now, one not infrequently meets "Marxists" who ignore the political tasks of socialism on these very grounds. Economic relations, they say, are the basis of all social organisation. Changes in these relations are the cause of all political reorganisation. In order to free itself from capitalist oppression, the working class must bear in mind not the effect, but the cause, not the political, but the economic organisation of society. Political organisation will not bring the workers nearer to their goal, since political enslavement will continue as long as their economic dependence on the propertied classes is not removed. The *means* of struggle which the workers use must be brought into line with the *aim* of the struggle. An economic revolution can be achieved only by struggle on economic ground.

With a certain amount of consistency, "Marxism" understood in that way should have changed the socialists' views of the aims and the means of the social revolution and brought them back to Proudhon's famous formula: "political revolution is the aim, economic revolution, the means". In exactly the same way it should have brought the socialist-revolutionaries considerably nearer—at least in theory—to the followers of "conservative socialism" which so resolutely opposes independent political action on the part of the working class.[32] Rodbertus, the last honest and intelligent representative of this socialism, was unable to agree with Lassalle precisely because that celebrated agitator endeavoured to advance the German workers along the path of independent political activity. Not Marx, but Rodbertus, not *revolutionary,* but *conservative, monarchist* socialism denies the significance of "political admixtures to the economic aims" of the working class. And the conservatives know full well why they do so; but those who wish to conciliate the revolutionary movement of the working class with the rejection of "politics", those who attribute to Marx the practical tendencies of Proudhon or even of Rodbertus, show clearly that they do not understand the author of *Capital* or that they deliberately distort his teaching. We speak of deliberate distortion because a certain book by the Moscow Professor Ivanyukov is nothing but such a deliberate distortion of the consequences following from the basic propositions of scientific socialism.[33] This book shows

that our Russian *police* socialists are not averse to exploiting for their reactionary aims even a theory under whose banner the most revolutionary movement of our age is proceeding. This alone could make a detailed elucidation of modern socialism's *political* programme indispensable. We will now begin that elucidation, without, however, entering into a controversy with Messrs. Ivanyukov, for it is sufficient to bring out the true sense of a given theory in order to refute deliberate distortions of it. And besides, we are far more interested here in those revolutionaries who, for all the sincerity of their aspirations, are still permeated, although perhaps unconsciously, with anarchist teachings and are therefore prepared to see in Marx's works thoughts which are in place only in *The General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century.*[34] The criticism of the conclusions they draw from Marx's philosophical and historical views will logically take us on to the question of the so-called *seizure of power* and will show us how far they are right who see in that act a crime against the idea of human liberty, and also those who, on the contrary, see it as the Alpha and the Omega of the whole social-revolutionary movement.

Let us first consider what the concepts of cause and effect signify when applied to social relations.

If we push a billiard ball with the hand or a cue, it is set in motion; if we strike steel against a flint, a spark appears. In each of these cases it is very easy to determine which phenomenon acts as the cause and which is the effect. But the task is easy only because it is extremely simple. If instead of two isolated phenomena we take a process in which several phenomena or even several series of phenomena are observed simultaneously, the matter is more complicated. Thus, the burning of a candle is, relatively speaking, a fairly complicated process as a result of which light and heat are produced. Hence it would seem that we run no risk of error if we call the heat given off by the flame one of the effects of this chemical process. That is, indeed, the case to a certain extent. But if we contrived in some way to deprive the flame of the heat which it gives off, the combustion would immediately cease, for the process we are considering cannot take place at the ordinary temperature. Therefore, it would also be right to a certain extent to say that heat is the *cause* of combustion. In order not to deviate from the truth in one direction or the other we should say that heat, while it is the *effect* of combustion at a particular moment, is its *cause* the moment following. This means that when we speak of a combustion process lasting a certain time we must say that heat is *both* its *effect* and its *cause,* or, in other words, *neither effect nor cause,* but simply one of the phenomena arising from that process and constituting, in turn, a necessary condition for it. Let us take another example. Everybody, "even if he has not been

trained in a seminary", knows that what are called the vegetative processes of the human organism exert great influence on psychic phenomena. One mental disposition or other proves to be the *effect* of a particular physical condition of the organism. But once a certain mental disposition exists, the same vegetative processes are often influenced by it, and it thus becomes the *cause* of the particular changes in the physical condition of the organism. In order not to go wrong here in one direction or the other, we should say that the psychic phenomena and the vegetative life of the organism constitute two series of coexisting processes, each of which is influenced by the other. If a doctor were to ignore psychic influences on the grounds that man's mental disposition is the effect of the physical condition of his organism, we would infer that schoolboy logic had made him unfit for rational medical practice.

Social life is distinguished by still greater intricacy than the life of the individual organism. That is why the relativity of the concepts of cause and effect is more noticeable here. According to the teaching of classical economics, the size of wages is determined, on the average, by the level of the worker's primary requirements. This means that a given size of wages is the *effect* of a given condition of the worker's requirements. But these requirements, in turn, can grow only if there is a rise in wages, because otherwise there would not be sufficient cause to change their level. Consequently, a given size of wages is the *cause* of a given condition of the worker's requirements. One cannot get out of this logical circle by means of the schoolboy categories of cause and effect. We shall fall into it at every step in our sociological considerations if we forget that "cause and effect are conceptions which only hold good in their application to individual cases; but as soon as we consider the individual cases in their general connection with the universe as a whole, they run into each other, and they become confounded when we contemplate that universal action and reaction in which causes and effects are eternally changing places, so that what is effect here and now will be cause there and then, and vice versa". (Frederick Engels.)* [35]

Having made this reservation, let us endeavour to determine in what sense the causal connection between the economic relations and the political structure of a given society must be understood.

What does history teach us in this respect? It shows that whenever and wherever the process of economic development gave rise to a splitting of society into classes, the contradictions between the interests of those classes invariably led them to struggle for political domination. This struggle arose not only between the

* See *Herrn Eugen Dühring's Umwälz. der Wissensch.*, S. 6.

various strata of the dominating classes, but also between those classes, on the one hand, and the people, on the other, provided the latter was given conditions at all favourable to intellectual development. In the states of the ancient Orient we see the struggle between the soldiers and the priests; all the drama in the history of the ancient world is in the struggle between the aristocracy and the *demos,* the patricians and the plebeians; the Middle Ages bring forth the burghers, who strive to conquer political mastery within the bounds of their communes; finally, the present-day working class wages a political struggle against the bourgeoisie, which has achieved complete domination in the modern state. Always and everywhere, political power has been the lever by which a class, having achieved domination, has carried out the social upheaval necessary for its welfare and development. So as not to go too far afield, let us consider the history of the "third estate", the class that can look with pride at its past, full of brilliant achievements in all branches of life and thought. It will hardly occur to anybody to reproach the bourgeoisie with lack of tact or ability to attain its aims by the most appropriate means. Nor will anybody deny that its strivings have always had a quite definite economic character. But that did not prevent it from following the path of political struggle and political gains. Now by arms, now by peace treaties, sometimes for the republican independence of its towns, sometimes for the strengthening of royal power, the rising bourgeoisie waged a hard, uninterrupted struggle against feudalism for whole centuries, and long before the French Revolution it could proudly draw its enemies' attention to its successes. "The chances were different and the success varying in the great struggle of the burghers against the feudal lords," the historian says,* "and not only was the sum of privileges wrested from them by force or obtained by agreement not the same everywhere, but even when the political forms were the same there were different degrees of liberty and independence for the towns." Nevertheless, the sense of the movement was identical everywhere—it meant the beginning of the social emancipation of the third estate and the decline of the aristocracy, secular and ecclesiastical.** In general this movement brought the burghers "municipal independence, the right to elect all the local authorities, the

* See *Essai sur l'histoire du Tiers Etat,* par. Aug. Thierry, pp. 33-34.

** The supporters of feudalism understood full well the aims of the burghers and the connection between their political and their economic demands. "Commune is a new and detestable word," said Guibert, abbé de Nogent, "and here is what it means: those who have to pay tithes pay only once a year to their lord the rent they owe him. If they commit some offence, they are quit for the payment of a fine fixed by law, and as for the money levies usually made from serfs, they are entirely exempt from them." Laurent, *La féodalité et l'église,* p. 546.

exact fixing of duties", guaranteed the rights of the individual inside the town communes,* gave the bourgeoisie a more elevated position in the estate-based states of the "ancien régime", and finally, by a series of continuous gains, brought it to complete domination in modern society. Setting itself social and economic aims which were perfectly defined although they changed with time, and drawing means to continue the struggle from the advantages of the economic position which it had already attained, the bourgeoisie did not miss an opportunity of giving legal expression to the stages in economic progress which it had reached; on the contrary, it made just as skilful a use of each political gain for new conquests in the economic field. No further back than in the middle forties of this century the English Anti-Corn Law League, following Richard Cobden's clever plan, aimed at increasing its *political* influence in the shires in order to secure the abolition of the "monopoly" it hated and which, apparently, was exclusively *economic*.[36]

History is the greatest of dialecticians. If in the course of its progress, reason, as Mephistopheles says, is changed into irrationality and blessings become a plague, not less often in the historical process does an effect become a cause and a cause prove to be an effect. Arising from the economic relations of its time, the political might of the bourgeoisie in its turn served, and still serves, as an indispensable factor for the further development of those relations.

Now that the bourgeoisie is nearing the end of its historical role and that the proletariat is becoming the only representative of progressive strivings in society, we can observe a phenomenon similar to the one referred to above, but taking place in changed conditions. In all the advanced states of the civilised world, in Europe as well as America, the working class is entering the arena of political struggle and the more it is conscious of its economic tasks, the more resolutely it separates into a political party of its own. "As the existing political parties have always acted only in the interests of property-owners for the preservation of their economic privileges," we read in the programme of the North American Socialist Workers' Party, "the working class must organise into a big workers' party *to achieve political power in the state* and gain economic independence; for the emancipation of the working class can be effected only by the workers themselves."** The French Workers' Party expresses itself in the same spirit and in complete agreement with the programme of German

* The Statute of Liège established the principle of the inviolability of the home in the following forceful expression: *"The poor man is king in his home."* Laurent, *ibid.*, p. 548.

** Von Studnitz, *Nordamerikanische Arbeiterverhältnisse*, S. 353.

Social-Democracy, acknowledging that the proletariat must aspire to an economic revolution "by all means in its power, including universal franchise, thus transformed from a weapon of deceit, which it has been up to now, into a *weapon of emancipation*". The Spanish Workers' Party also strives to "conquer political power" in order to remove the obstacles in the way of the emancipation of the working class.*

In England, where, with the ending of the chartist movement, the struggle of the proletariat has been concentrated exclusively on the economic field, the political aspirations of the workers have begun to revive of late. Only a few years ago, the German economist Lujo Brentano noted with triumph in his book *Das Arbeitsverhältniss, etc.* the complete disappearance of the Social-Democratic trends in England, and philosophised profoundly and with true bourgeois self-satisfaction on the subject that "at present England again constitutes a *single* nation", that "the English workers of our time again form part of the great Liberal Party" and do not strive to seize state power in order, by means of it, "to reorganise society in their own interests" (p. 110).[37] The recently published *Manifesto* of the British Democratic Federation[38] shows that the bourgeois economist's joy was somewhat premature. The Democratic Federation aims at causing the exploited to break away politically from the exploiters and calls on the first of these "nations" precisely to seize state power for the purpose of reconstructing society in the interests of the workers. "The time has come," says the *Manifesto,* "when the mass of the people must necessarily take the management of matters which concern it in its own hands; at present, political and social power is the monopoly of people who live by the labour of their fellow-citizens. The landowners and capitalists who have control of the Upper House and have filled the Lower House aspire only to safeguard their own interests. Take your fate in your own hands, remove the rich parasites of these two groups and rely only on yourselves! " The *Manifesto* demands "*full franchise for all adult men and women*" in the United Kingdom, and other political reforms which "would only show that the men and women of this country have become the masters at home". Then comes a list—representing the immediate demands of the British Democratic Federation—of measures necessary for the development of a "healthy, independent and soundly educated generation, ready to organise the labour of each for the good of all and to *take control, ultimately, of the entire social and political machine of the state,* in which class differences and privileges will then cease to exist".

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* We quote this from B. Malon's *Le nouveau parti,* t. I, p. 15.

Thus, the British proletariat, too, is again entering on the path which the workers of other civilised states entered upon long ago.

But, as the bourgeoisie not only fought the aristocracy on the basis of already existing political relations, but aspired to reshape those relations in its own interests, so also the proletariat does not restrict its political programme to the seizure of the modern state machine. The conviction is more and more spreading among its members that "every order of things which determines the relations of citizens to one another and governs their labour and property relations corresponds to a particular form of government which is at the same time the means of implementing and preserving that order".* While the representative (monarchic or republican) system was the progeny of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat demands *direct popular legislation* as the only political form under which its social aspirations can be put into effect. This demand of the working class is among the first in the programme of Social-Democracy in all countries and is very closely related to all the other points in its programme.** In spite of Proudhon, the proletariat continues to see in the "political revolution" the most powerful means of achieving an economic revolution.

This testimony of history alone should incline us to think that the political tendencies of the various social classes are based on a correct practical instinct, and not on an erroneous theory. If, despite the complete dissimilarity in all other respects, all classes which wage a conscious struggle against their opponents begin at a definite stage in their development to strive to ensure for themselves political influence and later domination, it is clear that the political structure of society is a far from indifferent condition for their development. If, moreover, we see that not a single class which has achieved political domination has had cause to regret its interest in "politics", but on the contrary, that each one of them attained the highest, the culminating point of its development only after it had acquired political domination, then we must admit that the political struggle is an instrument of social reconstruction whose effectiveness is proved by history. Every teaching which runs counter to this historical induction loses a considerable part of its power of conviction, and if modern socialism were in fact to condemn the political striving of the working class as inexpedient, that would be sufficient reason not to call it scientific.

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* See *Sozialdemokratische Abhandlungen*, von M. Rittinghausen, drittes Heft, "Über die Nothwendigkeit der direkten Gesetzgebung durch das Volk", S. 3.

** See the programmes of the German and the North American Workers' parties. The *Manifesto* of the British Democratic Federation also demands "direct voting on all important questions".

Let us now check our induction by the deductive method, taking Marx's philosophical and historical views as the premises for our conclusions.

Imagine a society in which a particular class is completely dominant. It secured this domination thanks to the advantages of its economic position which, according to our premises, open before it the path to all other successes in social life. In its capacity as the *ruling* class it naturally reshapes social organisation to provide the most favourable conditions for its own existence and carefully removes from it all that can in any way weaken its influence. "Those in power, the mighty, in every period," Schäffle correctly notes, "are also the ones who create law and morality. They only apply the urge of self-preservation inherent in all when they exploit the consequences of their victory, install themselves as rulers at the top and endeavour to maintain domination hereditary as long as possible, as the means to a privileged situation and the exploitation and subjection of those who are not free.... There is hardly another section of positive law for which the dominating estates in every period have such great respect and for which they vindicate so much the character of 'eternal' institutions or even 'sacred' foundations of society as that which has consolidated and safeguards the right of their estate and the domination of their class."* And as long as the dominating class is the vehicle of the most progressive social ideals, the system it has set up will satisfy all the demands of social development. But as soon as the economic history of a particular society brings forward new elements of a progressive movement, as soon as the "productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto", the progressive role of the ruling class in question will be over. From a representative of progress it will become its sworn enemy and, of course, it will make use of the state machine for self-defence. In its hands political power will become the most powerful weapon of reaction. To free the road for the development of the productive forces of society it is necessary to remove the property relations which hinder that development, i.e., as Marx says, to carry out a social revolution. But that is impossible as long as legislative power is in the hands of the old order, in other words, as long as it safeguards the interests of the ruling class. It is therefore not astonishing that innovators, i.e., representatives of the oppressed class or classes, will strive to wrest this terrible weapon out of the hands of their opponents and turn it against them. The very logic of things will bring them out on to

* See Schäffle, *Bau und Leben des sozialen Körpers*, B. III, S. 91 und 102.

the road of political struggle and seizure of state power, although they set themselves the task of an economic revolution. Lassalle uttered a profound truth when he said in the preface to his *System of Acquired Rights:* "...where juridical right as private right seems to become entirely detached from the political element, *it is far more political than the political element,* for there it is the *social* element".*

In practical life, of course, things are far from going as fast as one might suppose, judging *a priori.* Only gradually does the oppressed class become clear about the connection between its *economic* position and its *political* role in the state. For a long time it does not understand even its economic task to the full. The individuals composing it wage a hard struggle for their daily subsistence without even thinking which aspects of the social organisation they owe their wretched condition to. They try to avoid the blows aimed at them without asking where they come from or by whom, in the final analysis, they are aimed. As yet they have no class consciousness and there is no guiding idea in their struggle against individual oppressors. The oppressed class does not yet exist *for itself;* in time it *will be* the advanced class in society, but it is not yet *becoming* such. Facing the consciously organised power of the ruling class are separate individual strivings of isolated individuals or isolated groups of individuals. Even now, for example, we frequently enough meet a worker who hates the particularly intensive exploiter but does not yet suspect that the whole class of exploiters must be fought and the very possibility of exploitation of man by man removed.

Little by little, however, the process of generalisation takes effect, and the oppressed begin to be conscious of themselves as a class. But their understanding of the specific features of their class position still remains too one-sided: the springs and motive forces of the social mechanism as a whole are still hidden from their mind's eye. The class of exploiters appears to them as the simple sum of individual employers, not connected by the threads of political *organisation.* At this stage of development it is not yet clear in the minds of the oppressed—any more than in Professor Lorenz von Stein's—what connection exists between "society" and "state". State power is presumed to stand above the antagonisms of the classes; its representatives appear to be the natural judges and conciliators of the hostile sides. The oppressed class has complete trust in them and is extremely surprised when its requests for help remain unanswered by them. Without dwelling on particular examples, we will merely note that such confusion of concepts

* See *Das System der erworbenen Rechte,* Leipzig, 1880, erster Theil, Vorrede, S. VII.

was displayed even recently by the British workers, who waged quite an energetic struggle in the economic field and yet considered it possible to belong to one of the bourgeois political parties.

Only in the next and last stage of development does the oppressed class come to a thorough realisation of its position. It now realises the connection between society and state, and it does not appeal for the curbing of its exploiters to those who constitute the political organ of that exploitation. It knows that the state is a fortress serving as the bulwark and defence of its oppressors, a fortress which the oppressed can and must capture and reorganise for their own defence and which they cannot bypass, counting on its neutrality. Relying only on themselves, the oppressed begin to understand that "*political* self-help", as Lange says, "is the most important of all forms of *social* self-help". They then fight for political domination in order to help themselves by changing the existing social relations and adapting the social system to the conditions of their own development and welfare. Neither do they, of course, achieve domination immediately; they only gradually become a formidable power precluding all thought of resistance by their opponents. For a long time they fight only for concessions, demand only such reforms as would give them not domination, but merely the possibility to develop and mature for future domination; reforms which would satisfy the most urgent and immediate of their demands and extend, if only slightly, the sphere of their influence over the country's social life. Only by going through the hard school of the struggle for separate little pieces of enemy territory does the oppressed class acquire the persistence, the daring, and the development necessary for the decisive battle. But once it has acquired those qualities it can look at its opponents as at a class finally condemned by history; it need have no doubt about its victory. What is called the revolution is only the last act in the long drama of revolutionary class struggle which becomes conscious only insofar as it becomes a *political* struggle.*

The question is now: would it be expedient for the socialists to hold the workers back from "politics" on the grounds that the political structure of society is determined by its economic relations? Of course not! They would be depriving the workers of a fulcrum in their struggle, they would be depriving them of the possibility of concentrating their efforts and aiming their blows at the social organisation set up by the exploiters. Instead, the wor-

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] These lines were written 15 years before Bernstein came forward as a "critic" of Marx. Let the reader judge for himself whether the "critic" and his numerous fellow-thinkers are right when they reproach us, the "orthodox", with understanding the revolution of the proletariat as a simple and almost instantaneous "catastrophe".

kers would have to wage guerrilla warfare against individual exploiters, or at most separate groups of those exploiters, who would always have on their side the organised power of the state. This was the kind of mistake the Russian socialists from among the so-called intelligentsia made when they censured the Northern Union of Russian Workers (in No. 4 of *Zemlya i Volya*) for having included certain political demands in its programme.[39] The same mistake was repeated by *Zerno*[40] when it recommended that the workers should wage the struggle on economic ground, fight for a shorter working day, higher wages, etc., that they shoud kill spies and particularly hated foremen and employers, but did not say a word about the *political* tasks of the Russian workers. This lack of synthesis in our socialists' revolutionary views and programmes could not fail to have the most damaging effect on the results of their work. By preserving the political indifference of the workers as a most important sign of the radical nature of their economic demands, we gave indirect support to modern absolutism. Moreover, by cutting short our programmes at the very point where we should have summed up politically the social demands of the working class, we were diminishing the practical significance of those programmes in the eyes of the workers, who understood better than we did the utter futility of the divided struggle against individual exploiters. Fortunately, our working-class movement very soon outgrew this first phase of its development. The answer given by the Northern Union of Russian Workers to the editors of *Zemlya i Volya* (see No. 5 of that publication) showed that at least the members of the Union had understood earlier than our "intelligentsia" how inappropriate was this "political non-interference" of the working class.[41]

All that is very well, some readers may say, but your arguments are not to the point. We do not deny, they may argue, that it would be *useful* for the working class to gain political influence and take state power in its own hands; we only maintain that at present that is *impossible* for many reasons. Your reference to the history of the bourgeoisie proves nothing, for the position of the proletariat in bourgeois society is nothing like that of the third estate in the states of the "ancien régime"! Even Marx admits the difference and formulates it as follows in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: "The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth in bourgeois countries."[42] There is

nothing surprising in the fact that every progressive step made by the bourgeoisie in the domain of production and exchange was accompanied by the "corresponding political conquests"; everybody knows that improvement in the material welfare of any particular class is accompanied by the growth of its political influence. But the very fact that the political gains of the bourgeoisie presupposed an increase in its wealth makes us abandon any hopes in the political movements of the working class. Falling deeper and deeper into "pauperism", the workers apparently must lose even the little influence which they won in the struggle for the interests of the bourgeoisie, "fighting the enemies of their enemies—the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois", and so on. The political struggle of the working class is purposeless because it is doomed to failure by virtue of the economic position of the workers.

For all its inner untenability, this objection seems at first glance so decisive as not to be passed over in silence. It is the last argument of those supporters of the theory of political non-interference who consider themselves followers of Marx.* Therefore, if it is disposed of, the theory of non-interference falls away altogether and the political tasks of modern socialism stand out in their true light.

The working class's share in the national product is constantly diminishing—there is not a shade of doubt about that. The working class is becoming poorer not only relatively, but absolutely too; its income, far from increasing in the same progression as those of other classes in society, is falling; the real wages of the modern proletarian (the quantity of consumer goods falling to his share) are less than the worker's pay was five hundred years ago[43] —this has been proved by the studies of Rogers, Du Châtelet[44] and others.** But it by no means follows from this that the economic conditions are at present less favourable to the political

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] This will seem paradoxical, but in actual fact the theory of political non-interference of the working class was formulated by Bakunin *as a conclusion from the materialist explanation of history*. Bakunin, who was an ardent supporter of this explanation, reasoned as follows: if the political system of every given society is based on its economy, then *political* revolution is unnecessary, it will itself be the result of the *economic* revolution. This man, once a pupil of Hegel and who, it seems, should have refined his logic, just could not understand that not only every particular *ready-made* political system is a result of economics, but so is every new political movement which, springing from the given economic relations, serves in turn as a necessary *instrument* for their reconstruction. All *the most serious* objections of the *anarchists* against the *Social-Democrats* are still founded on this *misunderstanding*.

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] This concerns the "theory of impoverishment" which caused such a stir at the heyday of *Bernsteinians*. On this subject, see my "Criticism of Our Critics." in Nos. 2 and 3 of *Zarya*.[45]

movement of the working class than they were in the fourteenth century. We have already said that in thus appraising the economic conditions in a particular country one must take into account not only the distribution of the national income, but mainly the organisation of production and the mode of exchange of products. The strength of the rising bourgeoisie lay not so much in its wealth as in the social and economic progress of which it was once the vehicle. It was not the increase in its income that impelled it to take the path of revolutionary struggle and guaranteed the growth of its political influence; it was the contradiction between the productive forces it brought into existence and the conditions under which the production and exchange of products took place in feudal society. Having once become the representative of progressive demands in that society, the bourgeoisie rallied all the dissatisfied elements under its banner and led them to fight against a regime which the overwhelming majority of the people hated. Not money, but the immaturity of the working class gave the bourgeoisie the leading role in that emancipation movement. Its wealth and its already fairly high social position were naturally indispensable for the fulfilment of this role; but what was that indispensability determined by? First of all by the fact that the bourgeoisie could not destroy the old order without assistance from the lower strata of the population. In this its wealth helped it by giving it influence over the masses which were to fight for its domination. Had the bourgeoisie not been rich it would have had no influence, and without influence over the people it would not have defeated the aristocracy; for the bourgeoisie was strong not of itself, but by virtue of the power which it had already mastered and which it commanded thanks to its capital. The question now arises, *is it possible* for the proletariat to have such influence over another class of the population, and *does it need* such influence to be victorious? It is enough to ask the question and we hear a resolute "No! " from everybody who understands the present position of the working class. It is *impossible* for the proletariat to influence lower classes in the way the bourgeoisie once influenced it, for the simple reason that there are no classes below it; the proletariat itself is the very lowest economic group in modern society. *Nor is there any need* for it to aim at such influence, because it is at the same time the *most numerous* section in society, because precisely the proletariat, with other sections of the working population, has always been the agent whose intervention has decided political issues. We say the most numerous class because all "the other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product. The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bour-

geoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore ... conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat".[46]

Formerly the working class was victorious under the command of the bourgeoisie, and it only naïvely wondered at the strange fact that nearly all the difficulties in the struggle fell to its lot while nearly all the advantages and honours of victory went to its ally. Now it is not satisfied with this auxiliary role and it turns against the bourgeoisie the very strength which once secured the latter's victory. But that strength is now much greater. It has grown and is continuing to grow in the same measure as the concentration of capital and the spread of large-scale production. Besides, it has grown in the same measure as the political experience of the working class, which the bourgeoisie itself brought into the social arena. Can there be any doubt that the proletariat, which, when led by the bourgeoisie, was once strong enough to destroy feudal absolutism, will in time be strong enough to smash the political domination of the bourgeoisie on its own initiative? The bourgeoisie was able to defeat feudalism only thanks to its wealth, the proletariat will defeat the bourgeoisie for the very reason that its lot—"pauperism"—is becoming the lot of an ever-increasing portion of modern society.

But in the history of its development the bourgeoisie received from its wealth another and indeed extremely "*productive* service", as its economists would say. It received knowledge and became the most advanced and educated section of society at that time. Can the proletariat acquire that knowledge, can it be at the same time the poorest and the most advanced of all classes in society? Without this condition political domination is out of the question for the proletariat, for without knowledge there is no strength.

We have already said that the bourgeoisie itself began the political education of the proletariat. It took care of the education of the proletariat as much as this was necessary for the struggle against its own enemies. It shattered the proletariat's religious beliefs whenever this was required to weaken the political significance of the clergy; it broadened the proletariat's legal outlook wherever it needed to oppose "natural" law to the written law of the estate-based state. Now the economic question is on the agenda and political economy now plays—as a very clever German*

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] i.e., Rodbertus.

said—just as important a role as natural law played in the eighteenth century. Will the bourgeoisie agree to be the working class's leader in the investigation of the relations between labour and capital, that question of questions of the whole of social economy? It is reluctant to take upon itself even that role, advantageous as it is to itself, because merely to raise that question means to threaten the bourgeoisie's domination. But *can* it fulfil that role, if only in the way it once did in regard to religion and law? No, it cannot. Blinded by their class interests, its representatives in science lost long ago all ability to investigate social questions objectively, scientifically. Therein lies the whole secret of the present decay of bourgeois economics. Ricardo was the last economist who, though still a bourgeois in heart and soul, was intelligent enough to understand the diametrical opposition of interests between labour and capital. Sismondi was the last bourgeois economist who had enough feeling to deplore that antagonism sincerely. After them, the *general* theoretical studies of bourgeois economists in the main lost all scientific significance. To convince oneself of this it is sufficient to recall the history of political economy since Ricardo and to look through the works of Bastiat, Carey, Leroy-Beaulieu or the modern Katheder Sozialisten.[47] From peaceful and objective thinkers the bourgeois economists have become militant guardians and watchdogs of capital who devote all their efforts to reconstructing the very edifice of science for the purpose of war. But in spite of these warlike exertions, they continually retreat and leave in their enemies' hands the scientific territory over which they once had uncontrolled sway. Nowadays people who display no "demagogic" strivings whatever try to assure us that the workers are "better able than any Smith or Faucher to master the most abstract concepts" in the science of economics. Such was the opinion, for instance, of a man who has the highest authority among German economists but who, for his part, had the deepest scorn for them. "We look upon the workers as children," this man added, "whereas they are already head and shoulders above us."*

But is there no exaggeration in what he says? Can the working class understand "abstract" questions of social economics and socialism at least as well as, if not better than, people who have spent years and years on their education?

What are the principles of modern scientific socialism founded on? Are they the concoctions of some leisurely benefactor of humanity, or are they the summing up of those very phenomena which we all come up against, one way or another, in our daily life, the explanation of the very laws which determine our parti-

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] I again mean Rodbertus.

cipation in the production, the exchange, or simply the distribution of products? Whoever answers this question will agree that the working class has many chances of understanding correctly the "most abstract" laws of social economics and of mastering the most abstract principles of scientific socialism. The difficulty in understanding the laws of some particular science is caused by incomplete knowledge of the data underlying those laws. Wherever it is only a question of everyday phenomena in which the scientific law only generalises facts that everybody knows, people in the practical field not only understand perfectly the theoretical principles, they can sometimes even teach the theoreticians themselves. Ask the farmer about the influence that the distance to the market has on the price of his products or the effect the fertility of the soil has on the size of the land rent. Ask the manufacturer how the expansion of the market influences the cheapening of production. Or ask the worker where the employer gets his profits from.... You will see that all these people know Ricardo, although they have never even seen the cover of his works. Yet these questions are reputed to be very intricate and "abstract", whole seas of ink have been used upon them and such a tremendous number of volumes have been written about them that they are enough to terrify you when you begin to study economics. The same in each and every part of social economics. Take the theory of exchange value. You can explain to the worker in a couple of words what it is determined by and how but many of Messrs. the bourgeois economists are still unwilling or unable to understand this perfectly simple theory, and in their disputes about it they fall into gross errors of logic for which no teacher of arithmetic would hesitate to give an elementary school pupil a bad mark. That is why we think that the writer we quoted was correct and that the only understanding audience today on urgent social problems is one of proletarians or of people who have adopted the proletarian standpoint. Once the fundamental principles of social economics are mastered, the understanding of scientific socialism no longer presents any difficulty: here too the worker will only follow the directions of his practical experience. This aspect of the question was magnificently explained by Marx. "By heralding the dissolution of the hitherto *existing world order,*" we read in *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law,* "the proletariat merely proclaims the secret of *its own existence,* for it is the *factual dissolution* of that world order. By demanding *the negation of private property,* the proletariat merely raises to the rank of *a principle of society* what society has raised to the rank of *its* principle, what is already embodied in it as the negative result of society without its own participation."* [48]

* See *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher,* 1. und 2. Lieferung, S. 81-85.

So we see that the proletariat needs no material wealth to attain to an understanding of the conditions of its emancipation. Its pauperism, determined *not by the poverty of the barbarism of society, but by defects in the social organisation—this* pauperism, far from making the understanding of these conditions more difficult, makes it easier.

The laws governing the distribution of products in capitalist society are extremely unfavourable to the working class. But the organisation of production and the form of exchange characteristic of capitalism provide for the first time both the objective and the subjective possibility for the emancipation of the working people. Capitalism broadens the worker's outlook and removes all the prejudices he inherited from the old society; it impels him to fight and at the same time ensures his victory by increasing his numbers and putting at his disposal the economic possibility of organising the kingdom of labour. Technical progress increases man's power over nature and raises labour productivity to such a degree that the necessity of labour cannot become a hindrance, but, on the contrary, will be an indispensable condition for the all-round development of the members of socialist society. At the same time, the socialisation of *production* characteristic of capitalism paves the way for the conversion of its *instruments and products* into common property. The joint-stock company, the highest form of organisation for industrial enterprises at the present time, excludes the capitalists from any active role in the economic life of society and turns them into drones whose disappearance cannot cause the slightest disorganisation in the course of that life. "If the energetic race of major-domos once succeeded without difficulty in deposing a royal dynasty which had grown indolent," the conservative Rodbertus says, "why should a living and energetic organisation of workers (the staff of companies is composed of qualified workers), why should not such an organisation in time remove owners who have become mere *rentiers?*... And yet capital cannot turn off this road! Having outlived its period of prosperity, capital is becoming its own grave-digger!"

Why, we ask, in our turn, should not the same organisation of workers which will be in a position "to remove owners who have become mere *rentiers*"—why should not such an organisation be in a position to seize state power and thus achieve political domination? For the former presumes the latter: only such an organisation can "remove" the owners as can overcome their *political* resistance.

But that is not all: there are other social phenomena which also increase the probability of the proletariat's *political* victory.

"...Entire sections of the ruling classes are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threat-

ened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

"Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole." [49]

There is a very remarkable legend among the Negroes of North Guinea. "One day," it says, "God summoned the two sons of the first human couple. One of them was white, the other dark-skinned. Placing before them a heap of gold and a book, God ordered the dark-skinned brother, as being the elder, to choose one of the two. He chose the gold, so the younger brother received the book. An unknown force immediately transported the younger one with the book to a cold, distant country. But thanks to his book he became learned, terrifying and strong. As for the elder brother, he remained in his native country and lived long enough to see how superior science is to wealth."

The bourgeoisie once had both knowledge and wealth. Unlike the dark-skinned brother in the Negro legend, it obtained possession of both gold and book, because history, the god of human societies, does not recognise the right of classes which are under age, and commits them to the guardianship of their elder brothers. But the time came when the working class, slighted by history, grew out of childhood, and the bourgeoisie had to share with it. The bourgeoisie kept the gold, while the younger brother received the "book", thanks to which, despite the darkness and cold of his cellars, he has now become "strong and terrifying". Little by little, scientific socialism is ousting the bourgeois theories from the pages of this magic book, and soon the proletariat will read in the book how they can gain material sufficiency. Then they will throw off the shameful yoke of capitalism and show the bourgeoisie "how superior science is to wealth".

## III

In the first chapter we endeavoured to explain historically the origin of the conviction that socialism is incompatible with any "politics". We saw that this conviction was based on Proudhon's

and Bakunin's teaching on the state, on the one hand, and on a certain inconsistency in our Social-Democrats of the seventies, on the other. Moreover, it was supported by the general tone of the background against which both the tendencies mentioned above stood out. That background consisted, as we said quoting Engels, in a mish-mash of manifold theories of the founders of different socialist sects. The utopian socialists, we know, had an entirely negative attitude to the political movements of the working class, seeing in them nothing but "blind unbelief in the new Gospel".[50] This negative view of "politics" came to us with the teachings of the utopians. Long before revolutionary movement of any strength began in Russia, our socialists, like the "true" socialists in Germany at the end of the forties (see the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 32), were ready "to hurl the traditional anathemas against liberalism, against representative government, against bourgeois competition, bourgeois freedom of the press, bourgeois legislation, bourgeois liberty and equality", forgetting entirely that all these attacks "presupposed the existence of modern bourgeois society, with its corresponding economic conditions of existence, and the political constitution adapted thereto", i.e., the very conditions that it should still have been a question of assuring in our country.*[51]

As a result of all these influences there arose such a firm conviction of the inexpediency of any political struggle except the revolutionary struggle in the narrow and vulgar sense of the word, that we began to regard with prejudice the socialist parties in Western Europe which saw electoral campaigns, for instance, as a powerful means of educating and organising the working masses. All the political and economic gains those campaigns brought seemed to us unpardonable opportunism, a ruinous deal with the demon of the bourgeois state, tantamount to renouncing bliss in future socialist life. We ourselves did not even notice that our theories were involving us in a vicious circle of insoluble contradictions. We regarded the village commune as the point of departure of Russia's social and economic development and, at the same time, renouncing political struggle, we voluntarily deprived ourselves of all possibility of safeguarding that commune against the present destructive influences by state interference. We were thus forced to remain indifferent spectators of a process which was destroying the very foundation on which we wished to erect the edifice of the future.

We saw, however, that the logic of events had led the Russian movement on to another road and forced the Russian revolution-

* What is said here does not apply, however, to the group which published *Narodnoye Dyelo* in Geneva, a group which repeatedly affirmed its negative attitude to the "theory of political non-interference".[52]

aries, as represented by the Narodnaya Volya party, to fight for political influence and even dominance as one of the most powerful factors of economic revolution. We also saw that having entered upon that road our movement was growing to such an extent that the social and political theories of different varieties of Proudhonism were too narrow and cramping for it. The course of events peculiar to Russian social life clashed with the course of the ideas dominating among our revolutionaries and thus provoked a new trend of thought.

This trend, we said further, will not rid itself of its characteristic contradictions until it merges with the incomparably deeper and wider current of modern socialism. The Russian revolutionaries must adopt the standpoint of Western Social Democracy and break with "rebel" *theories* just as a few years ago they renounced "rebel" *practice,* introducing a new, *political* element into their programme. This will not be difficult for them to do if they endeavour to adopt the correct view of the political side of Marx's teaching and are willing to reconsider the methods and immediate aims of their struggle by applying this new criterion to them.

We saw as early as in the second chapter what false conclusions were prompted by the philosophical and historical premises of modern socialism. *Narodnaya Volya* itself apparently did not notice the erroneousness of those conclusions and was inclined "even to defend Dühring's sociological standpoint on the predominant influence of the political and legal element in the social structure over the economic", as P. L. Lavrov put it in describing the most recent tendencies in the Russian revolutionary movement.* And it is only by this inclination that we can explain the polemic contained in the home review of *Narodnaya Volya* No. 6 against some kind of "immediate interpreters of Marx's historical theory", who, according to the author, based their views "mainly on Hegel's famous triad", not having "any other inductive material" for their conclusions and explaining "Hegel's law in the sense that evil, merely in its extreme development, will lead to good".** It is sufficient to acquaint oneself with the programme of the German Social-Democrats or the French collectivists to see how

* See the article "View of the Past and the Present of Russian Socialism", *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli, 1883,* p. 109.

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] Subsequently, our "legal" critics, N. Mikhailovsky and Bros., repeated this nonsense in all keys. It must be noted in general that in their disputes with us these gentlemen could think of nothing new in comparison with what was written against us in *illegal* literature. Let anybody who wants to convince himself of this read Tikhomirov's article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" in the second issue of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* and compare it with the arguments Beltov had to refute much later in his book.[53] "Illegal" thought long ago outstripped "legal" thought in our country.

"Marx's historical theory" is understood by his West European followers and, if you like, by his "immediate interpreters". We, for our part, can assure our Russian comrades that these "interpreters" understand "Hegel's law" by no means "in the sense that evil, merely in its extreme development, will lead to good", and, besides, that they use it as "*inductive* material" only when they study the history of German philosophy, in which this law has a very prominent place and which, *in any case,* it cannot be left out of, just as, according to the popular saying, you cannot leave words out of a song. The passage we quoted is an almost word-for-word repetition of the reproach addressed by Dühring to Marx that in his historical scheme "the Hegelian negation of negation plays, for want of better and clearer means, the role of a midwife with whose help the future emerges from the womb of the present".* But this trick has already received the punishment it deserved from Engels, who showed the utter scientific worthlessness of the former Berlin *Dozent's* works. Why, then, repeat other people's errors and adopt, on such shifting grounds, a negative attitude towards the greatest and most revolutionary social theory of the nineteenth century? For without revolutionary theory there is no revolutionary movement in the true sense of the word. Any class which strives for its emancipation, any political party which aims at dominance, is revolutionary only insofar as it represents the most progressive social trends and consequently is a vehicle of the most progressive ideas of its time. An idea which is inherently revolutionary is a kind of dynamite which no other explosive in the world can replace. And as long as our movement is under the banner of backward or erroneous theories it will have revolutionary significance only by *some,* but by no means all of its aspects. At the same time, without its members knowing it, it will bear in itself the germs of reaction which will deprive it even of that little significance in the more or less near future, because, as Heine said,

*New time needs a new garment*
*For the new job it's got to do.*

And indeed that really new time will come at last—for our country too.

Incorrect understanding of some principles of modern socialism is not, however, the main obstacle preventing our revolutionary movement from taking the road paved by the working class in the West. A closer acquaintance with the literature of "Marxism" will show our socialists what a powerful weapon they have deprived

* See *Kritische Geschichte der Nationaloekonomie und des Sozialismus,* dritte Auflage, S. 498.

themselves of by refusing to understand and master the theory of the great teacher of the "workers of all countries". They will then see that our revolutionary movement, far from losing anything, will gain a lot if the Russian Narodniks and the Russian Narodnaya Volya at last become Russian Marxists and a new, higher standpoint reconciles all the groups existing among us, which are all right each in its own way, because despite their one-sidedness each of them expresses a definite vital need of Russian social life.

Another obstacle prevents our movement from developing in the direction just indicated. It consists in our lacking sense of proportion in politics. Since the very beginning of our movement this has prevented our revolutionaries from bringing their immediate tasks into line with their strength and it is due to nothing else than lack of political experience on the part of Russian public figures. Whether we went among the people to disseminate socialist publications, settled in the villages to organise the protesting elements of our peasantry or joined directly in the fight against the representatives of absolutism, we repeated one and the same mistake everywhere. We always overestimated our strength and never fully took account of the resistance that would be offered by the social environment, we hastened to raise a method of action temporarily favoured by circumstances into a universal principle precluding all other ways and means. As a result, all our programmes were in a state of absolutely unstable equilibrium which could be upset by the most insignificant change in the surrounding atmosphere. We changed those programmes almost every couple of years and could not keep to anything *lasting* because we always kept to something *narrow* and *one-sided.* Just as, according to Belinsky's words, Russian society had experience of all literary trends even before it had any literature, so the Russian socialist movement managed to try out all possible shades of West European socialism despite the fact that it had not yet become a movement of our working class.

The struggle against absolutism that Narodnaya Volya has undertaken will undoubtedly help greatly to eliminate the one-sidedness of the study *groups* by bringing our revolutionaries out on to a broader path and compelling them to strive to set up a real *party.* But in order to put a stop to the continual changing of programmes, to rid themselves of these habits of political nomads and to acquire intellectual stability at last, the Russian revolutionaries must complete the criticism which began with the rise of conscious political trends among them. They must adopt a critical attitude to the very programme which has made necessary the criticism of *all* previous programmes and theories. The "Narodnaya Volya party" is the child of a time of transition. Its programme is the last produced in the conditions which made our one-sidedness inevitable and therefore legitimate. Although it broadens the

political horizon of the Russian socialists, this programme in itself is not yet free from one-sidedness. The lack of sense of proportion in politics, of the ability to line up the immediate aims of the party with its actual or potential strength is also still conspicuous in it. The Narodnaya Volya party reminds one of a man who is going along a real road but has no idea of distances and therefore feels sure that he can leave "miles and leagues behind—twenty thousand leagues, ere night, covered in a single flight".[54] Practice will, of course, shatter his illusion, but that shattering may cost him a great deal. It would be better for him to ask himself whether seven-league strides do not belong to the realm of fantasy.

By seven-league strides we mean the element of fantasy whose existence in the programme referred to we have already pointed out and which was manifested in the second issue of *Narodnaya Volya* by assurances concerning the social-revolutionary (we do not say *socialist*) majority in the future Russian Constituent Assembly,[55] and in No. 8-9 by considerations on "the seizure of power by the provisional revolutionary government".[56] We are profoundly convinced that this element of fantasy is highly dangerous for the "Narodnaya Volya party" itself. Dangerous to it as a socialist party because it diverts attention of the working class from the immediate tasks in Russia; dangerous to it as a party which has assumed the initiative of our emancipation movement because it will alienate from the party great resources and forces which, in other circumstances, would accrue to it out of the so-called society. Let us explain this in greater detail.

To whom does Narodnaya Volya appeal, to whom *can* it and should it apeal in fighting absolutism? "The enlistment in the organisation"—Narodnaya Volya—"of *individuals from the peasantry* capable of joining it," we read in *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli,** "has naturally always been acknowledged as very desirable....[57] But as for a *mass* peasant organisation at present, that was considered completely fantastic when our programme was drawn up, and, if we are not mistaken, subsequent practice was unable to change the opinion of our socialists on this subject." Perhaps the "Narodnaya Volya party" intends to rely on the more progressive section of our labouring population, i.e., on the town workers? It does actually attach great importance to propaganda and organisation among them, it considers that "the urban working population must be the object of the party's serious attention". But the very reason on which it bases this necessity shows that in the party's conception the town workers must be only one of the elements in our revolutionary movement. They "are of particular significance *for the revolution,* both by their position and by their relatively

* "Preparatory Work of the Party", p. 129, note. [Plekhanov's italics.]

greater maturity", the same document explains; "the success of the first attack depends entirely on the conduct of the workers and the troops". So the impending revolution will not be a working-class revolution in the full sense of the term, but the workers must take part in it because they "are of particular significance *for it*". Which other elements, then, will be included in this movement? We have already seen that one of these elements will be the "troops"; but in the army "in present conditions propaganda among the men is so difficult that great hope can hardly be placed upon it. Action on *the officer corps* is far more convenient: being more educated and having greater liberty they are more susceptible to influence"! That is quite correct, of course, but we will not stop at that for the moment, we will go further. Besides the workers and "the officer corps", the Narodnaya Volya party has in mind the liberals and "Europe", in relation to which "the policy of the party must strive to ensure the sympathy of the *peoples* for the Russian revolution, to rouse sympathy for the revolution among the European public". To attain this aim "the party must make known to Europe all the disastrous significance of Russian absolutism for European civilisation itself, and also the party's true aims and the significance of our revolutionary movement as the expression of the protest of the whole nation". As far as the "liberals" are concerned, "we must point out, without concealing our radicalism, that given the present setting of our party tasks, our interests and theirs compel us to act jointly against the government".

Thus we see that the Narodnaya Volya party relies not only, nor even mainly, on the working and peasant classes. It also has in mind society and the officer corps, which, in substance, is the "very flesh and bone" of that society. It wants to convince the liberal part of that society that "given the present setting of our party tasks" the interests of Russian liberalism coincide with those of the Russian social-revolutionary party. What, then, does it do to impress that conviction upon the Russian liberals? First of all it publishes the programme of the Executive Committee[58] which says that "the *people's will* would be sufficiently well expressed and implemented by a Constituent Assembly freely elected by universal suffrage and receiving instructions from the electors". In its famous "Letter to Alexander III" the Executive Committee also demanded "the convocation of representatives of the whole Russian people to reconsider the existing forms of statehood and public life and to refashion them according to the desires of the people".[59] That programme does indeed coincide with the interests of the Russian liberals, and in order to carry it out they would probably be reconciled even to universal suffrage, which the Executive Committee cannot fail to demand. In all this, the prog-

ramme of the said Committee displays far greater maturity than all those which preceded it. But, not to mention such a huge blunder as to demand freedom of assembly, of speech, of the press and of electoral programmes only "as a temporary measure",*[60] let us recall other statements of the Narodnaya Volya party. The party organ hastened to warn its readers that the majority of the deputies to the Constituent Assembly would be supporters of radical economic revolution. We have already said above that this assurance was no more than a fiction invented to conciliate incompatible elements in the Narodnaya Volya programme. Let us now consider the printed expression of that assurance from the standpoint of tactics. The question is: does an economic revolution suit the interests of Russian liberalism? Does our liberal society sympathise with the agrarian revolution which Narodnaya Volya says the peasant deputies will aim at? West European history tells us most convincingly that whenever the "red spectre" took at all threatening forms the "liberals" were ready to seek protection in the embraces of the most unceremonious military dictatorship. Did the terrorist organ think that our Russian liberals would be an exception to this general rule? If so, on what did it base its conviction? Did it also think that contemporary "public opinion in Europe" was so imbued with socialist ideas that it would sympathise with the convocation of a social-revolutionary Constituent Assembly? Or did it think that although the European bourgeoisie trembled at the red sprectre in their own countries they would cheer its appearance in Russia? It goes without saying that it thought nothing of the sort and forgot nothing of the sort. But why, in that case, make such a risky statement? Or was the Narodnaya Volya party organ so convinced of the inevitable realisation of its prophecy that it considered it necessary to rouse the members of the organisation to take steps corresponding to the importance of the anticipated event? Bearing in mind the fact that the same organ declared work among the people useless, we think the statement was intended rather to calm than to rouse: a social-revolutionary majority in the Constituent Assembly was expected *despite* the fact that the work referred to now recalls the "Danaïdes filling bottomless barrels".

In itself the statement could have been regarded as unimportant, especially as *Narodnaya Volya* itself had apparently given up its exaggeratedly optimistic hopes about the future composition of the Russian Constituent. We think so, because the leading article in No. 8-9 speaks of the economic revolution which, in the absence of social-revolutionary initiative among the people themselves, must be accomplished by the "provisional revolutionary government" before the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. The

* See "Letter to Alexander III", *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli*, p. 14.

author of the article quite rightly sees such a revolution as the only guarantee that "the Zemsky Sobor[61] which is convoked will be attended by true representatives of the people". Thus, *Narodnaya Volya*'s former illusion has been shattered completely. But, unfortunately, it has only disappeared to give place to a new one, still more harmful for the cause of the Narodnaya Volya party. The element of fantasy in the programme has not been removed but has only assumed a new form, being now called that very "*seizure of power by the provisional revolutionary government*" which is supposed to give the party the possibility to carry out the economic revolution referred to. It is obvious that the new "setting of the party tasks" can on no account impress upon either Russian liberalism or bourgeois Europe the idea that they have common interests with the Russian revolutionary movement. However downtrodden and crushed Russian society may be it is by no means deprived of the instinct of self-preservation and in no case will it voluntarily meet the "red spectre" half-way; to point out to it such a formulation of the party tasks means to deprive oneself of its support and to rely only on one's own strength. But is that strength great enough to warrant the risk of alienating such an ally? Can our revolutionaries really seize power and retain it, if only for a short time, or is all talk of this nothing else than cutting the skin of a bear that has not been killed and which, by force of circumstances, is not even going to be killed? That is a question which has recently become an urgent one for revolutionary Russia....

Let us hasten to make a reservation. The previous pages must already have convinced the reader that we do not belong to the opponents in principle of such an act as the seizure of power by a revolutionary party. In our opinion that is the last, and what is more, the absolutely inevitable conclusion to be drawn from the political struggle which every class striving for emancipation must undertake at a definite stage in social development. Having gained political domination, a revolutionary class will retain that domination and be relatively secure against the blows of reaction only when it uses against reaction the mighty weapon of state power. "Den Teufel halte, wer ihn hält! " says Faust.

But there is no more difference between heaven and earth than between the dictatorship of a class and that of a group of revolutionary *raznochintsi*.[62] This applies in particular to the dictatorship of the working class, whose present task is not only to overthrow the political domination of the unproductive classes in society, but also to do away with the anarchy now existing in production and consciously to organise all functions of social and economic life. The mere *understanding* of this task calls for an advanced working class with political experience and education, a

working class free from bourgeois prejudices and able to discuss its situation by itself. In addition to this, its *solution* presupposes that socialist ideas are spread among the proletariat and that the proletariat is conscious of its own strength and confident in victory. But *such* a proletariat *will not allow* even the sincerest of its well-wishers to seize power. It will not allow it for the simple reason that it has been to the school of political education with the firm intention of finishing it at some time and coming forward as an independent figure in the arena of historical life, instead of passing eternally from one guardianship to another; it will not allow it because such a guardianship would be unnecessary, as the proletariat could then solve the problem of the socialist revolution itself; and finally it will not allow it because such a guardianship would be harmful, for the conscious participation of the producers in organising production cannot be replaced by any conspiratorial skill, any daring or self-sacrifice on the part of the conspirators. The mere thought that the social problem can be solved in practice by anybody but the workers themselves shows complete misunderstanding of this problem, irrespective of whether the idea is held by an "Iron Chancellor" or a revolutionary organisation. Once the proletariat has understood the conditions of its emancipation and is mature to emancipate itself, it will take state power in its own hands in order to finish off its enemies and build up social life, not, of course, on the basis of *an*-archy, which would bring new disasters, but of *pan*-archy, which will give all adult members of society the possibility to take part in the discussion and settlement of social matters. And until the working class is sufficiently developed to be able to fulfil its great historical task, the duty of its supporters is to accelerate the process of its development, to remove the obstacles preventing its strength and its consciousness from growing, and not to invent social experiments and vivisection, the outcome of which is always more than doubtful.

That is how we understand the seizure of power in the socialist revolution. Applying this point of view to Russian reality we must admit that we by no means believe in the early possibility of a socialist government in Russia.

Narodnaya Volya considers the contemporary "relation of political and economic factors on Russian soil" particularly "advantageous" to the socialists.[63] We agree that it is more advantageous for them in Russia than in India, Persia or Egypt, but it cannot be compared, of course, with the social relations in Western Europe. And if Narodnaya Volya arrives at its convictions by comparing our system not with the Egyptian or the Persian, but with the French or the English system, then it has made a very big mistake. The contemporary "relation" of social factors "on Russian soil" is the cause of the ignorance and indifference of the

popular masses; when were such qualities advantageous for their emancipation? Narodnaya Volya apparently presumes that this indifference has already begun to disappear because among the people "there is growing hatred of the privileged ruling estates and persistent striving for a radical change in economic relations". But what comes of that striving? "Hatred of the privileged estates" proves nothing at all; it is often not accompanied by a single ray of political consciousness. Furthermore, at the present time we must clearly distinguish between *estate* consciousness and *class* consciousness, for the old division into estates no longer corresponds to the economic relations in Russia and is preparing to give place to formal equality of citizens in a "legal state". If Narodnaya Volya considers the contemporary outlook of our peasantry from the standpoint of the development of their *class* and *political* consciousness, it will hardly persist in saying that the relation between our social factors is advantageous to the cause of the social revolution. For it certainly cannot consider "advantageous" to that cause the rumours, for instance, circulating among the peasantry about their own struggle against the government. No matter how strongly "hatred of the ruling classes" [64] is shown in these rumours, the fact that the revolutionary movement itself is attributed by the peasants to scheming by the serfdom-minded nobility and the officials is evidence that the "provisional revolutionary government" will be in great danger when the people begins "winning economic equality from those who have been exploiting and oppressing it for centuries". Then the relation between the factors now interesting us will perhaps display rather *disadvantageous* qualities for the temporarily victorious conspirators. And then, what is meant by "winning economic equality"?

Is it enough for that to expropriate the big landowners, capitalists and businessmen? Does it not require production itself to be organised in a definite manner? If so, are Russia's present economic relations favourable to such organisation? In other words, does the "economic factor" offer us much chance of success? We do not think so, and for the following reason. Any organisation presupposes in what is to be organised certain qualities determined by the purpose and character of the organisation. The socialist organisation of production implies such a character of the economic relations as will make that organisation the logical conclusion of the entire previous development of the country and is therefore distinguished by an extremely significant definiteness. In other words socialist organisation, like any other, requires the appropriate basis. But that basis does not exist in Russia. The old foundations of national life are too narrow, heterogeneous and one-sided, and moreover too shaky, and new ones are as yet only being formed. The objective social conditions of production neces-

sary for socialist organisation have not yet matured, and that is why the producers themselves have not yet either the striving or the ability for such organisation: our peasantry can yet neither understand nor fulfil this task. Therefore, the "provisional government" will have not to "sanction", but to *carry out* "the economic revolution", granted that it is not swept away by a wave of the popular movement, granted that the producers are obedient enough.

You cannot create by decrees conditions which are alien to the very character of the existing economic relations. The "provisional government" will have to reconcile itself to what exists, to take as the basis of its reforming activity what it is given by present Russian reality. And on that narrow and shaky foundation the edifice of socialist organisation will be built by a government which will include: first, town workers, as yet little prepared for such a difficult task; second, representatives of our revolutionary youth, who have always kept aloof from practical life; third, the "officer corps", whose knowledge of economics is certainly subject to doubt. We do not want to make the quite probable supposition that, besides all these elements, liberals will also find their way into the provisional government, and they will not sympathise with, but hinder the social-revolutionary "setting of the party tasks". We suggest that the reader merely weigh up the circumstances we have just enumerated and then ask himself: has an "economic revolution" which begins in such circumstances much chance of success? Is it true that the present "relation of political and economic factors on Russian soil" is favourable to the cause of the socialist revolution? Is not the confidence that this relation is advantageous one of the fictions borrowed from the old anarchist and rebel outlook and carried to impossible extremes in the programme of the new *political* party? Yet it is this fiction that determines the most "immediate tasks" of the party and underlies the desire for the immediate "seizure of power", a striving that terrifies our society and makes the entire activity of our revolutionaries one-sided!

Perhaps it will be objected that Narodnaya Volya does not even think of undertaking the socialist organisation of society immediately after seizing power, that the "economic revolution" it plans is intended only to educate the people for a future socialist revolution. Let us see whether this supposition is possible, and if so, what conclusions follow from it.

The leading article of No. 8-9 of *Narodnaya Volya* speaks of the economic equality which will be "won" by the people itself, or, if the people lacks initiative, created by the provisional government. We have already said that so-called economic equality is possible only with a socialist organisation of production. But let us assume

that *Narodnaya Volya* considers it possible under other circumstances too, that economic equality, in its opinion, will be sufficiently guaranteed by the transfer of the land and the instruments of production to the ownership of the working people. Such an opinion would be nothing but a return to the old Narodnik ideals of Zemlya i Volya, and from the economic standpoint it would show the same weaknesses that characterised those ideals. The mutual relations of individual village communes, the conversion of the product of the commune members' labour into commodities and the capitalist accumulation connected with it would threaten to make that "equality" extremely precarious! With the independence of the *mir* "as an economic and administrative unit", with "broad territorial self-government guaranteed by the electivity of all offices", and "the ownership of the land by the people" which the Executive Committee's programme demands, the central government *would not be able* to take steps to consolidate that equality, even if we assume that it would devise measures to abrogate not only the written laws of the Russian Empire, but the laws of commodity production itself. And anyhow, it would be reluctant to take such measures, for it would consist of representatives of the "economically and politically emancipated people" whose ideals would be expressed, at the best, by the words "Land and Freedom" and would leave no room for any organisation of national (let alone *international*) production.

Let us suppose that in view of this danger Narodnaya Volya's "provisional government" will not hand over the power it has seized to the representatives of the people but will become a permanent government. Then it will be faced with the following alternative: either it will have to remain an indifferent spectator of the slow decay of the "economic equality" it has established, or it will be obliged to *organise* national production. It will have to fulfil this difficult task either in the spirit of modern socialism, in which it will be hindered by its own unpracticality as well as by the present stage of development of national labour and the workers' own habits; or it will have to seek salvation in the ideals of "patriarchal and authoritarian communism", only modifying those ideals so that national production is managed not by the Peruvian "sons of the sun" and their officials but by a socialist caste. But even now the Russian people is too far developed for anybody to flatter himself with the hope that such experiments on it could be successful. Moreover, there is no doubt that under such a guardianship the people, far from being educated for socialism, would even lose all capacity for further progress or would retain that capacity only thanks to the appearance of the very economic *in*equality which it would be the revolutionary government's immediate aim to abolish. Not to mention the influence of international relations

or the impossibility of Peruvian communism even in Eastern Europe in the nineteenth or the twentieth century.

Anyhow, why speak so much of the *results* of the seizure of power by our revolutionaries? Is that seizure itself probable or even possible? In our opinion the probability is very small, so small that the seizure of power may be considered as absolutely impossible. Our "thinking proletariat" has already done much for the emancipation of its motherland. It has shaken absolutism, aroused political interest among society, sown the seed of socialist propaganda among our working class. It is intermediary between the higher classes of society and the lower, having the education of the former and the democratic instincts of the latter. This position has eased for it the diversified work of propaganda and agitation. But this same position gives it very little hope of success in a conspiracy to seize power. For such a conspiracy talent, energy and education are not enough: the conspirators need connections, wealth and an influential position in society. And that is what our revolutionary intelligentsia lacks. It can make good these deficiencies only by allying itself with other dissatisfied elements of Russian society. Let us suppose that its plans actually meet with the sympathy of those elements, that rich landowners, capitalists, officials, staff and senior officers join in the conspiracy. There will then be more probability of the conspiracy being a success, although that probability will still be very small—just remember the outcome of most of the famous conspiracies in history. But the main danger to the *socialist* conspiracy will come not from the existing government, but from the members of the conspiracy itself. The influential and high-placed personages who have joined it may be sincere socialists only by a "fortunate coincidence". But as regards the majority of them, there can be no guarantee that they will not wish to use the power they have seized for purposes having nothing in common with the interests of the working class. And once the conspirators deviate from the socialist aim of the conspiracy it can be considered not only useless but even harmful for the social development of the country; for hatred of absolutism does not warrant sympathy for the successes of the "most modern Séyans", as Stepnyak puts it in his well-known book, [65] who would wish to use the conspiracy in their own interests. Thus, the more sympathy a conspiracy of the socialist intelligentsia to seize power in the immediate future meets among influential spheres, i.e., the greater the probability of its outward success, the more open to doubt its results will be; contrariwise, the more such a conspiracy is confined to our socialist "intelligentsia", i.e., the less the probability of its success, the less doubt there will be about its results, as far as the conspirators' intentions are concerned. Everything leads us to think that at present a Russian

socialist conspiracy would be threatened with a failure of the second kind rather than of the first.

Considering all that has been said we think that only one aim of the Russian socialists would not be fantastic now: to achieve free political institutions, on the one hand, and to create elements for the setting up of the future *workers' socialist party* of Russia, on the other. They must put forward the demand for a democratic constitution which shall guarantee the workers the "rights of citizen" as well as the "rights of man" and give them, by universal suffrage, the possibility to take an active part in the political life of the country. Without trying to scare anybody with the yet remote "red spectre", such a political programme would arouse sympathy for our revolutionary party among all those who are not systematic enemies of democracy; it could be subscribed to by very many representatives of our liberalism as well as by the socialists.* And whereas the seizure of power by some secret revolutionary organisation will always be the work only of that organisation and of those who are initiated in its plans, agitation for the programme mentioned would be a matter for the whole of Russian society, in which it would intensify the conscious striving for political emancipation. Then the interests of the liberals would indeed "force" them to "act jointly with the socialists against the government", because they would cease to meet in revolutionary publications the assurance that the overthrow of absolutism would be the signal for a social revolution in Russia. At the same time another, less timid and more sober section of liberal society would no longer see revolutionaries as unpractical youths who set themselves unrealisable and fantastic plans. This view, which is disadvantageous for revolutionaries, would give place to the respect of society not only for their heroism but also for their political maturity. This sympathy would gradually grow into active support, or more probably into an independent social movement, and then the hour of absolutism's fall would strike at last. The socialist party would play an extremely honourable and beneficial role in this emancipation movement. Its glorious past, its selflessness and energy would give weight to its demands and it would at least stand chances of thus winning *for the people* the possibility of political development and education, and *for itself* the right to

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] The sympathy of "society" is very important for us and we can—or more exactly we *had many chances* to—win it without changing one iota of our programme. But, of course, it requires *tact* to make the *possibility a reality*, and that is what we have not always got. For instance, we sometimes allow ourselves to abuse "capital" *about*, though, of course, not *because of*, its "rebellion". Marx would never have made such a gross tactical blunder. He would have considered it worthy of Karl Grün and other "true socialists".

address its propaganda openly to the people and to organise them openly into a separate party.

But that is not enough. Or more exactly, it is unachievable without simultaneous action of another kind and in another sphere. Without might there is no right. Every constitution—according to Lassalle's splendid expression—corresponds or strives to correspond to the "*real, factual relation of forces in the country*". That is why our socialist intelligentsia must concern itself with changing the factual relations of Russian social forces in favour of the working class even in the pre-constitutional period. Otherwise the fall of absolutism will by no means justify the hopes placed in it by the Russian socialists or even democrats. Even in a constitutional Russia, the demands of the people may be left completely unattended to or satisfied only as far as is necessary to allow them to pay more taxes which they are now almost unable to do as a result of the rapacity of the state economic management. The socialist party itself, having won for the liberal bourgeoisie freedom of speech and action, may find itself in an "exceptional" position similar to that of German Social-Democracy today. In politics, only he may count on the gratitude of his allies of yesterday, now his enemies, who has nothing more serious to count on.

Fortunately, the Russian socialists can base their hopes on a firmer foundation. They can and must place their hopes first and foremost in the working class. The strength of the working class—as of any other class—depends, among other things, on the clarity of its political consciousness, its cohesion and its degree of organisation. It is these elements of its strength that must be influenced by our socialist intelligentsia. The latter must become the leader of the working class in the impending emancipation movement, explain to it its political and economic interests and also the interdependence of those interests and must prepare it to play an independent role in the social life of Russia. They must exert all their energy so that in the very opening period of the constitutional life of Russia our working class will be able to come forward as a separate party with a definite social and political programme. The detailed elaboration of that programme must, of course, be left to the workers themselves, but the intelligentsia must elucidate for them its principal points, for instance, a radical review of the present agrarian relations, the taxation system and factory legislation, state help for producers' associations, and so forth. All this can be done only by intensive work among at least the most advanced sections of the working class, by oral and printed propaganda and the organisation of workers' socialist study groups. It is true that these tasks have always held a more or less prominent place in the programmes of our socialists, and *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli* can convince us that they were not forgotten even

in the heat of the bitterest fight against the government (see "Preparatory Work of the Party" in section C, *Urban Workers*). But we suggest that everybody who is acquainted with our revolutionary movement should recall and compare how much energy and money was wasted on destructive work and how much was devoted to training elements for the future *workers' socialist party*. We are not accusing anybody, but we think that the distribution of our revolutionary forces was too one-sided. Yet it would be vain for us to try to explain this by the quality of the revolutionary forces themselves or of the elements of the working class which, according to their own programme, they should have influenced. The appearance and success of such publications as *Zerno* and *Rabochaya Gazeta*[66] show that our revolutionaries have not lost their inclination for propaganda, and our working people are not indifferent to it. Of course these publications made mistakes, at times serious ones, but only he who does nothing makes no mistakes. The main trouble is that in their publications one does not see any of the energy with which printed propaganda is conducted among "intellectual" sections of society, that when a print-shop is closed by the police a new one is not opened in its stead, that when it is impossible to publish them in Russia they are not transferred abroad, and so forth. Of all the journals from abroad—and we had a fair number of them—*Rabotnik*[67] alone wrote for the people and that was the great merit of its publishers. But *Rabotnik* has already been closed for a long time and we have heard nothing of new attempts of this kind, with, say, a new programme, better suited to the changed views of the Russian socialists. What has been published here, in Russia, for the workers besides *Zerno* and *Rabochaya Gazeta?* Absolutely nothing. Not a single booklet, not a single pamphlet.* And that at a time when the revolutionary movement has centred universal attention upon itself, and the people, grasping avidly at the rumours and opinions, have been wondering anxiously: What do these people want? Can one be astonished, after this, at the absurd answers to this question with which for lack of better ones, they are sometimes satisfied? We repeat: we are not accusing *anybody,* we advise *everybody* to pay attention

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] From this we see that the idea of a popular publication is by no means a novelty in our literature. But this did not prevent it from seeming a dangerous novelty to many comrades *no further back than on the eve of our Second Congress,* when I was almost its only supporter on the staff of *Iskra.* This idea has now been practically realised—with greater or lesser success. Better late than never. But if you could hear, reader, what amazing arguments were brought out against this idea in the not-far-off time just mentioned, you would exclaim, like Faust: Wie weh, wie weh, wie weh!

to this aspect of the matter so as to make up for the omission in time.*

Thus, the struggle for political freedom, on the one hand, and the preparation of the working class for its future independent and offensive role, on the other, such, in our opinion, is the only possible "setting of party tasks" at present. To bind together in one two so fundamentally different matters as the overthrow of absolutism and the socialist revolution, to wage revolutionary struggle in the belief that these elements of social development will *coincide* in the history of our country *means to put off the advent of both.* But it depends on us to *bring* these two elements *closer together.* We must follow the splendid example of the German Communists who, as the *Manifesto* says, fight "with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy", and yet "never cease, for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat". Acting thus, the Communists wanted "the bourgeois revolution in Germany" to "be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution".[68]

The present position of bourgeois societies and the influence of international relations on the social development of each civilised country entitle us to hope that the social emancipation of the Russian working class will follow very quickly upon the fall of absolutism. If the German bourgeoisie "*came too late*", the Russian has come still later, and its domination cannot be a long one. Only the Russian revolutionaries should not, in their turn, begin "too late" the preparation of the working class, a matter which has now become of absolute urgency.

Let us make a reservation to avoid misunderstandings. We do not hold the view, which as we have seen was ascribed to Marx's school rather than it existed in reality, and which alleges that the socialist movement cannot obtain support from our peasantry until the peasant has been turned into a landless proletarian and the village commune has disintegrated under the influence of capitalism. We think that on the whole the Russian peasantry would show great sympathy for any measure aiming at the so-called "nationalisation of the land". Given the possibility of any at all free agitation among the peasants,** they would also sympathise with the socialists, who naturally would not be slow in introducing into their programme the demand for a measure of that kind. But we do not exaggerate the strength of our socialists or ignore the obstacles, the opposition which they will inevitably encounter

* "This year," we read in the Supplement to *Listok of N. V.* No. 1 (1883, p. 61), "there was a whole series of strikes which, *thanks to the workers' lack of organisation,* were mostly failures! "

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] i.e., under a constitution.

from that quarter in their work. For that reason, and *for that reason only,* we think that for the beginning they should concentrate their main attention on the industrial centres. The rural population of today, living in backward social conditions, is not only less capable of conscious political *initiative* than the industrial workers, it is also less *responsive* to the movement which our revolutionary intelligentsia has begun. It has greater difficulty in mastering the socialist teachings, because its living conditions are too much unlike the conditions which gave birth to those teachings. And besides, the peasantry is now going through a difficult, critical period. The previous "ancestral foundations" of its economy are crumbling, "the ill-fated village commune itself is being discredited in its eyes", as is admitted even by such "ancestral" organs of Narodism as *Nedelya*[69] (see No. 39, the article by Mr. N.Z. "*In Our Native Parts*"); and the new forms of labour and life are only in the process of formation, and this creative process is more intensive in the industrial centres. Like water which washes away the soil in one place and forms new sediments and deposits in others, the process of Russian social development is creating new social formations by destroying the age-old forms of the peasants' relation to the land and to one another. These new social formations contain the embryo of a new social movement which alone can end the exploitation of Russia's working population. The industrial workers, who are more developed and have higher requirements and a broader outlook than the peasantry, will join our revolutionary intelligentsia in its struggle against absolutism, and when they have won political freedom they will organise into a workers' socialist party whose task will be to begin systematic propaganda of socialism among the peasantry. We say *systematic propaganda* because isolated opportunities of propaganda must not be missed even at present. It is hardly necessary to add that our socialists would have to change the distribution of their forces among the people if a strong independent movement made itself felt among the peasantry.

That is the "programme" which life itself suggests to the Russian revolutionary socialist party. Will the party be able to carry out this programme? Will it be prepared to give up its fantastic plans and notions, which, it must be admitted, have a great appeal to sentiment and imagination? It is as yet difficult to answer that question with certitude. The "Announcement of the Publication of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*" speaks of the political tasks of the revolutionary party only in the most general terms.[70] *Vestnik*'s editorial board describes those aims as "absolutely definite" and apparently does not consider it necessary to define them again in its announcement. That is why there is ground for fear that it will not consider it necessary either to ask itself whether the "absolute-

ly definite conditions" of present Russian actuality correspond to the "absolutely definite aims" of the Narodnaya Volya party. In that case the new publication will leave unsatisfied the most urgent need of our revolutionary literature, the need for a critical reconsideration of obsolete programmes and traditional methods of action. But we hope that the future will dissipate our fears. We wish to hope that the new publication will take a sober view of our revolutionary party's tasks, on whose fulfilment the party's future depends. Social life will be just as pitiless to the party's present illusions as it was to those of our "rebels" and propagandists. *It is better to follow its directions now than to pay for its stern lessons later by splits and new disappointments.*

# OUR DIFFERENCES

## LETTER TO P. L. LAVROV

### (In Lieu of Preface)

Dear Pyotr Lavrovich,

You are dissatisfied with the Emancipation of Labour group. In No. 2 of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* you devoted a whole article to its publications, and although the article was not a very long one, its two and a half pages were enough to express your disagreement with the group's programme and your dissatisfaction over its attitude to the "Narodnaya Volya party".[71]

Having been long accustomed to respect your opinions and knowing, moreover, how attentively our revolutionary youth of all shades and trends listen to them, I take the liberty of saying a few words in defence of the group, towards which, it seems, you are not quite fair.

I consider myself all the more entitled to do so as in your article you speak mainly of my pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle.* As it was that pamphlet which caused your reproaches, it is most fitting that its author should answer them.

You find that the pamphlet can be divided into two parts, "to each of which", in your opinion, "you must adopt a different attitude". One part, "namely, the second chapter, deserves the same attention as any serious work on socialism". The other, which constitutes a considerable portion of the pamphlet, you say, is devoted to a controversy on the past and present activity of the Narodnaya Volya party, whose organ abroad your journal intends to be. Not only do you disagree with the opinions which I express in that part, but the very fact of a "controversy with Narodnaya Volya" seems to you to deserve severe censure. You think "it would not be particularly difficult to prove to Mr. Plekhanov that his attacks can be countered with quite weighty objections (all the more as, perhaps due to haste, his quotations are not exact)". You are convinced that my "own programme of action contains perhaps more serious shortcomings and unpractical things than I accuse the Narodnaya Volya party of". But to my immense regret you cannot spare the time to point out these shortcomings and unpractical things. "The organ of the Narodnaya Volya party,"

you say, "is devoted to the struggle against the political and social enemies of the Russian people"; that struggle is so complicated that it takes up "*all* your time, *all* your work". You have "neither the leisure nor the desire" to devote a part of your publication "to a controversy with groups of Russian revolutionary socialism which consider a controversy with Narodnaya Volya more timely for them than the struggle against the Russian Government and the other exploiters of the Russian people". Hoping that time itself will settle the questions at issue in your favour, you do not consider it useful "to stress" your "not particularly serious disagreement" with the Emancipators of Labour, as you choose to call us,* "by direct blows at a group the majority of whose members may any day now be in the ranks of *Narodnaya Volya*". This transformation of "Emancipators of Labour" into members of Narodnaya Volya appears all the more probable to you as, to quote your own words, "Mr. Plekhanov himself, as he said in the preface to his pamphlet, has already undergone a sufficiently great evolution in his political and social convictions" and you "have reason to hope for new steps" on my part "in the same direction". Reaching that point in my "evolution"—a point which apparently seems to you the apogee of possible development of Russian socialism at present—you hope I may acknowledge still another aspect of the practical task of every group in the social army fighting the common enemy, namely, "that to disrupt the organisation of that army, even if one sees or assumes certain shortcomings in it, is permissible only either to the enemies of that army's *cause*" (among whom you do not include me), "or to a group which by its own activity, its own strength and organisation, is capable of becoming a social army at a particular historical minute". But such a role, in your opinion, "is a matter of a remote and perhaps somewhat doubtful future" for the "Emancipators of Labour" as such, i.e., for people who have not yet completed the cycle of their transformations and are now something like Narodnaya Volya larvae or pupae.

Such, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, is the almost word-for-word content of all that you said about my pamphlet. Perhaps I have wearied you with my abundance of quotations from your own article, but,

* Concerning this name which you have invented, I take the liberty, incidentally, of noting the following: "Emancipation of Labour" is our group's motto and name. But to call the Emancipation of Labour group "Emanicipators of Labour" is a fault against etymology. I shall explain this by means of an example. Your collaborators talk a lot about "government of the people"; with a little consistency they should agree that the very name of their "party"—Narodnaya Volya—is but the motto, the expression of the striving for a political system the idea of which is linked with the term "government of the people". But does that mean that they can claim the title of *governors of the people?*

**NOS CONTROVERSES,** *par G. Plechanoff*

**БИБЛІОТЕКА СОВРЕМЕННАГО СОЦІАЛИЗМА**

*Выпускъ Третій.*

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# НАШИ РАЗНОГЛАСІЯ

**Г. Плеханова.**

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ЦѢНА 1 РУБ.

**ЖЕНЕВА**

**Типографія группы „Освобожденіе Труда"**

**1884**

Title-page of the first edition of *Our Differences*

on the one hand, I was afraid I would again receive the reproach that my "quotations are not exact", and, besides, I did not consider it superfluous to recall your words in full to the reader, so as to make it easier for him to pronounce the final verdict in our case. You know that the reading public is the chief and supreme judge in all disputes which arise in the free "republic of speech". It is, therefore, not surprising that each of the parties must take all steps to make the true character of the question under dispute clear to the public.

After setting forth your remarks on my pamphlet and your considerations on the tactics adopted by the Emancipation of Labour group towards the "Narodnaya Volya party", I now go on, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, to explanations without which it is impossible to understand correctly the motives which prompted my comrades and me to act precisely in this way and no other.

Actually, I could say that all talk of such motives is completely unnecessary, and the reader may find it of very little interest. How so? Is not the question of the immediate tasks, the tactics and the scientific substantiation of all our revolutionaries' activity the most important and most vital question in Russian life for us? Can it be regarded as already settled finally and without appeal? Is not every revolutionary writer obliged to promote its clarification by all means at his disposal and with all the attention he is capable of? Or can this clarification be considered useful only if it results in the conviction that although the Russian revolutionaries have not the pope's infallibility, they have not made a single mistake in their practical work or a single error in their theoretical arguments, that "all is well" in both these respects? Or must those who do not share that pleasant confidence be condemned to silence, and may the purity of their intentions be suspected every time they take up their pen to call the revolutionaries' attention to the way the revolutionary cause is being conducted, and how, as far as they can judge, it should be conducted? If Spinoza said as early as in the seventeenth century that in a free state everybody must be granted the right to think as he pleases and say what he thinks, may that right be placed in doubt at the end of the nineteenth century by members of a socialist party, if even of the most backward state in Europe? If the Russian socialists recognise in principle the right of free speech and include the demand for it in their programmes, they cannot restrict its *enjoyment* to the group or "party" which claims hegemony in a particular period of the revolutionary movement. I think that now, when our legal literature is persecuted most ruthlessly, when in our fatherland "all that is living and honest is mown down"[72] in the field of thought as in all others—I think that at such a time a revolutionary writer should rather be asked the reason for his *silence* than for the *fact of the publication* of one or other of his works. If you agree with this—

and you can hardly fail to—you will also agree that one cannot condemn to hypocrisy a revolutionary writer who, as Herzen splendidly puts it, must sacrifice very, very much to "the human dignity of free speech". And if that also is true, can he be censured if he says in plain terms and without any reservation what he thinks of any of the programmes of revolutionary activity? I am sure, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, that you will answer that question in the negative. For that I have one guarantee, among others, in your having signed the "Announcement of the Publication of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*", page VIII of which tells us: "Socialism, like every other vital historical idea, gives rise to numerous, though not particularly substantial, differences among its supporters, and many questions in it, both theoretical and practical, remain disputable. Owing to the greater intricacy, the greater difficulties and the greater recency of the development of Russian socialism, there is perhaps a still larger number of more or less considerable differences in the views of Russian socialists. But, we repeat, this just goes to show that the Russian socialist party is a living one which stimulates energetic thought and firm convictions among its supporters, a party which has not contented itself with dogmatic belief in formulae learned by rote."

I do not understand how an editor who signed that announcement can be dissatisfied at the writings of a group whose differences with Narodnaya Volya he considers "not particularly substantial" (*Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, section II, page 65, line 10 from bottom); I cannot imagine that the journal which published that announcement can be hostile to people who "have not contented themselves with dogmatic belief in formulae learned by rote". For one cannot entertain the thought that the lines I have quoted were written merely to explain to the reader why "the programme put forward by *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* embraces views which are to a certain extent not identical with one another" ("Announcement of the Publication of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*", p. VII). Nor can one presume that after setting itself such a "definite programme" *Vestnik* will see a vital significance in the "more or less considerable differences between the Russian socialists" only if they "do not go beyond the limits" of that programme, which "embraces views which are to a certain extent not identical with one another". That would mean being tolerant only to members of one's own church, admitting with Shchedrin's characters that opposition is harmless only if it does no harm. Such liberalism, such tolerance, would not be of great comfort to Russian "nonconformist"[73] socialists, of whom there are apparently no few now since you speak yourself in your article of "*groups* which consider a controversy with Narodnaya Volya more timely", etc. From these words it is obvious that there are at least two

such groups and that *Vestnik,* "which intends to be the organ of unification of all the Russian socialist-revolutionaries", is still far from having attained its aim. I think that such a failure should have widened, not narrowed the limits of the inherent tolerance of its editorial board.

You advise me not "to disrupt the organisation" of our revolutionary army. But allow me first of all to inquire what "social army" you are talking about. If by that metaphor you mean the organisation of the "Narodnaya Volya party", I never thought my pamphlet would have such destructive influence on it, and I am convinced that the first member of Narodnaya Volya that you ask will put you at ease on that score. But if by "disrupting the organisation of the social army" you mean winning to our group people who for some reason or other are outside the "Narodnaya Volya party", the "organisation of the social army" only stands to gain by that, for in it there will appear a new group, composed, so to speak, of new recruits. Besides, since when has discussion of the path followed by this or that army and the expression of the assurance that there is another path which will lead more surely and quickly to victory been considered as "disruption of the organisation of that army"? I think such a confusion of concepts is possible only among the barbarous hordes of the Asiatic despotic states, but certainly not among the armies of modern civilised states. For who is not aware that criticism of the tactics adopted by this or that army can harm only the military reputation of that army's generals, who are perhaps not disinclined to "lay the finger of silence" on indiscreet mouths. But what has that to do with the "organisation of the army", and who, indeed, are its leaders? You know that such leaders can be either elected by the rank and file or appointed from above. Let us agree for a minute that the Executive Committee plays the role of leader to our revolutionary army. The question is: are even those who did not take part in its election obliged to submit to it, or, if it was appointed from above, who had the power, and what power, to appoint it?

You include the Emancipation of Labour group among the "groups of Russian revolutionary socialism which consider a controversy with *Narodnaya Volya* more timely for them than the struggle against the Russian Government and the other exploiters of the Russian people". Allow me to ask you whether you think that the peculiarities of the Russian people and the "present historical moment" also include the circumstance that the struggle "against its exploiters" can be waged without the dissemination of the ideas which express the meaning and the tendency of that struggle. Is it for me, a former "rebel",[74] to

prove to you, a former editor of the journal *Vperyod,* that the growth of the revolutionary movement is inconceivable without the dissemination of the most progressive, the soundest, in a word, the most revolutionary ideas and concepts among the appropriate section of society? Are you one whose attention must be drawn to the circumstance that socialism—"as expressed" in the works of Marx and Engels—is the most powerful spiritual weapon in the struggle against all possible exploiters of the people? The dissemination of what the writers just named taught is precisely the purpose of my comrades, as is clearly stated in the announcement of the publication of the *Library of Modern Socialism.* There can be no doubt that the socialism of Marx's school differs in many respects from "Russian socialism as expressed" in our revolutionary movement as a whole and in the "Narodnaya Volya party" in particular, for "Russian socialism" still wears a long Bakuninist pigtail down its back. It is also quite natural and understandable that Russian Marxists are therefore not infrequently obliged to adopt a negative attitude towards certain "formulae learned by rote", but it by no means follows from this that they prefer the struggle against the revolutionaries to the struggle against the government. In *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* a certain Mr. Tarasov exerts himself to refute one of the fundamental propositions of Marx's historical theory.* His article is given the first place, the foremost corner, so to speak, in No. 2 of *Vestnik.*[76] Does this mean that Mr. Tarasov regards a controversy with Marx as "more timely than the struggle against the Russian Government and the other exploiters of the Russian people"? Or does a controversy which is appropriate and "timely" coming from the pen of Dühringists, Bakuninists and Blanquists become an insult to the grandeur of the Russian revolution as soon as Marxists raise their voice? Is such an attitude on the part of an author who has so often declared his agreement with Marx's theories fair, nay more, is it explainable?

* I still hope to have a special talk with Mr. Tarasov when he has finished his article. But let me now note that he does not at all understand either Marx or his "epigoni" and in his inviolable simplicity it is the petty-bourgeois George Molinari, and not the great socialist Karl Marx, he polemises with. Mr. Tarasov's "method" greatly embarrasses me in exactly the same way. The honourable author probably borrowed it from the same bourgeois science whose "bankruptcy" he so irrefutably proved in the first issue of *Vestnik.*[75] Just as bourgeois writers were in the habit, when they wished to prove their "natural laws", of inventing "savages" who naturally never dreamed of anything as much as "saving and accumulating capital", so Mr. Tarasov now quite consciously ignores the modern findings of ethnology and invents "savages" who are obvious Blanquists and desire only to "seize power" over their neighbours. This originally *inductive* method threatens to reduce to complete "bankruptcy" Mr. Tarasov's Dühringian socialist "science".

I am well aware that it is by no means easy to settle the question of our revolutionary party's tasks from the point of view of Marx's theories. The fundamental principles of these theories are, in fact, only the "major term" in the syllogism, so that people who equally recognise the correctness and the great scientific significance of this first term may either agree or disagree as to the conclusion, according to the way in which they understand the "minor" term, which is this or that assessment of the present Russian situation. That is why I am not at all surprised at your disagreement with our programme, although I think that if you were still a Marxist you would not be capable of "proving" to me that "my" programme contains "more serious shortcomings and unpractical things" than I "accuse the Narodnaya Volya party of". But no disagreements in assessing the present Russian situation will explain to me and my comrades the unfair attitude that you adopted towards us in your article.

I appeal to the reader's impartiality. On the desk before the editor of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* lie two pamphlets published by the Emancipation of Labour group. One of them is a translation of a work by Engels which the honourable editor calls "the most remarkable work of socialist literature in recent years".

The second, in the words of the same editor, deserves, as far as one part of it is concerned, "the same attention as any serious work on socialism". The second part contains "a controversy on the past and present activity of Narodnaya Volya", a controversy aimed at proving to that party that "having dealt the death-blow to all the traditions of orthodox Narodism by its practical activity and having done so much for the development of the revolutionary movement in Russia, the Narodnaya Volya party cannot find a justification for itself—nor should it seek one—outside modern scientific socialism".* And that *part of a part* of the Emancipation of Labour group publications proves, in the opinion of our editor, that the group sets itself almost exclusively the task of "polemising with Narodnaya Volya" and is ready, for that purpose, to give up the struggle against the government! Even the least impartial reader will agree that such an inference from the part to the whole is not justified by the character of the other parts of that whole.

I do not deny that "one part" of my pamphlet is controversial, or to be more exact, critical. But the fact that a controversy with Narodnaya Volya was not the exclusive aim even of the part incriminated is obvious if only from what you, Pyotr Lavrovich, have overlooked, namely, that my criticism was not

* See the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle*, p. 20, [p. 66 of this volume].

confined to the Narodnaya Volya period in the Russian revolutionary movement. I also criticised other stages in it. And if, indeed, from the fact of my printed and, moreover, *motivated* expression of disagreement with one revolutionary programme or another it follows that a controversy against that programme is the main aim of my writing, the accusation brought against me should, in the interest of truth, have been considerably extended. It should have been said that the principal aim of my writing was to polemise with the anarchists, the Bakuninists, the Narodniks of the old trend, the members of Narodnaya Volya and, finally, the "Marxists" who do not understand the significance of the political struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. Moreover, it should also have been taken into account that "the other part of Mr. Plekhanov's pamphlet is devoted to the exposition and proof of the philosophical and historical side of the teaching of Marx and Engels". Then it would have been clear that I was guilty of spreading the revolutionary views that I share and of polemising with those which seem to me erroneous. But there is more to it than that. A careful examination of all the circumstances of the case would have revealed that my crime had been committed "with pre-considered intent", since as far back as in the "Announcement of the Publication of the *Library of Modern Socialism*" P. Axelrod and I expressly stated that the purpose of those editions boiled down to:

1) The spreading of the ideas of scientific socialism by translating into Russian the most important works of the school of Marx and Engels and original works intended for readers with various degrees of education.

2) The criticism of the teachings prevalent among our revolutionaries and the elaboration of the most important questions in Russian social life from the standpoint of scientific socialism and the interests of the working population of Russia.

That is the true character of the "deed" that provoked your dissatisfaction. To make even a single reproach to the man who committed it one must first prove that there is now no need for criticism of the programmes and teachings prevalent among us revolutionaries, or that criticism must be transformed, as Belinsky once said—naturally in another connection—into "a modest servant of authority, a flattering repeater of worn-out commonplaces". But I have already said that there is hardly a writer who would undertake to support such an unheard-of proposition, and you, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, will certainly on no account assert that it is time for our revolutionary party to "content itself with dogmatic belief in formulae learned by rote". If that is so, then

### *Wozu der Laerm?*

However, many people, although they cannot bring themselves to deny completely the significance of criticism in our revolutionary literature, apparently think that not every person or individual group of persons has the right to criticise the teachings and tactics of an "active party". Since my pamphlet was published I have frequently had the occasion to hear remarks in that vein. "Party of action", "the traditions of Narodnaya Volya", "heroic struggle"—such have been the phrases used to disguise fear of the slightest reference to "formulae learned by rote" of our revolutionary catechism. My right to express disagreement with the "Narodnaya Volya party", or rather with its writings, has been contested with utter disregard of who is right—the publicists of our "party of action" or I. As I listened to these attacks on my pamphlet I could not help recalling the argument of the "Bachelor of Salamanca", Don Inigo-i-Medroso-Comodios-i-Papalamiendo,[77] in the famous controverse des mais.

"Mais, monsieur, malgré toutes les belles choses que vous venez de me dire," this dialectician said, "vous m'avouerez que votre église anglicane, si respectable, n'existait pas avant dom Luther et avant dom Eccolampade; vous êtes tout nouveaux: donc vous n'êtes pas de la maison! " And I wonder whether the arguments furnished by the great satirist to his bitterest enemies can be used seriously by Russian revolutionaries and whether the caricature of the Catholic "bachelor" is to become the perfect image of Russian revolutionary dialecticians. You will agree, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, that there is nothing sadder than such a prospect and that no anxiety for the integrity of the "organisation" means anything at all in comparison with fear of the possibility of such terrible intellectual degeneration!

It is in the interests of Narodnaya Volya to counteract as resolutely as possible the degeneration of our revolutionary literature into revolutionary scholasticism. And yet, your article, my dear Pyotr Lavrovich, is more likely to maintain than to weaken the zeal of our revolutionary "bachelors". The conviction expressed by you that "to disrupt the organisation" of the revolutionary army "is permissible only either to the enemies of that army's *cause* ... or to a group which by its own activity, its own strength and organisation, is capable of becoming a social army at a particular historical minute", your pointing out that, as regards our group, "this role is a matter of a remote and perhaps somewhat doubtful future"—all this can give grounds for the conclusion that, in your opinion, although our group "may have its own view at its age",[78] it must carefully conceal it every time it contradicts the opinion of the

editors of one or other of the "Narodnaya Volya party" periodicals. Of course it would be wrong to draw such a conclusion from what you wrote, but one must not forget that people do not always judge by the rules of strict logic.

The very principle you express in the lines just quoted can give rise to many unfortunate misunderstandings. Those lines can be a completely "untimely" *avis* for nonconformist readers, whom they can lead on to approximately the following thoughts. *It is permissible* for a group capable of becoming "a social army at a particular historical minute" to "disrupt the organisation" of our revolutionary army. All the more it is "permissible" for the latter, as a tried and tested force, "to disrupt the organisation" of "nonconformist" groups whose hegemony it considers a matter of a remote and "perhaps somewhat doubtful" future. But which revolutionary group do the editors of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* consider to be a "social army"? Probably the "Narodnaya Volya party". That means—but the conclusion is clear, and it is an extremely sad conclusion for groups which have hitherto taken for granted, as we have, that the outlooks of others may be criticised but that the organisations of others must not be "disrupted" and that it is better to advance "alongside of them, *supporting and supplementing one another*".*

Our group's future seems doubtful to you. I am prepared to doubt of it myself as far as our group itself, not the outlooks which it represents, is concerned.**

The fact of the matter is as follows.

It is no secret to anybody that our revolutionary movement is now going through a critical period. Narodnaya Volya's terrorist tactics set our party quite a number of highly important and vital problems. But unfortunately these problems are still unsolved. The stock of Bakuninist and Proudhonist theories that were in use among us proved insufficient even for the correct *posing* of those questions. The stick that was previously bent over in one direction has now been bent back in the other. The former completely unjustified rejection of "politics" has now given place to a no more justified confidence in the omnipotence of conspiratorial "political scheming". The Petersburg Narodnaya Volya programme was Bakuninism turned upside-

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* See the "Announcement of the Publication of the *Library of Modern Socialism*", note to p. 3.[79]

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] It is now strange even to read these controversies on the future of Social-Democracy in Russia. It now predominates among revolutionaries and would have been naturally still stronger were it not for the disagreements within it.

down with its Slavophile contrasting of Russia to the West, its idealisation of the primitive forms of national life and its faith in the social wonder-working of our intelligentsia's revolutionary organisations. The theoretical principles from which the programme departs have remained unchanged, the practical conclusions alone being diametrically opposed to the former ones. Renouncing political abstention, Bakuninism has described an arc of 180 degrees and has been revived as a Russian variety of Blanquism basing its revolutionary hopes on Russia's economic backwardness.

This Blanquism is now attempting to create its own particular theory and has recently been fairly fully expressed in Mr. Tikhomirov's article "*What Can We Expect from the Revolution?*"[80] In that article he makes use of the whole arsenal of the Russian Blanquists to defend his own programme. One cannot deny Mr. Tikhomirov's ability to use the weapon: he skilfully marshals the facts in his favour, carefully avoids any contradictory phenomena and appeals, not without success, to the reader's feelings when he has no hope of influencing his logic. His weapon has been renovated, cleaned and sharpened. But if you examine it more attentively you will see that it is nothing but the old-fashioned sword of Bakuninism and Tkachovism[81] embellished with a new trade-mark, that of V. V.,[82] an expert in reactionary theories in Petersburg. Below I shall give a few extracts from P. N. Tkachov's *"Open Letter to Frederick Engels"*, and you will see for yourself, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, that your comrade is only repeating what was said ten years ago by the editor of *Nabat* and what drew a sharp answer from Engels in a pamphlet not unknown to you, *Soziales aus Russland*. Have ten years of the movement taught our writers nothing better? Does the "Narodnaya Volya party" refuse to understand the historical significance of its own sacrifices, the political importance of its genuinely heroic struggle against absolutism? Not being in Russia, neither you nor I can say anything definite about the state of mind now prevalent among the members of Narodnaya Volya. But as far as can be judged from what is going on outside the Narodnaya Volya organisation, we can be certain that the revolutionary movement is not destined to be revived under the banner of Tkachovism. Our revolutionary youth is irresolute and hesitant, it has lost faith in the old forms of action, and the number of new programmes and theories which now appear among it proves that not a single one of them is able to embrace all the real interests and all the vital tasks of our movement. Scepticism is coming into its own. Narodnaya Volya is losing its former fascination. The period of more than three years that has elapsed since the event of March 1[83] has

been characterised by a fall of revolutionary energy in Russia. This sad fact cannot be disputed. But it seems to me that a great many people offer too superficial an explanation of it. They say that our movement has weakened under the impact of persecution by the government. I have too much faith in the "timeliness" of the Russian revolution to be satisfied with such a hackneyed explanation. I think that the Russian revolution has an enormous, invincible potential energy, and that reaction is raising its head only because we are unable to transform that energy from potential into kinetic. Russia's social tasks today cannot find a satisfactory solution in the traditional conspiratorial programme of Blanquism. Little by little that hackneyed programme will become the Procrustean bed of the Russian revolution. One by one all the methods of action, all the elements of the movement which have been its strength and the conditions of its influence, will be sacrificed to its spectral and fantastic aims. The terrorist struggle, agitation among the people and in society and the rousing and development of popular initiative are all only of secondary importance for the Blanquist. His attention is centred first and foremost on conspiracy aimed at seizing power. He does not bother about the development of the social forces or the establishment of institutions calculated to make a return to the old regime impossible. All he endeavours to do is to combine the already existing forces of society. He has no regard for history, does not try to understand its laws or to direct his revolutionary activity in accordance with them; he simply substitutes his own conspiratorial skill for history.* And as the growth of the revolutionary forces in Russia is far from being complete, as those forces are still in the process des Werdens, this violent arresting of their development is bound to have very harmful consequences and to make reaction more secure instead of promoting the cause of progress. In this case, one of two things may happen. Either the future of the Russian revolution will be placed at stake in a plot which has less chances of success than any other—the *"social-revolutionary"* plot—or a new force will emerge out of the womb of oppositional and revolutionary Russia, a force which will push the "Narodnaya Volya party" into the background and take the cause of our movement in its own hands.

It would be very disadvantageous for the socialists if the leadership in the struggle were to pass into the hands of our liberals. This would at once deprive them of their former

* An obvious example: one of the paragraphs of the Statute of the so-called Nechayevists says expressly that "the general principle of the organisation is not to convince, i.e., *not to produce forces, but to unite those already existing*".[84]

influence and postpone for many years the formation of a socialist party among the progressive strata of the people. That is why we refer our revolutionary youth to Marxism, that algebra of the revolution, as I called it in my pamphlet, that "programme" which teaches its supporters to make use of every step in social development for the revolutionary education of the working class. And I am sure that sooner or later our youth and our workers' groups will adopt this, the only revolutionary programme. *In this sense,* the "future" of our group is by no means "doubtful", and I do not understand where you get your scepticism from in this case—you, a writer who, as recently as in the same No. 2 of *Vestnik,* called Marx "the great teacher who ushered socialism into its scientific phase, proved its historical legitimacy and at the same time initiated the organisational unity of the workers' revolutionary party".[85] For one cannot profess the theoretical principles of the "great teacher" and deduce Bakuninism or Blanquism from them in practice.

I repeat that the most consistent Marxists may disagree in the appraisal of the present Russian situation. That is why we in no case wish to cover our programme with the authority of a great name.* And moreover, we are ready to admit in advance that our programme contains many "shortcomings and unpractical things", like any first attempt at applying a particular scientific theory to the analysis of very complicated and entangled social relations. But the fact is that so far neither my comrades nor I have a finally elaborated programme, complete from the first paragraph to the last.[86] We only show our comrades the *direction* in which the answer to the revolutionary problems interesting them is to be sought; we only defend the reliable and unmistaken criterion with the help of which they will finally be able to strip off themselves the rags of the revolutionary metaphysics which has so far held undivided sway over our minds; we only prove that "our revolutionary movement, far from losing anything, will gain a lot if the Russian Narodniks and the Russian Narodnaya Volya at last become Russian Marxists and a new, higher standpoint reconciles all the groups existing among us".** Our programme has still to be completed and completed there, on the spot, by those same groups of workers and revolutionary youth who will fight for its fulfilment. Corrections, additions and improvements to this programme are quite natural, inevitable and indispensable. We are

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Quite recently, just a few days ago, this same statement of mine was understood by the Social-Democratic newspaper *Proletary* as expressing uncertainty as to the correctness of my opinion. But it has a different explanation. I never wished to jurare in verba magistri.

** *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* p. 56 [p. 91 of this volume].

not afraid of criticism, we wait for it impatiently and will naturally not stop our ears to it like Famusov.[87] In presenting this first attempt at a programme for the Russian Marxists to the comrades working in Russia, we are far from wishing to compete with Narodnaya Volya; on the contrary, there is nothing we desire more than full and final agreement with that party. We think that the Narodnaya Volya party *must* become a Marxist party if it at all wishes to remain faithful to its revolutionary traditions and to get the Russian movement out of its present stagnation.

When I speak of the revolutionary traditions of Narodnaya Volya I have in mind not only the terrorist struggle, not only the political murders and attempted murders; I mean the broadening of the channel of the Russian movement which was the necessary consequence of that struggle and which showed us how narrow, abstract, and one-sided were the theories we professed at that time. Dynamite killed those theories along with Alexander II. But both Russian absolutism and Bakuninism in all its varieties are only dead, not buried. They are no longer living, they are not developing, but they are still rotting and contaminating with their corruption the whole of Russia, from her most conservative to her most revolutionary sections. Only the wholesome atmosphere of Marxism can help Narodnaya Volya to finish the work it began so brilliantly, because, as Lassalle said, "the glow of dawn is seen earlier from the high peaks of science than from the bustle of everyday life". Marxism will show our Narodovoltsi how, while bringing into the movement new strata as yet almost untapped by them, they can at the same time avoid the reefs of fatal one-sidedness; how, while utilising the progressive aspects of the maturing liberal revolution, they can nevertheless remain perfectly loyal to the cause of the working class and of socialism. Being completely free from any narrow sectarianism, we wish Narodnaya Volya, not failure, but further success, and if we stretch out *only one* hand to it for reconciliation, the reason is that with the other we show it the theory of modern scientific socialism with the words, "*In this thou shalt conquer!* "

Unfortunately Spencer is quite right when he notes that every organisation is conservative in direct proportion to its perfection. The stern practice of struggle against absolutism evolved the strong and powerful organisation of Narodnaya Volya. This absolutely necessary and highly useful organisation is no exception to the general rule; it is an obstacle to theoretical successes for the Narodnaya Volya party, as it now strives to raise into dogmas and to perpetuate the programme and the teachings which could have but a temporary and transitory significance. At the end of my pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle*,

I expressed the hope that *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* would be able to adopt a critical attitude towards the theoretical errors in the programme and the mistakes in the practical work of Narodnaya Volya. "We wish to hope," I said, "that the new publication will take a sober view of our revolutionary party's tasks, on whose fulfilment the party's future depends." I expected the Geneva *Vestnik* to go further than the Petersburg Narodnaya Volya. But if you, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, read Mr. Tikhomirov's article attentively, you will see yourself that the views it expresses are a huge step backwards even compared with Narodnaya Volya. And this is quite natural. The theoretical premises of Narodnaya Volya's old programme are so precarious and contradictory that to go on relying on them means to go downwards. It is to be expected that other, progressive elements of the "Narodnaya Volya party" will at last raise their voices and that the revolutionary movement within that party will proceed as it has always done everywhere, i.e., *from below*.

But until that happens we shall not cease to rouse public opinion among our revolutionaries, no matter how many attacks, reproaches and accusations our literary activity provokes, no matter how much we are pained by the fact that even you, dear Pyotr Lavrovich, show dissatisfaction at that activity, you whose approval and sympathy we still so recently seemed able to rely upon. We engage in controversy with the Narodnaya Volya supporters in the interests of their own cause, and we hope that they will agree with us sooner or later. But if our sincerity is suspected, if they see us as enemies, and not as friends, we shall console ourselves with the consciousness that our cause is a just one. Being convinced Marxists, we will remain true to the motto of our teacher and go our way, letting people say what they think fit.[88]

Geneva,
July 22, 1884

With friendly greetings,
Yours respectfully,
*G. PLEKHANOV*

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. WHAT WE ARE REPROACHED WITH

What I said above about attacks, reproaches and accusations was not an empty phrase. It is still quite a short time since the Emancipation of Labour group came into existence, and yet how many objections we have had to listen to, the only cause for which was an obstinate refusal to examine the substance of our programme; how many misunderstandings have been caused only by the desire to ascribe to us thoughts and intentions which never entered our heads! By more or less veiled hints, avoiding "direct blows", not mentioning our names but using our expressions and twisting and distorting our thoughts, some have directly and others indirectly represented us as dried-up bookworms and dogmatists ready to sacrifice the people's happiness and welfare to the orderliness and harmony of the theories which they have hatched in their studies. And the theories themselves have been branded as a kind of imported commodity which it is just as dangerous for Russia to spread there as to import English opium to China. The time came long ago to put an end to this confusion of conceptions, to clear up these more or less sincere misunderstandings!

I begin with what is most important.

In the first chapter of my pamphlet I said a few words deriding revolutionaries who are afraid of "bourgeois" economic progress and who inevitably arrive at the "amazing conclusion that Russia's economic backwardness was a most reliable ally of the revolution and that stagnation was to be blazoned as the first and only paragraph of our minimum programme". I said that the Russian anarchists, Narodniks and Blanquists could become "revolutionary in substance and not in name alone" only if they "revolutionised their own heads and learned to understand the course of historical development and led it instead of asking old mother history to mark time while they laid new, straighter and better beaten roads for her".*

* *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* pp. 12-13 [pp. 60, 61 of this volume].

At the end of the third chapter I endeavoured to convince my readers that "to bind together in one two so fundamentally different matters as the overthrow of absolutism and the socialist revolution, to wage revolutionary struggle in the belief that these two elements of social development will *coincide* in the history of our country *means to put off the advent of both*".* I further expressed the thought that "the rural population of today, living in backward social conditions, is not only less capable of conscious political *initiative* than the industrial workers, it is also less *responsive* to the movement which our revolutionary intelligentsia has begun...." "And besides," I continued, "the peasantry is now going through a difficult, critical period. The previous 'ancestral foundations' of its economy are crumbling, the ill-fated village commune itself is being discredited in its eyes, as is admitted even by such 'ancestral' organs of Narodism as *Nedelya*; and the new forms of labour and life are only in the process of formation, and this creative process is more intensive in the industrial centres."

From these and similar passages it was concluded that my comrades and I, convinced that the immediate future in our country belongs to capitalism, were ready to drive Russia's working population into the iron embraces of capital and considered as "untimely" any struggle waged by the people for their economic emancipation.

In his article "*What Can We Expect from the Revolution?*" Mr. Tikhomirov, describing the "curious role" of public figures whose programmes "have no link with life", gives a particularly detailed picture of the "tragic situation" of socialists who think "that in order to work out the material conditions necessary to make the socialist system possible, Russia must necessarily go through the phase of capitalism". Mr. Tikhomirov imagines the situation as simply desperate; in it

*Not a step but leads to horror!*

Our socialists have to "fuss about creating a class in whose name they wish to work, and for that they have to desire the speedy dismissal of the millions of working people who exist in reality but, having the misfortune not to be proletarians, have no role in the scientific scheme of social progress". But the fall from grace of these pedants of socialism cannot be confined to the sphere of "fuss" and "desires". Wer A sagt, muss auch B sagen! "Had he been consistent and placed the interests of the revolution above his own moral purity, the socialist should then have entered into a direct alliance with the knights of *primitive*

* *Socialism and the Political Struggle*, p. 76 [p. 104 of this volume].

*accumulation* whose hearts and hands do not tremble at developing various 'surplus-values' and uniting the workers in the all-saving situation of the beggarly proletarian." The revolutionary is thus transformed into a supporter of the exploitation of labour, and Mr. Tikhomirov is very "timely" when he asks: "Where, then, is the difference between the socialist and the bourgeois? "

I don't know just what "socialists" the honourable writer has in view in this case. As we see, he has no liking for "direct blows", and without mentioning his adversaries he merely informs the readers that "some other people" think this or that. The reader is completely unaware who those *other people* are and whether it is true that they *think* what Mr. Tikhomirov *says* they do. Neither do I know whether his readers share his horror of the position of the socialists whom he criticises. But the subject he touches upon is so interesting, the accusations which he brings against *certain* socialists so much resemble accusations made more than once against us, his whole programme and "what he expects from the revolution" are to such an extent determined by the negative solution of the question of capitalism that it is his article which must provide the *occasion* for as complete and comprehensive an elucidation of this question as possible.

And so, "must" or "must not" Russia go through the "school" of capitalism?

The answer to this question is of the highest importance for the correct posing of our socialist party's tasks. It is therefore not surprising that it has for a long time claimed the attention of Russian revolutionaries. Until recent times the great majority of these were inclined to answer the question categorically in the negative. I also had my share of the general infatuation, and in the editorial of No. 3 of *Zemlya i Volya* I attempted to prove that "history is by no means a monotonous mechanical process"; that capitalism is a necessary predecessor of socialism only "in the West, where the village commune broke up as early as in the struggle against medieval feudalism"; that in our country, where the commune "constitutes the most characteristic feature of the peasantry's relations to the land", the triumph of socialism may be achieved in an entirely different way; collective ownership of the land may serve as the starting-point for the organisation of all aspects of the people's economic life on socialist principles. "That is why," I concluded, "our main task is to create a militant popular-revolutionary organisation to carry out a popular-revolutionary upheaval in the nearest possible future." [89]

Thus, as early as January 1879, I supported the very same proposition that Mr. Tikhomirov defends, true,

*Mit ein bischen anderen Worten,*[90]

now, in 1884, when he says that "beyond the mysterious line where the waves of history's flood seethe and foam", or, to put it more simply, after the fall of the present social and political system, "we shall find" not the reign of capitalism, as "certain people" maintain, but "the foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia". The necessity for creating a "militant popular-revolutionary organisation" is relegated to the background by Mr. Tikhomirov and gives place to a conspiratorial organisation of our intelligentsia which is to seize power and thus give the signal for the popular revolution. In this respect his views differ as much from those I formerly held as the programme of Narodnaya Volya from that of Zemlya i Volya. But Mr. Tikhomirov's mistakes about the economic side of the question are almost "identical" with those I made in the article mentioned. Consequently, in answering Mr. Tikhomirov I shall have to make frequent corrections to arguments which once appeared to me perfectly convincing and final.

Precisely because Mr. Tikhomirov's standpoint is not distinguished by freshness or novelty I cannot confine myself to criticising his arguments, but must examine as fully as possible all that had already been said to support a negative answer to the question which now occupies us. Russian literature in the preceding decades gives us far more wealthy critical material than the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?"

## 2. POSING OF THE QUESTION

Actually, Mr. Tikhomirov was unable even to present the question properly.

Instead of saying all that he could to defend the possibility of laying "the foundation of the socialist organisation" on the ruins of the contemporary social and political system in Russia, Mr. Tikhomirov devotes almost a whole chapter of his article to criticising the "consolation" which people who believe in the "historical inevitability of Russian capitalism" still have. In general he somehow too quickly and unexpectedly not so much passes as leaps from the objective standpoint he held at the beginning of the first chapter, in which he sought to prove that "the logic of history, the historical course of events, and so on", are "an elemental force which nobody can divert from the path it has chosen for the very reason that the path itself is not an arbitrary choice but expresses the resultant force of the combi-

nation of those forces outside which society contains nothing real, capable of producing any action whatever". We ask: is that "elemental force" stopped by considerations of the *inconsolability* of the Russian socialists? Obviously not. So before discussing what would happen to the Russian socialists if capitalism were to triumph, Mr. Tikhomirov should have tried to form a "correct idea of that force and its direction", an idea which "every public figure must have, for no political programme which does not conform to it can have any significance whatever", as the same Mr. Tikhomirov seeks to convince us. But he prefers the reverse method. He endeavours first of all to intimidate his readers, and then, in the "following chapters", outlines "roughly" the "aims and means of our revolution", which allow us to believe in the possibility of diverting the cup of capitalism from Russia's lips. Without saying for the time being how far he succeeds in his attempt to intimidate his socialist readers, I shall merely note that such a method of argument shoud not be used in solving serious social questions.

For reasons which it would be out of place to consider here, the Russian intellectual had to take an intense interest in "the role of the individual in history". Much has been written on this "cursed" question, and it has been still more discussed in various groups; and yet Russian public figures are still often incapable even of distinguishing the sphere of the *necessary* from that of the *desirable* and are prepared at times to argue with history in exactly the same way as Khlestakov[91] with the waiter in the inn. "But I must eat something! I can waste away altogether like this," said the immortal Ivan Alexandrovich. What kind of a socialist will I be after that? Shall I not have to "enter into a direct alliance with the knights of primitive accumulation! " some reader may exclaim, intimidated by Mr. Tikhomirov. But it is to be hoped that Mr. Tikhomirov's argument on the invincible force of the "logic of history" will do much towards correcting this big "blunder of immature thought".

The Emancipation of Labour group's standpoint, for its part, leads, it seems to me, to the removal of such abuses of the "subjective method in sociology". For us the desirable arises from the necessary and in no case replaces it in our arguments. For us the freedom of the individual consists in the knowledge of the laws of nature—including, incidentally, the laws of history—and in the ability to *submit* to those laws, that is, incidentally, to *combine them in the most favourable manner.* We are convinced that when "a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement ... it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments the obstacles offered.... *But it can shorten and lessen the*

*birth-pangs*",*[92] It is precisely this "shortening and lessening the birth-pangs" that, in our opinion, constitutes one of the most important tasks of socialists who are convinced of the "historical inevitability of capitalism in Russia". Their consolation must lie in the *possibility* of lessening those birth-pangs. The *consistency* which Mr. Tikhomirov tries to impose upon them is, as we shall see later, that of the metaphysician who has not the slightest notion of the dialectics of social development.

But let us not wander away from our subject.

### 3. A. I. HERZEN

As early as the beginning of the fifties A.I. Herzen, in proving the inevitability of the socialist revolution in the West, set rising Russian democracy the

*Ever-alarming and new question*

which since then

*So many restless heads has wearied...*
*So many sufferings has brought*

and which provided the ocassion, incidentally, for our "controversy with the Narodnaya Volya party" too.

"Must Russia pass through all the phases of European development, or will her life proceed according to other laws?"** he asks in his "Letters to Linton".[93]

"I absolutely deny the necessity for these repetitions," the famous writer hastens to answer. "We may have to pass through the difficult and painful trials of the historical development of our predecessors, but in the same way as the embryo passes through all the lower degrees of zoological existence before birth. The finished labour and the result obtained become the general possession of all who understand—such is the mutual guarantee of progress, the birthright of mankind.... Every schoolchild must himself find the solution of Euclid's theorems, but what a difference there is between the work of Euclid, who discovered them, and the work of the pupil of today!" ... "Russia has been through her embryo-genesis in the European class. The nobility and the government in our country represent the European state in the Slav state. We have been through all the phases of political education, from German constitutionalism and English bureaucratic monarchy to the worship of the year

* Italics by Plekhanov.

** Искандер, «Старый мир и Россия», стр. 31–32. Iskander, *The Old World and Russia*, pp. 31-32.

1793.... The Russian people need not begin that hard work again. Why should they shed their blood to achieve those semi-solutions that we have already reached and whose only importance was that through them we arrived at other questions, at new strivings? We went through that work for the people—we have paid for it with the gallows, casemates and banishment, with the ruin and the intolerable life which we are living! "

The connecting link, the bridge by which the Russian people can reach socialism, Herzen saw, of course, in the village commune and the peculiarities of way of life that go with it. "Strictly speaking, the Russian people began to be acknowledged," he says, "only after the 1830 Revolution. People saw with astonishment that the Russians, though indifferent, incapable of tackling any political questions, were nearer to the new social system by their way of life than all the European peoples...." "To retain the village commune and give freedom to the individual, to extend the self-government of the village and volost to the towns and the whole state, maintaining national unity—such is the question of Russia's future, i.e., the question of the very antinomy whose solution occupies and worries minds in the West."*

It is true that doubts occasionally arose in his mind about the Russian people's exceptional nearness "to the new social system". In the same "Letter" he asks Linton: "Perhaps you will reply that in this the Russian people resembles some Asian peoples; perhaps you will draw attention to the rural communes of the Hindus, which have a fair resemblance to ours? " But, without rejecting the Russian people's unflattering resemblance to "some Asian peoples", he nevertheless saw what seemed to him very substantial differences between them. "It is not the commune ownership system which keeps the Asian peoples in stagnation, but their exceptional clan spirit, their inability to emerge from patriarchalism, to free themselves from the tribe; we are not in such a position. The Slav peoples ... are endowed with great impressionability, they easily assimilate the languages, morals, customs, art and technique of other peoples. They can acclimatise themselves equally well on the shores of the Arctic and on the Black Sea coast." This "great impressionability", enabling the Slavs to "emerge from patriarchalism, to free themselves from the tribe", solved the whole question, Herzen thinks. His authority was so great, and the shortened road to socialism which he suggested was so tempting that the Russian intelligentsia in the early sixties was little inclined to be sceptical of his suggested solution of the "social antinomy", and apparently

* *Ibid.*

gave no thought at all to the question of just what places that historical short cut lay through and who would lead the Russian people—"indifferent, incapable of tackling any political questions"—along it. The important thing for the intelligentsia was first of all to find some philosophical sanction for their radical strivings, and they were satisfied for a start with the abstract consideration that no philosophy in the world could force them to be reconciled to bourgeois "semi-solutions".

But that abstract consideration was naturally not sufficient to outline a practical mode of action or to elaborate any at all suitable methods of fighting their environment. The data for the solution of this new problem had to be sought outside the philosophy of history, even if it were more rigorous and scientific than Herzen's philosophy. Between its abstract formulae and the concrete requirements of social life there was a gap which could be filled only by a whole series of new and increasingly particular formulae, requiring in turn knowledge of a whole series of increasingly complicated phenomena. By the way, philosophy in this case indirectly rendered Russian thought the service of acquainting it with the dialectical method and teaching it the truth—so often forgotten later on—that in social life "everything flows", "everything changes", and that the phenomena of that life can be understood only in motion, in the process of arising, developing and disappearing.

### 4. N. G. CHERNYSHEVSKY

The *Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices Against Communal Land Tenure* was and still is the most brilliant attempt made in our literature to apply dialectics to the analysis of social phenomena.[94] We know what an enormous influence this essay had on the development of our revolutionary intelligentsia. It strengthened their faith in the village commune by *proving* that this form of land tenure could, under certain conditions, pass directly into a communist form of development. But strictly speaking, Chernyshevsky himself and his followers drew from the *Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices* far more sweeping conclusions than the character of the premises warranted. The solution which Chernyshevsky found for the question of the commune's destiny was in substance purely algebraic; and it could not be otherwise, because he opposed it to the purely algebraic formulae of his opponents. The Russian supporters of the Manchester School sought to prove that communal land tenure must necessarily and everywhere be superseded gradually by private landownership. That was the scheme of development of property relations which they advanced. Chernyshevsky

proved, first, that this scheme did not embrace the entire process of development, since at a certain stage social ownership must again become the predominant form; moreover, he quite legitimately drew attention to the circumstance that there are no grounds whatsoever for ascribing an invariable and once-for-all determined duration to the historical interval that separates the epoch of primitive communism from the time of the conscious reorganisation of society on communist principles. Generally speaking, this interval is *x,* which has a particular arithmetical magnitude in each individual country, depending on the combination of internal and external forces determining its historical development. As this combination of forces necessarily varies considerably, it is not surprising that the *x* in which we are interested, i.e., the length of the interval during which private ownership will be predominant, will in certain cases be infinitely small and may therefore be equalled to *nought* without any considerable error. It was in this way that the *abstract possibility* of the primitive commune passing immediately into a "higher, communist form" was proved. But precisely because of the abstractness of the *line of argument,* this general result of philosophico-historical dialectics was equally applicable to all countries and peoples which had retained communal land tenure, from Russia to New Zealand, from the Serbian *zadruga* to one or other of the Red Indian tribes.* That is why it proved insufficient for even an approximate forecast of the commune's future in each of these countries taken individually. Abstract *possibility* is not concrete *probability*; still less can it be considered as a final argument in reference to *historical necessity.* In order to speak at all seriously of the latter, algebra should have been replaced by arithmetic and it should have been proved that in the case in point, whether it be in Russia or in the Ashanti State, in Serbia or on Vancouver Island, *x* would indeed be equal to *nought,* i.e., that private property must die out when still in the embryo. To this end statistics should have been resorted to and an appraisal made of the inner course of development of the country or tribe concerned and the external influences affecting them; not the *genus,* but the *species* or even the *variety* should have been dealt with; not primitive collective immovable property in general, but the Russian, the Serbian or the New Zealand system of communal land tenure in particular, taking into consideration all the influences hostile or favourable to it, and also the state which it had reached at the time in question owing to those influences.

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] At that time it had not yet been made finally clear that the Russian village commune had nothing in common with primitive communism. There is no longer any doubt about this.

But we do not even find a hint of such a study in the *Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices Against Communal Land Tenure,* in which Chernyshevsky dealt with "philosophising sages". In other cases, when he had to argue with "economising sages" and to shatter prejudices "arising out of lack of understanding, forgetfulness or ignorance of *general* truths relating to man's material activity, to production, labour and its general laws"—in those essays too he spoke only of the advantages of collective land tenure in general, and consequently he arrived only at algebraic formulae, general economic theorems.*

By the way, this is by no means surprising of him. The critic of Mill could have in mind only the pre-Reform village commune, when it had not yet emerged from natural economy and was reduced to a common denominator by the levelling influence of feudalism. Naturally, this influence did not remove the "economic contradictions" inherent in the village commune, but it kept them latent and thus reduced their practical significance to a negligible minimum. That is why Chernyshevsky could be satisfied with the consideration that in our country "the masses of the people still consider the land as the property of the commune", that "every Russian has his native land and also a right to a plot of it. And if he himself gives up his right to that plot or loses it, his children will still be entitled, as members of the village commune, to demand a plot in their own right". Understanding perfectly well that the emancipation of the peasants would place them in completely different economic conditions, that "Russia, which has thus far taken little part in the economic movement, is being quickly drawn into it, and our mode of life, which has as yet hardly been influenced by the economic laws which display their strength only when economic and commercial activity grows, is beginning to submit to their strength very quickly", that "soon we too, perhaps, shall be drawn into the sphere where the law of competition is in full operation", he was only concerned with preserving the form of land tenure which would help the peasant to begin the new economic life under more favourable conditions. "Whatever transformations the future may hold for Russia," he wrote in April 1857, we shall not presume to touch the sacred and salutary custom bequeathed to us by our past life, the poverty of which is abundantly compensated by this single precious legacy; no, we shall not presume to encroach upon the communal use of the land, that blessing on whose acquisition the prosperity of the agricultural classes in Western Europe now depends. May their example be a lesson for us."

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Cf. my article "N. G. Chernyshevsky"[95] in No. 1 of the journal *Sozial-Demokrat,* Geneva, 1890.

Here we are not undertaking an analysis of all Chernyshevsky's views on communal land tenure: we are only trying to bring out their most typical features. Not entering into details which are out of place here we shall confine ourselves to saying that the advantages which he expected from communal land tenure may be reduced to two points, one of which belongs to the domain of law, the other to that of agricultural technology.

Re I. "The Russian village commune system," he says quoting Haxthausen, "is infinitely important for Russia, especially at present, as far as the state is concerned. All West European states are suffering from the same disease, whose cure is so far an *unsolved problem**; they are suffering from pauperism, proletarianism. Russia does not know this social evil; she is ensured against it by her village commune system. Every Russian has his native land and also a right to a plot of it. And if he himself gives up his right to that plot or loses it, his children will still be entitled, as members of the village commune, to demand a plot in their own right."**

Re II. After describing, again according to Haxthausen, the life of the Ural Cossacks, "whose whole territory forms a single commune from the economic, military and civil points of view", Chernyshevsky notes: "If the people of the Urals live under their present system to see machines introduced into corn-growing, they will be very glad of having retained a system which allows the use of machines that require big-scale farming embracing hundreds of dessiatines." He notes at the same time, however, that his argument is intended only as an example of "how the Ural Cossacks will think at some future time which will come we know not when (although the success of mechanics and technology shows beyond any doubt that such a time will indeed come)—and we are not concerned with too distant a future: our great grandchildren will probably manage to live on by their own intelligence without our worrying about them—it will be enough for us to worry about ourselves and our children."[96]

Readers who are acquainted with Chernyshevsky's works naturally know that such reservations did not prevent him from thinking and "worrying" very much about the future. One of Vera Pavlovna's dreams shows clearly how he imagined the social relations of "the very distant future",[97] just as his heroine's practical activity gives us some idea of the methods by which the advent of that happy time could be hastened. It would

* My italics.

** Чернышевский, «Сочинения», т. V, Женева, 1879. «Об общинном владении землей», стр. 135. [Chernyshevsky, *Works*, Vol. V, Geneva, 1879. *On Communal Land Tenure*, p. 135.]

therefore be strange if the author of *What Is To Be Done?* had not linked the form of contemporary peasant land tenure which was so dear to him with the ideals of a future, which, distant as it was, was desirable and, indeed, inevitable. True enough, he returns time and again to this subject in his articles on communal land tenure, examining the influence this form of property relations has had on the peasants' character and customs. He naturally does not agree that "the village commune kills energy in man". That thought "definitely contradicts all known historical and psychological facts", which prove, on the contrary, that "man's intelligence and will are strengthened by association". But the chief advantage of communal land tenure is that it preserves and develops the spirit of association without which the rational economy of the future is unthinkable. "The introduction of a better order of things is greatly hindered in Western Europe by the boundless extension of the rights of the individual ... it is not easy to renounce even a negligible portion of what one is used to enjoying, and in the West the individual is used to unlimited private rights. The usefulness and necessity of mutual concessions can be learned only by bitter experience and prolonged thought. In the West, a better system of economic relations is bound up with sacrifices, and that is why it is difficult to establish. It runs counter to the habits of the English and French peasants." But "what seems a utopia in one country exists as a fact in another ... habits which the Englishman and the Frenchman find immensely difficult to introduce into their national life exist in fact in the national life of the Russians.... The order of things for which the West is now striving by such a difficult and long road still exists in our country in the mighty national customs of our village life.... We see what deplorable consequences resulted in the West from the loss of communal land tenure and how difficult it is to *give back to the Western peoples what they have lost.* The example of the West must not be lost on us".*

That is how Chernyshevsky appraises the significance of communal land tenure in the present and future economic life of the Russian people. Much as we respect this great writer, we cannot help seeing in his appraisal certain mistakes and instances of one-sidedness. For example, the "cure" of the West European states from the "ulcer of proletarianism" could hardly be considered as an "unsolved problem" at the end of the fifties, many years after the appearance of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party, The Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Condition of the Working Class in England.* Not only the "cure", but also

* *Works,* Vol. V, pp. 16-19.

the whole historical significance of the "illness" which frightened Chernyshevsky were shown in the works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels with a completeness and power of conviction that are still models. But everything shows that the Russian economist was not familiar with these works, while the socialist utopias of the preceding period failed, of course, to provide a satisfactory solution for many, very many, theoretical and practical questions. The main shortcoming in the utopians' outlook was, however, due to the fact that "the proletariat ... offers to them the spectacle of a class without any historical initiative or any independent political movement", that they had not yet adopted the standpoint of the class struggle and that the proletariat existed for them only in view of its being the "most suffering class".* Replacing the "gradual, spontaneous class organisation of the proletariat" by "an organisation of society specially contrived by themselves" and at the same time differing among themselves as to the principles and character of this future organisation, they naturally led their Russian readers to the idea that even the most progressive minds in the West had not yet been able to cope with the social question. Moreover, "reducing the future history of the world to the dissemination and practical implementation of their reform plans", they could not satisfy by their teachings a man with such a vigorously critical mind as Chernyshevsky. He was bound to seek independently the real "historical conditions" for the emancipation of the West European working class, and he apparently saw them in a return to communal land tenure. We already know that he held that "on the acquisition of this blessing the prosperity of the agricultural classes in Western Europe now depends". But no matter what attitude anybody adopted towards the historical significance of the *Russian* village commune, it is obvious to almost all socialists that its role is ended for ever in the West and that the Western peoples' road to socialism lay and still lies *from commune through private ownership,* and not vice versa, from private ownership through commune ownership. It seems to me that if Chernyshevsky had been clearer to himself on the subject of this "difficult and long road" along which the West is progressing towards "a better system of economic relations"; if, moreover, he had defined more precisely the economic conditions of the "better system", he would have seen, first, that the "West" tends to make the means of production the property of the state, not of a village commune, and second, he would have understood that the "ulcer of proletarianism" produces its remedy out of itself. Then he

* *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* pp. 36-37.[98]

would have better appreciated the historical role of the proletariat, and this, in turn, would have enabled him to take a broader view of the social and political significance of the Russian village commune. Let us explain this.

We know that any form of social relations can be considered from extremely varying points of view. For example, from the point of view of the benefits it brings to the generation concerned; or, not confining ourselves to these benefits, we can examine its capacity to pass on into another, higher form, more favourable to the economic prosperity and the intellectual and moral development of the people; finally, we can distinguish in that very capacity to pass on into higher forms two sides—the passive and the active side, *the absence of obstacles to the transition,* and the presence of a vital inner force which is not only *capable* of effecting this transition but, indeed, gives rise to it as to a necessary consequence of its own existence. In the former case, the social form in question is considered from the point of view of the *resistance* offered to progress introduced from outside, in the latter, from the point of view of *useful historical work.* For the philosophy of history, just as for the practical revolutionary, the only forms which have any importance are those which are capable of a greater or lesser quantity of such useful work. Every stage in the historical development of humanity is interesting precisely insofar as the societies which have reached it develop out of themselves, by their inherent self-activity, a force capable of destroying the old forms of social relations and erecting on their ruins a new and better social edifice. Generally speaking, the very number of the obstacles to the transition to a higher stage of development is closely linked with the magnitude of this vital force, because the latter is nothing but the result of the disintegration of the old forms of social life. The more intense the process of disintegration, the greater will be the number of forces which it sets free and the lesser will be the endurance of the obsolete social relations. In other words, both the historian and the practical revolutionary are interested in the dynamics, not the statics, the revolutionary, not the conservative aspect, the contradictions, not the harmony of social relations, because it is the spirit of these contradictions which

*Stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft.*[99]

So it has been up to now. It goes without saying that it must not always be so and that the whole meaning of the socialist revolution consists in removing the "cruel iron" law according to which the contradictions in social relationships were given but a temporary solution which in turn became the source of new

confusion and new contradictions. But the accomplishment of this greatest of all upheavals, of this revolution which is at last to make people "the masters of their social relations",[100] is unthinkable without the "presence" of the necessary and sufficient historical force born of the contradictions in the present bourgeois system. In the advanced countries of the civilised world today this force, far from being merely present, is growing every hour and every minute. Consequently, in those countries history is the ally of the socialists and is bringing them with ever-increasing speed nearer to the aim they pursue. Thus we see once more—let us hope for the *last* time—that the "sweet" could only come out of the "bitter", that for the accomplishment of a *good* "deed" history was obliged, if we may say so, to show *evil* "will". The economy of bourgeois societies, which is utterly "abnormal and unjust" as regards distribution, turns out to be far more "normal" as regards the development of the productive forces and still more "normal" as regards the production of people who are willing and able, in the words of the poet, "to establish the kingdom of heaven upon earth".[101] Not only has the bourgeoisie "forged the weapons that bring death to itself", i.e., not only has it brought the productive forces in the advanced countries to a stage of development at which they can no longer be reconciled with the capitalist form of production, "it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the *proletarians*".*

From this it follows that in order to assess to the full the political significance of a given social form, one must take into consideration not only the economic benefits which it may bring to one or several generations, not only its passive ability to be perfected under the influence of some favourable outside force, but primarily its inherent capacity to develop independently in the desirable direction. Without such a comprehensive appraisal, the analysis of social relations will always be incomplete and therefore erroneous; a given social form may appear to be quite rational from one of the points of view, but quite unsatisfactory from another. This will be the case every time we have to deal with an underdeveloped population which has not yet become the "master of its social relations". Only the objective revolutionariness of these relations themselves can bring backward people out on to the road of progress. And if the particular form of social life does not display this revolutionariness, if, though it is more or less "just" from the standpoint of law and distribution of products, it is nevertheless marked by great conservatism, the absence of any inner striving to perfect itself

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

in the desirable direction, the social reformer will have either to give up his plans or to resort to some other, outside, force able to compensate for the lack of inner self-activity in the society in question and to reform it, if not against the will of its members, at any rate without their active and conscious participation.

As for Chernyshevsky, he seems to have lost sight of the revolutionary significance of the West European "*illness*"—pauperism. It is by no means surprising that Haxthausen, for example, of whom Chernyshevsky so often had occasion to speak in his articles on communal land tenure, saw only the negative side of "pauperism-proletarianism". His *political* views were such that he was absolutely unable to class the revolutionary significance of the proletariat in the history of West European societies among the positive and favourable aspects of this "ulcer". It is therefore understandable that he gave an enthusiastic description of the institutions which can "avert proletarianism". But views which are quite comprehensible and consistent in the works of one author often face the reader with difficulties when he comes across them in another author's articles. We admit that we do not understand what meaning we must see in these words of Chernyshevsky about Haxthausen: "As a practical man, he very correctly foresaw in 1847 the proximity of a fearful outbreak on the part of the West European proletarians, and we cannot but agree with him that the principle of communal land tenure, which safeguards us against the fearful ulcer of proletarianism among the rural population, is a beneficial one."*[102] Here it is no longer a question of the economic hardships of the proletariat, which, incidentally, in no way exceed those of the Russian peasantry; nor is it a question of the Russian peasant's social habits, against which the West European industrial worker can at any rate counter his habit of collective labour and all kinds of associations. No, here it is a question of a "fearful outbreak on the part of the ... proletarians", and even in this respect Chernyshevsky considers the principle of communal land tenure, "which safeguards us against the fearful ulcer of proletarianism", a "beneficial" one. One cannot imagine that the father of Russian socialism adopted the same terrified attitude to the political movements of the working class as Baron von Haxthausen. One cannot imagine that he was terrified by the very fact of the proletariat's revolt. One can only presume that he was perplexed by the defeat of the working class in 1848, that his sympathy with the political movements of the working class was poisoned by the thought that political revolutions were without

* *Works*, Vol. V, p. 100.

result and that the bourgeois regime was barren. Such an explanation seems at least probable if not certain when we read some pages of his article "The Struggle of the Parties in France under Louis XVIII and Charles X",[103] those pages, to be precise, where he explains the distinction between the aspirations of the democrats and those of the liberals. "The liberals and the democrats have essentially different fundamental desires and basic motives," he says. "The democrats intend to destroy as far as possible the domination of the upper classes over the lower ones in the state structure: on the one hand, to reduce the power and wealth of the upper estates, and on the other, to give more weight and prosperity to the lower ones. *It hardly makes any difference to them** how the laws could be changed in this sense and the new structure of society upheld. The liberals, on the contrary, will never agree to give the upper hand in society to the lower estates, because these, owing to their lack of education and their material poverty, are *indifferent* to those interests which are of supreme importance for the liberal party, namely, *the right to freedom of speech and the right to a constitutional system. For the democrat our Siberia, where common folk enjoy prosperity, is far superior to England, where the majority of the people suffer dire need.* The democrat is irreconcilably *hostile only to one* political institution—the aristocracy; the liberal nearly always holds that society can attain a liberal system only with a certain measure of aristocracy. That is why the liberals have a mortal hatred of the democrats ... liberalism understands freedom in a very narrow, purely formal manner. For it freedom consists in an abstract right, authorisation on paper, the absence of legal prohibition. Liberalism refuses to understand that legal authorisation is of any worth only to those who have the material means to avail themselves of it. Neither you nor I, dear reader, are forbidden to eat out of a gold dinner set, but unfortunately neither you nor I have or will probably ever have the means of satisfying that fanciful idea. For that reason I say frankly that I do not appreciate in the least my right to have a gold dinner set and am ready to sell it for a silver ruble or even cheaper. *The same, as far as the people are concerned, with all the rights that the liberals fuss about.* The people are ignorant and in nearly all countries the majority of them are illiterate; not having the money to get education themselves or to give their children any, how can they come to treasure their right to free speech? Need and ignorance deprive the people of all possibility of understanding state affairs or of taking part in them; tell me then, will they treasure the

* The italics in these extracts are mine.

right to parliamentary debate, can they avail themselves of it? ... There is not a single country in Europe where the overwhelming majority of the population are not completely indifferent to rights which are the object of the desires and efforts of the liberals. That is why liberalism is condemned to impotence everywhere: argue as you like, only those strivings are powerful, only those institutions lasting, which are supported by the popular masses."* [104]

Hardly ten years had elapsed since the publication of the article by Chernyshevsky just quoted when the European proletariat declared through its foremost representatives that it saw its political movement as the means of attaining its great economic aim and that "the social emancipation of the working class is unthinkable without its political emancipation". The necessity for the working class constantly to extend its political rights and finally to achieve political domination was acknowledged by the International Working Men's Association. "To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes," said the first Manifesto of that Association. [105] It goes without saying that the working population of England is nearer to and more capable of political might than the "common folk" of Siberia, and if only for that reason nobody but the Proudhonists would have said in the sixties that "Siberia is superior to England". But even when Chernyshevsky wrote his article, i.e., at the end of the fifties, it was noticeable that among the "ignorant and illiterate people" of "nearly all" West European countries there was a whole stratum—once more the same proletariat—which did not enjoy "the right of free speech and the right of parliamentary debate" by no means because it was indifferent to them, but because of the reaction that reigned throughout Europe after 1848 and whose concern was primarily to prevent the people from achieving these "abstract rights". Beaten, so to speak, all along the line, stunned by the blows of reaction, disappointed in its radical and "democratic" allies in the bourgeois parties, it had indeed fallen into something like a temporary lethargy and showed little interest in social questions. But so far as it was interested in them it did not cease to see the acquisition of political rights and their rational utilisation as a powerful means of its emancipation. Even many of the socialist sects which had formerly been completely indifferent to politics began to show a great interest in it precisely in the early fifties. In France, for instance, the Fourierists joined Rittinghausen and preached with

* "The Struggle of the Parties in France under Louis XVIII and Charles X", Russian Social-Democratic Library, Vol. III, pp. 5-8.

great energy the principle of direct popular legislation. As for Germany, neither the "democrat" Johann Jacobi and his followers nor the Communists of Marx and Engels' school would have said that for them "it makes hardly any difference how the laws could be changed" in the sense of decreasing the power and the wealth of the upper estates and ensuring the prosperity of the lower classes. They had a well-defined *political* programme, "irreconcilably hostile" by no means to the "aristocracy alone".

The West European peasantry was indeed often indifferent to all "abstract rights" and was prepared perhaps occasionally to prefer the Siberian system to the English. But the point is that true, i.e., not bourgeois, but *socialist,* democrats appeal not to the peasants, but to the proletariat. The West European peasant, being a property-owner, is classed by them among the "intermediate strata" of the population, strata which, "if by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, *they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat*".* This distinction is a very substantial one. The West European "democrats" did not emerge from the barren field of political metaphysics until they learned to analyse the concept "people" and to distinguish the revolutionary section of it from the conservative.

To make his study of communal land tenure complete, Chernyshevsky should have considered the matter from this last—social-*political*—point of view. He should have shown that communal land tenure can not only preserve us from the "ulcer of proletarianism", that it not only offers many advantages for the development of agricultural technology (i.e., for machine cultivation of large tracts of land), but that it can also create in Russia just as active, receptive and impressionable, just as energetic and revolutionary a population as the West European proletarians. But he was prevented from doing so by his considering the "people" "in nearly all countries" of Western Europe as an "ignorant" and in the majority of cases "illiterate" mass, indifferent to "abstract" political rights. His lack of depth in understanding the political role of the West European proletariat made it impossible for him to suggest a comparison with the political future of the Russian peasants in the village commune. The passivity and political indifference of the Russian peasant could not embarrass one who expected no great independent political action from the working class in the West. This circumstance provides one reason why Chernyshevsky limited his

* See *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* p. 14 of my translation.[106] [Italics by Plekhanov.]

study of communal land tenure to considerations in the sphere of law, the distribution of the products and agronomics, and did not set the question of the political influence of the village commune on the state and of the state on the village commune.

This question remained unelucidated. As a result, the question of the method of transition from communal land *tenure* to communal *cultivation* and—what is the chief thing—to the final triumph of socialism, was not elucidated either. How will the village commune of today pass over into a communist commune or be dissolved in a communist state? How can the revolutionary intelligentsia promote this? *What Is To Be Done* by this intelligentsia? Must they support communal land tenure and conduct communist propaganda, establish production associations similar to Vera Pavlovna's sewing shops in the hope that in time both these shops and the village communes will understand the advantages of the socialist system and set about introducing it? Let us suppose so, but this will take a long time, and what guarantee is there that it will always go straight and smoothly, that there will be no unforeseen obstacles or unexpected turns? And what if the government takes measures against socialist propaganda, prohibits the associations, places their members under police surveillance or exiles them? Must we struggle against the government and win freedom of speech, assembly and association? But then we shall have to admit that Siberia is not superior to England, that the "abstract rights" which the "liberals make a fuss about" are a necessary condition for the people's development; in a word, that we must start the political struggle. But can we count on a favourable outcome of that struggle, can we win political freedom of any duration? For, "argue as you like, only those strivings are powerful, only those institutions lasting, which are supported by the popular masses", and in Russia, if not in other countries, those masses attach no importance to "the right of free speech" and understand absolutely nothing about "the right of parliamentary debate". If it is "for that very reason" that liberalism "is condemned to impotence", where will the socialists get their strength from when they begin the struggle for "the rights which are the objects of the desires and efforts of the liberals"? How can this difficulty be overcome? By adding concrete demands for economic reforms to "the abstract rights" of political freedom contained in their programme? But the people must be acquainted with that programme, i.e., we must conduct propaganda, and in doing so we again come up against government persecution, which again drives us on to the path of political struggle, which is hopeless as a result of the people's indifference, etc., etc.

On the other hand, it is very probable that "if the people of the Urals live under their present system to see machines introduced into corn-growing, they will be very glad of having retained a system which allows the use of machines that require big-scale farming embracing hundreds of dessiatines". It is also highly probable that those peasant associations also "will be glad" which "survive under their present system" until the introduction of agricultural machines. Well, what will those agriculturists be glad about *who do not survive* "under their present system"? What will the rural proletarians be glad about who have had to hire themselves as labourers to members of the village commune? The latter will contrive to carry the exploitation of labour power to the same degree of intensity as in private farms. Thus the Russian "people" will divide into two classes: exploiters—the *communes*, and exploited—the *individuals*. What will be the fate awaiting this new caste of pariahs? The West European proletarians, whose ranks are constantly swelling thanks to the concentration of capital, can flatter themselves with the hope that, slaves today, they will be independent and happy workers tomorrow. Is the same consolation available for the Russian proletarians, whose numerical increase will be retarded by the existence of communal land tenure? Must they not expect hopeless slavery, a stern struggle

*Without triumph, without reconciliation?*

Whose side will our socialist intelligentsia have to take in that struggle? If they support the proletariat, will they not have to burn everything they had adored and reject the commune as a stronghold of petty-bourgeois exploitation?

If such questions did not occur to Chernyshevsky, who wrote about communal land tenure before serfdom was abolished and could hope that the development of the rural proletariat would be made impossible by some legislative measures or others, all or nearly all those questions should inevitably have occurred to our revolutionaries of the seventies, who knew the nature of the notorious Reform of February 19. Difficult as it is to imagine laws which would safeguard the village commune from disintegration without at the same time imposing the most insufferable restraint of the whole course of our industrial life; difficult as it is to combine collectivism of peasant land *tenure* with money economy and commodity *production* of all products, not excluding the agricultural products of the communes themselves, all this could still have been spoken and argued about before 1861. But the peasant reform should have given such arguments and talk a perfectly definite background. In their excursions into the more or less problematic future our revolutionaries should

have proceeded from the indisputable facts of the present. And that present already had very little in common with the old picture of peasant life as Haxthausen and Chernyshevsky knew it before the Reform. The "Act of February 19" knocked the village commune out of the stable equilibrium of natural economy and subjected it to all the laws of commodity production and capitalist accumulation. The redemption of peasant lands was bound, as we shall see later, to take place on a basis hostile to the principle of communal land tenure. Moreover, although our legislation retained the commune in the interests of the fiscal system, it gave two-thirds of the householders the right to divide the communal lands once and for all into plots attached to the houses. Reallotments were also hindered and, to cap it all, a burden of taxes and dues completely out of proportion to the paying capacity of the "free agriculturists" was imposed upon them. All the peasants' protests against the "new serfdom" were suppressed with rods and bayonets, and the "new" Russia was seized with a fever of money speculation. Railways, banks and stock companies shot up like mushrooms. Chernyshevsky's prophecy quoted above about the "considerable economic transformations" awaiting Russia came true before that great teacher of youth had time to reach his place of exile. Alexander II was the tsar of the bourgeoisie just as Nicholas was the tsar of the soldiers and nobility.

Our revolutionary youth should have taken these irrefutable facts into account when they set out to go "among the people" to conduct social-revolutionary propaganda in the early seventies. Now it was no longer a question of emancipating the landlords' peasants from serfdom, but of emancipating the whole working population of Russia from all kinds of exploitation; it was no longer a question of a peasant "reform", but of "establishing a peasant brotherhood in which there would be neither mine nor thine, neither profit nor oppression, but work for the common good and brotherly help among all"*[107] To found such a "peasant brotherhood" an appeal had to be made no longer to the government, to the Editorial Commission, or even to "society", but to the peasants themselves. In undertaking the emancipation of the working people which was to be the business of "the working people themselves" it was necessary to study, determine and point out with greater precision the revolutionary factors in the life of the people; to do this, the abstract, algebraic formulae worked out by the progressive literature of the preceding decades had to be translated into the language of arithmetic and the conclusions had to be drawn

* See «Хитрая механика», изд. 1877, стр. 47-48. [*Ingenious Mechanism*, 1877, pp. 47-48.]

from the positive and negative influences of Russian life on the sum-total of which the course and the outcome of the emancipation depended. And as our youth already knew from Chernyshevsky's articles that "the masses of the people still consider the land as the property of the commune, and the quantity of land owned by the communes ... is so large that the mass of the plots set aside from it as absolute property of private individuals is negligible in comparison with it", it was with communal land tenure that the study of the revolutionary factors in Russian life should have begun.

How did the contradictory rulings of the "Act of February 19" affect the village commune? Is the latter firm enough to fight the conditions of money economy, which are unfavourable to it? Has not the development of our peasant life already stepped on to the road of "the natural law of its movement" from which neither the rigour of laws nor the propaganda of the intelligentsia will be able to divert it? If not, if our commune can still assimilate the socialist ideals without any great difficulty, then this passive business of assimilation must be accompanied by an energetic act of implementation which requires struggle against many obstacles; will the conditions under which our peasants live promote the development among them of that active energy without which all their "socialist" *predispositions* would remain useless?

The various groups in our movement solved these questions in various ways. The majority of revolutionaries were prepared to agree with Herzen that the Russian people was "indifferent, incapable" of politics. But the propensity to idealise the people was so great, the interconnection between the various aspects of social life was so poorly elucidated in the minds of our socialists, that this inability to deal with "any *political* questions" was regarded as a guarantee, so to speak, against bourgeois "semi-solutions" and a proof, as it were, of the people's great ability to solve *economic* questions correctly. Interest in and capacity for *politics* were considered necessary only for *political* revolutions, which our socialist literature of the time contrasted to "*social*" revolutions as the principle of evil to the principle of good, as bourgeois deception to the full equivalent of the blood shed and the losses suffered by the people. An interest in *social* questions corresponded, in the conception we had then, to the "social" revolution, and the peasants' complaints about land poverty and taxation burdens were seen as such an interest. From the people's understanding of its immediate needs to the understanding of the "tasks of working-class socialism", from bitter allusions to those needs to the socialist revolution seemed no long road and one that lay, again, through

the village commune, which we considered as a solid rock against which all the waves of the economic movement had been shattered.

But as a single point does not determine the position of a line in a plane, so the land commune, which all our socialists agreed in idealising, did not determine agreement between their programmes. All felt that there was much in the commune itself and in its members' outlook and habits that was partly unfinished and unpolished and partly even directly contrary to socialist ideals. It was the way of removing these defects that proved to be the apple of discord for our groups.

In this respect, too, however, there was a feature that can be considered as common to all our revolutionary trends.

This feature common to them all was faith in the possibility of our revolutionary intelligentsia having a powerful and decisive influence on the people. In our revolutionary calculations the intelligentsia played the role of a beneficent providence of the Russian people, a providence upon whose will it depended whether the wheel of history would turn one way or the other. However any of the revolutionaries explained the contemporary enslavement of the Russian people—by the people's lack of *understanding*, of solidarity or of revolutionary *energy*, or finally by their complete *incapacity* for political *initiative*—each one nevertheless thought that intervention by the intelligentsia would remove what he indicated as the cause of the people's enslavement. The propagandists felt sure that they would have no difficulty in teaching the peasants the truths of scientific socialism. The rebels demanded the immediate formation of "fighting" organisations among the people, not imagining there could be any serious obstacles to this. Finally, the supporters of *Nabat* presumed that our revolutionaries only had to "seize power" and the people would immediately assimilate the socialist forms of social life. This self-assurance of the intelligentsia got along together with utter idealisation of the people and the conviction—at least as far as the majority of our revolutionaries were concerned—that "the emancipation of the working people must be conquered by the working people themselves". This formula, it was assumed, would be applied in a perfectly correct manner once our intelligentsia took the people as an object of its revolutionary influence. The fact that this basic principle of the General Rules of the International Working Men's Association had another, so to speak philosophico-historical meaning, that the emancipation of a definite class can be its own affair only when an independent emancipation movement arises within that class—all this partly did not occur at all to our intelligentsia, or partly conception of it was a very strange one. For

example, as a proof that our people had begun without the help of the intelligentsia to understand the conditions for their true emancipation, they pointed to the people's dissatisfaction over the 1861 Reform. The people's capacity for independent revolutionary movement was usually proved by reference to our "peasant wars"—the Razin and Pugachov rebellions.

Bitter experience soon showed our revolutionaries that it was a far cry from complaints about land poverty to the development of a definite class consciousness and that it was wrong to conclude from revolts that took place one or two hundred years before that the people was ready to revolt at the moment in question. The history of our revolutionary movement in the seventies was one of disappointments in "programmes" which had seemed perfectly practical and infallible.

But at present we are interested in the history of revolutionary ideas, not of revolutionary attempts. What is needed for our purpose is to sum up all the social and political outlooks we have inherited from preceding decades.

Let us therefore see what each of the principal groups in the seventies left us in this respect.

The most instructive for us will be the theories of M. A. Bakunin and P. N. Tkachov. The programme of the so-called propagandists, which reduced the entire further history of Russia down to the revolution to the spreading of socialist ideas, was too obviously tainted with idealism. They recommended propaganda to the Russian socialists in exactly the same way as they would have recommended it, should the case have arisen, to the Polish, Serbian, Turkish or Persian socialists—in a word, to the socialists of any country deprived of the possibility of organising the workers in an open political party. Herzen's comparison quoted above of the fate of "Euclid's theorems" with the probable history of socialist ideas provides a typical example of their arguments in favour of their programme. They understood this comparison—in itself quite a risky one—in the abstract and one-sided sense that once social and political ideas have been worked out no more is needed for their assimilation than the subjective logic of people, even if it is not supported by the objective logic of social relationships. They made few mistakes in analysing social relationships in Russia for the simple reason that they hardly undertook any such analysis.

## 5. M. A. BAKUNIN

That was no Bakunin's way of reasoning. He understood that the revolutionary intelligentsia could influence the people only if

certain historical conditions were to hand, only if there was among the people a more or less conscious desire for a socialist upheaval. That is why he proceeded from a comparison between the "ideals of the people" and the ideals of our intelligentsia, naturally of the anarchist trend.

In his opinion, the two elements which can be indicated as the necessary conditions for the social revolution are present on the widest scale in the Russian people. "It can boast of its extraordinary poverty and also of its exemplary" (*sic*) "enslavement. Its sufferings are countless and it bears them not patiently but with a profound and passionate despair which has already been expressed twice in history by two fearful outbreaks: the rebellion of Stenka Razin and the Pugachov rebellion, and which incessantly manifests itself to the present day by an uninterrupted series of peasant rebellions."* It is not the "lack of a common ideal, an ideal capable of comprehending a popular revolution and providing it with a definite aim", which prevents the people from carrying out a victorious revolution. If there were no such ideal, "if it had not developed in the consciousness of the people, at least in its main lines, one would have to renounce all hope of a Russian revolution, because such an ideal is brought forth from the very depths of the people's life, is necessarily the result of their historical trials, strivings, sufferings, protests and struggle, and at the same time it is in a way a figurative, understandable and always simple expression of their real demands and hopes ... if the people do not develop this ideal out of themselves, nobody will be able to give it to them". But "there is no doubt" that such an ideal exists in the imagination of the Russian peasantry, and "there is not even any necessity to delve too deep into the historical consciousness of our people to determine its main features".

The author of *Statehood and Anarchy* counts six "main features" of the Russian people's ideal: three good ones and three bad ones. Let us examine this classification more closely, for Bakunin's outlook has left its imprint on the views of many of those among our socialists who were never his followers or were even his opponents.

"The first and main feature is the conviction of the whole people that the land, all the land, belongs to the people who water it with their sweat and fertilise it with their labour. The second, just as great, feature is that the right to make use of it belongs not to the individual, but to the whole village commune, *mir,* which divides it temporarily among individuals; the third feature is of equal importance to the first two; it is the

* *Statehood and Anarchy,* Note A, p. 7.

quasi-absolute autonomy, the self-government of the village commune, and the commune's consequent resolute hostility to the state.

"Those are the three main features underlying the ideal of the Russian people. In their substance they fully correspond to the ideal which is developing in recent times in the consciousness of the proletariat in the Latin countries, which are incomparably nearer to the social revolution than the German countries. However, the ideal of the Russian people is darkened by three other features which distort its character and extremely (*nota bene*) hinder and retard its realisation.... These three darkening features are: 1) patriarchalism, 2) the absorption of the individual by *mir,* 3) faith in the tsar.... As a fourth feature we could add the Christian faith, official orthodox or sectarian, but ... here in Russia this question is of far less importance than in Western Europe."*

It is against these negative features of the people's ideal that Russian revolutionaries must fight "with all their strength", and this fight is "all the more possible as it is already going on among the people themselves".

The confidence that the people themselves have already taken up the fight against the negative "features" of their ideal formed a very characteristic "feature" of the entire programme of the Russian Bakuninists. It was the straw at which they clutched to save themselves from the logical conclusions from their own premises and from the conclusions of Bakunin's analysis of the people's ideal. "No individual, no society, no people, can be given what does not already exist in itself, not only in the embryo, but even at a certain stage of development," we read in Note A, which we have already quoted so often. To remain consistent, the Russian Bakuninist should have "renounced all hope of a Russian revolution" if the people had not noticed the "darkening features" of their ideal and if their dissatisfaction at these features had not already attained a "certain stage of development". It is therefore comprehensible that it was in this direction that all the dialectic power of the founder of Russian "rebellion" had to be directed.

It must be noted, besides, that on this point Bakunin was not far from a perfectly correct formulation of the question of the social-revolutionary movement's chances in Russia or from a serious, critical attitude to the character and "ideals" of our people. It was precisely this kind of critical attitude that was lacking in Russian public figures. Herzen was amazed in his time at the absence of any at all definite and generally accepted

* *Ibid.*, Note A, p. 10.

characteristic of the Russian people. "Some speak only of the omnipotence of the tsar, of governmental tyranny, and of the slavish spirit of the subjects; others maintain, on the contrary, that Petersburg imperialism is not of the people, that the people, crushed under the double despotism of the government and the landlords, bear the yoke, but are not reconciled to it, that they are not annihilated, but only wretched, and at the same time they say that these same people give unity and strength to the colossal empire which oppresses them. Some add that the Russian people are a despicable mob of drunkards and knaves; others affirm that Russia is inhabited by a capable and richly gifted race."*

Thirty years have passed since the lines that I quote were first written, and yet to this very day not only the foreigners whom Herzen had in mind but even Russian public figures support diametrically opposite views on the character and "ideals" of the Russian people. Of course there is nothing surprising in every party being prone to exaggerate people's sympathy for its own strivings. But neither in France, Germany nor any other Western country does one find the contradiction in views about the peasantry which amazes us in Russia. This contradiction occasionally leads to most amusing misunderstandings. The difference in the political and social outlooks of people belonging to the most opposite trends is often determined only by a difference in the conception of the "ideals of the people". Mr. Katkov and Mr. Aksakov, for example, would agree with Mr. Tikhomirov that "a political programme ... must take the people as they are and only in that case will it be capable of influencing their life". The editor of *Rus,* on the other hand, could accept that "out of 100 million inhabitants" in our country "there are 800,000 workers united by capital", as Mr. Tikhomirov states in his article "*What Can We Expect from the Revolution?* "; but the editor of *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* would perhaps consider that estimate too low and point out many more inaccuracies in Mr. Tikhomirov's statistical calculations.[109] Nevertheless, both of them would be only too eager to subscribe to the opinion that Russia is an agricultural country and that the results of "the analysis of social relationships made ... in the capitalist countries of Europe" are not applicable to Russia, that talk about the political and economic significance of the Russian bourgeoisie is absurd and ridiculous, that the Russian Social-Democrats are doomed to "a truly tragic condition", and finally, that when talking about the people "as they are", it is our peasantry one must have in mind. However, despite the fact that the outlook

* *The Russian People and Socialism,*[108] London, 1858, pp. 7-8

of the literary representatives of our extreme (in opposite directions) parties "includes views to a certain extent" identical with one another, the conclusions they draw from their premises turn out to be diametrically opposed. When Mr. Tikhomirov speaks about the people we learn with satisfaction that "disappointed in the autocracy of the tsars", our people can pass over "only to the autocracy of the people", that "at a revolutionary moment our people will not be split politically when the basic principle of state power is in question. In just the same way they will prove to be completely united economically on the land question, i.e., on the basic question for contemporary Russian production" (*sic*). We are finally overcome by mirth when we read that "in neither moral strength, clarity of social self-consciousness nor the resulting historical stability can we place a single of our social strata on a level with the peasant and worker class", that "the intelligentsia are not deceived by their impression and that at the moment of the final unravelling of the contemporary tangle of political relationships the people will, of course, act with greater unity than even the exalted (by whom? ) bourgeoisie".[110]

We see that the people "wish well", as a Russian writer[111] once assured the French, and overjoyed, we are already preparing to burst forth, "Roll, thunder of victory, make merry, brave Russian! "[112] when suddenly *Rus* catches our eye and we drop down from heaven to earth. It appears that the people "wish" evil indeed. They deify the tsar, support corporal punishment, are not thinking on any revolution at all and are prepared to shatter Messrs. the lovers of the people as soon as they receive "a stern telegramme" about them. References to the present situation and even to history abound here just as in Mr. Tikhomirov's articles. How strange! If we turn to students of the people's life like Mr. Uspensky who are known for their impartiality, our disappointment only becomes deeper. We learn that our people are under "the power of the land"[113] which forces them logically enough to conclude in favour of absolutism without even a hint at transition to "autocracy of the people". Mr. Uspensky persuades us that not only such extreme opposites as Messrs. Aksakov and Tikhomirov, but people of approximately similar outlooks, hold diametrically opposed views about the people.

What, then, is the cause of all this Babel, this tangle of concepts?

Bakunin's classification of the various aspects of "the people's ideal" gives us a fairly likely explanation. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Tikhomirov bases all his social and political considerations on certain positive "features" of this

ideal (the same which "in their substance fully correspond to the ideal developing in the consciousness of the proletariat in the Latin countries"): "the conviction of the whole people that the land, all the land, belongs to the people and that the right to make use of it belongs not to the individual, but to the whole village commune, *mir,* which divides it temporarily among individuals". And although the author of the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" would not be particularly gratified by the third feature which is "of equal importance to the first two", i.e., "the commune's ... resolute hostility to the state", this hostility, in Bakunin's own classification, is only the consequence of "the quasi-absolute autonomy, the self-government of the village commune" on which many of Mr. Tikhomirov's hopes rest.* Our author either knows nothing or does not wish to tell his reader anything about the "darkening" features of the people's ideal (patriarchalism, the absorption of the individual by *mir,* "the superstition of the people, naturally coupled with ignorance", poverty, etc.). Mr. Aksakov proceeds the opposite way. He builds his arguments precisely on these last "features", forgetting the contraries or passing them over in silence. Mr. Uspensky's articles also cease to amaze us. He contrasted Ormuzd with Ahriman,[114] the bad aspects of the ideal with the good, and landed in the blind alley of "the power of the land" from which there is no way out, apparently, either for the peasant or for the whole of Russia, which rests upon the peasant as the earth does upon the "three whales"; whereas the lovers of the people, as he represents them, saw, some the bright, others the "unfortunate" features of the people's character and ideal, and therefore they could not come to any agreement. All this is quite understandable and we cannot but thank the late Bakunin for the key which he gave us to understand the one-sidedness of both his own followers and the majority of our Narodniks in general.

But it was not to no effect that Bakunin once made a study of German philosophy. He understood that the classification of the "features of the people's ideal" which he suggested—whether we take only the good ones or only the "unfortunate" ones or, finally, both the fortunate and the "unfortunate features"—explained only the Chinese side of the question.[115] He understood that the people must be "taken" not "as they are" but as they *are striving to be and are becoming* under the influence of the given historical movement. In this respect Bakunin was much

* "The peasantry knows how to arrange its self-government, to take the land into the jurisdiction of the *mir* and to dispose of it in common." *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, p. 225.

closer to Hegel than to Mr. Tikhomirov. He was not satisfied with the conviction that the people's ideal was "*as it is*"; he was concerned with the study of the "features" of that ideal in their development, in their mutual interrelations. And precisely in that point, as I said above, he was not far from the correct formulation of the question. Had he applied the dialectical method in the appropriate manner to explaining the people's life and outlook, had he better mastered "the indubitable truth proved by Marx and corroborated by all the past and present history of human society, peoples and states, that the economic fact has always preceded and always does precede ... political right", and consequently the social and political ideals of the "peoples", had he remembered in time that "the proof of this truth is one of Mr. Marx's great scientific services",* I would probably have no need to argue with Mr. Tikhomirov, for there would be no longer any trace of "Bakuninism".

But dialectics betrayed Bakunin, or rather he betrayed dialectics.

Instead of proceeding from "economic facts" in his analysis of the Russian people's social and political ideal, instead of expecting that *old* "ideal" to be refashioned under the influence of *new* tendencies in the economic life of the people, the author of *Statehood and Anarchy* sets up a completely arbitrary hierarchy of "defects" of the people's ideal, trying to find a combination of its "unfortunate features" in which one is neutralised or even entirely removed by another. This changes his whole argument into a completely arbitrary playing with arbitrary definitions. The author, who seemed to be so close to the truth, suddenly strayed infinitely far from it simply because he only *felt* the necessity for a dialectical appraisal of the people's world outlook but was either unable or unwilling to *make* it. Instead of the anticipated dialectics, sophistry appeared on the scene. "Bakuninism" was saved, but the elucidation of the tasks of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia was not advanced a single step.

The hierarchy of the various defects in the people's ideal is established in the following way. "The absorption of the individual by *mir* and the worship of the tsar follow, properly speaking, as direct results ... from patriarchalism." The village commune itself proves to be "nothing but the natural extension

* *Statehood and Anarchy*, pp. 223-24.

of the family, the tribe",* and the tsar—"the common patriarch and ancestor, the father of the whole of Russia". Precisely "*for that reason* his power is unlimited". Hence it is understandable that patriarchalism is "the principal historical evil" which we are obliged "to fight with all our strength". But how can an anarchist who has neither "the intention nor the slightest wish to impose on our people or another any ideal of social structure obtained from reading books or from his own imagination" fight "the historical evil"? In no other way than by basing himself on the historical development of the people's ideal. But does the development of the Russian people's ideal promote the elimination from it of the darkening feature of patriarchalism? Without any doubt, and in this way: "the war against patriarchalism is now being waged in nearly every village and every family, and the village commune, *mir,* has now been so transformed into an instrument of the hated state power and despotism of officialdom that the revolt against the latter is becoming at the same time a revolt against the despotism of the village commune, *mir*".** Not embarrassed by the fact that the fight against the despotism of the village commune cannot fail to shake the very principles of communal land tenure, the author considers the question finally settled and assures us that "there remains the deification of the tsar", which "has extremely palled on and weakened in the consciousness of the people in the last ten or twelve years", not even because "patriarchalism" has been shaken, but "thanks to the wise policy of Alexander II the mild", a policy prompted by love of the people. After many trials, the Russian people "have begun to understand that they have no worse enemy than the tsar". The intelligentsia needs only to support and intensify this anti-tsar trend in the minds of the people. In conclusion the same intelligentsia is urged to fight one more "main defect", not mentioned in the list of the features of the people's ideal quoted above. This defect, "which has so far paralysed and rendered impossible a general rising of the people in Russia, is the exclusiveness of the peasant communes, the isolation and disjunction of the peasant *mirs*".... If we consider that "the disjunction of the peasant *mirs*" results

* Apparently M. A. Bakunin did not even suspect that the commune existed in history before the patriarchy and exists among peoples who show no trace of "patriarchalism". By the way, he shared this error with many of his contemporaries, for instance Rodbertus and perhaps Lassalle, who in his scheme of the history of property, *System der erworbenen Rechte,* T. I, S. 217-23, makes no mention of the primitive commune.

[Note to the 1905 edition.] I repeat that the Russian village commune has nothing in common with the primitive commune. But in the early eighties this was not yet established.—*G.P.*

** *Statehood and Anarchy,* Note A, p. 19.

from the circumstance that "every village commune forms a closed whole, in consequence of which not one commune has or even *feels** the necessity to have any independent organic link with the others", that "they are united among themselves only through the intermediary of father tsar, only in his supreme, paternal authority", we are obliged to admit that no easy task is imposed on the intelligentsia. "To establish a link between the best peasants in all villages, volosts and, as far as possible, regions, and, where possible, to establish a similar vital link between the factory workers and the peasantry", ... to ensure "that the best or progressive peasants in every village, volost and region know the like peasants of all the other villages, volosts and regions", ... to convince them that "in the people there lives an invincible strength which is powerful only when it is assembled and works simultaneously ... and that thus far it has not been assembled", ... to establish a link between and organise "the villages, volosts and regions according to a general plan and with the concerted aim of emancipating the whole people", ... briefly, to add several new and very good "features" to the people's character and ideal and to remove from them several radical defects—that is a truly titanic work! And this gigantic work will have to be undertaken with the conviction that "one must be an unmitigated blockhead or an incorrigible doctrinaire to imagine that one can give something to the people, present them with any material good or new intellectual or moral content, a new truth, and arbitrarily give their life a new direction or, as ... the late Chaadayev maintained, write what one wishes on them, as on a blank sheet".** ... Can one imagine a more crying contradiction between the theoretical propositions of a "programme" and the practical tasks it outlines?

People who did not want to break with logic for ever could do nothing but renounce the practical part of the programme while supporting its basic propositions, or follow its practical directions and try to find a reliable theoretical basis for them. That is what happened subsequently.

### 6. P. N. TKACHOV

But side by side with Bakuninism, which carried within itself the elements of its own disintegration, there was another trend in the Russian revolutionary party. Extremely hostile to Bakunin's anarchist philosophy, it agreed with him, as I have already mentioned in the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle,*

* My italics.

***Statehood and Anarchy,* Note A, p. 9.

in his appraisal of the contemporary situation in Russia. At the same time, this trend was insured against many of the blunders the author of *Statehood and Anarchy* made by, so to speak, its lesser pretentiousness and the lower logical type of its line of argument.

Bakunin sought the justification of the action he suggested in the very process of development of the people's outlook, but as he used an unsuitable criterion he was forced to substitute the logical leaps of his own thought for the historical development of Russian social life. Tkachov, the father of the trend which we are now going on to, gave no thought to a dialectical analysis of our social relationships. His programme was the immediate conclusion he drew from the *statics* of those relationships. The contemporary structure of Russian life seemed to him purposely invented, as it were, for the social (which in his terminology meant *socialist*) revolution. For him, to talk about progress and development was to betray the cause of the people. "Now, or in a very remote future, perhaps never! " was the motto of his journal *Nabat.* He expressed the same thought in his pamphlet *Tasks of Revolutionary Propaganda in Russia,*[116] and it pervades every line of his "Open Letter to Engels". Not venturing on to the difficult road of dialectics, he did not make the false steps in logic typical of Bakunin, which he so bitingly ridiculed in his *Anarchy of Thought.* He was more consistent than Bakunin in the sense that he kept firmly to his premises and drew more logical conclusions from them. The whole trouble was that not only those premises, but also the standpoint he adopted in their elaboration, were inferior to those of Bakunin for the simple reason that they were nothing but Bakuninism simplified, a Bakuninism which renounced all efforts to create its own philosophy of Russian history and anathematised such attempts. A few extracts from Tkachov's works will suffice to prove this.

Let us begin with his "Open Letter to Mr. Frederick Engels". The purpose of this letter was "to help the ignorance" of Engels, to prove to him that "the accomplishment of the social revolution is encountering no serious obstacles in Russia" and that "at every particular moment it is possible to arouse the Russian people for a unanimous revolutionary protest".* The method he uses to prove this thesis is so original, so typical of the history of "poor Russian thought", so important for understanding and correctly appraising the "Narodnaya Volya party's" programme and it anticipates to such a degree Mr. Tikhomirov's whole line of argument that it deserves the reader's most serious attention.

* "Offener Brief", S. 10.

In Tkachov's opinion it would be childish to dream of transposing the International Working Men's Association to Russian soil. This is hindered by the social and political conditions in Russia. "May it be known to you," he says to Engels,[117] "that we in Russia have not at our command a single one of the means of revolutionary struggle which you have at your disposal in the West in general and in Germany in particular. We have no urban proletariat, no freedom of the press, no representative assembly, nothing that could allow us to hope to unite (in the present economic situation) the downtrodden, ignorant masses of working people into a single, well-organised, disciplined workers' association...." "A working-class literature is unthinkable here, and if it could be created it would prove useless, because the majority of our people cannot read." Personal influence upon the people is also impossible owing to the police regulations which take measures against any approach by the intelligentsia to the common people. But all these unfavourable conditions, the author of the letter assures Engels, "must not lead you to think that the victory of the social revolution is more problematic, less guaranteed in Russia than in the West. By no means! If we have not certain of the chances that you have, we can point out many which you have not got".

What are these chances? Why can we expect a revolution, and what may we expect from it?

"We have no urban proletariat, that is true, of course; but, on the other hand, we have no bourgeoisie at all. Between the suffering people and the despotism of the state which oppresses them we have no intermediate estate; our workers will only have to fight *political power—the power of capital* in our country is still in the embryo....

"Our people are ignorant, that is a fact too. But on the other hand, the immense majority of them are imbued with the principles of communal land tenure; they are, if we may put it that way, communist by instinct, by tradition....

"Hence it is clear that despite their ignorance our people are far nearer to socialism than the peoples of the West, although the latter are better educated.

"Our people are accustomed to slavery and subjection—that is also indisputable. But you must not conclude from that that they are satisfied with their condition. They protest, and protest continually against it. No matter what form these protests take, whether that of religious sects—called dissidence—that of refusing to pay taxes, of revolt, or open resistance to the authorities, in any case they protest, occasionally with great energy....

"True, these protests are narrow and scattered. Nevertheless, they prove sufficiently that the people cannot bear their condition and that they profit by every opportunity to give vent to the bitterness and hatred heaped up in their breasts. And that is why the Russian people may be called instinctively revolutionary in spite of their apparent torpor, in spite of their not being clearly aware of their rights....

"Our revolutionary party of the intelligentsia is numerically small, that is true too. But then, it pursues none but socialist ideals and its enemies are almost more impotent than it, and their impotence is to the party's advantage. Our upper estates constitute no force whatsoever—neither *economic* (they are too poor), nor political (they are too obtuse and too much accustomed to rely in everything on the wisdom of the police). Our clergy are of no importance whatever.... Our state seems a power only when considered from a distance. In reality its strength is only apparent and fictitious. It has no roots in the economic life of the people. It does not embody the interests of any estate. It oppresses indifferently all classes of society and is equally hated by all. They tolerate the state, they suffer its barbaric despotism with complete equanimity. But this tolerance, this equanimity ... are the result of a mistake: society has created for itself the illusion that the Russian state is mighty and is under the magic influence of that illusion." But not much is needed to dispel this illusion. "Two or three military defeats, a simultaneous rising of the peasants in many gubernias, an open revolt in the capital in peacetime, and its influence will be destroyed in an instant and the government will find itself alone and abandoned by all.

"Thus, in this respect too, we have more chances than you (i.e., the West in general and Germany in particular). In your countries the state is by no means a fictitious force, it stands firmly based on capital; it embodies definite economic interests. It is not only supported by the army and police (as in our country), but is strengthened by the whole system of bourgeois relations.... In our country ... on the contrary, our social form owes its existence to the state, to a state hanging, so to speak, in the air, a state which has nothing in common with the existing social order, whose roots are in the past, not the present."*

Such is Tkachov's social and political philosophy.

If by some mistake of the type-setter the above quotations were followed by a reference to the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" Mr. Tikhomirov himself would hardly notice the mistake, such is the resemblance the copy

* "Offener Brief", S. 4, 5, 6.

published in April 1884 bears to the original which appeared ten years ago. But alas, what does the glory of the first discovery matter?! Mr. Tikhomirov does not say a word about his teacher. For his part, the author of "*Open Letter to Mr. Frederick Engels*" did not consider it necessary to refer to *Statehood and Anarchy,* which had already been published in 1873 and contains the same account of Russian social relations and the same assurances that the Russian peasant is "communist by instinct, by tradition". Frederick Engels was perfectly right when he said in his answer to Tkachov that the latter's argument was based on "Bakunin's usual phrases".

But what does Bakuninism lead to when it has lost faith in the possibility of removing the "unfortunate features" of people's ideal by direct influence and has concentrated its attention on the *fortunate* circumstance that our *state* is "hanging in the air" and "has nothing in common with the existing social order", that the "*accomplishment of the social revolution* presents no difficulties"? It is easy to understand what it leads to. If "capital in our country is still in the embryo" and "our workers have to fight only the *political power*" of tsarism; if the people, for their part, "are always ready" to rebel just as Pushkin's Onegin is to fight a duel, the revolutionary struggle acquires an exclusively "political" character. But as, moreover, we are unable "to unite the downtrodden, ignorant masses of working people into a single, well-organised, disciplined association", or to create a working-class literature and as it would even be useless to do so, it appears that it is not the workers at all who have to wage that political struggle. This must be the concern of the same "numerically small revolutionary party of the intelligentsia" whose strength lies in its socialist ideals and the impotence of its enemies. But, owing to contemporary Russian conditions and also the very substance of its relations to the other social forces, that minority, which is strong because of others' weakness, has no alternative but to set up a secret organisation and prepare a coup d'état in anticipation of favourable circumstances for a decisive blow—"military defeats" of Russia, "simultaneous risings in several gubernias", or "revolt in the capital". In other words, Bakuninism, having lost faith in "progress", leads us direct to conspiracy for the overthrow of the existing government, the seizure of power and the organisation of a socialist society with the help of that power and the Russian peasantry's "inborn and traditional" inclination towards communism. We saw all this in Tkachov's works long before we beheld it in Mr. Tikhomirov's article.

But to acquaint ourselves fully with Tkachov's programme or, as he said, the programme of the "group to which all that is

courageous, clever and energetic in our revolutionary intellectual youth belongs", we must turn to other works of the editor of *Nabat,* since the "Open Letter" contains only the assurance that "the contemporary period of (Russian) history is the most convenient for carrying out the social revolution", and references to such "general features" of the programme as "a direct appeal to the people", the creation of a vigorous revolutionary organisation and strict discipline. From the pamphlet *Tasks of Revolutionary Propaganda in Russia* we shall get the original thought that "a forcible revolution can take place only when the minority refuses to wait for the majority to become conscious of their requirements and decides, so to speak, to impose this consciousness on the majority". Finally, in the collection of "critical essays by P. N. Tkachov" published under the general title *Anarchy of Thought* [118] we actually find in the chapter directed against the programme of the journal *Vperyod* and the pamphlet *Russian Social-Revolutionary Youth* [119] the following alternative: "One of the two: either the intelligentsia must take power in its hands after the revolution, or it must resist, retard the revolution until the blissful moment when the 'popular outbreak' no longer presents any danger, i.e., when the people have assimilated the results of world thought and acquired knowledge which is beyond them." The mere circumstance that this knowledge is admitted to be "beyond the people" makes it clear where P. N. Tkachov's sympathies lie.

The organisation of a conspiracy to seize power becomes the main practical task of propaganda in the newspaper and then in the journal *Nabat.* Parallel with this goes propaganda of terror and the extolling of "the so-called Nechayev plot" at the expense of the propagandist circles. "For us revolutionaries, who no longer wish to tolerate the sufferings of the people and can no longer bear their shameful slave-like condition, for us, whose view is not dimmed by metaphysical ravings and who are profoundly convinced that the Russian revolution, like every other one, cannot take place *without the hanging and shooting of gendarmes, public prosecutors, ministers, merchants and priests,* briefly, cannot take place without 'a forcible upheaval', for us materialist revolutionaries *the whole question boils down to acquiring the power of the authority which is now directed against us.*" These lines, printed *in 1878,** when nobody even thought of forming the "Narodnaya Volya party", show clearly enough where we must seek the source of the practical ideas whose dissemination this party took upon itself. We therefore

* See *Nabat,* 1878 (month and number not given), "Revolutionary Propaganda", p. L. [120]

think that the editors of *Nabat* were right in their way when, noting in 1879 "the complete fiasco" of going among the people, they added proudly: "We were the *first* to point out the inevitability of this fiasco; we were the *first*... to implore youth to abandon that fatal anti-revolutionary path and to return once more to the traditions of direct revolutionary work and a fighting, centralised revolutionary organisation (i.e., to the traditions of the Nechayev trend). And ours was not a voice crying in the wilderness...." "The fighting organisation of the revolutionary forces, the disorganisation and terrorisation of the government authorities, these have been from the very beginning the basic demands of our programme. And at present these demands have at last begun to be put into practice." Carried away by terrorist activity, the editors even state that "*at present our only task* is to terrorise and disorganise the government authorities".* [121]

## 7. RESULTS

We shall later see the significance of the extracts I have quoted on the question of "our differences". Let us now consider the programmes which we have set forth from the purely historical standpoint and ask ourselves how satisfactory were our formulation and solution of the problem of the condition of the Russian village commune and of the Russian people's ability to wage a conscious struggle for their economic emancipation.

We have seen that both M. A. Bakunin and P. N. Tkachov spoke a lot about the communist instincts of the Russian peasantry. References to these instincts form the starting-point of their social and political arguments and the main basis of their faith in the possibility of a socialist revolution in Russia. But neither the author of *Statehood and Anarchy* nor the editor of *Nabat* apparently gave the slightest thought to the question whether the village commune exists because our people "are imbued with the principles of communal land tenure" or whether they are "imbued" with these "principles", i.e., are accustomed to the commune, because they live under conditions of collective ownership of the land. Had they devoted more attention to this question—about the answer to which there cannot be any doubt—they would have had to transfer the main emphasis of their argument from the discussion of the people's "instincts" and ideals to the study of the national economy.

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* *Nabat*, 1879, Nos. 3, 4, 5, pp. 2, 3.

Then they would have had to pay attention to the history of land tenure and in general of the right of property among the primitive peoples, to the rise and gradual growth of individualism in the communities of hunting, nomadic and agricultural tribes, to the social and political influence of this new "principle", which gradually became dominant. Applying the results of such studies to Russia, they would have had to appraise the conditions which cause the disintegration of the village commune and whose significance has particularly grown since the abolition of serfdom. This appraisal would logically have brought them to attempt to determine the strength and significance of individualism in the economy of the modern village commune in Russia. Then, since the significance of this principle is continually rising—under the influence of conditions adverse to collectivism—they would have had to determine the magnitude of the acceleration individualism is gaining in the course of its assault on the rights and the economy of the commune members. Having determined with all possible accuracy in such conditions the magnitude of this acceleration, they would have had to go on to study the qualities and development of the force by means of which they hoped not only to stave off the triumph of individualism, not only to restore to the village commune its primitive form, but to give it a new and higher form. Then there would have arisen the question—a very important one, as we have seen—whether this force would be the product of the inner life of the commune or a result of the historical development of external conditions. In the latter case, this force would be a purely external one in relation to the commune, and they would then have needed first of all to ask themselves whether external influences alone were sufficient for the reorganisation of the economic, social and political life of the class concerned. Having dealt with this question, they would have had to consider another, namely, where the point of application of this force was to be sought—in the sphere of *the conditions of life* or in the domain of *the thinking habits* of our peasantry. To conclude, they would have had to prove that *the strength of the supporters of socialism grows with greater speed than individualism is growing in Russian economic life.* Only when they had made this circumstance at least *probable* could they have proved the *probability* of the social revolution which they held could not encounter *"any"* difficulties in Russia.

In each of the cases listed above they would have had to deal not with the statics but with the dynamics of our social relationships, to "take" the people not "as they are", but as they are *becoming,* to consider not the motionless *picture* but the *process* of Russian life taking place according to definite

laws. They would have had to apply in practice the very instrument of dialectics which Chernyshevsky used to study the question of the village commune in its abstract form.

Unfortunately neither Bakunin nor Tkachov were able, as we have seen, to approach the question of the chances of a social revolution in Russia from this most important standpoint. They contented themselves with the conviction that our people are "communist by instinct, by tradition"; and although Bakunin paid due attention to the weak sides of the people's "traditions" and instincts, although Tkachov saw that such weak sides could be eliminated only by institutions and not by logical arguments, neither of them carried their analysis to the end. In appealing to our intelligentsia they expected social miracles from its activity and presumed that its devotion would be a substitute for the people's initiative and that its revolutionary energy would replace the inner striving of Russian social life towards a socialist revolution. They regarded the national economy, the way of life and the thinking habits of the peasantry exactly as a still life, a complete whole requiring only slight changes, right up to the social revolution itself. In the imagination of those same writers who, naturally, would not have refused to admit the forms of the people's life in their time to be the result of historical development, history seemed "to stand still". From the publication of *Statehood and Anarchy* or "Open Letter to Frederick Engels", right up to the first or "second day after the revolution" the village commune, they held, was to remain in its present form, which they affirmed was not far from the transition to socialism. The thing was to set about the matter as soon as possible and to follow the appropriate road. "We brook no postponements, no delays.... We cannot and will not wait.... Let each one gather his belongings as quickly as he can and hasten to set out! " wrote the editor of *Nabat.* And although there were fundamental differences between Bakunin and Tkachov as to the direction of that road, each was sure at any rate that if youth followed the road *he* indicated they would still manage to find the village commune in a state of desirable stability. Although "every day brings us new enemies, creates new social forms hostile to us", those new forms do not change the mutual relations between the factors of Russian social life. There continues to be no bourgeoisie, the state continues to be "hanging in the air". If we ring the tocsin louder, if we set about revolutionary activity more energetically, we shall yet succeed in saving the "communist instincts" of the Russian people and, relying on their attachment to the "principles of communal land tenure", we shall succeed in accomplishing the socialist revolution. That was the way P. N. Tkachov argued and

also the way, or nearly the way, the author of *Statehood and Anarchy* argued.

Our youth read the works of both authors and, splitting into groups, did indeed hasten to set to work. It may seem strange at first sight that Tkachov's or Bakunin's programme could find supporters among the very intelligentsia that had been reared on the works of Chernyshevsky and if only for that reason should have developed the habit of more rigorous thinking. But in substance the matter was simple and was partly explained by Chernyshevsky's own influence.

It was not for nothing that Hegel gave such an important place in his philosophy to the question of method or that those West European socialists who are proud to "trace their descent", incidentally, "to Hegel and Kant", attach far more importance to the *method* of studying social plenomena than to the data resulting from that study.* A mistake in the results will *inevitably* be noticed and corrected by further application of the correct method, whereas an erroneous method can only in rare and *individual* cases give results not contrary to this or that *individual* truth. But there can be a serious attitude to questions of method only in a society which has had a serious philosophical education, a thing which Russian society could never boast of. The inadequate philosophical education made itself felt with particular force in our country in the sixties, when our "thinking realists",[123] having established the cult of natural science, began cruelly to persecute philosophical "metaphysics". Influenced by this anti-philosophical propaganda, Chernyshevsky's followers were unable to master the methods of his dialectical thinking and concentrated their attention merely on the *results* of his studies. As a result of these very studies, as we know, there appeared faith in the possibility for our village commune of a direct transition to a higher, communist form of communal life. This conviction suffered from one-sidedness by virtue of its abstractness, and had the pupils remained faithful to the spirit and not to the letter of Chernyshevsky's works, they would not have been slow to pass, according to an expression I used above, from algebra to arithmetic, from general abstract arguments about *possible* transitions of certain social forms into others, to the detailed study of the contemporary conditions and *probable* future of the Russian village commune in particular. So-called

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* "We are far from needing bare results so much as *study*," Engels says, "we have known since Hegel's time that without the development leading to them, results have no significance whatsoever; they are worse than useless if research stops at them, if they are not made the premises for further development."[122]

"Russian" socialism would thus have been placed on a perfectly firm basis. Unfortunately, our revolutionary youth did not even suspect that their teacher had any special method of thinking. Contenting themselves with the results of his investigations, they regarded as his fellow-thinkers all writers who defended the principle of communal land tenure, and whereas the author of *Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices* could himself never agree, for example, with Shchapov,* our youth saw in the latter's historical works only a new illustration and new arguments in favour of their teacher's opinion. Still less could they make a severe criticism of the new revolutionary doctrines. P. N. Tkachov and M. A. Bakunin seemed to them to belong to exactly the same trend as Chernyshevsky. Hegel's pupils, while strictly following the very same method which that great thinker handed down to them, smashed his system to bits. They kept to the spirit, not the letter of his system. Chernyshevsky's followers could not bring themselves even to think of a critical attitude towards his opinions. They kept strictly to every letter of his writings and lost all idea of their spirit. The result was that they could not preserve in their purity even the results of Chernyshevsky's investigations, and, mixing them with Slavophile tendencies, they formed the curious theoretical amalgam from which our *Narodism* subsequently arose.

Thus, the preceding socialist literature bequeathed to us several (unimitated) attempts at applying the dialectical method to the solution of important problems in Russian social life and several socialist programmes; one of these recommended socialist propaganda, considering the Russian peasantry just as receptive to it as the West European proletariat; another insisted on the organisation of a nation-wide rebellion, and a third, not considering propaganda or organisation possible, pointed to the seizure of power by a revolutionary party as the starting-point of the Russian socialist revolution.

The theoretical posing of the question of the revolution, far from progressing since Chernyshevsky's time, regressed in many respects towards Herzen's semi-Slavophile views. The Russian revolutionary intelligentsia of the early seventies did not add a single serious argument in support of the negative solution of the question posed by Herzen: "Must Russia pass through all the phases of European development?"

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* See Аристов, «А. П. Щапов, жизнь и сочинения», С.-Петербург, стр. 89–92. [Aristov, *A.P. Shchapov, Life and Works*, St. Petersburg, pp. 89-92.]

*Chapter I*

# A FEW REFERENCES TO HISTORY

## 1. RUSSIAN BLANQUISM

It is now ten years since the most important programmes of the seventies appeared. Ten years of efforts, struggle and sometimes bitter disappointments have shown our youth that the organisation of a revolutionary movement among the peasantry is impossible under the present conditions in Russia. As *revolutionary* doctrines, Bakuninism and Narodism are antiquated and are now received with joy only in the *conservative*-democratic literary camp. Their fate will be either to lose their distinctive features altogether and merge with new and more fruitful revolutionary trends or to congeal in their old form and serve as a buttress for political and social reaction. Our propagandists of the old type have also disappeared from the stage. But that is not the case with the theories of P. N. Tkachov. Although for full ten years "every day has brought us new enemies and created new social factors hostile to us", although the social revolution "has encountered" in that time certain considerable "obstacles", Russian Blanquism is now raising its voice with particular force and, still confident that "the contemporary historical period is particularly favourable for the carrying out of the social revolution", it is continuing to accuse all "dissenters" of moderation and meticulousness, repeating in a new key the old refrain: "now, or in a very remote future, perhaps never! " or "we have not the right to wait", or "let each one gather his belongings and hasten to set out", and so on. And it is this strengthened and, if we may so express it, rejuvenated Tkachovism that everybody has to deal with who would like to write about the present "differences" in Russian revolutionary spheres. All the more must it be taken into account in the study of "the fate of Russian capitalism".

I have already said more than once that Mr. Tikhomirov's article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution? " is only a new and supplemented edition—though at the same time inferior in many respects—of the social and political views of P. N. Tkachov. If I have not been mistaken in determining the

distinctive features of Russian Blanquism, the literary activity of the "Narodnaya Volya party" boils down to a repetition of Tkachov's teachings in different keys. The sole difference is that for Tkachov "the time we are passing through" referred to the early seventies, while for the publicists of the "Narodnaya Volya party" it coincides with the late seventies and early eighties. Completely lacking what the Germans call the "sense of history", Russian Blanquism has very easily transferred and will transfer this concept of the particularly favourable "time" for the social revolution from one decade to another. After proving a false prophet in the eighties, it will renew its prophecies with an obstinacy worthy of a better fate ten, twenty or thirty years later and will go on doing so right up to the time when the working class finally understands the conditions for its social emancipation and greets the Blanquist doctrine with Homeric laughter. For the dissemination of Blanquism every moment of history is favourable except a time which is really favourable for the socialist revolution.

But it is time to define more exactly the expressions I use. What is Blanquism in general? What is Russian Blanquism?

P. L. Lavrov hopes, as we have seen, that "the majority of the members" of the Emancipation of Labour group "may any day now be in the ranks of Narodnaya Volya". He affirms that "Mr. Plekhanov himself has already undergone a sufficiently great evolution in his political and social convictions for us to have reason to hope for new steps on his part in the same direction".[124] If the "Narodnaya Volya party" professes—as far as can be judged by its literary works—the Blanquist standpoint, it turns out that my "evolution" too is taking place "in the same direction". The Marxism which I profess at present is consequently but a purgatory through which my socialist soul must pass to obtain final rest in the lap of Blanquism. Is that so? Will such an "evolution" be progressive? How does this question appear from the standpoint of modern scientific socialism?

"Blanqui is first and foremost a political revolutionary," we read in an article by Engels,[125] "a socialist only in feeling, who sympathises with the people in their sufferings but has no special socialist theory of his own and proposes no definite measures for social reorganisation. In his political activity he was mainly a so-called '*man of action*'* who was convinced that a small number of well-organised people who choose the right moment and carry out a revolutionary attempt can attract the popular masses with one or two successes and thus carry out a

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

victorious revolution. During the reign of Louis Philippe he could naturally organise such a group only, of course, in the form of a secret society and what happened then was what always happens when there is a conspiracy. The people forming it, wearied by continuous restraint and vain promises that it would soon come to the final blow, ended by losing all patience and ceasing to obey, and then one of two things remained: either to allow the conspiracy to fall to pieces or to start the revolutionary attempt without any external occasion. An attempt of that kind was made (on May 12, 1839) and was suppressed at the very outset. This conspiracy of Blanqui, by the way, was the only one that was not discovered by the police....

"From the fact that Blanqui viewed every revolution as a Handstreich by a small revolutionary minority, it naturally follows that a revolutionary dictatorship must be established after a successful upheaval; naturally not a dictatorship of the whole revolutionary class, the proletariat, but of a small number of those who have carried out the Handstreich and who themselves were previously subject to the dictatorship of one or a few of the elect.

"The reader sees," Engels continues, "that Blanqui is a revolutionary of the old generation. Such conceptions of the course of revolutionary events have already grown too obsolete for the German working-class party, and even in France they can arouse sympathy only in the least mature or least patient workers."

Thus we see that socialists of the latest, scientific school consider Blanquism as an already obsolete standpoint. The transition from Marxism to Blanquism is not impossible, of course—all sorts of things happen—but on no account will it be acknowledged by any Marxist as progress in the "political and social convictions" of any of their fellow-thinkers. Only from the Blanquist standpoint can such an "evolution" be considered progressive. And if the honourable editor of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* has not radically changed his views of the socialism of Marx's school, his prophecy concerning the Emancipation of Labour group is bound to puzzle every impartial reader.

We see further from this quotation from Engels that Tkachov's conception of the "forcible revolution" as something "imposed" on the majority by the minority is nothing but Blanquism which could be called the purest if the editor of *Nabat* had not taken it into his head to try to prove that in Russia there is no need even to impose socialism on the majority, who are communist "by instinct, by tradition".

The distinctive feature of the Russian variety of Blanquism is therefore merely the idealisation of the Russian peasantry

borrowed from Bakunin. Let us now pass on to Mr. Tikhomirov's views and see whether they come under this definition or are a new variety of "Russian socialism".

## 2. L. TIKHOMIROV

I maintain that there is absolutely nothing new in them except a few historical, logical and statistical mistakes.

These mistakes indeed are something new and original, typical only of the views of Mr. Tikhomirov. Neither Blanquism in general nor Russian Blanquism in particular had any part in their appearance or their peculiar "evolution".

Their appearance was due to a purely negative cause: lack of knowledge, which generally has a fairly prominent part in the genesis of the social and political concepts of our intelligentsia and which attains inordinate proportions in Mr. Tikhomirov's article.

It will not be difficult for the reader to check the correctness of our appraisal if he endeavours with us to disentangle the ravelled and in several places broken threads of the "exceptionalist" considerations of our author.

Let us begin with the history of revolutionary ideas in Russia and in the West.

"Only a few years ago," says Mr. Tikhomirov, "socialists, proceeding from the analysis of social relationships, made by their teachers in the capitalist countries of Europe, considered political activity to be harmful, if anything, to the interests of the popular masses as such, for they presumed that in our country a constitution would be an instrument for the organisation of the bourgeoisie, as it is in Europe. On the basis of these considerations, one could even find among our socialists the opinion that of two evils an autocratic tsar was at any rate better for the people than a constitutional one. Another, so-called liberal, trend was opposite in character", etc.*

The Russian socialists "considered political activity to be harmful, if anything ... proceeding from the analysis ... made by their teachers in the capitalist countries of the West". What "analysis" is Mr. Tikhomirov talking about? Which teachers does he mean? Whose "portrait's this? Where's such talk heard?" [126] We know that West European socialist thought, "proceeding from the analysis ... made in the capitalist countries in Europe", presented and still presents "two types of attitude to the question of political activity". The followers of Proudhon profess political abstention and advise that it should be pursued

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, p. 231.

right up to "the day after the revolution". For them "political revolution is the aim, economic revolution, the means". That is why they wish to begin with the economic upheaval, supposing that in contemporary conditions political activity is "harmful, if anything, to the interests of the popular masses as such", and that a constitution is merely "an instrument for the organisation of the bourgeoisie". Another trend "was opposite in character". *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher,*[127] published in Paris in 1844, roughly outlined at that time the *political* task of the working class. In 1847 Marx wrote in his *Misère de la philosophie*: "Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time social. It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that *social evolutions* will cease to be *political revolutions.*"* In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Marx and Engels again return to the same question and prove that *"every class struggle is a political struggle"* and most caustically ridicule those "true socialists" in whose opinion—as in Mr. Tikhomirov's—the constitution "is in Europe" merely "an instrument for the organisation of the bourgeoisie". In the opinion of the authors of the *Manifesto,* socialism, opposing the emancipation movement of the bourgeoisie, "lost its pedantic innocence" and became the instrument of *political and social reaction.* The same thought was then repeated many times in other works of the authors of the *Manifesto* and of their followers. It can be said that almost every issue of every Social-Democratic newspaper in every European country reproduces this thought in some form or other. Karl Marx and the Marxists have done everything to elucidate their social and political views and show the unsoundness of the Proudhon "programme".

And after such brilliant literary activity—activity which opens a new epoch in the history of socialist thought in "Europe"—we hear that the Russian socialists denied the expediency of the political struggle for the sole reason that they "proceeded from the analysis made by their teachers in the capitalist countries of the West"! Can one speak seriously now of any other "analysis of social relationships" in Western Europe than that contained in the works of Marx and Engels? This would be appropriate only in a historical work dealing with the mistakes and one-sidedness of Marx's predecessors. But either Mr. Tikhomirov is entirely unacquainted with Marxist literature or he has understood it in exactly the same way as Mr. Ivanyukov, whose "bankruptcy" was announced and partly proved in the first issue of *Vest-*

* *Misère de la philosophie,* pp. 177-78.[128]

*nik.* [129] The Russian socialists spoke of the harmfulness of political activity, not because they generally "proceeded from the analysis of social relationships" in Western Europe, but because they proceeded from an erroneous, petty-bourgeois "analysis" made by Proudhon. But were they all Proudhonists? Were they all supporters of the teaching of Bakunin, that reformer, so to speak, of Proudhonism? Who does not know that far from all of them were! P. N. Tkachov, just as absolutely all the West European Blanquists, proceeding, by the way, not from "the analysis made in the capitalist countries of Europe", but from the traditions of French Jacobinism, savagely attacked the principle of "political abstention". Did not P. N. Tkachov write precisely "only a few years ago"? Must his opinions not be registered in the history of Russian revolutionary thought? It would be a very risky step for Mr. Tikhomirov to decide to answer this question in the affirmative; what if his own philosophy turned out in effect to be only a new edition of Tkachov's? It is easy for any reader to make a comparison.

But were there only Bakuninists and Blanquists in the Russian revolutionary movement "only a few years ago"? Were there no other trends? Were there no writers who knew that a constitution "is in Europe" ... "an instrument for the organisation" *not only* of the bourgeoisie, but of another class, too, whose interests socialists cannot ignore without betraying their own banner? It seems to me that there were, and precisely in the camp of those opposed to Tkachov, who, while revolting against the thought that political activity is "harmful, if anything, to the interests of the popular masses as such", nevertheless demanded all or nothing—either the seizure of power by the socialists or political stagnation for Russia. When on these grounds it occurred to him to terrify the Russian socialists with the spectre of capitalism and a bourgeois constitution, here is the answer he immediately got from a well-known Russian writer in an appeal to our "social-revolutionary youth": "You are told that Russia must have a revolution now or she will never have one. You are shown a picture of the bourgeoisie developing in our country and are told that with its development the struggle will become more difficult, that a revolution will become impossible. The author has a very poor idea of your wits if he thinks you will yield to his arguments...." "What grounds are there for thinking that the struggle of the people against the bourgeoisie would be unthinkable in Russia if forms of social life like those abroad were indeed established there? *Was it not the development of the bourgeoisie that roused the proletariat to the struggle?* Are not loud calls to the imminent social revolution heard in all the countries of Europe? Does not

the bourgeoisie realise the danger threatening it from the workers and continually drawing nearer? ... Our youth are by no means so cut off from the world as to be ignorant of this state of affairs, and those who would like to convince them that the domination of the bourgeoisie would be unshakable in our country are relying too much on youth's lack of knowledge *when they draw for them a fantastic picture of Europe.*"

It is clear that the author of these lines by no means considered a constitution as an "instrument for the organisation of the bourgeoisie" alone as it "is in Europe", to quote Mr. Tikhomirov. Let Mr. Tikhomirov judge the author to be right or wrong as he wishes, but reference should be made to him in speaking of the "types of attitude" of our "intelligent thinkers" to the question of political activity. Even if the writer we have quoted—P. L. Lavrov,* now Mr. Tikhomirov's co-editor—did not acknowledge the expediency of political struggle in Russia, it was by no means because he "proceeded" from the Bakuninist analysis of the "social relationships in the capitalist countries of Europe". Mr. Tikhomirov is absolutely unforgivable for his lack of attention to the writings of his honourable colleague.

Let us be impartial though, let us try to point out circumstances attenuating his guilt. What is the explanation for this lack of attention? Why does Mr. Tikhomirov include all Russian socialists of the recent past in his list of Bakuninists and pass over P. L. Lavrov's writings in silence; why does he forget about Tkachov already now before "the boots" of the smugglers who brought *Nabat* into Russia "are worn out"? For a very simple reason. "There's nothing new under the sun," sceptics say. And if that cannot be considered as unconditionally true, there is nevertheless no doubt that in many programmes of "Russian socialism" there is absolutely "nothing new". And yet the supporters of those programmes have great pleasure in saying that their trend was the first "open manifestation" of such and such a "consciousness". All one has to do in order to afford oneself such a pleasure is to forget certain things in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement and to add a thing or two of one's own. Then it will be clear that our "intelligent thinkers" were a kind of lost sheep until the programme in question appeared, but that as soon as the authors of that programme uttered their "Let there be light", "the majestic sunrise" began, as Hegel said of the epoch of the French Revolution.[131] The appropriate standpoint was found, the misunderstandings were dissipated, truth was discovered. Is it

* See his pamphlet, *Russian Social-Revolutionary Youth,*[130] pp. 22-24.

surprising that people to whom pleasant self-deception is dearer than "many a bitter truth"[132] are tempted by such prospects and, forgetting their predecessors and their contemporaries, attribute to their own "party" the discovery of methods of struggle which, often enough, far from being discovered, were not even correctly *understood* by that party?

Mr. Tikhomirov has become infatuated with precisely that kind of stereotyped method in historical research. He wanted to show that "the bulk of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia", despite the famous "analysis", "could not renounce the fight against political oppression", but all this, nevertheless, "took place only unwittingly and spontaneously. The idea of the actual equality of the political and the economic elements in the party programme was clearly and loudly acknowledged only with the appearance of the Narodnaya Volya trend"* (which our author humbly honours with capitals). It was to prove his proposition that Mr. Tikhomirov attributed to all the Russian socialists views held only by the Bakuninists. As the latter considered political activity "harmful, if anything", while the Narodovoltsi rather thought it useful, it is clear that the honour of discovering that political activity is useful belongs to Narodnaya Volya. It was awkward to mention Tkachov because that would have revealed that he professed just that kind of "equality of the political and the economic elements in the party programme" which "was clearly and loudly acknowledged", it is alleged, "only with the appearance of the Narodnaya Volya trend". Neither did Mr. Tikhomirov find it "timely" to mention the writings of his co-editor, for to criticise and appraise them he would have had to adopt a standpoint which was quite unusual for a man who still imagined that there was no other "analysis of social relationships" in Western Europe than that "made" by Proudhon and the Proudhonists, by Bakunin and the Bakuninists.

Mr. Tikhomirov "did" all that was possible and even attempted a little of the impossible for the exaltation of his party. He brought himself, for instance, to affirm that "the former founders of *Chorny Peredel*" were once among the "fiercest opponents of the constitution". And yet, if he had been guided in his historical research by a striving for truth and not by the interests of "party politics" he would not have forgotten that in the very first issue of *Chorny Peredel,* in "A Letter to Former Comrades",[133] the following view on the constitution was expressed, which was far from corresponding to his idea of "the former founders" of the paper in question: "*Do not think, comrades, that I am altogether against a constitution, against*

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, p. 232.

*political freedom,*" says the author of the letter. "I have too great a respect for the human personality to be against political freedom.... It is unreasonable to say that the idea of political freedom is incomprehensible, unnecessary for the people. It" (i.e., political freedom) "is just as necessary for the people as for the intelligentsia. The difference is that among the people this need merges with other, more vital and basic needs of an economic character. These latter must be taken into consideration by any social-revolutionary party which desires political freedom to be fully ensured and guaranteed from usurpation and distortion by hostile elements."

These lines contain inaccuracy in expression and incorrectness in the definition of concepts. But the conclusions that "the founders of *Chorny Peredel*" were "opponents of the constitution", and even the "fiercest" opponents, can be drawn from them only by a man who has either renounced logic altogether or consciously ignores facts in the interests of his "party", or finally, has no knowledge at all of those facts, that is, does not know the very history of revolutionary ideas in Russia which he writes of with "the appearance of a learned expert"!

But perhaps the founders of *Chorny Peredel* changed their views on the constitution subsequently. Let us see. Under the editorship of these "founders" two issues of the paper were published. We know already what views on the political freedom were contained in the first issue; what, then, do we find in the second?

"Naturally it is not for us, who deny all subjection of man to man, to mourn the fall of absolutism in Russia; it is not for us, whom the struggle against the existing regime has cost such terrific efforts and heavy losses, to wish for its continuation," we read in the leading article of that issue. "*We know the price of political freedom* and can only regret that the Russian constitution will not give it a large enough place as well. We welcome any struggle for human rights and the more energetically the struggle is waged the greater is our sympathy towards it.... But besides the advantages which political freedom indisputably brings with it, *besides the tasks of winning it*, there are other advantages and tasks; and they must not be forgotten precisely now that social relationships have become so acute and we must therefore be prepared for anything."[134]

Is that the language of the "fiercest opponents of the constitution"?

There were, of course, quite substantial errors in the programme of Chorny Peredel. No fewer than in the programme of the "Narodnaya Volya party". But those errors can be criticised successfully only from the standpoint of scientific socialism,

certainly not from that of the Narodnaya Volya publicists. The latter labour under the same defect as the "founders of *Chorny Peredel*" did once—namely, inability to adopt a critical attitude to the social and political forms of our national life. People who are reconciled to the idealisation of these forms and base their practical plans on it display greater consistency when they conclude in favour of the programme of Chorny Peredel than when they subscribe to that of "the Narodnaya Volya party".

Let Mr. Tikhomirov try to prove the contrary.

However, he will hardly have time for that. He will first have to show how his revolutionary outlook differs from P. N. Tkachov's, how the social and political philosophy of the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" differs from that of the "Open Letter to Frederick Engels". Until he has solved that difficult problem, his arguments about the historical significance of the Narodnaya Volya trend will have no meaning at all. The reader may admit that the *actions* of Narodovoltsi were heroic, but that their *theories* were as bad as could be, and—what is the chief thing—they were by no means new; in other words, the reader can say that the Narodovoltsi-terrorists were heroes while the Narodovoltsi-writers were ... inferior to their tasks. This conclusion will not be shaken even by references to the fact that the "socialists in the Narodnaya Volya trend for the first time reached the level of a party, and of perhaps the strongest party in the country". Even if there were not a shade of exaggeration in those words, they would still justify the conclusion being drawn from them that there are times when, despite erroneous and immature theories, energetic parties can "reach the level" of a dominating influence in the country. But no more. Only people who are ignorant of history can conclude from the influence of this or that party that its theories are infallible. The Narodnaya Volya trend is not new even in the respect that the course of its ideas is lagging far behind the "course of things" "caused" by the trend itself. Has there been any lack of parties which did not understand the historical significance of their activity, any lack of fictions which in no way corresponded to the idea of "party" actions? From the fact that the Independents[135] temporarily reached "the level of a party ... perhaps the strongest party in the country", one still cannot conclude that there was more common sense and logic in their religious teachings than in the teachings of other parties. And yet the Independents even succeeded in "seizing power", a thing which the Russian Blanquists as yet only promise to do.

While the author collects material for a more lasting exaltation of the political philosophy of the Narodnaya Volya trend we shall have time for a detailed study of the article "What Can We

Expect from the Revolution?" and an exhaustive definition of Mr. Tikhomirov's outlook.[136]

We already know that he either does not know enough himself or did not want to give his readers the opportunity of getting to know the recent history of socialism in general and of "Russian socialism" in particular. Let us now go on to his arguments on history generally and especially the history of capitalism.

He engages in these edifying considerations for the following amazing reason:

"The political struggle," he says, "has become such an irrevocable conclusion of Russian life that nobody can make up his mind to deny it. But, while not making up their minds, a certain section of the socialists are also unable to bring this conclusion into relation with the customary theoretical views, and in their attempts to find this relation they resort to artificial constructions which completely distort the meaning of the political struggle which Narodnaya Volya has undertaken."

What is this "certain section of the socialists" and what are their "customary" views? The preceding pages of Mr. Tikhomirov's article told us that "only a few years ago, socialists ... considered political activity to be harmful, if anything, to the interests of the popular masses as such". We decided then that in Mr. Tikhomirov's opinion all the Russian socialists "only a few years ago" were Bakuninists, since he did not say a word of any other trends. We also saw that Narodnaya Volya noticed the Russian socialists' mistake and helped them "to understand the character of the historical development of Russia". It now appears that "a certain section" of the Russian socialists cannot rid themselves of their "customary views" and reach conclusions "which completely distort" the meaning of the activity of the Narodovoltsi. Apparently Mr. Tikhomirov means the Russian Bakuninists, who failed "to understand the character of Russia's development". That would be a logical opinion, but it is not our author's.

"Proceeding from the thought that Russia must inevitably pass through the phase of capitalist development to become capable of accepting and carrying out the ideas of socialism, they" (the socialists who belong to the "certain section" mentioned above) "try to draw the Russian revolutionaries on to the road of purely political struggle, exclusively for a constitution, and abandon as an impossible fantasy all thought of attaining, simultaneously with a political upheaval, a greater or lesser degree of economic upheaval."

"What a turn, God be praised!" we would exclaim, quoting Shchedrin; but unfortunately such a lyrical outburst will not solve the "cursed questions" which torture us. Where did this

"certain section" of the Russian socialists come from, and—what is more puzzling—where did they get their "customary views" from if "only a few years ago" *all* Russian socialists denied the expediency of the political struggle? How can people who ascribe no importance to that struggle "proceed from the thought that Russia must inevitably pass through the phase of capitalist development"? This thought may be correct or it may be erroneous, but in any case it is a *new* one and it bears no relation whatever to the "customary" theoretical views of any "section of the Russian socialists", as is vouched for by the history of the question of capitalism in Russia in general and by the historical references supplied by Mr. Tikhomirov himself. And if this thought is new, it is probably based on some new "theoretical views" which were unknown or unpleasant to Russian socialists "only a few years ago". And if a new trend has arisen in Russian socialist thought, it should be named, defined; its genesis should be pointed out and it should not be dismissed with vague hints about some kind of "customary theoretical views" which explain nothing at all in the present case.

We have already noted, however, that Mr. Tikhomirov does not like "direct blows" and bears no resemblance to Svyatoslav, who, when about to attack one or the other of his enemies, used to tell him beforehand: "I will attack thee." Mr. Tikhomirov attacks his opponents without any preliminary declaration of war. That, of course, is a matter of taste, and tastes differ, as we know.

Wondering, however, "why indeed" our author proceeds "with such secrecy", we must, "by our own reason",[137] reach the solution of this question of the new trend in Russian socialism—a question which is highly interesting for us. We ourselves have renounced many old "customary theoretical views" of the Russian socialists—you never know, perhaps we may agree with the innovators whom Mr. Tikhomirov is analysing. It is true they are not attractive as Mr. Tikhomirov describes them, but then, "how many times has it been affirmed to the world"[138] that the opponent must also be given a hearing!

### 3. THE EMANCIPATION OF LABOUR GROUP

In the opinion of "the socialists of this formation" the desire for an economic upheaval is "only harmful because it terrifies the liberals with the 'red spectre' and deprives us of their collaboration in the struggle for a constitution".

These words about the "red spectre" sound somewhat familiar. What article, what pamphlet do they occur in? Ah, of course! I used that expression in my pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* where I said that the Narodovoltsi terrify our society with the red spectre.

What if all Mr. Tikhomirov says is only a parable in which "a certain section of the socialists" is to be understood as meaning the Emancipation of Labour group, and "customary theoretical views", the views of the members of that group? But no, it would be too comical.

Indeed, has the Emancipation of Labour group ever abandoned "all thought of attaining, simultaneously with a political upheaval, a *greater or lesser degree* of economic upheaval"? What nonsense! We only do not believe in that peculiar theory according to which the cause of a certain *class* can be accomplished—"to a greater or lesser degree"—by a small group. We only say that if a lawyer can represent his client *in court,* no Committee, whether Executive, Administrative or whatever else it may be called, can represent the working class *in history*; that the emancipation of that class *must be its own work* and that in order to carry it out the class must acquire political education and must understand and assimilate the ideas of socialism. We think that the possibility of the economic emancipation of the working class increases in direct proportion to the speed and intensity of this process of education and assimilation. Our socialist intelligentsia, for whom it would be childish even to think of carrying out the economic upheaval by their own forces, can, however, render inestimable services to the workers by preparing them to put into effect "the general idea of the worker estate".[139] In the very first publication of the Emancipation of Labour group, the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* it was said quite clearly that our intelligentsia "must become the leader of the working class in the impending emancipation movement, explain to it its political and *economic interests* and also the interdependence of those interests. They must ensure that even in the pre-constitutional period *the factual relations of the social forces in Russia are changed in favour of the working class....* They must exert all their energy so that in the very opening period of the constitutional life of Russia our working class will be able to come forward as a separate party with a definite social and political programme. The detailed elaboration of that programme must be left to the workers themselves, but the intelligentsia must elucidate for them its principal points, for instance, *a radical review of the*

*present agrarian relations, the taxation system and factory legislation,* state help for producers' associations, and so forth".* Does all this resemble abandoning "all thought of attaining, simultaneously with a political upheaval, a greater or lesser degree of economic upheaval"? I hope not. And as Mr. Tikhomirov is too intelligent a man not to understand such simple things, and too conscientious a writer purposely to distort their meaning, by "a certain section of the socialists" he apparently did not mean the Emancipation of Labour group, or by "customary theoretical views", the views set forth in the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle.*

In all probability the mention of the "red spectre" is not borrowed from my pamphlet either. If it were, I would be justified in reproaching Mr. Tikhomirov for the fact that "his quotations are not exact". When I spoke of the "red spectre" I did not recommend that our socialists would renounce the "desire" to achieve "a greater or lesser degree of economic upheaval". I recommended that they should renounce the "desire" to chatter about the nearness of the economic upheaval when they had done nothing or very little for the actual accomplishment of such an upheaval and when confidence in its proximity could be based only on the most childish idealisation of the people. I opposed chatter about the red spectre to effective work for the economic emancipation of the working class, as anybody can see by reading pages 71 and the following of my pamphlet, where, among other things, one can find a reminder of the example of the German Communists in 1848.[140] Or is Mr. Tikhomirov accusing Marx himself of once renouncing "all thought of attaining, simultaneously with a political upheaval, a greater or lesser degree of economic upheaval"? Even if we presume that our author has a very poor knowledge of West European socialist literature—as everything goes to show—such crying ignorance would be completely unpardonable. No, it was evidently not my pamphlet or what I said about the "red spectre" that Mr. Tikhomirov had in mind.

But as we have started talking about this spectre, it is worth while explaining in detail what provided me with the occasion for mentioning it in my pamphlet.

At the end of the leading article of *Narodnaya Volya* No. 6, we read the following appeal to our so-called society:

"*Acting in the interests of society* we urge society to emerge at last from its pusillanimous apathy; we implore it to raise its voice in favour of its own interests, the interests of the people,

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* *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* pp. 84-85 [p. 102 of this volume].

and the life of its children and brothers, who are being systematically persecuted and killed."*

I read in *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli*[141] that "in respect of our liberals we must point out, without concealing our radicalism, that given the present setting of our party tasks, *our interests* and theirs compel us to act jointly against the government".**

At the same time, Mr. Tikhomirov's conviction that after the fall of absolutism we may anticipate "the foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia" was not the first "open" manifestation of the "Narodnaya Volya party's" hopes. By this "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia" were meant not those successes of the working-class minimum programme which Marx calls the first victory of economics of labour over the economics of capital, but the "social revolution" after *Nabat*'s fashion. In order to convince the reader of the possibility of such a revolution, a doctrine was invented alleging that the relations between the political and the economic factors in Russia were particularly favourable to it.

Finally, the agitational influence of the terrorist struggle "undertaken" by the Narodnaya Volya party extended far more to "society" than to the "people" in the narrow sense of the word.

Bearing all this in mind, I wondered who it was that the "Narodnaya Volya party" was deceiving—itself or "society"? What a sophist one must be to convince the "liberals" that the "present setting of party tasks", i.e., the social (I do not say the *socialist*) revolution after Tkachov's fashion, "compels them" (the liberals) to act "jointly" with Narodovoltsi against the government. Where can one find "liberals" who are naïve enough not to notice how loosely this sophism holds together? Not in Russia, at any rate. "While urging" our society "to emerge, at last, from its pusillanimous apathy", Narodnaya Volya at the same time assures it that by doing so and by overthrowing absolutism it will work *directly* to promote the social revolution. Narodnaya Volya's propaganda, I argued, cannot be successful in our society.

On the other hand, the terrorist struggle, for all its indisputable importance, has absolutely nothing in common with the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia". What, in fact, has Narodnaya Volya done to prepare such an organisation? Has it founded secret revolutionary groups among the people? Then why is nothing heard of such groups? Has it conducted socialist propaganda among the people? But where is

* I quote from the first edition published abroad.

** *Kalendar*, p. 129.

the popular literature it has created? With the exception of the very poorly edited *Rabochaya Gazeta*[142] we know of none at all. This means that the "foundation of the socialist organisation" of Russia is "awaiting" the Narodnaya Volya party, so to speak, without having received any invitation from the latter. But we can hardly expect such courtesy from history. Narodnaya Volya wants to reap what it has not sown, looks for the social revolution growing wild, so to speak. It aims its gun at one hare and thinks it will shoot another. What it *expects* "from the revolution" does not correspond to what it has *done* for the revolution. This being so, is it not time to bring the conclusions into agreement with the premises and to understand that the terrorist struggle is a struggle for political freedom and nothing more? Is it not time to admit that this stuggle has been waged mainly "in the interests of society", as No. 6 of *Narodnaya Volya* admits? Is it not time to cease terrifying society with the appearance of the "red spectre" from a direction from which the red banner of the working class can never appear? Talk of this logically impossible appearance is harmful not only because it "deprives us of the collaboration" of the liberals "in the struggle for a constitution". It inspires us with completely unjustified confidence that the socialist revolution "is awaiting" us independently of any efforts on our part; it diverts our attention from the most important point—*the organisation of the working class for its struggle against its present and future enemies.* This, and only this, was the meaning of what I said about the "red spectre".

On the eve of the war of 1870 there were people in France who shouted that the French troops would not "encounter any obstacles" on the road to Berlin and gave little thought to arms and food for the soldiers.[143] There were others who said that without wishing to terrify anybody with the spectre of the "old soldier" the first thing to do was to organise the country's military forces. Which of these understood the interests of their country best?

But my explanation has made me digress. I wanted to study Mr. Tikhomirov's philosophy of history and have diverted to explanations about the "red spectre".

"A certain section of the socialists", by their liberal programme and their "customary theoretical views", must bring us out on to the correct road and back to the "subject" which we are interested in.

What else does this "certain section" say, and how does Mr. Tikhomirov defeat it?

In the words of our author this "section" almost limit their arguments to the considerations quoted above about the consti-

tution and the terrifying spectre. They have not even taken the trouble to explain their "extreme partiality for a constitution". This pernicious partiality "is somewhat incomprehensible, as are in general all these" (*all* which?) "programmes, and on the whole it gives the impression of something not fully expressed, not fully defined. These programmes arise, however, from a single common standpoint, which is already fully defined". This at least is good; but what kind of standpoint gives rise to "all these programmes", i.e., among others, to the programme of "a certain section" of the socialists? A very bad one, because it "creates a trend" which has "a corrupting influence on the revolutionary party".

"We are speaking of a trend which considers Russian capitalism as historically inevitable and, reconciled to this alleged inevitable fact, consoles itself with the thought that unless it goes through the school of capitalism Russia cannot become capable of putting the socialist system into practice."

This, we take it, is not new, for on the preceding page we read that "a certain section of the socialists" proceed from the thought that "Russia must inevitably pass through the phase of capitalist development", etc. The common point of view which "gives rise to *all these* programmes" proves to be nothing more than the starting-point of *one of these* programmes. But even if it is neither new nor quite logical, its interest cannot be doubted. Now it becomes clear why a certain section of our socialists display "extreme partiality for a constitution". "Indeed, what do we need a constitution for?" Mr. Tikhomirov asks. "Surely not to give the bourgeoisie new means of organising and disciplining the working class by depriving them of land, fining and man-handling them. Hence, the only man who can go headlong to his destruction is one who has irrevocably bowed down before the inevitability and necessity of capitalism in Russia." "A certain section of the socialists" have bowed down before that inevitability, and once they have thus sinned in thought they cannot stop on the slope of sin and vice. As if it were not enough to display "partiality for a constitution", which is a disgrace to an orthodox Bakuninist, they have begun or will begin very soon to show condescendence towards "depriving of land, fining and man-handling", in contrast to Mr. Tikhomirov, who wants neither the bourgeois nor depriving of land, fining or man-handling. But what do "a certain section of the socialists" want all these horrors for? It is quite clear. "In the present condition of Russia, of Russian capitalism and of the Russian factory worker, the propaganda of the political struggle is bound temporarily to lead anybody who believes in the historical necessity of capitalism to a complete renunciation of

socialism. The worker capable of class dictatorship hardly exists. Hence he cannot be given political power. Is it not far more advantageous to abandon socialism altogether for a while as a useless and harmful obstacle to the immediate and necessary aim? That is the way a consistent man, capable of self-sacrifice, argues." Now we know where fines and man-handling come from, although it is not yet apparent whether they are destined to exist only in the terrified imagination of Mr. Tikhomirov or are actually to be included in the programme of "a certain section of the socialists".

We shall try to solve this important question later; for the time being let us hasten back to Mr. Tikhomirov, who is engaging in a general battle with the socialists who are convinced of the historical inevitability of Russian capitalism.

### 4. L. TIKHOMIROV IN THE BATTLE AGAINST THE EMANCIPATION OF LABOUR GROUP

"Is not the argument of its supporters" (i.e., apparently, the supporters of capitalism) "based on a whole series of sophisms? " he asks the reader.

"We are referred to France, to Germany" (not to England? "A certain section of the socialists" apparently did not notice that mountain), "where capitalism has united the workers. So capitalism is necessary to unite ours too. That is exactly how the supporters of slavery argue. They also refer to the role of slavery in primitive history, where it taught the savage to work, disciplined the emotions of man and raised the productivity of labour. All that is quite true. But does it follow that the missionary in Central Africa" (where slavery already exists as it is, I would remind Mr. Tikhomirov) "must see that the Negroes are turned into slaves or that the teacher must use slavish compulsion for the education of children? "

The reader will readily agree, of course, that it does not "follow", and Mr. Tikhomirov, certain in advance of the answer, continues his argument. "At times the history of humanity proceeds by the most unbelievable roads. We no longer believe in the hand of God directing every step of mankind and pointing out the swiftest and surest road to progress. On the contrary, in history these roads were sometimes too crooked and the most hazardous that could be imagined. It naturally happened that a historical fact which was harmful and delayed the development of man by some of its aspects served the cause of progress, on the contrary, by others. Such was the significance of slavery. But that school is not the best nor the only one.

Modern pedagogy has shown that slavish compulsion is the worst of all methods of teaching labour.... The same thing applies to the development of large-scale production; it is permitted to doubt whether the roads of history were the best and the only possible ones for all times and all peoples in that respect.... It is quite true that in the history of certain European peoples, capitalism, although it gave rise to a mass of evils and misfortunes, nevertheless had something good as one of its consequences, namely, the creation of large-scale production, by means of which it prepared the ground, to a certain extent" (?!), "for socialism. But it does not follow from this that other countries, for instance Russia, could not have other ways of developing large-scale production.... All this compels us to think that the mode of socialisation of labour which capitalism was capable of is one of the worst, because, although in many respects it actually prepares the possibility of the socialist system, at the same time, by other aspects it postpones in many respects the moment of its advent. Thus, capitalism, together with the mechanical union of the workers, develops competition among them, which undermines their moral unity; in exactly the same way it tends to keep the workers at a much lower level of development than is possible according to the general condition of culture; in the same way too, it directly disaccustoms the workers from any control over the general course of production, etc. All these harmful aspects of capitalist socialisation of labour do not irremediably undermine the significance of its positive aspects, but at any rate they put into the wheel of history a lot of thick spokes which doubtlessly delay its movement towards the socialist system."

It is not without a purpose that I have made this long excerpt from Mr. Tikhomirov's article. These very pages show us the original side of the philosophical and historical theory of our author. In a controversy with Engels, P. N. Tkachov betrayed the "West", so to speak, to his West European opponent. "Your theories are based on Western relations, mine on our Russian relations; you are right as far as Western Europe is concerned, I, as far as Russia is concerned," said every line of his "Open Letter". Mr. Tikhomirov goes further. From the standpoint of his "pure" Russian reason he criticises the course of West European development and carries on an inquiry about the "lot of thick spokes" which have been put "into the wheel of history" and "doubtlessly delay its movement towards the socialist system". He is apparently convinced that a characteristic of history is independent movement "towards the socialist system", completely irrespective of the relationships created by this or that period, in the present case, the period of capitalism.

The latter's role in this "movement of history" is secondary and even rather doubtful. "Although in many respects it actually prepares the possibility of the socialist system, at the same time" capitalism "by other aspects postpones the moment of its advent". But what communicates this "movement" to history? For Mr. Tikhomirov "no longer believes in the hand of God" which could have successfully solved the question—fatal for his philosophy of history—of the "first impulse". What a pity that this original theory "gives, the impression of something not fully expressed, not fully defined".

Ah, this Mr. Tikhomirov! As we see, he likes to talk about important matters! Indeed, it is not a laughing matter, this conviction that "at times history proceeds by the most unbelievable roads", this assurance that these "roads were sometimes too crooked and the most hazardous that *could be imagined*"! He will probably soon "imagine", if he has not already done so, another road to socialism for the "West" too—one not so crooked or so hazardous as the road followed by the countries which gave the world Newton, Hegel, Darwin, and Marx, but unfortunately showed too much light-headedness in straying far from Holy Russia and her exceptionalist theories. Apparently it is not without a purpose that Mr. Tikhomirov states that "it is permitted to doubt whether the roads of history were the best, etc., in that respect" (i.e., in respect of the transition to socialism). Do not be embarrassed at the modesty of this doubt! Here Mr. Tikhomirov is dealing with the famous question whether our world is the best "that could be imagined" or whether it suffers from some "hazardousness". One cannot but regret that our author confines his study de optimo mundo to the single field of history. He would probably bring his readers to the pious doubt whether the course of our planet's development is the best "that could be imagined". It would be interesting to know whether maître Pangloss, the former teacher of metaphysico-theologo-cosmologo-nihology of the Westphalian castle of Tunder-ten-Tronk,[144] is still alive. The honourable doctor, we know, was an optimist and proved, not without success, that "the roads of history" were the best "that could be imagined". If asked the famous question whether the history of Roman culture could dispense with the violence suffered by the virgin Lucretia[145] he would naturally have answered in the negative. Mr. Tikhomirov is a sceptic and considers it "permitted to doubt" the correctness of Pangloss' answer to that question. Sextus' feat will probably seem "hazardous" to him and the worst "that could be imagined". Such disagreement could be the occasion for great and very edifying philosophical debates for posterity.

For us who have but little interest in the *possible* history of the *possible* West of a *possible* Europe and are completely indifferent to the historical "roads" that "can be imagined" by this or that idle metaphysician, it is an important circumstance that Mr. Tikhomirov has not understood the meaning and significance of one of the most important periods of the *real* history of the *real* West of *real* Europe. His appraisal of capitalism would not satisfy even the most extreme Slavophiles, who long ago cast their *Eastern* anathema on the whole of *Western* history. That appraisal abounds in the most blatant logical contradictions. On one page of "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" we read about the "mighty culture of Europe", a culture which "gives thousands of means to rouse the curiosity of the savage, develop his requirements, electrify him morally", etc., and on the next page we, Russian savages, who have been "electrified morally" by these lines, are immediately plunged into the cold water of the scepticism mentioned above. It appears that "capitalism, although it gave rise to a mass of evils and misfortunes, nevertheless had *something good* as one of its consequences, namely, the creation of large-scale production, by means of which it prepared the ground, *to a certain extent,* for socialism".* Everything "compels" Mr. Tikhomirov to think that the method of socialisation of labour which capitalism was capable of is one of the worst, and so on. [Briefly, Mr. Tikhomirov, when faced with the question of the historic role of capitalism, is just as bewildered as the famous general faced with the question: whether the Earth is a sphere:

*The Earth is round, they say—*
*That I'm ready to admit,*
*Although it's bad form, anyway,*
*That on a ball I have to live.]***

Under the influence of this sceptical philosophy a mass of "unsolved questions" have appeared in our country. We ask whether the "mighty culture of Europe" existed in the pre-capitalist period, and if not, whether it does not owe its rise to capitalism; or in the opposite event, why does Mr. Tikhomirov only mention large-scale production incidentally, attributing to it only the "mechanical union of the workers". If the Egyptian Pharaoh Cheops "mechanically united" hundreds of thousands

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] I omitted the lines included in brackets in the first edition on the advice of V. I. Zasulich, who thought them too harsh. It is to be hoped now that their harshness will do no harm and I have restored them.—*G. P.*

of workers to build his pyramid, is his role in the history of Egypt similar to that of capitalism in the history of the West? The difference seems to us to be only one of quantity; let us assume that Cheops succeeded in "mechanically uniting" far fewer workers, but, on the other hand, he probably "gave rise" to a lesser "mass of evils and misfortunes". What is Mr. Tikhomirov's opinion on that? In just the same way the Roman latifundia, by their "mechanical union" of the workers chained in gangs, "gave rise to a mass of evils and misfortunes" but probably "prepared the ground, to a certain extent", for the transition of ancient society to socialism? What will the same Mr. Tikhomirov say? In his article we find no answer to that question, and

*Die Brust voll Wehmuth,*
*Das Haupt voll Zweifel...* [146]

we are forced to turn to the writers of the West. Will they dispel our doubts?

## 5. THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF CAPITALISM

"The bourgeoisie" (and consequently capitalism, is it not so, Mr. Tikhomirov? ), "historically, has played a most revolutionary part," we read in the *Communist Manifesto.*

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

"The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigour in the Middle Ages, which Reactionists so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.

"The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of

production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind....

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

"The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

"The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the

urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilised ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West....

"The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?"[147]

That is how Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "revolutionaries by logic and by feeling", understand capitalism. And how do intelligent and educated *conservatives* understand it?

Almost in the same way. "Joint-stock undertakings" (the highest phase of capitalist development, is it not, Mr. Tikhomirov?)..."have their historic mission," we read in one of Rodbertus' letters to R. Meyer, "they are destined to complete the work of God's hands, to pierce isthmuses where the Almighty forgot or did not consider it opportune to do so, to link under the sea or over the sea lands which it separates, to burrow through high mountains, etc., etc. The pyramids and the Phoenician stone constructions cannot be compared with what will yet be done by joint-stock capital", etc.[148]

Such is the general cultural and historical significance of capitalism. But what is its influence, particularly on the workers, their intellectual make-up, their moral habits?

What workers did capitalism have to deal with at the beginning of its development? "What the moral and intellectual character of this class was may be guessed," we read in Engels' work about English weavers. "Shut off from the towns ... so shut off that old people who lived quite in the neighbourhood of the town never went thither until they were robbed of their trade by the introduction of machinery and obliged to look about them in the towns for work—the weavers stood upon the moral and intellectual plane of the yeomen.... They regarded their squire ... as their natural superior; they asked advice of him, laid their small disputes before him for settlement, and gave him all honour, as this patriarchal relation involved.... In short, the English industrial workers of those days lived and thought after the fashion still to be found here and there in

Germany,* in retirement and seclusion, without mental activity and without violent fluctuations in their position in life. They could rarely read and far more rarely write; went regularly to church, never talked politics, never conspired, never thought, delighted in physical exercises, listened with inherited reverence when the Bible was read, and were, in their unquestioning humility, exceedingly well-disposed towards the 'superior' classes. But intellectually, they were dead" (listen, Mr. Tikhomirov); "lived only for their petty, private interest, for their looms and gardens, and knew nothing of the mighty movement which, beyond their horizon, was sweeping through mankind. They were comfortable in their silent vegetation, and *but for the industrial revolution***" (i.e., capitalism, Mr. Tikhomirov) "they would never have emerged from this existence, which, cosily romantic as it was, was nevertheless not worthy of human beings. In truth, they were not human beings; they were merely toiling machines in the service of the few aristocrats who had guided history down to that time. The industrial revolution has simply carried this out to its logical end by making the workers machines pure and simple, taking from them the last trace of independent activity, and so forcing them to think and demand a position worthy of men...." This industrial revolution in England tore the workers out of their "apathetic indifference to the universal interests of mankind" and "drew them into the whirl of history". ***

Those words are from Engels, whom bourgeois economists accuse of having painted the condition of the workers in the pre-capitalist period in too bright colours and given too gloomy a description of their condition in the period of capitalism. Such accusations abound, for instance, in Bruno Hildebrand's *Die Nationalökonomie der Gegenwart und Zukunft.*

But what are the West and its pseudo-sages to us, as Mr. Aksakov would say; let us listen to Moses and the prophets, let us read Bakunin himself.

"From the Renaissance and the Reformation right up to the Revolution, the bourgeoisie" (thanks to rising capitalism, Mr. Tikhomirov, or not? ) "in Italy, France, Switzerland, Britain and Holland, if not in Germany, was the hero and the representative of the revolutionary genius of history. Out of it came most of the free thinkers in the eighteenth century, the religious reformers in the preceding two centuries and the apostles of human emancipation, among these also the German figures of

* Written in the early 1840s.

** [Italics by Plekhanov.]

*** *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England,* S. 13-14.[149]

the last century. The bourgeoisie alone, leaning, of course, on the mighty arm of the people who had faith in it, carried out the revolution in 1789 and 1793. It proclaimed the fall of the royal power and of the Church, the fraternity of the peoples, the rights of man and of the citizen. Those are its rights; they are immortal!"*

In view of these immortal services of West European capitalism, Mr. Tikhomirov, the man of the East, cannot renounce his Slavophile scorn for the West, and yawning lazily, he says that this road of development was nevertheless not the best "that could have been imagined". In all the history of the bourgeoisie he sees but the "mass of evils" and the "mechanical union of the workers". For him this "union" contains the whole significance of "large-scale production". Talking about slavery he still mentions the increase in the productivity of labour that it led to, but when he goes on to capitalism he does not even hint at "the gigantic means of production conjured up", which were alone capable of preparing the victory of the proletariat! He has not the slightest idea of the influence of capitalism on the development of philosophy, public and private law, the philosophy of history, natural science and literature. And yet there can be no doubt of that influence and there was a time when Russian writers understood the influence of class relations in society (and what, if not capitalism, created the class relations in *contemporary* society?) on the course of development of learning in general and of philosophical thought in particular. "Political theories, and indeed, all philosophical doctrines generally, have always been created under the extremely powerful influence of the social position of their authors, and every philosopher represented one of the political parties struggling at that time for domination over that society to which the philosopher belonged," says Chernyshevsky**.... "Philosophical systems are permeated through and through with the spirit of the political parties to which the authors of the systems belonged." Or does Mr. Tikhomirov presume that the political and philosophical systems of the epoch of capitalism are inferior to the corresponding systems of the Middle Ages? Does he think that the theories which characterise capitalism were worse than those which he himself can "imagine"? In that case, let him "imagine" as many of them as he pleases, let him go on ignoring the history of West European culture! In this disagreement of the editor of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* with the

*Dieu et l'Etat*, Geneva, 1882, pp. 92-93.

**«Антропологический принцип в философии», стр. 2–3. [The *Anthropological Principle in Philosophy*, pp. 2-3.] 150

West, the former loses very much and the latter absolutely nothing. It is not Mr. Tikhomirov, however, who must be considered as the initiator of this discord. On this question our author only repeats what was said in various articles by Mr. V. V. who in general is inclined, as we know, to narrow down the cultural and historical significance of Western capitalism and, on the contrary, to exaggerate the corresponding influence of the present Russian "authority", which "has no serious opponent in society" and therefore "need not fear the factors of progress against which the West European governments waged a continuous war".* Examine attentively the volume *The Destinies of Capitalism in Russia,* which is full of endless repetitions and therefore quite bulky, and you will not find any indications of the significance of capitalism other than references to the "socialisation of labour" which is in turn identified with the "union of the workers" and the development in them of some feelings or others with which Mr. V. V. sympathises. And this narrow and one-sided appreciation is wholly adopted by Mr. Tikhomirov in his article; on it he bases what he *expects* "from the revolution"! Our author has forgotten, it appears, the fine piece of advice which Lassalle gave to one of his opponents: "study, study, but not from newspaper articles."

Russian writers are not content with their absurdly narrow philosophy of the history of capitalism. They themselves analyse this form of production and, so to speak, their own intelligence shows them the contradictions inherent in it. But what contradictions! They are not solved by historical dialectics through the old social form being replaced by a new one which has grown within the former as a result, apparently, of the very logical development of the principle underlying it. They are not the contradictions whose historical meaning was thus expressed by Goethe:

*Vernunft wird Unsinn, Wohlthat Plage.*[152]

They are contradictions which have *no* historical meaning *whatever,* and which are only the result of the attitude of the petty-bourgeois observer to the object of his study, an attitude which may be described by the words: "Measure ten times before cutting your cloth." It is a kind of eclecticism which sees a good and a bad side in everything, encourages the former and condemns the latter and sins only by not seeing any organic link between the "bright" and "darkening" features of a given historical epoch. Capitalism could have said to such critics

* «Судьбы капитализма в России», предисловие, стр. 6. [*The Destinies of Capitalism in Russia,* preface, p. 6.][151]

Feuerbach's words: "You condemn my defects, but note that my good qualities are conditioned by them." In this case the Russian writers apply to the historical categories the method of Proudhon, who saw it as the task of dialectics to point out the good and the evil sides of every *economic* category. "Il veut être la synthèse," Marx wrote about him, "il est une erreur composée."[153]

Proudhon is said to have been once Bakunin's pupil. Did he not get this method, which he shares with many Russian critics of capitalism, from the one common teacher?

A brilliant representative of this method of "composite error" can again be seen in the same Mr. Tikhomirov, who, having shown the good side of capitalism, the union of the workers, immediately goes on to show its shady sides. We have already seen how far his "praise" of capitalism corresponds to reality. It is not surprising that the reproach he makes turns out to be completely unfounded.

"Capitalism, together with the mechanical union of the workers, develops competition among them, which undermines their moral unity...."

Apparently Mr. Tikhomirov wants to "imagine" a way of transition to socialism in which competition would be unknown. Leaving aside the question of the role of competition in the existence of the economic category known as the exchange value, which brings the labour of various specialists to the common denominator of simple human labour, without the understanding of which conscious communist tendencies would be unthinkable, let us give attention to the *evil* side of competition which our author points out. Here we will first of all note that only what exists in reality, not in Mr. Tikhomirov's sympathies and "expectations", can be "undermined". Was there moral unity of the workers during the pre-capitalist period? We already know there was not. In the most flourishing period of guild production there was "moral unity" among workers of one association or, at most, of *one branch of labour* within quite restricted local limits; but the idea of the worker as such, the consciousness of the unity of the whole of the productive class never existed.* Capitalism undermined, disrupted, removed the

* "Although all workers, whatever profession they belonged to, had essentially the same interests," Simon said of the medieval workers' associations, "and should therefore have formed a single general association... instead of that, their spirit of antagonism prevailed over the spirit of association, and division did not cease to reign among them. The struggle that took place between the journeymen of the different associations must have dated to their very foundation.... Considering these deadly combats, which were provoked without cause and waged without reason, who would not be

"moral unity" of patented *specialists* and set up in its place the moral unity of "*working men of all countries*," a unity which it achieved by means of competition. Why, then, does Mr. Tikhomirov thus attack competition? We have already seen that in his opinion history has some kind of independent, abstract "movement towards the socialist system"; given such a "movement" one can with impunity "criticise" all the motive powers and springs which first compelled progressive mankind "to face with sober senses, their real conditions of life, and their relations with their kind".

Capitalism "tends to keep the workers at a much lower level of development than is possible according to the general condition of culture".

This sentence seems to have been taken in full from the minutes of the Eisenach Congress of the German Katheder Sozialisten, in whose opinion the social question comes to the question of raising the *workers* to a higher "level of development". But the Katheder Sozialisten know what they are demanding, although, in spite of all their efforts, they have not yet decided how to attain their demands. They understand the epoch-making and revolutionary significance of the modern proletariat and they want to undermine that significance with their palliatives and to impose on the workers Rodbertus' motto: "monarchisch, national, sozial." By a higher level of development they understand a somewhat higher and better guaranteed wage, far greater narrow-mindedness and incomparably less responsiveness in the working class. They know that the "iron law" of wages[154] is the death sentence for modern society and are not against *sweetening* this law to repeal the sentence. They foresee that, if affairs remain in their present condition, the proletariat will soon take *everything*, and that is why they are doing their utmost to force the proletariat to barter its impending birthright for a mess of pottage. They want a bourgeoisie without any proletariat. But what does Mr. Tikhomirov want? In which of the historical periods previous to capitalism did the working class have a higher level of development than at present? Was it in the ancient world, the epoch of slavery, or in the Middle Ages, the epoch of serfdom? Or is Mr. Tikhomirov comparing bourgeois society with the "future", socialist society? If so, then, of course, he is right in the sense that the social system of the "future historic

temped to believe that the sad words of the gloomy philosopher, 'Man is wolf to man', were not said of one of these associations." *Etude historique et morale sur le compagnonage* by J. Simon, Paris, 1853, pp. 43-44. It must be admitted that it was very difficult for capitalism to "undermine" such a "moral unity of the workers" in the preceding period!

epoch" will bring man's development into greater conformity with the productive forces created by civilisation. But, not to mention that to accuse capitalism of not being socialism means not to understand the historical genesis of socialism, we will point out to Mr. Tikhomirov that by force of habit he has got mixed up in his terminology. It is obvious that socialist society is unthinkable without people who work, but it can be said in all probability that there will be no *workers* under socialism; for a worker presupposes capitalist employers, landowners, etc., just as the slave presupposed the slave-owner and the serf the feudal lord. What Mr. Tikhomirov says boils down in this case to the amazing proposition that the modern workers are at a lower level of development than the workers in a society in which there are no workers at all.

Or is Mr. Tikhomirov comparing the condition of the workers in capitalist society with their condition under the social relationships "that can be imagined" as transitional steps to socialism? If so, let him "imagine" such relationships; we will read his *imaginings* with great interest. But he should not be too much infatuated with fiction, he should not forget that one must distinguish between the *degree* and the *type* of culture, and that if the degree of material culture of the present-day proletariat is not very high, it is nevertheless a culture of a much higher type than any which existed before. We are not even speaking of the intellectual and moral culture of this class, which is much higher in its development than the productive classes of all preceding periods. Mr. Tikhomirov should devote serious attention to this development, which cannot be replaced either by primitive forms of land tenure and production or by strict discipline instituted by this or that "Committee" in the revolutionary organisations of *raznochintsi.*

"In exactly the same way" capitalism "directly disaccustoms the workers from any control over the general course of production, etc."

Capitalism could answer this unexpected accusation with the Russian saying: "You're welcome to the best we have." It cannot teach the workers control "over the general course of production" for the simple reason that it does not know any such control itself. Industrial crises are conditioned, among other things, precisely by this lack of control. But, we ask, can such control be imagined outside socialist society? Let Mr. Tikhomirov prove that it can, and then we will enter into greater details with him. Now we will only repeat that to accuse capitalism of not being socialism means to accuse history of not having started immediately by putting into practice the

*Manifesto of the Communist Party* instead of its "*movement* towards the socialist system".

This dispute about the significance of Western capitalism may appear completely unwarranted to many readers. It is Russia we are interested in, not the West, they will say; why spend so much time on an appraisal of the historical development of the West? Even if Mr. Tikhomirov has overlooked some things, and got mixed up in a thing or two over this question, what relation has that to our domestic matters?

The most direct relation. Mr. Tikhomirov "criticises" Western capitalism for the completely definite practical purpose of working out a programme for the Russian social-revolutionary party. He "expects" certain blessings "from the revolution", on the basis, by the way, of his appraisal of West European history. If his appraisal is correct, then his expectations are grounded; if, on the contrary, this appraisal reveals complete ignorance of the history of the West and of the methods of contemporary philosophical and historical criticism, then his very "expectations" prove to be completely unfounded. That is why I have devoted many pages to unravelling this confusion which found so comfortable room in two pages (238 and 239) of the second issue of *Vestnik*. When we have dealt with it, we can go on to Russian questions.

## 6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM IN THE WEST

"Don't idolise private business capital," exclaims Mr. Tikhomirov on his return from one of his philosophical-historical excursions; "the more so as there still remains the great question whether such capital will be able to do for Russia even that" (!) "which it did for Europe. Our present condition differs considerably from that of the European countries at the moment when they began to organise national production on the basis of private capital. There the private businessman was provided with extensive markets and encountered no particularly terrible competition. But we have absolutely no markets and in everything he undertook the private businessman encountered insuperable competition from European and American production."[155]

All these arguments of our author are again not his, they are borrowed from Mr. V. V. But, without going into their genealogy, let us examine how serious they are. Here again we are faced with a difficult and thankless task—that of unravelling the most unbelievable muddle of facts and concepts.

First of all, we ask Mr. Tikhomirov why he attacks "*private*" business capital and does not mention other forms of the same *business* capital. Why does he, to use Rodbertus' expression, prefer blondes to brunettes? Does he think that *state* business capital in the hands of the Iron Chancellor is better than private capital in the hands of Borsig or Krupp?

Or is he opposing private business capital to the same capital belonging to workers' associations? Why, in that case, did he not make the reservation that his sympathy for business capital not belonging to private individuals extends only to one variety of that capital? And indeed, can one have sympathy for this variety without new and very substantial reservations?

German[156] Social-Democracy demands state credit for workers' associations, but it knows by experience that these can be successful, i.e., not degenerate into exploiters of other people's labour, only on condition that they are strictly controlled on the basis of socialist principles. Workers' socialist parties can and must be representative of such a control. Thus, whoever speaks of state credit for workers' associations either speaks of strengthening the influence of the workers' party or suggests a measure capable of resulting in splitting the proletariat and strengthening the influence of the bourgeoisie or the government. Mr. V. V. is not afraid of the latter outcome, and that is why he fearlessly addresses his projects of reform to "the existing authority". Mr. Tikhomirov is one of the irreconcilable enemies of absolutism and at the same time is very sceptical of the possibilities of a bourgeois regime and a workers' socialist party coming to exist in our country. Hence his plans for the institution of workers' industrial associations—plans, however, about which we *can only make surmises,* thanks to his confused terminology—belong to the more or less distant future when the "seizure of power by the revolutionaries" will be "the starting-point of the revolution". As we shall have a lot to say about this seizure and its possible consequences, we will not stop here to consider the conditions under which Russian workers' industrial associations can promote the cause of socialism. Now, however, having pointed out to Mr. Tikhomirov his lack of clarity and definition in the economic terminology, let us go on to his historical contrasts.

There would be no doubt, if the formulation were at least tolerable, that "our present condition differs considerably from that of the European countries at the moment when they began to organise national production on the basis of private capital". Any schoolboy knows that no two facts in the whole of history have been accomplished under exactly identical conditions; it is therefore not surprising that every historical period in each

country "differs considerably" from the corresponding period in any other country. But as a consequence of this, we may say *a priori* that the stereotyped contrasting of Russia with the "West" loses all human meaning if it is not accompanied by a number of reservations, amendments and additions, since by Western Europe we mean not one single country but many greatly differing ones. Mr. Tikhomirov sees no necessity for these additions. He contrasts the "present condition of Russia" with the *"moment"* in the history of "the European countries when they began to organise national pruduction on the basis of private capital". But not to mention that one cannot "organise national production on the basis of private capital" and that complete anarchy, i.e., the absence of any organisation, is a characteristic feature of "national production" in capitalist countries; forgiving Mr. Tikhomirov these blunders in logic and terminology, we will ask him whether the foundation of capitalist production was laid at a single "moment" "in the European countries". Were there not, on the contrary, just as many "moments" as there were "European countries" engaging on the road of capitalism? And if so, did not those historical "moments" differ "considerably" one from another? Was the beginning of English capitalism like the beginning of capitalism in Germany? As far as we know, it was by no means alike, so unlike that at one time in Germany, too, the opinion was held that the country completely lacked the conditions for developing large-scale manufacturing industry and would have to remain for ever an agrarian country. Those who held that opinion based it on the very fact that the "present" condition of Germany "differed considerably", etc. What has Mr. Tikhomirov to say about this question in general and about these false prophets in particular?

In the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle* I spoke of those Russian writers who are supporters of the geographical school founded by the Jewish boy in Weinberg's story. "Russian writers, propagandists of exceptionalism," I wrote, "introduced only one new thing into that clever geographical classification of the poor schoolboy: they divided 'abroad' into East and West, and, not stopping long to think, began to compare the latter with Russia, which was ascribed the role of a kind of Middle Empire." When I wrote those lines it did not even occur to me that such absurdities could be repeated in a publication edited, incidentally, by P. L. Lavrov. Now I see that Lavrov's co-editor is among the followers of the Jewish boy and heaps together, in a "moment" of some kind "imagined" by himself, quite a number of highly complicated and "considerably" different historical plenomena. *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* was appa-

rently fated to disappoint the expectations of its readers in many, many respects!

In this case, however, there is an attenuating circumstance for Mr. Tikhomirov. He was led into his mistake by the conviction that in "the European countries" at a historical "moment" with which we are already familiar "the private businessman was provided with extensive markets and encountered no particularly terrible competition" whereas "we have practically no markets". Were this correct, his contrast between Russia and the West would be sufficiently well founded. No matter how greatly the conditions under which capitalism arose differed in each of "the European countries", they would have had in common one feature of the highest importance not repeated in contemporary Russia: the presence of "extensive markets" for the disposal of wares. This circumstance, which was favourable to "the European countries", would have given a completely different colouring to the economic history of the West. The trouble is that Mr. Tikhomirov, or rather the author of the articles from which he derived his conviction, was cruelly mistaken. In the countries referred to, the private businessman was *not* provided with any "extensive markets" at all. The bourgeoisie *created* the markets, they did not find them *ready-made.* In the feudal and handicrafts period which had preceded, not only were there no "extensive markets", there were no markets at all in the modern sense of the word; at that time only surpluses were exchanged—what remained after the producers' own consumption—and the handicraftsmen worked *to order* for a specified person in a specified locality, and not for the market. Nobody who has even the slightest understanding of the economic relations in the Middle Ages will dispute that. In the same way everybody, "even if he has not been trained in a seminary", will understand that demand, and with it markets, could only appear side by side with production, as they were called for by the latter and in their turn called for it. "Most often, needs arise directly from production or from a state of affairs based on production. World trade turns almost entirely round the needs, not of individual consumption, but of production."* But the modern, indeed "extensive", world market is characterised precisely by the fact that not consumption calls forth production, but the other way round. "Large-scale industry, forced by the very instruments at its disposal to produce on an ever-increasing scale, can no longer wait for demand. Production precedes consumption, supply compels demand."**

* *Misère de la philosophie,* p. 16.[157]
** *Ibid.,* p. 48.[158]

For brevity's sake we may admit as indisputable that Western Europe encountered no "particularly terrible competition" during the period when capitalism arose, although the not unfrequent prohibitions of imports to "European countries" of Eastern industry's products during that period show that indeed the manufactories in the West feared competition from Asia. But the "particularly terrible" rivals of West European producers were the West European producers themselves. This will cease to seem paradoxical if we remember that capitalism by no means began to develop at one and the same "moment" in the different "European countries", as Mr. Tikhomirov thinks. When industrial development reached a certain level in one of those countries, when the representatives of capital attained such power and influence that they could make legislation an instrument to further their purposes, it turned out that "in everything he undertook the private businessman encountered insuperable competition" from neighbouring countries. Then agitation for state intervention began. The history of the seventeenth century with its tariffs, which were the object of diplomatic negotiations, and its trade wars, which necessitated colossal expenditures for those times, is a tangible proof of the enormous efforts that the "European countries" had to make to acquire the markets which are said to have been ready-made for them. It was a question not only of winning foreign markets, but of defending the home market too. Is there any need to illustrate by examples a history which seems to be generally known? Perhaps it will not be superfluous in view of the ignorance of our home-grown and exceptionalist economists. Let us begin with France.

Colbert "saw that France was importing from abroad far more goods than she was exporting, that in spite of the existence of the Tours and Lyons manufactories, Italy was continuing to supply silk wares, gold and silver fabrics, and gold yarn; that Venice was getting millions from her annually for mirrors and lace; that England, Holland and Spain were supplying her with woollen goods, spices, dyes, hides and soap.... He saw ... that the large companies and colonies which Richelieu had tried to set up were ruined and that all France's sea trade was still in the hands of the English and the Dutch. In order to hinder this overrunning of French ports Fouquet had already placed a tax of fifty sous on every ton of goods brought in foreign ships and constant complaints from the Dutch proved to Colbert that his predecessor had dealt them a heavy blow. Such was the situation. Colbert set himself the aim of changing it in France's favour, of freeing the country from all trade subjection

and raising it by industrial development to the level of the more prosperous nations", etc.* He set about the matter with such diligence that his direct intention was to "annihilate" Dutch trade by the 1667 tariff. "The English and Dutch countered in like manner, the tariff dispute was the occasion for the 1672 war, and finally, the Peace of Nymwegen[159] compelled France to restore the 1664 tariff."**

We see that France was by no means "provided with" extensive markets, she had to win them by the appropriate economic policy, diplomatic negotiations and even arms. Colbert relied only on "time and great diligence", thanks to which France would be able, he thought, to become "the teacher of the nations which had taught her lessons". We know that France's protection and prohibition policy did not end with the influence of Colbert any more than it had owed him its beginning. Not until after the Peace of Versailles[160] did the French Government take the first step towards free trade in 1786. But this attempt did not favour French industry. By an agreement with England in 1786 each of the contracting countries imposed a duty of only 12 per cent of the cost price on woollen and cotton fabrics, porcelain, pottery and glass wares, of 10 per cent on metal goods—iron, steel, copper, etc.; flax and hemp fabrics were taxed according to the tariff fixed for the most favoured countries; but England, being able to produce these goods 30, 40, or 50 per cent cheaper than the French manufacturers, soon became the mistress on the French market. That was why in 1789 the electors almost unanimously demanded a more energetic protection of French industry. The governments of the Restoration and the July monarchy also adhered to a strictly protectionist tariff. To guarantee the sale of French wares the colonies were forbidden to trade with any country but the metropolitan country. Not until 1860 was there a turn in favour of free trade, but even this aroused great opposition in the country and was censured, incidentally, by Proudhon. Finally, as recently as 1877, fear of English competition moved the protectionists to form the "Association for the Protection of National Labour". The 1882 tariff was a compromise between demands for protection and the desire for free trade displayed mainly by the representatives of commercial capital.***

Such is the history of the "extensive markets" that were at

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* Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières en France,* Vol. 2, pp. 174-75.

** See Henry W. Farnam, *Die innere französische Gewerbepolitik von Colbert bis Turgot,* S. 17.

*** See *Histoire du commerce français* par Ch. Périgot, Paris, 1884.

the disposal of the French capitalists. Has Mr. Tikhomirov heard of it?

And what about Germany, to which our author is "referred" by "a certain section of the socialists"?

Here matters stood no better. Here too, "in everything he undertook the private businessman" encountered "insuperable competition" from the more progressive countries. We know that the appearance of German capitalism was relatively recent. Not only in the last century, but even at the beginning of this, competition with France or England was out of the question for Germany. Let us take Prussia as an example. In 1800, Prussia absolutely prohibited the import of silk, semi-silk and cotton fabrics. In the preceding eighty years the government had spent more than ten million taler only on silk factories in Berlin, Potsdam, Frankfort on the Oder and Köpenick (from which Mr. Tikhomirov can clearly see that not the Russian Government alone displayed efforts to "organise" national production "according to bourgeois principles"). But French and English wares were so much better than the Prussian that the prohibition of imports was evaded by smuggling, which no severe legislative measures could stop. Napoleon's victory deprived Prussia of the possibility of saving her manufactories by a "wall" of prohibitive tariffs. With the invasion by the French army, French goods began to glut the markets in the conquered territories. At the beginning of December 1806, the invaders demanded the admission of French goods at low customs tariffs to all parts of the territory occupied by French troops. In vain did the Prussian Government draw their attention to the local industry's inability to hold out against competition from French manufacturers. It tried in vain to prove that the Berlin manufacturers had held their own only thanks to protection tariffs, with the abolition of which the population would be irremediably impoverished and the factory workers would be completely ruined. Bourgeois France's victorious generals answered that the import of French goods was the "natural result" of the conquest. Thus, side by side with the governments' political struggle there proceeded the economic struggle of the nations, or more exactly of those sections of the nations in whose hands the means of production are still concentrated. Side by side with the struggle of the armies was the struggle of the manufacturers; alongside the warfare of the generals was the competition of commodities. The French bourgeoisie needed to gain control of a new market, and the Prussian bourgeoisie did all in their power to safeguard the market they owed to protection tariffs. Where, then, were the ready-made "extensive markets"? When, after the declaration of war in 1813, the Prussian industrialists were at last freed

from their French rivals, they found themselves faced by new and still more dangerous opponents. The fall of the continental system gave English goods access to the European markets. Prussia was glutted with them. Their cheapness made it impossible for the local producers to compete with them in view of the low customs dues imposed on goods from friendly and neutral countries. Complaints from the Prussian industrialists again forced the government to limit imports of at least cotton goods.* From then on until this very day the Government of Prussia, and indeed of Germany as a whole, has not ventured to waive protective tariffs for fear of "insuperable competition" from more advanced countries. And if the Russian Blanquists seize power while Bismarck is still alive, the Iron Chancellor will probably not refuse to reveal to them the secret of his trade policy and will convince our journalists that "extensive markets" do not and never did grow on trees.

Let us pass on to America.

"In respect of industry the North American colonies were held in such complete dependence by the metropolitan country that they were to have no kind of industry except domestic production and the usual crafts. In 1750 a hat factory founded in Massachusetts so attracted the attention of Parliament and was the object of such jealousy on its part that factories of all kinds (in the colonies, of course) were declared common nuisances. As late as 1770 the great Chatham, perturbed by the first attempts at factory production in New England, said that not a single nail was to be made in the colonies."[161] During the War of Independence, thanks to the rupture with England, "factories of all kinds received a strong impulse" and this, in turn, influenced agriculture and led to an increase in the price of land. "But as, after the Peace of Paris, the constitution of the states prevented elaboration of a general trade system and thus gave free access to English manufactures with which the newly built North American factories could not compete, the country's industrial prosperity disappeared even more rapidly than it appeared. 'On the advice of the new theoreticians,' a speaker in Congress said later, referring to this crisis, 'we purchased where it was cheaper for us and our markets were glutted with foreign goods.... *Our manufacturers were ruined,* our merchants went bankrupt and all this had such a harmful effect on agriculture that a general devaluation of land followed and as a result bankruptcy became common among landowners too.'"[162]

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* *Die neuere Nationalökonomie* von Dr. Moritz Meyer.

Hence we see that a threat once hung also over American production, whose "insuperable competition" now threatens the Russian "private businessman". What lightning-rods did the Americans invent? Were they convinced by this that their situation "differed considerably from that of the European countries at the moment when they began to organise national production on the basis of private capital"? Did they renounce large-scale industry? Not in the least. Taught by bitter experience, they merely repeated the old story of protecting the home market against foreign competition. "Congress was stormed by all states with petitions for protective measures favouring local industry", and as early as 1789 a tariff was proclaimed making considerable concessions in this direction to local manufacturers. The 1804 tariff went still further along this path, and in the end, after a few vacillations in the opposite direction, the rigorous protection tariff of 1828 finally guaranteed American producers against English competition.*

Once more, where were the "extensive" markets that Mr. Tikhomirov speaks of? I completely agree that the course of development of West European capitalism which he indicates must be acknowledged as more "straight" and less "hazardous"; what risk does the "private businessman" run when he is "provided with extensive markets"? But Mr. Tikhomirov, on his side, must agree that he, or rather his teacher, "imagined" this course of development for the sake of a doctrine and that it has nothing in common with the true history of the West. The matter proceeds so differently there that Friedrich List even establishes a particular law according to which each country can come out in the struggle on the world market only when it has allowed its industry to strengthen by mastering the home market. In his opinion, "the transition of every nation from the wild state to that of herdsmen and from the state of herdsmen to that of tillers of land and the early beginnings in agriculture are best effected by free trade". Then the "transition of agrarian peoples to the class of simultaneously agricultural, manufacturing and trading nations could take place under free trade only *if*, in all nations called upon to develop manufacturing power, *one and the same vital process took place at one and the same time,* if nations raised no obstacles whatsoever to each other's economic development and if they did not impede each other's success by war and customs systems. But as the nations which had attained superiority in manufactures, trade and navigation

* See *Das nationale System der politischen Ökonomie,* von Friedrich List, zweite Auflage, 1842, B. I, Kap. 9. Cf. also *Geschichte der Nationalökonomie,* von Eisenhart, III. Buch, 2. Kapitel.

saw that success as the most effective means of acquiring and consolidating political influence over other nations, they" (i.e., the advanced nations) "strove to set up institutions which were and still are calculated to guarantee their own monopoly in manufactures and trade and to prevent backward nations from succeeding. The aggregate of these institutions (import prohibition and customs dues upon imports, restrictions on shipping, premiums for exports, and so on) is called the customs system. Under the influence of the earlier successes of other nations, the customs system of foreign countries and wars, the backward nations find themselves forced to seek at home means for the transition from the agrarian to the manufacturing condition; they are obliged to restrict trade with the advanced countries—since it hinders that transition—by their own customs system. The latter is therefore by no means an invention of speculative brains, as some maintain, but the natural consequence of the nations' desire to guarantee themselves lasting existence and progress or even dominating influence. But this wish can be recognised as legitimate and reasonable only inasmuch as it *does not hinder* the economic development of the nation displaying it, *but, on the contrary, promotes* it and does not contradict the higher aim of humanity—the future world confederation".*

These words are from Friedrich List, who understood well the interests of German capitalism in his time and whose only fault was a certain pompousness in the definition of the future "higher aims of humanity" which for the bourgeoisie boil down not to a "world federation" but to a fierce struggle on the world market. List was embarrassed neither by the accusation that his views were obsolete nor by the reference to the impossibility of Germany's securing any favourable opportunities in the future struggle on the world market. To the first objection he replied that he was not at all an unconditional enemy of free trade, for he demanded only temporary restrictions of it, and at the same time stood for free trade within the limits of the German customs union. To the second he replied by criticising the very theory of markets, or rather the conditions of their acquisition. He pointed out that the backward countries may and must form alliances with one another to fight jointly their stronger enemies and that those backward countries must strive to acquire colonies of their own. "Every industrial nation must strive to have direct exchange with the countries in the torrid zone; if all second-rate manufacturing nations understand their own interests they must act in such a way that no nation can acquire overwhelming influence in respect of colonial

* *Das nationale System*, etc., S. 18-19.

possessions."* He supported the possibility of acquiring new colonies by pointing out that up to then a great number of convenient places in the torrid zone had not been utilised in this way by Europeans.

At the time when List was agitating, many people doubted the possibility of a large-scale manufacturing industry being developed in Germany. Now nobody doubts this, but the programme of economic policy which he suggested has not yet been finally carried out. The question of acquiring colonies is only now being raised in Germany. Reality has surpassed his expectations. One part of his programme has sufficed to consolidate German large-scale industry.

Not only does no sceptic now ask whether a large-scale manufacturing industry is possible in List's country, but Mr. Tikhomirov "is referred" among other things "to Germany, where capitalism united the workers" and "private businessmen" are alleged to have been provided with "extensive markets". How much that country's first difficult steps on the road of capitalism have been forgotten! But is it a long time since List wrote? No more than half a century, no more than five times as long as the Russian Blanquists have been making fruitless efforts to "seize power". What if Marx and Engels and their followers, convinced that the people must be taken "as they are" and that the German Communists of the forties still needed, to use Mr. Tikhomirov's picturesque expression, "only to set about the creation of the class in whose name they wished to act"; what if Marx and Engels, I say, had given the "West" up as lost and decided that "the starting-point" of the social revolution in Germany had to be "the seizure of power" by the forces of the then existing Communist League? [163] What if they had directed all their work towards that aim? Would German Social-Democracy have got far by now? And yet the question of such a "seizure of power" is by no means an exclusive feature of the Russian movement. It was raised even in the Communist League and caused its splitting into two groups: Marx and Engels on one side, Willich and Schapper on the other.

The story of this division is so instructive that it is worth relating to the readers. [164]

"Since the defeat of the 1848-49 Revolution, the party of the proletariat on the continent was deprived of all that it had during that short period—freedom of the press, of expression and of association, i.e., the legal means of organising a party. After 1849, as before 1848, there was only one road open to

* List, *ibid.*, S. 560-61.

the proletariat—the road of secret societies.... The immediate aim of one section of those societies was to overthrow the existing state power. That was timely in France, where the proletariat had been defeated by the bourgeoisie and where attacks on the existing government were equivalent to attacks on the bourgeoisie." Another section of these secret societies was working in countries such as Germany "where the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were both subjected by their semi-feudal governments, and where, therefore, a successful attack on the existing governments, instead of breaking the power of the bourgeoisie or of the so-called middle classes, had first to help them to power"—in such countries the progressive representatives of the proletariat, while not refusing to take part in the impending revolution, saw as their immediate aim not to seize power, but to prepare the working-class party of the future. Such, by the way, was the aim of the Communist League, in which Marx and Engels played the leading role. "The Communist League was not therefore a society of conspirators but a society which aimed at the secret organisation of the proletariat, because the German proletariat was under an interdict, was deprived of the *fire and water,* of press, expression and association." It goes without saying that activity "which had in view the establishment not of a *governmental* but of an *oppositional party of the future*", had exerted little attraction on people intellectually backward and impatient, and accordingly "a group broke off from the *Communist League,* demanding, if not actual conspiracies, at least a conspiratorial appearance and a direct alliance with the democratic heroes of the day". The motives of this split, which many people ascribed to personal quarrels between the leaders of the two groups, were explained as follows by the very actors in these events.

According to Marx, "the minority" (the Willich and Schapper group) "replace the critical outlook by a dogmatic one, the materialist by the idealist. They take their own will instead of the existing relations for the principal revolutionary motive force. Whereas we say to the workers: you must still pass through 15, 20, or 50 years of civil war and popular movements, and this not only to change existing relations but to re-educate yourselves and become capable of being the dominant party, the minority, on the contrary, say: we must win supremacy at this very moment or we shall be unable to do anything other than sit back and relax. Whereas we point out to the German workers the undeveloped condition of the German proletariat, you flatter the national feeling and estate prejudices of the German crafts-

man* in the vilest way, this, of course, being a far more popular method.... Like the democrats, you replace revolutionary development by revolutionary phrases", etc., etc.

Schapper, for his part, formulated his outlook as follows:

"I did in fact express the outlook attacked here, because generally I support it with enthusiasm. The question is: will we start to chop off heads, or will ours be chopped off? First the workers in France will rise, then we in Germany. Otherwise I would, in fact, sit back and relax. But if our plans are fulfilled, we shall be able to take steps to guarantee the supremacy of the proletariat" (as Mr. Tikhomirov promises steps to guarantee "government by the people" for Russia, we will remark). "I am a fanatical supporter of this view, but the Central Committee" (Marx's group) "wishes the opposite", etc.

This dispute took place on September 15, 1850, when the final break between the two groups occurred. Each of them set about its work. Willich and Schapper began to prepare to seize power, Marx and Engels continued to prepare the "oppositional party of the future". Fifteen years went by and that "party of the future" became a threat to the bourgeoisie in all nations and countries; the views of the authors of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* were assimilated by tens of thousands of workers. And what did Willich and Schapper do? Did they succeed in immediately "seizing power"? We all know they did not, but not all know that the same "fanatic" Schapper was soon convinced of the impossibility of carrying out his plans and even "many years later, a day before his death, when he was already on his death-bed" he could not speak of his unsuccessful ventures without "bitter irony".**

Groups of the Willich-Schapper type are the natural result of undeveloped social relationships. They appear and may have a certain success as long as the proletariat is undeveloped and during its first attempts to achieve its emancipation. "The revolutionary literature that accompanied these first movements of the proletariat had necessarily a reactionary character," as the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* says. When, under the influence of more highly developed relationships, a serious socialist literature is at last evolved in the more advanced countries, it is in part the object of more or less peculiar

* However, it is hardly possible that even the Schapper group has ever published a proclamation like the famous one in Ukrainian on the occasion of the anti-Jewish disorders, a proclamation with which the editors of *Narodnaya Volya* declared their complete solidarity and which was the vilest flattery of national prejudices of the Russian people.[165]

** See *Enthüllungen über den Kommunisten-Prozess zu Köln* von Karl Marx, second edition, which we take all the above-cited details from.

counterfeits in countries which consider their backwardness as a sign of "exceptionalism"; and in part provides the occasion for incorrect interpretations and reactionary practical programmes. Not only in Russia, but in Poland too, and in the East of Europe generally, we now meet or may meet "social-revolutionaries" of the Willich and Schapper fashion.* It goes without saying that the further development of the European East is discrediting their "expectations from the revolution" just as it discredited the expectations of Willich and Schapper in Germany.

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] These lines were written when we could not become clear about the trend of the "organ of the international social-revolutionary party" (? ) *Walka Klas.*[166] Now, after the publication of three issues of this paper, it can be said with assurance that it has made the dissemination of "theories" after the Willich and Schapper fashion its main aim. However, one must be very careful when talking about the theories characterising such a trend, for, as Marx noted, "die Partei Schapper-Willich hat nie auf die Ehre Anspruch gemacht, eigne Ideen zu besitzen. Was ihr gehört, ist das eigentümliche Missverständnis fremder Ideen, die sie als Glaubensartikel fixiert und als Phrase sich angeeignet zu haben meint".[167]

*Chapter II*

# CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA

## 1. THE HOME MARKET

We now know that every backward country can at first, until the home market is glutted, eliminate "insuperable competition" from its more advanced neighbours by means of a customs system. Mr. Tikhomirov's arguments that in our country there are hardly any markets thus lose a considerable portion of their specific weight. For backward countries the question can be formulated only as follows: will Western capitalism succeed—and to what extent—to draw them into its wake before it gives place to a higher form of social organisation? To answer this question we must weigh attentively the present situation of each of those countries separately. That we will do in the next chapter; let us now return to Mr. Tikhomirov and see how he makes this analysis.

Anybody who has followed social trends in our country in recent years knows, of course, that the efforts of our "private businessmen" are directed precisely towards guaranteeing the home market. This striving meets with support from the government, from the press and also from the section which only Mr. Tikhomirov's peculiar terminology can allow one not to recognise as "intelligentsia". A fair number of our professors and scientists are already rallying to that banner. Nevertheless, the cause of Russian capitalism seems to Mr. Tikhomirov to be a very difficult "if not an altogether hopeless one". In his opinion, "industry is developing sluggishly. It is always complaining of a shortage of intelligent and energetic forces". That is true, of course, to a certain extent; but does this show "the hopelessness of Russian capitalism's striving"? Is not the "sluggish development" of Russian industry determined by the influence of contemporary political oppression? Free institutions are a necessary condition for capitalism at a certain stage of its development—that has long been clear to everybody both in "Europe" and in Russia, where voices were raised as early as the fifties demanding freedom for the sake of industrial success. It would be very useful for Mr. Tikhomirov to read the late I. Babst's speech, "On Certain Conditions Promoting the Increase of the National Capital", delivered in June 1856 at a great assembly of

Kazan University. It would help him to understand how the same capitalism which at first hides under the "cloak of an autocrat" gradually comes into contradiction with the interests of absolute monarchy and stands in opposition, in its own way of course, moderately and in an orderly fashion. "It is difficult to imagine how harmful bad administration, lack of security, arbitrary extortions, plundering and evil institutions are to economy and accumulation, and at the same time to the increase of the national capital," says the economist I have just named. "Internecine wars, the struggle of the political parties, invasions, pestilence, and famine cannot have on the national wealth the destructive influence of despotic and arbitrary administration. What have the blessed countries of Asia Minor not suffered, what upheavals have they not experienced, and they have constantly been transformed again into an earth paradise until they were pinned down by Turkish administration. What happened to France in the eighteenth century, when the infamous system of taxation weighed down on the agricultural population and when, into the bargain, every official was able to plunder without fear and with impunity under cover of taxes? Thieves and robbers can be kept in check, but what can be done with bodies and officials of the supreme authority who consider their position as a lucrative trade? Here all energetic labour, all care for the future, for the improvement of one's living, run low and ... capitals and their accumulation, gentlemen, fulfil their real purpose only *when the road for their activity is fully and freely opened.*" In vain does Mr. Tikhomirov refer to the circumstance that "the reign of Alexander II was a continual attempt by the monarchy to restore its stability by organising Russia on bourgeois principles" (? ) as an argument to support the idea that Russian capitalism's striving is hopeless. The history of the French absolute monarchy, beginning with Henry IV, was also almost "a continual attempt" to maintain the stability of the old state system by organising France "on bourgeois principles". As early as at the assembly of the Etats Généraux in 1614 the nobility complained of this in the most unambiguous terms. We have already said what care Louis XIV's minister applied to France's industrial development. In the eighteenth century, on the eve of the revolution, there was set up a whole school of economists professing solidarity of interests between capitalism and the absolute monarchy, proclaiming the bourgeois principle "laissez faire, laissez passer" and at the same time quoting China as a model of a political system. The monarchy endeavoured according to its ability to adapt itself to the new conditions, as far as was possible without renouncing absolute power. At the opening of the Etats Généraux in 1789,

when it had one foot in the grave, the monarchy, with Louis XVI as its mouthpiece, condemning "illusions", promised to satisfy all the "reasonable" demands of the country. But the implacable logic of things shows in a manner which is unexpected even to many members of the bourgeoisie that, although not everybody realised it, the fall of absolutism was the country's most "reasonable" demand. The political ideals of the physiocrats [168] were an unrealisable utopia, and many contemporaries of the physiocrats realised that absolutism was incompatible with the bourgeoisie's further development. The socialist Mably, at least, and his *Doutes proposés aux philosophes économistes,* may be given as an example. In his time the bourgeoisie as a class had not yet thought of "seizing" supreme political power in the country, but, unlike Mr. Tikhomirov, he did not say that "if it were strong enough it would do so now". He knew that there are epochs in history in which the strength and political consciousness of a given class rise just as rapidly as the level of the water in a river when the ice breaks. He also knew that the strength of each class is a relative concept, defined, among other things, by the degree of decay of its predecessors and the level achieved by the successor in its development. Given the low development of the people, the French bourgeoisie was the only class capable of exercising supremacy. Absolutism was a hindrance to France's further development under the guidance of the bourgeoisie and was therefore doomed. The bourgeoisie revolted against the autocracy under whose "cloak" it had grown to "sedition". Mably foresaw this outcome and, in spite of his communist ideals, he realised that the immediate future belonged to the bourgeoisie.

If the significance and future prospects, not only of social classes, but even of the philosophical and political theories, could be denied on the grounds that they all develop for some time under the auspices of a principle which is incompatible with their further development, we would have to deny all human culture and "imagine" for it new and less "hazardous roads". Did not philosophy grow within and at the expense of theology? "Unity, subordination and freedom are the three relationships to church theology in which the philosophy of the Christian period successively stood," says Friedrich Überweg in his history of philosophy*; and this order of mutual relations between knowledge and faith may be recognised as a general law if we, on our side, add that "freedom" clears the road for itself only by the bitterest struggle for existence. Every new social or philosophical principle is born in the womb of—and consequent-

**Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie,* Th. III, S. 2.

ly on the nutritive juice of—the old which is its *opposite*. To conclude from this that the fate of the new principle is "hopeless" means not to know history.

Our exceptionalists, indeed, have a very poor knowledge of history. When they listen to the arguments of the Manchester School [169] on the harmfulness of state intervention, knowing at the same time that the Russian capitalists have a weakness for such intervention so long as it is manifested in protective tariffs, subsidies, guarantees, etc., the home-grown Russian sociologists conclude that the road of development for our capitalism is diametrically opposed to that of Western Europe; in the West the bourgeoisie speak only of "non-intervention", here, only of subsidies and guarantees. But if Messrs. V. V. & Co. did not believe in the word of the Manchester School economists and would leave aside at least for a time their "exceptionalist" sources, they would find out that the West European bourgeoisie did not always or everywhere maintain the principle of non-intervention in their own country and still less did they support that principle in the colonies. Having found this out, they would see that their contrapositions have hardly any sense at all. We know that the radical mistake of the bourgeois economists of the Manchester School consisted precisely in elevating to the dignity of eternal immutable "natural laws" principles which have only a transient significance. Not sharing bourgeois economists' "expectations" from the future, many Russian exceptionalists are nevertheless convinced that their views on the past are correct. They believe that in the history of the West the bourgeoisie never needed state intervention and government support and derived nothing but harm from it. That is the principal defect of our exceptionalist theories and programmes. Mr. V. V. believes what the Manchester School says, and thinks even a slight acquaintance with the economic history of Europe superfluous. Mr. Tikhomirov believes what Mr. V. V. says, and sees the increasing influence of the Russian bourgeoisie's interests on the economic policy over the last twenty-five years ("the reign of Alexander II was a continual attempt", etc.) as the principal sign of the weakness and still-bornness of Russian capitalism.

Mr. V. V., a supporter of absolutism and for that reason if for no other a bitter reactionary, does not interest us in the least. But we confess that we are very much grieved by the credulity of the editor of a revolutionary paper.

That the interests of the Russian bourgeoisie are now coming into irreconcilable contradiction to the interests of absolutism is known to anybody who has given the slightest attention to the

course of Russian life in the last decade.* That the very same bourgeoisie is able, however, to derive profit from the existing regime and therefore not only supports some aspects of it, but stands for it as a whole, in some of its sections, is also no wonder. The development of a given social class is too complicated a process for us to be able to judge of the whole trend from some separate aspects. Our bourgeoisie is now undergoing an important metamorphosis; it has developed lungs which require the fresh air of political self-government but at the same time its gills, with which it still breathes in the troubled water of decaying absolutism, have not yet completely atrophied. Its roots are still in the soil of the old regime, but its crown has already attained a development which shows that it absolutely needs to be transplanted. The kulaks are continuing to get rich thanks to the predacious character of our state economy, but the big works owners and manufacturers, merchants and bourgeoisified agriculturists already understand that they must absolutely acquire political rights for their own welfare. This is proved to us by the petitions fairly frequently addressed to the government in the last ten years; in one of them the big industrialists and tradesmen even asked the government not to take any financial measures without consulting representatives of big capital. What is the tendency of such a petition? Does it not show that the destructive influence of absolutism is reflected in a palpable and noticeable manner in the incomes of the trading and industrial companies? Does it not show that the system by which each individual businessmen can influence ministers and ministries by all sorts of "petitions", "patriotic" subscriptions and outright bribery is already becoming insufficient and ineffective and therefore tends to be replaced by organised and legal participation of the industrial class in the administration of the country? S. S. Polyakov can still be of the opinion that the ministers he has bribed are better than responsible, constitutional ministers.[170] But His Excellency's rivals, whom he defeated by presents and bribes, probably do not share his point of view. A political regime which is profitable to separate *individuals,* becomes unprofitable to the business *class* as a whole. Naturally, the representatives of that class do not come out into the streets, put up barricades or publish underground leaflets. However, the bourgeoisie in general do not like such "hazardous" means. Only in very rare cases were they the first to raise the banner of revolt even in Western Europe: for the

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] The present behaviour of the Russian bourgeoisie shows that the contradiction which I point out was, indeed, irreconcilable.

greater part they merely undermined the hated system little by little and reaped fruits from the victory of the people who "fought against their enemies' enemies". As for secret political propaganda, what kind of a bourgeoisie would they have been had they not understood the significance of the division of labour? The bourgeoisie leave propaganda to the so-called intelligentsia and do not let themselves be distracted from the task of their own enrichment. They know that their cause is "certain" and that the political struggle begun by our intelligentsia will sooner or later clear the ground for their, the bourgeoisie's domination. Did not the Italian bourgeoisie let the revolutionaries pick out of the fire the chestnuts of political emancipation and unification and are they not now feeding on those chestnuts?

And what if the revolutionaries "seize power" and carry out a social revolution? The bourgeoisie do not believe in that, and soon, indeed, the revolutionaries themselves will cease to believe in it. Soon they will all understand that if people open their umbrellas when it is raining, that does not mean that rain can be caused by opening umbrellas; they will soon see that if the "seizure" of political power is the inevitable consequence of the development of the working class, just as of any other class, one must not conclude that it is enough for "revolutionaries from among the privileged sections" to seize power and the working population of Russia will be able to carry out a socialist upheaval. Soon all our socialists will understand that one can serve the interests of the people only by organising and preparing the people for *independent struggle* for those interests.

But nothing could be more profitable for the Russian bourgeoisie than the confidence some of our revolutionaries have in the bourgeoisie's powerlessness. The bourgeoisie themselves are perhaps ready to join in their song. They even do so whenever the occasion offers. Just take the question of the number of our industrial workers. According to our author "out of 100 million inhabitants" in Russia "there are only 800,000 workers united by capital"; and besides this relatively negligent number of workers "in our country ... is not growing, but perhaps is even" (! ) "remaining at the same figure". Noting that it "*is not growing*" and therefore exactly "*is remaining at the same figure*", let us trace the genesis of this conviction.

## 2. NUMBER OF WORKERS

Here Mr. Tikhomirov is repeating the words of Mr. V. V., to whom the credit is due for having noticed the numerical

stagnation of our working class. For Mr. V. V., the entire significance of capitalism is reduced to "the union of the workers"; it is understandable why he exerts himself so much to prove that the number of our workers "is remaining at the same figure". Once this proposition is proved, capitalism's inability to contribute to the success of Russian culture in any sense at all is also proved. People who know that the role of capitalism is not confined to "the union of the workers" also know that the fact quoted by Mr. V. V. would not prove anything at all, even if it were correct. And those who are familiar with today's Russian statistics know, besides, that the fact itself is incorrect. How, indeed, does Mr. V. V. prove it? From a single article in *Vestnik Yevropy* [171] he "drew the following table on the history of Russian non-taxable factories and works". [172]

| Year | Number of workers | Number of factories | Production in rubles | Production per worker in rubles |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1761 | 7, 839 | 200 | 2,122,000 | |
| 1804 | 95,202 | 2,423 | 26,750,000 | approx. 300 |
| 1842 | 455,827 | 6,930 | 97,865,000 | |
| 1854 | 459,637 | 9,444 | 151,985,000 | approx. 330 |
| 1866 | 393,371 | 16,451 | 342,910,000 | approx. 870 |

From these figures Mr. V. V. concludes that from 1842, i.e., the time when England allowed the free export of machines, and mainly from 1854, the development of Russian production began to follow the "law" which he had developed, i.e., that "side by side with the increase of its" (capital's) "turnover, there was a decrease in the number of workers—production expanded not in width, but in depth".* Is that true? Not quite.

In order to find the "law" of the development of Russian production, one must take into account all Russian production as a whole, and not its separate sections. Why, then, does Mr. V. V. base his conclusions only on figures for "non-taxable factories and works"? We do not know, and probably neither does Mr. Tikhomirov, who indiscriminately repeats what other people say. And yet, so long as this question remains unanswered the "law" found by Mr. V. V. will only have one leg to stand on. Not a few examples are to be found in the history of West European capitalism of "expansion of production not in width, but in depth". In France, according to Moreau de Jonnés, the total value of woolen industry products increased by 74 per cent from 1811 to 1850, the number of looms used nearly doubled, and the number of workers employed "dropped by

* See *The Destinies of Capitalism in Russia,* pp. 26-27.

15,000".* Does this mean that from 1811 the number of French workers "remained at the same figure" or even decreased? Not at all: the decrease in one branch of production was compensated by an increase in others; in the forty years preceding 1850, capitalism doubtlessly drew into its wake an enormous mass of workers, although, of course, it did not provide them with a guaranteed wage, as bourgeois economists try to assure readers. Mr. V. V. should have proved that no similar phenomenon took place in Russia, above all as, precisely from the forties, there was rapid development in certain taxable industries in our country.

Did he do so? He could not do so, because the statistic figures he quoted are of no use for any serious conclusions; for instance, the figures relating to 1842 are simply incommensurable with those for the second half of the sixties; they were collected by various institutions using various methods and are therefore not equally reliable. Up to 1866 statistic computations were based mainly on Ministry of Finance information supplied by the manufacturers themselves and mostly inaccurate. Up to 1861, taxable works were not taken into account at all. And finally it was in 1866, thanks to the efforts of the Central Statistical Committee, that more accurate figures were obtained. Mr. V. V. would have shown more caution by not basing any laws on the shaky foundations of such "statistics". But leaving that aside, the figures quoted by him do not agree with those of the Central Statistical Committee, i.e., the only data which are at all reliable. According to the information of this Committee, the number of workers employed in the "manufacturing industry" in European Russia (not including the Kingdom of Poland and Finland) was *829,573*. They were divided as follows among the various groups of production:

| | Workers |
|---|---|
| Processing of fibrous materials | 294,866 |
| " " wood | 14,639 |
| " " livestock products | 38,757 |
| " " mineral products | 49,332 |
| " " metals | 128,058 |
| " " chemical production | 13,628 |
| " " tobacco | 26,116 |
| " " food products | 262,026 |
| " " others | 3,052** |

* *Statistique de l'industrie de la France*, p.34

** See *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik* No. IV, Russia, St. Petersburg, 1871, pp. 322-25.

"What song do these figures sing?" we ask, using Mr. V. V.'s words. First of all that even in the non-taxable industries the number of workers in 1866 was much higher than the figure which was to testify in favour of his "law".

But these figures are not accurate either, they are lower than the reality. In an addendum to the chapter on the manufacturing industry, the editors of *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik* admit that "in the index to the exhibition (of 1870) and in Timiryazev's atlas" they "came across many factories and works which were not mentioned in previous sources". Pages 913 and 914 of *Sbornik* are printed in very small, close-set type and are completely filled by a list of such factories. This new list only mentions enterprises with a production of not less than 25,000 rubles and the greater part of it deals with factories with a production of over 100,000 rubles. But Mr. Timiryazev's atlas was not complete either. Mr. Skalkovsky, basing himself on declarations of "many manufacturers", said that the figures in that atlas "are all the same far from the truth", even after the corrections made to them by Messrs. Alafuzov and Alexandrov.*

This is quite understandable. It was precisely after 1842, i.e., after England allowed free export of machines, that many of the "non-taxable branches of our industry developed rapidly both 'in width' and 'in depth'". It was only after that time, for example, that our cotton-spinning mills began to develop. This development was "partly promoted by the fact that in 1841... we had an increase of customs dues on imported yarn". And although these dues were abolished in 1850 the success of Russian cotton spinning was nevertheless assured, our own yarn began to oust the foreign article more and more. The following figures show what a great change took place in our cotton manufactures in a matter of some forty years:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| In 1824-25 we imported | 74,268 poods of | raw cotton |
| | 2,400,000 " " | yarn |
| In 1844 " " | 590,000 " " | raw cotton |
| | 600,000 " " | yarn |
| In 1867 " " | 3,394,000 " " | raw cotton |
| | 186,804 " " | yarn |

That this "change" was caused by the expansion of our capitalist industry after 1842 "in width" also, by the way, is seen from the fact that many new weaving, cotton and other mills in our country date from quite recent times. "The development of cotton spinning affected the further processing of cotton yarn. The peasants' weaving looms began gradually to

* See "Shorthand Account of the Sittings of the Third Session of the First All-Russia Congress of Manufacturers, Works Owners, etc.", p. 37.

be moved out of the cramped houses into roomy weaving halls[173] containing ten or more looms at which not only the master but also *hired people worked....* Finally, the bleaching, dyeing and printing industries were renovated. *Out of home production and crafts establishments in these sectors grew real factories,* some of which became comparable with those abroad in a short time."* In "one of the less industrial uyezds of Moscow Gubernia", namely Klin, Mr. Erisman says, "the majority of the small weaving mills now existing were founded in the late sixties and early seventies. The Balin and Makarov cotton-spinning mill (employing 432 workers of both sexes) was founded in 1840; the power-loom cotton factory of Kaulen, Kapustin and Krasnogorov (776 workers of both sexes) in 1849; the Flandensilk-weaving and carpet factory (275 workers) in 1856; the power-loom cotton factory of Kashayev (from 500 to 700 workers) in 1864. Match production began in 1863 with the equipment of the first Zakharov works (90 workers in his two factories and 60 in the Stram factory). Approximately at the same time the working of calf-leather, begun earlier, was considerably extended by the establishment of several new works in Steshino. As for the development of factory industry in the uyezd during the seventies, an idea of this can be obtained from the following figures, which show the number of factories and works *among those that we examined* which are known to have been built *after 1871.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Weaving factories | 16 | Fringe factories | 1 |
| Bleaching and dyeing establishments | 3 | Mechanical works | 1 |
| Dyeing establishments | 3 | Treacle works | 1 |
| Leather factories | 3 | Starch works | 1 |
| Mirror factories | 6 | Match works | 1 |
| Sandalwood mills | 1 | Chemical works | 1 |
| | | Shoemaking works | 1 |

"Actually, the number of factory establishments founded after 1871 and in particular the number of small weaving mills set up in the seventies is much larger than shown here since, firstly, we did not visit all the small establishments and, therefore, cannot say anything about the time of their foundation, and secondly, even in the establishments we examined we did not always get exact data about the time of their establishment.

"Moreover, it must be note that even now (1880) new factories are being set up in Klin Uyezd. Thus, the Kashayev

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* *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik* No. IV, p. 378.

association is expanding production by equipping a cotton-spinning mill; F. O. Zakharov has built another match works in Klin; in the village of Shchekino, Troitskoye Volost, a new bolting-mill has been founded, belonging to the peasant Nikifor Pavlov; the steam sawmill at Zavidovo Station. Nikolayevskaya Railway, has expanded production, and finally, the Frishmak works producing wheel grease has been built near Solnechnogorsk Station."*

"What song" do these facts, taken from the economic life of one of the least industrial uyezds of Moscow Gubernia, "sing"? Certainly not that the number of factory workers is "remaining at the same figure". Rather that our exceptionalist writers use too exceptionalist methods to prove Russian exceptionalism. That in general; but to Mr. Tikhomirov they sing in chorus that his programme is based on too superficial a knowledge of the contemporary condition of our industry. Mr. Tikhomirov is quite mistaken if he seriously thinks that in our country "the number of factory and plant workers does not exceed 800,000". According to official information the figure for factories and plants in European Russia (not including the Kingdom of Poland) "does not", indeed, "exceed" the figure given by Mr. Tikhomirov: in 1879 it was 711,097, which, *however, does not include the number of workers at distilleries.* But Mr. Tikhomirov forgets that this "figure" applies only to the manufacturing industry. He takes no account of mining and metallurgical workers. And in those industries in the same year 1879 the number of workers was 282,959, and in the following year, 1880, the number *increased* by nearly ten thousand. The total is, therefore, 1,003,143. But can this figure be considered as even approximately correct? Do not forget that these are official figures collected by our administration and sarcastically called "ministerial figures" by our administration itself. We already know that the publishers of *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik* pointed out that the figures thus obtained were "in the majority incomplete and lower than the reality". At the First All-Russia Congress of Manufacturers, Works Owners and Persons Interested in National Industry, at the sitting of the Third Session on May 29, 1870, it was also noted that "the existing method of collecting statistic information on industry exclusively through routine returns made by the police at zemstvos *is extremely unsatisfactory*" and that the statistic data thus collected are considerably lower than the reality. In the opinion of N. S. Ilyin, "it is a commonly

* *Collection of Statistical Reports on Moscow Gubernia, Section on Sanitation Statistics,* Vol. III, No. 1, Erisman, "Study of Factory Establishments in Klin Uyezd", Moscow, 1881, pp. 7-8.

known truth that we have *no statistics,* either of industry or of trade".* This incompleteness and this inaccuracy are still indisputable facts today. In the study by Mr. Erisman that we quoted above we read (p. 6) that according to information collected by him "*the number of workers was twice as large as shown in the reports of the district police officer*". This depends, he said, "mainly on the fact that works and factory owners, when asked officially about the number of workers at the establishments they own, *nearly always give figures considerably lower than the real ones*". Are there any grounds for thinking that if we had a more accurate method of investigation of statistics we would not come across the same thing in other uyezds and gubernias in Russia? And if not, will we not be obliged to almost "double" the general total of factory and plant workers? From the debates which took place at the Congress of Manufacturers already referred to it will be seen that this assumption is hardly exaggerated. According to Mr. A. B. von Buschen, some manufacturers "openly admitted to him that they *reduce the real figures by half*". Mr. T. S. Morozov, representing one of the biggest firms in Russia, stated that "when the police collect information, a big manufacturer, for instance, orders his clerk to write the same as the previous year, and similar reports are returned year in, year out over ten years, whereas both the quantity of material processed and the number of workers have changed. The official writes down what he is told, he knows nothing about the matter". Mr. M. P. Syromyatnikov says that "*there are many instances* of production figures being cut *by half,* and not by small, but by very substantial businessmen; figures are *sometimes divided by ten.* This is a reliable fact". We ask our readers not to forget that all these revelations are made by manufacturers themselves, for whom such falsifications are all the same a "delicate question". What are we then to think of writers who not only base their social and political theories on data whose inaccuracy is obvious *a priori,* but continue to maintain that "the number of factory workers remains at the same figure" even after the manufacturers have explained the perfectly simple reason for this phenomenon? At the very best we must admit that such writers do not know the subject they are discussing!

But why do manufacturers resort to such cunning? "Many of them," Mr. von Buschen replies, "give false reports purposely, for fear of levies of some kind.... Some have openly stated that certain zemstvos tax factories in proportion to the number of

* See "Shorthand Account of the Sittings of the Third Session" of the Congress mentioned above, pp. 47 and 54.

*machines, workers,* etc., and consequently it is with absolute deliberation that they give smaller figures." When the collector of statistic information arrives, "the factory owner says: 'Ah! they're from the zemstvo, they probably want to levy some tax according to the number of workers', and he gives orders to report only half as many workers as he has".*

Hence we see clearly how our revolutionaries' confidence of the bourgeoisie's economic powerlessness is advantageous to the bourgeoisie themselves. Fearing income tax and all other attacks on their capital, our "private businessmen" try by all means in their power to hide the real scale of their production. With amazing naïveté our revolutionaries take their "oh's" and "ah's" at face value and do not doubt for a minute the accuracy of the figures they give; they build upon them whole theories about the "balance of forces on Russian soil" and spread among our youth erroneous ideas on the forms of exploitation of the Russian people. By so doing, our revolutionaries play into the hands of the "knights of primitive accumulation" and capitalist production.

However, it would be unfair to accuse *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* of disseminating such erroneous ideas. *Vestnik's* main fault is that it constantly contradicts itself and that, as the Gospel says, its right hand does not know what its left is doing. Mr. Tikhomirov assures his readers that Russian "industry is developing sluggishly". But in the article, "The Condition of the Ore Miners and Factory Workers in the Urals", written "*according to personal observation*" and published in the same issue No. 2 of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli,* we read exactly the opposite. The author of the article is "sure" that if his readers saw "the various locomotives, sowing or winnowing machines and many other kinds of big machines made here in Russia by our workers", many of those readers of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* would not be able to help exclaiming: "What the devil!** Russia is making giant steps forward. Why, only yesterday, so to speak, they could not have made anything of that kind even of barely tolerable, not to speak of good, quality.... Only some fifty years ago there were hardly ten factories in the whole of Russia! And now? Now there are nearly 200 iron works in the Urals alone, and how many in Petersburg, Moscow, and so on and so forth. There's something for you! Just give us freedom.... In ten or fifteen years the number of works in our country would double and production itself, technology would improve", etc. The

* *Ibid.,* p.31.

** There is no need to say that we are not responsible for the fine language of the quotations we make from our author.

author of the article thinks that this rather long "exclamation" expresses "correctly" the real state of affairs. According to what he says—and what he says, we know, is founded on "personal observation"—"we have had enormous success recently in this" (i.e., the industrial) "respect: the number of works is continually increasing, technology is imporving" (there is "sluggish development" for you! ). "Our last exhibition[174] showed that some of our metal works are almost on a level with the best in Europe."* Is there anyone who can clear up this confusion? Whom are we to believe: Mr. Tikhomirov, or a man who has "personally observed" the development of our industry? To top it, we will note that when the latter author "has the occasion to read articles" not based on personal observation but written by "some learned or non-learned writer on the condition of our workers, they arouse no reaction" in him but "bitter laughter". I imagine that he had a fit of Mephistophelean laughter when he read Mr. Tikhomirov's report on the "sluggish" development of our industry!

But let us leave the *economic contradictions* of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* and return to Mr. Tikhomirov: at present the part interests us more than the whole.

We have shown our author that the figures he reports do not correspond even to the "official truth". Moreover, we have quoted figures on the basis of which we can be sure that the "official truth" in turn does not correspond to the reality. Now we shall tell him that he simply does not know how to deal with the inaccurate statistical figures that he has at his disposal, because he operates with magnitudes that are in no way commensurable. According to him "out of 100 million inhabitants in our country there are 800,000 workers united by capital"—a most unfavourable proportion for our industry. But the figure 100 million (to be more exact 101,342,242) represents the population of the whole empire, i.e., not only European Russia (76,589,965), but also the Kingdom of Poland (7,319,980), Finland (2,060,782), the Caucasus and the Kars and Batumi regions (6,254,966), Siberia (3,965,192) and Central Asia (5,151,354). But the number of workers indicated by Mr. Tikhomirov is only for European Russia and exclusively for "manufacturing industries". What can we say about such methods of comparative statistic study?

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* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No.2, pp. 155-56.

### 3. HANDICRAFTSMEN

But that is not all. In quoting his figures he means workers "united by capital", who are "more or less dependent on the bourgeoisie", etc. Does he know that the number of such workers is far greater than the probable number of factory and plant workers proper? Such dependence is the condition of an enormous number of handicraftsmen, who have lost almost all their independence and been very successfully "united" by capitalism. This circumstance has already been pointed out by *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik,* which was published in 1871. More up-to-date investigations have fully confirmed this evidence. Thus we learn from Mr. V. S. Prugavin that "in Moscow Gubernia *alone* the number of handicraft weavers amounts to 50,000. And yet *only 12 handicraftsmen* attended the exhibition as exhibitors from the whole of the enormous Moscow weaving district.... The reason for this was mainly that the *great bulk of handicraft weavers do not work on their own account* but for more or less big masters who distribute the raw material to be worked up by the peasants at home. Briefly, *in the weaving industries the domestic system of large-scale production is dominant*".* In Vladimir Gubernia "extremely varied" weaving industries play a highly important role in the economic life of the population. In the *single* formerly Oparino *Volost,* Alexandrov Uyezd, "22 villages with 1,296 workers are employed" in wool production alone. The annual production of the handicraftsmen amounts to 155,000 rubles. Well, are not these handicraftsmen free from more or less complete dependence on the bourgeoisie? Unfortunately not. "When we direct our attention to the economy of the trade, we become aware first of all of the fact that the bulk of the handicraftsmen have no independent handicraft occupation and work for master workers or manufacturers." Things have gone so far in this respect that in the "production of dyes, where the independent handicraftsman gets one and a half times as much as the dependent craftsman, *the number of producers working on their own account is only 9 per cent of the total number of handicraftsmen".***

The fact that handicraft wool production has already entered the "path of natural movement" of capitalism can be seen from the very "economics" of this industry and also from the inequality which it creates among the peasants. "The wool

* В. С. Пругавин, «Кустарь на выставке 1882 года», Москва, 1882, стр. 9. [V. S. Prugavin, *The Handicraftsman at the 1882 Exhibition,* Moscow, 1882, p. 9.]

** *Ibid.,* p. 10.

industry, with its sudden transitions from complete stagnation to revival during war, made them" (the craftsmen), "at least the bigger producers among them, familiar with industrial speculation, all the attraction of stockjobbing, rapid enrichment and still more rapid failures.... The enriched manufacturers* hastened first and foremost to build large buildings with nine to fifteen windows on every floor. Half the houses in the village of Korytsevo are buildings of this kind. When in the Oparino district you see a brick house, or in general a large one, you can be sure that a master manufacturer lives there."**

In Vladimir Gubernia the cotton-weaving industry has developed most. "In Pokrov Uyezd alone there are more than 7,000 weaving looms working up two and a half million rubles' worth of wares per year. In Alexandrov Uyezd the cotton industry has spread to 120 villages, where more than 3,000 looms are operated." But here, too, the process of the transformation of the handicraft industry into the capitalist system of large-scale production spoken of above is noticed. "It is interesting," says Mr. V. S. Prugavin, "to observe in the trade that we are studying the gradual process of transition from the small handicraft form of production to large-scale power-loom weaving. Between these two economic forms of production there are many transitional ones: to speak of them would mean to examine the gradual process by which handicraft weaving becomes capitalist. In Pokrov Uyezd we see, for example, in cotton production, all possible forms of industrial units. The house of a handicraftsman is still the dominant form. In Pokrov Uyezd there are now 4,903 looms operated in homes, while 3,200 are used in power-loom establishments. The transitional forms are the large weaving halls—totalling 2,330 looms—which range from 6-10 looms to full sized factories of a hundred or more looms. In these large weaving halls using hand-looms the weaver's dependence on the manufacturer is more striking, the net earnings of the craftsman smaller and the conditions of labour less favourable than in small industrial units. Another step and we are in the domain of power-loom weaving production where the craftsman weaver is already completely transformed into an operative worker. *The number of large weaving halls in Pokrov Uyezd is constantly growing and of late some of them have already gone over to power-loom weaving production.* The number of small independent weaver craftsmen is very limited. There are *none at all* in Alexandrov Uyezd, and in Pokrov Uyezd not more than 50. Although the large weaving halls do not substantially differ in

* Note that they are also of peasant origin.

** V. S. Prugavin, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

any way from the small ones, their larger dimensions and their constant numerical growth show beyond doubt that there is a tendency and actual gradual approaching by the purely handicraft form of cotton weaving to the form of large-scale, factory production, the capitalist type of organisation of national labour."*

Let us go on to other uyezds in the same Vladimir Gubernia. "The economic organisation of cotton weaving in Yuryev Uyezd," we read in another work by V. S. Prugavin, "generally resembles what we observed in Alexandrov and Pokrov uyezds. As in the two uyezds considered earlier, the economic conditions of cotton production have taken here the shape of the domestic system of large-scale production ... 98.95 per cent of the cotton wares produced in Yuryev Uyezd is put out by the domestic system of *large-scale production* and only 1.05 per cent comes from"... independent craftsmen, you think? No, "small independent manufacturers".**

In general, in the whole of the north-west of Vladimir Gubernia "the spinning and weaving factories employ nearly all the free labour-power and almost the whole of the population here has become factory workers, so that small handicraft production here is nothing more than the *last survival* of a once vigorous handicraft industry. Of course, the ownership of the land has preserved for the peasant in this region *certain* features of the agriculturist, especially in places where the soil is fertile, but he is hardly less subordinate to capital than any other factory worker not possessing his own house.... Many pure craftsmen, in spite of all their apparent independence in production, are completely dependent on middlemen who in substance are manufacturer-customers not belonging to any firm".***

In the Shuya cotton-weaving district as far back as in the late sixties and early seventies "with the opening of new mechanical weaving mills the rural population began rapidly to be attracted to the big factories and to be transformed into a pure factory class of workers. Thus the rural work of the weavers finally lost the last trace of independence which it enjoyed in work in the

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* *Ibid.*, p. 13.

** The total number of looms in Yuryev Uyezd is 5,690; of these 5,630 work for big masters and 60 for small manufacturers. What remains in the hands of independent producers? See *The Village Commune, Handicraft Industries and Agricultural Economy of Yuryev Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia*, Moscow, 1884, pp. 60-61.

*** See *Statistic Records of the Russian Empire*, Issue III, "Material for the Study of Handicraft Industry and Manual Labour in Russia", St. Petersburg, 1872, p. 198.

'weaving halls', those low, stinking sheds filled with looms and packed with workers of both sexes and all ages".*

It would be a mistake to think that the facts described are true *only* of Moscow and Vladimir gubernias. In Yaroslavl Gubernia we see exactly the same thing. Even N. F. Stuckenberg in his "Description of Yaroslavl Gubernia"** spoke of the weavers of Velikoye village, of whom he counted 10,000, as independent producers. He wrote this essay on the basis of Ministry of the Interior figures relating to the forties. At that time and "up to 1850 linen production in the village of Velikoye was a purely peasant and handicraft one. Every peasant house was a linen factory. But in 1850 the *peasant* Lakalov of that village installed weaving looms, began to purchase yarn from Tula Gubernia and gave some of it to the peasants to weave. Many others followed his example and thus linen factories began to appear. The Velikoye factories gave out as much as 30,000 poods of yarn every year to the peasants not only of that village but also of Kostroma and Vladimir gubernias. Up to 100,000 pieces of linen were woven by the villagers in Velikoye alone in 1867.... As recently as a few years ago only the women in Velikoye were engaged in cloth-weaving, but now, with the introduction of improved weaving looms, weaving has become almost exclusively an occupation for men and boys from the age of ten".*** This last change means that weaving has already secured a more important role in the distribution of employment among the members of the village families. This is indeed so. Flax spinning and linen weaving are now "the main trade of the peasants in the area around Velikoye village". The role played by the *factory* in peasant *handicraft* weaving can be seen from the fact that "with the development in this locality of flax-spinning and scutching factories and of chemical linen bleaching establishments the flax industry is developing there year by year".****

In Kostroma Gubernia flax spinning and weaving have provided and are providing "earnings for peasants of both sexes, especially in the villages of Kineshma, Nerekhta, Kostroma, and Yuryevets uyezds". But here, too, the trouble is that "with the development of flax-spinning factories the weaving of linen

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* *Ibid.*, p. 200.

** *Статистические труды Штукенберга,* статья X, «Описание Ярославской губ.», СПБ, 1858. [*Statistical Works of Stuckenberg,* Essay X, "Description of Yaroslavl Gubernia", St. Petersburg, 1858.]

*** See above-quoted issue of *Statistic Records,* pp. 149-50.

**** See "Report of the Imperial Commission for the Study of the Present Condition of Agriculture", Appendix I, Section 2, p. 166.

articles out of home-spun yarn has declined drastically in the region because the peasants have seen the impossibility of competing with factory production of yarn and have begun to dress the flax more carefully and sell it instead of spinning it into home-made yarn and making *their own* linen".

It must not be forgotten that home-weaving sometimes provided an occupation for the whole peasant family, for nine months, i.e., three-quarters of the year. Where will that family apply its labour now that with the "introduction of spinning looms and power-loom weaving the hand weaving and dressing of articles have decreased by more than half"? It is easy to understand where. "The peasants prefer to work in the nearest factory rather than to weave articles at home."*

Some branches of handicraft production in Kaluga Gubernia are apparently exceptions to the general rules we have pointed out. There peasant weaving is beating the big dealers' factories. Thus ribbon and braid production "appeared in Maloyaroslavets Uyezd with the establishment in 1804 of the merchant Malutin's cotton-braid factory, the production of which rose from 20,000 rubles to 140,000 in 1820 as a result of the equipment with Rochet mill looms, on which one worker can weave 50 ribbons or braids at once. But after the same type of looms began to be used in peasant weaving in the district, the production of Malutin's factory dropped to 24,000 rubles by 1860 and finally the factory was closed altogether". From this our exceptionalists will conclude that Russian handicraftsmen are not afraid of capitalist competition. But such a conclusion will be just as light-headed as all their other attempts to establish some kind of economic "laws". First, if the independent handicraftsman did indeed triumph over Malutin's factory, it had still to be proved that the victory could be a lasting one. The history of the weaving trade in the same gubernia gives strong reasons for doubting this. The first cotton-weaving factory opened on the estate of P. M. Gubin in 1830 was also unable to withstand competition from village producers, and handicraft weaving flourished until 1858. But "since that time *machine-operated,* power-loom factories have been introduced with steam-engines which, in turn, have begun to oust hand weaving. Thus, in Medyn Uyezd there were formerly 15,000 hand looms, but now there are only 3,000".** Who can guarantee that as regards braid and ribbon production further technical improvement will not tip the scales in favour of the big capitalists? For industrial progress is constantly accompanied by a relative increase in

* *Ibid.*, pp. 170-71.

** *Ibid.*, Section 2, pp. 158-59.

constant capital which is extremely harmful to small producers. And besides, it would be a big mistake to think that in the examples quoted the struggle was between independent producers, on the one hand, and capitalists, on the other. Gubin's factory was undermined not by the independent producers but by "larger weaving establishments in the peasant houses" which immediately lowered the "*piece pay in the factories*". The struggle was between big and small capital, and the latter was victorious because it intensified the exploitation of the working people. It was the same in ribbon and braid making. "Masters", not independent handicraftsmen, have purchased Rochet looms. The weaver, braid-maker and ribbon-maker increasingly lose all trace of independence, so that they are obliged to choose between the local manufacturers and the "masters", who "get the warp from the Moscow manufacturers, weave it in their domestic factory and *pay by the arshin* or give it out to other peasants and then deliver the ready-made commodity to the manufacturer". Many of these masters have, in their way, quite a big business, and they are being transformed into real "manufacturers". In Maloyaroslavets Uyezd two cotton-weaving "handicraft factories" employ as many as 40 workers; five cotton braid-making peasant factories in Ovchinino and Nedelnoye volosts have 145 looms and 163 workers, a cotton ribbon factory in Ovchinino Volost has seven looms and eight workers, and so on.* In the "handicraft" brocade production of Moscow Gubernia there are "peasant brocade factories with a turnover of hundreds of thousands of rubles".**

"What song do these figures" and facts "sing"? They convinced Mr. Prugavin that "handicraft weaving is fatally, though slowly, being transformed into a large-scale form of production". But can this conclusion be confined to weaving? Alas! There are not a few other branches of handicraft production in which one must be blind not to notice the same process.

For example, shoemaking in Alexandrov Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia. In this trade, "the extensive proportions of fixed and circulating capital and the negligible role of small workshops in production, the strict, detailed division of labour in big establishments and the negligible expenses from the general turnover for the purchase of labour-power—all this bears witness to the fact that we are dealing with a process which is passing from the stage of a craft to the level of a manufacture".***

Or again the leather handicraftsmen who "are continually

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* *Idid.*, Section 2, pp. 158-59.

** *Statistic Records*, Issue III, p. 308.

*** V. S. Prugavin, *The Handicraftsman at the 1882 Exhibition*, p. 28.

decreasing numerically", because of competition from big works. "The works, thanks to their better conditions, material as well as technical, are able to work better and more cheaply than the handicraftsmen. There can be no doubt that the leather handicraftsmen will find it difficult to hold out against competition from factory production, which better satisfies modern demands."

And finally the production of starch and treacle. In Moscow Gubernia "this industry is concentrated in 43 villages in which there are 130 establishments, 117 producing starch and 13 treacle. There are not yet any big factories here as in the weaving districts, but here too handicraft production is beginning to assume a capitalist character. Hired labour plays a great part in this industry: in 29.8 per cent of the establishments it provides the only source of labour-power and in 59.7 per cent it has an equal share in production with the members of the master's family,* only 10 per cent of the establishments doing almost without its help. The causes of this are found in the considerable size of the fixed capital, which is beyond the capacity of most of the peasants".

The blacksmith industry in Novgorod and Tver gubernias and all gubernias in which it has a role of any importance in the life of the peasants, and all the small metal works of Nizhny Novgorod Gubernia also show a definite loss of all independence by producers.** The handicraftsmen have not yet felt competition from big industrial capital, but the role of exploiter is fulfilled with distinction by their peasant brothers or the merchants who provide them with raw material and buy their finished product.

In Nizhny Novgorod Gubernia "there are quite a number of places where whole communes live exclusively on hand-made production and differ little from factory workers as far as living conditions are concerned. This is the case in the well-known villages of Pavlovo, Vorsma, Bogorodskoye, Lyskovo and certain volosts and villages in Semyonovo and Balakhna uyezds". *** The workers here are not "united" by capital but there is no doubt that they are *tied down* to it and are, so to speak, the irregular army of capitalism. Their inclusion in the regular army

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* The situation of the workers in these businessmen's families can be seen from the following words of Mr. Erisman: "A mirror factory owner's son, asked by us whether he was employed at coating mirror glass with mercury, answered: 'No, we take care of ourselves.'" Erisman, *ibid.*, p. 200.

** See the article "The Blacksmith Industry in Uloma Volost, Cherepovets Uyezd, Novgorod Gubernia" in the "Report" already quoted.

*** *Statistic Records of the Russian Empire*, Issue III, p. 83.

is only a matter of time and of expediency as the employer sees it.

The contemporary condition of the handicraftsmen is so unstable that producers are often threatened with the loss of their independence merely as the result of an improvement in the means of production. For instance the craftsman I. N. Kostylkov invented four machines to make rakes. They considerably increase the productivity of labour and are, properly speaking, very cheap. Nevertheless, Mr. Prugavin expresses quite justified fears that "they will cause a very big change in the economic organisation of rake making", in the sense, of course, of undermining the independence of the producers. Mr. Prugavin presumes that there should be "help in this case for the mass of rake-makers to give them the possibility of acquiring machines on a collective basis". Of course it would be very good to do so, but the question is: *Will* it be done? Those who are now in power, we know, have very little sympathy for a "collective basis" and we really do not know whether we shall soon have a government with sympathy for such a basis; whether, for example, we shall soon have at the helm the "Narodnaya Volya party", which would lay the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia". And as long as that party only talks about seizing power, matters can change only for the worse: the present candidates for the proletariat may become proletarians in reality tomorrow. Can this fact be ignored in a study of economic relationships in contemporary Russia? There are several *million* handicraftsmen in our country and many branches of handicraft production are partly changing and have partly changed into the domestic system of large-scale production. According to information collected as early as 1864 "the approximate number of workers in the villages engaged in manufacturing cotton goods from the manufacturers' yarn" (only workers of that category!) "was about 350,000". To say after this that the number of our industrial workers does not exceed 800,000 means to study Russia only by means of statistical exercises of clerks, district police officers and non-commissioned officers.

### 4. HANDICRAFT TRADE AND AGRICULTURE

So far our handicraftsmen are still peasants. But what kind of peasants! From a so-called subsidiary trade handicraft production has been transformed in many places into the staple item of the peasant's income. This places agriculture in a dependent, subordinate position. It feels all the vacillations of our industry, all the vicissitudes of its development. The same Mr. Prugavin

says that "*the disruption of the peasant economy*" of the weavers in Vladimir Gubernia is the inevitable consequence of our industrial crises. Once agriculture thus depends on industrial labour, there is no need to be a prophet to foretell the time when the weavers' peasant economy will be ultimately ruined: that ruin coincides with the transition of "the domestic system of large-scale production" to the factory system. The former handicraftsman will have to give up one of his occupations in order not to be deprived of both. And he will naturally prefer to give up the land which, in the industrial zone of Russia, is far from paying the taxes and dues imposed upon it. Instances of peasants giving up land already occur now.

According to Mr. A. Isayev, the village of Velikoye which we mentioned above "ceased long ago to be an agricultural village. Only 10 to 15 of the total number (up to 700) of householders cultivate the soil, while most of the villagers can no longer use a plough or even a scythe.... These ten to fifteen householders and peasants in the neighbourhood of Velikoye rent the communal land from the people in Velikoye at the rate of a ruble a dessiatine of ploughland" (with such a high rate of "land rent" it is easy enough to give up the land altogether, be it noted incidentally). "The situation of cattle-rearing corresponds entirely to the low level of grain cultivation: there is hardly one cow and one horse to three households.... The Velikoye peasant has lost all resemblance to a peasant".

But is this process observed only in the village of Velikoye? *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik* noted the fact that the cotton handicraft industry "is in many places a subsidiary occupation; but there are places where it is the main and even the only one".* Similarly, "shoemaking is now the principal means of subsistence of the Kimry peasants and has pushed agriculture into the background. Nobody who studies the Kimry region can fail to notice the number of abandoned strips of land: one is struck by the decay of agriculture", Mr. Prugavin informs us. Like a true Narodnik, he consoles himself with the thought that "at present it is not the industry itself that is to blame so much as the unfavourable conditions in which agricultural labour is placed" and that most of the craftsmen "have *not yet finally* abandoned their land". But, first, the "Report of the Imperial Commission for the Study of the Present Condition of Agriculture" which we have already quoted shows, contrary to Mr. Prugavin, that precisely the majority of the Kimry peasants have

* P. 384.

"abandoned the land" for ever.* Secondly, all that he says on this subject is a fairly doubtful consolation. No matter who or what causes the fall of agriculture, it is an existing fact, as a result of which many craftsmen will soon be able to free themselves altogether from the "power of the land". Of course, this process could still be slowed down now by providing agriculture with better conditions. But here again we face the question: who will provide it with those conditions? The present government? They do not want to. The revolutionary party? It cannot yet. And by the time the sun rises you can be wading in dew—by the time our revolutionaries acquire strength enough to carry out their reform plans, peasant agriculture may be but a memory in many places.

The decline of agriculture and the disintegration of the old "foundations" of the peasant *mir* are the inevitable consequence of the development of handicraft production, under the *actual* conditions, of course, not under the *possible* conditions with which our Manilovs[175] console themselves and which will be a reality we know not when. For example, in Moscow Gubernia "frequent relations" (of the craftsmen) "with the Moscow trading world have a disrupting influence on the relations of common law; the *mir* has no say in dividing out family property, which is governed by the elders or the volost court *'according to the law'*; the father shares his property among his children *by testament* ... after the death of the husband the childless widow is deprived of immovable property" (the house) "which goes to the relatives on the husband's side, while she receives one-seventh of the inheritance".** How the same handicraft industry, when it reaches a certain degree of development, tends to undermine agriculture can be seen from the example of starch and treacle production. "A characteristic fact in the industry we are investigating is the *extreme unevenness with which plots are distributed between the householders*.... Thus, in the village of Tsibino, Bronnitsy Uyezd, 44.5 per cent of all the land intended for 166 households is in the hands of only 18 factory owners" (from among the *peasants*), "each of them having 10.7 personal allotments, while 52 prosperous peasants have only 172 personal allotments, or 3.3 per household. It is understandable that the more paying the industry becomes, the

* "In this village, peasant and land-poor single peasant households number 670, but not more than 70 householders cultivate grain and make use of all the land belonging to the village" (these no longer engage in shoemaking). "Report", Section 2, p. 153. This information was obtained from "the elders and peasants of Kimry Volost".

** Prugavin, *The Handicraftsman at the 1882 Exhibition.*

more the factory owners will be stimulated to lay their hands on as much land as they can, and it is quite possible that the 35 householders who now cultivate their plots by using hired labour will find it more profitable, when the rent is raised, to give up cultivating their plots and hand them over to the factory owners. Exactly the same thing is encountered in other villages in which starch and treacle production is more or less developed."

### 5. THE HANDICRAFTSMAN AND THE FACTORY

But that is enough; we are not studying handicraft industry in Russia. All we want is to point out the indisputable facts which show beyond refutation the transitory situation of our national economy. While those who have made the safeguarding of the people's interests the main aim of their life close their eyes to the most significant phenomena, capitalism is going its way: it is ousting independent producers from their shaky positions and creating an army of workers in Russia by the same tested method as it has already practised "in the West". "Thus, hand in hand with the expropriation of the self-supporting peasants, with their separation from their means of production, goes the destruction of rural domestic industry, the process of separation between manufacture and agriculture.... Still the manufacturing period, properly so called, does not succeed in carrying out this transformation radically and completely. It will be remembered that manufacture, properly so called, conquers but partially the domain of national production, and always rests on the handicrafts of the town and the domestic industry of the rural districts as its ultimate basis. If it destroys these in one form, in particular branches, at certain points, it *calls them up again elsewhere,** because it needs them for the preparation of raw material up to a certain point. It *produces,** therefore, a new class of small villagers who, while following the cultivation of the soil as an accessory calling, find their chief occupation in industrial labour, the products of which they sell to the manufacturers directly, or through the medium of merchants....

"Modern industry alone, and finally, supplies, in machinery, the lasting basis of capitalistic agriculture, expropriates radically the enormous majority of the agricultural population, and completes the separation between agriculture and rural domestic

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

industry...."* At present we are going through that very process of the gradual conquest of our national industry by manufacture. And this process of *"bringing into existence"* or at least temporarily livening many branches of small handicraft industry gives Mr. V. V. and his associates the possibility of trying to prove with apparent success that in our country there is no "capitalisation of handicraft industry".** The meagre pay for which the handicraftsmen sell their labour somewhat retards the transition to large-scale machine industry. But in this phenomenon as in its indubitable consequences there is not and cannot be anything *exceptionalist.* "The cheapening of labour-power, by sheer abuse of the labour of women and children, by sheer robbery of every normal condition requisite for working and living,... meets at last with natural obstacles that cannot be overstepped. So also, when based on these methods, do the cheapening of commodities and capitalist exploitation in general. So soon as this point is at last reached ... the hour has struck for the introduction of machinery, and for the thenceforth rapid conversion of the scattered domestic industries and also of manufactures into factory industries."*** We have seen that this hour has struck already for the uyezds of the Shuya cotton-weaving district. Soon it will strike in other industrial localities too. The giving out of work to be done "at home" is profitable to the capitalist only as long as industrial labour is a side-line and a subsidiary occupation for the handicraftsmen. The income from agriculture allows the labourer to be satisfied with an

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* *Das Kapital,* 2. Aufl., S. 779-80.[176]

** Those who have grasped the essence of the domestic system of large-scale production will understand how the process referred to takes place. Let us give some explanatory facts just in case. "Print manufacturers generally print either on other people's cloth according to orders from outsiders or on their own wares, buying yarn and giving it to be woven in different places." Successful business by print manufacturers is bound to lead to an intensified giving out of the yarn to be woven "in different places and consequently to the development of small handicraft industry. Handicraft cotton production has extensively developed *with the participation of many capitalist merchants* who, buying cotton yarn, either warp it in their own establishments and then give it out to weavers or give it unwarped to masters who, only doing the warping and giving it out in the villages, are middlemen between the capitalists and the weavers". *Voyenno-Statistichesky Sbornik* No. IV, pp. 381 and 384-85. The firm Savva Morozov Sons, which employs 18,310 permanent workers, also has 7,490 "occasional" workers. These "occasional" workers are in reality nothing but handicraftsmen who owe their living to large-scale industry. Such facts, which bear an unambiguous relation to capitalism, move the Narodniks so much as to make them forget the simplest truths of political economy.

*** *Kapital,* S. 493-94.[177]

incredibly low pay. But as soon as this income ceases, as soon as corn-growing is finally ousted by industrial labour, the capitalist is obliged to raise the wage to the level of the famous minimum of the worker's requirements. Then it is more profitable for him to exploit the worker in the factory, where the productivity of labour is increased by its very collectiveness. Then comes the era of large-scale machine industry.

Cotton spinning and weaving are, as we know, the most advanced branches of modern capitalist industry. That is why the process which has only just set in, or perhaps not yet quite set in in other productions, is there almost complete. At the same time the phenomena observed in more advanced branches of industry may and must be considered prophetic as regards other spheres of industry. What happened there yesterday can happen here today, tomorrow or in general in a not distant future.*

### 6. RUSSIAN CAPITALISM'S SUCCESSES

Mr. Tikhomirov does not acknowledge the successes of Russian capitalism. We ourselves are prepared to say to our bourgeoisie: "What thou dost, do quickly."[178] But, "fortunately or unfortunately", they do not need to be urged on. Mr. A. Isayev, in his objections to the Russian "state socialist's" book, drew the reader's attention to our manufacturing industry.[179] He was of the opinion that the recent Russian exhibition could provide the best answer to premature rejoicings over the allegedly wretched "destiny of capitalism in Russia". "The class of fibrous materials is worth developing", he said, "it holds out prospects of millions. We have a fair number of factories, even for linen production, which bring a million to a million and a half yearly. And in the cotton goods class the figure of one million is a completely negligible one. The Danilov Manufacture produces 1.5 millions' worth a year, the Gübner factory 3 millions', the Karetnikovs factory 5.5 millions', the two Baranov firms 11 millions', the Yaroslavl manufactory association 6 millions', the Prokhorovs' 7 millions', the Krenholm Manufacture up to 10 millions', and so on. The sugar mills also give an enormous production of 5, 6 and 8 millions' worth. Even the tobacco industry has its millionaires.... And the figures for 1878-1882 show a large expansion in production, which slowed down during the Russo-Turkish War". These and many other

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Subsequently these thoughts of mine were not badly developed in a number of studies by Mr. Tugan-Baranovsky.

facts led Mr. Isayev to conclude that "large private capital production in Russia is growing uninterruptedly".* Nor is he alone of this opinion. The last All-Russia Exhibition convinced Mr. V. Bezobrazov that in our industry "the progress of the last ten years (since the 1870 Petersburg Exhibition) is obvious; in comparison with the state of affairs twenty-five years ago this progress of our industry—particularly manufactory—is enormous: the industry is unrecognisable in many respects.... Besides improvement in the quality of products we must also note the enormous expansion in all branches of our industry during the last 25 years. This expansion is especially remarkable in the last decade, since the end of the crisis caused by the abolition of serfdom and the Turkish War. To see this one has only to compare our manufacturers' bills with the reports given by the latest official Ministry of Finance statistics. These are for 1877. Comparison of the figures for manufactory production in 1877 and 1882 (figures for the latter from bills) shows a tremendous increase in the quantity of products for these five years: it has doubled in many big enterprises.** A very large number of factories have been established in the last five years. Industries for processing fibre (silk, broadcloth, linen and cotton) hold first place. Our cotton industry has been enormously developed; some of its products can stand comparison with the most up-to-date and beautiful in Europe".*** These conclusions drawn by scientists are fully confirmed by the correspondent of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* quoted above, who personally observed the "enormous successes" of large-scale production in our country. Finally, foreigners who have written or who write about Russia say the same thing. They already place some branches of our industry on a level with those of Western Europe. Thus, sugar production, according to Ed. de Molinari, is "au premier rang de l'industrie de l'Europe".**** In 1877 Russian refined sugar even appeared on foreign markets, particularly in France. Alongside

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* *Yuridichesky Vestnik*, January 1883. Article "Novelties in Economic Literature", p. 102.

** In making this comparison account must be taken of the inaccuracy noted above and the incompleteness of our official statistics on which production figures for 1877 are based. But on the whole, Mr. Bezobrazov's conclusions are borne out also by his personal observation. "I myself," he says, "was able to note the increase in our manufactory during my travels in the Moscow industrial region."

*** *Economiste français*, 26 Août, 1882, "Lettres de Russie", par Wlad. Besobrasoff.

**** See *Journal des Economistes*, Juillet 1883, "L'industrie du sucre en Russie".

of such facts the striving towards and influx of foreign *productive* capital in our country is a sure sign that capitalism finds there a convenient field of development. We see that foreign capitalists are looking with growing attraction towards Russia and let slip no opportunity of founding new industrial establishments there. What would be the meaning of that tendency if industry there were really developing as "sluggishly" as it seems to Mr. Tikhomirov? But the fact is that this opinion is defended mainly for the sake of a doctrine for the triumph of which our exceptionalist writers are prepared to ignore a whole series of absolutely categorical facts. "Sluggish development" is a feature not so much of Russian capitalist production as of those of our revolutionaries whose programmes cannot conform to our contemporary reality.

And what about capitalist accumulation, money circulation in the country and credit operations? Their successes are in truth enormous. Before 1864 we had hardly any private credit establishments; this year "the State Bank capital reached 15 million rubles and various individuals deposited 262.7 million rubles at interest, out of which sums only 42 million rubles were expended on the needs of trade (23.1 million were issued against bills of exchange and 18.6 million as subsidies on securities)". Thirteen years have elapsed and the state of affairs has changed beyond recognition. "By 1877 the capital of all the credit establishments already totalled 167.8 million rubles and individuals deposited 717.5 million at interest (percentage, current account, time deposits, etc.), i.e., capital increased by 1,018 per cent, current accounts, deposits, etc., by 173 per cent, in all, by 220 per cent; consequently, these sums more than trebled. At the same time their distribution also completely changed. In 1864 15 per cent only of these sums was issued in subsidies or on bills of exchange, but by 1877 96 per cent, that is, almost the whole of the sums, was invested in the bills of exchange or subsidies.... Subsidies rose from 1864 to 1877 from 18.6 million by 337.9 million, or by 1,829 per cent. The growth of the accounting operations—trade operations in the narrow sense—was still greater in the same time: from 23.7 million the sum of account bills rose to 500 million rubles, i.e., by 2,004 per cent!! While the sums invested at interest increased, their mobility was more than doubled. In 1863 the investments circulated less than twice, but in 1876 4.75 times.

"Credit and the railways hasten the transformation of natural economy into money economy. And money economy—commodity economy, is capitalist economy; consequently, both credit and the railways hasten the turning of the economic conditions of production under which the producers are the owners of the

instruments of production into conditions under which the producers become wage-labourers."*

## 7. MARKETS

The facts quoted need no further comment. They show clearly and convincingly that it is high time for us to stop shutting our eyes to reality, at least in respect of the manufacturing industry, and to come to the conviction that this reality has little in common with the naïve illusions typical of the Narodnik period of our movement. It is time for us to have the courage to say that in this field not only the immediate future but the present of our country, too, belongs to capitalism. All the conditions of exchange, all the production relations are increasingly shaping in a manner favourable to capitalism.

As for markets, we have already said that this question is by no means as insoluble as Mr. V. V. and his epigoni think. Any country's transition from natural to money economy is necessarily accompanied by an enormous expansion of the home market and there can be no doubt that in our country this market will go over in its entirety to our bourgeoisie. But there is more to it than that. The capitalist who looks ahead can already foresee the glutting of that market and is in a hurry to secure foreign markets. Some Russian goods will naturally find an outlet even in the West, and others will go to the East in the company of "white" and other generals whose patriotic mission is "to strengthen our influence in Central Asia". It was not a coincidence that the last congress of our mill and factory owners discussed "measures to develop trade relations with the Balkan Peninsula" and the conclusion of "trade treaties with Asia". Practical steps have already been made in this direction and there is no reason to expect that they will fail. Relations with the East are not a novelty for Russian businessmen, and though foreign competition has often had an adverse effect on their interests, it would be a mistake to think that the countries which stepped on to the road of capitalist development before others have, or will always be able to maintain, the monopoly of cheaper transport, less expensive production and better quality. France entered upon that road later than England and yet she has succeeded in winning an honourable place in the international market. The same may be said of Germany compared with

* Николай – он, «Очерки нашего пореформенного общественного хозяйства», *Слово*, 1880, кн. 10, стр. 86–135. [Nikolai —on, "Outlines of Our Social Economy Since the Reform", *Slovo*, 1880, No. 10, pp. 86-135.]

France, and so on. In the "West" there are many countries for which the industrial struggle with the more advanced countries is difficult just as for Russia, and yet it did not occur to any of the revolutionary writers in those countries to "preach exceptionalism" after the manner of our Narodniks. It is true that modern productive forces are far ahead of the possibility to extend markets, the international market is nearing the glutting point and periodic crises tend to merge into one solid chronic crisis. But until all this happens nothing prevents the appearance on the market of new competitors relying on some physical peculiarity of their country or some historical conditions of their social development: the cheapness of labour-power, of raw material, etc. Moreover, it is the appearance of such competitors that will hasten the fall of capitalism in the more developed countries. Naturally, a victory of the working class in England or France would necessarily affect the development of the whole civilised world and would shorten the domination of capitalism in the other countries. But all this is a matter of the future, still more or less remote, and meanwhile our capitalism can become, and we have seen that it is becoming, the exclusive master in Russia. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof; no matter what the impending socialist revolution in the West holds out for us in the future, the evil of the present day in our country is all the same capitalist production.*

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Hence it is clear that I have never shared the theory imagined by our Narodniks—which found its way from their works even into *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—according to which the development of capitalism is impossible in Russia because our country has no markets. My view of this question was expounded elsewhere soon after the publication of *Our Differences* as follows: According to the teaching of Mr. V. V., the Narodnik theoretician, "the appearance on the world market of new competitors in the form of new countries, must henceforth be considered impossible, for the market has been finally conquered by the more advanced states. Therefore V. V. doubts the future of Russian capitalism.... V. V.'s theory is not without a certain cleverness but, unfortunately, it shows complete ignorance of history. There was a time when England dominated the world market almost exclusively and her domination postponed the decisive clash of the English proletariat with the bourgeoisie. England's monopoly was broken by the appearance of France and Germany on the world market, and now the monopoly of Western Europe is being undermined by competition from America, Australia and even India, which will naturally lead to a sharpening of relations between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in Europe. Hence we see that Mr. V. V.'s theory is not confirmed by the actual course of events. Mr. V. V. thinks that having once become dominant on the world market the industrially more developed countries absolutely close it to the less developed countries and *thus drive the latter on to the road of social reform,* which *reform must be undertaken by a government* supposed to be above class interests, for example the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Autocrat of All Russia. But facts show just the opposite. They tell us that the less

developed countries do not stand still. but gradually prepare for themselves the road to the world market and by their competition *drive the more developed countries on to the road of social revolution, which will be carried out by the proletariat when it has become aware of its class task,* relying on its own strength and having seized political power...."[180]

I now add that my arguments have been confirmed perfectly by the subsequent development of world economy and that numerous figures could be quoted in their favour both from English Blue-Books on this subject and from the reports of English consuls. I will also note, on the other hand, that I have never been a supporter of the theory of markets in general or that of crises in particular, a theory which spread like the plague in our legal literature on Marxism in the nineties. According to this theory, whose main propagator was Mr. Tugan-Baranovsky,[181] overproduction is impossible and crises are explained by the simple disproportion in the distribution of the means of production. This theory is very gladdening for the bourgeoisie, to whom it brings the pleasant conviction that the productive forces of capitalist society will never outgrow the production relations peculiar to capitalism. And it is not surprising that Mr. Werner Sombart, one of the best theoreticians of the modern bourgeoisie, was very gentle towards it in the paper which he read on September 15, 1903, at the Congress of the *League of Social Politics* in Hamburg. (See "Verhandlungen des Vereins für Sozialpolitik über die Lage der in der Seeschiffahrt beschäftigten Arbeiter und über die Störungen im deutschen Wirtschaftsleben während der Jahre 1900 ff.", Leipzig, 1903, S. 130.) The only surprising thing is that Mr. W. Sombart considers the prominent Russian scientist Tugan-Baranovsky as the father of this supposedly new theory. The real father of this by no means new doctrine was *Jean Baptiste Say,* in whose "course" it is given a fairly complete exposition. It is very interesting that in this respect bourgeois economics is returning to the point of view of the vulgar economist whom it avoids naming as if yielding to a commendable feeling of shame. Besides Mr. Tugan-Baranovsky, Mr. Vladimir Ilyin also professed the theory of J. B. Say in "Note on the Theory of Markets" (*Scientific Review,* January 1899) and *The Development of Capitalism in Russia.* In this latter work, Mr. Vladimir Ilyin, by the way, displays considerable *eclecticism* which shows that the theoretical conscience of a Marxist has not always been silent in him.[182]

*Chapter III*

# CAPITALISM AND COMMUNAL LAND TENURE

## 1. CAPITALISM IN AGRICULTURE

But the principal and only basis of our public economy is agriculture, Mr. V. V. and Co. generally say. The development of capitalist economy in this field, the application to the land of "private business capital" is hindered by the village commune, which has always been an impregnable buttress against capitalism. In our country large-scale agriculture, far from ousting small farming, is increasingly giving way to it. Big landowners and leaseholders are speculating only on a rise in land rent and are leaving agriculture to the peasant. But peasant economy, is bound to bring victory for the peasant, not capitalist, forms of economy.

Although throughout the whole of this argument error is closely interwoven with truth, the truth it contains is by no means convincing. Agriculture is nearly everywhere the most backward branch of national production, a branch which capitalism began to take over only after establishing itself firmly in industry proper: "Modern industry alone, and finally, supplies, in machinery, the lasting basis of capitalistic agriculture." That is why it is not logical to conclude that bourgeois relations of production are inexistent or even absolutely impossible in a country on the grounds that they have not yet spread to agriculture. Mr. Tikhomirov thinks, for example, that during the Great Revolution the French bourgeoisie was so strong that it was able to prevent the establishment of self-government by the people.* And yet right up to the Revolution, the application of "Private business capital" to the land was prevented by numerous survivals of feudal relations, agriculture was in an alarming state of decay, landowners preferred to live in towns and to rent out their lands either to sharecroppers or to bourgeois leaseholders; the latter, like our modern "Razuvayevs"[183] gave not the slightest

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli,* "What Can We Expect from the Revolution? ", p. 251.

thought to the correct cultivation of the land but in their turn rented out to the peasants the land they had leased and were concerned only with the most profitable conditions for doing so.* Did that prevent the bourgeois from being victorious or capitalism from being triumphant in France? If not, why should it have not only a strong, but, as the Narodniks think, a decisive influence on all production relations in our country? It may be argued there were no longer any communes in France at that time. Very well. But in France, as in the whole of "Western Europe", there was the feudal regime and there were at one time guilds which greatly hindered the development of capitalism and "cramped production instead of facilitating it". These "fetters", however, did not stop the course of social and economic development. The time came when "they had to be broken up and they were broken up". What insures the Russian village commune against the same fate?

Mr. Nikolai —on, who has a more thorough knowledge of our economy after the Reform than all the Russian revolutionary and conservative exceptionalists put together, will not hesitate to acknowledge that the very "Act" (on peasants freed from feudal dependence) was in our country the "swan song of the old production process" and that the legislative activity that followed it, and which was *aimed in the very opposite direction,* "had by its results *more substantial influence* on the entire economic life of the people" than the peasant reform. In this author's opinion, "the application of capital to the land, the fulfilment of its historic mission, is hindered in our country by the 'Act', which allotted the instruments of labour to the producers. But capitalist economy is promoted by the whole of the state's post-Reform economic activity.... The capitalist tendency, however, is *apparently prevailing.* All data point to an increase in the number of producers expropriated: the decrease in the producer's share of the product and the increase in the capitalist's going on before our eyes compel an increasing number of the former to abandon the land, not to 'dress' it. Thus a very curious thing is going on in the village commune itself: the *mir* is beginning to allot the poorest land to unenterprising peasants (they won't cultivate it anyhow) and the periods between the redistributions of the land belonging to the enterprising householders are continuing to be extended, so that we are in presence of the transformation of communal exploitation

* Н. Кареев, «Крестьяне и крестьянский вопрос во Франции в последней четверти XVIII века», Москва, 1879, гл. II, стр. 117 и след. [N. Kareyev, *The Peasants and the Peasant Question in France in the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century,* Moscow, 1879, Chapter II, pp. 117 et seq.]

to individual".* Mr. Tikhomirov completely ignores the conclusions of Mr. Nikolai —on's remarkable study and expressly maintains that in our country "the peasants still own 120,628,246 dessiatines of land".** He forgets that the substance of the question is not the legal *standards* but the economic *facts.* These facts show that in very many places the village commune has been so distorted by unfavourable influences that from a means of protecting the producers against capitalist exploitation it is already becoming a powerful instrument of the latter. So as not to speak without proof, let us once more take the people "as they are" and examine the contemporary Russian situation from that point of view.

But first of all a few general remarks on the history of primitive agrarian communism.

## 2. THE VILLAGE COMMUNE

Listening to our Narodniks one could really think that the Russian village commune is an exceptionally enduring organisation. "Neither the internecine struggles during the period of the independent principalities, the Mongol yoke, the bloody period of Ivan the Terrible, nor the years of unrest during the interregnum, nor the reforms of Peter and Catherine which introduced into Russia the principles of West European culture, nothing shook or changed the cherished institution of peasant life," says one of the most easily excitable Narodniks, Mr. K—n, in a book on "the forms of land tenure among the Russian

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* Nikolai —on, "Outlines", pp. 132-36.

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] When I wrote these lines, only the first part of Mr. N. —on's study had been printed. It did not appear in its final form until 1893 and was far from justifying the expectations I placed in it, and, as the reader will now see, placed by others. In the final account Mr. N. —on turned out to be just as much of a utopian as Messrs. V. V., Prugavin, Tikhomirov and others. It is true that he had incomparably more data than they, but he treated them in an extremely one-sided way, using them only to corroborate preconceived utopian ideas based on' a completely incorrect understanding of Marx's theory of value. Mr. N. —on's work made a very unpleasant impression on Engels, although he was very well disposed towards it. In one of the letters he wrote to me, Engels says that he has lost all faith in the Russian generation to which Mr. N. —on belongs because no matter what subject they discuss they inevitably reduce the question to "Holy Russia", i.e., they display Slavophile prejudices. Engels' main reproach against Mr. N. —on was that he did not understand the revolutionary significance of the economic upheaval Russia was passing through.[184]

people"; "the serfdom could not obliterate it, its abolition could not be brought about by the peasants leaving voluntarily for new lands or by forcible expulsions", etc., etc., in a word,

*The ages went by, all strived to be happy,*
*In the world all repeatedly changed,*[185]

but the Russian village commune remained unchanged and unchangeable. Unfortunately, this glorification, despitc all its indisputable eloquence, proves nothing at all. The village communes display indubitable vitality as long as they do not emerge from the conditions of natural economy. "The simplicity of the organisation for production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with the same name—this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic states, and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economical elements of society remains untouched by the storm-clouds of the political sky."*

But that same basic element of the barbarian societies which stands firm against the storms of political revolutions turns out to be powerless and defenceless against the logic of economic evolution. The development of money economy and commodity production little by little undermines communal land tenure.**

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* *Das Kapital,* 2. Aufl., S. 371.[186]

** The influence of money economy on the decline of primitive communism is wonderfully described by Mr. G. Ivanov (Uspensky) in the family community.

"At present," says Mr. Ivanov ("From a Village Diary", *Otechestvenniye Zapiski,* September 1880, pp. 38-39), "there is such an immense accumulation of insoluble and difficult tasks in the life of peasant families that if the big peasant families (I mean those near the towns) still stand fast, it is only, so to speak, by observing the exterior ritual; but there is already little interior truth. I fairly often come into contact with one of these big peasant families. It is headed by an old woman of about 70, a strong woman, intelligent and experienced in her way. But she derived all her experience under the serfdom and in an exclusively agricultural household, all of whose members contribute their labour, the whole income going to the old woman and she distributing it at her discretion and by general agreement. But then a high road was built and a barrel of cabbage sold to the carters began to bring in so much that it was more profitable than a whole year's labour on the ploughland of, say, one man. This is already a clear violation of the equality of labour and earnings. Then the machine came, calves began to get dearer and were needed in the capital. One of the sons became a coach-driver and in half a year he earned as much as the whole family in the country in a year. Another brother became a *dvornik* in Petersburg and got fifteen rubles a

Added to this there is the destructive influence of the state which is compelled by the very force of circumstances to support the principle of individualism. It is set on this road by the pressure of the higher estates, whose interests are hostile to the communal principle, as well as by its own ever-growing needs. The development of money economy, which in its turn is a consequence of the development of the productive forces, i.e., of the growth of the social wealth, brings into being new social functions, the maintenance of which would be unthinkable by means of the former system of taxes levied in kind. The need for money compels the government to support all the measures and principles of social economy which increase the flow of money into the country and quicken the pulse of social and economic life. But these abstract principles of social economy do not exist of themselves, they are only the general expression of the real interests of a certain class, namely that of trade and industry. Having emerged partly from the former members of the village commune and partly from other estates, this class is essentially interested in mobilising immovable property and its owners, since the latter are labour-power. The principle of communal land tenure is an obstacle to both of these aims. That is why it first arouses aversion, and then more or less resolute

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month—more than he sometimes got in a whole year. But the youngest brother and the sisters barked trees the whole spring and summer and did not earn a third of what the coachman earned in two months.... And thanks to this, although everything appears to be well in the family, and each one contributes "equally" by his labour, it is not really so: the *dvornik* concealed four red notes from his mother and the coach-driver still more. And how could they do otherwise? The girl worked her fingers raw with the tan the whole summer for five rubles while the coachman got twenty-five in a single night for driving gentlemen round Petersburg from midnight till dawn. Besides, the old woman's authority would have still meant quite a lot if the family's earnings had been only the result of agricultural labour. In this matter she is in fact an authority, but the question is: what does she know about a *dvornik*'s, a coachman's or other new earnings and what a piece of advice can she give on the matter? Her authority is, therefore, purely fictitious and if it means anything it is only for the women who remain at home; but even the women know quite well that their husbands only appear to have a respectful and submissive attitude to the old woman; the women have a very detailed knowledge of their husbands' earnings and know whether a lot is hidden from the old woman and by whom, and they themselves keep those secrets as close as possible. The authority of the head of the family is fictitious and so are all the family and communal relations; each one hides something from the old woman who is the representative of those relations, and keeps it for himself. If the old woman dies, the large family will not remain as much as two days in its present state. Each one will wish for more sincere relationship and this wish will inevitably lead to something else—the desire for each to live according to his income, to enjoy as much as he gets."

attacks on the part of the rising bourgeoisie. But neither do these blows destroy the village commune at once. Its downfall is prepared by degrees. For a long time the outward relations of the members of the commune apparently remain completely unchanged, whereas its inner character undergoes serious metamorphoses which result in its final disintegration. This process is sometimes a very lengthy one, but once it reaches a certain degree of intensity it cannot be stopped by any "seizures of power" by any secret society. The only serious rebuff to a victorious individualism can be given by those social forces which are called to being by the very process of the disintegration of the village commune. Its members, who were once equal as far as property, rights and obligations went, are divided, thanks to the process referred to, into two sections. Some are attracted towards the urban bourgeoisie and try to merge with it in a single class of exploiters. All the land of the village commune is little by little concentrated in the hands of this privileged class. Others are partly expelled from the commune and, being deprived of land, take their labour-power to market, while others again form a new category of commune pariahs whose exploitation is facilitated, among other things, by the conveniences afforded by the commune organisation. Only where historical circumstances elaborate a new economic basis for the reorganisation of society in the interests of this lower class, only when this class begins to adopt a conscious attitude to the basic causes of its enslavement and to the essential conditions of its emancipation, only there and only then can one "expect" a new social revolution without falling into Manilovism. This new process also takes place gradually, but once it has started it will go on to its logical end in just the same way with the relentlessness of astronomic phenomena. In that case the social revolution does not rely on "possible" success of conspirators but on the certain and insuperable course of social evolution.

Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur, we may say addressing the Russian village commune. It is precisely the recentness of the development of money economy in Russia that explains the stability which our village commune has shown *until recently* and which *still* continues to move poor thinkers. Until the abolition of the serfdom nearly all the communal—and to a great extent the state—economy of Russia was a natural economy, highly favourable to the maintenance of the village commune. That is why the commune could not be destroyed by the political events at the time of the principality and *veche* system and the Moscow centralisation, of Peter's reforms and the "drum-beat enlightenment" of the Petersburg autocrats. No matter how grievous the effect of these events was on the

national welfare, there is no doubt that in the final account they themselves were not forerunners of radical upheavals in the public economy, but only the consequence of the mutual relations existing between individual village communes. The Moscow despotism was based on the very "ancient foundations of the life of the people" that our Narodniks are so enthusiastic over. However, both the reactionary Baron von Haxthausen and the revolutionary agitator Bakunin understood this clearly. Were Russia isolated from the economic and political influences of West European life, it would be difficult to foresee when history would undermine at last the economic foundation of the Russian political set-up. But the influence of international relations accelerated the natural, though slow, process of development of money economy of commodity production. The Reform of February 19 was a necessary concession to the new economic trend and in turn it gave it new strength. The village commune did not, and indeed could not, adapt itself to the new conditions. Its organism was overstrained, and one must be blind not to notice the signs of its disintegration now. Those are the facts.

### 3. DISINTEGRATION OF OUR VILLAGE COMMUNE

The process of disintegration of our village commune affects even its outward appearance. "I stood for a long time on the edge of a graveyard looking at the outward appearance of villages (lying below at the foot of a hill)," says Mr. N. Zlatovratsky. "What variety! On one side, a group of houses, apparently decrepit, having two windows and thatched roofs.... On the other side new houses with three windows each, roofs of planks and separated by a broad passage; between them I could see green iron roofs with weather-vanes on the chimneys. And then a third group, long and winding like a worm, where, side by side with the mansion of a well-to-do kulak, there was a structure something between a cabin and a hovel, hardly rising above the ground."* Corresponding to this outwardly very picturesque variety we have a variety of figures expressing the budgets of different households. Mr. Zlatovratsky says that the village commune which he selected for study displayed, "in spite of its small size, fairly extreme degrees of economic inequality, from those *sitting on a money bag* and munching nuts for days

* Н. Златовратский, «Деревенские будни», С.-Петербург, 1880, стр. 9. [N. Zlatovratsky, *Everyday Life in the Villages*, St. Petersburg, 1880, p. 9.]

on end to the widow of a hussar, living in misery with a whole crowd of children; and this village was very clearly divided into the *sunny side* and the *cold side*". And yet this commune "was an example of the average *new* village of the type to which the Russian villages in general tend, while some have managed to go much farther in the same direction, i.e., in the direction of disorganising the foundations of the old village as the representative of the principle of labour and economic equality". Mr. Zlatovratsky knows that such villages still exist and that "there are still many of them in which you can feel and see the strong, unshakable foundations" of the old community life. "But there *used to be* more of these villages than there are *now*."* Now, indeed, what the author of *Everyday Life* calls the "atmosphere of village duplicity and double-facedness", which is the inevitable consequence of the splitting of the village commune into diverse sections with completely irreconcilable interests, is becoming more and more rooted in the countryside.

On the one side you see the "kind-hearted" *enterprising peasant* "who has no more than a one-person allotment and yet manages to cultivate three, four or even five allotments belonging to his associates who are unable to cope with them"; and on the other side you see before you those very "weak" householders, the "obscure", the "poor", etc., who "either work themselves as wage-labourers for their leaseholders or close up their houses altogether and go away, God knows where, and never return to their native village commune". And there are quite a lot of these poor people. No. 2922 of *Novoye Vremya*, of April 18 this year, gave the following very significant report: "Here is a fact the authenticity of which is borne out officially. Out of the 9,079,024 households in the village communes in Russia (not counting the Vistula and Baltic regions), there are 2,437,555 which have not a single horse. This means that one out of every four peasant households has no horse. But a peasant who has no horse cannot farm on his own account. This means that one-quarter of the rural population of Russia should not be included in the number of agriculturists running their own economy."** But the peasant who cannot run his economy independently is a candidate to the title of proletarian, a candidate who must be confirmed in that title in the very near

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* *Ibid.*, p. 191.

** The newspaper took this information from the book *Census of Horses in 1882.*

The average conclusion drawn here is corroborated by the private studies in separate gubernias and uyezds. For instance, for Tambov Gubernia, which is more or less wealthy, we have the following figures:

future. Though he avoids for the present being exploited by the big capitalist employer, this peasant is already completely dependent on the small usurer's capital of the village kulaks or even of the mere "clever masters". How the "clever enterprising peasants" treat their impoverished commune associates is seen from the already quoted Mr. Zlatovratsky's book.

"But do those shut-up houses belong to the 'airy' people?" the author asks his interlocutors.

"Airy ... that's what they are!" the interlocutor says with a smile, "for they fly, like birds! For a time they sit tight, try to settle down and make ends meet on their dessiatine, and then up they get and fly away. They ask their neighbours to lease their plot so that their passports will not be delayed, *they invoke the name of God*, stand a treat of vodka, undertake to send money in addition, and all they ask for is that the neighbours should do them the favour of taking the land. And, of course, the neighbours do ... that suits us, the enterprising peasants ... what happens is that if these people come back and want to have their land again they have nothing to cultivate it with: they hire themselves out to the leaseholder as wage-labourers of their own land.... Each gets what the Lord sends him!"

Do you like the commune of such "enterprising peasants", reader? If so, your taste hardly resembles that of the "airy people", who "invoke the name of God" to be freed from the land. And note that these "people" are quite right in their way. The difference between their sympathies and yours is determined by the very simple circumstance that the commune which you like in no way resembles the one which the "airy people"

| | Spasskoye Uyezd | Temnikov Uyezd | Morshansk Uyezd | | Borisoglebsk Uyezd | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Households having no horses | 21% | 21.6% | 21.6% | 50.5% | 18% | 46% |
| Households with one horse | 41% | 42.9% | 28.9% | | 28% | |
| Households with 2 or 3 horses | 33% | 31.3% | — | | — | |

(See Mr. Grigoryev's article "Zemstvo Statistic Research on Tambov Gubernia", *Russkaya Mysl*, September 1884, p. 79.) In Pokrov Uyezd of Vladimir Gubernia (Kudykinsk District) "24 per cent of the householders have no horses. In Yuryev Uyezd of the same gubernia, the percentage of horseless householders is not particularly great but, on the other hand, we find many households with only one horse. And such families must indisputably be classed among the weak ones with only a small capacity for agriculture." However, there are some regions in the same uyezd (Nikulskoye Volost) where the horseless households make up from 19 (landlords' peasants) to 24 per cent (state peasants) of the total. In Spasskoye Volost only 73 per cent of the householders cultivate their soil themselves.

have to deal with. In your imagination you picture the ideal village commune which *may* appear after the revolution in the Narodnik or Narodovoltsi fashion. But the airy people have to do with the *real* village commune in which their irreconcilable antagonist, "the enterprising, clever peasant" has already asserted himself and self-complacently repeats, "in our commune the poor will not hold out, there is no air for them, and if it were not for *them,* would we be able to live? Were it not for these airy people, our life would be very cramped.... But now, if you release the airy people sufficiently from the *mir,* you will be more at ease".* The *mir* which releases the poor "from itself" is the *mir* of kulaks and exploiters. Having nothing to "breathe", the airy people flee it as they would a prison.

But the clever peasant does not always give the poor their freedom gratis. Joining "in a single allotment four" which belong to his ruined co-villagers, he even demands "money in addition" from them. Hence we get amazing contracts like the following, consigned to history by Mr. Orlov: "In the year 1874, on November 13, I, the undersigned, of Moscow Gubernia, Volokolamsk Uyezd, village of Kurvina, hereby declare to my peasant commune of the village of Kurvina that I, Grigoryev, give my land, and allotment for three persons, for the use of the commune, *in return for which, I, Grigoryev, undertake to pay 21 rubles a year* and the said sum to be sent every year by the first of April, not counting the passports, for which I must pay separately, and also for their dispatch; which undertaking I pledge with my signature." If we compare the payments exacted on peasants' allotments with the rent for them, it is obvious that this was not the only such case. It has been concluded that the average size of the payments effected on peasants' plots in twelve uyezds of Moscow Gubernia was 10 rubles 45 kopeks, while the average rent for a one-person plot was no higher than 3 rubles 60 kopeks. Thus the average additional payment made by the owner for a plot which he hired out amounted to 6 rubles 80 kopeks. "Of course one comes across cases in which the plot is rented at a price compensating for the payment exacted upon it," says Mr. Orlov; "but such cases are extremely rare and can therefore be considered as exceptions, while the general rule is that there is a bigger or smaller additional payment besides the rent of the plot.... It is now understandable why the peasants, as they themselves put it, are not envious of commune land."** Anybody familiar with the famous studies

* *Everyday Life in the Villages,* pp. 203-04.

** *Collection of Statistical Reports on Moscow Gubernia,* Section on Economic Statistics, Vol. IV, No. 1, Moscow, 1879, pp. 203-04.

made by Mr. Yanson on peasants' plots and payments knows that the disparity noted by Mr. Orlov between the profitableness of allotments and the total payments exacted on them exists throughout the greater part of Russia. This disparity often reaches really terrifying proportions. In Novgorod Gubernia "payments on a dessiatine of land for isolated groups of payers amount to the following percentage of the normal income from the land:

| | |
|---|---|
| On lands of state peasants | 160% |
| On lands of peasant proprietors: | |
| of former appanage peasants | 161% |
| of former landlords' peasants | 180% |
| of temporarily-bound peasants[187] | 210% |

But under unfavourable conditions, i.e., when the peasant proprietors had to effect extra payments, when the temporarily-bound peasants had only small plots and their general dues were high, these payments reached:

| | |
|---|---|
| for peasants having bought their liberty up to | 275% |
| for temporarily-bound peasants up to | 565%"* |

In general, comparing the data collected in Volume XXII of *The Works of the Taxation Commission* with the figures given in the report of the agricultural commission, Mr. Nikolai —on found that "the state independent peasants in 37 gubernias" (therefore not counting the western gubernias) "of the European part of Russia pay 92.75 per cent of the net income from the land they have, i.e., for all their needs they have 7.25 per cent of the income from the land left. But the payments demanded from former landlords' peasants amount to 198.25 per cent of the net income from the land, i.e., these peasants are obliged not only to surrender the whole of their income from the land, but to pay as much again out of their outside earnings". Hence it follows that the poor peasants "released by the *mir*" must in the majority of cases pay a certain sum every year for the right to give up their plot and be free to move around. This indisputable conclusion is confirmed by facts in every case in which the peasants' economic relations have been studied with any attention. For example, in the sandy region of Yuryev Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia, as Mr. V. S. Prugavin says, "the paltry,

* "Report of the Imperial Commission for the Study of the Present Condition of Agriculture", etc., Section 3, p. 6.

ungrateful plot of soil is a burden for the economy, the land is a stepmother for the peasant. Here, far from the plot compensating for the payments imposed upon it, the one who rents out the land has moreover to pay out 8-10 rubles on each plot, since the average rent for a cheap plot in this region is 4-5 rubles a year per person".* Weighed down by the burden of taxation, ruined by "stepmother earth", the rural poor fall into the most desperate position. On the one hand, lack of resources prevents them from cultivating the land that they have, and on the other hand, the legislation in force forbids them to renounce ownership of the land, although it brings them nothing but loss. What does such a state of affairs lead to? The answer is quite clear. As Mr. Orlov says, those householders who have given up their land "detach themselves into a special group and are so to speak rejected and banned from the commune; the latter divides into two parts, each of which enters into hostile relations towards the other; enterprising peasants consider those who have given it up as a heavy burden, having in the majority of cases to answer for them under the collective responsibility, and there is generally nothing they can get out of them; those, on the other hand, who have given up their land, being finally ruined and having ceased corn-growing, are compelled to go *elsewhere* with their families in order to earn; at the same time, although they do not make use of their plots, they have to pay all the taxes levied on them, for otherwise the *mir* does not give them their passports and, besides, 'scourges' them at the volost administration offices for failing to pay; *obviously, in the eyes of those who have given up the land the mir is a burden, a scourge, a hindrance*". It is easy to understand that "the link between these two sections of the village commune is purely exterior, artificial and fiscal; with the dissolution of this link *the final disintegration of the groups mentioned* must inevitably take place: the village commune will consist only of corn-growers, while those who have given up their land, having no means of starting to farm again and gradually losing the habit of agricultural work, will finally be transformed into landless people, which is what they are now in actual fact".**

At a certain stage in the disintegration of the village commune there almost necessarily comes a time when the poorest of its

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* В. С. Пругавин, «Сельская община» и т. д., Юрьевского уезда, Владимирской губ., Москва, 1884, гл. III, стр. 93–95. [V.S. Prugavin, *The Village Commune*, etc., in Yuryev Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia, Moscow, 1884, Chapter III, pp. 93-95.]

** Орлов, «Сборник статистич. свед.», стр. 55. [Orlov, *Collection of Statistical Reports*, p. 55.]

members begin to revolt against this form of land tenure which for them has become "a scourge and a hindrance". At the end of the last century the poorest peasants in France often demanded the "sharing out of the communal lands either because, not having any cattle, they made no use of them or because they hoped to set up their own independent farm; but in that case they *had against* them the farmers and the independent owners generally, who sent their cattle to graze on these lands".* It is true that the contrary sometimes took place, i.e., the poor wanted to keep their communal pastures and the rich seized them for their own exclusive use; but in any case there is no doubt that the rural commune was an arena of fierce struggle between material interests. Antagonism replaced the original solidarity.** The same antagonism is to be noticed now, as we saw, in the villages of Russia, the desire of the poor to withdraw from the village commune being manifest at earlier stages of its disintegration. For instance, the ploughlands in Moscow Gubernia have not yet gone over to private ownership, but the oppression of state taxes is already making the poor section of the peasantry hostile to the village commune. "In those communes where conditions are unfavourable ... to conduct agricultural economy ... the middle peasants are for the maintenance of communal tenure; but the peasants of the extreme sections, i.e., *the most and the least prosperous, incline towards the replacement of the communal system by a family and inheritance system.*"*** The kulaks and those who have given up the land strive equally to break off their link with the village commune.

How widespread is this striving? We already know that it is manifest where "conditions are unfavourable for all households to conduct agricultural economy", and where "some of the households gradually become poor and weak and then lose their agricultural economy altogether, cease to engage in corn-growing, turn exclusively to outside employments and thus break off their immediate ties with the commune lands". Wherever such a state of affairs is observed, the striving of the poor to break away from the village commune is so natural that it is an already existing fact or a matter of the very near future. Wherever the cause is to hand, the effect will not be long in becoming visible.

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* Kareyev, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

** Une commune est presque toujours divisée par la différence des esprits qui la gouvernent et qui opposent leurs vues particulières au bien général (quoted by Kareyev, p. 135).

*** Orlov, pp. 289-90.

We also know that in the majority of our village communes conditions, far from being favourable, are simply impossible. Our economy, both as a state and as a specifically *popular* economy,[188] now rests on a most unreliable foundation. To destroy that foundation there is no need of either miracles or unexpected events: the strictest logic of things, the most natural exercise of the functions of our modern social and economic organism are leading us to it. The foundation is being destroyed simply by the weight and disproportion of the parts of the structure we have built on it.

How quickly the economy of the poorest section of the commune loses its balance can be seen partly from the figures given above on the numbers of households which have no horses, and partly—and more clearly—from the following significant facts. In Podolsk Uyezd, "according to the 1869 census, 1,750 personal allotments out of 33,802, i.e., 5 per cent, were not cultivated; expressed in dessiatines, this means that out of 68,544 dessiatines of peasants' ploughland 3,564 were abandoned. Exact data about the number of plots not cultivated in 1877 were collected only for three volosts, the finding being 22.7 per cent of ploughland abandoned. Not having any reason to consider those volosts as exceptions and, therefore, presuming that abandonment reigned to the same degree* in the rest of the uyezd, we find that the area of uncultivated land rose from 3,500 dessiatines to 15,500, i.e., four- to fivefold. *And that in 8 years!* This approximate determination of the area of abandoned ploughland is corroborated by reports on the number of householders who did not cultivate their plots".** And indeed, whereas in 1869 the number was 6.9 per cent of those who received plots, *it increased to 18 per cent* by 1877. That is the mean figure for the whole of the uyezd. In some places the increase in the number of householders who did not engage in agriculture was much more rapid. In Klyonovo Volost the figure rose from 5.6 per cent in 1869 to 37.4 per cent in 1877. But even that is not the extreme. In eleven villages taken by the investigators as examples, we find that in the time lapse indicated cattle-rearing dropped 20.6 per cent and the area of abandoned land increased from 12.3 to 54.3 per cent, that is, "more than half the population was obliged in 1877 to seek earnings outside agriculture". In localities which had the most favourable conditions in that uyezd, in the villages where, as the

* The reader will immediately see that this assumption is completely justified.

** "Moscow Gubernia in the Works of Its Zemstvo Statisticians", *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, 1880, Vol. 5, p. 22.

investigators say, agriculture was "flourishing", the percentage of those who had given up the land more than doubled all the same, increasing from 4 per cent in 1869 to 8.7 per cent in 1877. Thus this relative "flourishing" only delays the peasants' break with the land but by no means does away with it. The general trend—fatal to the peasants—of our national economy remains unchanged.

But perhaps this uyezd is an exception to the general rule? Hardly. Other uyezds in Moscow Gubernia just as in others in the European part of Russia are in a similar condition. In Serpukhov Uyezd the number of householders not engaged in corn-growing attains 17 per cent, in Vereya Uyezd, 16 per cent. In Gzhatsk Uyezd, Smolensk Gubernia, "there are villages in which as much as half or even three-quarters of the land has been abandoned; ... peasant land cultivation on the whole in the uyezd has decreased by one-quarter".* Not multiplying figures and quotations, we can without fear apply to at least half of Russia what Mr. Orlov said about Moscow Gubernia: "Sharp contrasts appear in the property situation of the peasant population: *an enormous percentage of the peasants are gradually losing all possibility of engaging in agriculture on their own account and are being changed into a landless and homeless class,* while a negligible percentage of the peasants are increasing their wealth in property year by year."** This means that at least half of the village communes in Russia are a burden for their members.

The Narodniks themselves are well aware of the irrefutability of this conclusion. In the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle* we have already quoted Mr. N. Z., in whose opinion "the ill-fated village commune is being discredited in the eyes of the people".*** Mr. Zlatovratsky too says somewhere that now the village commune is dear only to old men in the country and intellectuals in the towns. Finally, Mr. V. V. himself admits that "the commune is falling to pieces as a voluntary association and there remains only the 'society' in the administrative sense of the word, a group of persons forcibly bound together by collective responsibility, i.e., each one's responsibility for the limitations of the powers of all the payers and the inability of the fiscal organs to understand this limitation. All the benefits that the village commune once provided have disappeared and there remain only the disadvantages connected with the membership of the com-

* This information dates back to 1873. See "Report of the Agricultural Commission", Supplement, article "Cultivation of the Land", p. 2.

** Orlov, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

*** See *Nedelya* No. 39, 1883, "In the Homeland".

mune."* The so-called unshakable foundation of the life of the people is being shattered daily and hourly by the pressure of the state. Capitalism would perhaps not need to enter into active combat with this "invincible armada"[189] which, even without that, will be wrecked on the reefs of land hunger and the burden of taxation.

But the Narodniks say "Bah! " to the present, *really existing* village commune and do not cease to sing dithyrambs to the abstract commune, the commune an und für sich, the commune which would be *possible* under certain favourable conditions. They maintain that the village commune is being destroyed owing to external circumstances which do not depend upon it, that its disintegration is *not spontaneous* and will cease with the removal of the present state oppression. It is to this side of their argument that we must now devote our attention.

Our Narodniks are really amazingly mild in the majority of cases. They willingly lay the care of delivering the village commune from its modern "captivity in Egypt" on the very government whose efforts have reduced very nearly the whole of Russia to poverty. Shunning politics as being a "bourgeois" pastime, scorning all constitutional aspirations as being incompatible with the good of the people, our legal advocates of the village commune try to persuade the government that it is in its own interests to support the ill-famed "foundations". It goes without saying that their voice remains the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Vaska the Cat[190] listens, eats, and now and then brings down his paw on the newspapers and journals which bore him really too much with their explanation of his "correctly understood interests". The indisputable moral of the famous fable is an axiom in social and political life too.

The question of freeing peasant economy from the conditions which are unfavourable to it is thus reduced to that of Russia's deliverance from the oppression of absolutism. We, for our part, think that the political emancipation of our native country will become possible only as a result of the redistribution of the national forces which without doubt will be caused, and is already being caused, by the disintegration of a certain section of our village communes. But we shall speak of that later. Now we shall make a concession to the Narodniks and forget about the *really existing* village commune to speak of the *possible* one.

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* "The Economic Collapse of Russia", *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, 1881, Vol. 9, p. 149.

## 4. THE NARODNIKS' IDEAL VILLAGE COMMUNE

All our previous arguments were based on the assumption that the Russian village commune will still for a long time be weighed down by unbearable taxation and land hunger. Let us now examine the matter from another aspect. Let us admit that thanks to some circumstances or others the village commune will manage to get rid of that burden. The question is: will the disintegration of the commune which has already set in then stop? And will not the commune then rush to communist ideals with the speed and impetuosity of Gogol's troika? [191]

At present the total of the payments exacted on the peasant allotments is, in the majority of cases, higher than the income from those allotments. Hence the quite natural desire of a certain section of the peasantry to detach themselves from land which only brings a negative rent. Let us now imagine the opposite case. Let us picture that there has been a serious reform in our taxation system and that the payments exacted on the peasant allotments have become considerably less than the income. This general case which we assume exists even now in the form of isolated exceptions. Even now there are village communes in which the land is not a burden for the peasant, communes in which, on the contrary, it brings him a definite, though not large, income. The tendencies observed in such communes ought to show us what the fate of the ancient form of our peasant land tenure should be in the event of *all* village communes being placed in such comparatively favourable conditions. Let us see what hopes, what expectations the examples of these privileged communes can awake in us.

In the *Collection of Statistical Reports on Moscow Gubernia* we find the following highly important indication: "General reallotments of village commune fields take place all the oftener according as the payments exacted on the commune lands are *higher,* and as these (payments) are more out of proportion to the income from the land. If the sum of the payments is not higher than the income from the commune land, reallotments take place only after long intervals of from 15 to 20 or more years; if, on the contrary, the sum of the payments exceeds the income from the land, the intervals between reallotments are shorter, the reallotments being repeated all the more frequently according as the proportion between payments and the income from the land is greater, other conditions being equal."* The same thing was noted by Mr. Lichkov in Ryazan Gubernia. It is easy to understand what this means: it shows us that a lowering of the payments exacted

* *Collection of Statistical Reports,* Vol. IV, p. 200.

on the peasant's land would arouse a tendency to lengthen the intervals between reallotments. To be more exact, however, we should say that a lowering of the payments would only *increase* that tendency, since it already exists even at present. "A comparison of the mean figures expressing the periods between general reallotments in single uyezds and the figures expressing the frequency of reallotments reveals a tendency to lengthen the periods between reallotments, and therefore to lower the number of reallotments, i.e., to lengthen the duration of tenure."* The same tendency is pointed out in the "Report" of the Agricultural Commission in regard to other gubernias in European Russia. Many of our Narodniks have great sympathy for that tendency. They think it will provide the possibility of removing or extenuating certain inconveniences in agriculture which are inseparable from radical reallotments of commune lands. This is correct, but the misfortune is that the inconvenient consequences of the commune principle will in this case be removed only by means leading to the undermining of that principle itself and which very much resemble curing a headache by cutting the head off. The lengthening of the period of the allotment is one of the signs of the imminent disintegration of the village commune. In every place where this form of land tenure has disappeared under the influence of growing individualism, its disappearance has taken place by a fairly long process of adaptation of the *village commune* to the rising needs for *individual* immovable property. Here, as everywhere, *factual* relations have anticipated *juridical* relations: land which was the property of the whole commune remained longer and longer in the possession of a certain family which cultivated it until, in the end, the lengthening of the period of allotment prepared the ground for the complete abolition of the antiquated juridical standards. The cause of this is easy to understand and is easily revealed by any at all attentive study of the process by which immovable property becomes individual property.

The village commune is no more than *one of the stages in the decline of primitive communism.*** Collective ownership of the land could not but arise in societies which did not know any other form of ownership. "The historian and ethnographer," Mr. Kovalevsky rightly says, "will seek the oldest forms of common ownership not among the tribes that had already become settled, but among the nomads who hunted and fished, and he will see in *communal land tenure* of the former *no more than the transposition to immovable property of all the juridical ideas* and *institu-*

*Ibid., p. 158.

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] I repeat that the fiscal origin of our village commune has already been proved.

*tions* which arose under the pressure of necessity among individual tribes when the only means of subsistence were hunting and fishing."* Thus the "juridical ideas and institutions" connected with *movable* property had a decisive influence on the character of *immovable* property. Far from weakening, this influence even grew still more when movable property assumed an individual character. But on the other hand, it now took the opposite direction. Formerly movable property tended to give a collective character to immovable property, because it belonged not to individuals but to the whole tribe. Now, on the contrary, it undermines *communal* immovable property because it does not belong to the whole village commune but to individuals. And this indubitable influence of movable property on immovable was shown with particular force where, as in agriculture, the very essence of the economic undertaking demands simultaneous utilisation of articles of both private and collective property. The corn-grower needs first land available for his use only for a certain time, and second, fertilisers, seeds, draught animals and instruments of labour, which are his private property. It is in this point of contact of the two kinds of property that the disintegrating influence of individualism attains its peak and victory falls all the sooner on its side according as the objects of movable (private) property acquire greater influence in agriculture, i.e., as the given category of communal lands requires more labour, fertilisers and care. That is why kitchen gardens and lands attached to the house, being the object of more assiduous cultivation, become hereditary property of the household earlier than other lands, whereas common pastures and waste lands, which require only to be fenced in for the safety of the cattle gracing on them, remain communal property longer than other lands. Between these two extremes come the other communal lands in ascending or descending order of the complication of their cultivation.

Thus the lengthening of the period of the allotment is the natural consequence of the increasing diligence with which the lands are cultivated.

The following examples will explain this.

In the Zaozyorye village commune (Novgorod Gubernia) "all the ploughland is divided into two types: 1) *steady lands* and 2) ploughland". The former pass from one householder to another only at radical reallotments, which take place only at inspections; the second type of fields, *ploughland,* "are divided among the householders every year before the autumn". This difference is determined by the fact that "*steady fields* are usually dunged" and

* *Communal Land Tenure, the Causes, Course and Consequences of Its Disintegration,* p. 27.

the "peasants are satisfied with relatively long intervals from one reallotment to the next", because, as they themselves say, "one must get some profit out of the land, *or else why the devil should I work well on my strip if tomorrow I have to hand it over to somebody else?*" More careful cultivation leads to more prolonged ownership, and this in turn is naturally extended to other types of communal lands which for some reason are considered by the peasants to be of particular value, although their cultivation requires no particular expense. In the same Zaozyorye commune the communal hayfields are divided just like the ploughlands into several categories; those of the first category, "large water meadows" along the river Khorinka, "are included only in the radical reallotment".*

The same phenomenon, only more pronounced, is to be found in the Torkhovo commune, Tula Gubernia. *Those householders in this commune "who fertilise their strips hold on to them and bring themselves to yield them to another householder only in exceptional circumstances".*

In Mikhailov Uyezd, Ryazan Gubernia, "the peasants do not divide the dunged fields".

In Mtsensk Uyezd, Orel Gubernia, "at the reallotment one strip of land is left undivided so that each can fertilise it. These strips are called dung strips. Each peasant has five *sazhen* [192] of such dung strip, which is never reallotted."

In Kurmysh Uyezd, Simbirsk Gubernia, "in recent years"—this was written in the early seventies—"allotments of land are made for longer periods, as a result of which agriculture is improving and it is becoming a general custom to dung the fields".**

The connection between the lengthening of allotment periods and improved cultivation of the fields is obvious from the examples quoted. There is no longer any doubt that householders are very unwilling to part with land whose cultivation has demanded any particular expense. This tendency to hold for as long as possible strips once received in allotment would naturally become much weaker if all the members of the commune had the material possibility to fertilise their fields to the same extent. "If all or at least a considerable majority of the households could grow corn with the same efficiency, there would not be any great difference between the strips, and general reallotments of fields would not be burdensome to anybody," said Moscow Gubernia peasants to Mr. Orlov. But such equality is of itself very unstable in a village

* See *Collection of Material for the Study of the Village Commune*, published by Free Economic and Russian Geographical Societies, St. Petersburg, 1880, pp. 257-65.

** "Report of the Agricultural Commission", Appendix I, Section I, Chapter 2, "Communal and Allotment Use of the Land".

commune, in which *economy is run by single households on the commune land,* and each individual member cultivates at his own risk and peril the strip of land allotted to him. The number of animals, the quality of agricultural implements and the labour-power of the family are variable magnitudes which considerably diversify the income of individual households. The development of industry around or inside the village commune opens up new means of earning and at the same time new sources of inequality. One household has no means at all of "earning outside", while another earns a considerable part of its income in this way. One householder engaging in cottage industry becomes a "small master" and exploiter of the members of his own commune, while the fate of another is to fall into the numerous category of exploited. All this, of course, affects the economic capacity of the various households. And finally, not all households bear the burden of state taxation with equal ease. In this way the village commune is divided into the "sunny" side and the "cold" side—into a section of rich, "enterprising peasants" and section of poor ones, who little by little become "airy" people. Then reallotments become extremely unprofitable for prosperous peasants. These are forced to "work not for themselves, but for their weaker and less prosperous neighbours". It goes without saying that the well-to-do peasants try to avoid this necessity—unpleasant for them; they begin to adopt a very unfavourable attitude to reallotments. We can therefore say that the *inequality which necessarily arises in the village commune, also necessarily leads, at a more or less early period of the commune's existence, to a lengthening of the period of allotment.*

But the matter does not end there. With the lengthening of the periods between the reallotments, the inequality among the members of the commune, far from disappearing, is intensified still more. Householders who have the means of cultivating their allotments better now no longer fear that "tomorrow" their land will pass into somebody else's hands. They cultivate it with great industry and do not stop at expense to improve it. Their troubles are naturally rewarded with better harvests. The well-cultivated strip of the prosperous householder brings in a greater income than the hardly ploughed allotments of the village poor.* As a result there is a repetition in the commune of the old and yet ever new story

* In Spasskoye Volost, Yuryev Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia, "if 12 *meras*[193] of rye per person are sown, six hundred sheaves are harvested and five *meras* are threshed from one hundred sheaves". Such is the average harvest. It varies for peasants of various degrees of prosperity. The "well-to-do peasants" have the best harvest—"ten hundred sheaves per person, and they thresh *six meras per hundred sheaves*". "The land-poor single woman peasants" have the poorest harvests—"200-300 sheaves, each giving *3-4 meras*". Prugavin, *The Village Commune,* etc., p. 15.

told in the parable of the talents: the prosperous householder becomes still more "prosperous", the poor one still poorer. The well-to-do householders form among themselves a defensive and offensive alliance against the poor, who still have a voice in deciding commune business and may still demand reallotments. Desiring at all costs to maintain their hold on the well-cultivated strips of commune land, and being hesitant or unable to establish household possession by heredity, the well-to-do peasants resort to the following clever measure. They separate their lands into a special plot, from which allotments are made only to prosperous householders. "The commune lands are divided into two unequal parts: one, comprising the better soil, is all allotted to the prosperous corn-growers and is cultivated by them; the other, which comprises the poorer soil, is allotted to the unenterprising households and lies waste."* The poor are thus deprived of any hope of ever having at their disposal the well-cultivated land of their fortunate neighbours. The character of the commune changes radically: from a buttress and bulwark for the poorer members it becomes the cause of their final ruin. *The lengthening of the periods between reallotments, which appeared as a result of inequality among the commune members, leads only to an accentuation of the inequality and the final undermining of the village commune.*

In their efforts to achieve the fulfilment of their demands, our reformers presume that they are working for the consolidation of the "traditional foundations which have withstood", etc., etc., which, being translated from Narodnik into human language, means for the maintenance of communal land tenure. But life has some very unpleasant surprises in store for them. The increase in the allotments and the reduction of taxes result in the peasants "valuing" the land, and where they "value" it they do not like reallotments and therefore endeavour to lengthen the periods between them; but where periods between reallotments are lengthened inequality among the members of the commune grows, and the peasants are gradually prepared by the very logic of things for hereditary household ownership. Briefly, the measure recommended as a means of maintaining the village commune only increases the instability of its equilibrium which already amazes the impartial observer; this measure will be a real "gift of the Greeks" for the commune. It must be conceded that only with the help of a very ardent imagination and a pretty big dose of ignorance can one base any plans of reforin on the shaky foundations of a form of life which is in such a hopeless and contradictory condition.

The contradictions typical of the social form in question inevi-

* Орлов, «Формы крестьянского землевладения», стр. 55. [Orlov, *Forms of Peasant Land Tenure*, p. 55.]

tably and fatally affect the way of thinking and the conduct of its supporters. Our legal Narodniks, who are so prolific of all kinds of recipes for supporting and consolidating the "traditional foundations of the Russian people's life", do not notice that they are all, in fact, coming more and more to voice the interests of the section of the peasants representing the principle of individualism and kulak enrichment.

Talk about popular credits and tender emotion at the so-called "commune" leases out of landlords' estates can serve as new examples of a short-sighted attitude to the interests of the village commune. In essence, neither the communal leases nor the petty credit on land by any means consolidate the "foundations" which are so dear to our Narodniks, they even directly undermine the commune principle. We shall come back to this question, but first of all we consider it necessary to finish dealing with other causes of the disintegration of the village commune upon which we have already touched.

We already know that the peasants favour the lengthening of the periods between reallotments of the communal lands for the sake of their better cultivation. They do not want to "*work well*" on a strip which may soon go over to somebody else. Good cultivation of the land presupposes the expenditure not only of the worker's living labour but also of the inanimate products of his past work, of those means of production which in bourgeois economy bear the name of capital.

These expenditures of "capital" are paid back over a more or less long period of time. Some are refunded to the owner completely in as little as one or a few years in the form of increased income from the land; others, on the contrary, require a considerable time to circulate. The first are called circulating capital expenditures, the second, constant capital expenditures. It goes without saying that the more constant capital expenditures in peasant agriculture increase, the more the rich and well-to-do householders will intensify their striving to hold on to their allotments as long as possible. The manuring of the soil is not so great an expenditure, and yet we see that it is in itself enough to make a certain section of our peasantry hostile to reallotments. "It is bad because I have three cows, whereas he has one cock," the peasants of Sengilevskoye Volost,[194] Yuryev Uyezd, say, commenting on reallotment.* What, then, will the situation be when more rational management, intensive cultivation and many-field system are introduced? There can be no doubt that communal land tenure is a serious obstacle to their consolidation This form of land tenure is already leading to abnormal phenomena such as refusal to

* Prugavin, *The Village Commune*, pp. 40-41.

fertilise ploughlands. In Kaluga Gubernia some "peasants take all the dung out to the hemp-close and fertilise their fields very little for fear that when there is a reallotment the strip may go to another master". In Moscow Gubernia "the dunging of plough-fields is stopped three years before reallotment". In Kineshma Uyezd, Kostroma Gubernia, "there are instances of well-to-do peasants selling the dung they have accumulated" because they cannot bring themselves to use it for the fields for the reasons already mentioned. In Tula Gubernia "the fields belonging to peasants who have not yet bought themselves free and are still obliged to pay quit-rent become exhausted year by year through not being fertilised, because for the last ten years dung has not been taken to the fields but has been kept in reserve until the reallotment of the land". Finally in Syzran Uyezd, Simbirsk Gubernia, "it is obvious from many reports on rent prices that the lease rent under communal land tenure (when whole allotments are leased out) is on the average only half that of land which is private property, owned by a household hereditarily. There can be no doubt about this fact, which can be easily authenticated from books, transactions and contracts in the volost administrative offices.

"The explanation for this is that the mere cultivation of the land, because of the negligible allotments falling to each householder, is a great inconvenience; this is a fact which is fully acknowledged by the better-off and developed section of the peasant population and it in turn gave rise to two things which must be recognised as the most characteristic in the definition of the present condition of peasant landownership. Firstly, in some villages (Kravkovo, Golovino, parts of Fedrino and Zagarino) the communes have decided to divide the communal land into household allotments. Secondly, in a large number of villages, individual householders redeem their allotments and demand that they be detached from the communal lands. Similar cases are encountered in the villages of Repyevka, Samoikino, Okulovka and many others; they would be far more frequent if there were more order in the peasant administration, but now, a certain obscureness in the law, which is also aggravated by defects in the peasant administration, willy-nilly holds up redemption cases."*

But this does not exhaust the inconveniences of the communal land tenure. The obligatory rotation of crops connected with it also raises considerable obstacles to the improvement of agriculture.

Can there be radical improvements in agriculture, for example in

* "Report of the Agricultural Commission", Appendix I, Section I, Chapter 2, "Conditions of Peasant Agriculture".

the Torkhovo village commune, Tula Gubernia, where "*it is not allowed either to fence in one's field or to change the system of field crop cultivation*", or in the Pogorelki commune, Kostroma Gubernia, where "a three-field system, *obligatory for all,* is in vigour"? Such village communes are by no means exceptions; on the contrary, the order prevailing in them can be acknowledged to be the general rule, based on the simple consideration that in the event of fields being fenced in or the system of cultivation changed by some member of the commune, "for the sake of one everybody would have to bear restrictions on the admission of the cattle to fallow lands and stubble".* The elder and the peasants of Tikhonov Volost, Kaluga Uyezd, stated that "no farm work can be done as the individual householder would like: he is not allowed treble fallow ploughing when the others do only double fallow ploughing, because the cattle are put out to graze on the fallow land; for the same reason he cannot sow winter rye earlier than the others; he must start mowing at the same time as the others because one is not allowed to mow before the hay meadows are shared out, and he cannot mow after the others because the cattle are driven from the fallow land; and thus in absolutely all kinds of work there are similar hindrances". Not to mention the introduction of new crops. This is impossible if they are "sown later than our plants, after the harvesting of which the cattle in the commune will trample everything flat".** We can, therefore, say that a struggle between the commune, on the one hand, and its members, who see their advantage in a change in the system of cultivation and *have the necessary* means, on the other, is inevitable. And it is not difficult to foretell on whose side victory will be: "the rich will always dominate the poor," the peasants say; in the present case, the rich minority will "dominate" the poor by using the most terrible weapon which history ever created, i.e., improved means of production.

Much paper has been filled by our Narodniks to prove that the village commune in itself, i.e., by the essence of the principle on which it is based, is not hostile to any improvements in agriculture. All that is necessary is for all the members of a given commune to set about such improvements, or, still better, to cultivate the land collectively, they said, and far from meeting difficulties, the matter will be considerably eased by the absence of private ownership of the land. That is right, of course, but then there are many *possibilities* whose conversion into *realities* can be thought of only under certain conditions which are *impossible* at the time in question.

* *Collection of Material for the Study of the Village Commune,* pp. 161 and 234.

** "Report", "Conditions of Peasant Agriculture".

*"If only frost the flowers did not blight,*
*Flowers would bloom in winter all right!"*

the song says. And that is true, but can one prevent frost in our climate in winter? No? Well, flowers will not bloom in winter except in hot-houses. Our peasants *could* eat oysters with champagne, *if only ... if only* they had the means. The importunate question of the means has always been the cold water that cooled the fire of Manilov's imagination. If *all* our peasants had the means not to cultivate their fields according to improved methods, but simply to keep up the traditional three-field farming, we would not have the agrarian question which Messrs. the Narodniks are working so hard and so unsuccessfully to solve. Reality tells us that an enormous proportion of our peasantry have no such means, and once they have not got them neither individual householders nor the whole state either desire or have any reason to put off the improvement of the cultivation of the land until the majority of the commune members "recover": has not our antediluvian wooden plough already played enough tricks on us in the fight for the market, if only with the Americans, who do not postpone the use of the steam plough till the golden age of fraternity and equality?

Consequently we can say that *the introduction of improved methods of agriculture will be a new factor in the disintegration of our village commune* unless by some miracle the inequality which already exists in our modern "reformed" countryside disappears. But we shall speak of miracles later.

But what is improved agriculture? Is it a negative condition of social development, the product of unfavourable influence surrounding the tiller of the soil, or is it, on the contrary, the result of the abolition of those unfavourable influences, the effect of a rise in the level of the peasants' material welfare? It seems to us that the second assumption is more correct than the first. Now the majority of the peasants are very poor and the system of collective responsibility threatens even the well-to-do minority with ruin. It is easy to understand that they are not interested now in intensive cultivation of the soil. But place them in better conditions, remove the burden of taxation which is oppressing them, and even the collective responsibility system will cease to be a threat to the rich peasants: the fewer insolvent members of the commune there are, the less responsibility the rich will have. Confident of their future, the better-off section of the peasantry will begin to think of serious improvements in cultivating the soil. But then they will come into conflict with the commune and will have to engage in a mortal struggle with it. The conclusion, therefore, again forces itself upon us that improvement in the material welfare of the

peasantry will intensify the instability of communal land tenure and render more frequent the phenomena already observed in Tambov Gubernia, for instance, where "peasants who become rich introduce ownership of plots, but as long as they are poor they adhere to communal ownership, with reallotment of the fields".* Our patient is poorly, so poorly! He is now so exhausted that he is rotting alive and yet all the nutrition recommended by our legal Narodnik homeopathists as a means of restoring his strength can do nothing but hasten the process of disintegration that has already begun.

But is it not time to finish with the village commune? Have we not already shown all the factors of its disintegration? By no means! There are many, very many such factors. All the principles of modern economy, all the springs of modern economic life are irreconcilably hostile to the village commune. Consequently, to hope for its further independent "development" is as strange as to hope for a long life and further development of a fish that has been landed on the bank. The question is not what hook the fish has been caught with, but whether its respiratory organs are adapted to the surrounding atmosphere. And the atmosphere of modern money economy kills our archaic form of land tenure, undermines its very foundation. Do you want illustrations? Here are some.

We have already seen what a destructive effect money economy has on the family community. Let us now look for examples of its influence on the rural commune, the village commune proper.

### 5. REDEMPTION [195]

Here we have the redemption of lands, which is supposed to present Russia with a new estate of peasant landowners. Some village communes have already redeemed their lands. How has this affected their inner structure?

"As long ago as in the *Collection of Statistical Reports on Tambov Gubernia*," says Mr. L. S. Lichkov,** "it was pointed out, incidentally, by V. I. Orlov that the system of *redeeming lands had very great influence upon the abolition of land reallotment among the peasants* for it maintained and spread among the peasantry the view that redeemed land was *their personal, inalienable property*.... My colleagues and I, in collecting statistical data, also had occasion to note the same thing in Ryazan Uyezd."

It must be admitted that Mr. Lichkov was able to note a highly curious and instructive phenomenon. "In Ryazan Uyezd," he says, "the peasants who have redeemed land *do not at all reallot* their

* "Report of the Agricultural Commission", Appendix I, Section II, p. 178.

** See his article "Redemption as the Destroyer of the Village Commune", *Dyelo* No. 11, 1881.

lands in village communes *where land is valued,* whereas those who are temporarily bound, especially the state peasants, do effect land reallotments. The peasant landowners, on the other hand, reallot the land only where land is not valued, i.e., where it is not really the land that has to be shared, but the burdens which it brings.... It is extremely characteristic that in all the redeemed communes where the land is divided out among the actual members this distribution is done *not after, but before* or *at the time* of the redemption (*generally with the intention of never dividing it any more*). But since the redemption *there is not a single commune*—except those in which the land is poor and only a burden to the peasants—not a single one, I say, in which land was reallotted, notwithstanding the obvious inequality of its distribution. However annoying it may be, one must all the same admit this and other facts, *which are characteristic of peasant interests by no means favourable to the village commune*—one must admit this because one must look every fact in the face and not embellish it with phrases harmful to the cause."

The tendency of the lands redeemed by the peasants to become private—or more correctly household—property is not observed only in Ryazan Gubernia, the same can be seen in other places.

In Krestsy Uyezd, Novgorod Gubernia, "after redeeming land approximately half the former landlords' peasants resolved by decision of the village commune to distribute all the land by allotments including strips in different fields according to the number of persons and to abolish reallotments for ever". Similar cases are noted in the "Report of the Agricultural Commission" for Kaluga Gubernia as well. In the village of Starukhino, Tula Gubernia, "communal lands have not been reallotted since the time of the Reform". In the event of partial reallotments the number of persons "who received shares at the Reform" serves as the standard for the allotment. Even "in the case of the division of a *family* the same persons are counted, *without any consideration for minors.* The plot belonging to the household is never divided and goes over to the family." As we see, the commune principle has made no few concessions to individualism in this village of peasant *proprietors,* notwithstanding that, as Mrs. Y. Yakushkina says, they see communal land tenure as "the only means of preventing people from becoming landless". The objective logic of things proves stronger than the subjective logic of the peasant. But here there is still struggle and disagreement between these kinds of logic, while in Borok commune (Pskov Gubernia), which redeemed its land in 1864, the subjective logic of the majority long ago closely allied with the objective logic of money economy. When the poor demanded a new reallotment the answer they were given was that "although those who now have extra allotments do not

own them by law (according to the number of persons), all the same they have cleared those allotments of taxes (redemption payments) and it would therefore be unjust to deprive them of those allotments".* In another village in the same district the following typical case occurred: "One of the peasants adopted a waif and asked the commune to give an allotment from the common field; then the foster-father redeemed the plot for 100 rubles, i.e., *exempted it for ever from reallotment.*" Here, too, the redemption of the land was hostile to communal land tenure.

This case leads us on to the redemption of the land not by the village commune as a whole, but by individual members. Such a procedure is admitted by law and is not seldom practised. Sometimes peasants who have ultimately redeemed their allotments continue to hold them on the former commune principle, but sometimes they oppose reallotment and then the commune is obliged to consider them as proprietors. In the village of Soroguzhino in Yuryev Uyezd, Vladimir Gubernia, "there are three houses of full proprietors who have ultimately redeemed their plots, two of them agreed unconditionally to radical reallotment with all its consequences (change of site by lots, decrease in size of plots, etc.), while one demanded that his plot should be enlarged and the commune gave him what he needed by adding strips of land to the edges of each field".** In the villages of Khoroshovka and Nikolayevskoye, in the same gubernia, "there are full proprietors and the village communes intend to *allot* them, if only in separate strips, a *complete plot* equal to the one they redeemed".*** Sometimes, on the contrary, the commune is opposed to owners leaving it, and then the redemption of the land itself is retarded. Thus, in Tambov Gubernia "many peasants desire to redeem their plots individually, but the village communes do not allow such redemptions in order not to exempt the rich peasants from the collective responsibility system". Sometimes the village commune gives householders who have redeemed their allotments the farthest and most inconvenient plots. That is why "peasants buy far more often land from others than they redeem their own"**** in Kharkov Gubernia.

These facts suffice to show how unstable the equilibrium of communal relations is becoming owing to redemptions. It is true that the final juridical transition to hereditary ownership by household, far from being the necessary *direct* result of redemption, is, on the contrary, a comparatively rare thing. The peasant is conservative, but he is particularly so in his attitude to the land.

* See the *Collection* quoted above, article by Mr. P. Zinovyev, p. 308.
** Prugavin, *The Village Commune*, p. 19.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 48.
**** "Report of the Agricultural Commission", Section II.

But that does not change things. Only in name do the mutual relationships between those who have redeemed their land resemble the "*mir*" of the good old time—the time of natural economy, serfdom and the complete absence of means of communication. The basis of distribution of land is no longer the need of this or that householder, the quantity of labour-power in his family or, finally, even taxes or dues. New birds sing new songs. The peasant proprietors do not like reallotments and are not embarrassed by the needs of their neighbours. The aged villagers moan and complain about the people being "spoilt", the intelligentsia sigh still more earnestly and when they see to their distress that the "deterioration of morals" is irrepressibly penetrating into the countryside, they hope only for the "revolution" which will put everything right, smooth out everything and restore to the village commune the freshness it had in the time of Gostomysl.[196] But what is surprising in this phenomenon, which so distresses the "old men" in the villages and the Narodniks in the capital? Nothing at all. "Morals" have not deteriorated, they have only been given another economic basis. Formerly the land belonged to the tsar, to "God" or whoever you like, but it was not bought. It was enough for a peasant to succeed in being accepted into a village commune and he received the right to use the land, restricted, sometimes, only by the limitations of his own labour-power. And the commune was in general the master of the territory it occupied, it had authority everywhere its axe, its scythe and its wooden plough went. Serfdom fettered and debased the tiller but did not change his attitude to the land. "We belong to you and the soil belongs to us," the peasants used to say to the landlords. And now the time has come when the peasants have ceased to belong to the masters, but on the other hand, the soil has also ceased to belong to the peasants. It has to be redeemed, to be paid for in money. What is money? It is first and foremost a commodity, and a commodity which has a very special character; a commodity which buys all other commodities, a commodity which is the measure and the expression of their value. Needless to say, this special commodity cannot be an exception to the general laws of commodity production and circulation. On the contrary, it is the vehicle of those laws, it extends their operation to every place where it happens to make its appearance, through the hazard of some exchange transaction. But what are the laws of commodity production? What is a commodity and where does it come from? Commodity production develops only in a society in which the means of production, and therefore the product, are the private property of the producer; without this condition no division of labour would be enough to give rise to commodity production. Hence, commodity production is the result of the development of *private property.*

Money, which naturally grows out of commodity exchange, presupposes a *private owner* in exactly the same way as does, generally speaking, the entire process of commodity production. Individual members of the village commune can acquire money only in exchange for things that are their *private property,* although they are produced by cultivating *communal* land. And it is this money that the peasant must now pay as the price of redemption.

But "money begets money" in the sense too, incidentally, that the means of production and the materials for manufacture which it buys are themselves *exchange value,* the equivalent of the sum of money paid for them and again transformable into money should the buyer wish. Consequently, objects bought by some person must become his private property. Such is the irrefutable logic of money economy. And it is that logic which is now taking up the struggle against the tradition of communal land tenure. The redemption of land introduces into the peasant *mir* a contradiction which can be solved only by the final disintegration of the village commune. By force of habit and tradition, and partly also by conscious conviction, the *mir* endeavours to preserve the old *collective* principle of land *tenure* after the mode of *acquisition* of that land has become entirely based on the new, money, *individual* principle. It goes without saying that that endeavour cannot be fulfilled, that it is impossible to transfer to collective ownership of the *mir* objects which were acquired in exchange for the private property of individual householders.

"Although the *Statute on Redemption* stipulates that peasants' allotments will be redeemed as communal property," says Mr. Lichkov, "nevertheless, the payment of a redemption, customarily (i.e., by force of facts, which are always stronger than any juridical standards, and stronger again than any juridical contradictions), is effected in most communes by the *members* of the commune, *according to the quantity* of land. The sum of the redemption payment decreases every year as payment proceeds. Here is what may happen as a result of this: having punctiliously paid the redemption money for a period of as much as two or three decades, peasants may be deprived at a reallotment of a considerable portion of the land they have redeemed; on the other hand, those who have not paid anything may get land for nothing. In other words, each further instalment on the redemption price, while apparently increasing the right of the one who pays it to the land redeemed, *by the very fact* brings him nearer to the time when he will be actually *deprived* at the first reallotment of this right which he has earned by his sweat and blood. It is understandable that the peasant cannot fail to notice this practical contradiction." We have already seen that this contradiction can

be solved only by the abolition of reallotments and the confirmation in possession of the land of those who have paid for its redemption.

By January 1883, 20,353,327 dessiatines of land had been redeemed by the peasants. As the total land in use by the peasants is reckoned as 120,628,246 dessiatines, we can support what has been said above with the statement that the redemption of land has already managed to place *one-sixth* of the peasant lands in conditions which are incompatible with the principle of the village commune.

The extent to which the communal land tenure principle is incompatible with the *redemption* of land, or purchase for money, is clear from the following. In Moscow Gubernia some peasant communes have, besides the land allotted to them, "gift land", that is, land given gratis when they were granted freedom by their former landlords. With the exception of but a single village "gift land is everywhere owned by the communes". But in cases when peasant communes *buy* land from the landlords "ownership of the portions falling to each household is always established by inheritance and by household, each household receiving the right freely to dispose of and alienate part or the whole of its portion by sale, gift, etc. Thus the size of the portion belonging to each household taking part in the redemption of the land remains fixed."*

It is exactly the same in Pskov Gubernia: in cases when peasants "acquire estates, examples of which are not rare", tenure is settled as "non-communal".

But that is not all. Mr. Nikolai —on justly remarks that "redemption forces the producer to turn more and more of the product of his labour into commodities and consequently to lay more and more firmly the foundations of capitalist economy".

From what has been said it is clear how naïve the Narodniks are when they see the development of small land credit as means of consolidating the village commune and fighting capitalism. As is their rule, they recommend exactly those measures which can only hasten the triumph of the bourgeois relationships which they hate so much. On the one hand, "all projects aimed at improving the material condition of the producer and based on credit, far from being able to improve his position, on the contrary, better the condition of a few and worsen that of the majority". On the other hand, often lands which have been redeemed, and always those which have been bought—and the better the land is, the more often this happens—become the personal property of the one acquiring them.

* Orlov, *Forms of Peasant Land Tenure in Moscow Gubernia.*

In the case of the lease of landlords' or state lands, the peasant *mir* is also transformed into an association of shareholders responsible for one another, an association in which the distribution of the lands leased is effected proportionally to the amount of money contributed. Where, in this case, is the commune, where are the "traditional foundations"?

Incidentally, the peaceful Narodniks are not the only ones who are moved by facts of more than doubtful significance. Even the terrorists can boast of such "delicacy". Mr. Tikhomirov, for example, in his war against people who are convinced of the "inevitability of Russian capitalism", points out that the "quantity of land belonging to the peasants is slowly but steadily increasing". He apparently considers this fact so significant that he gives it without any comments whatsoever. But after all that has been said here about the significance of money economy in the history of the village commune's disintegration, we are entitled to consider the increase of the quantity of land owned by the peasants as a fact which is extremely ambiguous, to say the least. Reality fully justifies our scepticism.

In Moscow Gubernia the amount of land bought by the peasants "increased in 12 years from 17,680 dessiatines to 59,741". So here we see that very "slow but steady increase" noted by Mr. Tikhomirov. Fine. But how is this new land distributed among the peasants? Out of 59,741 dessiatines "31,858 belong to *no more than 69 owners,* i.e., exceed the usual dimensions of peasant farming, and 10,428 dessiatines consist of plots *exceeding 100 dessiatines".** How are we to understand this kind of "peasant property"? Does it prove that the bourgeois system cannot exist in Russia? In that case we could say of Mr. Tikhomirov what Proudhon once said of Adam Smith: he sees and does not understand, he speaks and does not realise the meaning of what he is saying!

It is now time for us to finish with the problem of the village commune. We have expounded our views on its history generally and its position in Russia in particular. We have supported what we have said with facts and examples and have often compelled the Narodniks themselves to speak in our favour. Our study has been necessarily brief and superficial. Not only could we not list all the *phenomena* which confirm our thought and have already been noted by investigators, the limits of our work also prevented us even from pointing out all the tendencies which are now of great importance in the life of the tiller of the land and whose development is incompatible with commune principles. But despite all that, we can say that our statements have not been

* V. V., *The Destinies of Capitalism,* p. 136.

unsubstantiated. The examples *cited* and the tendencies *indicated* perfectly suffice to defend our statements. No serious doubt is possible. Every impartial observer sees that our village commune is passing through a grave crisis, and that this crisis itself is approaching its end, and that primitive agrarian communism is preparing to give way to individual or household ownership. The forms of this ownership are very diverse and it often penetrates into the countryside under the cover of the usual communal relationships. But the old form has not the power to change the new content: it will have to adapt itself to it or perish for ever. And this upheaval which is becoming more and more intense, this process of disintegration which is spreading daily in "width" and "depth" and affecting an ever-increasing area, is introducing radical changes in the peasants' customs and outlook. While our Slavophile revolutionaries console themselves with the consideration that "three-quarters" of our factory workers are "not at all proletarians and half of them work in the factories only seasonally and accidentally",* the peasants themselves realise full well that the village commune of today is far from being what it was formerly and that the links between the tiller of the land and the land itself are being increasingly severed. "The young, my dear friend, are running, running away from the land.... The town is attracting them," the peasants say in Mr. Zlatovratsky's *Everyday Life in the Villages.* And, indeed, the town is more and more subordinating the country to itself, introducing into it its "civilisation", its pursuit of wealth, its antagonism between the rich and the poor; it is elevating some and lowering others, creating the "educated" kulak and a whole army of "airy people", ignoring the lamentations of the old peasants and pitilessly pulling the ground away from under the feet of our reformers and revolutionaries of the old, so to speak, physiocratic fashion. And here, in the attitude to this process of the radical recasting of our rural "foundations", the absolute powerlessness of the outlook which Marx and Engels branded as *metaphysical* is clearly shown. "To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other, are objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. 'His communication is "yea,yea; nay,nay"; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.' For him a thing either exists or does not exist; a thing cannot at the same time be itself and something else." [197] That is Mr. Tikhomirov's type of outlook and method of thinking.

* "What Can We Expect from the Revolution? ", pp. 228 and 236, *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2.

For him "people" is a fixed and invariable concept given once and for all; for him the village commune "either exists or does not exist", for him the peasant who is a member of the commune "cannot at the same time be himself and something else", i.e., in the given case a representative of the principle of individualism, an unwilling, and yet irresistible destroyer of the commune. Mr. Tikhomirov "thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses"; he cannot understand how one can acknowledge the action of capitalism to be useful and at the same time organise the workers to fight it; how one can defend the principle of collectivism and at the same time see the triumph of progress in the disintegration of one of the concrete manifestations of that principle. As "a man who is consistent and can sacrifice himself" our metaphysician presumes that the only thing to do for the people who are convinced of the "historical inevitability of Russian capitalism" is to enter the service of the "knights of primitive accumulation". His reasoning can be taken as a classic example of metaphysical thought. "The worker capable of class dictatorship hardly exists. Hence he cannot be given political power. Is it not far more advantageous to abandon socialism altogether for a while as a useless and harmful obstacle to the immediate and necessary aim? " Mr. Tikhomirov does not understand that the worker who is incapable of class dictatorship can become more and more capable of it day after day and year after year, and that the growth of his ability depends to a great extent upon the influence of the people who understand the meaning of historical development. The way our author talks is "yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil".

"At first sight this mode of thinking seems to us very luminous, because it is that of so-called sound common sense. Only sound common sence, respectable fellow that he is, in the homely realm of his own four walls, has very wonderful adventures directly he ventures out into the wide world of research." [198]

We already know what "wonderful adventures" Mr. Tikhomirov's common sense went through during his peregrinations in the realm of suppositions: very often there was not the slightest trace of it left. But the history of that common sense is in the final account a dialectical history too. It does not exist and does exist at one and the same time. It comes to grief on the reefs of suppositions, and yet, like Rocambole resuscitated, it again appears in all its splendour on the more beaten track of reasoning.

We shall not, of course, forego the opportunity of once more meeting this merry companion. But now we must pause to remember the direction of the road we have already traversed on the initiative of Mr. Tikhomirov.

## 6. SMALL LANDED PROPERTY

We have seen that in the field of processing industry large-scale capitalist production is now developing "without stopping" and that, armed with the power of capital and the might of modern technology, it is increasingly knocking the small producers out of their positions, defeating and subjugating them. We then said that the home market is entirely ready to serve large-scale production and that on the international market, too, by no means all accesses and exits are closed to it. From this we concluded that in this sphere not only the immediate future, but the present too belongs to capitalism. But we recalled that the Narodniks see the village commune as an impregnable bulwark against capitalism in our country, where the bulk of the people's labour still goes to cultivate the land. Then we turned to the commune and tried to study its position today. This study brought us to the conclusion that the commune is being crushed under the burden of taxes and disintegrating under the influence of money economy and of the inequality which has arisen in it, and that in many places in Russia, far from having its former calling of preserving and defending the interests of all its members without exception, it is being transformed into a commune of kulaks, the destruction of which would bring nothing but profit to the village poor whom it has enslaved. Not satisfied with these results, we tried to determine what would be the significance of the reforms upon which our friends of the people rely so much. We came to the conviction that these reforms would only intensify the disintegration which has set in in the village commune, and that the latter could not in any case be the bulwark against those conditions of production which have already inflicted upon it so many incurable wounds. It now remains for us to say a few words on small peasant agriculture and then we shall be in a position to draw our final conclusion about capitalism.

It would be a great mistake to think that what is called the "abolition of large-scale agriculture" will save us from capitalism. First of all this "abolition" can only prove to be a temporary and transient phenomenon, and secondly, even small-scale agriculture strives to adopt a bourgeois character. That very American competition that our big landowners fear will leave its mark on the peasant too. Transforming our corn-growing into production of a corn *commodity* it will subordinate all the tillers of the soil to the implacable laws of commodity production. The result of those implacable laws will be that at a certain stage in its development commodity production will lead to the exploitation of the producer, will give birth to the capitalist employer and the proletarian worker. Thus, the question of small-scale or large-

scale agriculture in Russia only boils down to the question of victory for the big or for the small bourgeoisie. The traditional foundations of peasant economy, far from being consolidated by the "abolition of large-scale agriculture", will suffer much more owing to the complete transposition into the peasantry of all the contradictions of commodity production. And all the sooner will the peasant estate divide into two hostile camps—the exploiting minority and the toiling majority.

## 7. CONCLUSION

If, after all we have said, we ask ourselves once more: Will Russia go through the school of capitalism? we shall answer without any hesitation: Why should she not finish the school she has *already entered*?

All the newest, and therefore most influential, trends of social life, all the more remarkable facts in the fields of production and exchange have one meaning which can be neither doubted nor disputed: not only are they clearing the road for capitalism, they themselves are necessary and highly important moments in its development. *Capitalism is favoured* by the whole dynamics of our social life, all the forces that develop with the movement of the social machine and in their turn determine the direction and speed of that movement. *Against capitalism* are only the more or less doubtful interest of a certain portion of the peasantry and also that force of inertia which occasionally is felt so painfully by educated people in every backward, agrarian country. But the peasants are not strong enough to defend their real interests; on the other hand, they are often not interested enough to defend with energy the old principles of communal life. The main stream of Russian capitalism is as yet not great; there are still not many places in Russia where the relations of the hirer of labour to the labourer correspond entirely to the generally current idea of the relations between labour and capital in capitalist society; but towards this stream are converging from all directions such a number of rivers, big and small, of rivulets and streamlets, that the total volume of water flowing towards it is enormous, and there can be no doubt that the stream will grow quickly and vigorously. For it cannot be stopped, and still less can it be dried up; all that remains possible is to regulate its flow if we do not want it to bring us nothing but harm and if we are not abandoning hope of submitting at least partly the elemental force of nature to the rational activity of man.

But what must we Russian socialists do in this case, we who are accustomed to thinking that our country has some charter of

exceptionalism granted to it by history for services which nobody, however, is aware of?

It is not difficult to answer that question.

All laws of social development which are not understood work with the irresistible force and blind harshness of laws of nature. But to discover this or that law of nature or of social development means, firstly, to be able to avoid clashing with it and, consequently, expending one's efforts in vain, and, secondly, to be able to regulate its application in such a manner as to draw profit from it. This general idea applies entirely to the particular case we are interested in. We must utilise the social and economic upheaval which is proceeding in Russia for the benefit of the revolution and the working population. The highly important circumstance that the socialist movement in our country began when capitalism was only in the embryo must not be lost on us. This peculiarity of Russian social development was not invented by the Slavophiles or the pro-Slavophile revolutionaries. It is an indisputable fact which we are all aware of and which will be of great benefit to the cause of our working class on the condition that the Russian socialists do not waste their energy building castles in the air after the style of the principality and *veche* epoch.

*Chapter IV*

# CAPITALISM AND OUR TASKS

## 1. CHARACTER OF THE IMPENDING REVOLUTION

What was said at the end of the last chapter needs to be explained. The least ambiguous views are erroneously interpreted when the purpose of the interpretation is to defend somebody's "programme". We must dot our *i*'s, because if our opponents do not see the dots they may by "misunderstanding" take the *i*'s for some other letter. It is always better to draw the conclusions from one's premises oneself than to rely on the good will of others. Besides, Russian programmatic questions have been adapted so exclusively to our "exceptionalism" that it cannot be considered as a waste of time to examine them from the standpoint from which *exceptionalism* appears as nothing else but Slavophilism, either "devoted without flattery"[199] or rebellious and going over to the revolutionary camp. Whether that standpoint is correct or not, whether they who adhere to it argue rightly or wrongly, there can be no doubt, at any rate, that it would be unjust to reproach them with repeating "theories" with which everybody has long been acquainted and many have been bored.

What, then, must a "certain section of the socialists" do once they are convinced of the "historical inevitability of Russian capitalism"? What real profit for the cause of the Russian working class can be drawn from the circumstance that the beginning of the socialist movement in our country almost coincided with the fall of the economic system of the good old times? Those are questions which we are bound to answer.

We shall not forget that obligation. But for the time being it is not our turn to speak, but, as you will remember, Mr. Tikhomirov's, and he must make use of it in accordance with all laws, both divine and human. We have acquainted ourselves fairly briefly and with great profit with the general principles of his philosophical-historical and socio-political theory. In order to enlighten those who do not understand and to beat "dissenters" Mr. Tikhomirov paraded before us old woman history with her "unbelievable roads", Western Europe with its capitalism, and

finally Mother Russia with her Chinese immobility and her land commune. He made both the past and the present clear for us. But can we content ourselves with that? Will we refuse to look into the future?

What does that future hold out for Russia?

It seemed to us that first and foremost it held out the triumph of the bourgeoisie and the beginning of the political and economic emancipation of the working class. This outcome seemed to us to be the most probable in view of many, many facts. We investigated the present condition of our national economy and came to the conclusion that no reforms whatsoever would save its ancient foundations. But in so reasoning we were forgetting that "at times the history of humanity proceeds by the most unbelievable roads". Mr. Tikhomirov firmly recalls that basic proposition in his philosophical-historical theory, and, therefore, in his excursions into the realm of the future, he is not embarrassed by the incredibility of the picture he draws. Let us follow him and see whether Narodnaya Volya's revolution will not be more effective than Narodnik reforms.

The first thing that awaits us on our road is very pleasant news. A revolution is impending in Russia, "we are going towards a catastrophe". That is very pleasant, although, to tell the truth, one experiences a feeling of fear when Mr. Tikhomirov begins to explain the meaning of this already menacing picture in the highflown style of old Derzhavin. The government's attempts to retard the revolutionary movement in the country are "only hastening the dawn of the terrible and solemn moment when Russia will enter at high speed" (!) "into the period of revolutionary destruction like a rushing river", etc. Mr. Tikhomirov writes splendidly! But you cannot feed a nightingale with fables, even if they are written by grandfather Krylov. There is no arguing: "the period of revolutionary destruction" would be a happy period in the history of our country, but we should like to know all the same what the revolution can bring Russia, "what awaits us beyond that mysterious line where the waves of the historic stream seethe and foam".

"The foundation of the socialist organisation," Mr. Tikhomirov answers, contrary to the opinion of "some" who presume that it is the "reign of capitalism" that awaits us.

How can one fathom the whims of fortune! Yes, history is really an incredible old woman! It was she who led the "West" through the incredible experience of her "roads", and yet she has still not freed it from capitalist production; as for us, she has left us in peace, without urging us on for whole centuries, and now she wants to move us straight up to the highest class in her school. What virtues is that a reward for? Perhaps for having sat quiet all

that time and not having importuned her with those indiscreet questions at which the "free-tongued" West is such a master?

However, we are beginning to fall into impermissible "freedom of tongue" ourselves. Our scepticism is completely out of place if we consider that history loves occasionally to follow improbable roads just as Khlestakov sometimes loved to "read something amusing". Credo, quia absurdum! [200]

Acknowledging as entirely probable the most improbable caprices of the whimsical old woman, we nevertheless permit ourselves a question: What has history at its disposal to fulfil the promise made by Mr. Tikhomirov in its name? Through which countries does the road leading us to the "foundation of socialist organisation" lie?

How will our author answer that question? What will *Vestnik*, whose editor he is, say?

We ask our readers not to forget that the programme of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* "embraces elements which are to a certain extent not identical with one another". Each of these elements defends its own existence, each aspires to live and develop, not always without damage to its antagonist. Hence the contradictions and the impossibility of forming a clear idea of this journal's programme. One thing is obvious: Mr. Tikhomirov does not consider himself bound either by what his co-editor says, or even by what he says himself in cases when the solo gives place to a duet and the honourable P. L. Lavrov joins his voice to Mr. Tikhomirov's. For instance, according to what Mr. Lavrov says, the Narodnaya Volya party "directs *all its energies**" (our italics) "against the chief enemy who hinders any at all rational approach to the fulfilment of the task" [201] formulated by one of the members of our group** as follows: "to help our working class to develop into a conscious social force, to make up to some extent for the gaps in its historical experience and to fight with it for the emancipation of the entire working population of Russia". If the reality corresponds to what the honourable author of *Historical Letters* says, the actual task of the Narodnaya Volya party boils down to clearing the way for Russian Social-Democracy of the future. At the same time, that party's role seems to be entirely negative. It prepares no elements for the organisation of the Russian workers' party, but "directs *all its energies against the chief enemy*" who hinders not only the solution but even an approach to the solution of such a question. Which enemy does Mr. Lavrov mean? Everybody will agree that the only such enemy at present can be absolutism, which fetters all the vital forces in Russia; all

* See *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, Section II, p. 67.

** V. Z.[202] in the Foreword to the translation of Engels' *Development of Scientific Socialism*, p. IX.

the more should Narodovoltsi admit this as they have repeatedly expressed in the press the thought that in our country it is not the political structure that is based on a definite kind of economic relations but on the contrary the latter are indebted to absolutism for their existence. But if that is the case, then the Narodnaya Volya party is fighting for no more and no less than the political emancipation of its country, and the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia" is naturally put off until such times as the Russian working class forms at last into a conscious social force. In other words, the Narodnaya Volya party is first of all, and mainly, if not solely, a *constitutional* party because it now "directs all its energies" towards the destruction of absolutism. Does it not seem so? Or perhaps the Narodnaya Volya party is not noted for any "partiality for a constitution"? But then how are we to understand activity which boils down to the struggle against absolutism for the "possible implementation" of the social-democratic tasks in the future? Some Narodnaya Volya writers are not indeed noted for a great partiality for the word *constitution*; they assert that their party strives for "government by the people". But the difference between government by the people and a democratic constitution is just as great as that between galoshes and rubber shoes—it is no more than the replacement of the awkward Russian word by the current foreign one. And besides, in every civilised society, democracy, or, if you like, government by the people, presupposes a certain political education in the people, unless, of course, "government by the people" means government by a group of persons who speculate on the *will of the people*. It means that a democratic constitution is an aim which is not yet so near and can be attained only by rallying the class of producers in a democratic party of its own. But in Russia the "chief enemy" hinders even "any at all rational approach" to the fulfilment of the social and political tasks of the working class. So down with the "enemy"! Long live "partiality" for political freedom, and consequently for a constitution! The activity of the Narodnaya Volya party thus acquires a clear and definite meaning.

Such are the logical conclusions we come to when we read P. L. Lavrov's bibliographical note. Everything here is clear, although perhaps not everything attracts the sympathy of this or that reader. Unfortunately bibliographical notes are not enough to make clear the trend of a "social-political" journal, and the only reason we here refer to Mr. Lavrov's note is that it contains a direct answer to our group. The leading articles themselves and the outright statements by the editorial board of *Vestnik* only confuse the question of the actual trend of the paper. Take the "Announcement" of its publication and read the lines on the method of achieving the general aims of socialism and you will

think you are dealing with "convinced" Social-Democrats. "These aims, which are common to all socialists," say Messrs. the Editors, "can be attained *only in one way*" (note, reader! ):"the working class—in town and country—must *gradually rally and organise* into a social force united by common interests and striving for common aims; this force must, in the process of rallying, *gradually undermine* the existing economic and political system, consolidating its own organisation as a result of its very struggle and growing in might until it finally succeeds in overthrowing the existing system." The authors of the "Announcement" even add that "socialist-revolutionaries in *all countries* are at one in their awareness of the necessity of this way". One could think in view of this that "Russian socialism as expressed in the Narodnaya Volya party" is neither more nor less than Russian Social-Democracy. The "Announcement" obviously explains the tasks of the Narodnaya Volya party still more clearly than P. L. Lavrov's bibliographical note did and comes even closer than the latter to the views of "thinking socialists" in all civilised countries. We know, however, that Russians often have two measures, two criterions, to appraise social phenomena—one for the "West" and another for domestic use. Never refusing to sympathise with the most progressive ideals of "Europe", the Russian often contrives to add to his profession of human faith a "but" so full of meaning that the ideals that are so dear to him are transformed into something quite unrecognisable. Needless to say, the "Announcement" which now claims our attention does not dispense with such a "but", and nothing definite can be said about *Vestnik*'s programme until it completes its difficult passage from West to East. Let us look at the "Announcement" from this dangerous side, and rather more attentively too, for its authors are Russians and probably nothing that is Russian is alien to them.

"But the programme of Russian socialism," we read on the same page V of the "Announcement", "cannot limit itself to these general aspirations of socialism at *present* and in the *given* conditions. History has set before every social group in our time these same tasks in a different form, according to the economic, juridical and cultural conditions surrounding it. The Narodnaya Volya party is convinced that these tasks are now inevitably set before the subjects of the Russian Empire in the form of the *necessity of changing the political structure of Russia* to make possible the further healthy development of every progressive party, *including*" (our italics) "the socialist party".... That is why "side by side with socialist aims, which form the essence of the Russian socialist party's programme, this programme includes an immediate task—to prepare for and hasten a change in Russia's political structure".

It must be admitted that this first "but" accompanying the setting forth of the "general socialist aims of the Russian socialist party" is enough to make them particularly vague and indefinite. A real equation with many unknowns! The reader is left completely in the dark as to what the editors understand by "a change in Russia's political structure". Is it the "government by the people" mentioned by Messrs. Tikhomirov and K.T.[203] or the overthrow of the "chief enemy", etc., i.e., simply the fall of absolutism? And why does this "immediate task" stand "*side by side* with the general socialist aims" and not follow from them by way of logical consequence? We can only guess at all this. Many of our guesses will be probable, but not one will be indisputable. And in fact, the editors say that the "change" that is desirable to them must make "possible the further healthy development of every progressive party, including the socialist party". Which, then, are the *other* "progressive parties"? Apparently the bourgeois ones. But the "healthy development" of the bourgeois parties in the field of politics is unthinkable without a corresponding "further healthy development" in the economic field. Does that mean that bourgeois development will be progressive for Russia? That is what apparently follows from the editors' works. As for us, we are prepared, with some, very substantial, it is true, reservations, to agree with that opinion. However, it is not a question of us but of one of the authors of the "Announcement", Mr. Tikhomirov, who, as we know, recommends that his readers should "not idolise private business capital". From what he says about what exactly "such capital will be able to do for Russia" it follows that the "further healthy development" of the bourgeois parties will perhaps be a net loss for Russia. And besides, the "Announcement" hastens to state that the socialist party (like all the other parties, we will note in passing) considers itself to be the "representative of pure and the only possible progress". Does that mean that there are no other progressive parties? But then why speak of their "further healthy development"?

If, in the opinion of the Russian socialist party, the "change in Russia's political structure" must take place in the interests of the progressive parties, and if, at the same time, there are no other progressive parties but the socialist party, the "change" referred to will take place exclusively in the interests of the latter. In other works, the impending revolution must lead at least to the victory of the "government by the people" mentioned above, i.e., to the political domination of the "working class in town and country". But "socialist-revolutionaries in all countries are at one in their awareness" of the truth that the working class can only "gradually undermine the existing economic and *political* system", and, therefore, also "gradually" bring nearer the time of its domi-

nation. In exactly the same way, "socialist-revolutionaries in all countries" agree, as the editors say,that the socialist revolution can be attained "only in one way"—by gradually rallying and organising the working class into a "social force", etc. Perhaps *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* sees such organisation as the chief task of the Russian socialists? But we already know that in present-day Russia, according to Mr. Lavrov, there is a certain "chief enemy" who hinders "any at all rational approach to the fulfilment of such a task". And as long as this task is not fulfilled, the socialist revolution is impossible—and so is government by the people. So this is not what the editors mean when they speak of a "change in Russia's political structure"? But what do they mean, then, by this mysterious change? Not that same constitution "partiality" for which is "somewhat incomprehensible" to Mr. Tikhomirov? For which progressive parties is the Narodnaya Volya party making "possible the further healthy development"? Not the party of "private business capital"?

How clear everything was in the "West", and how dark everything has become in the East! And all this darkening is due to a single "but" accompanying the setting forth of the "general aims of socialism". What a mysterious power does that small work have?

The matter is quite simple.

It is precisely from the point we are interested in that the process begins thanks to which the component elements of *Vestnik*'s programme prove to be "to a certain" (even rather significant) "extent not identical with one another". The East enters into a struggle with the West as soon as the setting forth of the "general aims of socialism" and the *only* way leading to their fulfilment is ended. And this struggle, smouldering and hidden at the beginning, rages in full fury in the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" In it "doubts are expressed" over the West. On the occasion of its history Mr. Tikhomirov goes into long and rather "hazardous" arguments on the "hazardous" and "unbelievable roads" of history in general, and finally *the only* way to the victory of socialism which the "Announcement" points out is transformed into a stereotyped edition of the late *Nabat*'s programme merely supplemented with a few illustrations of Mr. Tikhomirov's exceptionalism. Everything is changed beyond recognition, everything is transformed into its opposite on this side of the small "but" which separates the western territory of the editorial world outlook from the eastern or, to be more exact, the views in communal ownership by Messrs. the Editors from those which are Mr. Tikhomirov's private property. And all this transsubstantiation is effected by means of a few more "buts" picked out of articles by P. N. Tkachov. Needless to say, an argument which is not convincing on the lips of *Nabat*'s editor will not

become any more convincing on the pages of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli.* But it is always pleasant to meet old acquaintances, and if only for that reason we could not resist the temptation to draw the reader's attention to Mr. Tikhomirov's arguments.

Like a true follower of Blanqui, or rather of Tkachov, when Mr. Tikhomirov sets out to discuss some revolutionary question he first of all tries to substitute his own will for historical development, to replace the initiative of the *class* by that of a *committee* and to change the cause of the whole working population of the country into the cause of a secret organisation. It is not easy to perform such tricks before the eyes of people at all acquainted with the propaganda of modern socialism or even only half convinced that "the emancipation of the workers must be conquered by the workers themselves". That is why our author tries to prove that the cause of the Executive Committee will be the cause of the whole people, not only as *interests* go but also as far as *will* and *consciousness* are concerned. Forced to admit that *historical development* has so far but little promoted the elaboration of socialist consciousness and *revolutionary* (not merely *rebellious*) tendencies in the Russian people, he endeavours with all the more zeal to convince us of the stability and unshakability of the *prehistoric forms* of the Russian way of life and outlook.

The economic revolution which the West is approaching after a long and difficult movement proves to be very close to us because of our centuries of stagnation. But as a certain knowledge of history can arouse doubts about that closeness, the reader is reminded that the ways of history "have sometimes been too crooked and the most hazardous that could be imagined". The peculiarity of our Bakuninists' favourite scheme of Russian social development thus becomes a manner of guarantee for its probability. And in a similar way, the necessity of giving a *class character* to the struggle for the economic emancipation of the workers is also avoided.

Here too, all difficulties are successfully overcome by contrasting Russia to the West. In the West, there are classes which are sharply divided economically, and powerful and united politically. There the state itself is the result of the class struggle and its weapon in the hands of the victors. That is why the only way in which it is possible to win state power there is to oppose one class to another and to vanquish the victors. In our country it is different. Here the attitude of society to the state is the direct opposite of what it is in Western Europe. Here it is not the class struggle that gives rise to the given state structure, but, on the contrary, that structure itself brings into existence the different classes with their struggle and antagonism. If the state decided to

change its policy, the upper classes, deprived of its support, would be condemned to perish, and the popular foundations of primitive collectivism would be given the possibility of "further healthy development". But the government of the Romanovs is neither willing nor able to renounce its landlord-bourgeois traditions, whereas we are both willing and able to do so, being inspired by the ideals of economic equality and "government by the people". So down with the Romanovs and long live our *Committee*! is the invariable line of argument of the Russian Jacobins, whether in the original, i.e., in the "Letter to Frederick Engels", or in the "copy", i.e., in the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?"

We have already said that the basic premises of Tkachov's programme are borrowed from the same source that the Russian anarchists derived their political wisdom from. Bakuninist theories lay at the basis of both groups' teachings. But we know that Bakunin's influence did not end there. He had pupils in the "West" too, i.e., in the very countries which he so readily contrasted with Russia. And it is remarkable that the Western followers of the author of *Statehood and Anarchy* attribute to the state the same overwhelming role in the history of the relations of their "West European" classes as Messrs. Tkachov and Tikhomirov ascribe to it in Russia alone, "as distinct", so to speak, from other countries. "Suppress government dictatorship", says Arthur Arnoult to the French workers, "and there will be facing one another only men of the same kind, only economic forces whose balance would be immediately established by a simple law of statics.... It is, therefore, the state, and the state alone, that is the cause of your weakness and your misery, just as it is the cause of the strength and the impertinent presumption of the others."* In this case the Western anarchists reason with greater courage and logic than the Russian Bakuninists and Tkachovists. In the history of every country without exception they reduce to nil the significance of the economic factor which their Russian "partners" hold to be condemned to inactivity only in Russia. The distinctive feature of Russian exceptionalism is thus turned into a cosmopolitan spectre of anarchist ignorance. The objective condition for the development of one country proves to be a subjective defect, a logical blunder of "a certain section of the socialists" in all civilised peoples.

Losing, as a result of this, a considerable portion of their exceptionalism, the arguments of the Russian Jacobins are not, however, lacking in a certain instructiveness. Not saying anything new about *how we must* consider our reality, they show perfectly

* *L'État et la révolution*, p. 65.

well by their own example *how we must not* consider it, *how we must not* interpret its characteristic aspects.

In the Russian Jacobins' usual way Mr. Tikhomirov tries to prove to his readers that, as Tkachov once put it, "the time we are passing through is particularly favourable for the social revolution". He analyses the present-day balance of all the social forces under conditions prevailing in Russia and comes to the conclusion that nothing can come of the impending revolution but "the foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia". He did not need to go far for proofs. The "Letter to Frederick Engels" is a concentrate of Russian Jacobin arguments which has preserved for a whole decade all the charm of freshness and novelty for many, many readers. This concentrate has only to be dissolved in hot water of eloquence and it gives forth all the "expectations from the revolution" typical of Mr. Tikhomirov. Let us take a closer look at this simplified way of preparing a "new" programme. We shall start with the political "factor".

What do we find in the Tkachov preserves on this point?

The reader will naturally remember the extensive excerpts made above from the "Open Letter to Frederick Engels". He will not have forgotten Tkachov's conviction that although "we have no urban proletariat, but, on the other hand, we have no bourgeoisie at all. Between the suffering people and the state which oppresses them we have no intermediate estate." And it is this absence of a bourgeoisie that Mr. Tikhomirov takes as the foundation of all his political arguments.

According to him our bourgeoisie is negligible economically and powerless politically. As for the people, they have "certain points on which they cannot be divided into groups but, on the contrary, always appear unanimous" (p. 251). The first of these points turns out to be their "idea of the supreme power". The fact is that the "supreme power in the view of the people is the representative of the whole people, certainly not of classes. Only the unshatterable firmness of this conviction provided support for the power of the tsars themselves." And it is this conviction that our supreme power represents the whole people that strengthens Mr. Tikhomirov's faith in the not distant triumph of government by the people. The transition to the latter from the autocracy of the tsars "is nothing original [? ]. The French people went in exactly the same way without any difficulty [? ! ] from the idea of the autocracy of a king who could say 'l'état c'est moi' to the idea of the peuple souverain. The domination of the self-governing people could not be set up in fact there because of the power of the bourgeoisie"; but we have no bourgeoisie and therefore nothing prevents the triumph of government by the people in our country "provided the autocracy does not maintain itself long

enough to give the bourgeoisie time to acquire the strength necessary to organise our entire production on capitalist principles". But "in its present chaotic condition Russia can hardly wait until the bourgeoisie becomes so constituted that it can put any order, even bourgeois, in that chaos".... Therefore, "if we live to see the destruction of the present system before this, the bourgeoisie has none of the requisites for seizing political power".

Hence we see that the "time we are passing through" is indeed very favourable for the social revolution; on the one hand, "Russia can hardly wait", and, on the other, there is absolutely nobody but the people, and perhaps the revolutionary party, who can seize power. P. N. Tkachov was perfectly right when he said that the social revolution would be "now, or in a very remote future, perhaps never". But in that case P. L. Lavrov was wrong when he qualified this assurance as speculation on the ignorance of Russian readers.

We also see that on the question of the "political factor" it did not cost Mr. Tikhomirov much trouble to warm up Tkachov's arguments. He only had to complete P. N. Tkachov's general arguments on the power of the Western and the powerlessness of the Russian bourgeoisie with a particular example. This example was provided for him by the great revolution thanks to which, in all probability, the French people would have become self-governing had they not been prevented by the power of the bourgeoisie.

"Happy are those who have an *absolute principle*," said N. G. Chernyshevsky. "They need neither to observe facts nor to think, they have a ready-made medicine for every disease, and the same medicine for every one, like the famous doctor who said to every patient: purgare et clystirizare.... Many people have such talisman For the 'man of importance' to whom Akaky Akakiyevich[204] applied about the theft of his overcoat, the talisman was a 'good scolding'. For the economists of the backward school that talisman is the charming motto: '*non-intervention of the state*'." Finally, we shall add on our part, for the "Russian socialists" of a no less backward school the talisman is the "bourgeoisie". References to the weakness or complete absence of the bourgeoisie give the answer to all the most difficult questions of the past, present and future. Mr. Tikhomirov is not the last among the happy possessors of this philosophic stone. Why was not "government by the people" set up in France? Because it was prevented by the "power of the bourgeoisie". Why will it be set up in our country when the people "become disappointed in the autocracy of the tsars"? Because our bourgeoisie is weak. Why is it that in the West the only way of putting into effect the "aims common to all socialists" is the slow and gradual road of organising the working class in town and country into a "conscious social force",

whereas in our country "it is sometimes said" that the "seizure of power by the revolutionaries" may provide the "starting-point of the revolution", which, in turn, will be the starting-point of the "socialist organisation of Russia"? Once again because in our country the bourgeoisie is very weak and in the West it is very strong. Purgare et clystirizare—how the theory of medicine is simplified, how easy practice is made by this talisman! Unfortunately social questions are a little more complicated than those of medicine, and, therefore, publicists who resemble Molière's physician should have provided themselves with more ingenious talismans. You can bet that the key which the "Russian socialists" have will not open for them the door of many historical questions. Why did not the Spanish people, when they became disappointed in the "autocracy of the emperors" pass "without difficulty" to the idea of self-government of the people? It is true that Spain is one of the most "Western" countries in Europe; but even Mr. Tikhomirov would not dare to attribute great strength to the Spanish bourgeoisie, particularly at the beginning of the present century. And what is more, even the "principles of communal land tenure" were, and still are, far more widespread in Spain than in any other heretical land, as is proved by the recent investigations of Mr. Luchitsky.[205] Try as you like, but you will not open this door with Mr. Tikhomirov's key!

We take the liberty of coming to the help of the "Russian socialists" in these difficult circumstances. If two heads are better than one, we are just as much entitled to say that two talismans are also better than one, even if it is a good one. Why, then, not add to the "bourgeoisie" another no less magic word, for instance catholicism, protestantism or *non*-orthodox confession generally. It is true this talisman is not new and has been rather worn out by the conservative Slavophiles, all the same, it is hardly less universal than the "bourgeoisie". For it is still very doubtful, whether it is true that there is no bourgeoisie in our country, and if there is, whether it is "weaker" than the bourgeoisie in all the Western countries and in all the times of "disappointment of the people in the autocracy of the tsars"; but orthodoxy is beyond doubt a "truly and strongly Russian" feature, quite alien to the European West. It should be easy to decide by means of orthodoxy what hindered the "setting up in fact of the domination of the self-governing people" in Spain in the twenties, although there was no strong bourgeoisie there. It would be sufficient to point to catholicism. Really, you should try, gentlemen!

However, far be it from us to think of belittling the importance of Mr. Tikhomirov's talisman; not only do we know its worth, we even want to try and apply it ourselves. Why do "thinking" socialists in the West know what they are talking about and not

carry Mr. Tikhomirov's confusion into the questions they analyse? Is it not because the bourgeoisie in the West is stronger than ours? It seems very much so! Where the bourgeoisie is strong the economic development of the country is great and all social relations are clear and well defined. And where social relations are clear there is no room for fantastic solutions of political questions; that is why in the "West" only people who are hopeless from the intellectual point of view are characterised by the "anarchy of thinking" which is often a feature even of the "convinced and thinking socialists" in Russia. So if Mr. Tikhomirov writes bad publicistic articles it is not he but the weakness of our bourgeoisie that is to blame. The reader will see that our author's favourite little key occasionally opens very complicated little caskets.

Although Mr. Tikhomirov's arguments have no "originality" about them, they are amazing none the less for their "hazardous" character. Where did he get the conclusion that supreme power, in the idea of the people, is "*representation*"? So far we have had the impression that the present "idea of the people of the supreme power" is explained by the fact that the people have no idea at all about representation. The subjects of the Shah of Persia, the Khedive of Egypt or the Emperor of China have absurd prejudices about supreme power in their countries similar to those of the Russian peasants. Does it follow from this that the Persians, Egyptians and Chinese will pass with the same ease to the "idea of the peuple souverain"? If so, the farther eastward we go the closer we get to the triumph of government by the people. Further, why does Mr. Tikhomirov think that "having become disappointed in the autocracy of the tsars" our people cannot be anything but supporters of their own autocracy? Did an erroneous conception of the substance of absolutism ever guarantee any individual or whole people against erroneous conceptions of the substance of a limited monarchy or a bourgeois republic? "The millions of the people," Mr. Tikhomirov says, "will rise like one man against the class state if only that character becomes at all noticeable." But the fact of the matter is precisely that the people's awareness of the shortcomings of the present is not enough to supply the correct conception of the future. Was not the absolute monarchy a "class state" in our country just as everywhere else? Even Mr. Tikhomirov admits in our history "the existence of the nobility *as the real ruling estate*" at least since the Ukase on Freedom.[206] And did not the people give precisely the influence and even a direct conspiracy of the nobles and officials as an explanation of all our legislation's decrees which were unfavourable to the people and all the measures of tyranny and oppression taken by the administration? That being the case, the class character of our monarchy was very noticeable. We think that the protest against the

class state is conspicuous in the whole of our history. It is true that "millions rose" against it, although, unfortunately, far from "like one man" as Mr. Tikhomirov prophesies in regard to the future. But what came of those protests? Did they abolish the "class state" or lead the people to the conviction that the existing "supreme power" did not correspond to their political ideals? If not, what guarantee have we against the continuation of such a sad history under constitutional monarchy too? The people's disappointment in the "autocracy of the tsars"? But what will that save the people from? What will it prevent? For the weak side of the people's political outlook consists, Mr. Tikhomirov says, in the conclusions, not the premises. If we are to believe our author, the Russian people know quite well what the supreme power *should be*; they demand that it be "representative of the whole people" and get confused only in cases when they have to determine whether a given form of state conforms to their ideals. After noticing one error they can fall into another no less unfortunate or gross. They may not know under what conditions their own supreme rights will cease to be vain and hypocritical works, a mask hiding the political domination of the upper classes. Does Mr. Tikhomirov admit that the Russian people *can* really not know those conditions? For our part, we shall have no hesitation in answering that question in the affirmative: not only is it possible, it is even probable that they do not know. And if they do not know, they will make mistakes; and if they make mistakes—and inasmuch as they make mistakes—the ideals Mr. Tikhomirov attributes to them will not be put into effect, i.e., the people will not become self-governing. Mr. Tikhomirov thinks that such political failures by the people are possible only in the "West", but are unthinkable in his beloved East, in countries which the care of history has saved from the ulcer of capitalism. It would be reasonable and consoling if the people's political notions were not so closely connected with their economic development. Unfortunately, there is not the slightest doubt about that connection and the people are disappointed in the "autocracy of the tsars" only when the economic relations lose their primitive character and become more or less bourgeois; but simultaneously with this the bourgeoisie begins to gain strength, i.e., the immediate transition to self-government of the people becomes impossible. It is true that Mr. Tikhomirov consoles us with considerations about Russia's exceptional development. But firstly, no historical peculiarities of our country will free it from the action of universal social laws, and secondly, we already know that the economic reality in present-day Russia by no means corroborates the political paradoxes of the editor of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*. The people's disappointment in the auto-

cracy of the tsars is only beginning to appear *probable,* while the growing disintegration of the village commune and the penetration of bourgeois principles into the people's life is already an indubitable and indisputable fact. What if such a parallel is maintained in the future? By the time the people break completely with tsarism the bourgeoisie may have become almighty. Where shall we then get "government by the people" from?

We would draw Mr. Tikhomirov's attention to the fact that we oppose self-government of the people to the supremacy of the bourgeoisie only because he himself found it convenient to do so. In substance, however, we think that such opposition can have a meaning only in exceptional cases. Political self-government of the people does not in any way guarantee them against economic enslavement and does not preclude the possibility of capitalism developing in the country. The canton of Zurich is one of the most democratic and at the same time one of the most bourgeois in Switzerland. A democratic constitution becomes an instrument for the social emancipation of the people only when the natural course of the development of economic relationships makes it impossible for the upper classes to continue to dominate. Thus, in the advanced countries production is becoming more and more collectivised, whereas the private appropriation of its products by employers gives rise to a whole series of morbid convulsions in the entire social and economic organism. The people are beginning to understand the cause of these convulsions and therefore will in all probability sooner or later make use of political power for their economic emancipation. But let us imagine another phase in social development; let us picture to ourselves a country in which large-scale industry is as yet only aspiring to supremacy while commodity production has already become the basis of the economy; in other words, let us transport ourselves into a petty-bourgeois country. What economic tasks will face the "self-governing people in that case"? Primarily, and exclusively, the task of guaranteeing the interests of the small individual producers, since that is the class which forms the majority of the people. But following that path you cannot avoid either capitalism or the domination of the big bourgeoisie, for the objective logic of commodity production itself will take care to transform the small individual producers into wage-labourers on the one side and bourgeois employers on the other. When that transformation has taken place, the working class will of course use all political means in a deadly fight against the bourgeoisie. But then the mutual relations of the classes in society will become sharply defined, the working class will take the place of "the people" and self-government of the people will change into the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Hence it follows that the degree to which a particular people is prepared for true and genuine democracy is determined by the degree of its economic development. Sharply defined economic relations determine no less sharply defined political groupings, the antagonism between labour and capital gives rise to the struggle between the workers' and the bourgeois parties. And the development of the productive forces brings this struggle closer to its end and guarantees the victory of the proletariat. So it has been and still is in all the "Western" countries.

But Messrs. the Slavophile revolutionaries are not pleased that it should be exactly so with Russia. Just as the Russian peasant does not like written laws and strives to do everything as he wishes, "according to his taste", so the Russian intellectual is afraid of historical laws and appeals to exceptionalism, to the "subjective method in sociology" and the like, i.e., in substance to the same "taste". Considered from the standpoint of "taste" history receives a very peculiar colouring. It appears as nothing but a series of intrigues of the wicked against the good, the advent of the "kingdom of God" upon earth being hindered only by the strength of the wicked and the weakness of the good. Needless to say, as a result of their corruption the wicked cannot establish a firm and lasting alliance among themselves. They fight not only against the good, but among themselves too, forming groups and factions and wrenching the "helm of government" from one another. This internecine war in the camp of the wicked is, of course, all to the profit of the good, for whom the "time" when one group of the wicked is no longer strong enough to retain power, while the others are not yet strong enough to seize it, is especially favourable. Then happiness becomes possible and close, and only slight efforts on the part of the good are needed to establish at least "government by the people". Kind and sensitive in substance, "Russian socialism as expressed" in the articles of P. N. Tkachov and Mr. Tikhomirov likes to flatter itself with the hope that at the "time we are passing through" Russia is precisely in this period of interregnum of the wicked and the vicious, of the exhaustion of absolutism and the powerlessness of the bourgeoisie.

We went to no small pains in the foregoing pages to destroy this naïvely optimistic aspect of the Russian revolutionary outlook. But as Mr. Tikhomirov will all the same be inclined to agree with his teacher P. N. Tkachov more than with us, his political opponents, we oppose to the authority of the editor of *Nabat* that of a colleague of our author on the editorial board of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*. Mr. Lavrov will probably not refuse to stand by the thoughts expressed in the leading article of *Vperyod* No. 27. The author of this splendid article maintains that "in Russia the

capitalist system is growing luxuriantly and rapidly with all its consequences"; that "this is not denied by the champions of the present system any more than by its opponents", and finally that the socialists see in these phenomena but a "fatal process for which there is only one cure: *the development of the capitalist system itself must give rise to* and prepare for the upheaval that will sweep that system away". Mr. Lavrov is completely justified in asking Mr. Tikhomirov where Russian capitalism and the Russian bourgeoisie, which certainly existed during the time of the London *Fortnightly Review,* have disappeared. And if he manages to convince his colleague that capitalism is not a needle and that it could not have got lost in the bustle of Russian life, Mr. Tikhomirov himself will see from which side danger threatens Russian "government by the people", which was supposed to succeed directly tsarist autocracy. Where "the capitalist system develops luxuriantly and rapidly with all its consequences" the bourgeoisie can always be strong enough to prevent—as was the case in France, according to Mr. Tikhomirov—the actual establishment of the "domination of the self-governing people".

If the author of the article we quoted from No. 27 of *Vperyod* was right when he spoke of the rapid development of capitalism in Russia, Mr. Tikhomirov is wrong when he supposes that precisely the present-day economic relations are highly favourable for laying the "foundation of the socialist organisation in our country". In this case, too, his arguments are nothing but slight variations on themes of Tkachov and Bakunin.

P. N. Tkachov, we know, wrote to Engels: "Our people are ignorant—that is a fact.... But on the other hand, the immense majority of them are imbued with the principles of communal land tenure; they are, if we may put it that way, communist by instinct, by tradition! "

Faithfully echoing Tkachov, Mr. Tikhomirov assures us that "there are enough factors in the people's concepts and usages for the successful organisation of their forces. The peasant is capable of arranging his self-government, he is capable of taking communal possession of the land and disposing of it in a social manner."* From the fact that communal land tenure exists in Russia the editor of *Nabat* concludes that despite their ignorance our people are far nearer to socialism than the peoples of the West. The editor of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* could not bring himself to follow his teacher to such extreme conclusions, but he naturally did not fail to remind his readers that "our peasants are just as clearly conscious of the people's right to the land and of the social character of this instrument of labour as the Euro-

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, p. 255.

pean proletarian is conscious of his right to the factory of the proprietor". With his poor knowledge of the historical philosophy of modern socialism Mr. Tikhomirov cannot for the life of him understand the simple truth that the "European proletarian's consciousness of his right to the factory of the proprietor" is not the only important thing for the socialist revolution. There was a time when the Roman proletarians also had a fairly clear consciousness of "their right" to the latifundia of the rich, the origin of which was the seizure of state lands and the expropriation of the small landowners; but even had they been able to put their right into effect, it would by no means have resulted in socialism. The socialist revolution is prepared and made easier not by this or that mode of *ownership,* but by the development of the productive forces and the *organisation of production.* It is precisely in giving this organisation social character that the historical preparatory significance of capitalism consists, a significance which Mr. Tikhomirov reduces, in the words of Mr. V. V., to the "mechanical union of the workers". Neither P. N. Tkachov, nor Mr. V. V. nor Mr. Tikhomirov, and finally none of the Narodniks or Bakuninists have put themselves out to prove to us that the Russian people just as "clearly understands" the necessity for *the social organisation of production* as the "European proletarian". And yet that is the whole point. Mr. Tikhomirov should remember once and for all that it is not the organisation of production that is determined by juridical standards but juridical standards by the organisation of production. This is vouched for by the whole social history of all peoples, not excluding the least civilised and most exceptionalist. If that is so, and if there is no room for capitalism in Russia, then, when we compare Russia with the West, we must proceed not from the effect, but from the cause, not from the dominant type of land *tenure,* but from the dominant character of land *cultivation,* its organisation and the impending changes in it, for it is on these changes that the fate of the forms of land tenure themselves depends. Let Mr. Tikhomirov try and prove to us that the same tendency now predominates in our agriculture as in the modern mechanised industry of the capitalist countries, i.e., the tendency to planned organisation within the limits of the state at least. If he succeeds in doing so, the economic aspect of what he expects from the revolution will acquire quite considerable importance. In the opposite event all his economic and political considerations and contrasts boil down to the worn-out method of solving all our social problems, so to speak, by excluding the bourgeoisie; as for the foundation of the "socialist organisation of Russia", it loses all connection with the "not very distant time" of the "catastrophe" awaiting us and is again postponed to a more or less hazy future.

Have we said enough? If not we shall again resort to the assistance of our dear P. L. Lavrov. "For the overwhelming majority of the Russian people," says that excellent article in No. 27 of *Vperyod,* "the inherited feeling of solidarity of the village commune or the artel in its different forms is confined to the narrowest limits, beyond which begins the field of rivalry and struggle for existence between starving groups hemmed in on all sides. In this majority the ancient tradition that the land belongs to him who cultivates it, the ancient hatred for immediate exploiters of the people's labour ... could not grow into awareness of the necessity for economic communism; this majority cannot be clear as to the enormous difference there would be in future society if in a successful popular outbreak the economic upheaval were limited to a *redistribution* of property" (he should have said of the means of production), "and not the unconditional recognition of its social character." The author of these words correctly supposes that "a redistribution of property, instead of its social character, would inevitably lead to the elaboration of a new division of the classes, to a new system of exploitation, and consequently to the restoration of bourgeois society in a new form". Indeed, "the right of all the people to the land" is by no means a condition for the social character of the movable means of production, and, therefore, admits of inequality in their distribution and of the exploitation of the poor by the rich. Precisely the disintegrating influence of movable private property led to the decay of the primitive forms of collectivism.

What will the former editor of *Vperyod* say to that? Will he continue to admit the correctness of the argument just advanced, or has he "accomplished" such a "considerable evolution in his socio-political convictions" that he now shares the views of P. N. Tkachov and Mr. Tikhomirov, which are incompatible with that argument?

A straightforward and categorical answer to this question would be of very considerable importance. Indeed, if the people's awareness of their "right to the land" cannot be a sufficiently firm basis on which to lay the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia", all Mr. Tikhomirov's practical conclusions lose their entire meaning and significance. If the people are not clearly aware of the most essential conditions for their economic emancipation, that emancipation itself is unthinkable and consequently the seizure of power by the revolutionaries cannot "provide the starting-point" for the anti-bourgeois revolution which Mr. Tikhomirov expects. Which means that we must speak not of "what we can *expect* from the revolution" but of what we must *do* for it, how we must make the people clearly understand the tasks of the revolution; how we must prevent the victory of the

bourgeoisie or turn it to the advantage of the people, how we must make sure that the "development of the capitalist system itself will give rise to and prepare for the upheaval that will sweep away that system".

"A certain section of the socialists" advised our "revolutionary youth" to engage in propaganda among the industrial workers. Mr. Tikhomirov availed himself of all the mistakes and all the ignorance of our police statisticians to prove that this advice was not practicable. In his opinion the numbers of the working class in our industrial centres are too small for any social-revolutionary hopes to be founded on that section of our working population. From what he says about this it could be concluded that our author holds the old Narodnik view which ignores the town and exalts the country. But such a guess would be only partly correct. Mr. Tikhomirov does indeed exalt the country but any attentive reader will immediately understand that the country cannot "be better off for such praise". Indeed, there are various kinds of idealisation and they entail different practical conclusions. The Narodniks of the recent past idealised the people partly in order to incite themselves and all our intelligentsia to revolutionary work among them. Intensify this idealisation one degree more and you will come to the conviction that thanks to their communal tendencies our people need not be influenced by the socialist intelligentsia. In that case the role of the latter becomes purely destructive. It is reduced to the removal of the exterior obstacles which hinder the realisation of the people's ideals. That is the kind of idealisation of the people we find in Mr. Tikhomirov's article. "At a revolutionary moment our people will not be split when the basic principle of state power is in question," our author decides. "In just the same way they will prove to be completely united economically on the land question.... In order to gather the masses as a great force around these two points *no special propaganda is needed:* all that is needed is that the people know what the matter is about." Reduced to its extreme expression, the idealisation of the people deprives the Narodniks' work of all meaning and import. But, on the other hand, the significance of the conspiracy becomes all the greater. The social revolution, the conspirator argues, is delayed because of the influence of the present-day government. Do away with its influence and the necessary result of your destructive work must be "the foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia". In the political struggle "the power belongs to him who is able at any moment to deploy the greatest quantity of human forces in defence of his own cause". There is no need to inquire which class those forces proceed from. They "can be obtained at one's disposal by various means". One can even "buy one's fighters or drive them out to

defend one by means of economic pressure".* All the more can they be recruited from any classes of society. Success depends only upon skill in directing the forces "obtained" in accordance with the aims of the conspirators. That is why Mr. Tikhomirov "sometimes speaks" of the seizure of power by the revolutionaries as the "starting-point of the revolution". This conclusion follows logically from all of our author's premises.

The whole trouble is that Mr. Tikhomirov's premises cannot stand criticism, that not all is well with the people even as far as the "two main points" are concerned, and that there are also other points ignorance of which can bring the revolutionaries nothing but grave disappointment. And with the premises, the conclusions so dear to Mr. Tikhomirov but so unfavourable for the success of the socialist movement in Russia, naturally fall away. The sentimental haze of false and affected idealisation of the people disappears and reality looms before us with its urgent demands. We see that there is no hope of a successful outcome of the Russian revolutionary movement without "special propaganda" among the people. We come to the conclusion that our revolutionaries cannot be content with Tkachov's programme and that they would do well to remember *Vperyod*'s programme. But we have still not come to any decision as to the extent to which their break with the traditions of our Blanquism is desirable. In this very difficult case it would be interesting to know for certain the authoritative opinion of Mr. Lavrov.

## 2. "SEIZURE OF POWER"

Incidentally, we can partly guess what his opinion will be. The honourable editor probably does not approve of the circumstance that Mr. Tikhomirov "sometimes speaks of the seizure of power by the revolutionaries as the starting-point of the revolution". P. N. Tkachov was also accustomed to "speak sometimes" of such a seizure of power and thus courted severe censure from Mr. Lavrov. The editor of *Vperyod* even thought it necessary to warn our revolutionary youth against an alliance with *false friends*. "There are revolutionary groups," he wrote, "who say that they wish the good of the people, that they intend to achieve that good by a revolution, but not a popular one." For such groups all the philosophy of the revolution is naturally limited to seizing power. "Others wish the dictatorship to be only temporary, merely in order to disband the army, to *remove* the uppermost section of their opponents and disappear from the

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, "What Can We Expect from the Revolution? ", p. 250.

stage, leaving the people to decide their own future. Others again dream of handing over this dictatorship, when they have accomplished their business, to a *Zemsky Sobor* consisting of representatives of the people or to local assemblies, and so on and so forth. What is common to all revolutionaries of this kind is a revolution carried out by a minority, with a more or less lasting dictatorship of that minority." In his capacity as editor Mr. Lavrov stated that his journal "would never consider it possible to allow the theory of the revolutionary dictatorship of a minority—the so-called Jacobin dictatorship—being voiced in it *without objecting*". The theory mentioned was ostracised for the following fairly valid reasons.

"History has shown, and psychology convinces us, that any unlimited power, any dictatorship, spoils even the best people and that even men of genius who wished to confer blessings on the people by means of decrees could not do so. Every dictatorship must surround itself with coercive force, blindly obedient tools; every dictatorship has had to suppress by force not only reactionaries, but also people who simply did not agree with its methods; every dictatorship seized by force has had to spend more time, efforts and energy fighting its rivals for power than carrying out its programme by means of that power. *But dreams of the termination of a dictatorship seized violently by any party" (i.e., a dictatorship serving only as "the starting-point of the revolution", you mean, do you not, dear Editor? ) "can be entertained only before the seizure*; in the parties' struggle for power, in the agitation of overt and covert intrigues, every minute brings new necessity for maintaining power and reveals new impossibility of abandoning it. The dictatorship can be wrenched from the hands of the dictators only by a new revolution...." "Does our revolutionary youth indeed agree to be the base of the throne of a few dictators who, even *with most selfless intentions, can be only new sources of social calamities,* and who, most probably, will not even be selfless fanatics, but men of passionate ambition thirsting for power for power's sake, craving for power for themselves? ..."

"If, indeed, a section of our youth favour a dictatorship, the seizure of power by a minority," the honourable editor continues, "*Vperyod* will never be the organ of *that* section ... let the Russian Jacobins fight the governement, we will not hinder them, but the party of the popular social revolution will always become their enemy, directly one of them reaches out for power, which belongs to the people and nobody else."*

P. L. Lavrov's prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. The journal *Vperyod* "was never" the organ of the Russian Jacobins. It is true

* *Russian Social-Revolutionary Youth,* by the editor of *Vperyod,* London, 1874, pp. 40-43.

that P. L. Lavrov himself became editor of the organ of "that section of youth". But that is a different matter with which we are not concerned here.

Our interest at present is in the following considerations. The author of *Historical Letters* has nowhere stated that he has changed his views on the seizure of power; hence we can say with assurance that one of the editors of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* has an extremely negative attitude to such a seizure. We are glad of that assurance, it is pleasant to agree in opinion with a well-known and respected writer and we can say that we completely share his opinion on the seizure of power, although we arrived at our conviction by a somewhat different path. We have always tried to direct our main attention not to the subjective, but the objective side of the matter, not to the thoughts and feelings of individual personalities—even if they had the title of dictator—but to the social conditions which they have to take account of, to the inner meaning of the social problems which they undertake to solve. We speak against the seizure of power not because "any dictatorship spoils even the best people", for that question has hardly been finally settled by "history and psychology". But we think that if "the emancipation of the workers must be conquered by the workers themselves", there is nothing any dictatorship can do when the working class "in town and country" has not been prepared for the socialist revolution. And that preparation generally proceeds parallel to the development of the productive forces and of the organisation of production corresponding to them. That is why we posed the question to what extent contemporary economic relations in Russia justify the programme of those who aim at seizing power and who promise to work, by means of that power, a whole series of social and political miracles. Have these people any greater physical possibility to fulfil their promises than a tomtit has to set the sea on fire? [207] The answer we arrived at was negative. In the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle* we explained in detail why we considered such an answer the only possible one at present. Without directly analysing our arguments, Mr. Tikhomirov also touched on this question in the article we are analysing, and in doing so he flung at "a certain section of the socialists" a number of expressions used by us. But, as usual, our author's line of argument is not very convincing; he does not even always aim at being convincing. Sometimes he almost stops proving altogether and simply states, decrees, so to speak, some propositions or others, as though he had already "seized power" over the minds of his readers. Thus, shouting to those who consider the seizure of power by the present revolutionary party as physically impossible and accusing them of "confusing concepts" he opposes their arguments with the following ... statement: "It

cannot be doubted that the question of the seizure of power by any revolutionary force is determined first and foremost by whether the existing government is sufficiently disorganised, shaken and unpopular; and if all these conditions are to hand a state upheaval is by no means impossible or even particularly difficult."* Without dwelling any more on this interesting question, he immediately goes on to discuss our revolutionaries' chances of "holding power". Willy-nilly, all "dissenters" will have to be reconciled to the author's not quite customary laconicism. Let us be reconciled to it too, all the more as the truth of some of his propositions really "cannot be doubted" this time. But even so it will be quite opposite to ask: Who is "confusing concepts"—Mr. Tikhomirov or his opponents? Firstly, a "state upheaval" is far from being the same thing as "the seizure of power by any revolutionary force". Where "the existing government is disorganised, shaken and unpopular" a state upheaval is not only "by no means impossible", it is simply almost inevitable and consequently it is naturally not "particularly" difficult. But that still does not mean that "any revolutionary force" can take the place of the overthrown government and seize the power lost by that government. A state upheaval can be effected by the aggregate actions of many "forces" which, though hostile to one another, are nevertheless revolutionary in their attitude to the existing system. Then "power", too, will go not to one of those forces, but to the resultant of them all, which will be embodied in a new provisional or permanent government. But for each of them singly "the question of the seizure of power" far from being solved will be still more complicated by such an outcome; they will have to fight for power not against a weak and unpopular adversary, but against fresh, hale and hearty rivals who have not yet been exhausted by struggle and have the support of a certain section of the nation. All that is as clear as daylight. And if that is the case, can we make the question of the seizure of power by the "Narodnaya Volya party" in which we are interested depend exclusively on the instability of the existing government and on the probability of a state upheaval? Can one thus confuse concepts which differ entirely in meaning and content?

But, we may be told, you impute to the "state upheaval" quite a different meaning from the one in which Mr. Tikhomirov uses it. By it he understands not only the fall of the existing government and the organisation of a new one; he presumes that the whole of this revolution will take place by a successful conspiracy within a certain definite revolutionary party which has his sympathy. A

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, p. 255.

conspiracy is a secret undertaking which begins without the knowledge of any of those who could enter into rivalry with the conspirators after the state upheaval. When Little Napoleon thought out his "coup d'état", it did not occur to him to reveal his intentions to the Orleanists or the Legitimists; still less would he have brought himself to ask for their help and collaboration. The success which the Bonapartists achieved by their own efforts alone remained wholly and entirely theirs; all that was left for their rivals was to bear malice and to be sorry that they had not thought of or undertaken that daring action. What the infamous nephew did sincere revolutionaries can do too. Or is success a privilege of evil? Will an instrument which has proved its worth in the hands of political adventurers refuse to serve people sincerely devoted to the good of their country?

If Mr. Tikhomirov does understand a "state upheaval" in this last sense, he is resorting to a still grosser "confusion of concepts" than we formerly thought. What right has he so unexpectedly and unscrupulously to replace a general, abstract possibility by a particular, concrete actuality? Does not that which is *possible* in a general sense prove in many and many an instance to be impossible as regards some particular case? And, therefore, is it permissible, when recommending to the Russian revolutionary party the path of conspiracy, to confine oneself to general phrases about it not being "particularly difficult" to organise a successful conspiracy where the government is disorganised and unpopular? Are the Russian revolutionaries conspirators in the abstract, without flesh or bones, not coming within the pale of all the conditions which make what is possible for some fantastic and impossible for others? Are not the chances of success for a conspiracy determined by the qualities of that section of society to which its members belong, and do not the qualities of that section influence the desires and aims of the conspirators? One has only to cast a glance at our revolutionary section from this point of view for general phrases about a successful conspiracy not being "particularly difficult" to lose all meaning.

To what class, to what strata of society have the overwhelming majority of our revolutionaries belonged so far and do they still belong? To what is called the thinking proletariat. We already spoke in detail of the political qualities of this strata in *Socialism and the Political Struggle* and we greatly regret that Mr. Tikhomirov did not consider it necessary to refute our ideas. "Our thinking proletariat," we wrote, "has already done much for the emancipation of its motherland. It has shaken absolutism, aroused political interest among society, sown the seed of socialist propaganda among our working class. It is intermediary between the higher classes of society and the lower, having the education of the for-

mer and the democratic instincts of the latter. This position has eased for it the diversified work of propaganda and agitation. But this same position gives it very little hope of success in a conspiracy to seize power. For such a conspiracy talent, energy and education are not enough: the conspirators need connections, wealth and an influential position in society. And that is what our revolutionary intelligentsia lacks. It can make good these deficiencies only by allying itself with other dissatisfied elements of Russian society. Let us suppose that its plans actually meet with the sympathy of those elements, that rich landowners, officials, staff and senior officers join in the conspiracy. There will then be more probability of the conspiracy being a success, although that probability will still be very small—just remember the outcome of most of the famous conspiracies in history. But the main danger to the socialist conspiracy will come not from the existing government, but from the members of the conspiracy itself. The influential and high-placed personages who have joined it may be sincere socialists only by a 'fortunate coincidence'. But as regards the majority of them, there can be no guarantee that they will not wish to use the power they have seized for purposes having nothing in common with the interests of the working class.... Thus, *the more sympathy a conspiracy* of the socialist intelligentsia to seize power in the immediate future *meets among influential spheres, i.e., the greater the probability of its outward success, the more open to doubt its results will be*; contrariwise, the more such a conspiracy is confined to our socialist intelligentsia, i.e., the less the probability of its success, the less doubt there will be about its results, as far as the conspirators' intentions are concerned."[208] Is that comprehensible? Were we right when we said that our nihilist renegade, though very useful as a revolutionary ferment in the social sphere, will not seize power because he will be prevented from doing so by his social position? Bonaparte was not a nihilist, but for his coup d'état he, too, needed at first to become no more and no less than the head of the executive authority in the republic. Further. Is it probable that if the nihilist does draw over to his side a sufficient number of persons having influence and a high position, and if he is followed by all sorts of "white generals", he will not profit by their social position but they will avail themselves of his self-abnegation and transform the conspiracy into an instrument for their personal aims? Perhaps we will be told that a high situation in society does not always irremediably spoil man and that a heart full of devotion to its people can beat even under a general's uniform. We perfectly concede that, but still continue to fear the Greeks.[209] What guarantees will the revolutionaries have of the loyalty and sincerity of high-placed members of the conspiracy? The central committee's personal knowledge of those gentlemen?

But how will the committee assure us of the infallibility of its choice? Can one be satisfied with such guarantees in a matter as important as the fate of the working class of a whole country? It is here that the difference between the standpoints of the Social-Democrats on one side and of the Blanquists on the other is revealed. The former demand objective guarantees of success for their cause, guarantees which they see in the development of consciousness, initiative and organisation in the working class; the latter are satisfied with guarantees of a purely subjective nature; they abandon the cause of the working class to individuals and committees, they make the triumph of the ideas they hold dear depend on faith in the personal qualities of some or other members of the conspiracy. If the conspirators are honest, brave and experienced, socialism will triumph; if they are not resolute or capable enough, the victory of socialism will be postponed, perhaps for a short time if new and more capable conspirators are found, but for an infinitely long time if there are no such conspirators. All is here reduced to hazard, to the intelligence, ability and will of individuals.*

Let it not be said that the Russian Blanquists of today do not deny the importance of preparatory work among the working class. No doubt whatsoever is possible on this score after *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli* has declared that the working population in the towns is of "particularly great importance *for* the revolution" (p. 130). But is there even a single party in the world which does not acknowledge that the working class can greatly help it to achieve

* Incidentally, this is not quite the case. Objective conditions of success appear sometimes to the conspirators as some kind of physical or meteorological happening. For instance, one of the issues of *Nabat* contains an article on the conspiracy of General Malet. From this article we see that in 1812 the revolution did not take place in France merely because of sudden, inopportune, heavy rains on the night of October 22-23. You find that hard to believe, reader? Read the following excerpt and judge for yourself. "When everything was finished, Malet intended to hurry to the nearest barracks, but rain poured down and the conspirators took it into their heads to wait till it was over. They had to wait till 3 a.m. and that was a fatal mistake. During the night the conspiracy had all chances of succeeding, for the civil and military authorities would not have had time to confer. The conspirators let the favourable time slip" and as a result of this and this alone, the conspiracy itself was a failure.

Whatever be the attitude to such explanations of the historical destiny of peoples, it is obvious at any rate that they do not avail us of making any sound forecast of social phenomena; in other words, they preclude any attempt to discuss programme questions seriously.

Tikhomirov's "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia", with which we are already familiar, will also apparently be cancelled in case of bad weather. In general heavy rain is all the more dangerous for the victory of socialism the more the cause of the latter is made to depend on the success of this or that committee in disregard of the degree of social and political development of the working class in the country in question.

its aims? The present-day policy of the Iron Chancellor clearly shows that even the Prussian junkers do not lack such awareness. Now all appeal to the workers, but they do not all speak to them in the same tone; they do not all allot them the same role in their political programmes. This difference is noticeable even among the socialists. For the democrat Jacobi the foundation of one workers' union was of more importance socially and historically than the Battle of Sadowa.[210] The Blanquist will of course perfectly agree with that opinion. But he will agree only because it is not battles but revolutionary conspiracies that he sees as the main motive forces of progress. If you were to suggest that he choose between a workers' union and a "repentant nobleman"[211] in the person of some divisional general, he would prefer the latter to the former almost without thinking. And that is understandable. No matter how important the workers are "for the revolution", high-placed conspirators are still more important, for not a step can be made without them and the whole outcome of the conspiracy can often depend on the conduct of some "Excellency".* From the standpoint of the Social-Democrat a true revolutionary movement at the present time is possible only among the working class; from the standpoint of the Blanquist the revolution relies only partly upon the workers, who have an "important" but not the main significance in it. The former assumes that the *revolution* is of "particular importance" *for the workers,* while in the opinion of the latter the *workers,* as we know, are of particular importance *for the revolution.* The Social-Democrat wants the worker *himself to make* his revolution; the Blanquist demands that the worker should *support* the revolution which has been begun and led for him and in his name by others, for instance by officers if we imagine something in the nature of the Decembrists' conspiracy. Accordingly the character of the activity and the distribution of forces also vary. Some appeal mainly to the workers, others deal with them only incidentally and when they are not prevented from doing so by numerous complicated and unpredictable ever-growing needs of the conspiracy which has begun without the workers. This difference is of immense practical importance and it is precisely what explains the hostile attitude of the Social-Democrats to the conspiratorial fantasies of the Blanquists.

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* The report of General Malet's conspiracy in *Nabat* explains in detail the "importance for the revolution" of the commanders of "units" or even of mere officers. "In order to carry out the plan he had thought out, Malet needed to enlist the assistance of at least two officers who were capable, clever, and inspired, like him, with hatred of the emperor", etc.

### 3. PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES OF A "POPULAR" REVOLUTION

But let us be tractable. Let us concede the improbable—that "power" is actually in the hands of our contemporary revolutionaries. What will such success lead them to?

Let us listen to our author. "The immediate and prime task of the victorious provisional government consists in coming to the assistance of the popular revolution. The state power which has been seized must be used in order everywhere to revolutionise the popular masses and to organise their power; this is a task in the fulfilment of which the revolutionaries stand on firm ground. There the provisional government does not create anything but only frees the forces which exist in the people and are even in a state of very high tension.... In this the provisional government does not need either to use coercion on the popular masses or even to teach them. It only gives them purely external help."*

That is what Mr. Tikhomirov says when he discusses the role of the "provisional government which is forced to seize power".

He is convinced that this "purely external" help for the people will lead to the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia". If we recall his ancestry we will see that such an assurance is by no means surprising on his part and that it was handed down to him by the laws of heredity. Bakunin "begot" Tkachov, and Tkachov begot Tikhomirov and his brothers. And if the nearest literary forbears of our author were of the conviction that "the people is always ready" for the social revolution, it is quite natural that their descendant should believe in such readiness of the people at least at "the time we are passing through". We must be surprised not at Mr. Tikhomirov, who, ashamed to acknowledge his extraction openly, nevertheless piously keeps the traditions of his spiritual fathers. It is those readers we must be surprised at, who, having renounced the theories of Bakunin and Tkachov, imagine that Mr. Tikhomirov is presenting them with something newer, more serious and practicable. For such readers criticism is but an empty word and consistency an absolutely empty concept!

People, who have really and irrevocably broken with the fantasies of Bakunin and Tkachov, will see Mr. Tikhomirov's confidence as absolutely unjustified. They will understand that the socialist revolution presupposes a whole series of measures for the socialist organisation of production. And that reason alone is enough to prevent the "purely external" help of the revolutionary government from being considered sufficient to guarantee a successful outcome of such a revolution. Besides, the socialist organisation of production presupposes two conditions without the

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, pp. 255-56.

"presence" of which it cannot be undertaken. The first of these conditions is objective and lies in the economic relations in the country. The other is purely subjective and concerns the producers themselves: the objective economic possibility of the transition to socialism is not enough by itself, the working class must understand and be aware of that possibility. These two conditions are closely connected with one another. Economic relations influence people's economic concepts. These concepts influence people's mode of activity, the social and, consequently, the economic relations. And since we now "do not believe" in any "hand of God" or in inborn ideas, it only remains for us to assume that "the order of ideas is determined by the order of things" and that people's views of economic circumstances are determined by the qualities of those circumstances. These qualities also determine the tendencies of the various classes—conservative in one period of history, revolutionary in another. A certain class rises against the reality surrounding it, enters into antagonism with it only in the event of reality being "divided against itself", of some contradictions being revealed in it. The character, the course and the outcome of the struggle which has started against that reality is determined by the character of these contradictions. In the capitalist countries, one of the chief economic contradictions is the antagonism between the social character of production, on the one hand, and the individual appropriation by the employers of its instruments, means, and consequently its products, on the other. As it is absolutely impossible to renounce the social organisation of production, the only means of solving this contradiction is to bring juridical standards into conformity with economic facts, to hand over the instruments and objects of labour to the ownership of society, for the latter to distribute the products according to the requirements of the working people. This contradiction, as also the urgent need for its solution, increasingly impresses itself upon the consciousness of the people who suffer from it. The working class becomes more and more inclined to and ready for the socialist revolution. We have already repeated time and again the truth proved by Marx that the antagonism referred to above inevitably arises at a definite stage in the development of commodity production. But commodity production, like everything else in the world, has not only an end, but a beginning, too. It not only prepares for a new social system thanks to its inherent contradictions, but there was a time when it was new itself, it arose out of antagonisms in its predecessor. We know that commodity production was preceded by natural economy and primitive collectivism. The principal cause leading to antagonism in the primitive communities was their inherent limitation which did not permit the application of communist principle to the relations

between communities. These relations led to the development of *exchange,* the products of social labour became commodities and in this new quality they exerted a disintegrating influence on the interior organisation of the community itself. The stage in the disintegration of primitive collectivism which is known as the village commune is characterised, as we know, by the contradiction that in it corn-growing on *communal land* is carried out by *individual householders.* This leads to the development of private property, to a new intensification of commodity production and at the same time to the birth of the contradictions inherent in this kind of production, i.e., to the exploitation of labour by capital. Thus commodity production nears its end because of the contradiction between the social organisation of production and the individual mode of appropriation. It develops, on the contrary, because of the contradiction between the individual character of the economy and the social character of the appropriation of one of the chief means of production—the land. We now ask Mr. Tikhomirov: which stage in the development of commodity production is Russia now passing through? Which of the contradictions we have pointed out is typical of her economic relations now? If the first, then there is no sense in contrasting Russia with the West, and, therefore, in emphasising the peculiar features of the Russian "social-revolutionary" programmes. If the second, by what means will the revolutionary government prevent commodity production from developing further? By what means will it solve the contradictions inherent in our village commune?

The seizure of power by the revolutionaires may have two outcomes.

Either the provisional government will in fact confine itself to "purely external" help to the people and, not teaching them anything, not coercing them to anything, will allow them to set up their own economic relations.

Or, not relying on the wisdom of the people, it will keep in its hands the power it has seized and itself set about organising socialist production.

In the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* we have already spoken of each of these outcomes. All we need to do now is to repeat and elaborate the thoughts we expressed then.

Mr. Tikhomirov has freed us from the necessity of discussing in detail the second of the cases assumed. He does not even wish to hear of "the despotism of a communist government". He demands that the provisional government should give the people "purely external help", that it should "organise the people temporarily and only inasmuch as their" (the people's) "self-government can be realised in those conditions". Obscure

as this last phrase is, if it has any sense it means a resolute renunciation of any attempt to implant socialism by means of decrees of the secret society which has "seized power". Finally, our author declares outright that the provisional government must use power, "of course, not to create a socialist system". That, of course, is another big piece of nonsense, for it is ridiculous for a socialist government—even if only a provisional one—not to use its power to create a socialist system. However that may be, it is obvious that Mr. Tikhomirov is seriously convinced that the provisional government will not need to "create anything but only to free the forces which already exist in the people". Let us see what such "freeing" can lead to.

Our author did not explain how long this period will last during which the provisional government will "organise the power of the popular masses". Neither did he tell us what this organisation means when translated from his party's mystic "way of speaking" into literary Russian. He did not say a word about the way in which, after seizing power, the "Narodnaya Volya party" government will be replaced by a government "elected by the people, controlled by them and replaceable". Hence it remains for us to choose the most probable of all possible guesses. The Eastern countries have distinguished themselves so far only by court revolutions or popular movements in which there were very few conscious political actions. To have any at all graphical idea of the probable course of the Russian revolution, we must willy-nilly presume that, despite all its exceptionalism, it will nevertheless take place at least partly after the manner of the West. But in the West it generally developed as follows. The provisional government placed in power by the coup d'état continued to support the revolution against the efforts of reaction, convened a constituent assembly and placed the country's future in its hands. Having drawn up the new constitution, the constituent assembly set up a permanent government conforming to the most compelling demands of the whole country or certain of the classes. It goes without saying that the new government was *permanent* only until there was a new revolution or a new reshaping of the country's constitutional structure.

Let us now imagine that after seizing power the "Narodnaya Volya party" will remain faithful to Mr. Tikhomirov's promises and, not coercing the Russian people to anything, will convene a constituent assembly of representatives of the people. Let us assume that the elections will take place in the most favourable conditions for the revolutionaries, and only after "providing the guarantee of the people's economic independence", i.e., after the expropriation of the big landowners and employers. Let us even assume that the provisional government will institute electoral

qualifications according to estate and class and grant political franchise only to peasants, artisans and proletarians working by hand or brain. Finally, let us suppose that the provisional government will manage to maintain, and the constituent assembly to consolidate, the people's "political independence". This will be all the more difficult the sooner the revolutionary situation foretold by Mr. Tikhomirov arises; from Mr. Tikhomirov, too, we learn that even with a powerless bourgeoisie self-government by the people is possible only if the people are sufficiently disappointed in the autocracy of the tsars. Hence it follows that if by the time of the revolutionary outbreak this disappointment is not intense enough, there will not be any self-government by the people and the revolution which has taken place may lead to a political monster similar to the ancient Chinese or Peruvian empires, i.e., to a renewal of tsarist despotism with a communist lining. But refraining from pessimism, we will take into consideration the fact that Russia "can hardly wait" and assume that in view of such urgency our country will hasten to put an end to autocracy. We are so accommodating that we are ready to admit the best possible outcome to be the most probable one and to concede that the purest kind of "government by the people", i.e., direct popular legislation, will be established in our country. All we ask is whether it can be "expected" that the self-governing people will immediately lay the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia".

We have long known that

*...Wo die Begriffe fehlen,*
*Da stellt ein Wort zur rechten Zeit sich ein,*[212]

but we ask our reader to ponder the meaning of the words *socialist organisation of production* and, in order to make it more palpable, to imagine the decisions that the self-governing Russian people will probably come to on this matter.

The representative assembly will be obliged to appeal to the judgement of the people on all important legislative questions.

It will ask the people whether they approve and endorse the expropriation of big proprietors which the provisional government has carried out. And of course the people will answer in the affirmative. The land, the mines, the works and the factories will be declared state property.

But a change in the owner does not mean a change in the organisation of production. The question of *expropriation* will lead to that of the *exploitation* of the confiscated properties.

The self-governing people will have to organise on a new basis the whole of their economy, the production and the distribution of all their products.

What form of organisation will the people deem necessary? Will the majority of our peasantry pronounce in favour of communism?

Even Mr. Tikhomirov does not "expect" that. Being in or not far from their present stage of development, the people would not wish or even be able to establish a communist economy.

Even as far as corn-growing is concerned, the people would probably maintain the present organisation of production. After socialisation, the land would still be cultivated by individual households. We already know what that contradiction leads to. It creates inequality, promotes the development of commodity production and consequently of the new contradictions inseparable from it. The history of the disintegration of the village commune and of the appearance of the various social classes would be repeated in a new form and on a wider scale. Our Narodniks and Narodnaya Volya members generally see the cause of the disintegration of the commune in the hostile attitude adopted to it by the estate and "class" state. But after all that has been said on this subject in the preceding chapter, we need not stop to refute, or rather to explain the real meaning of that conclusion. Modern science leaves not the slightest doubt as to inequality arising in primitive communities before those communities themselves organise into a state. Far from being the *original cause* for inequality appearing, the state itself is historically its *product.* Subsequently the state naturally begins to influence economic relations, to destroy primitive communism. But he who wishes to strike at the root of inequality (and without that desire one cannot be a socialist) must direct his attention mainly to its radical, not its derivative cause. It would be very inconsistent on the part of such a one to wish to do away with the kind of state which *intensifies* inequality and to leave untouched the economic relations which *create* the inequality itself and the "class" state, too. And that would be the very kind of inconsistency that a provisional socialist government would suffer from which did not set itself the aim either of "teaching" the people, or of "coercing it" to adopt socialist organisation. By leaving that organisation to producers who are absolutely unprepared for it and confining itself to giving the people "purely external" help it would at best be chopping down the trunk and leaving untouched the roots which support it. The former members of such a government would display great naïveté if they showed astonisment at a new healthier and stronger trunk growing in the place of the old rotten one.

We repeat, if government by the people were really established in our country, when asked whether they needed land and whether it should be confiscated from the landlords, the self-

governing people would answer that they did need it and that it should be confiscated. But if asked whether they needed the "foundation of the socialist organisation", they would first answer that they did not understand the meaning of that question, and then, having understood it with great difficulty, they would answer: No, we don't need that. And as the expropriation of the big landowners is by no means equivalent to the "foundation of the socialist organisation", there would not be any socialism as a result of the seizure of power by the revolutionaries.* The outcome would be what Mr. Tikhomirov involuntarily prophesied when he said that the provisional government would use its power "by no means to create a socialist system". We would be faced with the same village commune as now. The total difference would be that, having about three times as much land as at present, the commune would perhaps disintegrate more slowly and consequently more slowly clear the ground for higher forms of social life.

What about the further independent development of the village commune? Well, its development consists in disintegrating! Whoever disputes this must prove the opposite; he must show us, if not historical examples of a village commune becoming a communist one, at least of the tendency to such a transition, existing not in the heads of our Narodniks but in the very organisation of the commune and in all the dynamics of its agricultural economy. We know where, how and why the primitive communist communes were changed into communities of individual householders. But we do not know why and how our Russian village commune will accomplish the transition into a communist one. Liking an occasional conversation with the Narodniks, we naturally could not remain unaware that two or three of our communes had organised collective cultivation of the fields. The village of Grekovka, which has distinguished itself by this good action, was once spoken of by absolutely all the "friends of the people" and its example was thought to solve the whole social problem in Russia. But if the peasants in that famous village were ever persecuted for communist tendencies it would not be difficult for their counsel to prove that the prosecutor knew nothing at all about communist doctrines. Collective cultivation of the soil is only a little nearer to communism than collective work in the form of corvée or the "collective ploughing" introduced under Nicholas I with the help of bayonets and birch-rods. However stupid the "unforgettable" tsar was, even he never thought that collective ploughing could give rise to an independent movement towards communism in the village communes. The main stress in this question is not on the

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] This is what our present "socialist-revolutionaries" still refuse to understand when they put themselves out to resuscitate our old "revolutionary" prejudices.

manner in which the householders work—individually or collectively—but on the fact whether there are separate household economies and whether they tend to unite in one communist whole. The village of Grekovka has shown no such tendency. Its householders continue to be owners of their products, which they turn into commodities. And once they do not abolish the commodity quality of their products, it can be mathematically proved that the strongest tendency in this commune is towards capitalism and by no means towards communism.

Collective cultivation of the soil is a very good and useful thing; but it would be strange to think that it can be the main road from the present village commune to the ideals of communism. It can play, if anything, only the role of a small "by-road" leading on to a main road which goes in a completely different direction. It would have rendered great service in the West, where its role would have amounted to giving the peasants the habit of collective work and thus decreasing their resistance to the communist revolution, in which the initiative would have fallen to the proletariat in town and country. But that would have exhausted its advantages. In every historical, as well as mechanical movement, part of the motive force is expended in overcoming resistance. To decrease the resistance means to free a corresponding portion of the force tied down by it and to accelerate the movement. If you pave a main street, if you lubricate an engine, you decrease the labour of the horse drawing a cart and cut down fuel consumption. But not a single mechanic will imagine that the engine will be set in motion just because you have decreased the friction in its parts, no carter will ever dream of unharnessing his horse as soon as he reaches a well-paved road. Any man who imagined or did any such thing would be declared insane by everybody. And there would not be the slightest mistake in the verdict. In order to cause movement we need an active, not a passive force, positive, not negative conditions. The same with the village commune. Collective tilling of the soil is good provided there is an active force which causes and accelerates its transition to a higher form of social life. In the West the proletariat would play that role, beginning the communist revolution in a completely different sphere, the sphere of large-scale production and agriculture, in works and factories and on big farms. The force of the proletariat would be created and directed by absolutely definite economic relations existing outside and independently of the commune. But where would we get that force from here in our peasant state, set up by the revolution of the Narodnaya Volya party? From among the peasants themselves? It seems to Mr. Tikhomirov, we know, that history has some kind of independent "movement towards socialism". He may think that such

an independent "movement" will appear among the peasants as well. But we will leave Mr. Tikhomirov and talk to less credulous readers. They will agree, at least, that the *economic* tendencies of every class are determined by the character of the economic conditions in which it lives. Our peasants live in conditions of commodity production, and in commodity production the product dominates the producer and dictates its laws to him. And the laws of commodity production are such that they promote first and foremost the development of capitalism and capitalist, by no means communist, tendencies. Where, then, will our peasant get a tendency towards communism from?

Is that clear? No? Let us go from discussion to comparison. The Don Cossacks now have as much land as our peasants would have after the popular (of the Narodnaya Volya party) revolution. They have about thirty dessiatines per person. This land belongs not to individuals, not even to individual communes, but to the whole of the "glorious troop". The question is: Do the Don Cossacks show any tendency to introduce communist economy? As far as I know, not communist, but bourgeois tendencies are becoming stronger and stronger among them. Perhaps this will be put down to the "corrupting influence of the state"? But there was a time when that influence was almost non-existent; why did they not then accomplish the transition to communism? Perhaps, their military way of life prevented them? Just imagine the Cossacks, freed altogether from military service, devoting themselves entirely to peaceful occupations. What would happen in such a case? We will tell you: an intense disintegration of the remaining traces of primitive communism among the Cossacks would set in, then the reign of the Cossack bourgeoisie would be nearer....

Abundance of land did not save the Cossacks from the appearance of inequality and the resulting exploitation of the poor by the rich. Quite the contrary, abundance of land in itself encouraged the appearance of inequality.* The late Professor Belyayev, despite his pronounced Slavophile tendency, perfectly understood the significance of abundance of land in the history of the rise of the classes. "Naturally, there was plenty of land in ancient Russia, far more than was needed at the time, and anybody who wished could occupy without any hindrance enormous expanses of wild fields and woods which belonged to nobody, *naturally, all those who could afford it did so*."** But not everybody had equal means, and that is why not all occupied the same quantity of land;

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] This was confirmed a few years later by Mr. Borodin's excellent study on the Ural Cossack troop.

** «Крестьяне на Руси», 2-е изд., Москва, 1879, стр. 19. [*The Peasants in Russia*, 2nd edition, Moscow, 1879, p. 19.]

some did not even occupy any at all, having no means whatsoever to clear and cultivate it. Hence, inequality in income and dependence of the poor upon the rich. Neither is there any doubt that in some cases "the free occupation and cultivation of the land was not long in leading to the concept of landed property". This side of the matter has been well set forth by M. Kovalevsky in his book on communal land tenure.[213] Until recent times the right freely to occupy untilled lands existed in the region of the Don Cossacks—and perhaps still exists today in the Kuban territory; that was precisely what allowed the rich to become richer, that is what sowed into that virgin soil the first seeds of the class struggle.

But the state, transformed by the revolution, would prevent such a turn of affairs in our country, another reader will say.

It is difficult to say beforehand what a people's state would do in one particular case or another, but, having an idea of the economic conditions under which the majority of citizens live, it is not difficult to foresee the general direction that the economic policy of such a state would take. According to Mr. Tikhomirov's own "expectations" the revolutionary state established would be mainly a state of peasants. Being both unwilling and unable to lay "the foundation of the socialist organisation" in his own commune, the peasant would also be both unable and unwilling to set up such an organisation within the broader limits of the state. The economic policy of the people's state would be just as little communist as that of the individual peasant communes out of which it would be formed. It goes without saying that the state would endeavour to eliminate abuses which could arise as a result of the distribution of social lands to individual persons or groups for cultivation. But it would never bring itself to take away stocks and instruments belonging to the better-off householders. Similarly, it would consider as perfectly just and natural to limit the right of landed property only by the owner's labour and *means,* which, naturally, would be his private property. If in fact the peasant has any definite ideals for the social structure, there is no doubt that the freedom by which everybody can occupy free land wherever his "axe, plough, and scythe can go" has a great part in them. The "popular revolution" would provide, at least partly, the possibility to put those ideals into practice; but that would lead, as we know, to inequality between the agriculturists. Once that impulse given, the inequality could, of course, reach its natural extreme and reduce "to nil" all the results of the "popular revolution".

Further. The peasant state would naturally leave untouched not only trade, but also, to a great extent, industrial capital. Mr. Tikhomirov himself apparently admits this when he presumes

that the people's revolution would only *render powerless* "the already weak nobility and bourgeoisie". "To render powerless" does not mean to destroy. Need we say what results the existence of trade and industrial capital would lead to? Mr. Tikhomirov assumes that these results would be prevented by that same people's government. But we will draw his attention to the fact that not all that seems dangerous to the socialist is so in the eyes of the peasant, and consequently of a peasant government. Whereas Mr. Tikhomirov and we are opposed generally to "private business capital", the peasant waxes indignant only over certain applications of the capitalist principle, he has no objection to its substance. He fully acknowledges the possibility of *private* business enrichment. That being the case, the "people's" government will not have any objection to it either. Its radicalism will at best engage in the struggle against the big capital of the manufacturer, but the government will not even think of setting a limit to exploitation by the "master" in general. Hence this is already a second factor leading to the disappearance of the "relative equality" established by the revolution. Mr. Tikhomirov thinks that this factor will be rendered powerless by the "removal of the land from the domain of exploitation". But we already know that the land will not be altogether "removed" from it; the people's government will tolerate both inequality in the distribution of land and the possibility of hiring a labourer from among the ruined householders. *Peasant* "ideals" are easily reconciled with *hired labour.* Besides, anybody who understands the matter knows that only so-called petty-bourgeois socialism hopes to help the people by "rendering powerless" the bourgeoisie or "removing from the domain of exploitation" this or that particular means of production. And the only reason why it hopes to do so is because the "people" in whom it is interested are the petty bourgeoisie, who stand only to gain if the big bourgeoisie is "rendered powerless". It is a distinctive feature of petty-bourgeois socialism that its reform plans leave commodity production untouched. This is the origin of its complete theoretical and practical powerlessness. The truly revolutionary working-class movement of the present has nothing in common with the cowardly fantasies of the petty bourgeoisie. Unfortunately, "Russian socialism as expressed"... in Mr. Tikhomirov's article is much nearer in this case to the socialism of the petty bourgeoisie than to that of the working class. Like the former, it does not carry its revolutionary projects as far as the elimination of commodity production. It leaves that care to the future, post-revolution "history of the Russian state". Completely ignoring the significance of economic evolution in the analysis of its revolutionary premises, it places exaggerated hopes in it as soon as it is concerned with results of the upheaval which it

recommends. It calls for *revolution* where it is unthinkable without preliminary *evolution* and appeals to *evolution* where it is impossible without a radical *economic revolution.* It wants to be mainly revolutionary but it falls into half-measures and inconsistency as far as the substance is concerned.* We will soon see where it borrowed this typical trait, which reduces to nil all its revolutionary phrases.

In his efforts to convince his readers that a people's government will be able to paralyse the harmful consequences of the impending half-measure economic revolution, Mr. Tikhomirov represents the probable course of Russia's future social development as follows:

"The government, responsible for the course of affairs in the country, has an interest in the country's prosperity, for its own popularity depends upon it, and the government will no doubt be obliged to take measures to increase labour productivity and, among other things, to organise large-scale production.... Large-scale production is too obviously advantageous and necessary, in many cases it is even inevitable. The popular masses can understand that easily. Moreover" (and this is particularly interesting, we will remark), "private undertaking, slowed down in the domain of capitalist production, will try in all respects" (just imagine, what an idyll! ) "to make clear to the people the advantage and convenience of social production.... We will not even mention the socialist intelligensia's influence on the people.... Why can there not thus be gradually effected a transition of the village commune into an association, *an organisation of exchange among the communes and associations of communes,* an association of several communes for some production or other, until the socialist system, developing little by little and increasingly ousting private economy, finally extends to all the functions of the country." Then, "the advent of the socialist revolution, in some countries of Europe if not in the whole of it,... will place Russia in the almost unconditional necessity to organise her international exchange on the same" (i.e., socialist) "principles and hence will almost impose upon us *socialist organisation* in the sphere of *home exchange*" (pp. 258-59). That is how this question "is viewed" by Mr. Tikhomirov. Before examining its substance we shall make two incidental remarks.

Our author pins great hopes on the influence of the Russian socialist intelligentsia and the West European working-class revolution. We also recognise the significance of that influence but think that it cannot be unconditional. First of all, where did Mr. Tikhomirov get the idea that after the peasant revolution

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] This again applies in full to the present "socialist-revolutionaries".

not only a socialist intelligentsia, but any "intelligentsia" at all in the present sense of the word will "be born unhindered"? At present, our socialist intelligentsia, like any other, come mainly from among the official, landlord, merchant and ecclesiastical walks of life, that is, from the higher sections of society, who see education as a means for making a career. While producing careerists, our universities also, by the way, create revolutionaries. But both careerists and revolutionaries are a product of the existence of the bureaucratic state and the higher classes. This is so far beyond doubt that the consciousness of their "bourgeois" origin impelled our revolutionaries, on the one hand, to speak of their "duty to the people" and, on the other, systematically to contrast themselves with the people. The "socialist intelligentsia" are conscious that they form nothing more than one of the branches of the common trunk of the official-ridden "class" state. Mr. Tikhomirov wants to fell that trunk but at the same time he hopes that the branch which is dear to him, far from withering, will be born "unhindered". That reminds one of the well-known anecdote about the Ukrainian who, having chopped down the bough he was sitting on, was surprised at his own fall. Or perhaps Mr. Tikhomirov thinks that after the "popular revolution" the socialist intelligentsia will be "born unhindered" from the peasantry itself? In that case we fear he is mistaken.

What does the meaning of the revolution he is "expecting" amount to? To an agrarian upheaval, to the expropriation of the big landowners, to the possibility to give the peasants allotments three times as large as the present ones, to the abolition of oppressing taxation. Does Mr. Tikhomirov presume that such an increase in allotments will convince the peasants that higher education is a necessity, that it will compel *them, themselves,* to send their children to university and *their government* to support and institute higher educational establishments?

The large quantity of land *will* so much *simplify* the peasant's position, will so greatly increase the importance of extra working hands in his family that the peasantry will see neither the necessity nor any possibility of spending much money and time on higher education.

Universities are necessary for a state of officials, of bourgeoisie and of gentry, and they will eventually be necessary for the proletariat, who, without higher scientific education, will be unable to cope with the productive forces which will have come under their command; but in the reign of the peasant communes universities will be a luxury having little attraction for practical-minded householders. But let us grant that the peasants can "easily understand" the significance of higher education. Let us remember, besides, that after the "popular revolution" both

the bourgeoisie and the gentry will remain; let us assume that both of them will be "rendered powerless" to the extent necessary for them to be able to send their children to higher schools without harming the people economically. Why does Mr. Tikhomirov think that those schools will be nurseries of *socialist* intelligentsia? In Switzerland we happen to see, on the one hand, a well-to-do peasantry and, on the other, a fairly "powerless", i.e., petty, bourgeoisie. Do many socialists come from the Swiss schools, where, in fact, the number of peasants' children is not at all negligible?

Yet isn't it "easy" for the Swiss peasants "to understand" the advantage of the socialist organisation of production?

Of course it is, but still they don't understand it! They don't want to hear of socialism and this is not helped by their survivals of communal land tenure and their famous collective dairies!

The advantages of socialist way of life are so apparent that they would seem "easy to understand" for everybody. But only the socialists of the utopian period could fail to know that understanding of socialism can be achieved only combined with actual economic necessity. And in a peasant state such a necessity can be present only as a rare coincidence.

And what about the present intelligentsia? the reader will ask. Can they not, when they experience the people's revolution, devote their energies "to the service of the people and to organising their labour and their social relations"?

Are there many such "intellectuals"? Do they—excuse me for asking—understand much themselves? What will they do against the inexorable logic of commodity production?

Will their exertions be aided by the West European revolution? It is that revolution we want to talk about now.

The West European revolution will be mighty, but not almighty. To have a decisive influence on other countries, the socialist countries of the West will need some kind of vehicle for that influence. "International exchange" is a powerful vehicle, but it is not almighty either. The Europeans have brisk trade with China, but one can hardly be confident that the working-class revolution in the West will very soon "impose" "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange" on China. Why? Because China's "social structure" seriously hinders European ideas and institutions in having decisive influence on it. The same can be said of Turkey, Persia, and so on. But what is the "social structure" of the Sublime Porte? First and foremost a peasant state in which there is still not only the village commune, but also the *zadruga*, which, according to our Narodniks' scheme, is much closer to socialism. And despite this, despite all the "popular" revolutions

in the Turkish Empire, there can be no thought of the European proletariat succeeding without any difficulty in "imposing" socialism on Turkish citizens, even those of Slav origin. Here again a distinction must be made between the active force of circumstances *impelling* the people towards socialism and the negative conditions which *only ease* the transition to socialism. The objective logic of the relations inside peasant states by no means "imposes" upon them a "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange"; and what is imposed upon them purely from outside cannot be crowned with success. No doubt the European working-class revolution will have a very powerful influence on those countries in which at least some strata of the citizens resemble the European working class by their economic situation, their political education and their habits of thought. Its influence will be rather weak, on the contrary, where there are no such strata. The February Revolution had an echo in nearly all countries which resembled France by their "social structure". But the wave which it raised broke on the threshold of peasant Europe. Beware lest the same happens, too, with the future revolution of the proletariat!

"The meaning of this fable is" that West is West and Russia is Russia, or, in other words, don't count on eating somebody else's loaf, but yourself get up early and start baking your own. However powerful the possible influence of the European revolution may be, we must bother about providing the conditions which would render that influence effective. As for Mr. Tikhomirov's half-measure peasant and petty-bourgeois revolution, far from creating those conditions, it will destroy even those which actually exist at present.

In this case, as in all others, all Mr. Tikhomirov's "expectations" are full of contradictions. The influence of the West on Russia appears possible to him thanks to "international exchange". From this it follows that the brisker that exchange is, the sooner the West will "impose" upon us a "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange". But the development of our international trade relations presupposes the development of trade, commodity production in our country. And the more commodity production develops, the more the "relative economic equality" resulting from the people's revolution will be upset, and the more difficult will be "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange", at least for the time being, i.e., until the development of commodity production reaches its logical end. But in that case the "popular revolution" which has been carried out will lose all its meaning.

Thus, if after the "upheaval" we return to natural economy, we shall have "relative equality", but then the West will be

unable to influence us because of the weakness of international exchange. On the other hand, if commodity production develops in our country, it will be difficult for the West to influence us because our "relative equality" will be seriously upset and Russia will be transformed into a country of petty bourgeoisie. That is the vicious circle in which Mr. Tikhomirov's expectations from the West are fated to go round and round. That is what it means to be a metaphysician, that is what it means to consider things "one after the other and apart from each other"! [214]

*Mein theuerer Freund, ich rath'euch drum*
*Zuerst Collegium logicum.* [215]

These are the contradictory hopes pinned on the West by those who suspect the whole of modern European history of being "hazardous" and "unbelievable"! Really, collegium logicum would be very useful for Mr. Tikhomirov!

Having concluded these remarks, let us now go on to the main content of the excerpt quoted above.

### 4. L. TIKHOMIROV WAVERS BETWEEN BLANQUISM AND BAKUNINISM

In his projects for the socialist organisation of Russia Mr. Tikhomirov is a Bakuninist of the first water. It is true, he does *not* abolish the state, but his state helps the process of this organisation purely from outside; it does not *create* the elements of that process, but "only supports them". P. N. Tkachov, who is Mr. Tikhomirov's immediate ancestor, presumed that having seized power, the minority must "impose" socialism on the majority. Mr. Tikhomirov's government *eases* for the people the organisation of social production "without any violence", "coming to the help of *only such a movement* which *cannot but arise independently in the country*". In his arguments on the present, Mr. Tikhomirov was Tkachov's true disciple. His "expectations" from the future are an instance of atavism in ideas, of a return to the theories of a more distant spiritual ancestor.

The anarchist Arthur Arnoult, as we know, wrote: abolish the state, and the economic forces will come into equilibrium as a result of the simple law of statics.[216] Mr. Tikhomirov says: abolish the *modern* state, expropriate the big landowners, and the economic forces of Russia will begin "independently" to come into equilibrium. The former appeals to a "law of statics", the latter to "popular concepts and habits", i.e., to the same "ideal of the people" with which we are familiar from the works of M. A. Bakunin. Arthur Arnoult aims at the "state" and does not notice that his "criticism" applies only to the modern state, the state of bourgeois centralism. Mr. Tikhomirov wishes to set up

a "people's" state, and he devises a new form of petty-bourgeois state, a state which, without definitely abandoning the principle of laissez faire, laissez passer, i.e., "without creating anything", manages, all the same, to "support" the independent "movement of history" in our country towards the socialist system.

Bakuninism is not a system, it is a series of contradictions which Messrs. the Bakuninists and the anarchists share in conformity with the general aggregate of "concepts and habits" of each.

Our author has chosen the peculiar variety of Bakuninism that degenerated into P. N. Tkachov's "programme". But he has not remained faithful to that programme to the end. The exhortations of his "first teacher" are too fresh in his mind, he has not forgotten that although "our people are most obviously in need of help", at the same time "one must be an unmitigated blockhead" to "attempt to teach the people anything or to endeavour to give their life a new direction". And so he has made up his mind to devise a revolutionary government which would give the people "purely external" help, which, without any desire to "use coercion on the popular masses or even to teach them", would nevertheless guide the matter to a successful end.

We asked Mr. Tikhomirov in what way the socio-political philosophy of his article differs from the philosophy of the "Open Letter to Frederick Engels". Now it will not be difficult for us to answer that question ourselves. It differs by its pallor and timidity of thought, its desire to reconcile the irreconcilable. What can one say about the pale copy if the original itself, as Engels said, could attract only "green gymnasium pupils"?

M. A. Bakunin professed irreconcilable hatred for any form of state and advised our revolutionaries not to seize power, because all power is of the devil. P. N. Tkachov was of the opinion that they should seize power and hold it for a long time. Mr. Tikhomirov has chosen the golden mean. He thinks that the seizure of power "can easily prove to be useful and necessary", but at the same time he assumes that the revolutionaries should not strive to *keep* power indefinitely, but only *hold* it until the popular revolution begins.

From this awkward position between two stools there can be only two ways out. Our author can seat himself on Bakunin's or on Tkachov's stool: he can become an anarchist or a consistent follower (not only a secret pupil) of P. N. Tkachov. But he will hardly succeed in breathing into the "Narodnaya Volya programme" a really new content; he will hardly manage to prove that this or that new idea found "recognition only with the appearance of the Narodnaya Volya trend". Never yet did empty eclecticism give birth to new mighty theories, never yet did

timid hesitation between two old "programmes" open a new epoch in the history of revolutionary ideas in any country!

And so Mr. Tikhomirov will be a follower of Tkachov in the "first day of the revolution" and change into a Bakuninist immediately its honeymoon expires.

But what is Bakuninism when applied to the "lendemain de la révolution"? We repeat, Bakuninism is not a system. It is a mixture of the socialist theories of the "Latin countries" and Russian peasant "ideals", of Proudhon's popular bank and the village commune, of Fourier and Stenka Razin.

That mixture is characteristic of the "kind of process of socialisation of labour" recommended to our country by Mr. Tikhomirov and which not only "never existed anywhere" but never can either.

Without any exaggeration one can apply to this "process" Famusov's words:

*Everything is there, provided there's no deception!*

There we have the village commune, we have the "transition of the village commune into an association", we have also "an organisation of *exchange* among the communes and associations of communes", and besides all that we also have "an association of *several* communes for *some production or other*"; in brief, we have here the notorious Bakuninist-anarchist "organisation of the producers from bottom to top". If the reader has any idea of this "organisation", he needs no further proof of Tikhomirov's Bakuninism. But if he has not had the opportunity to become acquainted with the theories of anarchism (which, of course, is no great loss) we recommend that he should read a little pamphlet by a certain once well-known Guillaume called *Idées sur l'organisation sociale.* Once acquainted with the "process of socialisation of labour" suggested in the pamphlet, he will see that the revolutionary theories of Russian exceptionalists are very closely related to the theories of the European anarchists.

It is difficult for an intelligent Russian to get away from the influence of the "West". By declaring the most advanced theories of Europe to be "inapplicable" to his own country, the Russian social figure does not save his exceptionalism, but only transfers his sympathy from a serious model to a caricature. Mr. V. V. turns out to be a full brother of the imperial and royal "state socialists" and Mr. Tikhomirov an anarchist standing on his head.

But a position so awkward for our author does not very much promote consistency in his thinking. That is why he does not reach the conclusions at which M. A. Bakunin arrived in his time. Even Mr. Tikhomirov's most daring outbreaks of "revolutionary fantasy" do not extend to abolishing the *businessman's profit.* In

the organisation of "social" production, "the businessman, as an undertaker and an able manager" (Bastiat himself would not repudiate such a motive) "still acquires some advantages, fewer, of course, than at present, but the only advantages accessible to him at that time".* This part of the project of the "socialist organisation of Russia" somehow reminds one, on the one hand, of the petty-bourgeois socialist's jealous attitude to the enormous "profits" of the big businessman and, on the other, of the distribution of the income between labour, capital and talent recommended by Fourier. Not without reason did we say that some varieties of "Russian socialism" are nothing more than a mixture of Fourier and Stenka Razin.

However, in all this, the reader will think, there is at least no deception.

Granted, there is no *deception*, but there is *self-deception*. There is not even the slightest ill intent, but there is an enormous dose of naïveté. And it consists in nothing else than the talk about the "*socialist* organisation of *exchange*". For anybody who understands the matter, this is an absurdity, stuff and nonsense. Only petty-bourgeois followers of the petty-bourgeois Proudhon could take this absurdity for anything possible or desirable. But on the other hand it was said of Proudhon that he understood as much about dialectics as a woodcutter about botany. The social structure created by the proletariat can have nothing in common with *exchange* and will know only distribution of the products according to the *requirements* of the working people. Some inconsistent Communists find a distribution more convenient if it is proportional to the share the worker has in production. It would not be difficult to find weak sides in such a demand.** Nevertheless, even those who put forward that demand have always understood the impossibility of "exchange" in a socialist state.

Whenever you say "exchange" you imply "commodity", and if you retain commodities, you presuppose all the contradictions inherent in the commodity. And once more, only anarchists could think, to quote Proudhon, that there is a philosopher's stone which makes it possible to remove from "socialist exchange" all the "bourgeois" contradictions contained in ordinary exchange.

There is not and cannot be any such stone, because *exchange* is a basic and inseparable attribute of bourgeois production, and bourgeois production is a necessary consequence of *exchange*. As recently as the late fifties Karl Marx splendidly explained this side of the matter and thus left far behind the present-day

* *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* No. 2, "What Can We Expect", etc., p. 258.

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] Of course this demand is inconsistent only as an *ideal*, as a *transitional* measure it can turn out to be perfectly expedient.

scientific progress the petty-bourgeois theories of the anarchists and Bakuninists of all colours and shades.[217] One must be ignorant of the very ABC of revolutionary socialism to base one's expectations "from the revolution" on the socialist organisation of exchange.

We have already had occasion to speak of this question in another place* but it is so interesting that it will do no harm to repeat what we have said. To make it more comprehensible, this time we shall leave aside the abstract formulae of science and confine ourselves to simple and vivid examples.

Socialist exchange is exchange without money, the direct exchange of product for product according to the quantity of labour expended in their production. It was in that form that the idea emerged from the head of Proudhon, who, by the way, repeated on this occasion a mistake made long before him.

Let us now imagine that "on the day after the revolution" our Bakuninists have succeeded in convincing the Torkhovo commune in Tula Gubernia, which we have already mentioned, of the advantages of the socialist organisation of exchange. The members of the commune have decided to "lay the foundation" of such an organisation and published their decision in some kind of *Narodniye Vedomosti.* Their call is answered by the Arkhangelsk fishers, the Novgorod nail-makers, the Kimry shoemakers, the Tula samovar-makers and the Moscow tailors, all members of workers' associations or village communes. They also have been imbued with the new principles of exchange under the influence of the Bakuninists who "are born unhindered". No sooner said than done: an "agreement" is concluded and it only remains to put it in practice. After the corn harvest our Proudhonist peasants get down to exchange. They send a certain quantity of corn to Arkhangelsk and receive fish from there; they dispatch a few loads of potatoes to Kimry and bring back boots. They offer the tailors millet, nail-makers groats and the like. All these things are sent not as signs of good will, but in accordance with the conditions previously agreed upon. They will all have to be transported over long distances and with great trouble and it would probably have been more profitable to dispose of them on the neighbouring market; but our peasants are people of principle and are ready to defend the new principle of exchange even if, as they say, it costs more than it is worth. And so the exchange is carried out, our village commune members have nails, fish, shoes, samovars and ready-made clothing. But the point is that far from all the peasants' requirements are satisfied by these articles. They need other articles of consumption, agricultural

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] I here refer to my exposition and criticism of Rodbertus' economic doctrine.

implements, fertilisers, cattle and so on. Those who produce all these things do not wish to enter into socialist exchange, perhaps because they have read Marx and laugh at Proudhon's economic "discoveries", or perhaps because they have not reached the stage of development needed to understand Proudhon's wisdom and are still ordinary commodity producers. For even Mr. Tikhomirov presumes that the "socialist" system which he recommends will develop only "little by little". What then must our Torkhovo Proudhonists do in such a case? How will they satisfy the numerous requirements not covered by means of "socialist" exchange? They have only one way out: to *buy* what they have not got. This will also be the case for the tailors, who naturally cannot live on millet alone, and for the nail-makers, who cannot subsist only on groats. In short, side by side with "fair", socialist exchange the old, so to speak heathen, form of exchange for money will continue to exist. This "cursed money" (maudit argent) will have to be resorted to even in dealings between the proselytes of Proudhonism. If the Kimry shoemakers need only a quantity of potatoes which embodies *x* days' work, whereas the Torkhovo people need a number of pairs of boots requiring twice as many days to make, the difference will have to be made up in money, if the Kimry people do not want oats, hay or straw, or any other agricultural products. This can easily be the case if Mr. Prugavin's prophecy comes true and the Kimry shoemakers again take to agriculture with "the improvement in its conditions". What will happen then? Becoming organised only "little by little", the Proudhonist producers will have against them the enormous mass of producers of the old economic "faith", and the negligible "progress" made with the help of the "socialist organisation of exchange" will always be outbalanced by the regression in "relative equality" which will result inevitably from commodity production and ordinary "bourgeois" exchange. Vice will outweigh virtue, bourgeois relationships will take the upper hand over Proudhonist socialism. Surrounded by the petty-bourgeois majority, the Proudhonists themselves will begin to be "perverted", all the more as their own wealth will be largely in money of the old "exploiters'" kind. Tempted by enrichment, the Kimry people can send the Torkhovo people boots with cardboard soles, for which the Torkhovo people will not fail to pay them back with half-rotten "taties". "The enemy is strong" in general, but in the present case his strength will lean on the invincible logic of commodity production, which will dominate even in the village communes after they have entered into "socialist exchange". The associations which were set up with difficulty will disintegrate, the Proudhonists will turn into ordinary petty-bourgeois

producers and the intelligentsia who have been brought up on Bakuninism will need repeatedly to set about the ungrateful work of spreading the new economic principles. It is the tale of the white bullock, Sisyphean labours! And that is the toil which Mr. Tikhomirov imposes on the Russian socialists merely to bring the reign of socialism as near as possible, so as not to approach it by the slow and difficult road of capitalism. It is a case of haste making waste.

On the question of "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange" as on that of international trade, one must have in mind this alternative: either the popular revolution will bring us back to natural economy and then "socialist exchange" will develop slowly in our country, because exchange generally will be very weak; or else the revolution will preserve the present tendency towards greater and greater division of labour, towards the complete separation of agriculture from industry, and then the socialist organisation of exchange will be an extremely difficult task because of the great intricacy of the country's productive mechanism. And yet the slow development of the socialist organisation of exchange robs it even of the sense which its supporters see in it. To cut off at least *one village commune* from the disintegrating influence of money economy, that commune must manage to organise socialist exchange with *all the producers* whose products correspond to its various requirements. In the contrary event, its monstrous money-socialist organism would choke in its own contradictions. But one single commune cannot supply agricultural produce to *all* the producers of *all* the consumer goods it requires. Those producers will either have to buy part of the raw material they require, and in turn to have a monstrous money-moneyless economy, which will cause their socialist plans to flounder; or they will have to wait for the blessed time when the number of Proudhonist village communes attains the sufficient and necessary level. With the advent of that blessed time it will be possible to organise the first minimum production and exchange organisation. But what is one such organisation in the immense economic organism of the Russian state? It will be stifled in the surrounding atmosphere of competition. It will be like a drop of honey in a barrel of pitch. Alongside it and against it there will be all the heathen producers; the "nobility and the bourgeoisie", who, though "rendered powerless", have not been destroyed by the "popular" revolution, will try to trip it up at every step. What do you think, reader: will the "socialist system finally extend to all the functions of the country" under such conditions? We think that it at best will take a very, very long time. And yet, we repeat, Mr. Tikhomirov indicates "such a process of socialisation of labour" only because of its rapid assault

on history. The road that Social-Democracy in all civilised countries has chosen seems to him too "moderate and painstaking". Our author has chosen the "straight path" and has got stuck in the quagmire of petty-bourgeois reforms which display no consistency, originality or daring at all.

But let us not digress. Suppose the socialist organisation of exchange is rapid and successful. Let us see what the practical application of its principles will lead to.

The Torkhovo village commune has entered into a union with the association of the Kimry shoemakers. Their products are exchanged on the basis of "constituted value", the yardstick of which is labour and labour alone. Proudhon has triumphed. But the practical and "prosperous" Torkhovo "householders" raise the question, which kind of labour must serve as the measure of value? The more ideally inclined Kimry people (shoemakers are always philosophers to some extent) have no difficulty in giving the answer. They say that the measure of value must be labour in general, abstract human labour. But the "free corn-growers" are not browbeaten. They say they do not know any such kind of labour and that although it may exist "scientifically", they have to do with the concrete and definite labour of the shoemakers Pyotr, Ivan and Fyodor or a whole association of Pyotrs, Ivans and Fyodors. They are a prey to "bourgeois" doubts and they suppose that to give the Kimry people all the more bread the more time they take to make the boots means to institute a prize for inability, slowness and clumsiness. Exasperated by the lack of understanding displayed by the peasants the shoemakers leave Proudhon aside and appeal, they think, to Marx himself. They say that the measure of the value of their products must be "the socially necessary labour", the average labour necessary to make boots under the present development of technique. But even that argument does not overcome the obstinacy of the Torkhovo peasants. They do not understand how one can determine the exact quantity of socially necessary labour contained in the work of the importunate shoemakers. Then the latter seek salvation in Rodbertus and triumphantly bring along his pamphlet *Der Normalarbeitstag* and his correspondence with the Schwerin architect Peters. The Pomeranian economist proves that it is always possible to determine exactly how much the average workman can and must do in a particular branch of production. That average productive labour must be reckoned as socially necessary labour. He who can exceed that norm will receive more, he who cannot reach it, less; the question seems finally exhausted. But just a minute, exclaim the Torkhovo peasants, who were on the point of yielding. Suppose the average productivity of your labour and ours can be determined.

We hope that the matter will be taken in hand by the state which "promotes" the socialist organisation of exchange. Suppose it takes two days' labour to make a pair of boots. But there are many other shoemakers besides your association. They produce for the market, and you, who have sent us thirty pairs of boots, put thousands of pairs on the market. Imagine that the supply of boots exceeds the demand. Then their exchange value drops too, because each pair of boots will represent only one and a half or three-quarters of a day's socially necessary labour. Do you think we will give you the same amount of corn as before? That would be very unprofitable for us, and charity begins at home, you know. If, on the contrary, not enough boots are made, it will not pay *you* to sell them at the former "fair" socialist price. In general, it seems to us that the basis of fairness is the utilitarian principle and that no bargain can be considered as "fair" which causes detriment to one party or the other. But with the present fluctuation of prices on commodities it is absolutely impossible to balance our mutual interests, since the relation of the individual labour of separate producers or the aggregate labour of a whole association of producers to the *socially necessary labour* is determined only by those fluctuations. So as long as the commodity market dictates to us the conditions for our socialist exchange, the whole of our "agreement" will be nothing but vain beating of the air. It will bring us just as much profit as if we agreed to write our bills in Roman instead of Arabic figures. You shoemakers have long been noted not only for drunkenness, but for a great inclination to fantasy as well, whereas we peasants are reasonable and have no intention of wasting our time on nonsense.

But don't you see that the inconveniences of socialist exchange will exist only until all producers agree to join in, the shoemakers will answer. When that time comes nothing will prevent socialist exchange from extending to all the functions of the country.

Yes, but that is coming at a snail's pace, the corn-growers will object. If everybody agrees to that, we, of course, will not go against the village commune. But until then it doesn't suit us.

The implementation of the "agreement" is thus postponed indefinitely, and meanwhile commodity production takes its normal course and undermines the "relative equality".

It follows from all this that the time of the "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange" will not come until it is possible to remove all the contradictions that have been pointed out. And that will be possible only when the *labour of each individual person assumes a social character*. That can be the case only when the whole of the social production mechanism

constitutes a single planned entity. But then the "organisation of exchange" will be the fifth wheel to a cart, because any exchange has sense only as long as the production mechanism in society consists of separate parts not organically linked, i.e., as long as the labour of the producers has an individual, not a social character. Neither the tribal nor the family community knew any "home exchange" or needed to organise it, for the simple reason that they were based on *organised production*: if they needed anything it was only some kind of *distribution quota*. But with the present development of the productive forces even those quotas can be based on a single principle—that of human requirements. After our excursion along the road of "socialist organisation of exchange" we again come back to our starting-point. We arrive back again at the question: how will the *socialist organisation of production* make its appearance in Russia? We have seen that it will not be introduced by either a provisional or a permanent people's government; we have also seen that neither communal land tenure nor communal cultivation of the soil will lead to it. Moreover, we are now convinced that "socialist organisation in the sphere of home exchange" will not lead to it either. And yet Mr. Tikhomirov prophesied to us the "foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia"; that was the whole idea of his Narodnaya Volya revolution. How, then, will his prophecy come true?

One must have faith, Mr. Tikhomirov exclaims. Faith "in the people, in one's own strength, in the revolution".

"I believe, Lord, help me in my lack of faith! " We know that faith is a beautiful thing; that "it is faith that guides the navigator when, trusting to fate his frail bark, he prefers the fickle movement of the waves to the more solid element, the land". But the same divinely inspired father who makes this apology of faith could also tell us in what unstable equilibrium faith finds itself when it enters into contradiction with reason. And Mr. Tikhomirov's "faith" suffers greatly from that gross defect. He has faith in *his own*, semi-Bakuninist, semi-Tkachovist revolution only because his reason is perfectly satisfied with the Tkachov-Bakunin philosophy. But as soon as his reason becomes more exacting not a trace of *this* faith of his will be left. He will then understand that he was cruelly mistaken when he considered it permissible to talk about the economic revolution knowing nothing at all about the ABC of economics, i.e., having no idea of money, commodity and exchange.

For the rest, we shall not make any special reproach to our author on these last grounds. We will say: his faith has saved him. He has been mistaken only because he "had faith" in Tkachov and Bakunin; not he is to blame, but those who "tempted" him.

The important thing for us is the conclusion from all that has been said. And we can formulate it as follows: *all Mr. Tikhomirov's expectations "from the revolution" are nothing but a continual misunderstanding and a return of advanced Russian thought to the beaten track of Bakuninism.* But "what was is overgrown with the past, and what will be will not be in the old way, but in a new way", as the popular song says. Discredited in the seventies, Bakuninism will not be revived in the eighties. It will not be resuscitated even by men either more eloquent or more noisy than Mr. Tikhomirov.

Those of our readers to whom this conclusion seems convincing can raise a new and last objection. They can say that our arguments are founded on the supposition that Mr. Tikhomirov will only *take* power, but will not *hold* it for any length of time. What will happen if the revolutionaries, instead of following Mr. Tikhomirov's directions, follow those of Tkachov, if they justify the opinion of P. L. Lavrov who, as much as ten years ago, said that "the dictatorship can be wrenched from the hands of the dictators only by a new revolution"?

### 5. PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SEIZURE OF POWER BY THE SOCIALISTS

What will happen then? Oh, then there will be a most disgraceful fiasco for the Russian socialist party! It will be obliged to undertake an "organisation" for which it has neither the necessary strength nor the requisite understanding. Everything will combine to defeat it: its own unpreparedness, the hostility of the higher estates and the rural bourgeoisie, the people's indifference to its *organisational* plans and the underdeveloped state of our economic relations in general. The Russian socialist party will provide but a new historical example corroborating the thought expressed by Engels in connection with the Peasant War in Germany. "The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party is to be compelled to take over a government in an epoch when the movement is not yet ripe for the domination of the class which he represents, and for the realisation of the measures which that domination implies. What he *can* do depends not upon his will but upon the degree of contradiction between the various classes, and upon the level of development of the material means of existence, of the conditions of production and commerce upon which class contradictions always repose. What he *ought* to do, what his party demands of him, again depends not upon him or the stage of development of the class struggle and its conditions. He is bound to the doctrines and demands hitherto propounded which, again, do not proceed from

the class relations *of the moment,** or from the more or less *accidental** level of production and commerce, but from his more or less penetrating insight into the general result of the social and political movement. Thus, he necessarily finds himself in an insolvable dilemma. What he *can* do contradicts all his previous actions, principles and immediate interests of his party, and what he *ought* to do cannot be done. In a word, he is compelled to represent not his party or his class, but the class for whose domination the movement is then ripe. In the interests of the movement he is compelled to advance the interests of an alien class, and to feed his own class with phrases and promises, and with the asseveration that the interests of that alien class are their own interests. Whoever is put into this awkward position is irrevocably lost."[218]

Hence it follows that Mr. Tikhomirov is greatly mistaken when he imagines that the seizure of power by the revolutionaries would be the "starting-point of the revolution". Quite the contrary: such a "seizure" would be a signal for reaction. It would not consolidate the influence of the country's progressive forces, but, having exhausted them in the first sterile effort, it would guarantee the triumph of the conservative and reactionary parties. Not only would the Russian revolution diverge from the example of the French Revolution which our Jacobins treasure and which is the only comprehensible one for them, but in its development it would be the exact opposite of that revolution. Whereas up to a certain time every new wave of the French Revolution brought on to the arena of history a more extreme party, our home-reared Jacobins would reduce to nil the corresponding period of the Russian revolution. Shattered and discredited, they would withdraw from the stage under a hail of hostile accusations and mockery, and the unorganised and disunited masses of the people, having no leaders, would be unable to overcome the systematic resistance of their enemies. At the very best the popular revolt would end in the overthrow of the remnants of the old regime without bringing the working class the reforms which most directly and immediately affect their interests.

As Marx notes, all facts of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce.[219] The history of the French Jacobins is a majestic tragedy, full of burning interest. But the history of the conspiratorial plans of the modern Blanquists (Russian and foreign) *despite the heroism* of individuals remains a farce whose tragicomicality lies in the complete inability of the cast to understand the meaning and character of the impending working-class revolution.

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

*Chapter V*

# TRUE TASKS OF THE SOCIALISTS IN RUSSIA

## 1. SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS AND MAN-HANDLING

And so, "Russian socialism as expressed in the Narodnaya Volya party", will be alien to the great tasks of European socialism until it abandons for ever its intermediary position between Bakunin's anarchism and Tkachov's Blanquism, i.e., until it acknowledges the barrenness of Mr. Tikhomirov's theoretical constructions.

But as these constructions are the last desperate attempt to revive our revolutionary theories of the good old times, our socialism, by raising itself to the height of such an acknowledgement, will cease to be "*Russian*" and will merge with world socialism "as expressed" in the works of Marx and Engels and partly in those of Lassalle.

Its supporters will then understand that:

1. The *communist* revolution of the working class cannot in any way grow out of the petty-bourgeois peasant socialism professed at present by nearly all our revolutionaries.

2. By the inherent character of its organisation the rural commune tends first and foremost to give place to bourgeois, not communist, forms of social life.

3. In the transition to the latter its role will be not *active*, but *passive*; it is not in a position to *advance* Russia on the road to communism; it can only *offer less resistance* to that advance than small individual landownership.

4. The initiative in the communist movement can be assumed only by the working class in our industrial centres, the class.

5. Whose emancipation can be achieved only by its own conscious efforts.

Once they have understood these simple truths, the Russian socialists "from the privileged sections" will put aside all thoughts of seizing power, leaving that to our workers' socialist party of the future. Then their efforts will be directed only *towards the creation of such a party and the removal of all conditions which are unfavourable to its growth and development.*

Needless to say, such activity cannot have anything in common with that uniting of the working class by means of "depriving them of land, fining and man-handling them" which Mr. Tikhomirov speaks of as the outcome—the only possible one at present—for the Russian Social-Democrats.[220] This fiction alone would be enough to perpetuate our author's name in literature if only it were not distinguished, like all his arguments, by its complete lack of originality. In this case our author only repeated what was said and printed long ago by our Narodniks, legal and illegal. Even fiction writers of the would-be-peasant trend have given Marxists the role of myrmidons of capitalism in their writings. Two years ago Mr. Ertel published in *Vestnik Yevropy* a tale called "The Young Lady of Volkonsk".[221] In this amusing story we see a liberal landowner, an enlightened bourgeois, a Narodnik who spends part of his time collecting songs and part making love to the heroine, and finally a Marxist who has dedicated his energies to improving agriculture on the liberal landlord's estate. True, Ertel's Marxist does not like "fining and man-handling" but he waxes enthusiastic over the mere thought of the landlord acquiring a new kind of machine, not to mention a works or factory. He has become so imbued with the interests of capitalism that he hastens to contract a close and fraternal alliance with the enlightened bourgeois already referred to as soon as the latter pays a visit to his protector. Such a "programme" has indeed nothing attractive about it, but that is the fault neither of Marxism in general nor of the above-mentioned Marxist in particular. He could only imagine the kind of programme Mr. Ertel thought fit to bestow on him. It has long been noted that the fruit does not fall far from the tree and that the heroes of fiction are no more ingenious than their authors. To corroborate that old truth we could cite the new proof that Ertel's Narodnik himself says a lot of completely incoherent things; for instance, in a conversation with the Marxist he assures him that Marx "has been dealt the final blow" by the publication of some new articles in Russian journals (not Mr. V. V.'s articles in *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*?[222]). If the reader takes this truth into consideration and exonerates the "Marxist", he will have to be all the more condescendent towards Marxism itself, whose crime consists only in the representatives of Russian exceptionalism not being able to understand and assess it.

If any attention at all is given to this question it is obvious that the Social-Democrats, far from being ever or anywhere capable of allying with the bourgeoisie in enslaving the workers, are, on the contrary, the only ones who can organise serious resistance to capitalist exploitation. To make this palpable let us resort once more to a practical example. Let us remember the contemporary

condition of the handicraft weavers and see what attitude the various socialist groups may and must adopt to them.

It is useless to say much about the anarchists. They would recommend "propaganda by action" to the handicraftsmen and would advise them to blow up some inn or to maim some manufacturer. No systematic mode of action can be indicated by a programme whose main feature is the negation of logical order and system of any kind. The most interesting for us are the Blanquists. In France, Blanqui's native country, his followers have a systematic mode of action only insofar as their programme loses all its distinctive features and merges with that of the "workers' party", as we see in the electoral campaigns, the propaganda of the class struggle, etc., etc. But whenever the Blanquists preserve intact their "particular imprint" their mode of action becomes deprived of any kind of guiding thread and is reduced to the formula: "Let's make a noise, brothers, let's make a noise! "[223] Today they agitate for the presentation of a revolver to Brzozowski[224] as a mark of honour, tomorrow they will demand the abolition of the standing army and the day after they will get excited over a "Chapel of Atonement", and so on. Of course, such "noisy" activity is out of the question for Blanqui's Russian followers, i.e., for open or secret supporters of *Nabat*. The Blanquists' propaganda in Russia is necessarily reduced mainly to "terror" and their organisational work to setting up secret conspiratorial societies. The question is: What role in this can the handicraftsman play as such, i.e., without getting lost among the intelligentsia, but remaining in his craft and maintaining all the relations to capital which history has imposed on him? Only isolated individuals can take part in the terrorist struggle. Now it is not the time to invite the handicraftsmen to unite in a single workers' party, for the "worker capable of class dictatorship hardly exists; hence he cannot be given political power", etc. All the weavers can do is to place their hopes in the future and support the revolutionary party in its striving to seize power in the hope that the result of that seizure will be "the foundation of the socialist organisation of Russia".

*The master will come*
*And settle our quarel.*[225]

But the "master" may be late in coming or may not come at all; he may be deported as soon as he arrives and have no time to lay the famous "foundation". What immediate practical profit will the revolutionary movement then bring the handicraftsmen? Will it make their own condition clear to them? Will it teach them to defend their own interests by union and organisation?

No, it will not! And if it does it will only do so accidentally and

incidentally, since the main efforts of the Blanquists are by no means directed at socialist propaganda among the workers. We have already seen that Tikhomirov's revolution hopes to rally the forces of the people round "points" whose explanation "needs no special propaganda". And yet "special propaganda" is the very thing that is needed for the handicraftsmen's serious and successful struggle against their exploiters. From this it follows that in spite of all their desire to "take the people as they are" the Russian Blanquists are bound to ignore a whole series of the people's practical needs and requirements.

What, then, will be the position adopted towards the handicraftsmen by the Russian Social-Democrat, who has so often and so insistently been accused of fantasy and of being unpractical? Knowing that the emancipation of the workers must be conquered by the workers themselves and that the degree of capitalist exploitation is determined, among other things, by the level of the requirements and development of the exploited, he will endeavour to rouse the workers to independent struggle against capital. As the scattered efforts of the workers in individual factories and workshops cannot guarantee the success of such a struggle, he will have to give it a class character. For that he will have to conduct with great energy and perseverance that "special propaganda" which is called the propaganda of socialism. But we already know that every class struggle is a political struggle. Therefore, our Social-Democrat's propaganda must immediately assume a *social and political* character. He will say to the workers: "A rise in the standard of your material prosperity is possible only with resolute intervention by the state. It can and must help some of you, namely those who have almost become full-fledged factory workers, first and foremost by legislation to protect the interests of the working men, women and children; those among you whose independent small production is still struggling against capitalism can stabilise their position only by means of state credit to workers' associations. But not every state will assume the role of your ally. The state will be wholly and entirely on your side only if it is wholly and entirely yours, a workers' state. That is the aim at which you must direct all your efforts. And as long as it is not attained you must *force* even a state which is hostile to you to make concessions to you. And in so doing, do not forget that the more resolute you are in demands and the stronger your party, the more decisive those concessions will be. So set up such a party, unite in a single, formidable, disciplined force. When you have succeeded in winning the final victory you will throw off completely the yoke of capital, but until then you will at least hold it in check to some extent, you will at least safeguard yourselves and your children against physical, moral and intellec-

tual degeneration. You have only two ways out of your present condition: either struggle or complete subjection to capital. I call to my side those who wish to struggle! "

What do you think, reader? Will such activity be the most practical of all that are possible? You will say that its success will be too slow and unsure. We grant that. But other forms of activity hold out still less certainty of success. Neither anarchist "propaganda by action" nor Blanquist conspiracies will advance the class struggle a single step in Russia, and it is on the course of that struggle that the emancipation of the workers depends.

The Social-Democrat, of course, will do only what he *can*; but the advantage of his position is that *he can do much more for the working class* than any other "socialist-revolutionary". He will bring *consciousness* into the working class, and without that it is impossible to begin a serious struggle against capital. And once he brings that consciousness he will give the revolutionary movement a strength, endurance and intensity that cannot even be dreamed of if one adheres to the old "programmes".

And note that our Social-Democrat has no need at all to "fuss about" (a typically Russian expression! ) "over the creation of the class in whose name he wishes to act". Only somebody who is completely ignorant of the economic relations in Russia today can be in the dark as to the indisputable fact that that class is partly already created and partly *being created* with increasing speed by the implacable course of social development. Only somebody who does not at all understand the historical role of all-levelling capital can compare the condition of our working class with the more or less exceptional position of our "gentry".[226] The French Anglomaniacs at the end of the last century and the beginning of this failed in transplanting into their country England's aristocratic institutions; but the French workers' party can, without in the least falling into utopianism, adhere to the same programme as the British Democratic Federation. Whence this difference? It is a secret which, by the way, Mr. Tikhomirov himself will discover if only he reads attentively the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Recommending to him this wonderful work, we for our part shall say a few words more about the tasks of the socialists of that "trend which considers Russian capitalism a historical inevitability" and to which we ourselves belong.

The most usual argument against that trend—an argument which comes *from the heart* if not "from reason"— is the reference to the impossibility of the revolutionary movement developing rapidly in Russia if its chances depend on the strength and growth of the Russian working class. This consideration gives rise, on the one hand, to the inclination towards exceptionalist programmes, and, on the other, to the fear that we have already mentioned of the revolutionaries themselves having, perhaps, to enter the service

of Russian capital. This argument, of course, will not be long in being brought to bear against our reasoning.

That is why we do not think it superfluous to draw our reader's attention to the strange inconsistency of those from whom we hear objections similar to the one just quoted. That inconsistency is a palpable indication that many of the so-called pupils of Chernyshevsky have mastered only the results of his study and have not formed the slightest idea of his method.

When it is a question of the probable destiny of Russian capitalism or of its influence on our political relations, the Narodniks generally begin by pointing out the supposedly indisputable fact that our capitalism is in the same stage of development as was that "in Western Europe" more than a century ago. From this it is concluded that a whole century must elapse before capitalism renders our history the same "service" as it rendered the history of the "West". That is a long time, and as our intelligentsia have long been in the habit of substituting their revolutionary will for revolutionary development, they look to the village commune and refer to the possibility proved by Chernyshevsky of its immediate transition to a socialist form of communal life. Thus they invoke the probability of the *complete omission* of one phase in social development largely because they do not understand the possibility of that phase *being shortened.* It does not even occur to them that the complete omission of a particular historical period is but a particular case of its shortening, and that by proving the possibility of the former we at the same time, and to a larger extent, affirm the probability of the latter.

We have already seen above from the example of P. N. Tkachov that this gross error in logic underlay our Blanquists' programme. Unfortunately not only the Blanquists repeat it.

Many people think that the social revolution can take place in Russia "now, or in a very remote future, perhaps never"—in other words on the basis either of our present economic relations or of a system whose institution and consolidation are a matter of the most hazy future. But we already know—and this we learn from the history of that same Western Europe—that only the first step was difficult for capitalism and that its uninterrupted advance from "West" to East is taking place with constantly increasing acceleration. Not only the development of capitalism in Russia cannot be as slow as it was in England, for example, its very existence cannot be so lasting as it has been fated to be in the "West European countries". Our capitalism will fade before it has time to blossom *completely*—a guarantee for which we find in the powerful influence of international relations. But neither is it possible to doubt that the course of affairs is advancing to its more or less complete victory. Neither unsubstantiated denials of an

already existing fact nor grieved exclamations about the disintegration of the old, "traditional" forms of the people's communal life—nothing will stop the advance of a country "which has entered the road of the natural law of its development". But this development will be more or less slow, the birth-pangs will be more or less painful, depending on the combination of all the social and international relations of the country in question. The more or less favourable character of that combination for the working class depends, in turn, on the conduct of those who have understood the meaning of the evolution which awaits their country. Capitalism developed in Germany at a time when the working class there was more highly developed than in England or France, and that is why the rebuff given to capitalist exploitation in that country was swifter and more resolute. The German Communists did not even think of entering the service of capitalism. They knew that the more or less early victory of the working class depends, among other things, on the influence that those who understand the meaning of historical development have on that class. They actively set about the work of propaganda among the workers and success exceeded their expectations. Why should we not follow their example?

The manufacturer is just as unthinkable without the worker as the "master", according to Aristotle's remark, without the slave. The development of the bourgeoisie presupposes the development of the working class; the historical growth of capitalism is a two-sided process, each side being the rallying point for the corresponding class in society. On the whole, each of these classes is chained to its place "more securely than Vulcan's chains bound Prometheus to the rock". In capitalist society the commodity dominates the producer and prescribes his behaviour. But some individuals have the possibility to make a conscious choice between the two opposite poles. It is to these individuals that our so-called "intellectuals" belong. It will depend on their own moral and intellectual development what attitude they adopt to the cause of the working class. No kind of sophism can provide any justification for the socialist who deserts to the camp of the exploiters. And the possible sophisms in this case are so wretched and impotent that they cannot for a minute appear convincing to him who can correctly construct even a single syllogism.

Only owing to the rectilinear and angular views typical of our exceptionalists can there possibly be any talk about a logical necessity of the socialist's personal participation in the capitalist development of a country. The exceptionalist is accustomed to substituting his own will for historical development, he is used to contenting himself with a dogmatic outlook instead of a critical one. He judges as follows: capitalism is inevitable as a transitional stage, hence there must be people who will create capitalist rela-

tions. And yet I can no longer serve the knights of primitive accumulation, I cannot "plunder the worker with a clear conscience and energy". What if there are many people like me? What if *all* are imbued with my views? Then there will be no capitalism, which is necessary as a transitional stage, etc. Thus, the poor exceptionalist finds himself involved in a real vicious circle of premises followed by further concentric circles of conclusions. Is it not better to "renounce socialism for a time and apply one's energies to the spreading and strengthening of capitalism, since capitalism is absolutely necessary"? "On what grounds," asks Mr. Tikhomirov, "will we soak the worker himself with socialist ideas which divert the best forces of that class from striving towards the capitalist career which nobody will carry out better than people from among the workers themselves?"[227] We shall have time to return to socialism when capitalism has fulfilled its historic mission, etc. The exceptionalist lives perpetually in a world of ready-made and sharply defined facts and concepts, but he has not the slightest idea of *the process by which* these facts and concepts *came into existence.* That is why, dealing with each of them apart from the others, he completely loses sight of their mutual connection and dependence.

He proceeds from the assumption that it is impossible successfully to spread socialist ideas without the development of capitalism. But in his desire to reduce his opponents' views to the absurd as quickly as possible he soon forgets this assumption and begins to talk about the rapid spread of socialist ideas hindering the development of capitalism. He agrees to consider one phenomenon as a consequence and another as a cause, but he fears that the consequence may appear sooner than the cause and thus prevent it from manifesting its action, i.e., from giving rise to this very consequence. Thus, our exceptionalist falls into the very same pit of absurdity that he so carefully dug for his opponents. All these have to do then is to pull him out by means of the following very simple argument.

If the successful spread of socialist ideas among the popular masses were thinkable, they will say, without the radical revolution in relationships of life, revolution which capitalism gives rise to, there would be no need for talk about any kind of transitional phases in our social development. These phases have a meaning for us only for the very reason that they clear the ground for socialist propaganda. It would, therefore, be ridiculous to fear that our present propaganda will stop the development of capitalism in our country. But, on the other hand, it would be absurd to abandon that propaganda since its very possibility is an indication that history has already prepared a certain part of the ground for it. The sooner we cultivate that part, the sooner our historical de-

velopment will be accomplished and the fewer sacrifices and efforts the road opening out before our people will cost them. We do not wish to go against history, but neither do we wish to lag even a single step behind. As Chernyshevsky puts it, we have no pity for anything which has outlived its time, but we refuse to delay, even for a minute, a matter which already now appears timely and possible. We undertake to spread our ideas, being able to prove mathematically that every step Russia makes on the road of social development brings closer the time when those ideas will triumph and eases our subsequent work.

We differ from you inasmuch as, while the development of the present economic relations is carrying you increasingly farther away from your *commune* ideals, *our communist* ideals are coming closer and closer to us thanks to that same development. You remind one of a man who wishes to go north and gets into a south-bound train; we, on the other hand, know where we are going and board the train of history that takes us at full speed to our goal. It is true that you are confused by the direction we have taken; you think that a socialist may have no sympathy for the development of bourgeois modes of production. But the reason for that is that your logic is too exceptionalist.

You imagine that a socialist, if he remains faithful to his ideals, must everywhere and always hinder the development of capitalism. In that case you are once again arguing in the most primitive manner: to hinder the development of capitalism, you say, means to harm the interests of the employers; and as those interests are diametrically opposed to the workers' everything which is detrimental to capital will be profitable to labour. You do not even suspect that capitalism is opposed *not only to the following, but also to the preceding* link in the chain of historical development; that it fights not only the revolutionary efforts of the proletariat, but the reactionary strivings of the nobility and the petty bourgeoisie too. You burn with hatred for capitalism and are prepared to attack it wherever possible. This zeal often makes you rejoice over those defeats of capitalism which can be useful *only to the reactionaries.* The programme of your "Russian socialism" coincides in that respect with the programme of the German "social-conservatives" and has no trace of progressive tendencies. In order to avoid such miserable metamorphoses you must at last become imbued with the dialectical view of history. You must at the same time support capitalism in its struggle against *reaction* and be the implacable enemy of the same capitalism in its fight against the working-class *revolution* of the future. Only such a programme is worthy of a party which considers itself to be the representative of the most progressive strivings of its time. To adopt this standpoint you need again to abandon your position as a kind of intermediary between the various classes and to merge with the workers.

## 2. PROPAGANDA AMONG THE WORKERS

But is such a merger possible at present? Is propaganda among the workers at all possible in the present political circumstances?

Impossibility is a particular case of difficulty. But there are two forms of difficulty which occasionally become impossibility. One type of difficulty depends on the personal qualities of the agents, on the dominant character of their strivings, views and inclinations. This type of difficulty is created by social surroundings through the intermediary of individuals, and therefore its shades are as varied as the qualities of individuals. What was *difficult* for Goldenberg was *easy* for Zhelyabov; what is impossible for a man of one type of character and convictions may appear necessary and therefore possible, though perhaps difficult, for another with different habits and views.[228] The impossible is often not what is in itself impossible, but what, in the opinion of a certain individual, brings profits which do not compensate for the efforts exerted. But the appraisal of the profits a given political matter brings depends entirely on the agent's view of the matter. Mr. V. V., being convinced that the government itself will undertake the organisation of national production which he thinks desirable, will naturally consider superfluous the sacrifices and efforts which propaganda among the workers will cost at present. Similarly, the conspirator who relies mainly on some "committee" or other will declare without great inner struggle that propaganda is impossible among the workers, who, in his opinion, are *important* "for the revolution" but are far from being the only representatives of the revolution.[229] This is by no means the way the Social-Democrat speaks; he is convinced that it is not a case of the workers being necessary *for the revolution*, but of the revolution being necessary *for the workers*. For him propaganda among the workers will be the main aim of his efforts, and he will not give it up until he has tried all means at his disposal and exerted all the efforts he is capable of. And the more our revolutionary intelligentsia become imbued with truly socialist views, the more possible and the easier work among the workers will seem to them, for the simple reason that their desire for such work will be all the greater.

We do not wish and would not be able to deceive anybody. Everybody knows how many difficulties and persecutions await the propagandist and popular agitator in our country today. But those difficulties must not be exaggerated. Every kind of revolutionary work without exception is made very difficult in our country today by persecution from the police, but that does not mean that the white terror has achieved its aim, i.e., that it has "rooted out sedition". Action calls for counteraction, persecution gives birth to self-sacrifice, and no matter how energetic the reac-

tionary steps taken by the government, the revolutionary will always be able to evade them if only he devotes the necessary amount of energy to that purpose. There was a time when the blowing up of the Winter Palace and the undermining in Malaya Sadovaya would have seemed unpracticable and unfeasible to the revolutionaries themselves.[230] But people were found who did the impossible, carried out the unfeasible. Can such persistence be unthinkable in other spheres of revolutionary work? Are the spies that track down the "terrorists" less skilful and numerous than those who guard our working class against the "pseudo-science of socialism and communism"? Only he can affirm that who has made up his mind to avoid any kind of work that is unpleasant for him.

As far as the qualities of the working class itself are concerned, they do not by any means justify the gloomy prophecies of our pessimists. Properly speaking, hardly anybody has ever undertaken propaganda among the workers in our country with any consistency or system. And yet experience has shown that even the scattered efforts of a few dozen men were sufficient to give a powerful impulse to the revolutionary initiative of our working class. Let the reader remember the Northern Union of Russian Workers, its Social-Democratic programme and its organisation, which was very far-flung for a secret society. This Union has disintegrated, but before accusing the workers of that our intelligentsia should recall whether they did much to support it.[231] Yet it was quite possible and not even so very difficult to support it. In their "Letter to the Editors of *Zemlya i Volya*" representatives of the Union even defined the type of help that was desirable and indispensable for them. They requested co-operation in setting up a secret printshop for the publication of their working-class paper. The "intellectual" society *Zemlya i Volya* considered it untimely to fulfil that request. The main efforts of our "intellectual" socialists were then aimed in a completely different direction. The result of those efforts was not support for the workers but intensification of the police persecutions whose victims, among others, were the workers' organisations. Is it astonishing that, left to their own resources in a conspiracy which they were by no means accustomed to, the Workers' Union broke up into small sections not linked by any unity of plan or of action? But those small circles and groups of socialist workers have still not ceased to exist in our industrial centres; all that is needed to unite them again in one impressive whole is a little conviction, energy and perseverance.

Needless to say the workers' secret societies do not constitute a workers' party. In this sense, those who say that our programme is meant far more for the future than for the present are quite right. But what follows from that? Does it mean we need not set to work immediately on its implementation? The exceptionalists

who argue in that way are again being caught in a vicious circle of conclusions. A widespread working-class movement presupposes at least a temporary triumph of free institutions in the country concerned, even if those institutions are only partly free. But to secure such institutions will in turn be impossible without political support from the most progressive sections of the people. Where is the way out? West European history broke this vicious circle by slow political education of the working class. But there is no limit to our revolutionaries' fear of punctilious old woman history's slowness. They want the revolution as soon as possible, cost what it may. In view of this one can only wonder at them not remembering the proverb: If you want to ride the sledge, pull it up the hill—a proverb whose political meaning amounts to the irrefutable proposition that anyone who wishes to win freedom quickly must try to interest the working class in the fight against absolutism. The development of the political consciousness of the working class is one of the chief forms in the struggle against the "principal enemy which prevents any at all rational approach" to the question of creating in our country a workers' party on the West European pattern. What, indeed, is the meaning of the assurances given by historians that in such and such a historical period the bourgeoisie—or, what comes to almost the same, society—was fighting against absolutism in such and such a country? No more and no less than that the bourgeoisie was inciting and leading the working class to fight, or at least was counting on its support. Until the bourgeoisie were guaranteed that support they were cowardly, because they were powerless. What did the republican bourgeoisie—deservedly deprived of that support—do against Napoleon III? All that they could do was to choose between hopeless heroism and hypocritical approval of the accomplished fact. When did the revolutionary bourgeoisie show courage in 1830 and 1848? When the working class was already getting the upper hand at the barricades. Our "society" cannot count on such support from the workers; it does not even know who the insurgent workers will aim their blows at—the defenders of absolute monarchy or the supporters of political freedom. Hence its timidity and irresoluteness, hence the leaden, hopeless gloom that has come over it now. But if the state of affairs changes, if our "society" is guaranteed the support from at least the city suburbs, you will see that it knows what it wants and will be able to speak to the authorities in the language worthy of a citizen. Remember the Petersburg strikes in 1878-79. Reports about them were far from interesting to the socialists alone. They became the event of the day and nearly all the intelligentsia and thinking people in Petersburg showed an interest in them.[232] Now imagine that those strikes had expressed, besides the antagonism of interests between the employers and the

workers of a given factory, the political discord which was appearing between the Petersburg working *class* and the absolute monarchy. The way the police treated the strikers gave occasion enough for such political discord to be manifested. Imagine that the workers at the Novaya Bumagopryadilnya Mill had demanded, besides a wage rise for themselves, definite political rights for all Russian citizens. The bourgeoisie would then have seen that they had to consider the workers' demands more seriously than before. Besides this, all the liberal sections of the bourgeoisie, whose economic interests would not have been immediately and directly threatened had the strikers been successful, would have felt that their political demands were at last being provided with some solid foundation and that support from the working class made the success of their struggle against absolutism far more probable. The workers' political movement would have inspired new hope in the hearts of all supporters of political freedom. The Narodniks themselves might have directed their attention to the new fighters from among the workers and have ceased their barren and hopeless whimpering over the destruction of the "foundations" they cherished so much.*

The question is who, if not the revolutionary intelligentsia, could promote the political development of the working class? During the 1878-79 strikes even the self-reliant intelligentsia could not boast of clear political consciousness. That was why the strikers could not hear anything at all instructive from them about the connection between the economic interests of the working class and its political rights. Now, too, there is much confusion in the heads of our "revolutionary youth". But we are willing to entertain the hope that confusion will at last give way to the theories of modern scientific socialism and will cease to paralyse the success of our revolutionary movement. Once that fortunate time comes, the workers' groups, too, will not delay in adopting the correct political standpoint. Then the struggle against absolutism will enter a new phase, the last; supported by the working masses, the political demands of the progressive section of our "society" will at last receive the satisfaction they have been waiting for so long.

Had the death of Alexander II been accompanied by vigorous action of the workers in the principal cities of Russia, its results would probably have been more decisive. But widespread agitation among the workers is unthinkable without the help of secret societies previously set up in as large numbers as possible, which

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] The events of last year brilliantly confirm what is said here: the proletariat aroused the political consciousness of Russian "society".

would prepare the workers' minds and direct their movement. It can, therefore, be said that without serious work among the workers, and consequently without conscious support from the secret workers' organisations, the terrorists' most daring feats will never be anything more than brilliant sorties. The "principal enemy" will only be hit, not destroyed by them; that means that the *terrorist* struggle will not achieve its aim, for its only aim must be the complete and merciless destruction of absolutism.

Thus, far from the political situation in Russia today compelling us to renounce activity among the workers, *it is only by means of such activity that we can free ourselves from the intolerable yoke of absolutism.*

Let us now consider another aspect of the matter. The foregoing exposition has once more confirmed for us the truth that the working class is very important "for the revolution". But the socialist must think first and foremost of making the revolution useful for the working population of the country. Leaving the peasantry aside for the time being, we shall note that the more clearly the working class sees the connection between its economic needs and its political rights, the more profit it will derive from its political struggle. In the "West European countries" the proletariat often fought absolutism under the banner and the supreme leadership of the bourgeoisie. Hence its intellectual and moral dependence on the leaders of liberalism, its faith in the exceptional holiness of liberal mottoes and its conviction in the inviolability of the bourgeois system. In Germany it took all Lassalle's energy and eloquence to do as much as only to *undermine* the moral link of the workers with the progressists. Our "society" has no such influence on the working class and there is no need or use for the socialists to create it from scratch. They must show the workers their own, working-class banner, give them leaders from their own, working-class ranks; briefly, they must make sure that not bourgeois "society", but the workers' secret organisations gain dominating influence over the workers' minds. This will considerably hasten the formation and growth of the Russian workers' socialist party, which will be able to win itself a place of honour among the other parties after having, in its infancy, promoted the fall of absolutism and the triumph of political freedom.

In order thus to contribute to the intellectual and political independence of the Russian working class, our revolutionaries need not resort to any artificial measures or place themselves in any false or ambiguous position. All they need is to become imbued with the principles of modern Social-Democracy and, not confining themselves to political propaganda, constantly to impress upon their listeners that "the economical emancipation of the working classes is ... the great end to which every political move-

ment ought to be subordinate as a means".[233] Once it has assimilated this thought, our working class will itself be capable of steering between Scylla and Charybdis, between the political reaction of state socialism and the economic quackery of the liberal bourgeoisie.

In promoting the formation of the workers' party, our revolutionaries will be doing the most fruitful, the most important thing that can be pointed to a "progressive man" in present-day Russia. The workers' party alone is capable of solving all the contradictions which now condemn our intelligentsia to theoretical and practical impotence. We have already seen that the most obvious of those contradictions is at present the necessity to overthrow absolutism and the impossibility of doing so without the support of the people. Secret workers' organisations will solve this contradiction by drawing into the political struggle the most progressive sections of the people. But that is not enough. Growing and strengthening under the shelter of free institutions, the Russian workers' socialist party will solve another, not less important contradiction, this time of the economic character. We all know that the village commune of today must give place to communism or ultimately disintegrate. At the same time, the economic organisation of the commune has no springs to start it off on the road to communist development. While *easing* our peasants' transition to communism, the commune cannot impart to them the *initiative* necessary for that transition. On the contrary, the development of commodity production is more and more undermining the traditional foundations of the commune principle. And our Narodnik intelligentsia cannot remove this basic contradiction in one fell swoop. Some of the village communes are declining, disintegrating before their eyes and becoming a "scourge and a brake" for the poorest of the commune members. Unfortunate as this phenomenon may seem to the intelligentsia, they can do absolutely nothing to help it at present. There is absolutely no link whatever between the "lovers of the people" and the "people". The disintegrating commune is still alone on its side, and the grieving intelligentsia are alone on theirs, neither being able to put an end to this sad state of affairs. How can a way out of this contradiction be found? Will our intelligentsia indeed have to say Bah! to all practical work and console themselves with "utopias" of the kind Mr. G. Uspensky likes? Nothing of the sort! Our Narodniks can at least save a certain number of village communes if only they will consent to appeal to the dialectics of our social development. But such an appeal is also possible only through the intermediary of a workers' socialist party.

The disintegration of our village commune is an indisputable fact. But the speed and intensity of the process differ according to

localities in Russia. To halt it completely in places where the commune is freshest and most stable, our Narodniks must use the forces now being freed by the breaking up of communes in gubernias where industry is more developed. These forces are nothing else than the forces of the rising proletariat. They, and they alone, can be the link between the peasantry and the socialist intelligentsia; they, and they alone, can bridge the historical abyss between the "people" and the "educated" section of the population. Through them and with their help socialist propaganda will at last penetrate into every corner of the Russian countryside. Moreover, if they are united and organised at the right time into a single workers' party, they can be the main bulwark of socialist agitation in favour of economic reforms which will protect the village commune against general disintegration. And when the hour of the final victory of the workers' party over the upper sections of society strikes, once more that party, and only that party, will take the initiative in the socialist organisation of national production. Under the influence of—and, if the case presents itself, under pressure from that party—the village communes still existing will in fact begin the transition to a higher, communist form. Then the advantages offered by communal land tenure will become not only *possible*, but *actual*, and the Narodnik dreams of our peasantry's exceptional development will come true, at least as far as a certain portion of the peasantry is concerned.

Thus *the forces which are being freed by the disintegration of the village commune in some places in Russia can safeguard it against total disintegration in other places.* All that is necessary is the ability to make correct and timely use of those forces and to direct them, i.e., to organise them as soon as possible into a Social-Democratic party.

But, the champions of exceptionalism may object, the small landowners will offer vigorous resistance to the socialist tendencies of the workers' party. Most probably they will, but, on the other hand, there will be somebody to fight that resistance. The appearance of a class of small landowners is accompanied by the growth in numbers and strength of the revolutionary proletariat, which will at last impart life and movement to our clumsy state apparatus. Resistance need not be feared where there is a historical force capable of overcoming it; this is just as true as, on the other hand, a presumed absence of resistance is by no means a fact to rejoice at when the people are not capable of *beginning* the socialist movement, when the heroic exertions of separate individuals are shattered by the inertia of the obscure and ignorant masses.

It must be borne in mind, moreover, that this workers' party will also be for us a vehicle of influence from the West. The working man will not turn a deaf ear to the movement of the European

proletariat, as could easily be the case with the peasant. And the united forces of the home and international movement will be more than enough to defeat the reactionary strivings of the small landowners.

So once more: *The earliest possible formation of a workers' party is the only means of solving all the economic and political contradictions of present-day Russia.* On that road success and victory lie ahead; all other roads can lead only to defeat and impotence.

And what about terror? the Narodovoltsi will exclaim. And the peasants? the Narodniks, on the other hand, will shout. You are prepared to be reconciled with the existing reaction for the sake of your plans for a distant future, some will argue. You are sacrificing concrete interests for the victory of your doctrines like narrow-minded dogmatists, others will say horrified. But we ask our opponents to be patient for a while and we shall try to answer at least some of the reproaches showered on us.

First of all, we by no means deny the important role of the terrorist struggle in the present emancipation movement. It has grown naturally from the social and political conditions under which we are placed, and it must just as naturally promote a change for the better. But in itself so-called terror only destroys the forces of the government and does little to further the conscious organisation of its opponents. The terrorist struggle does not widen the sphere of our revolutionary movement; on the contrary, it reduces it to heroic actions by small partisan groups. After a few brilliant successes our revolutionary party has apparently weakened as a result of the great tension and cannot recover without an affluence of fresh forces from new sections of the population. We recommend it to turn to the working class as to the most revolutionary of all classes in present-day society. Does that mean that we advise it to suspend its active struggle against the government? Far from it. On the contrary, we are pointing out a way of making the struggle broader, more varied, and therefore more successful. But it goes without saying that we cannot consider the cause of the working-class movement from the standpoint of how important the workers are "for the revolution". We wish to make the very victory of the revolution profitable to the working population of our country, and that is why we consider it necessary to further the intellectual development, the unity and organisation of the working population. By no means do we want the workers' secret organisations to be transformed into secret nurseries rearing terrorists from among the workers. But we understand perfectly that the political emancipation of Russia coincides completely with the interests of the working class, and that is why we think that the revolutionary groups existing in that class must co-operate in the political struggle of our intelligentsia by propaganda, agitation, and

occasionally open action in the street. It would be unjust to leave all the hardships of the emancipation movement to be borne by the working class, but it is perfectly just and expedient to bring the workers, as well as others, into it.

There are other sections of the population for whom it would be far more convenient to undertake the terrorist struggle against the government. But outside the workers there is no section that could at the decisive minute knock down and kill off the political monster already wounded by the terrorists. Propaganda among the workers will not remove the necessity for terrorist struggle, but it will provide it with opportunities which have so far never existed.*

So much for the terrorists. Let us now speak to the Narodniks.

They are grieved at all programmes in which revolutionary work among the peasants is not given the chief place. But although such work is all that their own programme contains, the result is that

*The people's gains are still but small,*
*Their life's not easier yet at all!*

Since the late seventies, i.e., since the splitting of the Zemlya i Volya society, revolutionary work among the peasants, far from being extended, has become increasingly narrow. At present it would not be a great error to rate it at nil. And yet all this time there has been no lack of people who assumed that the main stress of our entire revolutionary movement should be immediately transferred to the peasantry. Whence this contradiction? It would be unjust to suspect the Narodniks of inactivity, cowardice or lack or resolution. So one must think that they have set themselves a task which they cannot carry out in the present circumstances, that it is not with the peasantry that our intelligentsia must begin its merger with the people. That is in fact what we think. But that is far from meaning that we *attribute no importance* to revolutionary work among the peasants. We note the fact and try to understand what it really means, convinced that once they have understood the true reasons for their failure the Narodniks will manage to avoid repeating it. It seems to us that the formation of a workers' party is what would free us from the contradiction as a result of which in Russia Narodniks have been able to exist for the last seven years only in a state of complete alienation from the people.

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] On the basis of this passage it was subsequently said that the Emancipation of Labour group sympathised with "terrorism". But as long as it has existed that group has held that terrorism is *inconvenient* for the workers; it was certainly useless at that time to pronounce against the terrorist activity of the intelligentsia who believed in it as in a god.

How the workers' party will do this can be seen from what has been set forth above. But it will do no harm to say a few words more on this subject.

To have influence on the numerous obscure masses one must have a certain minimum of forces without which all efforts of separate individuals will never achieve any more than absolutely negligible results. Our revolutionary intelligentsia have not that minimum, and that is why their work among the peasants has left practically no trace. We point out to them the industrial workers as the intermediary force able to promote the intelligentsia's merger with the "people". Does that mean that we ignore the peasants? By no means. On the contrary, it means that we are looking for more effective means of influencing the peasantry.

Let us continue. Besides the definite minimum of forces necessary to influence the sections in question, there must be a certain community of character between the sections themselves and the people who appeal to them. But our revolutionary intelligentsia has no community with the peasantry either in its way of thinking or its fitness for physical labour. In this respect, too, the industrial worker is an intermediary between the peasant and the "student". He must, therefore, be the link between them.

Finally, one must not lose sight of still another, far from negligible, circumstance. No matter what is said about the alleged exclusively agrarian character of present-day Russia, there is no doubt that the "countryside" cannot attract all the forces of our revolutionary intelligentsia. That is unthinkable if only because it is in the town, not in the countryside, that the intelligentsia is recruited, that it is in the town, not in the countryside, that the revolutionary seeks asylum when he is persecuted by the police, even if it is for propaganda among the peasants. Our principal cities are, therefore, the centres in which there is always a more or less considerable contingent of the intelligentsia's revolutionary forces. It goes without saying that the intelligentsia cannot avoid being influenced by the town or living its life. For some time this life has assumed a political character. And we know that despite the most extreme "Narodnik" programmes our intelligentsia have not been able to hold out against the current and have found themselves forced to take up the political struggle. As long as we have no workers' party, the revolutionaries "of the town" are compelled to appeal to "society", and therefore they are, in fact, its revolutionary representatives. The "people" are relegated to the background and thus not only is the establishment of a link between them and the intelligentsia delayed, but even the link which formerly existed between the intellectual revolutionaries "of the town" and those "of the countryside" is severed. Hence the lack of mutual understanding, the disagreements and differences. This

would not be the case if the political struggle in the towns were mainly of a working-class character. Then the only difference between the revolutionaries of the town and those of the countryside would be in the *place*, and not the *substance* of their activity; both types of revolutionaries would be representatives of the *popular* movement in its various forms, and the socialists would not need to sacrifice their lives in the interests of a "*society*" which is alien to their views.

Such harmony is not an unfeasible utopia. It is not difficult to realise in practice. If at present it is impossible to find ten Narodniks who have settled in the countryside because of their programme, because of their duty to the *revolution*, on the other hand, there are quite a number of educated and sincere democrats who live in the countryside because of their duty in the service of the *state*, because of their profession. Many of these people do not sympathise with our political struggle *in its present form* and at the same time do not undertake systematic revolutionary work among the peasantry for the simple reason that they see no party with which they could join efforts, and we know that a single man on a battlefield is not a soldier. Begin a social and political movement among the workers, and you will see that these rural democrats will little by little come over to the standpoint of Social-Democracy and in their turn will serve as a link between the town and the countryside.

Then our revolutionary forces will be distributed in the following very simple manner: those who are obliged by professional duties to be in the countryside will go there. It goes without saying that there will be a fair number of them. At the same time, those who have the possibility of settling in towns or industrial centres will direct their efforts at work among the working class and endeavour to make it the vanguard of the Russian Social-Democratic army.

Such is our programme. It does not sacrifice the countryside to the interests of the town, does not ignore the peasants for the sake of the industrial workers. *It sets itself the task of organising the social-revolutionary forces of the town to draw the countryside into the channel of the world-wide historic movement.*

*Chapter VI*

## CONCLUSION

We now permit ourselves to say a few concluding words to the reader.

In all that concerns the defence of our *standpoint* we should like to appeal to his reason, not to his feelings. Valuing exclusively the interests of truth we shall succeed in reconciling ourselves to it, even if it disagrees with the convictions which are dearest of all to us. That is why we have only one request to the reader: let him criticise our arguments with the attention that the revolutionary questions we deal with deserve. Whether he approves or disapproves of the solutions we offer, in any case, Russian revolutionary thought will only gain from the new review of the results it has achieved.

But there is another aspect of the matter, and it concerns not the substance of our views but the form in which we chose to expound them. We—or I should say *I*—may be accused of excessive severity, a hostile attitude to groups which have rendered no small services to the cause of the revolution and, therefore, beyond doubt, deserve respect.

"Bachelors" of science with whom I am already familiar may even go further and accuse me of a hostile attitude to the Russian revolution.

In all that concerns *this* question, I consider it will not be superfluous to appeal to the feelings of the reader that we call justice and impartiality.

Now, in the concluding chapter as in the beginning, in the "Letter to P. L. Lavrov", I can repeat in all sincerity that my wishes for Narodnaya Volya are not of failure but of further success. And if I was severe towards the literary exercises of one of its representatives, there were enough reasons for that which have nothing in common with hostility towards the revolution or any revolutionary group.*

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Here is another thing to be noted: I was well aware that Mr. Tikhomirov was completely "disappointed" in the programme of Narodnaya Volya long before his article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" was published. That is why his defence of it was outrageously hypocritical.

One must first of all bear in mind that a revolutionary is not the revolution and that *theories of revolutionaries* far from always and not in all their parts deserve the name of *revolutionary theories.*

I by no means deny the importance and usefulness of the revolutionary actions carried out by the Narodovoltsi; but I do not interpret them in the same way as the official representatives of the "party". I see them in a light which irritates the eyes of Narodnaya Volya publicists. My view of the significance of these actions was made sufficiently clear in the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle,* where I said that "Narodnaya Volya cannot find a justification for itself—nor should it seek one—outside modern scientific socialism".

It pleased Mr. Tikhomirov to express another view on this question, a view which he thought more correct and more revolutionary.

Grieved by the fact that in "certain sections of the socialists"... the "political democratic idea"... "has taken forms which distort its very substance", he decided to improve the matter and in the article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution? " he endeavoured to adapt his party's activity to the theories of Bakunin and Tkachov. Thanks to such a twist, the "Narodnaya Volya party's" official theories ceased to be revolutionary and could be criticised just as severely as all other phenomena of the now more and more intensifying Russian literary reaction, without any harm to the revolution.

Reactionary theories in general are not attractive, but they are not dangerous as long as they come forward under their own banner. They become dangerous poison, real venom of the mind only when they begin to disguise themselves under a revolutionary banner. In such a case it is not the one who tears the revolutionary mask off them but the one who remains indifferent to the sight of intentional or unintentional literary forgery who is the opponent of the revolution.

I am incapable of such indifference, and I do not try to display it either. Hating reaction generally, I hate it all the more when it attracts people over to it in the name of the revolution. Neither can I confess to excessive severity towards Mr. Tikhomirov until the following two propositions are proved:

1. That Mr. Tikhomirov's theories are not a new edition of the teachings of Bakunin and Tkachov.

2. That these teachings cannot be acknowledged as reactionary in comparison with Karl Marx's scientific socialism.

Let my opponents try to prove these two propositions and not show any haste in accusing me of treason towards the Russian revolution. I myself will declare my severity out of place if their arguments are convincing.

But for that it is necessary, among other things, to base the argument on the very propositions of Mr. Tikhomirov which served as the occasion for my polemic with him. The general trend of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* is so vague and ill-defined that the Bakuninist and Tkachovian tendencies of the article "What Can We Expect from the Revoltuion?" cannot prevent Marxist tendencies from being manifest in articles by the other contributors, and perhaps—unexpected as this may be—in new articles by Mr. Tikhomirov. There is nothing impossible in the fact that our author will remember the part of *Vestnik*'s programme which lies on the other side of the fatal "but" and will write a few eloquent pages on the *only* road leading to the achievement of the general "socialist aims". But such a change of front will not weaken the reactionary tendency of the article we have analysed; it will only prove that our author has no definite views.

I wish to remind those readers who are more impartial than Mr. Tikhomirov's defenders that one can sympathise from the bottom of one's heart not only with the revolution in general, but also with the revolutionary "Narodnaya Volya party" in particular, and at the same time think that that party's most urgent task, the first and most necessary success, must be an *unconditional break with its present theories.*

The supporters of Narodnaya Volya are wrong when they think that to effect such a break would be to betray the memory of the heroes of the Russian terrorist struggle. The most outstanding terrorists began with a critical attitude to the then generally recognised "programmes" of revolutionaries. Why then should people who are following in their footsteps be unable to adopt a similar critical attitude to the "programmes" of their time; why do they think that Zhelyabov's critical thought should stop before Mr. Tikhomirov's dogmatic outlook?

That is a question which the young members of our Narodnaya Volya would do well to think over.*

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* [Note to the 1905 edition.] I have so far received no serious answer to my book. In the fifth issue of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* there was, it is true, a short bibliographical note[234] which said that to answer me would mean first and foremost to speak of my *personal character.* Beyond this *hint,* which was obviously intended to be *spiteful,* the editors of *Vestnik* said *absolutely nothing* in defence of Mr. Tikhomirov's expectations from the revolution, but some years later Mr. Tikhomirov himself stated that those expectations were unrealistic and admitted that already at the time of his arrival abroad he had considered his "party" as a *corpse.* That was an unexpected but very significant conclusion to the whole of our argument. All that remained for me was to sum up, which I did in the article "Inevitable Change" published in the symposium *Sozial-Demokrat,* and in the pamphlet *A New Champion of Autocracy, or Mr. L. Tikhomirov's Grief,* Geneva, 1889.[235]

# PROGRAMME OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC EMANCIPATION OF LABOUR GROUP

The *Emancipation of Labour* group sets itself the aim of spreading socialist ideas in Russia and working out the elements for organising a Russian workers' *socialist party*.

The essence of its outlook can be expressed in the following few propositions:*

I. The economic emancipation of the working class will be achieved only by the transfer to collective ownership by the working people of all means and products of production and the organisation of all the functions of social and economic life in accordance with the requirements of society.

II. The modern development of technology in civilised societies not only provides the *material possibility* for such an organisation but makes it *necessary and inevitable* for solving the contradictions which hinder the quiet and all-round development of those societies.

III. This radical economic revolution will entail most fundamental changes in the entire constitution of social and international relationships.

Eliminating the class struggle by destroying the classes themselves; making the economic struggle of individuals impossible and unnecessary by abolishing commodity production and the competition connected with it; briefly, putting an end to the struggle for existence between individuals, classes and whole societies, it renders unnecessary all those social organs which have developed as the weapons of that struggle during the many centuries it has been proceeding.

Without falling into utopian fantasies about the social and international organisation of the future, we can already now foretell the abolition of the most important of the organs of chronic struggle inside society, namely, *the state, as a political organisation opposed to society* and safeguarding mainly the interests of its ruling section. In exactly the same way we can already now

* *Note 1.* We by no means regard the programme which we submit to the judgement of the comrades as something finished and complete, not subject to partial changes or additions. On the contrary, we are ready to introduce into it any kind of corrections provided they do not contradict the basic concepts of scientific socialism and that they correspond to the practical conclusions following from these concepts concerning the work of the socialists in Russia.

foresee the international character of the impending economic revolution. The contemporary development of international exchange of products necessitates the participation of all civilised societies in this revolution.

That is why the socialist parties in all countries acknowledge the international character of the present-day working-class movement and proclaim the principle of international solidarity of producers.

The *Emancipation of Labour* group also acknowledges the great principles of the former *International Working Men's Association* and the identity of interests among the working people of the whole civilised world.

IV. Introducing *consciousness* where there now reigns *blind economic necessity*, replacing the present mastery of the *product* over the *producer* by that of the *producer* over the *product*, the socialist revolution simplifies all social relationships and gives them a purpose, at the same time providing each citizen with the real possibility of participating directly in the discussion and decision of all social matters.

This direct participation of citizens in the management of all social matters presupposes the abolition of the modern system of political representation and its replacement by *direct popular legislation.* [236]

In their present-day struggle, the socialists must bear in mind this necessary political reform and aim at its realisation by all means in their power.

This is all the more necessary as the political self-education and the rule of the working class are a necessary preliminary condition of its economic emancipation. Only a completely *democratic* state can carry out the economic revolution which conforms to the interests of the producers and demands their intelligent participation in the organisation and regulation of production.

At present the working class in the advanced countries is becoming increasingly clear on the necessity of the social and political revolution referred to and is organising into a special labour party which is hostile to all parties of exploiters.

Being accomplished according to the principles of the *International Working Men's Association,* this organisation, however, has mainly in view the achievement by the workers of political domination within each of the respective states. "The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."

This introduces an element of variety into the programmes of the socialist parties in the different states, compelling each of them to conform to the social conditions in its country.

It goes without saying that the practical tasks, and consequently the programmes of the socialists, are bound to be more original and complicated in countries where capitalist production has not yet become dominant and where the working masses are oppressed under a double yoke—that of rising capitalism and that of obsolescent patriarchal economy.

In those countries, the socialists must at the same time organise the workers for the struggle against the bourgeoisie and wage war against the survivals of old pre-bourgeois social relationships, which are harmful both to the development of the working class and to the welfare of the whole people.

That is precisely the position of the Russian socialists. The working population of Russia is oppressed directly by the whole burden of the enormous police-despotic state and at the same time suffers all the miseries inherent in the epoch of capitalist *accumulation* and in places—in our industrial centres—it suffers from the oppression of capitalist *production* which is not as yet limited by any decisive intervention of the state or by the organised resistance of the workers themselves. Present-day Russia is suffering—as Marx once said of the West European continent—not only from the development of capitalist production, but also from insufficiency of that development.

One of the most harmful consequences of this backward state of production was and still is the underdevelopment of the middle class, which, in our country, is incapable of taking the *initiative* in the struggle against absolutism.

That is why the socialist intelligentsia has been obliged to head the present-day emancipation movement, whose immediate task must be to set up free political institutions in our country, the socialists on their side being under the obligation to provide the working class with the possibility to take an active and fruitful part in the future political life of Russia.[237]

The first means to achieve this aim must be agitation for a democratic constitution guaranteeing:

1. The right to vote and to be elected to the Legislative Assembly as well as to the provincial and communal self-government bodies for every citizen who has not been sentenced by court to deprivation of political rights* for certain *shameful* activities strictly specified by law.

2. A money payment fixed by law for the representatives of the people, which will allow them to be elected from the poorest classes of the population.

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* *Note 2.* Such actions may include, for example, *bribing at elections,* outrageous repression of workers by employers, etc.

3. Inviolability of the person and home of citizens.
4. Unlimited freedom of conscience, speech, the press, assembly and association.
5. Freedom of movement and of employment.
6. Complete equality of all citizens irrespective of religion and racial origin.*
7. The replacement of the standing army by general arming of the people.
8. A revision of all our civil and criminal legislation, the abolition of division according to estates and of punishments incompatible with human dignity.

But this aim will not be achieved, the political initiative of the workers will be unthinkable, if the fall of absolutism finds them completely unprepared and unorganised.

That is why the socialist intelligentsia has the obligation to organise the workers and *prepare* them as far as possible for the struggle against the present-day system of government as well as against the future bourgeois parties.

The intelligentsia must *immediately set to work to organise* the workers in our industrial centres, as the foremost representatives of the whole working population of Russia, in secret groups with links between them and a definite social and political programme corresponding to the present-day needs of the entire class of producers in Russia and the basic tasks of socialism.

Understanding that the details of such a programme can be worked out only in the future and by the working class itself when it is called on to participate in the political life of the country and is united in its own party, the *Emancipation of Labour* group presumes that the main points of the *economic section* of the workers' programme must be the *demands:*

1. Of a radical revision of our agrarian relations, i.e., the conditions for the redemption of the land and its allotment to peasant communes. Of the right to renounce allotments and leave the commune for those peasants who find this convenient for themselves, etc. [238]
2. Of the abolition of the present system of dues and the institution of a progressive taxation system.
3. Of the legislative regulation of relations between workers (in town and country) and employers, and the organisation of the appropriate *inspection with representation of the workers.*

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* *Note 3.* This point is logically included in §4, which requires, among other things, complete freedom of conscience; but we consider it necessary to set it in relief in view of the fact that there are in our country whole sections of the population, for instance the Jews, who do not even enjoy the wretched "rights" made available to other "residents".

4. Of state assistance for production *associations* organised in all possible branches of agriculture, the mining and manufacturing industries (by peasants, miners, factory and plant workers, craftsmen, etc.).[239]

The *Emancipation of Labour* group is convinced that not only the success but even the mere possibility of such a purposeful movement of the Russian working class depends in a large degree upon the work referred to above being done by the intelligentsia among the working class.

But the group assumes that the intelligentsia themselves must as a preliminary step adopt the standpoint of modern scientific socialism, adhering to the Narodnaya Volya traditions only inasmuch as they are not opposed to its principles.

In view of this, the Emancipation of Labour group sets itself the aim of spreading modern socialism in Russia and preparing the working class for a conscious social and political movement; to this aim it devotes all its energies, calling upon our revolutionary youth for help and collaboration.

Pursuing this aim by all means in its power, the Emancipation of Labour group at the same time recognises the necessity for terrorist struggle against the absolute government[240] and differs from the Narodnaya Volya party only on the question of the so-called seizure of power by the revolutionary party and of the *tasks of the immediate activity of the socialists among the working class.*

The Emancipation of Labour group *does not in the least ignore the peasantry, which constitutes an enormous portion of Russia's working population.* But it assumes that the work of the intelligentsia, especially under present-day conditions of the social and political struggle, must be aimed first of all at the most developed part of this population, which consists of the industrial workers. Having secured the powerful support of this section, the socialist intelligentsia will have far greater hope of success in extending their action to the peasantry as well, especially if they have by that time won freedom of agitation and propaganda. Incidentally, it goes without saying that the distribution of the forces of our socialists *will have to be changed if an independent revolutionary movement becomes manifest among the peasantry*, and that even at present people who are in direct touch with the peasantry could, by their work among them, render an important service to the socialist movement in Russia. The Emancipation of Labour group, far from rejecting such people, will exert all its efforts to agree with them on the basic propositions of the programme.[241]

*Geneva, 1884*

# SECOND DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

The Russian Social-Democrats, like the Social-Democrats in other countries, aim at the complete emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital. This emancipation can be achieved by the transfer to social ownership of *all the means and objects* of production, a transfer which will entail:

a) the abolition of the present commodity production (i.e., the purchase and sale of products on the market) and

b) its replacement by a new system of social production according to a previously drawn-up plan with a view to satisfying the requirements both of society as a whole and of each one of its members within the limits permitted by the condition of the productive forces at the given time.

This communist revolution will give rise to the most radical changes in the whole constitution of social and international relationships.

Replacing the present mastery of the product over the producer by that of the producer over the product, it will introduce consciousness where there now reigns blind economic necessity; by simplifying and giving purpose to all social relationships it will at the same time provide each citizen with the real economic possibility of participating directly in the discussion and decision of all social matters.

This direct participation of citizens in the management of social affairs presupposes the abolition of the present system of political representation and its replacement by *direct popular legislation.* [242]

Moreover, the international character of the impending economic revolution may now already be foreseen. Given the present development of international exchange, it is possible to consolidate this revolution only by all or at least several of the civilised societies taking part in it. Hence follows the *solidarity of interests between producers of all countries*, already recog-

nised and proclaimed by the International Working Men's Association.

But as the emancipation of the workers must be the matter of the workers themselves, as the interests of labour in general are diametrically opposed to the interests of the exploiters, and as, therefore, the higher classes will always hinder the above described reorganisation of the social relationships, the necessary preliminary condition for this reorganisation is *the seizure of political power by the working class in each of the countries concerned.* Only this temporary domination of the working class can paralyse the efforts of counter-revolution and put an end to the existence of classes and their struggle.

This political task introduces an element of variety into the programmes of the Social-Democrats in the different states, according to the social conditions in each of them individually.

The practical tasks, and consequently the programmes of the Social-Democrats, are bound to be, naturally, more complicated in countries where modern capitalist production is as yet only striving to become dominant and where the working masses are oppressed by a double yoke—that of rising capitalism and that of obsolescent patriarchal economy. In such countries the Social-Democrats must strive for such forms of social structure, as transitional stages, as are already in existence in the advanced countries and are necessary for the further development of the working-class party. Russia is in precisely such a position. Capitalism has achieved enormous success there since the abolition of serfdom. The old system of natural economy is giving place to commodity production and thereby opening up an enormous home market for large-scale industry. The patriarchal, communal forms of peasant land tenure are rapidly disintegrating, the village commune is being transformed into a mere means of enslaving the peasant population to the state and in many localities it is also an instrument for the exploitation of the poor by the rich. At the same time, binding to the land the interests of an enormous section of the producers, it hinders their intellectual and political development by limiting their outlook to the narrow bounds of village traditions. The Russian revolutionary movement, whose victory would be first and foremost profitable to the peasants, finds among them hardly any support, sympathy or understanding. The main bulwark of absolutism is precisely the political indifference and intellectual backwardness of the peasantry. An inevitable consequence of this is the powerlessness and timidity of those educated sections of the higher classes whose material, intellectual and moral interests are in contradiction with the present political system. Raising their voice in the name

of the people, they are surprised to see the people indifferent to their calls. Hence the instability of our intelligentsia's political outlooks and occasionally their discouragement and complete disappointment.[243]

Such a state of affairs would be absolutely hopeless if the movement of Russian economic relationships referred to had not created new opportunities of success for those defending the interests of the working people. The disintegration of the village commune is creating in our country a new class of industrial proletariat. Being more receptive, mobile and developed, this class responds to the call of the revolutionaries more easily than the backward rural population. Whereas the ideal of the village commune member lies in the past, under conditions of patriarchal economy, the political complement of which was tsarist autocracy, the lot of the industrial worker can be improved only thanks to the development of the more modern and free forms of communal life. In this class our people find themselves for the first time under economic conditions which are common to all civilised peoples and it is therefore only through the intermediary of this class that the people can take part in the progressive strivings of civilised humanity. On these grounds the Russian Social-Democrats consider as their first and principal obligation the formation of a revolutionary workers' party. The growth and development of such a party, however, will find a very powerful obstacle in modern Russian absolutism.

That is why the struggle against absolutism is obligatory even for those working-class groups which are now the embryo of the future Russian Workers' party. The overthrow of absolutism must be the first of their political tasks.

The principal means for the political struggle of the workers' groups against absolutism, in the opinion of the Russian Social-Democrats, is agitation among the working class and the further spread of socialist ideas and revolutionary organisations among that class. Closely bound together in a single harmonic whole, these organisations, not content with isolated clashes with the government, will not delay in passing, at the convenient time, to general and resolute attacks upon it and in this they will not stop even at so-called acts of terrorism if that proves to be necessary in the interests of the struggle.[244]

The aim of the struggle of the workers' party against absolutism is to win a democratic constitution which shall guarantee:

1) The right to vote and be elected to the Legislative Assembly as well as to the provincial and communal self-government bodies, for every citizen who has not been sentenced by court to deprivation of his political rights for certain shameful activities strictly specified by law.

2) A money payment fixed by law for the representatives of the people, which will allow them to be elected from the poorest classes of the population.

3) Universal, civil, free and compulsory education, the state being obliged to provide poor children with food, clothing and school requisites.

4) Inviolability of the person and home of citizens.

5) Unlimited freedom of conscience, speech, the press, assembly and association.

6) Freedom of movement and of employment.

7) Complete equality of all citizens irrespective of religion and racial origin.

8) The replacement of the standing army by general arming of the people.

9) A revision of all our civil and criminal legislation, the abolition of division according to estates and of punishments incompatible with human dignity.

Basing itself on these fundamental political demands, the workers' party puts forward[245] a number of immediate economic demands, such as:

1) Radical revision of our agrarian relations, i.e., the conditions for the redemption of land and its allotment to peasant communes. The right to renounce allotments and leave the village communes for those peasants who find this convenient for themselves, etc.[246]

2) The abolition of the present system of dues and the institution of a progressive taxation system.

3) Legislative regulation of relations between workers (in town and country) and employers, and the organisation of the appropriate *inspection with representation of the workers.*[247]

4) State assistance for production *associations* organised in all possible branches of agriculture, the mining and manufacturing industries (by peasants, miners, factory and plant workers, craftsmen, etc.).[248]

These demands are as favourable to the interests of the peasants as to those of the industrial workers; hence, aiming at their implementation, the workers' party will open for itself a broad road for an approach to the agrarian population. The proletarian ejected from the countryside as an impoverished member of the village commune will return there as a Social-Democratic agitator. His appearance in that role will change the present hopeless fate of the village commune. The disintegration of the latter is unavoidable only as long as this very disintegration has not created a new popular force capable of putting an end to the reign of capitalism. That force is the working class and the poorest peasantry drawn in its wake.

*Note.* As is seen from above, the Russian Social-Democrats presume that the work of the intelligentsia, particularly under present-day conditions of social and political struggle, must be aimed first at the most advanced part of the working population, which consists of the industrial workers. Having secured the powerful support of this section, the Social-Democrats may have far greater hope of success in extending their action to the peasantry, especially when they have won freedom of agitation and propaganda. Incidentally, it goes without saying that even at present, people who are in direct touch with the peasantry could, by their work among them, render an important service to the socialist movement in Russia. The Social-Democrats, far from rejecting such people, will exert all their efforts to agree with them on the basic principles and methods of their work.[249]

# A NEW CHAMPION OF AUTOCRACY, OR MR. L. TIKHOMIROV'S GRIEF

(Reply to the Pamphlet:
*Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary)*

## FROM THE AUTHOR

The present pamphlet is being published later than it should have been. Illness prevented me from finishing it in time. All the same I am publishing it because Mr. Tikhomirov's fall is still a question of actuality for many readers.

*Baugy, March 3, 1889*

### I

If Mr. Tikhomirov were noted for the same indiscriminate love of fame as Herostratus, he would naturally bless the day and the hour when it occurred to him to write the pamphlet: *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary.* For that pamphlet made him the centre of general attention. His fame, which even before was not negligible, grew enormously. But Mr. Tikhomirov is not one who can be satisfied with the fame of the insane Greek; he tries to *instruct,* not to *surprise,* or if you like, he must *surprise* his reader by the *instructiveness* of his story and the extraordinary maturity of his political tendencies, those "fully formed ideas on social order and firm state authority" which "have long made" him "notable" among revolutionaries.* Naturally he does not refuse to scourge himself for his former revolutionary errings. Such a refusal is incompatible with the "fully formed" ritual of setting the revolutionary on the road of truth. But Mr. Tikhomirov is very skilful in the way he carries out the necessary ceremony of self-flagellation. While making an appearance that he is going to scourge himself, he, instead, manages to lash his former comrades the revolutionaries in general and that revolutionary "groups" which were able for a time to "tie and prostrate" even such a remarkable man as he. Decency is fully observed but at the same time the self-flagellation, far from inflicting pain on our repentant author, is a pleasant exercise which gives him the opportunity to show off before the public. Another vulgar violator of basic principles

* *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary,* p. 11.

repents with the coarse simplicity of a thoroughly ill-bred man. "In my rage, I frequently called the sacred person of His Imperial Majesty a fool," said, for instance, one of the accused in the Petrashevsky affair. That is not altogether elegant and by no means prudent. Does it please His Imperial Majesty to hear such confessions? Is not the point to incline him to clemency? Mr. Tikhomirov behaves differently. Not without reason has he written a lot in his time: he knows how to use words. He so cunningly composes his psalm of repentance that it is at the same time a chant of victory on Mr. Tikhomirov defeating the revolutionary hydra and a hymn of praise to Russian autocracy ... and also, by the way, to Mr. Tikhomirov himself. All the moved and reconciled monarch can do is to fold the prodigal son in his august embrace, press the once unruly head to his fat breast and give orders for the fatted calf to be killed for a solemn celebration. "Our brother the Russian is a rogue! " Belinsky[250] once exclaimed. He should have said: "Our brother the writer is a rogue! "

Seriously speaking, we do not know how fat the calf is that is going to be slaughtered on the occasion of loyalty being aroused in Mr. Tikhomirov's heart. But we can see that certain preparations are being made for the celebration from the envy that has seized the good sons of the Russian autocracy who have never revolted against their tsar. This feeling was expressed in the *Russky Vestnik,*[251] which obstinately refuses to be reconciled with Mr. Tikhomirov and grumbles angrily at the "Petersburg departmental offices" for their too lenient attitude to the former terrorist. So the compliments paid to Katkov have not done any good! It must be presumed that the Board of Trustees will not delay in calling the editors of the paper in question to reason by reminding them of the moral of the parable of the prodigal son. But still the sorties of the *Russky Vestnik* will spoil the pleasure of Mr. Tikhomirov's reconciliation with "firm authority".

Were it not for the *Russky Vestnik,* Mr. Tikhomirov would consider himself the happiest of mortals. He is extremely satisfied with himself and with his metamorphosis. He "invites the hesitating and the irresolute" to give it great attention, and, sure beforehand of their enthusiastic approval, he presents them with a whole collection of counsels containing wonderfully original and sensible thoughts. He tells them that they must learn to think and not to be carried away by phrases, and so on. But let us imagine that we are among "the hesitating and the irresolute" and let us "give attention" to the metamorphosis our author has gone through. Its story is told in the pamphlet *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary.*

## II

"Here in Russia, and not here alone," Mr. Tikhomirov says, "the thought has become rooted that we live in some kind of 'period of destruction', which, some people believe, will end with a terrible upheaval, with torrents of blood, dynamite explosions, and so on. After that, it is presumed, a 'creative period' will begin. This social conception is entirely erroneous, and as already noted, it is merely a political reflection of the old ideas of Cuvier and the school of sudden geological catastrophes. In actual fact, in real life, destruction and creation go hand in hand, being even inconceivable without one another. The destruction of one phenomenon originates, properly speaking, because in it, in its place, something different is being created, and on the contrary, the formation of the new is nothing else than the destruction of the old."*

The "conception" contained in these words is not distinguished by particular clarity, but in any case the idea can be reduced to two propositions:

1. "Here in Russia, and not here alone", revolutionaries have no idea of *evolution,* of the gradual "change in the type of phenomena", as Mr. Tikhomirov says elsewhere.

2. If they had an idea of evolution, of the gradual "change in the type of phenomena", they would not imagine that "we live in some kind of period of destruction".

Let us first see how things are in this respect *not in Russia,* i.e., in the West.

As everybody knows, there is now in progress in the West a revolutionary movement of the working class, which aspires to economic emancipation. The question is: have the theoretical representatives of that movement, i.e., the *socialists,* succeeded in conforming their revolutionary aspirations to any at all satisfactory theory of social development?

Nobody who has the slightest idea of modern socialism can fail to answer that question in the affirmative. All serious socialists in Europe and America adhere to Marx's teaching, and who does not know that his teaching is first and foremost the doctrine of the development of human society? Marx was an ardent defender of "revolutionary activity". He sympathised profoundly with *every* revolutionary movement directed against the existing social and political order. One is not obliged against one's wish to share such "destructive" sympathies, but naturally one is not entitled to conclude from them that Marx's imagination

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* *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary,* p. 13.

was "fixed on forcible revolutions", that he ignored social evolution, slow, gradual development. Not only did Marx not forget evolution, but he discovered many of its most important laws. It was in his mind that the history of mankind was first organised into a harmonic, non-fantastic picture. He was the first to show that *economic evolution leads to political revolutions.* Thanks to him the contemporary revolutionary movement was given a clearly defined aim and a strictly formulated theoretical basis. But that being the case, why does Mr. Tikhomirov imagine that by a few incoherent phrases about social "creation" he can prove the inconsistency of the revolutionary strivings, existing "here in Russia, and not here alone"? Is it not because he has not given the trouble to understand the teaching of the modern socialists?

Mr. Tikhomirov now feels repugnance for "sudden catastrophes" and "forcible revolutions". When all is said and done that is his own affair: he is not the first or the last. But he is wrong in thinking that "sudden catastrophes" are impossible both in nature and in human societies. First of all, the "suddenness" of such catastrophes is a relative concept. What is *sudden* for one person may *not* be sudden at all for another; eclipses of the sun occur "suddenly" for the ignorant but by no means for the astronomer. The same thing applies to revolutions: those political "catastrophes" happen "suddenly" for the ignorant and the great majority of self-satisfied philistines, but very often they are by no means sudden for the man who understands the social phenomena surrounding him. Secondly, if Mr. Tikhomirov tried to consider nature and history from the standpoint of the theory he now holds, a number of overwhelming surprises would await him. He has fixed in his mind that nature does not make any leaps and that leaving the world of revolutionary fantasy and coming to the firm ground of reality one may speak "scientifically" only of slow "change in the type of a given phenomenon", and yet nature makes leaps without troubling herself about all those philippics against "suddenness". Mr. Tikhomirov knows full well that "the old ideas of Cuvier" are erroneous and that "sudden geological catastrophes" are not more than the imagination of scientists. Let us suppose he lives a carefree existence in the south of France, without knowing of any trouble or danger. Then suddenly there comes an earthquake like the one that occurred there two years ago. The earth trembles, houses topple down, the terrified inhabitants flee—in a word, there is a genuine "catastrophe" which probably shows the incredible light-headedness of Mother Nature! Learning from bitter experience, Mr. Tikhomirov attentively checks all his geological concepts and comes to the conclusion that slow "changes in the type of phenomena"

(in this case in the condition of the earth's crust) do not preclude "revolutions", which, from a certain standpoint, may perhaps appear "sudden" or "forcible".*

Mr. Tikhomirov boils water which does not cease to be water, and is not inclined to any suddenness as long as its temperature increases from 32 to 212 degrees. But when it is heated to the critical temperature—oh, horrible thing!—there is a "sudden catastrophe"—the water turns into steam as if its imagination were "fixed on forcible revolutions".

Mr. Tikhomirov *cools* the water and the same strange story repeats itself. The temperature of the water changes gradually, the water remains water. But when it is cooled down to 32 degrees, the water turns into ice regardless of "sudden revolution" being an "erroneous conception".

Mr. Tikhomirov observes the development of some insect subject to metamorphosis. The process of development of the chrysalis goes on slowly, and for a time the chrysalis remains a chrysalis. Our thinker rubs his hands with satisfaction, saying, "everything is going on as it should. Neither the social nor the animal organism experiences any kind of the sudden upheavals whose existence I have had occasion to observe in the inorganic world. When it rises to the creation of living beings nature shows more steadiness." But soon his joy gives place to disappointment. One fine day the chrysalis accomplishes a "forcible revolution" and emerges as a butterfly. Thus Mr. Tikhomirov is compelled to admit that even organic nature is not insured against "sudden changes".

It will be exactly the same, if Mr. Tikhomirov seriously "gives attention" to his own "evolution", he will certainly find in it a similar sharp turn, or "revolution". He will remember what particular drop overfilled the cup of his impressions and changed him from a more or less hesitating *defender* of the "revolution" into its more or less sincere *opponent.*

Mr. Tikhomirov and I are doing exercises in addition. We take the number *five* and like respectable people "gradually" add to it one by one, making six, seven, eight.... Everything goes well up to

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* Because science has rejected Cuvier's geological doctrines it does not follow that it has proved the impossibility of geological "catastrophes" or "revolutions" generally. Science could not prove that without contradicting generally known phenomena such as the eruption of volcanoes, earthquakes, etc. The task of science was to explain those phenomena as the product of the accumulated action of those natural forces whose slow influence we can observe on a small scale at any given time. In other words, geology had to explain the *revolutions* that affect the earth's crust basing itself on the *evolution* of that crust. Social science had a similar task to deal with and with Hegel and Marx as its spokesmen it has had success similar to that of geology.

nine. But as soon as we want to add another unit a disaster occurs: our *units*

*Suddenly, without any plausible reason*

are changed into a *ten*. The same unfortunate thing happens to us when we pass from *tens* to a *hundred*.

Mr. Tikhomirov and I will not deal with music: there we have too many "sudden" transitions and this might put all our "conceptions" out of joint.

To all Mr. Tikhomirov's confused arguments about "forcible revolutions" contemporary revolutionaries can successfully answer by asking the simple question: What will you do about those upheavals which have already occurred in our "actual life" and which, in any case, represent "periods of destruction"? Must we declare them nuls et non avenus or regard them as the works of vain and foolish people whose behaviour is not worth the attention of a serious sociologist? However you regard those phenomena, you must admit that there have been violent revolutions and political "catastrophes" in history. Why does Mr. Tikhomirov think that to admit such phenomena in the future is to have "erroneous social conceptions"?

History makes no leaps! That is perfectly true. On the other hand, it is equally true that history has made a great number of "leaps" and accomplished a mass of violent "revolutions". There are countless instances of such revolutions. What does this contradiction mean? Only that the first of these propositions has not been quite correctly formulated and that is why it is often misunderstood. We ought to have said that history does not make leaps which have not been prepared. No leap can occur without a sufficient reason, which is to be found in the previous course of social development. But as this development never stops in societies which are progressing, we may say that history is constantly engaged in preparing leaps and revolutions. It does so assiduously and unflinchingly; it works slowly, but the results of its work (leaps and political catastrophes) are inevitable and unavoidable.

The "change in the type" of the French bourgeoisie takes place slowly. The burgher during the Regency is not the burgher of the time of Louis XI, but generally speaking, they both conform to the type of the old regime bourgeois. He has become richer, more educated, more exacting, but he has not ceased to be a roturier, obliged always and everywhere to give way to the aristocracy. But then comes 1789 and the bourgeois raises his head proudly. A few years more and he becomes the master. But how? With "torrents of blood", to the rolling of drums, and "explosions of gunpowder", if not of dynamite which has not yet been

invented. He forces France to undergo a genuine "period of destruction" regardless of the fact that in days to come some pedant might proclaim that violent revolutions are "an erroneous conception".

The change in "type" of Russian social relationships is slow. The separate principalities disappear, the boyars finally submit to the authority of the tsar and become ordinary members of the class serving the state. Moscow subjugates the Tatar khanates, acquires Siberia, incorporates half of southern Russia, and still it remains the old Asiatic Moscow. Peter appears and effects a "forcible revolution" in the life of Russia as a state. A new period of Russian history, the European period, begins. The Slavophiles called Peter the Antichrist because of the "suddenness" of the revolution which he carried out. They said that in his eagerness for reform he forgot evolution, the slow "change in the type" of the social system. But anybody who can think, will easily realise that Peter's revolution was necessitated by the historical "evolution" which Russia had undergone, and by which it *had been prepared.*

*Quantitative changes, gradually accumulating, become, in the end, qualitative changes. These transitions occur by leaps and cannot occur in any other manner.* "Gradualists" in politics, of all colours and shades, the Molchalins,[252] who make moderation and meticulous order a dogma, cannot understand this, although it was explained long ago by German philosophy. Here, as on many other occasions, it is useful to remember the view held by Hegel, whom, of course, it would be difficult to accuse of partiality for "revolutionary activity". He wrote: "The ordinary notion of the *appearance* or *disappearance* of anything is the notion of a *gradual* appearance and disappearance. Nevertheless, there are transformations of being which are not only changes from one quantity to another, but also changes from the qualitative to the quantitative and vice versa; such a transformation is an *interruption of 'gradual becoming'* and gives rise to a kind of being qualitatively different from the preceding. Underlying the theory of gradualness is the idea that that which makes its appearance already exists effectively, and only remains imperceptible because it is so very small. In the like manner, when we speak of the gradual disappearance of a phenomenon, we imagine to ourselves that this disappearance is an accomplished fact and that the phenomenon which takes the place of the extant one already exists, but that neither the one nor the other is as yet perceptible.... In this way, however, we are really suppressing all appearance and all disappearance.... To explain the appearance or the disappearance of a given phenomenon by the gradualness of the transformation is absurdly tautological, for it implies that

we consider as *having already appeared or disappeared* that which is actually in the course of appearing or disappearing."* This means that if you need to explain the origin of the state, you simply imagine a microscopic organisation of the state which, gradually changing in size, finally makes the "inhabitants" aware of its existence. In the same way, if you need to explain the disappearance of the primitive clan relations, you endeavour to imagine a small non-being of these relationships and that is all there is to it. It goes without saying that such methods of thinking will not get you far in science. One of Hegel's greatest merits was that he purged the doctrine of development of similar absurdities. But what does Mr. Tikhomirov care about Hegel and his merits! Mr. Tikhomirov has the fixed idea that Western theories are not applicable to Russia.

Contrary to our author's opinion on forcible revolutions and political catastrophes, we will confidently say that at the present moment history is preparing in the advanced countries a revolutionary change of extreme importance, which there is every reason to assume will be accomplished by force. It will consist in changing the mode in which products are distributed. Economic evolution has created gigantic productive forces whose practical application requires a very definite organisation of production. They are applicable only in large industrial establishments founded on collective labour, on social production.

But the individual *appropriation* of the products, which grew up under quite different economic conditions in the epoch of flourishing small-scale industry and small-scale cultivation of the soil, is in flagrant contradiction to this social mode of *production.* The products of the social labour of the workers thus become the private property of the employers. It is this basic economic contradiction which determines all the other social and political contradictions observed in modern society. And this basic contradiction is becoming more and more flagrant. The employers cannot dispense with the social organisation of production, for it is the source of their wealth. On the contrary, competition forces them to extend the social organisation to other branches of industry where it did not exist before. The big industrial enterprises drive out the small producers thus increasing the number, and consequently the power, of the working class. The fatal dénouement is at hand. To remove the contradiction between the mode of production, on the one hand, and the mode in which the products are distributed, on the other, a contradiction which is harmful to the workers, these must win political power which is now practically in the hands of the

* *Wissenschaft der Logik,* erster Band, S. 313-14. We quote according to the Nuremberg edition of 1812.

bourgeoisie. If you wish to put it thus, you may say that the workers must effect a "political catastrophe". *Economic evolution* leads as sure as fate to *political revolution* and this latter, in turn, will be the cause of important changes in the economic structure of society. The mode of *production* slowly and gradually assumes a social character. The mode of *appropriation* of the products corresponding to it will be the result of a forcible revolution.

That is how the historical movement is taking place *not in Russia*, but in the West, of whose social life Mr. Tikhomirov has not the slightest "conception", although he has indulged in "observing the powerful culture of France".

Forcible revolutions, "torrents of blood", scaffolds and executions, gunpowder and dynamite—these are distressing "phenomena". But what can we do about them, since they are inevitable? Force has always been the midwife at the birth of a new society. That is what Marx said, and he was not the only one to think so. The historian Schlosser was convinced that great revolutions in the destiny of mankind are accomplished only "by fire and sword".* Whence this sad necessity? Whose fault is it?

*Or is not everything on earth*
*Subject to the power of truth?* [253]

No, not yet. And this is due to the difference between class interests in society. For one class it is useful or even essential to reorganise social relationships in a certain way. For the other it is useful or even essential to oppose such a reorganisation. To some it holds out prospects of happiness and freedom, others it threatens with the abolition of their privileged state, and even with complete destruction as a privileged class. What class will not fight for its existence? What class has no instinct of self-preservation? The social system that is advantageous to one class seems to it not only just, but even the only possible one. In its opinion any attempt to change that system means destroying the foundations of all human society. That class con-

* His thorough knowledge of history apparently inclined Schlosser even to accept the old geological views of Cuvier. Here is what he says about Turgot's reform projects which still make the philistines wonder: "These projects contain all the substantial advantages that France acquired later by means of the revolution. They could be achieved only by the revolution; in its expectations the Turgot ministry displayed too much of a sanguine and philosophical spirit: it hoped, contrary to experience and history, to change, by its prescriptions alone, the social structure which had been formed during the course of time and consolidated with firm ties. Radical transformations, in history *as in nature*, are impossible until all that exists has been annihilated by fire, sword and destruction." *History of the Eighteenth Century*, Russian translation, second edition, St. Petersburg, 1868, Vol. III, p. 361. "What an amazing fantast that German scholar is," Mr. Tikhomirov will say.

siders itself called to defend those foundations even by the force of arms if necessary. Hence the "torrents of blood", hence the struggle and violence.

However, the socialists, in reflecting on the impending social upheaval, may console themselves with the thought that the more their "destructive" doctrines spread, the more developed, organised and disciplined the working class is, the fewer victims the inevitable "catastrophe" will demand.

And then, the triumph of the proletariat, by putting an end to the exploitation of man by man, and consequently to the division of society into a class of exploiters and a class of exploited, will make civil wars not only useless, but even utterly impossible. Thereafter mankind will advance by "the power of truth" alone and will not need the argument of arms.

## III

Let us now pass on to Russia.

The socialists in the West adhere to the teaching of Marx. Until recently the Narodnik socialists have been dominant among the Russian revolutionaries. The distinction between the Western socialist, i.e., the *Social-Democrat,* and the Narodnik socialist is that the first appeals to the working class and relies only on the working class, while the second has long ceased to appeal to anybody but the "intelligentsia", i.e., to himself, and relies only on the intelligentsia, i.e., only on himself. What the Social-Democrat fears above all is to become isolated, and therefore, to be in a false position in which his voice could no longer reach the masses of the proletariat and would be a voice of one crying in the wilderness. The Narodnik socialist, who has no support among the people, does not suspect the falseness of his position; he voluntarily goes into the wilderness and his only concern is that his voice should strike his own ears and bring joy to his heart. The working class, as is seen by the Social-Democrat, is a powerful, eternally mobile and inexhaustible force which alone is able now to lead society to progress. The people, as is seen by the Narodnik socialist, is a clumsy giant born of the earth who can remain immobile on his famous "foundations" for hundreds of years. And the Narodnik socialist sees this immobility of our Ilya Muromets[254] not as a shortcoming but as quite a considerable merit. Far from grieving over it, he asks of history but one favour—not to move the Russian giant from the foundations which have long been worn out until the fortunate time when he, the good Narodnik socialist, having dealt with capitalism, tsarism and other harmful "influences", appears satisfied and radiant before Ilya Muromets and respectfully announces:

Monsieur est servi! Dinner is served! Then all the giant will need to do will be to drink off two and a half pailfuls of strong wine and sit down quietly to the social repast prepared for him.... The Social-Democrat studies attentively laws and the course of historical development. The Russian Narodnik socialist, who dreams willingly and often of the development which the people will begin to undergo some time in some other world, "on the day after the revolution", will not hear of that economic evolution which is not a dream and which is proceeding every day and every hour in present-day Russia. The Social-Democrat swims with the current of history, but the Narodnik socialist, on the contrary, drifts with that current farther and farther away from his "ideals". The Social-Democrat *derives support* from evolution, but the Narodnik socialist looks to all sorts of sophisms for *support against* it.

More than that. The village commune was far more enduring one or two hundred years ago than it is now. That is why the Narodnik socialist has a yearning furtively to turn the clock of history one or two hundred years back.*

Hence it follows that Mr. Tikhomirov's opinion is quite correct when applied to the Russian Narodnik socialists: they were really unable to reconcile the two concepts: *evolution* and *revolution.*

Only our author did not consider it necessary to add that he was the principal and the most prolific literary exponent of that tendency in our revolutionary party. Long and obstinately he fought in his articles against every attempt to establish reasonable connections between the Russian revolutionaries' demands and the inevitable course of Russian social development. The village commune, on the one hand, and the "intelligentsia", on the other, were for Mr. Tikhomirov extreme concepts further which his "revolutionism" never got.

But it goes without saying that the revolutionaries in a particular country cannot ignore its evolution with impunity. The Russian Narodnik socialists soon learned this by bitter experience. They did not always appeal only to themselves, they did not always place their hopes on the "intelligentsia" only. There was a time when they tried to rouse the "people", they naturally meant the peasants, the bearers of the village commune ideals and the representatives of commune solidarity. But as was to be expected, the peasants remained deaf to their revolutionary calls and they were

* By Narodnik socialists we mean all those socialists who held the village commune to be the main economic basis of the socialist revolution in Russia. In this sense the Narodovoltsi must also be considered as Narodniks. They themselves admit that they are. In the "Programme of the Executive Committee" they indeed call themselves Narodnik socialists.[255]

obliged against their will to try to carry out the revolution with their own forces. Well, and what could they do with those forces? They never had the slightest possibility of entering openly into conflict with the government. The political demonstrations during the second half of the seventies quite convincingly brought home to the "intelligentsia" that their forces were not sufficient even for a victory over *dvorniks* and policemen. In such a state of affairs, the Narodnik socialists having the views we have spoken of, there was no other course for them but what we call terror and what Mr. Tikhomirov calls *individual rebellion.* But "individual rebellion" cannot overthrow any government. "Very rarely, I presume, are the champions of political murder aware that the present force of terrorism in Russia is the powerlessness of the revolution," our author caustically notes. That is perfectly true. Only he was wrong when he imagined that his "creative" mind was required to discover such a simple truth. This was pointed out in the time of the Lipetsk and Voronezh congresses by those of our revolutionaries who wished to maintain the old programme of Zemlya i Volya.[256] They were perfectly right when they said that without support from at least a certain section of the popular masses no revolutionary movement was possible. But as they adhered to the old Narodnik views, they could not have even a vague idea of the kind of activity that would guarantee our revolutionary party beneficial influence over the masses and would therefore insure it against the exhaustion they could not avoid when carrying out the terrorist struggle. At the same time the "terrorist struggle" had one indisputable advantage over all the old programmes: it was at any rate in real fact a struggle for political freedom, a thing which the revolutionaries of the old make-up would not hear of.

Once they had entered the political struggle, the Narodnik socialists were faced with the question of *evolution.* For the socialist to win political freedom cannot be the last step in revolutionary work. The rights guaranteed to citizens by the modern parliamentary system are no more in his eyes than an intermediary stage on the road to the main aim, i.e., to the reorganisation of economic relationships. Between winning political rights and reorganising these relationships a certain time must necessarily elapse. The question is: Will Russian social life undergo a change during that time, and if it does, in which direction? Will not the constitutional system lead to the destruction of the old foundations of peasant life which are so dear to the Narodnik socialists? To answer this question satisfactorily the main propositions of Narodism had to be criticised.

It would not be difficult to notice in our revolutionary literature an ever-growing consciousness of the necessity to elucidate, at last, the connection between the Russian *revolution* and Russian

*evolution.* Mr. Tikhomirov, who, as we have already said, was the most obstinate of all our revolutionaries of the old faith and zealously safeguarded the Narodnik dogma which he had adopted against incursion by any new thought—even Mr. Tikhomirov personally felt the influence of this transitory period. His pamphlet *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary* quite definitely indicates this. Telling the story of the transformation which he underwent, Mr. Tikhomirov mentions an article that he wrote for No.5 of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* but which was not approved by his colleagues on the editorial board and was therefore not printed. He says that in it he elaborated the proposition that "*only a certain evolution in the life of the people can provide ground for revolutionary activity*"; ... "*my revolutionism*", he says, "*sought precisely that evolution, that historical process of change of type, in order to act in conformity with it.*"*

Well, what did Mr. Tikhomirov's "revolutionism" find?

"I demand the union of the party with the country," our author proclaims. "I demand the abolition of terror and forming of a great national party ... but then, what would be the purpose of conspiracies, revolts and revolutions? A party, such as I was striving to create would obviously have been able to work out a system of improvements which would have been quite possible and clearly fruitful, and hence it would have found strength and ability to prove this to the government, which would have asked for nothing better than to head the reform itself."**

Apparently, while "seeking" *evolution,* Mr. Tikhomirov's "revolutionism", "in its striving", dropped *revolution,* of which there is no trace in his present views. That is sad, but it has its *inevitable logic.* It was natural for a man who refused at any price to abandon the idealisation of antediluvian economic relationships in the Russian countryside to end up with the idealisation of tsarism, the natural political fruit of those relationships. Mr. Tikhomirov's present views are not more than the logical, though very uncomely, conclusion from the theoretical premises of the Narodnik socialists which he has always considered indisputable.

But, on the other hand, there can be no doubt either that this conclusion has absolutely nothing in common with any *evolution* whatsoever.

Mr. Tikhomirov sought evolution where it never existed and where, consequently, it could not possibly be found.

What is the "union of the party with the country"? In any country which has outgrown childhood there are classes or estates whose interests are partly different and partly completely opposed

* Pp. 13-14 of his pamphlet.
** Pp. 12-13 of his pamphlet.

to one another. No party can reconcile these interests; therefore, no party can unite with the country *as a whole.* Any party can express only the interests of a definite class or estate. This naturally does not mean that every party is confined to represent in politics only the selfish interests of this or that class. In every particular historical epoch there is a class whose victory is linked with the interests of the country's further development. The country's interests can be promoted only by contributing to the victory of that class. Consequently, the "union of the party with the country" can have but one rational meaning: the union of the party with the class which at the particular time is the bearer of progress. But what Mr. Tikhomirov says means nothing of the sort. He has always denied, and all the more does he now deny, the existence of any classes whatsoever in our country.

The difference between class interests is a product of the course of social development, of *historical evolution.* To understand the difference between class interests means to understand the course of historical development, and vice versa, not to understand that difference means not to have the slightest conception of historical development; it means to remain as far as theory is concerned in the kind of darkness in which all cats are grey and perfectly alike. And if a writer who is in such darkness nevertheless speaks to you about evolution, you can be sure that he is mistaking for evolution something that is its direct opposite.

But even if we leave aside all these considerations, we cannot refrain from asking Mr. Tikhomirov the following interesting question: Why does he think that once the party succeeded in "uniting" with the country, the government "would ask for nothing better than to head itself the reform" demanded by that party? Our author probably remembers that exactly a hundred years ago the following fact occurred: the representatives of the third estate in a certain country voiced the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population; they "worked out a system of improvements which were quite possible and clearly fruitful". But the government of that country did not wish to "head the reform" and began to "strive" to suppress it with the help of foreign troops. Of course, they did not prevent the reform being carried out, but as far as the government was concerned, its "striving" was a lamentable failure. However, Mr. Tikhomirov probably thinks that the government of such an exceptionalist state as Russia would most certainly follow its exceptionalist road in such a case, and that therefore the examples of other countries mean nothing for us.

Our author was seeking ways of uniting the party with the country and found himself by mistake on a road which led him

to union with absolutism. But what has the development of Russia in common with the interests of the autocracy?

"I regard the question of autocracy as follows," we read on page 25 of Mr. Tikhomirov's pamphlet. "First of all, it constitutes in Russia (as she is now) a phenomenon which is perfectly useless to discuss. It is a result of Russian history which stands in no need of acknowledgement and cannot be destroyed by anybody as long as there are tens and tens of millions in the country who neither know nor wish to know anything else in politics."

Mr. Tikhomirov was trying to understand the meaning of Russian "evolution". In order to succeed in that he should have made clear to himself not only *what Russia is now,* but above all *what she is becoming,* in which sense she is undergoing a "change in the type" of social relationships. Whoever ignores this side of the matter may speak only of *stagnation,* not of *development.* It was precisely this side of the matter that Mr. Tikhomirov ignored. That was why there happened to him what happens to all those of the "conservative" trend. They imagine that they are considering the "country" "*as it is now*", but in reality their mind's eye is turned towards the "country" as it *was* at one time and as *it is no longer* at the present time as far as a large part of it is concerned. Their conservative "dreams" are founded on the idealisation of old, already obsolete economic and political relationships.

Mention economic relationships in Russia to Mr. Tikhomirov. He will tell you: the village commune is "a result of Russian history which stands in no need of acknowledgement as long as there are tens and tens of millions who neither know nor wish to know anything else in economics". But the short phrase *as long as* contains the whole substance of the matter. A man who says high-sounding phrases about evolution must not be content with references to the present. If he wishes to convince us that the village commune has a lasting future he must prove that the above "*as long as*" is not fated to be only a very short time, that the village commune does not carry in itself and will never, or at least for a long time, carry in itself the elements of its disintegration. Similarly, if he wishes to convince us of the lasting future of the Russian autocracy, he must prove that in our social relationships there are no factors under the influence of which "tens and tens of millions" will not, perhaps very soon, want to hear anything about autocracy. "As long as" is a very vague term; it is an *X* which may be equal to a million, but may also be not far from nil. It was the task of our evolutionist to determine the properties of *X*. But that was above his abilities. Overflowing with "exceptionalism", he has always lived in such strained relations with science, which came to us, as we know,

from the West, that it was entirely beyond his power to find a serious solution of any questions at all.

Defining the political views of the Russian people, Mr. Tikhomirov speaks of Russia *as she is now,* or, more exactly, as she appears to him. But his gaze is fixed on the past when he goes on to the question whether the existence of autocracy is a hindrance to the success of Russian "culture". It is obvious to any unprejudiced and unsophisticated person that this question can only be formulated as follows: does the contemporary absolutism, "*as it is now*", hinder or promote Russia's development? Mr. Tikhomirov prefers another formulation of the question. He points to absolutism *as it was,* in his opinion, at one time. "Can one be so forgetful of one's own history as to exclaim: 'What cultural work there was under the tsars! '" (as many people do exclaim, to Mr. Tikhomirov's great grief). "Was not Peter a tsar? Yet has there ever been in history an epoch of more rapid and broader cultural work? " asks our author vehemently. "Was not Catherine II a tsaritsa? Was it not under Nicholas that all the social ideas according to which Russian society still lives developed? And lastly, are there many republics which carried out as many improvements in the space of 26 years as the Emperor Alexander II? In answer to such facts we only find such pitiable phrases as that this was done 'in spite of the autocracy'. But even if that were the case, does it matter whether it was 'thanks to' or 'in spite of' as long as progress—and rapid progress—was possible?"*

But allow us to ask you, oh wise defender of evolution: Do you really not understand the very simple fact that the present may not resemble the past, and that the example of Peter, Catherine or even Alexander II means nothing at all for Alexander III or Nicholas II? Peter tried to make Russia become an enlightened country; Alexander III wanted to plunge her back into barbarity. Russia can raise twenty new monuments to Peter and at the same time find that Alexander III deserves nothing but the gallows. Why turn back to Peter the Great when it is a question of Alexander the Fat?

Besides, how are we to understand the reference to the reign of Nicholas? "It was under Nicholas that many of the ideas according to which Russian society still lives were developed." That is true, but do not be angry, Mr. Tikhomirov, and allow us to ask you what role Nicholas, "the guardsman-father of all reactions", had in this. Suppose there is a war between the cats and the mice. The mice think that the cats are a great danger to their well-being and try by all means to get rid of them. Suddenly

* P. 25.

Reynard the Fox appears and cunningly wagging his bushy tail says to the mice: "Unreasonable and imprudent mice, I really cannot understand you being so forgetful of your history as to exclaim, 'How can we be well-off with cats? ' Now isn't Vaska a cat? Isn't Mashka one too? Did not your number increase so much under Vaska that the master of the house where you lived had to go to the trouble of buying new mousetraps? It is true that Vaska destroyed as many of you as he could, but all the same you multiplied, and isn't it just the same to you whether you multiplied thanks to or in spite of Vaska? " What should the mice have answered to such a sycophant?

"Great progress in literature is compatible with Autocratic Monarchy," Mr. Tikhomirov assures us (p. 26). But that is really too un ... ceremonious! Or does he think that his readers do not know the history of much-suffering Russian literature? Who does not remember Novikov and Radishchev, who felt the enlightened Catherine's claws, Pushkin's exiles under Alexander "the blessed"; Polezhayev, tortured to death by Nicholas the "unforgettable"; Lermontov, exiled for a poem which contained nothing dangerous for the "foundations"; Shevchenko, condemned to waste his life as a common soldier; Dostoyevsky, at first sentenced to death in spite of his complete innocence and then "reprieved", sent to forced labour, shut up in the "Dead House" where he was twice subjected to corporal punishment; Belinsky, whom death alone saved from the gendarmes? Does Mr. Tikhomirov think his readers have forgotten the exile of Shchapov, Mikhailov who died in Siberia, Chernyshevsky, who spent more than twenty years there; Pisarev, who spent the best years of his life in a fortress; the modern Russian writers among whom one rarely finds a man of independent mind who has not been under police surveillance or banished to more or less remote districts; and finally the fury of the Russian censorship, accounts of which people who do not know our "Autocratic Monarchy" would never believe? Merciless persecution of every living thought runs through the whole history of the Russian emperors and our literature paid a price unheard of for its development "*in spite of*" autocracy. Everybody knows that, and we advise Mr. Tikhomirov to expatiate on anything he likes, to write solemn odes on: "guns of victory, sound louder! Sing, rejoice, courageous Russ! " but to leave Russian literature in peace. The mere thought of it is enough to inspire us with burning hatred for our autocrats!

Replying to a book by Custine on Russia under Nicholas, Grech once affirmed that one could write with the same freedom in Petersburg as in Paris or in London.[257] Mr. Tikhomirov's observations on the flourshing of Russian literature under the auspices of autocracy are nothing more than the further development of

Grech's audacious thought. On the apearance of the pamphlet *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary,* many people thought that Mr. Tikhomirov wanted to become a new Katkov, endowed with a more "creative" intelligence than the late editor of *Moskovskiye Vedomosti.*[258] But that was a mistake. To one who considers the matter carefully it is clear that Mr. Tikhomirov was disturbed by Grech's fame. And it must be admitted that Mr. Tikhomirov's entire manner of writing is reminiscent of Grech. Mr. Tikhomirov is not destined to be a new Katkov, but he has all that it takes to be a new Grech, in miniature, of course.

What difference does it make, says Mr. Tikhomirov, whether it is "thanks to" or "in spite of" the tsars that our social development proceeds! A great deal of difference, Mr. Tikhomirov! It is not a matter of indifference to us whether our educational establishments are under the authority of Tolstoys, Delyanovs, Runiches or Magnitskys. It is not a matter of indifference to us that admission to them is restricted, that they may be closed at any time on the whim of the tsar and the youths taught in them are handed over to "sergeant-majors in lieu of Voltaires". It is not the same to us that the northern and eastern exile regions are populated with our students and that, at the present, parents who let their sons enter a higher educational establishment consider them already almost lost. It is not a matter of indifference to us that in our autocratic, police state at least one-fifth of the inhabitants (peasants) every year are subjected to corporal punishment when the taxes are collected. It is not a matter of indifference to us that the workers are persecuted in violation of the laws by the administration for the slightest protest against the hellish conditions in the factories and, if it occurs to our autocrat, can even be handed over to a military tribunal, as was not infrequently the case under Nicholas. All that is far from being a matter of indifference to us. The stupid self-willedness of the autocrats costs us too great a price. There was a time too when all this was far from being a matter of indifference to you, Mr. Tikhomirov. And do you know what? If you still have the slightest drop of humanity you will, in spite of yourself and your "evolution", often recall that time as the noblest in your life.

In Mr. Tikhomirov's opinion, if our student youth is surrounded with danger those to be blamed are the "incitors" who draw them into politics. "Student interference in politics is attended by the most harmful consequences in the form of various demonstrations, when, for some paltry protest against a wretched inspector, hundreds of young people, irreplaceable forces, are lost for the country in hardly 24 hours." Let us note first that "student interference in politics" is one thing and what are called student

affairs are quite another. For students there are other ways of "interfering in politics", besides the fight against the inspectors. Secondly, we humbly ask Mr. Tikhomirov to tell us who is to blame for ruin of these really valuable and truly irreplaceable forces? Is it not the government, which is capable of destroying hundreds of young people "for a paltry protest against some wretched inspector"? It is remarkable that even in Mr. Tikhomirov's presentation our absolutism is a kind of dragon, the wisest policy towards which is merely not to fall into its claws.

Or course, it would be millions of times better "for the country" if our youth could study and develop in peace! Who will dispute that? But unfortunately they will not be able to do so until the political system which is now ruining their young energies is finally abolished. The government will never forgive the youth their "interference in politics" and the youth will never refrain from such interference. The student youth everywhere have taken a most active part in the fight for political freedom. George Sand long ago gave the right answer to the philistines who condemn them for this: if everything that is good and noble in youth is directed against the existing system, that is the best proof that the system is worthless.

But it is not only the student youth that Mr. Tikhomirov would like to keep away from the political struggle. He advises everybody, even the very oldest of his readers to ignore it and suggests as an alternative "cultural work" ... approved by the authorities. According to him, no impediments or obstacles can *hinder* such work. "Whatever the kind of government," he says, "it can take away from the people anything you like to imagine but the possibility to carry on cultural work, assuming that the people is capable of such work." How gladdening! The only trouble is that we just cannot imagine what wonderful kind of "work" it is that, so to say, moths do not eat and rust does not consume, and that we can peacefully engage in it even if the government takes away from us "anything you like to imagine". The spreading of education, for example, is the most cultural of all cultural works. But the government can always "take away" from us this kind of work and Mr. Tikhomirov himself knows many examples of it having done so. Literary activity must also be recognised as cultural work. But Mr. Tikhomirov also knows full well that the government can easily forbid any of us to indulge in such work at any time. What kind of "work" does our author mean then? The building of railways, the promotion of the success of our "national industry"? But even here everything depends on bureaucratic tyranny. The government may at any time refuse permission for your undertaking or crush it with heavy taxes, absurd tariffs, etc. Will we have much left, once the govern-

ment "takes away everything you like to imagine"? (To tell the truth, it is not far from doing that already.)

It seems to us that Mr. Tikhomirov should be more sincere with his readers and tell them, without any reservation, the consoling words that the stoics used to tell the slaves: your masters can take away from you everything you like to imagine, but it is above their power to take away from you the inner freedom of your "ego", and only that inner freedom is of any value to the man of reason. Many people would probably understand all the correctness of that philosophical thought.

If the Russian "intellectual" is fated to a stormy youth from the political point of view, and if in a riper age he wishes to rest, to live and enjoy it, he will yearn for "cultural work". He does not even know very well himself what that work must consist of. From his confused explanations you can generally understand only one thing: a very considerable portion of his future "work" will be needed to guard and maintain his "cultured person". But excuse me, every educated man is of value to us, the future Kulturträger will protest, avoiding that his eyes should meet yours. In other words, he is so good and instructive in his "intellectualness" that when the Russian people look at him they will be cured of many diseases without more ado, just as the Hebrews in the desert were cured by looking at the brazen serpent. And it is this "work" of figuring as a Russian brazen serpent that Mr. Tikhomirov recommends to his readers. He who once waxed enthusiastic over the fame of Robespierre or Saint-Just now pretends to be infatuated with the splendid examples of Kostanjoglo, the model landlord, or Murazov, the angelically kind taxfarmer.[259]

But speaking of such work he should not have made any reference to history. Our author was very imprudent when he recalled Peter, Catherine and Alexander II. Delving down to the meaning of such examples, the reader may say to himself: however much or little "cultural work" there really was in the country during the reign of one or the other of those sovereigns, it consisted in reorganising social relationships in accordance with the most crying needs of the time. The question is: is tsarism "as it is" now, capable of undertaking a reorganisation of Russian social relationships which would be useful and conform to the needs of *our* time? It is said that the most necessary reorganisation of those relationships consists in limiting the power of the tsar. Will the tsar undertake such "cultural work"? That is a dangerous thought, Mr. Tikhomirov! The reader, asking himself such a question, is not far from what today is called seditious intent. But that is not all: some readers can even go farther and indulge, for example, in the following "destructive" thinking: the reforms of

Alexander II were brought about by the Crimean pogrom, which forced us to adopt a programme of transformations which were unquestionably necessary for the self-preservation of Russia as a European country. The basis of all other reforms at that time was the abolition of serfdom. The reason for it, besides general economic considerations, was that the number of peasant revolts, increasing every year, led to fear of a popular rising. It apparently follows from this that when we wish to force the tsar to undertake "cultural work" we will have to intimidate him by an uprising, and intimidate him seriously, of course, i.e., not limit ourselves to words, but prepare an uprising in actual fact. This means that revolutionary activity is that same cultural work, but considered from a different aspect. And this last type of "cultural work" is in substance profitable to the autocrats themselves. Roused by the danger of a revolt, they will more readily transform themselves into "emancipators". For Alexander II to think of reforms Russia had to be in such a desperate condition that the only thing left for Nicholas was to commit suicide. The revolutionaries will reconcile the tsars with the inevitable perspective of "cultural work"; then the suicide of tsars may also prove superfluous.

Do you see, Mr. Grech, what a temptation you lead your readers into? How comes it that you behave so inconsiderately? And still you boast of the "imprint of positiveness" which you were always "noted" for! Why did you delve into history? Would it not have been better for you to limit yourself to exalting that "cultural work" which is so dear to you and which does not in the least concern social relationships and will repay us a hundredfold for all mishaps, even if absolutism takes away from the brave Russians everything "you like to imagine"?

Our modern Grech himself knows how little assiduity the Russian monarchs display in the domain of historical "cultural work". That is why he wishes to play on our patriotism by pointing out the Russian "national problems" which, in his mind, can be solved only by a "stable government". In a certain sense our tsarism seems never to have been lacking in "stability", but did that help much in solving our cultural problems? Let us recall at any rate the history of the Eastern question, which is nearest to us.

We were told that our "national problems" demanded the liberation of Moldavia and Walachia. We fought for that liberation, but when it was effected our absolutism managed to make the Rumanians our enemies. Was arousing them against Russia promoting the solution of the Russian "national problems"?

We were told that the liberation of Serbia was necessary in view of our "national problems". We contributed to it, and the tsar's policy drove the Serbs into the arms of Austria-Hungary. Did that promote the solution of our national problems?

We were told the interests of Russia required that Bulgaria should be liberated. Enough Russian blood was shed in that cause, but now, thanks to the policy of our "firm" and "stable" government, the Bulgars hate us as their bitterest persecutors. Is that advantageous to Russia?[260]

The solution of the national problems of any country requires first of all one condition: "stable" conformity of the government's policy with the country's national interests. But in our country that condition does not and cannot exist, because our policy is fully dependent on His August Majesty's fantasy. If Elizabeth fights Frederick of Prussia, Russia is obliged to think that the war is being waged in her national interests. Then Peter III becomes tsar—Peter, who when he was only heir to the throne, behaved treacherously towards Russia—and the Russian soldiers who until then have been fighting *against* Frederick immediately go over *to his side* and the inhabitants of Russia are obliged to think that the change of sides is required by their national problems. Or else let Mr. Tikhomirov recall the autocratic pranks played by Paul or Nicholas, who thought that Russia's principal national problem was to play implicitly the role of gendarme of Europe. What did Russia gain from her campaign against Hungary? A few years after it the Unforgettable, in a conversation with a Pole, asked him who was the most stupid king in Poland after Jan Sobieski. And as the Pole did not know what to answer, the tsar said: "I was, because I also saved Vienna when I should not have done it." But the stupidity of His Majesty the King of Poland and Emperor of Russia was bound to have the most harmful effects on the national interests of Russia.

The most important of all our national tasks is to win freedom of political institutions, thanks to which the forces of our country would at last cease to be a toy in the hands of some crowned Kit Kitych.[261] Speaking of Russia's national tasks, the apologists of the autocracy remind her first of all, against their will, of this task.

Our author writes that only "the desperate romanticism of our revolutionaries" allows them to "treat the hereditary autocrats of Russia in a way permissible in respect of a usurper. The Russian tsar did not usurp his power but got it from his solemnly elected ancestors and to this very day the overwhelming majority of the people have not uttered a single word showing a desire to deprive the Romanovs of their powers". To set off still more the greatness of the tsars' authority, Mr. Tikhomirov stresses that the Russian Church, which is acknowledged by the immense majority of the population, "consecrates" the tsar, giving him the "title of its temporal head".*

* P. 16.

Let us first make a tiny remark: it was not the Church that decided to "consecrate" the Russian tsar and give him the title of its temporal head; it was the Russian tsar himself who, on his own inspiration and in the interests of his own authority, decided to confer upon himself that title of honour. That is not a great crime, but why does Mr. Tikhomirov distort history?

To continue, which Romanovs is he talking about? There was a time when in fact Romanovs sat on the Russian throne. It cannot be said that this dynasty was elected by any particularly "solemn" considerations. Some historians affirm that the boyars were in favour of "Misha Romanov" because he was "weak in the head" and they hoped to keep him under their thumb. It is said also that when the tsar was elected, he in turn made a "solemn" promise to respect the rights of the "country". But nothing definite is known on this point and as far as the election of the Romanovs is concerned we must say with Count A. Tolstoy:

*It happened in summer, but*
*whether there was agreement*
*(between the parties concerned)*
*history does not say.*[262]

Whatever the case may be, the Romanovs were in fact elected, and the Russian tsars could claim election by the people if they really belonged to that dynasty. But that dynasty has been extinct for a long time. On the death of Elizabeth Peter Holstein-Gottorp succeeded her on the throne and no Romanovs could have issued from his union with the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, even if we acknowledge the legitimacy of Paul's birth which Catherine herself expressly denies in her *Memoirs*. The "country" had absolutely no share in the election of Peter Holstein. It is true that in the female line he was related to the extinct dynasty, but if that is a reason for granting him and his descendants the title of Romanov, the children of the Prince of Edinburgh, for example, should also be given that name, and this does not appear to have occurred to anybody. For the Russian revolutionaries, of course, it is all the same whom they overthrow, the Romanovs or the Holstein-Gottorps, but once more, why distort history?

The Russian tsars must not be treated as usurpers! That's a novelty! We always thought they should not be treated *otherwise than as usurpers*. And our reason was that the Russian tsars themselves not infrequently treated their predecessors as usurpers. Does Mr. Tikhomirov remember the history of the eighteenth century? Does he remember the accession to the throne of Elizabeth and Catherine II? Either ces dames *usurped* the power of tsar, or, if their accession was legitimate, their predecessors were *usurpers*. Paul always called Catherine's action *usurpation* and

they say that Nicholas shared his opinion on this point. Does Mr. Tikhomirov remember the murder of Paul? Does he remember that in this matter Alexander "the blessed" can be accused of at least "knowing and not revealing"? What name should we give a man who acceded to the throne by means of a plot against his father and emperor? Of course, it is all the same to the Russian revolutionaries whether they have to deal with tsars "by the grace of God" or with tsars by the grace of the "leibkampantsi"[263] and other praetorians. But, once again, why distort history? Why speak of the legitimate inheritance of power "from ancestors"? Why indulge in "fantasy" about the holiness of the throne when it is fouled with all sorts of crimes?

Either Mr. Tikhomirov thinks that his readers do not know the history of Russia, and is therefore speculating on their ignorance, or else he does not know it himself and, so to say, leaps before looking.

*O man of much experience, thy boldness is thy undoing!*

And such a brave champion was not understood or appreciated by the *Russky Vestnik*! The paper maintains that Mr. Tikhomirov has said nothing new. But where can we get anything new from if you, gentlemen, have absolutely exhausted all there is to say in favour of absolutism? And besides, *Russky Vestnik*'s assurance is not quite fair. Mr. Tikhomirov's pamphlet contains an absolutely new way of intimidating people to deter them from revolutionary work. Here it is the precious fruit of Tikhomirov's originality. "The influence of the way of life itself," we see on page 18 of his pamphlet, "is extraordinarily unfavourable to the terrorist and conspirator.... His consciousness is dominated by the awareness that not only today or tomorrow, but at every second, he must be ready to die. The only way to live with such an awareness is *not to think* of many things which one must, however, think of if one wishes to remain a man of culture. Any at all serious attachment is real misfortune in this situation. The study of any question whatsoever, of any social phenomenon, etc., is unthinkable. It cannot occur to one to have any at all complicated, or extensive programme. All day long, the terrorist and conspirator must deceive every single individual (with the exception of 5-10 fellow-thinkers); he must hide from everybody and see everyone as an enemy." In short, the conspirator and terrorist leads the "life of a hounded wolf" and his fight against the government is a fight which "humiliates" the fighter himself.

Well, how about the metaphor? Not a bad turn of phrase? we ask with Nekrasov. Delve down to the meaning of those arguments and you will see that Mr. Tikhomirov is by no means as simple as he often appears to be. In Russia there is a stern and implacable

force which oppresses us and takes away from us "everything you like to imagine". We protest against that force, each singly, and it grounds us to powder. We organise to fight it systematically, and the result of this struggle which, we thought, was to free us, is our own "*humiliation*". The moral is obvious: if you do not want to "*be humiliated*", do not protest, submit to the authority ordained by God, "bow thy head, proud man! "

Apparently this conclusion applies directly only to the terrorists but if there is any basis for its premise, *any kind of revolutionary struggle* in Russia must be acknowledged to be "humiliating", because every revolutionary without exception has to "*fight*" police spies and to be reconciled with the thought of his possible death "not only today or tomorrow, but at every second". But is our author right? Fortunately not, far from it; what he says is even just the opposite of the truth and it needs only a little attention on the part of the reader to blow away Tikhomirov's sophism like smoke.

Let us begin with a small but necessary correction. The revolutionaries *fight* not police spies, but the Russian Government *which persecutes them with the help of* its "eyes of the Tsar", *spies and provocateurs*. Such a method of fighting against the revolutionaries is most "humiliating" for the government itself. Mr. Tikhomirov says nothing about this, but it is self-evident.* As for the revolutionaries, how can persecution by police spies affect them? First of all, this persecution must maintain in each of them the consciousness "that not only today or tomorrow, but at every second, he must be ready to die" for his convictions. Not everybody is able to bear such a thought at every minute. We can find in the history of secret societies in any country examples of weakness, timidity, "humiliation" and even complete degradation. But unfortunately for despotism, not all revolutionaries are like that. Constant persecution has quite the opposite effect on people of stronger character; it develops in them not *fear* of persecution but complete and constant *readiness to die* in the fight for a just cause. And this readiness maintains in them a state of mind that pacific philistines who never aroused a single suspicion in any spy cannot come anywhere near to understanding. Everything personal, everything selfish is relegated to the background, or rather

* We need only remember the burial of Sudeikin and we will see how humiliatingly near to spies our tsars are brought by their method of fighting revolutionaries. During the famous Gatchina "isolation"[264] of Alexander III we read—we cannot remember in which paper—that the august family had arranged a Christmas tree ... for the court police officials. Her Majesty graciously deigned to distribute presents to those officials with her own hands. After such kindness to the *recognised* police nobody would be surprised if during Easter Week there was an announcement in the papers to the effect that Their Majesties had given the kiss of peace to the representatives of the *secret* police, or simply to spies, their "closest fellow-thinkers".

is forgotten entirely, and all that remains is the political interest common to all, "the power of one thought alone, a single but burning passion".[265] Man attains the height of heroism. And there have been enough people of this kind in our revolutionary movement. See what Kennan writes when he makes the acquaintance of our exiles in Siberia. "What I saw and learned in Siberia stirred me to the very depths of my soul—opened to me a new world of human experiences, and raised, in some respects, all my moral standards," he says in a letter quoted by Mrs. Dawes in the August 1888 issue of the American magazine *The Century*. "I made the acquaintance of characters as truly heroic in mould—characters of as high a type as any outlined in history, and saw them showing courage, fortitude, self-sacrifice and devotion to an ideal beyond anything of which I could believe myself capable.... I went to Siberia, regarding the political exiles as a lot of mentally unbalanced fanatics, bomb-throwers and assassins.... When I came away from Siberia I kissed those same men good-bye with my arms round them and my eyes full of tears...."[266] What will Mr. Tikhomirov say of such people? The "humiliating" struggle against police spies apparently did not have any humiliating influence on them. Ah, Mr. Grech, Mr. Grech, what an elephant you have not noticed!

Of course, it would be far better if the revolutionaries did not need to expose themselves to persecution by police spies. But that depends on the government. Tikhomirov would be rendering us a great service if he impressed on our rulers that not all means are good in fighting the revolutionaries and that "eyes of the Tsar" are very unattractive.

As for the deception which revolutionaries are allegedly obliged to engage in "all day long", we can answer Mr. Tikhomirov with the following arguments. We do not know whether he deceived many people when he considered himself as a revolutionary. Possibly he did. His own admissions show that as long as the *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* was published, his literary work was *deception* of his readers, for even at that time he no longer believed in the cause he was defending. But from this it by no means follows that *all* revolutionaries are obliged by the very force of things to deceive. Mr. Tikhomirov's sad example means nothing for them. Revolutionary work only obliges to *secrecy*, but there is an enormous difference between secrecy and *deception*. Even the most truthful man who has never told a lie in his whole life can have secrets, and he has absolute moral right to reveal those secrets *only* to his "fellow-thinkers". Does not Mr. Grech understand that?

But here, reader, is a most amazing thing: Russian absolutism is so monstrous that even when Mr. Tikhomirov himself has engaged on the road of truth he could not remain steadfast in his role of

loyal writer. After all sorts of far-stretched suppositions and sophisms that he has invented in support of the power of the tsar, he suddenly begins to be ironical, involuntarily adopting Shchedrin's tone. "The source of legislative and executive power according to Russian law is the sovereign of the country," he writes. "In republican countries it is the electors. Both of these forms have their advantages, but in both of them political action, whatever be its source, is manifested only through the intermediary of definite institutions" (sometimes such "institutions" as barricades, for example, Mr. Tikhomirov). "These institutions are no less means of activity in Russia than in other countries. We have the State Council, the Senate, the ministries with various supplementary bodies such as the department of trade and manufacture and a fair number of permanent commissions" (p. 31). For this caustic sarcasm we can forgive our author many transgressions against logic and common sense, but not, of course, against political decency.

IV

From all we have said the reader will perhaps conclude that we do not recognise any merits on the part of our despotism. That would not be quite true. Russian despotism certainly has undeniable historical merits, the chief of which is that it has brought to Russia the seed of its own downfall. It is true that it was forced to do so by reason of its proximity to Western Europe, but all the same it did it, and as a result deserves our sincerest recognition.

The old Muscovite Russia was noted for her completely Asiatic character. This strikes one in the economic life of the country, in all its usages and the whole system of state administration. Muscovy was a kind of China in Europe instead of in Asia. Hence the essential distinction that whereas the real China did all she could to wall herself in from Europe, our Muscovite China tried by every means in her power from the time of Ivan the Terrible to open at least a small window on Europe. Peter succeeded in accomplishing this great task. He effected an enormous change which saved Russia from ossifying. But Tsar Peter could do no more than was within the power of a tsar. He introduced a permanent army equipped in the European way and Europeanised the system of our state administration. In a word, to the Asiatic trunk of Muscovite Russia the "carpenter tsar" attached European arms. "On a social foundation which dated almost back to the eleventh century appeared a diplomacy, a permanent army, a bureaucratic hierarchy, industry satisfying luxurious tastes, schools, academies," and the like, as Rambaud wonderfully describes this period in our history. The power of the new, Euro-

pean arms was of great service to Russia in her international relations but was disadvantageous to many aspects of domestic life. Having brought Russia, as Pushkin said, into "a prance" the great tsar ground the people down under the weight of taxation and carried despotism to a degree of might unknown until then. Every state institution which had in the least restrained the power of the tsar was abolished, every custom and tradition which had in the slightest way safeguarded the people's dignity was forgotten and immediately on Peter's death those pranks of the "leib-kampantsi" began owing to which the history of Russian tsardom for a long time was, as an Italian writer put it, a tragedy nel un lupanar. Peter's "reform" pleased our tsars and tsaritsas chiefly because it strengthened tremendously the power of the autocracy. As for the "cultural work" which Peter began, they tried to escape it as far as was at all possible and it took shattering events to make the Russian monarchs remember Russian "culture". Thus, the unfortunate outcome of the Crimean War forced Alexander II, as we have already said, to remember it. The Crimean pogrom showed what a terrible distance separated us from Western Europe. While we rested on the laurels we had gathered during the Napoleonic Wars, and placed all our hopes in the Asiatic patience of our soldiers and the valour of Russian bayonets, the foremost peoples in Europe managed to avail themselves of all the most up-to-date achievements in technology. Willy-nilly we had to shake ourselves up too. The state needed new funds, new sources of revenue. But for them to be found, serfdom, which was then greatly cramping our industry, had to be abolished. Alexander II did this and after February 19, 1861, it could be said that our absolutism had done its utmost.

From the beginning of the sixties new social requirements began to mature in Russia and the autocracy could not satisfy them without ceasing to be an autocracy.

The fact was that the European arms were little by little exerting enormous influence on the trunk of our social organism. It started gradually to change from Asiatic into European. To maintain the institutions which Peter had introduced into Russia the need was, first, money, second, money, third, money. By the very fact of squeezing this money out of the people, the government was contributing to the development of commodity production in our country. Then, in order to maintain those same institutions, there had to be at least some kind of factory industry. Peter had laid the foundation of that industry in Russia. At the beginning, and perfectly in keeping with the character of its origin, this industry was perfectly subordinate and ancillary to the state. It was feudally bound, like every other social force in Russia, to serve the state. It maintained itself by the serf labour of peasants

enlisted for work in the factories and works. Nevertheless, it did what it was meant to do, greatly helped in this by the same international relations. The success of Russian economic development from Peter until Alexander II is best seen from the fact that whereas Peter's reforms *required the serf dependence of the peasants to be intensified,* those of Alexander II *were inconceivable without its abolition.* During the 28 years since February 19, 1861, Russian industry has so rapidly forged ahead that its relations to the state have altered quite substantially. At one time perfectly *subordinate to the state,* it now strives to *subordinate the state to itself,* to place it at its own service. In one of the petitions which they almost annually present to the government, the merchants of the Nizhny Novgorod Fair naively call the finance ministry the organ of the estate of trade and industry. Businessmen who formerly could not take a step without directions from the government now demand that the Government shall follow *their* directions. Those same Nizhny Novgorod merchants express the modest desire that measures capable of influencing the state of our industry should not be taken without being approved by representatives of their "estate". Thus, as regards Russian economic development, absolutism has already said its piece. Far from being needed by our industry, state tutelage was even *harmful* to it. The time is not far off when our "estate of trade and industry", convinced by experience that timid remonstrations are useless, will be forced to remind tsarism in a sterner and severer tone that tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*

* It is generally thought in our country that provided the government introduces protectionist tariffs and is not miserly as regards subsidies for this or that stock company, our bourgeoisie no longer have any reason to be dissatisfied with it. This is an entirely erroneous view. Here, as in all other matters, good intentions are by no means sufficient: *ability* is also needed, and that is what our government has not got. I. S. Aksakov, who was inspired in this case by our Moscow merchants, said, for example, in his *Rus* (October 30, 1882) that all the efforts of our merchants and industrialists to find new foreign markets for the disposal of their commodities "are not only weakly supported by the Russian administration, but can even be said to be unceasingly paralysed by the absence of a clearly conceived general trade policy in our government". He explained this absence by the perfectly correct consideration that "such is our bureaucratic system, in which all sections of administration are divided between departments to the detriment of the whole, and each department is very nearly a state within the state". He gives the following arguments to prove this: "The finance ministry, for example, works out and establishes a whole system of encouragements and support for Russian industry and trade, including, among other things, tariffs for foreign goods imported into Russia, and the railway departments, which are administered by another ministry, that of communications, establish a transport tariff which reduces to nil the tariff combinations of the finance ministry and protects foreign trade to the detriment of Russian trade. And a third ministry, that of the interior, which has under its authority natural, not artificial roads, neglects and allows to become unusable the important ancient trade

Mr. Tikhomirov, who once exalted the "real" peasant as a menacing revolutionary force, now speaks of the peasant's reactionary qualities as of something quite natural. It is precisely the peasant he has in view when he says that tens of millions among the population will not hear of anything except tsarism. Like the procurator in the comic poem "The Speech of Zhelekhovsky", [267] he is now ready to exclaim in a voice full of emotion:

*Christ be praised,*
*By the peasant we'll be saved.*

And, true enough, the peasant would save Mr. Tikhomirov and his present "fellow-thinkers" if Mr. Tikhomirov and his present fellow-thinkers could save the peasant who has been left to us by the good old times. But "no power whatever can save him".

The development of commodity and capitalist production has radically changed the life of Russia's working population. Our Moscow and Petersburg despotism used to rely for support on the backwardness of the rural population which lived in economic conditions dating back, according to the expression of Rambaud quoted above, almost to the eleventh century. Capitalism has completely disrupted our ancient patriarchal rural relationships. G. I. Uspensky, who in his essays portrayed the "real" peasant with photographic exactness, admits that such a peasant is fated not to exist much longer on earth, that the old peasant order is breaking up and that in the countryside two new "estates" have been taking shape, namely the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The latter are leaving the countryside as they grow and are going to the town, to industrial centres, to the factories and works.

One does not need to have studied in a seminary to know that the development of the proletariat revolutionises social relationships. Everybody knows what kind of role the working class has

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route, and the foreign affairs ministry suddenly concludes some kind of treaty without careful consideration of Russian trade interests (allowing, for example, in the Berlin treaty, the obligation for Bulgaria to follow the Turkish tariff, which is the most unfavourable for Russia and the most favourable for England and Austria, etc., etc.)". In the following issue of *Rus*, Aksakov stated that every safeguard of Russian industrial interests had to be obtained "by fighting, i.e., after long and obstinate insistence". In the same issue, speaking of transit through the Caucasus, the editor of the Slavophile paper, who, we repeat, is here inspired by Moscow manufactures, says that "our industrial world", dissatisfied with the direction adopted in this question by Petersburg was "ashamed, embarrassed and grieved and had already lost all hope of energetic support for the Russian national (*sic!* )interests in official spheres in Petersburg". Well, this seems clear!

had in the modern history of Europe. In modern European society, where the ruling classes present a horrifying picture of hypocrisy, falseness, perversion, deception, speculation on the Exchange and political corruption, the working class is the only buttress and the only hope of all sincere and thinking supporters of progress.

In our country the formation of this class is of still greater significance. With its appearance the very character of Russian culture is changing: our old *Asiatic* economic life disappearing, giving place to a new, *European* one. It is the working class in our country that is destined to finish the greatest work of Peter—to complete the *Europeanisation of Russia.* But the working class will impart an entirely new character to this matter, on which depends the very existence of Russia as a civilised country. Begun in the past *from above* by the iron will of the most *despotic* of Russian *despots,* it will be completed *from below,* by the *emancipation* movement of the most *revolutionary* of all classes that history has ever known. Herzen notes in his *Diary* that in Russia there is properly speaking no people, but only a prostrate crowd and an executioner. In the working class a *people* in the European sense of the word is now being created in Russia. In it the working population of our country will for the first time rise in all their might and call their executioners to account. Then the hour of Russian autocracy's doom will strike.

Thus the inexorable course of historical development solves all those contradictions which in our country are characteristic of the position not of the revolutionary "intelligentsia" alone, but of any "intelligentsia" whatsoever. The Russian "intelligentsia" themselves are the fruit, quite unintentional, it is true, of Peter's transformation, i.e., of the instruction of youth in "schools and academies" which started with that transformation. More or less European in structure, these schools instilled into the young people taught in them many European concepts which were contradicted at every step by the Russian system and mainly by the whole practice of autocracy. It is therefore understandable that a section of educated Russians not satisfied with the majestic perspective of the hierarchy system, adopted an oppositional attitude to the government. Thus there arose in our country the stratum which it is customary to call the intelligentsia. As long as this stratum existed on a social basis dating back almost to the eleventh century, it could "revolt" and be infatuated with any utopias it pleased but it could change absolutely nothing in the actual situation. In the general course of Russian life this stratum was one of the "lost generation", the whole of it was a kind of "*intelligent superfluity*", as Herzen described some of its varieties. With the destruction of the old economic foundation of Russian social relation-

ships, with the appearance of the working class in our country, everything is changing. By going among the workers, bringing them science, arousing the class consciousness of the proletarians, our revolutionaries from among the "intelligentsia" can become a powerful factor of social development—they who often enough despaired and lost heart, changed programme after programme without any result just as a hopelessly sick man resorts in vain to one treatment after another. It is among the proletariat that the Russian revolutionaries will find that support of the "*people*" which they have not had until recently. The *strength* of the working class will save the Russian "revolution" from *exhaustion* about which Mr. Tikhomirov and his "fellow-thinkers" now speak with a smile of satisfaction. Indeed, "individual revolts" are incapable of destroying any political system whatsoever (and any movement of the "intelligentsia" *alone* is nothing but a certain number of "individual revolts"), those individual revolts will merge with the mass "*revolt*" *of the whole class* as separate streams merge with a mighty river.

There is still time, *it is not yet too late*. Will our "intelligentsia" understand their position? Will they be capable of assuming the grateful role that history reserves for them?

Whether they understand or not, events will not wait for them. The absence of allies among the "intelligentsia" will not prevent our working class from becoming aware of its interest, understanding its tasks, bringing forward leaders from its own ranks and creating its own *working-class intelligentsia. Such an intelligentsia* will not betray its cause or abandon it to the mercy of fate.

It must again be noted, however, that in its fight against autocracy the working class will in all probability not be alone, although, of course, only the working class is capable of giving that fight the decisive turn. The very state of affairs will necessarily drive the whole of our bourgeoisie, i.e., our "society", our world of trade and industry, our landlords, that petty-bourgeois nobility, and finally even the rural "third estate" to a struggle which is *within their power*.

The Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs[268] are so absurd and conservative that at first sight they seem destined to be the future immovable foundation of "order". In time they will indeed assume that role but they must necessarily first pass through their "period of stormy strivings".

Our financial system is founded on the enslavement of the peasant to the state, which takes from him "everything you like to imagine", guided by the far from complicated consideration that "he will get it".[269] The all-suffering "he" long justified this assurance that was so flattering for him, but now even his amazing capacity for "getting things" is nearing its ruin. As we already said,

"he" is going through a process of differentiation, being transformed into a proletarian, on the one hand, and a kulak, on the other. As the most assiduous and vigilant chief cannot get much out of the light-headed proletarians, the burden of taxation weighing down on the village commune is falling more and more on the wealthier members. It is true that the latter endeavour to repay themselves by appropriating the plots abandoned by the proletarians, but it is not difficult to understand that when it is a case of dues and taxes they cannot be as disinterested as the good old "he" was. In his simplicity "he" dreamed only of running a farm on his own, and when he succeeded, as he did in the great majority of cases under the old system, he could be enslaved to the state by being deprived of every kind of income, both known and unknown to economists, with the exception of his meagre wage. The kulak cannot be content with such a wage. He must give it to his hired labourer and he must make sure of a *decent profit* for himself. But this is inconceivable without radical changes in the Russian financial system, changes which only the representatives of the whole country will be able to effect. And there is no need to be a prophet to know beforehand that in this respect there will be serious unpleasantness between the kulak and his "father the Tsar".

Thus, Russian absolutism has been and still is preparing its own downfall. The time is not far off when absolutism will become absolutely impossible in Russia and then, of course, not many educated people in our country will be sorry for it. One can argue, and it is even useful to do so, over the means by which we should strive to achieve political freedom. But among honest and educated people there cannot be doubt as to whether we require that freedom or not. "We now have enough experience to know what our old absolutism is, so no more compromising, no more hesitation, but put your thumbs in its eye-sockets and your knee on its chest! "*

## V

To conclude, a few words about our Grech. The reader can now see what should have constituted progress in our revolutionary theories and what will constitute it. As we noted above, our Narodnik socialists of all possible groups and trends, including the Narodnaya Volya party, *did not find support* in evolution but *sought support against* it in all sorts of sophisms. Their doctrine consisted in idealising the economic system which, if it were in reality as stable and unshakable as it seemed to them, would

* Words of Lassalle in his speech "Was nun? " [270]

condemn them for ever to utter powerlessness. A criticism of Narodism was therefore the first and indispensable step forward on the way to the future development of our revolutionary movement. If Mr. Tikhomirov was seriously grieved but the inability of the Russian revolutionaries to make evolution and revolution harmonise, he only had to undertake such a criticism. But he did just the opposite. He did not criticise Narodism, he only carried its main propositions to the extreme. The errors which underlay the Narodnik outlook reached such gigantic proportions in his head that he can call himself a "worker for progress" (whether peaceful or otherwise does not matter in this case) only as a joke. In brief, if the Narodniks proceeded from certain erroneous propositions, Mr. Tikhomirov carries those propositions to the extent of monstrosity and now proceeds happily from the absurd. But that horse will not carry him far!

Such is the sad story of our author's "revolutionism". This "revolutionism" was for a long time in complete theoretical solitude, but the time came when he saw that "it was not good for him to be alone" and he deigned to contract lawful wedlock with some theory of evolution. He "sought" himself a suitable partner for a few years and finally rested his eyes in love on the theory of "unity of the party with the country". This very modest-looking maiden, who passed herself off, so to say, as the major theory of evolution, turned out to be first a wicked woman who drove Mr. Tikhomirov's "revolutionism" to the grave, and secondly an impostor, who had nothing in common with any doctrine of social development.

Mr. Tikhomirov thinks that this story contains a lot of instructive material! It is instructive, but in a sense not so flattering for him.

He imagines that on reading the pamphlet *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary* everybody will think: it is obvious that the author was a revolutionary only through the fault of others, only because all our educated people are noted for their extremely absurd habits of thinking; and Mr. Tikhomirov ceased to be a revolutionary thanks to the outstanding features of his own "creative" reason and his wonderfully profound patriotism. Alas! not even *Russky Vestnik* came to that conclusion.

In Mr. Tikhomirov's complaints about what he had to suffer from the revolutionaries because of his "evolution" one can sense proud consciousness of his own superiority. He is cleverer than the others, the others didn't understand or appreciate him and insulted him terribly when they should have applauded him.

But Mr. Tikhomirov is cruelly mistaken. He owes his "evolution" only to his *lack of development.* Woe from wit is not his woe. His woe is *woe from ignorance.*

And this man, who understands no more about socialism than a pen-pusher in a Petersburg police station, was for a long time considered as a prophet and an interpreter of some kind of special "Russian" socialism which he liked to oppose to West European socialism! Revolutionary youth listened to his disquisitions, considering him as the continuer of the work of Zhelyabov and Perovskaya. Now they see what this would-be continuer was. Mr. Tikhomirov's betrayal has forced our revolutionaries to direct their critical attention to his *person.* But that is not all. They are now obliged to check critically all *that* Mr. Tikhomirov *wrote* throughout the eighties when he, although himself not believing what he wrote, thought it necessary to write in the capacity of a revolutionary.* A lot of rubbish Mr. Tikhomirov came out with, a lot of questions he muddled during those years. And until we can clear up that muddle, even if we have broken with him and assessed him as he deserves, we shall still not free ourselves from *theoretical Tikhomirovism. But free ourselves we must.*

And now, good-bye, Mr. Tikhomirov. May our orthodox god grant you health and our autocratic god reward you with the rank of general!

* See p. 8 of his pamphlet. "In Faith and Truth, by Conscience and Conviction", Mr. Tikhomirov served the revolutionary cause only "until nearly the end of 1880". Since that remote time all that he had was a mere "formal" loyalty to the banner. But that did not prevent him from writing numerous disquisitions on revolutionary themes, disquisitions which, he says fill "more than 600 pages in small type".

# SPEECH AT THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN PARIS

*(July 14-21, 1889)*

## [FIRST VERSION]

It may seem strange for you to see at this workers' congress representatives of Russia—a country where the working-class movement is still unfortunately extremely weak. We think that revolutionary Russia must not in any case remain aloof from the modern socialist movement in Europe, but that, on the contrary, her present closer contact with it will be of great advantage to the cause of the world proletariat. You all know the role played by Russian absolutism in the history of Western Europe. The Russian tsars have been crowned gendarmes who regarded it as their sacred duty to defend and support European reaction from Prussia to Italy and Spain. It would be wasting words to speak here of the role which Nicholas, for example, played in 1848 and 1849; it is as clear as daylight that the fall of Russian absolutism would mean the triumph of the international revolutionary movement in the whole of Europe. The only question is: what conditions are necessary for the revolutionary movement in Russia to be victorious over Russian absolutism?

Certain writers, who have more imagination than knowledge of social and economic matters, depict Russia as a country similar to China and whose economic structure has nothing in common with that of the West. That is completely false. The old economic foundations of Russia are undergoing a process of complete disintegration. Our village commune, once so dear even to certain socialists, but which in reality has been the main buttress of Russian absolutism, is becoming more and more an instrument in the hands of the rural bourgeoisie for the exploitation of the majority of the agrarian population. The poorer peasantry are forced to move to the towns and industrial centres, and simultaneously with this, big manufacturing industry is growing and absorbing the once flourishing handicrafts industry in the villages. Incited by the need for money our autocratic government is devoting all its energies to the development of capitalism in Russia. We socialists can only be satisfied with this aspect of its activity, because it is thus digging its own grave. The proletariat

which is being formed as a result of the disintegration of the village commune will strike a mortal blow at the autocracy. If, in spite of the heroic efforts of the Russian revolutionaries, the autocracy is not yet defeated in Russia, the explanation is that the revolutionaries are isolated from the masses of the people. The forces and the self-sacrifice of our revolutionary *ideologists* may be sufficient for the fight against the tsar as an individual, but they are insufficient for a victory over tsarism as a political system. The task of our revolutionary intelligentsia therefore comes, in the opinion of the Russian Social-Democrats, to the following: they must adopt the views of modern scientific socialism, spread them among the workers, and with the help of the workers, storm the stronghold of autocracy. The revolutionary movement in Russia can triumph only as the revolutionary movement of the workers. There is not and cannot be any other way out for us!

## [SECOND VERSION]

Citizens,

As the list of speakers is a long one and the congress can therefore give them only a short time for their reports on the economic and political situation in the countries they represent, I shall endeavour to make my account of the working-class movement in Russia as short as possible.

It may seem strange for you to see at this congress representatives of Russia—a country where the working-class movement is far from being as developed as in West European countries. But we Russian Social-Democrats think that revolutionary Russia must not in any case remain aloof from the rest of working-class and socialist Europe; on the contrary, her present closer contact with it will be of great advantage to the world socialist movement.

You all know the infamous role that Russian absolutism has been playing up to this very day in the history of Western Europe.

The Russian tsars have been crowned gendarmes who regarded it as their sacred duty to support reaction in all countries from Prussia to Italy and Spain.

It would be wasting words to speak here of the role which the Emperor Nicholas, of woeful memory, played in the well-known events of 1848.

That is why the triumph of the revolutionary movement in Russia would be a triumph for the European workers.

It is therefore important to elucidate how and on what conditions this triumph of the revolutionary movement is possible in Russia.

It is possible, citizens—we are firmly confident of this—only on condition that the Russian revolutionaries succeed in winning the sympathy of the people themselves.

And as long as our movement remains a movement of ideologists and student youth, it may, perhaps, be dangerous for the tsar personally, but it will present no danger for tsarism as a political system.

In order to overthrow and finally destroy tsarism, we must rely on a more revolutionary element than student youth, and this element, which exists in Russia, is the class of the proletarians, a class which is revolutionary by reason of its distressing economic situation, revolutionary in its very essence.

Some economists who have too ardent an imagination and more good will than solid knowledge, depict Russia as a kind of European China, whose economic structure has nothing in common with that of Western Europe. *That is utterly false.* The old economic foundations of Russia are now undergoing a process of complete disintegration. Our village commune about which so much has been said even in the socialist press, but which in fact has been the buttress of Russian absolutism—this much praised commune is becoming more and more an instrument of capitalist exploitation in the hands of the rich peasants, while the poor are abandoning the countryside and going to the big towns and industrial centres. At the same time big manufacturing industry is growing and absorbing the once flourishing handicrafts industry in the villages.

The autocratic government is intensifying this situation with all its might and thus promoting the development of capitalism in Russia. We socialists and revolutionaries can only be satisfied with this aspect of its activity, for it is thus preparing its own downfall.

The industrial proletariat, whose consciousness is being aroused, will strike a mortal blow at the autocracy and then you will see its direct representatives at your congresses alongside the delegates of the more advanced countries.

For the time being our task is to defend with you the cause of international socialism, to spread by all means the teachings of Social-Democracy among the Russian workers and to lead them in storming the stronghold of autocracy.

In conclusion I repeat—and I insist on this important point: the revolutionary movement in Russia will triumph only as a *working-class movement* or else it will never triumph!

# FOR THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HEGEL'S DEATH

Sixty years ago, on November 14, 1831, died a man who will indisputably and always occupy one of the very first places in the history of thought. Not one of the sciences which the French call "sciences morales et politiques" has remained unaffected by the powerful and highly fruitful influence of Hegel's genius. Dialectics, logic, history, law, aesthetics, the history of philosophy and the history of religion have all assumed a new countenance thanks to the impulse received from Hegel.

Hegel's philosophy formed and steeled the thinking of men like Strauss, Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach, Fischer, Hans, Lassalle, and finally Engels and Marx. During his life Hegel enjoyed immense, world-wide fame; after his death, in the thirties, the almost universal attraction of his philosophy became still more notable; but then came a quick reaction: Hegel began to be treated, to quote Marx, just as the honest Mendelssohn treated Spinoza in the time of Lessing, i.e., like a "dead dog".[271] Interest in his philosophy dissappeared altogether among the "educated" sections, and in the world of science it weakened to such a degree that so far no specialist in the history of philosophy has thought of determining and pointing out the "remaining value" of Hegel's philosophy in the various branches of science that it deals with. Below we shall see to a certain extent the explanation of this attitude towards Hegel; let us now merely note that a revival of interest in his philosophy, and particularly his philosophy of history, can be expected in a near enough future. The enormous success of the working-class movement, compelling the so-called educated classes to take an interest in the theory under whose banner that movement is proceeding, will force those classes also to show interest in the historical origin of that theory.

And once they show an interest in this, they will soon come to Hegel, who will thus be transformed in their eyes from the "philosopher of the Restoration" into the founder of the most progressive ideas of today.

That is why we can foretell that although there will be a revival of interest in Hegel among the educated classes, they will never adopt towards him the attitude of profound sympathy that he was the object of sixty years ago in the countries of German culture. On the contrary, bourgeois scientists will undertake a feverish "critical revision" of Hegel's philosophy and many doctors' diplomas will be obtained fighting the late professor's "extremes" and "arbitrary logic".

Naturally, science's only gain from that "critical revision" will be that the learned defenders of the capitalist system will repeatedly display their theoretical worthlessness, just as they have already shown it in the field of politics. But not without reason it is said that it is always useful to "dig around the roots of truth". The revival of interest in Hegel's philosophy will give impartial people an opportunity to study his works independently, and this will be a very fruitful though not easy exercise for their minds. Those who really wish for knowledge will learn very much from Hegel.

In the present essay we wish to attempt an appraisal of the philosophico-historical views of the great German thinker. This has already been done in the main lines by the hand of a master in Engels' articles "Ludwig Feuerbach und der Ausgang der klassischen deutschen Philosophie", which were printed in *Neue Zeit*[272] and then published as a separate booklet. But we think that these views of Hegel fully deserve more detailed study.

Hegel's importance in the social sciences is determined first and foremost by the fact that he considered all their phenomena from the standpoint of the process des Werdens (of coming into being), i.e., from the standpoint of their appearance and their disappearance. It may seem to many people that this was not a very great merit, as one cannot, apparently, consider social phenomena in any other way. But firstly, this standpoint, we shall see, is even today far from being understood by many of those who term themselves "*evolutionists*"; secondly, during Hegel's time, people who studied the social sciences were still farther from that standpoint. It is sufficient to remember the socialists and the economists of those days. The socialists then considered the bourgeois system as indeed a very harmful, but nevertheless entirely *accidental* product of human error. The economists were enthusiastic over it and could find no words to express their praise, but they too regarded it as no more than the fruit of the *accidental* discovery of *truth.* Neither the former nor the latter got any further than this *abstract counterposition of truth and error,* although the teachings of the socialists already contained *elements* of a more correct view of things.

# Zu Hegel's sechzigstem Todestag.

Von G. Plechanow.

Vor sechzig Jahren, am 14. November 1831, verstarb ein Mann, dem unstreitig und für immerdar einer der hervorragendsten Plätze in der Geschichte des menschlichen Gedankens gesichert ist. Unter den Wissenschaften, welche die Franzosen „sciences morales et politiques" nennen, giebt es keine einzige, die nicht vom Genie Hegel's in mächtiger und höchst fruchtbarer Weise beeinflußt worden wäre. Die Dialektik, die Logik, die Geschichte, das Recht, die Aesthetik, die Geschichte der Philosophie und Religion, — alle diese Wissenschaften haben eine neue Gestalt angenommen, dank dem Anstoß, den ihnen Hegel gegeben hat. Die Hegel'sche Philosophie hat den Geist solcher Männer großgezogen und gestählt, wie David Strauß, Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach, Vischer, Gans, F. Lassalle und endlich Engels und Marx. — Schon bei Lebzeiten war Hegel ein in der ganzen zivilisirten Welt gefeierter Denker. Nach seinem Tode, im Zeitraum zwischen den dreißiger und vierziger Jahren, nahm der fast allgemeine Enthusiasmus für seine Philosophie noch viel großartigere Dimensionen an. Darauf aber trat eine jähe Reaktion ein. Man begann Hegel so zu behandeln, wie — um mit Marx zu reden — „der brave Mendelssohn zu Lessing's Zeit den Spinoza behandelt hat, nämlich als ‚todten Hund'." Das Interesse für

A page from the article "For the Sixtieth Anniversary of Hegel's Death" (in the magazine *Neue Zeit*)

In Hegel's eyes this abstract counterposition of truth and error was one of those absurdities into which "rational" thought often falls. Jean-Baptiste Say considered it useless to study the history of political economy because before Adam Smith all economists professed erroneous theories. For Hegel, philosophy was nothing more than the intellectual expression of its time.

Each philosophy that has been "surpassed" at a particular time was the *truth for its time,* and if for only that reason Hegel could not cast aside the previous philosophical systems as old and useless rubbish. On the contrary, as he himself said, "the most recent philosophy is the result of all preceding philosophies and must therefore contain the principles of them all" (*Enzyklopädie,* § 13). Underlying such a view of the history of philosophy there was of course the purely idealist consideration that "the leader of this spiritual work" (i.e., the work of philosophical thought—G.P.) "is the single living spirit, whose thinking nature consists in coming to self-consciousness, and, having attained it, to rise immediately above the stage reached and go further." (*Ibid.*)

But the most consistent materialist will not refuse to admit that each particular philosophical system is no more than the intellectual expression of its time.* And if, turning again to the history of political economy, we ask ourselves which standpoint we must consider it from at present, we shall immediately see how much nearer we are to Hegel than to Say. For instance, from Say's standpoint, i.e., from the standpoint of the abstract counterposition of truth and error, the mercantile system or even the system of the physiocrats must, and indeed did, appear as no more than an absurdity which accidentally found its way into man's head. But we now know to what extent each of the systems mentioned was the necessary product of its time.

"With regard to the special attention paid by the Monetary and Mercantile systems to international trade and to individual branches of national labour that lead directly to international trade, which are regarded by them as the only real source of wealth or of money, one has to remember that in those times national production was for the most part still carried on within the framework of feudal forms and served as the immediate source of subsistence for the producers themselves. Most products did not become commodities; they were accordingly neither converted into money nor entered at all into the general process of the social metabolism, hence they did not appear as materialisation of universal abstract labour and did not indeed constitute bourgeois wealth.... It was consistent with the rudimentary stage of bourgeois production that those misunderstood

* Of course, it can be, and always is, only the reflection of *a certain aspect* of its time. But that does not affect the substance of the matter.

prophets should have clung to the solid, palpable and glittering form of exchange-value, to exchange-value in the form of the universal commodity as distinct from all particular commodities." (Karl Marx, *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie,* Berlin, 1859, S. 138-39.) Marx explains the physiocrats' disputes with their opponents as a dispute about which kind of labour creates surplus-value. (*Ibid.,* S. 35.) Was not this question most "timely" for the bourgeoisie, who were then preparing to become everything?

But not only philosophy appears to Hegel as the natural and necessary product of its time; he takes the same view of religion and law. And it must also be noted that philosophy, law, religion, art, and even technology ("technische Geschicklichkeit") are, in Hegel's opinion, closely interrelated: "only with a particular religion can a particular form of state exist, as also in that particular state a particular philosophy and a particular art."* This again may seem somewhat trivial: who does not know that all aspects and manifestations of the people's life are closely interlinked? Every schoolboy knows that now. But Hegel did not understand this interrelation of the different aspects and manifestations of the people's life as many "educated" people and schoolboys still understand it now. They see this link as a simple interaction of the aspects and manifestations referred to, and at that, first, this interaction itself remains completely unexplained, and secondly—and this is the main thing—they completely forget that there must be one common source out of which all these aspects and manifestations that are interrelated arise. Thus, this system of interaction proves to be deprived of all foundation, to be hanging in the air; law influences religion, religion influences law, and each of them and both together influence philosophy and art, which in turn, affecting each other, also affect law, religion, and so on. That is indeed what universal wisdom tells us. Let us assume that we may be satisfied with such an exposition of the matter for each particular period. But then the question still remains: what determined the historical development of religion, philosophy, art, law, etc., down to the present epoch?

This question is usually answered by referring to the same *interaction,* which thus finally ceases to explain anything; or else some accidental causes are pointed out which influence one aspect or other of the people's life but have nothing whatever in common; or, finally, the whole matter is reduced to subjective logic. It is said, for instance, that Fichte's system of philosophy derived logically from Kant's, Schelling's flowed logically

* *Philosophie der Geschichte,* dritte Auflage, Berlin, 1848, Einleitung, S.66.

from Fichte's and Hegel's from Schelling's. The succesion of schools in art is also "logically" explained in exactly the same way. Doubtless there is a measure of truth in this. The trouble is that it explains nothing at all. We know that in some cases the transition from one philosophical system to another or from one school in art to another takes place very rapidly, in a few years, but in other cases it requires whole centuries. How is this difference explained? The logical filiation of ideas does not explain it at all. Neither do references made by the generally known classical wisdom to interaction and accidental causes. But "educated" people are not embarrassed by this. Having uttered profound things about the interaction of various aspects of people's life, they are satisfied with this "manifestation" of their own profoundness of thought and cease to think at the very place *where strict scientific thought first comes into its own.* Hegel was as far from such profoundness of thought as heaven from earth. "To be satisfied with considering a particular content from the standpoint of interaction," he says, "...is an extremely poor method in the sense of understanding; then one deals merely with the plain fact and the demand for mediation which is manifest when it is a question of finding the causal link remains unsatisfied. The defect of the method which consists in considering phenomena from the standpoint of interaction lies in the fact that the relation of interaction, instead of serving as an equivalent of the concept, must itself be understood; this is achieved by both interacting aspects being acknowledged as moments in some third, higher one, and not being taken as immediately given."* This means that speaking, for instance, of the various aspects of people's life, we must not be satisfied with references to their interaction, but must see their explanation in something new, "higher", i.e., in what determines their very existence as well as the possibility of their interaction.

Where must this new, "higher" thing be sought?

Hegel answers that it must be sought in the qualities of the people's spirit. That is quite logical from his point of view. For him the whole of history is nothing but the "exposition and embodiment of the universal spirit". The movement of the universal spirit is accomplished *by stages.* "Each stage being different from the others, has its own definite principle. Such a principle in history is ... a special spirit of the people. The qualities of the spirit of the people are the concrete expression of all aspects of the people's consciousness and will, of the whole of their reality; they place their imprint on the people's religion, their political constitution, their morality, their system of law, their customs and

* *Enzyklopädie,* §156, Zusatz.

also their science, art, and technical skill. All these particular qualities are to be explained by the universal qualities, and vice versa, the universal qualities may be explained by the particulars of the life of the people provided by history."*

Nothing is easier than to make here the brilliant discovery that Hegel's view of world history that we have quoted is imbued with the *purest idealism.* That immediately strikes, as Gogol says, even anybody who did not study in a seminary. In just the same way there is nothing easier than to limit one's criticism of Hegel's philosophy of history to scornfully shrugging one's shoulders at its extreme idealism. This is done often enough by people who are incapable of any consistent thinking, people who are dissatisfied with the materialists because they are materialists, and with the idealists because they are idealists and are extremely satisfied with themselves because they suppose their own outlook to be free from any extremes, whereas in reality it is simply a completely undigested and completely indigestible mish-mash of idealism and materialism. In any case, Hegel's philosophy has the undeniable merit that it does not contain a trace of *eclecticism.* And if its erroneous idealistic basis does really make itself felt too often, if it places too narrow limits on the movement of the great man's genius, that very circumstance must force us to pay the utmost attention to Hegel's philosophy; for it is precisely what makes his philosophy supremely instructive. Hegel's idealist philosophy itself contains the very best, the most irrefutable proof of the inconsistency of idealism. But at the same time it teaches us consistency in thought, and whoever goes through its stern school with love and attention will acquire for ever a salutary repugnance for eclectical mish-mash....

If we now know that world history is not at all the "exposition and embodiment of the universal spirit", that still does not mean that we may be satisfied with the current considerations on the theme that the political structure of every given people influences their morals, that their morals influence the constitution, and so on. We must agree with Hegel that both morals

* ["...Hier haben wir nur dieses aufzunehmen, daß jede Stufe als verschieden von der anderen ihr bestimmtes eigenthümliches Princip hat. Solches Princip ist in der Geschichte Bestimmtheit des Geistes—ein besonderer Volksgeist. In dieser drückt er als concret alle Seiten seines Bewußtseyns und Wollens, seiner ganzen Wirklichkeit aus; sie ist das gemeinschaftliche Gepräge seiner Religion, seiner politischen Verfassung, seiner Sittlichkeit, seines Rechtssystems, seiner Sitten, auch seiner Wissenschaft, Kunst und technischen Geschicklichkeit. Diese speciellen Eigenthümlichkeiten sind aus jener allgemeinen Eigenthümlichkeit, dem besonderen Principe eines Volkes zu versehen, sowie umgekehrt aus dem in der Geschichte vorliegenden factischen Detail jenes Allgemeine der Besonderheit herauszufinden ist...."] *Philosophie der Geschichte,* Einleitung, S. 79.

and political constitution proceed from a common source. What that source actually is we are shown by the modern materialist explanation of history, about which we shall for the present merely note that Messrs. the eclectics have just the same difficulty in understanding it as in penetrating the secret of Hegel's idealistic views, which are diametrically opposed to it.

Every time Hegel undertakes to give a characteristic of any great people in history he displays versatile knowledge and enormous penetration; he gives truly brilliant and at the same time profoundly instructive characteristics, scattering in passing a number of valuable remarks on the various aspects of history of the people in question. He carries you away, and you are prepared to forget that you are dealing with an idealist, you are ready to admit that he really "die Geschichte nimmt, wie sie ist", that Hegel strictly follows his rule: "to remain on historical, empirical ground". But what does Hegel need that historical, empirical ground for? To determine *the quality of the spirit* of the people in question. The spirit of a particular people is, as we already know, but a stage in the universal spirit's development; and the qualities of the latter are not brought out by studying universal history; the concept of it is *brought into that study* as a ready-made one, a concept which is complete in all respects. Here is what arises from this: as long as history does not contradict the concept of the universal spirit, and the "laws" of the development of that spirit, it is taken "as it is". Hegel "remains on historical, empirical grounds". But when history, without exactly contradicting the "laws" of the development of the universal spirit, simply leaves the track of that supposed development and turns out to be something not foreseen by Hegel's *logic*, it receives no attention. Such an attitude to history apparently should have saved Hegel at least from contradicting himself. In actual fact it did not. Hegel is far from being free from contradictions. Here is a sufficiently vivid example. In the following lines Hegel speaks of the religious concepts of the Indians.

"Love, heaven, in brief, everything spiritual, on the one hand, passes through the Indian's imagination, but, on the other hand, what he thinks is just as present to his senses and he plunges ... into the natural. Thus religious objects are either horrible forms created by art, or natural things. Every bird, every ape, is the god of the present, an absolutely universal being. For the Indian is unable to grasp an object in its rational definition, since this requires reflection."*

On the basis of this characteristic, Hegel considers animal worship a natural consequence of the fact that the spirit of the

* *Philosophie der Geschichte*, S. 192, 193.

*Indian people* is one of the lower *stages* in the development of the *universal spirit*. The ancient Persians. who deified light and also "the sun, the moon and five other heavenly bodies", which they acknowledged to be "venerable images of Ormuzd", are placed higher than the Indians by Hegel. But see what the same Hegel says of animal worship among the ancient Egyptians.

"The cult" (of the Egyptians—G.P.) "consists mainly of animal worship.... Zoolatry is repulsive to us; we can accustom ourselves to praying to heaven, but to worship animals is alien to us.... And yet it is certain that the peoples who worship the sun and other heavenly bodies are in no way higher than those who worship animals; on the contrary, for in the animal world the Egyptians saw the Interior and the Incomprehensible...."*

The same animal worship is given a completely different significance in Hegel's opinion according as he is dealing with the Indians or the Egyptians. Why this? Can the Indians have worshipped animals in a different way from the Egyptians? No, it is simply that the "spirit" of the Egyptian people is a "*transition*" to that of the Greeks and occupies a comparatively higher stage in Hegel's classification; that is why Hegel is reluctant to testify that it has weaknesses of which he has convicted the spirit of the Indian people, which he places at a lower stage. Similarly Hegel adopts quite a different attitude to *castes* according as he comes across them in India or in Egypt. The Indian castes "arise from natural differences", and therefore the personality in India is less able to appreciate itself than in China, where there is unenviable equality of all before the despot. Of the Egyptian castes we are told that they "have not become petrified, but are in mutual struggle and mutual contact; they often disintegrate and then appear again". But, if only from what Hegel himself says about castes in India, it is obvious that in India too there was no complete absence of struggle and contact between them. On this question, as on that of animal worship, Hegel is obliged for the sake of a rather arbitrary logical construction to attribute completely different significance to analogous phenomena of social life. But that is not all. The Achilles' heel of idealism is bared to us particularly where Hegel is obliged to consider the transfer of the vortex of the historical movement from one people to another, or a change in the *interior* situation of a particular people. Naturally, in such cases there arises the question of what causes such transfers and changes, and Hegel, being an idealist, seeks the answer in the qualities of the same *spirit* whose embodiment, in his opinion, constitutes history. For instance, he asks himself why

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* *Ibid.*, S. 258.

ancient Persia declined, whereas India and China still exist. He prefaces the answer with the following remark:

"First of all, we must put aside the prejudice that length of resistance to disintegration is something excellent: indestructible mountains are by no means superior to the ephemeral rose...."

Of course that preliminary remark must in no case be considered as the answer. Further we have the following considerations:

"In Persia the principle of the free spirit begins in its opposition to naturalness, and this natural existence therefore fades and falls; the principle of separation from nature is to be found in the kingdom of Persia, which is therefore higher than the worlds which are plunged in the natural.* Thereby the necessity of progress has come out; the spirit has revealed itself and must fulfil itself. The Chinese has significance only when he is dead, the Indian kills himself, plunges into Brahma[273] and dies while living, in complete unconsciousness, or is god by virtue of his birth,** here there is no change, no progress, for advance is possible only through the fulfilment of the independence of the spirit. With the light*** of the Persians begins spiritual contemplation, in which the spirit parts from nature. That is why (*sic*! ) we first find here ... that objectness remains free, that is, that the peoples**** are not oppressed, but retain their wealth, their system, their religion. This was precisely Persia's weakness compared with Greece."*****

In this long disquisition only the very last lines, giving the internal organisation of the kingdom of Persia as the cause of the weakness which it manifested in its clashes with Greece—only these last lines can be termed an attempt to explain the historical fact of Persia's fall. But this attempt at an explanation has little in common with the idealist explanation of history which Hegel adhered to: the weakness of Persia's internal organisation has but a very doubtful connection with the "light of the Persians". But where Hegel remains true to *idealism*, the best he does is to wrap in an idealist cover the fact requiring an explanation. His idealism comes to grief in the same way everywhere. Take, for instance, Greece's internal disintegration. Greece's world, according to Hegel, was a world of beauty and "splendid moral morality".****** The Greeks were excellent people, profoundly devoted to the country and capable of all kinds of self-

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* i.e., the Chinese and Indian "worlds".

** As a brahmin.

*** Worshipped by the ancient Persians.

**** Forming the kingdom of Persia.

***** *Philosophie der Geschichte*, S. 270-71.

****** We know that Hegel distinguishes between *morals* and *morality*.

sacrifice. But they accomplished great feats entirely "without reflection".

For the Greek, his nation was a necessity without which he could not live. Only later did the sophists introduce principles; there appeared subjective reflection, moral self-consciousness, the teaching that each must act according to his conviction. Then it was that the internal decay of the "splendid moral morality" of the Greeks mentioned above began; the "self-liberation of the interior world" led to the decline of Greece. One of the aspects of this interior world was *thought*. Consequently we here find the interesting and historic phenomenon that the forces of thought act, incidentally, as "principles of decay". This view deserves attention if only because it is much more profound than the rectilinear views of the Enlighteners, for whom success in thought in any people must unconditionally and directly lead to "progress". Nevertheless, the question of where this "self-liberation of the interior world" came from still remains open. Hegel's idealist philosophy answers that "the spirit could only for a short time remain on the standpoint of splendid moral morality". But this, of course, is still not an answer, it is only a translation of the question into the philosophical language of Hegel's idealism. Hegel himself seems to feel this, and that is why he hastily adds that "the principle of decay *revealed itself* first of all in external political development, both in the wars of the Greek states among themselves and in the struggle of the different factions within the cities".* Here we already stand on *concrete* historical ground. The struggle of the "factions" within the cities, in Hegel's own words, was the product of Greece's *economic* development, i.e., in other words, the struggle between the political parties was but the expression of the *economic contradictions* which had arisen in the Greek cities. But if we remember that the Peloponnesian War,[274] too, was, as we see from Thucydides, nothing but a class struggle that spread to the whole of Greece, we shall conclude without any difficulty that the causes of the decline of Greece are to be found in *her economic* history.** Thus, Hegel puts us on the way to the materialist conception of history, although to him the class struggle in Greece appears only as a manifestation of the "principle of decay". Expressing it in the terms used by Hegel, we can say that *materialism is the truth of idealism*. And we constantly meet with such unexpected things in Hegel's philosophy of history. This greatest of *idealists* seems to have set himself the task of clearing the road for materialism. When he speaks about the cities of the Middle Ages he pays tribute to

* *Philosophie der Geschichte*, S. 323.

** Lacedaemon "besonders wegen der Ungleichheit des Besitzes herunterkam", says Hegel expressly.[275]

idealism, but considers their history, on the one hand, as the struggle of the burghers against the nobility and the clergy, and, on the other, as a struggle between different sections of citizens —the "rich citizens and the common people".* When he speaks about the Reformation,[276] he again first reveals to us the secrets of the "universal spirit" and then passes the following remark, which is completely unexpected on the lips of an idealist, about the spread of protestantism:[277]

"In Austria, in Bavaria and in Bohemia, the Reformation had already achieved great success, and although it is said: when truth has once permeated minds it can never be torn away from them, it was nevertheless suppressed here by force of arms, by cunning or persuasion. *The Slav nations were agrarian* peoples (Hegel's italics). But this condition carries with it the relationship of master and slave. In agriculture the impulse of nature is overwhelming, human industry and subjective activity are less to be found in this work. That is why the Slavs were slower and had greater difficulty in arriving at the basic feeling of the subjective *ego,* to consciousness of what is universal, ... and they were unable to take part in the rising freedom."**

By these words Hegel tells us outright that the explanation of the religious views and all the emancipation movements that arise among a particular people must be sought in that people's economic activity. But even that is not enough. The state which, according to Hegel's idealist explanation, is "the embodiment of the moral idea, of the moral spirit, as the obvious will, clear and substantial to itself, which thinks itself and knows itself and fulfils itself insofar as it thinks and knows itself...,"*** in Hegel the state itself is nothing more than the *product of economic development.*

"A real state and a real state government appear only when there is already a difference between the estates, when wealth and poverty become very great and there sets in a condition in which a great majority can no longer satisfy their needs as they are accustomed to."****

In exactly the same way, the historical origin of *marriage* in Hegel is closely connected with the *economic* history of mankind.

"The true beginning, and the first institution, of the state have correctly been attributed to the *introduction* of agriculture and

* Hegel notes: "Examining this troubled and changing internal life of the cities, the constant mutual struggle of the factions, we are surprised to see that, on the other hand, industry was highly flourishing there, just as was trade by land and sea. The same principle of vitality which fed on this internal incitement gave rise to that prosperity."

** *Philosophie der Geschichte,* S. 506.

*** *Philosophie des Rechts,* §257.

**** *Philosophie der Geschichte,* Einleitung, S. 106.

also of *marriage,* since the principle gives rise to exclusive private ownership, and the wandering life of the savage seeking subsistence in that wandering is led back to the tranquillity of private right and the guaranteed satisfaction of requirements, with which is linked the restriction of sexual love to matrimony, and hence the extension of this union to a *lasting,* in itself universal, union, of the craving for *care of the family* and for the possession of *family property.*"*

We could quote many more examples of this kind, but as space does not allow this, we shall confine ourselves to pointing out the significance attributed by Hegel to the "geographical basis of world history".

Much was written both *before* and *after* Hegel about the significance of the geographical environment in man's historical development. But after him, as well as before him, scientists often made the mistake of bearing in mind only the *psychological* or even the *physiological* influence of surrounding nature on man, completely forgetting its influence on the condition of the social *productive forces and through them* on all the social relations between people in general, with all their ideological superstructures.** Hegel avoided this enormous error, if not in details at least in the *general setting of the question.* According to him there are three typical varieties of geographical environment: 1) a waterless high plateau, with great steppes and plains; 2) low lands intersected by great rivers; 3) coastal lands having direct communication with the sea.

Cattle-rearing is dominant in the first, *agriculture* in the second, trade and the crafts in the third. The social relations of the inhabitants of these areas assume various characters according to these basic differences. The people inhabiting the high plateaux, the *Mongols,* for instance, lead a patriarchal nomadic life and have no history in the proper sense of the word. Only occasionally, assembling in great numbers, they swoop like a storm on the civilised countries leaving desolation and destruction in their wake.*** Cultural life begins in the lowlands, which

* *Philosophie des Rechts,* § 203, Anmerkung. It goes without saying that, considering the state of science at the time, Hegel's view of the original history of the family and property could not be distinguished by great clarity; the important thing is that he already feels where the key to that history should be sought.

** Montesquieu in his *Esprit des lois* not infrequently dwelt on the influence of nature on man's physiology. He tries to explain many historical phenomena by such influence. [278]

*** "The high plateaux lead to narrow valleys, inhabited by quiet mountain people, shepherds who engage in land cultivation as well, like the Swiss," says Hegel. "There are such peoples in Asia too, but they have less importance in general."

owe their fertility to the rivers. "Such a lowland we find in China, India..., Babylon ... and Egypt. Great empires arise in these lands and great states are formed there. For agriculture, which is dominant here as the first source of subsistence for individuals, is bound by the regularity of the seasons, by the regular occupations corresponding to them; here landed property and the relationships of right corresponding to them have their beginning."[279] But the agricultural peoples who live in the lowlands are distinguished by greater sluggishness, immobility and segregation; they are unable to use for their mutual relationships the means that nature places at their disposal. This defect does not exist in peoples in a coastal country. The sea does not separate peoples, it unites them. That is why precisely in the coastal countries culture, and with it the development of human consciousness, reaches its highest development. There is no need to look far for examples, it is sufficient to point to ancient Greece.*

Perhaps the reader knows L. Mechnikov's book *La civilisation et les grands fleuves historiques,*[280] which appeared in 1889. The author has undeniable deviations towards idealism, but in general he adheres to the materialist standpoint. Well? This *materialist's* view of the historical significance of the geographical environment agrees almost entirely with that of the *idealist* Hegel, although Mechnikov would probably be very surprised to hear of such an affinity.

Hegel also explains, in part, the rise of inequality among the more or less primitive societies by the influence of geographical environment. Thus, he pointed out that in the Attica *of before Solon's time,*[281] the differences between estates (by estates he means the various more or less well-to-do sections of the population: the inhabitants of the plains, those of the mountains, and those of the coastal areas—G.P.) were based on differences in the localities. And there is no doubt that local differences and the *occupations* which varied with them must have had great influence on the *economic* development of primitive societies. Unfortunately, this aspect of the matter is far from being always taken into consideration by modern investigators.

It is improbable that Hegel busied himself much with *political* economy, but here, too, as in many other fields, his genius helped him to grasp the most characteristic and essential aspect of phenomena. Hegel understood more clearly than all economists of his time, not excepting even Ricardo, that in a society which is based on private property, the growth of wealth, on the one hand, is inevitably accompanied by the growth of poverty, on the other. He says this expressly in his *Philosophie der Gesch-*

* *Philosophie der Geschichte,* Einleitung.

*ichte* and also particularly in *Philosophie des Rechts.* To use his words, this *dialectics,* meaning a lowering of the living standard of the majority of the population as a result of which they can no longer satisfy their requirements correctly, and which concentrates wealth in comparatively few hands, must necessarily lead to a situation in which civil society, despite the *surplus of wealth, is not rich enough,* i.e., has no sufficient means to do away with the excess of poverty and the dregs of the population (des Pöbels).*

The result is that civil society** finds itself forced to emerge from its own limits and to seek new markets, to turn to world trade and colonisation. Of all Hegel's contemporaries only Fourier distinguished himself by a similar clarity of views and good understanding of the dialectics of bourgeois economic relations.

The reader has probably noted that to Hegel the proletariat is no more than the "Pöbel", incapable of using the "spiritual advantages" of civil society. Hegel did not suspect to what degree the modern proletariat differed from the proletariat of the ancient world, say, at any rate, from the Roman proletariat; he did not know that in modern society the yoke weighing down the working class infallibly gives rise to counteraction from that class, and that in modern society the proletariat is destined considerably to outstrip the bourgeoisie intellectually. Neither, of course, did the utopian socialists know this; for them too the proletariat was no more than the "Pöbel", worthy of all kinds of sympathy but incapable of any initiative. Only *scientific* socialism was able to understand the great historical significance of the modern proletariat.

Let us resume what we have said. As an idealist, Hegel could not regard history otherwise than from the idealist standpoint; he made use of all the powers of his genuis, all the gigantic resources of his dialectics, to give at least some scientific character to the idealistic conception of history. His attempt proved vain. He himself seemed dissatisfied with the results he had achieved and he was often obliged to come down from the misty heights of idealism to the concrete ground of economic relationships. *Every time he turned to it, economics freed him from the shallows into which his idealism had led him. Economic development turned out to be the prius determining the whole course of history.*

This determined the subsequent orientation of science. The transition to materialism which took place after Hegel's death could not be a simple return to the naïve metaphysical materialism of the eighteenth century. In the sphere which interests us here, i.e., in the explanation of history, materialism had to turn

* *Philosophie der Geschichte,* S. 285; *Philosophie des Rechts,* § 243.
** He is here referring mainly to England.

first and foremost *to economics. To act otherwise would have meant not progress, but retrogression compared with Hegel's philosophy of history.*

The materialist conception of nature is still not the materialist conception of history. The materialists of the last century saw history with the eyes of idealists and very naïve idealists at that. Insofar as they dealt with the history of human societies, they tried to explain it by the *history of thought.* For them the remarkable proposition of Anaxagoras that "reason (Nus) governs the world" was reduced to the proposition that human *judgement governs history.* The sad pages in human history they put down to mistakes of judgement. If the population of a certain country patiently suffers the yoke of despotism, this is only because it has not yet understood the advantages of freedom. If it is superstitious it is because it is deceived by the priests who thought out religion for their own advantages. If humanity suffers from wars the reason is that it is not yet able to understand how detrimental they are. And so for everything. "*The progress of ideas depends on the progress of things,*" said the remarkable thinker, Jean-Baptiste Vico, at the beginning of the last century. The materialists thought just the opposite: the progress of things in society is determined by the progress of ideas and the latter is determined by ... well, say, the rules of formal logic and accumulation of knowledge.

Hegel's absolute idealism was very far from the naïve idealism of the thinkers of the Enlightenment. When Hegel repeated with Anaxagoras that reason governs the world, on his lips that did not at all mean that the world is governed by the thought of man. Nature is a system of reason, but that does not mean that nature is endowed with consciousness. "The movement of the solar system takes place according to immutable laws; these laws are the reason of that system, but neither the sun nor the planets which gravitate around it according to these laws have any consciousness of doing so."*

Man is endowed with consciousness; he sets a definite purpose for his actions; but it does not follow from this that history proceeds as people wish it to. The result of every act of man always has an unforeseen side and it is precisely this side that often, or more correctly nearly always, constitutes the most substantial acquisition of history, and it is this side that leads to the realisation of the universal spirit.

"In world history man's actions result in something quite different from what he purposes or intends"; he fulfils his own interests but thereby something more is brought into being, which

* *Philosophie der Geschichte,* S. 15-16.

is, admittedly, contained therein, but was not in his consciousness or his intention.* States, peoples and individuals pursue their own private interests, their particular aims.

From this standpoint they are undeniably *conscious, thinking* agents. But, consciously pursuing their own private aims (which generally are also permeated with definite universal aspirations to what is good and right), they unconsciously accomplish the aims of the universal spirit.

Caesar aimed at autocracy in Rome, that was his personal aim; but autocracy was at that time a historical necessity; hence in accomplishing his personal aim, Caesar served the universal spirit. In this sense we can say that historical figures, and also whole peoples are *blind instruments of the spirit.* It forces them to work for it by holding out to them the bait of their private aims and urging them on with the spur of *passion,* without which nothing great is done in history.

In relation to people there is here no mysticism of the "unconscious". People's actions are necessarily reflected in their heads, but it is not this reflection that determines the movement of history. The progress of things *is not determined by the progress of ideas* but by something outside and independent of man's will and hidden from human consciousness.

The *accident* of human arbitrariness and human prudence gives place to *conformity to law,* i.e., consequently, to *necessity.* In this lies the unquestionable superiority of "*absolute idealism*" compared with the naïve idealism of the French thinkers of the Enlightenment. Absolute idealism is to this latter idealism what monotheism is to fetishism and magic. Magic leaves no room in nature for conformity to law; it assumes that the "*progress of things*" can be disrupted at any moment by the intervention of a magician. Monotheism attributes to God the establishment of the laws of nature, but it acknowledges (at least at the higher stage of its development when it ceases to be reconciled with miracles) that the progress of things is determined by these once-and-for-all-established laws. In so doing it gives science a large place. In just the same way absolute idealism, seeking the explanation of the movement of history in something which is independent of human arbitrariness, sets science the task of explaining the phenomena of history in conformity to laws, and the fulfilment of this task does away with any necessity for the *hypothesis of the spirit* which was quite worthless as far as this explanation was concerned.

If the view of the French materialists of the last century on the progress of history came to the proposition that human

* *Ibid.,* S. 35.

judgement governs history, their expectations from the future could be expressed by saying: from now on everything will be arranged and put in order by enlightened reason, *philosophy*. It is remarkable that Hegel, the absolute idealist, reserved philosophy a far more modest role.

"To speak once more on the *precept** of how the world must be, here philosophy always arrives too late," we read in the preface to *Philosophie des Rechts*. "As the world *thought*, it appeared first at the time when reality had accomplished the process of its formation and was all complete.... When philosophy paints its grey things grey, it is a form of life already grown old, and can no longer be rejuvenated but only known; the owl of Minerva only flies out as twilight sets in."**

Beyond doubt, Hegel goes too far here. Completely agreeing that "philosophy" cannot revive a decrepit, obsolete social system, one may all the same ask Hegel what then prevents it from showing us—of course only roughly—the character of the *new* social system which is coming to take the place of the old. "Philosophy" considers phenomena in the process of their appearance. But this process has two sides: appearance and disappearance. These two sides can be considered as separate in time. But, both in nature and especially in history the process of appearing is, at every particular time, a *double process*: the old is destroyed and *at the same time* the *new* arises out of its ruins. Must this process of the appearance of the new always remain a mystery for "philosophy"? "Philosophy" takes cognisance of what *is*, and not what should be according to this or that person's opinion. But what is at each particular time? Precisely the *obsolescence of the old* and the birth of the new. If philosophy takes cognisance only of the obsolescent old, its cognisance is *one-sided*, and philosophy is unable to fulfil the task of knowing what is. But this contradicts Hegel's assurance of the omnipotence of cognisant reason.

Modern materialism knows not such extreme. On the basis of what is and *is becoming obsolete* it can judge of what *is coming into being*. But we must not forget that our conception of what *is coming into being* differs essentially from the conception of *being to be* (sein sollenden), against which Hegel directed the words we have quoted from him on the owl of Minerva. For us, what *is coming into being* is the necessary result of what *is becoming obsolete*. If we know that *such a thing*, and *no other* is coming into being, we are indebted for this to the objective process of social development, which prepares us to know *what is coming*

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

** *Philosophie des Rechts*, S. XXIII-XIV.

*into being.* We do not oppose our *thought* to the *being* around us.

But those whom Hegel argued with did not consider the matter that way. They imagined that thought could change the natural course of development of being as it wished. Therefore they did not find it necessary to study its course or take it into consideration. Their idea of what *was to be* was based not on the study of reality around them but on their reasoning about the just and normal social system they had at a particular time. This reasoning was prompted by nothing but the reality around them (chiefly its *negative* side). To rely on such reasoning meant in essence to be governed by the directions of that same reality but accepted indiscriminately without any attempts at checking them by studying the reality which prompted them. It was like trying to get to know a thing by looking not straight at it, but at its reflection in a convex mirror. Mistakes and disappointments were inevitable. And the more people forgot that their ideas of "what was to be" originated in the reality surrounding them, the more they believed that, equipped with these ideas, they could treat reality as it occurred to them, the greater was the distance separating what they aspired to and what they attained. How far modern bourgeois society is from the kingdom of reason which the French thinkers of the Enlightenment dreamed of! Ignoring reality, people could not free themselves from the operation of its laws; they only deprived themselves of the possibility to foresee the working of those laws and to use them for their own aims. That was precisely why their aims were unattainable. To adopt the standpoint of the thinkers of the Enlightenment meant to go no farther than the abstract opposition between *freedom* and *necessity.*

It seems at first sight that if necessity predominates in history there is no room in it for the free activity of man. This enormous mistake was corrected by German idealist philosophy. Schelling had already pointed out that in the correct view of the matter *freedom is necessity, necessity is freedom.** Hegel finally solved

* Schelling notes that freedom is inconceivable without necessity. "Denn wenn keine Aufopferung möglich ist ohne die Überzeugung, dass die Gattung, zu der man gehört, nie aufhören könne fortzuschreiten, wie ist denn diese Überzeugung möglich, wenn sie einzig und allein auf die Freiheit gebaut ist? Es muss hier etwas sein, das höher ist, denn menschliche Freiheit, und auf welches allein im Wirken und Handeln sicher gerechnet werden kann; ohne welches nie ein Mensch wagen könnte, eine Handlung von grossen Folgen zu unternehmen, da selbst die vollkommenste Berechnung derselben durch den Eingriff fremder Freiheit so durchaus gestört werden kann, das aus seiner Handlung etwas ganz anderes resultieren kann, als er beabsichtigte. Die Pflicht selbst kann mir nicht gebieten, in Ansehung der Folgen meiner Handlungen ganz ruhig zu sein, sobald sie entschieden hat, wenn nicht mein Handeln zwar

the antinomy between freedom and necessity. He proved that we are free only insofar as we know the laws of nature and socio-historical development and insofar as *we, submitting to them,* rely upon them. This was a tremendous gain in the field of philosophy and also in that of social science—a gain which, however, only modern, dialectical materialism has exploited to the full.

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The materialist explanation of history presupposes the dialectical method of thought. Dialectics was known before Hegel. But Hegel succeeded in making use of it as none of his predecessors had. In the hands of this idealist of genius, dialectics became a most powerful weapon for the cognisance of everything which exists. "Therefore," Hegel says, "the dialectical constitutes ... the motive soul of the scientific process and is the principle by which alone the content of science acquires *immanent connection and necessity....* Diversion from abstract rational definitions seems to our ordinary consciousness a profession of simple prudence according to the rule: live and let live, whereby everything seems equally good. But the essence of the matter is that what is definite is not only limited from without, but is bound to be destroyed and to pass over into its opposite by virtue of its own inherent nature."* As long as Hegel remains true to the dialectical method, he is a highly progressive thinker. "We say that all things (i.e., all that is finite as such) must be submitted to the judgement of dialectics and by the very fact we define it as a universal, invincible force, which must destroy everything, no matter how lasting it may seem." Therefore Hegel is perfectly right when he says that serious mastery and clear comprehension of dialectics is a matter of extraordinary importance. The dialectical method is the most powerful scientific weapon bequeathed by German idealism to its successor, modern materialism.

However, materialism could not make use of dialectics in its idealist form. It had first of all to be freed from its mystic wrappings.

The greatest of all materialists, a man who was in no way inferior to Hegel by his genius, the true successor of the great philosopher, *Karl Marx,* said quite rightly of himself that his method is the complete opposite of Hegel's method. "To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking,

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von mir, d.h. von meiner Freiheit, die Folgen meiner Handlungen aber, oder das, was sich aus ihnen für mein ganzes Geschlecht entwickeln wird, gar nicht von meiner Freiheit, sondern von etwas ganz Anderem und Höherem abhängig sind. *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* . Schelling's *Werke,* III Band, Stuttgart und Augsburg, 1858, S. 595.

* *Enzyklopädie,* §81 und Zusatz.

which, under the name of 'the idea', he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, the phenomenal form of 'the idea'. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought."*

Thanks to Marx, materialist philosophy has been elevated to an integral, harmonious and consistent world outlook. We already know that the materialists of the last century remained naïve idealists in the field of history. But Marx drove that idealism out of its last refuge. Like Hegel, he saw human history as a process conforming to laws and independent of man's arbitrariness; like Hegel, he considered all phenomena in the process of their appearance and their disappearance; like Hegel, he was not satisfied with barren metaphysical explanation of historical phenomena, and lastly, like Hegel, he endeavoured to trace to a universal and single *source* all the acting and interacting forces of social life. But he found that source not in the absolute spirit, but in the same economic development to which, as we saw above, Hegel too was forced to have recourse when idealism, even in his powerful and skilful hands, was a powerless and useless instrument. But what in Hegel is accidental, a guess of greater or lesser genius, becomes in Marx a rigorous, scientific investigation.

Modern dialectical materialism has made clear to itself incomparably better than idealism the truth that people make history unconsciously: from its standpoint the course of history is determined in the final account not by man's will, but by the development of the material productive forces. Materialism also knows *when* the "owl of Minerva" starts its flight, but it sees nothing mysterious in the flight of this bird, any more than in anything else. It has succeeded in applying to history the relation between freedom and necessity discovered by idealism. People made and had to make their history *unconsciously* as long as the motive forces of historical development worked behind their backs, independently of their consciousness. Once those forces have been discovered, once the laws by which they work have been studied, people will be able to take them in their own hands and submit them to their own reason. The service rendered by Marx consists in having discovered those forces and made a rigorous scientific study of their working. Modern dialectical materialism, which, in the opinion of philistines, must turn man into an automaton, in actual fact opens for the first time in history the road to the kingdom of freedom and conscious

* *Das Kapital*, Vorwort, 2. Auflage, S. XIX. [282]

activity. But it is possible to enter that kingdom only by means of a radical change in the present social activity. The philistines realise, or at least have a foreboding of this. That is why the materialist explanation of history causes them such vexation and grief; and for that reason too not a single philistine is able or willing to understand or grasp Marx's theory in its entirety. Hegel saw the proletariat as a *mob.* For Marx and the Marxists the proletariat is a great force, the bearer of the future. Only the proletariat is capable of mastering the teaching of Marx (we are not speaking of exceptions) and we see how it is in fact becoming more and more permeated with its content.

Philistines in all countries are raising a hue and cry about there not being a single important work in the whole of the writings of Marxism besides *Capital.* But first, that is not true, and secondly, even if it were, it would prove nothing. Can one speak of stagnation of thought at a time when thought daily wins masses of followers, when it opens new and broad perspectives for a whole class of society?

Hegel is enthusiastic when he speaks of the people of Athens before whom the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles were played, to whom Pericles addressed his speeches, and from among whom "emerged personalities who became classical characters for all ages". We can understand Hegel's enthusiasm. Nevertheless it must be noted that the Atheneans were a *people of slave-owners.* It was not the slaves that Pericles addressed himself to, nor was it for them that the great works of art were intended. In our time science addresses itself to the working people, and we are fully entitled to be enthusiastic when we consider the modern working class, to whom the profoundest thinkers address themselves and before whom the most talented authors make their speeches. Only now has a close and unseverable union between science and the working people at last been established, a union which will lay the foundations of a great and fruitful epoch in world history.

It is sometimes said that the standpoint of dialectics is identical with that of evolution. There can be no doubt that these two methods have points of contact. Nevertheless between them there is a profound and important difference which, it must be admitted, is far from favouring the teaching of evolution. Modern evolutionists introduce a considerable admixture of conservatism into their teaching. They want to prove that there are no leaps either in nature or in history. Dialectics, on the other hand, knows full well that in nature and also in human thought and history leaps are *inevitable.* But it does not overlook the undeniable fact that the same *uninterrupted process* is at work in all phases of change. It only endeavours to make clear to itself the series of

conditions under which gradual change must necessarily lead to a leap.*

From Hegel's standpoint *utopias* have a symptomatic importance in history: they display contradictions characteristic of the epoch in question. Dialectical materialism gives the same appraisal of them. It is not the utopian plans of various reformers, but the laws of production and exchange, which determine the now continually growing working-class movement. That is why, contrary to what happened in past centuries, not the reformers are at present utopians, but all those public figures who want to stop the wheel of history. And the most characteristic feature of our epoch is that not the reformers, but their opponents, resort *to utopias.* The utopian champions of the present unsightly reality want to convince themselves and others that of itself this reality has all perfections, and that therefore all that is necessary is to remove from it certain abuses that have accumulated. In this connection we cannot help remembering what Hegel said about the Reformation. "The Reformation," he said, "arose out of *the corruption of the Church.* The corruption of the Church is not accidental, not only *abuse* of power and authority. Abuse is usually regarded as the *cause* of corruption; it is presumed that the base is good, the thing in itself irreproachable, but passions and in general subjective interests, the accidental will of men, use that good as a means for themselves and that all that is needed is to remove these accidental things.... With such an idea the thing is saved and the evil considered as only extraneous to it. But accidental abuse of a thing is only a particular case; it is quite another matter in the case of a general and great evil in such a great and general thing as the Church."** It is not surprising that Hegel gets so little sympathy from those who like to appeal to "accidental" rents where it is really a matter of

* Hegel proved with amazing clearness how absurd it is to explain phenomena only from the standpoint of their gradual change. He says: "Bei der Allmäligkeit des Entstehens liegt die Vorstellung zu Grunde, dass das Entstehende schon sinnlich oder überhaupt wirklich vorhanden, nur wegen seiner Kleinheit noch nicht wahrnehmbar, so wie bei der Allmäligkeit des Verschwindes, dass das Nichtsein oder das Andere an seine Stelle tretende gleichfalls vorhanden, nur noch nicht bemerkbar sei;—und zwar vorhanden nicht in dem Sinne, dass das Andere in dem vorhandenen Anderen an sich enthalten, sondern dass es als Dasein, nur unbemerkbar, vorhanden sei; es wird damit das Entstehen und Vergehen überhaupt aufgehoben ... und der wesentliche oder der Begriffsunterschied in einen äusserlichen blossen Grössenunterschied verwandelt. Das Begreiflichmachen eines Entstehens oder Vergehens aus der Allmäligkeit der Veränderung hat die der Tautologie eigene Langweiligkeit, weil es das Entstehende oder Vergehende schon vorher ganz fertig hat, und die Veränderung zu einer blossen Änderung eines äusserlichen Unterschiedes macht, wodurch sie in der That nur eine Tautologie ist." *Wissenschaft der Logik,* Nürenberg, 1812, B.I, S. 313-14.

** *Philosophie der Geschichte,* S. 497-98.

radical change in the "thing" itself. They are horrified by the audacious, radical spirit that permeates Hegel's philosophy.

There was a time when those who more or less belonged to the innovators' camp rose against Hegel. What shocked them in his doctrine was his philistine attitude to the contemporary Prussian reality. These opponents of Hegel were gravely mistaken: underneath the reactionary *husk* they did not notice the innovatory *kernel* in his system. But however that may be, these people's antipathy for the great thinker proceeded from noble motives, worthy of all respect. Now Hegel is condemned by scientists representing the bourgeoisie, and they condemn him because they understand or at least feel instinctively the innovatory spirit of his philosophy. For the same reason people now like to pass over Hegel's merits in silence; they willingly oppose him to Kant and nearly every assistant professor considers it his calling to extol the system of "the Königsberg thinker". We willingly give Kant his due and do not dispute his merits. But it seems very suspicious to us that the bourgeois scientists' tendency to criticism is called forth not by his strong sides but his weak ones. It is the *dualism* characteristic of this system that attracts bourgeois ideologists most. And dualism is a particularly convenient thing in the field of "morality". With its help the most attractive ideals can be built up, the most daring expeditions into a "better world" can be undertaken without any thought of embodying those "ideals" in *reality*. What could be better? In the ideal one can, for example, completely destroy the existence of classes, abolish the exploitation of one class by another, and at the same time defend the class state, etc., in reality. Hegel saw the current assertion that an ideal cannot be implemented in reality as a terrible insult to human reason. "All that is rational is real, all that is real is rational." This proposition, we know, perplexed many people, not in Germany alone, but abroad, especially in Russia. The reason for this perplexion must be sought in the lack of clear understanding of the meaning which Hegel gave to the words *"reason"* and *"reality"*. It would seem that even if one gives these words their usual vulgar interpretation, one is bound, all the same, to be struck by the innovatory content of the first half of this proposition: "All that is rational is real". Applied to history these words can mean nothing else than the unshakable conviction that everything rational, far from remaining something *"of the beyond"*, must *become* reality. Without such promising conviction innovatory thought would lose all practical significance. According to Hegel, history is the manifestation and realisation in time of the universal spirit (i.e., reason). How can the continual superseding of social forms be explained from this standpoint? It can be explained only if one considers that in

the process of historical development "reason becomes madness and blessing an evil". One must not, according to Hegel, be ceremonious with reason which has gone over into its opposite, i.e., which has become madness. When Caesar seized state power he violated the Roman constitution. Such a violation was obviously a heinous crime. Apparently Caesar's opponents were fully justified in considering themselves as champions of right because they stood on legal ground. But the right which they championed "was formal right, void of any living spirit and abandoned by the Gods". The violation of that right was thus only formally a crime and therefore there is nothing easier than to justify Julius Caesar, the violator of the Roman constitution.

Hegel gave the following opinion of the fate of Socrates, condemned as the enemy of the prevailing morality: "Socrates was a hero because he consciously acknowledged the higher principle of the spirit and gave voice to it. The right of this higher spirit is absolute.... Such is the position adopted by heroes in world history in general; it is through them that the new world dawns. The new principle is in contradiction with the one that has so far existed; it seems destructive; therefore heroes appear as men of violence who break the laws. As individuals, they are doomed, but the principle itself forges on, even if in another person, and undermines what already exists."* These words are sufficiently clear in themselves. But the matter will become still clearer if we pay attention to the fact that according to Hegel not only heroes appear on the scene of world history, not only individual personalities, but whole peoples too, inasmuch as they are vehicles of the new historical principle. In such cases the field of activity to which the rights of the people extend is extraordinarily vast. "Against this its absolute right to be the vehicle of the present stage of development of the universal spirit, the spirits of the other peoples have no right and are as those whose epoch is past, they do not count any more in the history of the world."**

We know that at the present time the vehicle of the new principle of world history is not any single people, but a definite social class. But we shall still be faithful to the spirit of Hegel's philosophy if we say that all other social classes will go into world history in the degree in which they will be able to give support to this class.

*The irresistible striving to the great historical goal, a striving which nothing can stop—such is the legacy of the great German idealist philosophy.*

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* *Geschichte der Philosophie,* B. II, S. 120.
** *Philosophie des Rechts,* § 347.

# [FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION (FROM THE TRANSLATOR) AND PLEKHANOV'S NOTES TO ENGELS' BOOK *LUDWIG FEUERBACH AND THE END OF CLASSICAL GERMAN PHILOSOPHY*]

## FROM THE TRANSLATOR

In publishing the translation of Engels' remarkable work on Feuerbach we permit ourselves to say a few words on the significance which it may have for Russian readers.

Triumphant reaction attires itself in our country, among other things, in a philosophical raiment, as can be seen, for example, from the journal *Voprosy Filosofii i Psikhologii*.[283] The negational trend of the sixties[284] is treated as something very light-minded and superficial, and Messrs. Astafyev, Lopatin and others would-be sages are acknowledged as great philosophical magnitudes (see, for instance, what Mr. Y. Kolubovsky narrates on "Philosophy with the Russians" in the supplement to his Russian translation of *History of Modern Philosophy* by Überweg-Heinze).[285] The Russian socialists will be obliged to take this philosophical reaction into account and consequently study philosophy. In this field, in politics as in economics, Marx and Engels will be their most reliable guides. The present pamphlet contains as full as possible a summary of the philosophical views of these thinkers.

The pamphlet is written in a very concise form. We have had to supply a number of explanatory notes. The longer ones are indicated by figures and placed at the end of the book. There also are two supplements, one of which (*Karl Marx on Feuerbach*) is also in the German edition and the other one (*Karl Marx on French Materialism*) is borrowed from Marx and Engels' work *Die heilige Familie oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik, gegen Bruno Bauer und Comp*, Frankfurt a.M., 1845 (*The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism. Against Bruno Bauer and Co.*) But we have not borrowed it directly, as this book is extremely rare.[286] The chapter on French materialism has been translated by us from the well-known Socialist-Democratic journal *Neue Zeit*, in which there was a reprint of it a few years ago.[287]

Marx and Engels' polemic with "Bruno Bauer and Company" (see Note 4 on Bruno Bauer) constitues a whole epoch in the history of world literature. It was the new dialectical materialism's first resolute encounter with idealist philosophy. Of extraordinary

importance by its historical significance and its content (as far as we have been able to judge by the few extracts we are acquainted with) it could still play a great role in Russia, where even the most progressive writers obstinately continue to adhere to idealist views of social life. We would be very willing to contribute to the publication of this book in Russian if it were at our disposal. But we do not know when it will be and therefore we content ourselves with translating one chapter of it.* This chapter, which is closely connected with what Engels says about Feuerbach, is a fairly complete whole, and by its wealth of thought it leaves far behind the many pages on materialism of modern times contained in Lange's well-known work.[289] We particularly direct our readers' attention to the link which Marx shows between nineteenth-century utopian socialism and eighteenth-century French materialism.

Engels' work on Feuerbach was written on the occasion of Starcke's book on the same author.[290] But so little is said in it about this latter book that we do not consider it necessary to speak of it in the foreword. Readers will find the required information in Note 5.

June 1892 G. Plekhanov

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] This book has now been published in the second volume of the edition of *Gesammelte Schriften von K. Marx und Fr. Engels, 1841 bis 1850*[288] by Mehring.

## [PLEKHANOV'S NOTES TO ENGELS' BOOK *LUDWIG FEUERBACH...*]

(1)[291] The author here has in mind a series of articles on Germany by Heine, which appeared originally in *Revue des deux Mondes* and were then published as a separate book (the foreword to its first edition was dated December 1834). The reader will find this splendid work of Heine[292] in the complete collection of his works. Unfortunately the Russian translation has been horribly disfigured by the censor.

The modern Aristophanes did not adopt towards the philosophy of his time the Greek genius' attitude towards the "sophists". He not only *understood* the revolutionary siginificance of German philosophy, he warmly *sympathised* with it because of its very revolutionary significance. However, in his book on Germany, Heine dwells far more on the revolutionary significance [which he greatly exaggerated] of Kant (his *Critique of Pure Reason)* than of Hegel. By the forties he was more decisive in his pronouncements on Hegel. In a still extant excerpt from his first and only letter "On Germany" we find a humorous exchange of thoughts between the author and "the king of philosophy". "Once when I was embarrassed over the saying: 'All that exists is rational,' he laughed in a peculiar way and observed: 'It could also be worded: all that is rational *must* exist.' He looked around in alarm but soon regained his self-possession, for only Heinrich Beer[293] had heard what he said." It does not matter in the case in question who Heinrich Beer was. All that needs to be noted here is that in Heine's opinion Hegel himself understood the revolutionary significance of his philosophy but was afraid to bring it to light. Again, to what extent this opinion of Hegel is true is another question, which will be answered, by the way, in the present pamphlet. But there can be no doubt that Heine himself was by no means one of those limited and short-sighted people who were afraid of the *conclusions* following from Hegel's philosophy. In the conversation quoted it was not without intent that Hegel's famous proposition was changed: *real* was replaced by *existing* in general. Heine apparently wished to show that even in the vulgar form which the proposition was given by people who

were little versed in the secrets of Hegel's philosophy, it invariably retains *its revolutionary meaning.*

(2)[294] We know that the question of how to understand Hegel's teaching on the rationality of everything which is "real" played a great role in our philosophical circles in the late thirties and early forties. Thanks to it, V. G. Belinsky, the clearest brain among Russian writers, experienced, so to speak, a real tragedy. His articles on Menzel and the anniversary of Borodino[295] are full of the sharpest attacks on those who permitted themselves to condemn "reality", i.e., the social relations around them. Later he very much disliked to recall these articles, because he considered them as shameful error. In his passionate negation of the infamous Russian system he could not be restrained by any philosophical considerations on their alleged rationality. People who wrote after him in the same trend did not consider it necessary to return to Hegel and check the theoretical premises that the outstanding critic took as his starting-point at the time of his conservative infatuations. They thought that those premises contained nothing but error. Such is the view of "progressive" Russian writers at the present too. Is it correct?

In his *My Life and Thoughts* Herzen relates how he logically bypassed the theoretical stronghold which at a first (and, it must be noted, extremely superficial and incorrect) glance the teaching of the "rationality" of all that is "real" seems to represent. He decided that this teaching was merely a new formulation of the law of sufficient cause. But the law of sufficient cause does not at all lead to the justification of every given social system. If in the history of Russia there was sufficient cause for the appearance and growth of despotism, the emancipatory movement of the Decembrists also apparently had sufficient cause of its own. If in this case despotism was "rational", the wish to do away with it once for all was obviously no less "rational". Hence, Herzen decided Hegel's teaching is rather a theoretical justification for every emancipation struggle. It is the real algebra of the revolution.[296]

Herzen was perfectly right in the sense of his final conclusion. But he arrived at it by an erroneous way. Let us explain this by means of an example.

"The Roman Republic was real," Engels says, developing Hegel's thought, "but so was the Roman Empire, which superseded it." The question is: why did the Empire supersede the Republic? The law of sufficient cause only guarantees that this fact could not have been without a cause. But it does not give the slightest indication as to where the cause or causes of the fact in question are to be sought. Perhaps the Republic was superseded by the Empire because Caesar had greater military

talent than Pompey; perhaps because Cassius and Brutus made mistakes; perhaps because Octavius was very skilful and cunning, or perhaps for some other accidental reason. Hegel was not satisfied with such explanations. In his opinion accident is merely a wrapping hiding necessity. Of course, the concept of necessity itself can also be interpreted very superficially; one can say that the fall of the Roman Republic became necessary because and only because Caesar defeated Pompey. But with Hegel this concept had another, incomparably profounder meaning. When he qualified a particular social phenomenon as necessary, he meant that it had been prepared by all the preceding course of the development of the country in which it took place. It is there that we must seek the cause or causes. Consequently, the fall of the Roman Republic is not explained by Caesar's talents or the mistakes made by Brutus or any other man or group of men, but by the fact that there had been changes in the home relationships of Rome, and that as a result of those changes the further existence of the Republic became impossible. What exactly were those changes? Hegel himself often gave unsatisfactory answers to such questions. But that is not the point. The important thing is that Hegel's view of social phenomena is far more profound than that of people who know only one thing, namely that *there is no action without cause.* Neither is that all. Hegel brought out a far more profound and more important truth. He said that every particular aggregate of phenomena in the process of its development creates *out of its very self* the forces that lead to its negation, i.e., its disappearance; that consequently every particular social system, in the process of its historical development, creates *out of its very self* the social forces that destroy it and replace it by a new one. Hence the conclusion suggests itself—although it is not brought out by Hegel—that if I adopt a negative attitude to a particular social system, my negation is "*rational*" only if it coincides with the objective process of negation proceeding within that very system itself, i.e., if that system is losing its historical meaning and entering into contradiction with the social needs to which it owes its appearance.

Let us now try to apply this standpoint to the social questions which agitated Russian educated youth in the thirties. Russian "reality"—the serfdom, despotism, the allpowerfulness of the police, censorship and the like—appeared to them as infamous, unjust. Involuntarily they remembered with sympathy the recent Decembrists' attempt to improve our social relationships. But they, at least the most gifted among them, were no longer satisfied with the abstract revolutionary negation of the eighteenth century, or the conceited and self-loving negation of the romantics. Thanks to Hegel they had already become far more exacting.

They said to themselves: "Prove the rationality of your negation, justify it by the objective laws of social development or abandon it as a personal whim, a childish caprice." But to justify the negation of Russian reality by the inner laws of its own development meant to solve a problem which was beyond even Hegel's ability. Take for example Russian serfdom. To justify its negation meant to prove that it negated *itself,* i.e., that it no longer satisfied the social needs by virtue of which it had at one time come into being. But to what social needs did Russian serfdom owe its appearance? To the economic needs of a state which would have died of exhaustion without the serf peasant. Consequently, it was a matter of proving that in the nineteenth century serfdom had already become too poor a means for satisfying the economic needs of the state; that, far from satisfying them any longer, it was a direct obstacle to their satisfaction. All this was proved later in the most convincing way by the Crimean War. But, we repeat, Hegel himself would not have been capable of *proving that theoretically.* According to the direct meaning of his philosophy the conclusion was that the causes of any given society's historical development have their roots in its internal development. This correctly indicated the most important task of social science. But Hegel himself contradicted, and could not but contradict, this profoundly correct view. An "absolute" idealist, he regarded the logical qualities of the "*idea*" as the principal cause of any development. Thus the qualities of the idea turned out to be the radical cause of historical movement. And every time a great historical question towered before him, Hegel referred first of all to these qualities. But to refer to them meant to leave the ground of history and voluntarily to deprive himself of any possibility of finding the actual causes of historical movement. As a man of tremendous and truly genial intelligence, Hegel himself felt that there was something wrong and that, properly speaking, his explanations explained nothing. Therefore, paying due tribute to the "*idea*", he hastened down to the concrete ground of history to seek the real causes of social phenomena no longer in the qualities of ideas, but in the ideas themselves, in the very phenomena that he was investigating at the time. In so doing he often made surmises that were truly genial (noting the *economic* causes of historical movement). But these surmises of genius were all the same no more than surmises. Having no firm systematic basis, they played no serious role in the historical views of Hegel and the Hegelians. That is why, at the time they were pronounced, hardly any attention was paid to them.

The great task pointed out by Hegel to the social science of the nineteenth century remained unfulfilled; the real, internal causes of the historical movement of humanity remained undiscovered.

And it goes without saying that it was not in Russia that the man capable of finding them could appear. Social relationships in Russia were too underdeveloped, social stagnation held too tight a hold on the country for these unknown causes to emerge on the surface of social phenomena in Russia. They were found by Marx and Engels in the West, under completely different social conditions. But this did not happen till some time later, and during the period of which we are speaking the Hegelian negators there, too, became involved in the contradictions of idealism. After all that we have said, it is easy to understand why the young Russian followers of Hegel began by completely reconciling themselves with Russian "reality", which, to tell the truth, was so infamous that Hegel himself would never have recognised it as "reality": unjustified theoretically, their negative attitude to it was deprived in their eyes of any reasonable right to existence. Renouncing it, they selflessly and disinterestedly sacrificed their social strivings to philosophical honesty. But on the other hand, reality itself saw to it that they were forced to retract their sacrifice. An hourly and daily eyesore to them by its infamy, it forced them to aspire to negation at any cost, i.e., even to negation not founded on any satisfactory theoretical basis. And, as we know, they yielded to the insistence of reality. Parting with the "philosophical blinders" of Hegel, Belinsky undertook vigorous attacks on the very system that he had but recently justified. This, of course, was very good on his part. But it must be admitted that, acting thus, the writer of genius was lowering the level of his *theoretical demands* and was admitting that he, and in his person all progressive Russian thought, was an *insolvent debtor as far as theory was concerned.*[297] This did not prevent him from occasionally expressing extremely profound views on Russian social life. For example, in one of his letters at the end of the forties he said that only the bourgeoisie, i.e., only capitalism, would provide the ground for serious and successful negation of the monstrous Russian reality.[298] But all the same, on the whole he adhered in his negation to *utopian* views of social phenomena. Similar views were held by Chernyshevsky, the "subjective" writers of the late sixties and early seventies and the revolutionaries [of the same period and] of all trends. And it is remarkable that the farther the matter went and the more Hegel was forgotten, the less the Russian negators realised that their social views descended from a certain theoretical fall from grace. Our "subjective" writers made a scientific insolvency a dogma. They took pains to write and rewrite a certificate of theoretical indigence for Russian thought, imagining that they were making out for it a most flattering and precious document. But that could not go on for ever. The revolutionary failures of

the seventies alone were enough to make the Russian social thought stop admiring its own insolvency. The theoretical task which Russian philosophical circles in the forties could not solve turned out to be easy after Marx "turned Hegel's philosophy upside down", i.e., placed it on a materialist basis. Marx discovered the inner causes of the historical movement of humanity. All that remained to be done was to view Russian social relationships from his standpoint. This was done by the Social-Democrats, who very often arrived independently one of another at the same views on Russian life. Russian social thought, as represented by the Social-Democrats, at last entered the general channel of scientific thought of the nineteenth century. The theoretical fall from grace of the old occidentalists was redeemed: a firm objective *basis* for the negation of Russian reality was found *in that reality itself.* [See my article "Zu Hegel's sechszigstem Todestage" in *Neue Zeit,* XI, 1891 and my speech "V. G. Belinsky", Geneva, 1898.] [299]

(3)[300] In 1827 the Hegelian Henning began to publish *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* (Year-Books of Scientific Criticism) to spread and defend the views of his teacher. But Henning followed a conservative trend and his journal did not satisfy the Young Hegelians. In 1838 A. Ruge and T. Echtermeyer founded the *Halle Year-Books of German Science and Art (Hallische Jahrbücher für deutsche Wissenschaft und Kunst)* which was renamed *Deutsche Jahrbücher (German Year-Books)* when the editorial office was transferred to Leipzig in 1841. From both the religious and political points of view, *German Year-Books* was of a radical trend. In 1843 it was prohibited in Saxony and then Ruge and Marx decided to publish it in Paris under the title *German-French Year-Books (Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher).* Among its contributors were Frederick Engels and H. Heine. Unfortunately only one volume of *German-French Year-Books* appeared, combining both the first and the second issues. In it, among other things, were Marx's remarkable articles "Einleitung zur Kritik der Hegel'schen Rechtsphilosophie" ("Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law")—published in Russian in Geneva in 1888 and "Zur Judenfrage" ("On the Jewish Question") and a no less remarkable article by Engels: "Umrisse zu einer Kritik der Nationalökonomie" ("Sketch of a Criticism of National Economy" which was reprinted in *Neue Zeit,* No. 8 of the ninth year of its publication).[301]

The *Rheinische Zeitung*[302] was founded in Cologne by Camphausen, Hansemann and their fellow-thinkers. Marx was its most active and talented contributor. In [mid-October] 1842 he became the editor. At that time he was not yet a socialist[303] but his attacks on the government were already so vigorous that the

paper lasted only a few months under his direction. [The issue of March 17, 1843, contained this short notice: "The undersigned declares that as a result of *the present censorship conditions* he has retired from the editorial board of *Rheinische Zeitung. Dr. Marx.*" (Italics in the original). On March 31 of the same year the paper was compelled to cease publication as a result of a government decree which had been published on January 25. The editorial board ceased publication a few days before the term, on March 28.] Marx, by the way, was almost glad of this prohibition. Previous literary activity had proved to him the insufficiency of his *economic* information and he wished to complete it; the penalty imposed on the *Cologne Gazette*[304] gave him an opportunity of engrossing himself in his study. When Marx again took up literary and political activity he already had an extensive stock of knowledge which he had not had before, but, most important of all, he had a new view of economic science which constituted an epoch in its history.

[The most remarkable of Marx's articles in this newspaper were recently published by Franz Mehring in *Gesammelte Schriften von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, 1841 bis 1850,* Vol. I, pp. 208-321. For Russian readers these articles have still not lost their publicistic interest. It is superfluous to add that they are very important in the history of Marx's own intellectual development.][305]

In June 1848, Marx, with the collaboration of Engels, Freiligrath and Wilhelm Wolff (to whose memory *Capital* is dedicated), founded, again in Cologne, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung.* In it Marx and his main collaborators wrote as already completely convinced socialists in the most modern sense of the word, i.e., in the sense it has in their own works. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung,* as even its enemies admit, was the most remarkable literary event of its time. But more can and must be said about it: not one of the socialist newspapers either *before* or *after* it can be compared with it. It was prohibited in June 1849 for its open call to "insubordination to the government", which was then rapidly recovering from the blows dealt it by the revolution.[306]

(4)[307] Thanks to the solicitude of the censors the views of Strauss and B. Bauer which Engels mentions are still little known to Russian readers. We therefore do not consider it superfluous to expound them here in brief.

The matter is as follows. If you are convinced that the Holy Scripture was dictated by God himself (the Holy Ghost), selecting as his secretary sometimes one, sometimes another holy man, you will not tolerate even the idea that it can contain any [mistakes or] incoherences. All that is related there has for you the significance

of the most indisputable fact. In tempting Eve, the serpent pronounces a speech worthy of an insinuating Jesuit, full of experience of life. This is rather strange, but for God nothing is impossible: the apparent strangeness is only a new instance of his omnipotence. Balaam's famous she-ass entered into conversation with her rider. This again is quite an extraordinary phenomenon, but for God, etc., etc., according to the same once and for ever established formula. Faith is not embarrassed by anything [even by absurdity: credo quia absurdum]. Faith is "the announcement of things we hope for, the revelation of things invisible, i.e., the certainty of what we can see and also what we cannot see, what we desire and anticipate as if it were already present". For the religious man the omnipotence of God, the creator and lord of nature, is precisely what he "*desires*" above everything. All this would have been very good, very touching and even very lasting if man, in his struggle against nature for his existence had not been obliged to taste of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil", i.e., gradually to study the *laws of nature* itself. Once he has tasted of the fruit of this dangerous "tree" he is no longer so easily influenced by fiction. If he continues by force of habit to believe in the omnipotence of God, his faith assumes a different character: God recedes into the background, behind the stage of the world, so to speak, and nature with its eternal, iron immutable laws, comes on to the proscenium. But miracles are incompatible with conformity to law; conformity to law leaves no room for miracles; miracles preclude conformity to law. The question now is: How can people who have grown to the concept of immutable laws in nature regard the account of miracles in the Bible? They are bound to *negate* them. But negation can assume various forms according to the constitution and course of social life in which the particular intellectual trend takes place.

The French thinkers of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment simply laughed at the Bible stories, regarding them as a manifestation of ignorance and even of quackery. This sharply negative attitude to the Bible was prompted to the French by the struggle that the third estate in the country was then waging against the "privileged" in general and the clergy in particular. In Protestant Germany of the time the situation was different. First, since the Reformation the German clergy itself played quite a different role from that of the clergy in Catholic countries; secondly, the "third estate" in Germany was then far from the thought of struggling against the "old order". This circumstance laid its impress upon the whole of the history of eighteenth-century German literature. Whereas in France the educated representatives of the third estate used every new conclusion [every new hypothesis] of science as a weapon to fight the ideas and conceptions

which had grown out of the obsolete social relationships, in Germany it was not so much a question of *eradicating* old prejudices as of *bringing them into agreement* with recent discoveries. For the revolutionary-minded French thinkers of the Enlightenment, religion was the fruit of *ignorance* and *deception*; for the German supporters of the Enlightenment—even the most progressive among them [for example, Lessing]—it was the "*education of the human race*". Accordingly the Bible was not in their eyes a book to be denied and ridiculed. They tried to "*enlighten*" this book, to give its narrations new meaning and bring them into line with the "spirit of the time". Then began the most arduous rending of the Bible. In the Old Testament God "speaks" on almost every page. But that does not mean that he spoke in reality. That is only one of those figurative expressions to which Orientals are so inclined. When we read that God said one thing or another, we must understand it in the sense that he impressed these or those ideas on one or the other of his loyal worshippers. The same with the tempting serpent and Balaam's she-ass. These animals did not speak at all in reality. They only suggested certain thoughts to their so-to-speak interlocutors. On the Day of Pentecost, as is known, the Holy Ghost came down on the apostles in the form of tongues of fire. This again is a figurative expression. By it the author or authors of the *Acts of the Apostles* merely meant that the apostles felt at the time a vehement access of religious fervour. However, in the interpretation of other "enlightened" investigators the matter took place in a somewhat different manner. The tongues of fire which descended on the apostles represented a perfectly natural phenomenon, namely, electric sparks. In exactly the same way if Paul became blind on his way to Damascus, this is explained by the natural effect of lightning, and if the old man Ananias healed him by the contact of his hands, it is well known, that old men often have very cold hands, and cold calms inflammation. If Jesus raised many dead people to life, this is explained by the quite simple circumstance that he had to deal not with corpses but with living organisms in a swoon. His own death on the cross was only apparent death. In the interpretation of Doctor Paulus, who was well known in his time,* Jesus himself was astonished (voll Verwunderung) at his unexpected return to life. Finally, there can be no question of his ascension into heaven, for the evangelists themselves are extremely vague on this point: they say that he was taken up into heaven (Mark); but does not that mean that his soul was taken up into heaven *after his death*? And then, on what

* In 1800-04 he published *Evangeliencommentar* and in 1828 *Das Leben Jesu*, which we refer to hereafter in our quotations from Paulus.

grounds would it have occurred to the evangelists to relate things that neither a naturalist nor an astronomer, "able to calculate exactly how long it would take a cannon ball to reach ... Sirius", could have believed?

It would be superfluous to prove that *this kind of* criticism of the Gospels is quite inconsistent and that it testifies to its representatives' complete lack of a true critical attitude to the question. [It could be good and useful as a *first step.* But the first step, already made by Spinoza, had to be followed by the second, and the German thinkers of the Enlightenment did not take that *second* step.] The whole merit of Strauss (1808-74) consisted in putting a stop to fruitless attempts to "make the improbable probable and to make historically conceivable things which did not happen in history". Strauss regarded the Gospel narratives not as accounts (more or less accurate, more or less distorted) of actual events, but only *myths* unconsciously formed in Christian communities and expressing the idea of the Messiah at the time of its origin. Similarly, the speeches of Jesus, particularly the loftiest among them, quoted in the so-called Gospel of John, were in Strauss' view of later creation. In his latest arrangement of *The Life of Jesus* he thus expounds the view he then held of the origin of the Gospel myths:

"In my earlier works I suggested the idea of the *myth* as the key to the Gospel stories of miracles and other reports which are contrary to the view of history. In vain, I said, have attempts been made to present stories like the star which appeared to the Wise Men, the transfiguration, the miraculous feeding of crowds and the like as natural processes; but since it is also impossible to believe that such unnatural things really happened, narrations of this kind are to be considered as fictions. Answering the question how people came, in the time in which these Gospels originated, to imagine such things about Jesus, I referred first of all to the expectation of the Messiah at that time. When once, I said, first a few people, and then many, had come to see Jesus as the Messiah, they thought that everything must have happened to him which was expected from the Messiah in the prophecies and parables of the Old Testament and their current explanations. No matter how common knowledge it was that Jesus was a Nazarene, since the Messiah was the son of David, he had to be born in Bethlehem, for Micheas had prophesied it so. No matter how strictly Jesus condemned his compatriots' passion for wonders, the first saviour of the people, Moses, had worked miracles, and therefore the last saviour, the Messiah, and that was Jesus, was also bound to work miracles. Isaiah had prophesied that in that time, i.e., the time of the Messiah, the blind would see, the deaf would hear, the lame would leap like a hart and the tongue of the dumb man would be

loosened; thus it was known in detail what miracles Jesus had to work, since he was the Messiah. In this way it came about that in the first Christian communities stories could, and even had to be imagined about Jesus, without the consciousness that they were fictions.... In such a conception the compositon of myths by the early Christians is placed on the same level as we find elsewhere in the origin of religions. The progress of science in the field of mythology is precisely that it has understood that a myth in its original form is not an intentional and conscious invention of one single person but the product of the community consciousness of a people or a religious cirlce, first indeed uttered by a single person, but then believed precisely because that single person thus becomes the mouthpiece of the general conviction; the myth is not a wrapping in which a clever man covers an idea which has occurred to him for the use and edification of the ignorant crowd; but only with the story, and even in the form of the story which he tells, does he become conscious of the idea which he himself was unable to understand in its pure form....

"But the more the evangelical myths take, at least partly, a new and independent character, all the more difficult is it to imagine that their authors did not realise that they were passing off what they themselves had imagined for actual events. The one who first reported the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem could honestly believe it, since the prophet Micheas had foretold that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem, and Jesus was the Messiah, and must accordingly have been born in Bethlehem. The one, on the other hand, who first reported that at the death of Jesus the veil of the temple was rent asunder (Matthew, 27, 51) must, it seems, have known that he was relating something that he had not seen, that he had never heard of, but had imagined himself. Precisely in this case a figurative expression like the one in the *Epistle to the Hebrews* (10, 19), where it is said that the death of Jesus opened for us the way through the veil of the temple to the Holy of Holies, could easily be understood by listeners in the literal sense, and thus the story could arise without any conscious invention. In exactly the same way the story of the calling of the four apostles to be fishers of men could be conveyed in the form that the fishing to which Jesus called them would be far more productive than their previous poorly paying occupation, and from this, continuing to pass from one person to another, the story of the miraculous catch of fish (Luke, 5) could easily have arisen of itself. The data out of which the story of the resurrection of Christ took shape also seem at a first glance to be either true events or an undeniable and conscious lie. But here too, if we examine the matter carefully we shall see that it is not so. In an

argument with a Christian a Jew could have said: 'No wonder the tomb was empty, when you had stolen the body out of it.' 'We stole it? ' the Christian could have retorted. 'How could we when you were guarding the grave so closely? ' He could have said that because he supposed it was so; but the next narrator, using the same words, could have conveyed far greater certainty: 'the grave was guarded.' Then it would have been said that it was sealed, since one is reminded of the seal by Daniel, whose lion's den serves as a symbol for the tomb of Jesus.... Or the Jew could have said: 'Perhaps he appeared to you, but as an incorporeal vision from the other world.' 'How so, an incorporeal vision! ' the Christian would have objected. 'Why, he still had the wounds from the nails (that was quite obvious for the Christian), he showed them.' In the next narration the touching of the wounds could aslo have been added; such narrations could have arisen with complete honesty although they were quite contrary to historical truth."*

There is no doubt that Strauss' view was a huge step forward compared with the above-mentioned views of his predecessors. But it is not difficult to see that it also had certain shortcomings. "The change which historical facts undergo in passing through oral tradition, the growth of myths pointed out by Strauss, in a word, the popular Christian legend explains only the features common to all the Gospels or versions of them which are noted for their accidental and unintentional character and therefore betray no precise tendency and are not peculiar to any one of these expositions. But when, on the contrary, we see certain characteristic features constantly produced in one of the Gospels, whereas they are absent from the rest of evangelical tradition, we can no longer explain them by motives common to the whole of the Christian legend; we must recognise in them the influence of opinions and interests peculiar to the author of the book or to the group of Christians whose mouthpiece he is. And when this special character is manifest not only in certain isolated points of the work, but the whole work seems conceived so as to bring them out, when it leaves its mark on the arrangement of the material, the chronology, the accessory details of the narration and the style itself; when the work contains long discourses or conversations usually not preserved in legend—all circumstances which strike one in the fourth Gospel and also, although to a lesser degree, in the third—we can be certain that we are in presence not of a simple editing of religious legends but of the deliberate

* *Das Leben Jesu, für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet* von David Friedrich Strauss, dritte Auflage, Leipzig, 1874, S. 150-55.

work of the writer."* Consequently, Strauss' mythological theory is far from explaining all that needs explanation. Subsequently Strauss himself was convinced of this. In his latest arrangement of *The Life of Jesus* he gave a far larger place to "the deliberate work of the writers". But at the time referred to by Engels, i.e., in the forties, he had not yet noticed the weak side of his view which was so vigorously attacked by Bruno Bauer.

Bauer (1809-82) reproached Strauss with a tendency to *the mystic and the supernatural* because in his myth theory "the chief factor is the general, the tribe, the religious community, tradition", and no room is left for the *mediating activity of self-consciousness.* "Strauss' mistake," he says, "consists not in indicating a certain general force (i.e., the force of tradition), but in making that force work exclusively in a general form, directly out of its generality. This is a religious view, faith in miracles, the reproduction of religious ideas from the standpoint of criticism, religious vulgarity and ingratitude towards self-consciousness".... The opposition between the views of Strauss, on the one hand, and Bauer, on the other, is an "opposition of the tribe and self-consciousness, the substance and the subject".** In other words, Strauss points out the unconscious appearance of the Gospel narrations, while Bauer says that in the historical process of their formation they went through the consciousness of people who *deliberately composed* them for some religious purpose. This is perfectly noticeable in the so-called Gospel of John*** who created a quite special Jesus absolutely unlike the one of the other Gospels. But the other evangelists, too, were by no means innocent of such composing. The so-called Luke recarves and pieces together again as he likes the Gospel written by the so-called Mark; the so-called Matthew, who wrote after them, treats Luke and Mark without any ceremony, trying to conciliate them with each other and to adapt their narrations to the religious views and strivings of his time. But still he does not succeed in this by no means easy task. He gets muddled up in the most absurd contradictions. Here is one out of many examples. Matthew says that after being baptised Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. The question is: why did the Spirit, i.e., God, need to tempt Jesus by the intermediary of the devil? "For ... he could have known that the one whom he had just called his beloved son" (at the baptism—*G.P.*) "was inaccessible to

* Ed. Zeller, *Christian Bauer et l'ecole de Tubingue,* traduit par Ch. Ritter, Paris, 1883, p. 98.

** *Die gute Sache dèr Freiheit,* Zurich und Winterthur, 1842, S. 117-18.[308]

*** It is now acknowledged that the apostle John was not its author.

temptation".* But the fact is that Matthew simply got muddled up in his narration. He did not wish "simply to copy what he read in the writings of his predecessors, but to explain it and give it internal cohesion".** He read in Luke and Mark that the Spirit led Jesus into the desert, where in fact he was tempted by the devil. So he made up his mind that the Spirit led Jesus into the desert for the purpose of tempting him with the help of the devil. And that is what he wrote in his Gospel, not noticing what a ridiculous situation his omniscient god was getting into by finding it necessary to tempt his own son. And here is a more vivid example. Isaiah "prophesies" about the "voice crying in the wilderness" ("prepare ye the ways of the Lord"). In order that "the words of the prophet" should be fulfilled, Mark and Matthew make John the Baptist preach "in the desert". Matthew even names the desert—the Desert of *Judea.* Then, evidently repeating the words of Mark and Luke, he reports that many people who repented came to John and that he baptised them in the Jordan. But it is sufficient to glance at the map of Palestine to see that it was absolutely physically impossible for John to baptise the penitents in the Jordan if he was preaching in the Desert of Judea, which is far from the river.*** [Such errors must be considered as *personal* blunders on the part of the narrator.]

By picking out of the various evangelists features from the life of Jesus which for some reason struck them, the faithful, or even simply sentimental, compose for their spiritual use a more or less attractive figure of the "redeemer" according to their concepts, tastes and inclinations. Strauss' criticism already made this fabrication of a mosaic of Christ very difficult, but Bauer, by his criticism of the Gospels,**** threatened to make it absolutely impossible: he did not recognise Jesus as historical at all. It is therefore easy to understand the horror with which he inspired pious and "respectable" people. He was deprived of the right to teach in the theological faculty of Bonn University (where he was an assistant professor) , and was severely censured in a number of booklets, articles and faculty reports. But Germany in the forties of the nineteenth century was no longer the Germany of the eighteenth. The revolutionary storm of 1848 was approaching; the agitation among the progressive sections of the German people was growing, as the saying goes, not daily but hourly; the

* *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker,* zweite Auflage, Leipzig, 1846, I. Band, S. 213.

** *Ibid.,* p. 214.

*** *Ibid.,* p. 143.

**** First edition, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker,* I und II Band, Leipzig, 1841. *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker und des Iohannes,* III und letzter Band, Braunschweig, 1842.

literary representatives of these sections were by no means embarrassed by the conclusions from their criticism being opposed to established ideas; on the contrary, they were becoming more and more permeated with the tendency to negation. B. Bauer answered the attacks of his "respectable" opponents very sharply, sparing neither religion in general nor the "Christian state". His brother Edgar showed still greater vigour and for his *Der Streit der Kritik mit Kirche und Staat (Criticism's Dispute with Church and State),* published in Berne in 1844, he was imprisoned in a fortress. It goes without saying that such a method of arguing used by the defenders of the system could not be considered very praiseworthy, but it must also be conceded that in this work Edgar Bauer went so far that his views could even now horrify very many of the "progressive" representatives of Russian literature. He recognised neither God, private property nor state. He went so far that one could go *no farther* in the direction of negation. But no, we are mistaken: one more step could and should have been made—*the most decisive* step in that direction: the question could and should have been posed: How strong was the weapon of criticism? How well-grounded was it in its negation? Or, in other words, to what extent did it free itself from the prejudices it was attacking? This question was set by people who went farther than the Bauer brothers, by Marx and Engels in their book *Die heilige Familie (The Holy Family).*[309] It turned out that "critical criticism" based itself entirely on the very same idealism that it was fighting so furiously. That was its main shortcoming. As long as B. Bauer basing himself on the right of "self-consciousness" analysed the Gospel stories, he could strike many heavy blows at prejudices which time had rendered sacred; but when he and his brother went over to criticism of the "state" and to the appraisal of such great events as those in France at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, he arrived at conclusions some of which were absolutely erroneous and others altogether inconsistent and unconvincing. Nor could it be otherwise. To say that a particular social form is opposed to my "self-consciousness" is not equivalent to defining its historical significance. But without appraising its significance one cannot understand it correctly or fight it with any serious hope of success. Marx and Engels did precisely what was suggested by the whole course of the development of philosophical thought in the nineteenth century: once having broken with idealism, one had to break also with autocratic "self-consciousness", one had to find and point out the causes by which it *in turn* is determined. Here is not the place to discuss whether Marx and Engels were successful in the task they undertook; let the reader judge by their works. We shall only note that the abstract radicalism of the Bauer brothers recalls in many

respects our Russian "subjective method in sociology"; the same unceasing references to "criticism" and to the "critical spirit" (called "critical thought" in our country); the same inability to penetrate by thought into the *critical* process which goes on *within social relationships themselves* and which determines the "self-consciousness" of people. It would be very interesting and extremely instructive to write a special essay drawing a parallel between the arguments advanced by Edgar Bauer (*Der Streit der Kritik,* viertes Kapitel) against Hegel, on the one side, and the objections made by Nikolai Mikhailovsky to Spencer, on the other.[310] Such a parallel would show how little is new in the notorious subjective method. It would also show how all the originality of the Russian subjective sociologists comes to unconscious repetition of the mistakes of others which have long ago been pointed out and corrected by thinkers in Western Europe.

(5)[311] Having neither the necessity nor the possibility here to go into details on the life of Feuerbach, we shall confine ourselves to a few lines from the *History of Modern Philosophy* by Überweg-Heinze[312] (p. 394 of the Russian translation). "Born in 1804 ... the son of the famous criminalist Anselm Feuerbach, he studied theology and ... became a Hegelian. From 1824 he lived in Berlin, where he attended lectures by Hegel and devoted himself entirely to philosophy. In 1828 he became a lecturer in Erlangen and lived from 1836 in the village of Bruckberg, between Ansbach and Bayreuth, and from 1869 in Rechenberg near Nuremberg in difficult conditions and died in 1872."

The contents of his *Essence of Christianity* can also be set forth in a few words.[313]

"Religion," Feuerbach says, "is unconscious self-consciousness of man." In religion man deifies himself, his own "*essence*". The essence of God is the essence of man, or to express it better, the essence of man purified, freed from the limitation of the individual person. "The perfection of God," says Leibniz in his *Théodicée,* "is the perfection of our souls, but he possesses it in all its fulness ... in us there is a *certain* might, a *certain* knowledge, a *certain* goodness, all these attributes are *fully* inherent in God." This is quite true and only means that "*all attributes of God are attributes of man*". But the religious man is *not conscious* of deifying his own essence. He objectifies it, i.e., "contemplates and honours it as another being, separate from him and existing independently". Religion is the splitting of man in two, his separating from himself. From this follows a double conclusion.

First, Hegel absolutely distorted truth when he said "what man knows about God is God's knowledge of Himself", or, in other words, "God knows himself in man". In actual fact it is just the other way round: man knows himself in God and "what man

knows of God, is man's knowledge of himself". The attributes of God change according to what man thinks and feels. "Whatever is the value of man, that, and no more, is the value of his God ... religion is the solemn revelation of the hidden treasures of man, the open confession of his love secrets." Every step forward in religion is a step forward in man's knowledge of himself. Christ, the incarnation of God, is "god personally known to man ... the happy certainty that God exists and exists in the very form in which it is necessary and desirable that he should exist.... That is why the last desire of religion is fulfilled only in Christ, the secret of religious feeling revealed (revealed of course in the figurative language characteristic of religion); what in God was *essence* becomes a *manifestation* in Christ ... in this sense the Christian religion can be called absolute religion". The oriental religions, for example Hinduism, also speak of the incarnations of God. But in them these incarnations take place too often and "for that very reason they lose all their meaning". In them the God incarnate does not become a *person,* i.e., a *man,* for without a person there is no man.

Secondly, since in religion man is dealing with himself, as with a separate being outside and opposed to himself; as religion is only the *unconscious* self-consciousness of man, it inevitably leads to a number of contradictions. When the believer says God is love, he says in essence only that love is superior to anything in the world. But in his religious consciousness love is degraded to the level of an *attribute* of a separate being, *God,* who has significance even independently of love. For the religious man belief in God becomes the indispensable condition for a loving, cordial attitude to his neighbour. He hates the atheist in the name of that very love which he professes and deifies. Thus the belief in God distorts the mutual relations between people, by distorting man's attitude to his own essence. It becomes a source of fanaticism and of all the horrors which go with it. It damns in the name of salvation, it becomes violent in the name of beatitude. God is an illusion. But this illusion is extremely harmful, it binds reason, it kills man's natural inclination to truth and goodness.... That is why *reason which has grown to self-consciousness* must *destroy it.* And it is not difficult for reason to do this. It needs only to turn inside out all the relationships created by religion. What in religion is a *means* (e.g., virtue, which serves as a means of acquiring eternal happiness) must become an *end*; what in religion is a subordinate, secondary thing, a *condition* (e.g., love of one's neighbour—the *condition* for God's favour towards us) must become the principal thing, the *cause. "Justice, truth, and good contain their sacred foundation in themselves, in their quality. For man there is no being superior to man."*

[In 1902 the editorial board of the *Mouvement socialiste* undertook a wide enquête on the attitude of the socialist parties in different countries to *clericalism.*[314] This question now has obvious *practical* importance. But in order to solve it correctly we must first of all make clear to ourselves another mainly *theoretical* question: *the attitude of scientific socialism to religion.* This last question is hardly analysed at all in the international socialist literature of our time. And this is a great deficiency, which is explained precisely by the "*practicalness*" of the majority of present-day socialists. They say: religion is a personal matter. That is true, but only in a definite, limited sense. It goes without saying that the socialist party in each individual country would act very *improvidently* if it refused to accept in its ranks a man who recognises its programme and is ready to work for its fulfilment but at the same time still entertains certain religious prejudices. Yet it would be still more improvident of any party to renounce the theory underlying its programme. And the theory—modern *scientific socialism*—rejects religion as the product of an erroneous view of nature and society and condemns it as an obstacle to the all-round development of the proletarians. We *have not the right* to close the doors of our organisation to a man who is infected with religious belief; but we *are obliged* to do all that depends on us in order to destroy that faith in him or at least to prevent—with spiritual weapons, of course—our religious-minded comrade from spreading his prejudices among the workers. A consistent socialist outlook is in absolute disagreement with religion. It is therefore not surprising that the founders of scientific socialism had a sharply negative attitude towards it. Engels wrote: "We wish to remove from our path all that appears to us under the banner of the superhuman and the supernatural.... That is why we declare war once and for all on religion and religious conceptions."[315] Marx called religion the opium with which the higher classes try to put to sleep the consciousness of the people and said that to abolish religion, as the imaginary happiness of the people, is to demand their real happiness. And Marx again said: "The criticism of religion disillusions man in order that he may think and act and arrange his life like a sober man, free from any inebriation, so that he may gravitate round himself, i.e., round his genuine sun."[316]

This is so true that in our country all those former "Marxists" who, because of their bourgeois strivings, neither wish nor can wish that the proletariat should become completely sober, have now returned to the fold of religious belief.[317] ]

(6)[318] Engels uses the word "belles-lettres" and "literary" in a sense in which it is not now used in Russia. Hence there can arise a misunderstanding: "How does it come," the reader may

ask, "that 'true' socialism has degenerated into unattractive belles-lettres? Probably its followers wrote poor tendentious novels and tales?" But the point is that the Germans class among belles-lettres (the so-called schönen Wissenschaften) not only poetry (Dichtkunst) but also oratory (Redekunst). That is why the degeneration of true socialism into belles-lettres means its degeneration into unattractive rhetorics, as a Russian writer would put it. We will recall that in Belinsky the word "belles-lettres" did not have the same meaning as we give it now.

[On German, or "true", socialism, cf. Fr. Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie,* I.Theil, S. 199-203[319] (first edition).] This trend is characterised in greater detail by Mehring in his explanatory notes to the works of Marx and Engels published by him (*Aus dem literarischen Nachlass,* etc., Vol. II, pp. 349-74). Professor Adler's book *Geschichte der ersten sozialpolitischen Bewegungen in Deutschland* is interesting in this respect mainly by the excerpts it contains from the works of "true" socialists, especially M. Hess and K. Grün. A scientific characteristic of the latter is contained in Marx's article: "Karl Grün: Die soziale Bewegung in Frankreich und Belgien oder die Geschichtsschreibung des wahren Sozialismus".[320] which appeared originally in *Westphälischen Dampfboot,*[321] August-October 1847, and was then reprinted in *Neue Zeit,* Nos. 1-6, 1899-1900. Last but not least, mention must be made of a few extraordinarily substantial and correct although very rigorous pages of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* on true socialism (Chap. III, pp. 29-33 of my translation, 1900 edition). Mr. Struve's articles in *Neue Zeit* (Nos. 27 and 28 of 1895-96 and 34 and 35 of 1896-97) have now lost nearly all their interest. The first sets forth the content of two articles by Marx one of which has now been published in full by Mehring (the article on Hermann Kriege "Aus dem literarischen Nachlass", II. B., S. 415-45) and the other (on Karl Grün) reprinted in the above-mentioned issues of *Neue Zeit*; the second article of Mr. P. Struve, "Studien und Bemerkungen zur Entwickelungsgeschichte des wissenschaftlichen Sozialismus" is devoted to the "*history of the idea of the class struggle*". According to him Lorenz von Stein appears as the first to have proclaimed this idea, at least in German literature. Mr. Struve thinks Marx borrowed it from Stein. This is an unfounded and completely improbable guess. In order to corroborate it, Mr. Struve should have proved that at the time of publication of L. von Stein's book on French socialism Marx still had no knowledge of the works of the French historians of the period of the Restoration, who already firmly adhered to the idea of the class struggle. Mr. Struve did not prove and will never be able to prove that. (For the reader interested in this question I allow myself to refer to my foreword to the

*Manifesto of the Communist Party,* 1900 edition.) Mr. Struve's article is interesting only from one point of view: it shows us how high Mr. Struve was in 1896-97, in spite of all the defects of his thinking and all the gaps in his education, in comparison with the level to which he sank in his *Osvobozhdeniye.*[322] That man "developed out of the ape" is a very gratifying thing, but there is nothing sadder than the opposite metamorphosis—from man to "ape".

The "true" German socialists erred *in theory* by having no idea of economics generally and of the class struggle in particular; *in practice* their gravest fault was their negative attitude to "*politics*". Karl Grün's attacks on the liberal movement of the German bourgeoisie at the time would be now readily subscribed to by any of our defenders. Marx was extremely severe in his condemnation of this enormous error; this was one of the many services he rendered. But in condemning the "true" socialists one must remember that the question of socialism's attitude to politics was incorrectly solved by the utopian socialists in *all countries.* Russia is no exception to the general rule; our Narodniks and Narodovoltsi also coped very badly with this problem. More than that, even *now* rather strange views are spread among the Russian *Social-Democrats* as far as the political tasks of the working class are concerned. It suffices to recall the talk about the *seizure of power* by the Social-Democrats during the now impending *bourgeois* revolution. The supporters of such a seizure forget that the dictatorship of the working class will be possible and opportune only where it is a case of a *socialist* revolution. These supporters (who rally round the paper *Proletary*[323]) are returning to the political standpoint of the late *Narodnaya Volya trend.* The founders of scientific socialism had a different view of the seizure of power. "The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party," says Engels in his book *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg,* "is to be compelled to take over a government in an epoch when the movement is not yet ripe for the domination of the class which he represents, and for the realisation of the measures which that domination implies. What he *can* do depends not upon his will but upon the degree of contradiction between the various classes, and upon the level of development of the material means of existence, of the conditions of production and commerce upon which class contradictions always repose. What he *ought* to do, what his party demands of him, again depends not upon him or the stage of development of the class struggle and its conditions. He is bound to the doctrines and demands hitherto propounded which, again, do not proceed from the class relations *of the moment,** or from the more or less *accidental** level of production

* [Italics by Plekhanov.]

and commerce, but from his more or less penetrating insight into the general result of the social and political movement. Thus, he necessarily finds himself in an insolvable dilemma. What he *can* do contradicts all his previous actions, principles and immediate interests of his party, and what he *ought* to do cannot be done. In a word, he is compelled to represent not his party or his class, but the class for whose domination the movement is then ripe. In the interests of the movement he is compelled to advance the interests of an alien class, and to feed his own class with phrases and promises, and with the asseveration that the interests of that alien class are their own interests. Whoever is put into this awkward position is irrevocably lost"[324] (quoted by me in *Our Differences*, pp. 288-89).

It would be useful for Lenin and the Nietzscheans and Machists surrounding him to give this some thought. But there are grounds to fear that these "supermen" have lost the ability to think.][325]

(7)[326] What is the meaning of "to deny the possibility of knowing the world" or "not to consider complete knowledge of it possible"? We shall see this presently.

I cannot doubt my own existence for a minute; it is vouched for by my own internal conviction which nothing can refute. "Judging according to common sense," the reader may add, "it seems that it may be conceded that there are no grounds for doubting the existence of the paper on which you are writing those lines." At another time I would not doubt of it, but now I have been seized with a desire to philosophise and for the philosopher the current "judgements of common sense" are not always convincing. I ask the reader: of which *existence* of the paper are you talking? If you assume that it exists *outside* of me, that it is one of the objects that make up what is called the external world, I will ask you another question: How do you know of the existence of those objects? [What vouches to you for the existence of the external world? ] Your external senses tell you of it, it is testified to you by your *sensations:* you *see* this paper and *feel* this desk. That is undeniable. But that means that you are dealing, properly speaking, *not with objects but with sensations* and with conceptions arising from them. You only conclude as to the existence of these objects on the basis of your sensations. But by what will you prove the *correctness* of such a conclusion? You think that the objects *cause* the sensations. But leaving aside the question of how consistent your conception of *cause* in general is, I would ask you to explain to me why you are so sure that the cause of your sensations lies *outside you* and not *in yourself.* It is true that you are in the habit of dividing your sensations into two categories: 1) those whose cause lies within you; 2) those which are caused by objects outside you. But that is *only* a habit. How do you know

that this habitual classification of sensations is not a consequence of the properties of your "*ego*", which is conscious of itself only insofar as, by an unconscious act of creation, it creates and counterposes to itself, *in its very self*, the outer world, what is "not your *ego*"? It seems more probable to me that this is exactly what takes place in reality, and that there is no external world at all, no world existing outside my "*ego*".

While giving vent to your indignation at my "sophism" I shall continue philosophising. But now I shall abandon the standpoint of *subjective idealism*, whose most prominent representative was Fichte, and change into a *sceptic*.

I open Hume's book *Investigation of Human Reason* and read you the following passage from Chapter XII. "It seems evident that men are carried, but by natural instinct or prepossession, to repose faith in their senses.... It seems aslo evident that, when men follow this blind and powerful instinct of nature, they always suppose the very images, presented by the senses, to be the external objects, and never entertain any suspicion, that the ones are nothing but representations of the others...." But if philosophy wanted to *prove* that instinct does not deceive man, it would have extreme difficulty. The decisive argument can be taken only from experience; but "here experience is silent and must be silent"; we are dealing only with images and shall never be able to check their connection with objects. That is why reason gives no grounds whatsoever for admitting any such connection. Of course this need not embarrass us. All such arguments are only fruitless play of the mind. The sceptic himself would be embarrassed if he were asked what he really wants, what he is aiming at with his clever arguments. "Man must act, reason and believe", although, in spite of all his efforts, he cannot be completely sure of the ultimate basis of his actions and his reasoning. But, all the same, in philosophy one must not lose sight of this impossibility. It must be remembered that the field of knowledge of the world accessible to us is limited by fairly narrow bounds. We are not even in a position to understand the true nature of the *causal connection* between one phenomenon and another. Thousands of times we have seen a stone falling to the ground. Therefore we *believe* that it will always fall unless some support prevents it. But our belief is founded only *on habit*. Reason does not make it obligatory, and cannot do so. It does not vouch to us that what we call a law of nature is immutable.

Let us go further. Let us remember the basic proposition in the philosophy of Kant, who was influenced by Hume's scepticism. Outside us there exist objects of some kind. But exactly what kind, we do not know. Actually we are dealing only with our own sensations and with images of those objects which are formed in us

on the basis of the sensations. But sensation, and consequently the image of the object, is the resultant of two forces: the properties of the objects which produce a certain impression on us and those of the receiver which receives the impressions, the properties of our "ego", which groups them in a certain manner, disposes them and connects them *in a manner conforming to its own nature.* It is already obvious from this that our ideas of objects cannot be similar to the objects which give rise to them, that our images are one thing and *things as they exist in themselves* are another. Nor is that all. We said that our "*ego*" groups the impressions it receives from external things (things in themselves which are inaccessible to us) *in a manner conforming to its own nature.* But how does it group them, how does it dispose and connect them? We see things *in space.* The question is: does space exist in itself? *Experience* cannot give a direct answer to this question. As for reason, the presumption that space exists *outside us* and independently of us leads it to contradictory conclusions: it remains to presume that space (just as *time*) is nothing but a *form of our contemplation* (or outlook, as some Russian writers express it), and that consequently it has absolutely no relation to things in themselves (to *noumena*). From images let us go on to *concepts* and take, for example, the concept of *cause.* It is quite possible that we are mistaken when we say that phenomenon A is the cause of phenomenon B. But we are not mistaken when we say in general that there exists a causal connection between phenomena. Abolish the concept of cause and you will have nothing left but a chaos of phenomena which you will understand nothing at all about. But the point is precisely that it is *impossible* to abolish this concept. It is obligatory for us, it is *one of the forms of our thinking.* We shall not enumerate the other forms, but shall merely say that as forms of *our thinking* they lose all significance as soon as we talk of things as they exist in themselves, *independently* of our thinking. In other words, what we call laws of nature extend only to the world of phenomena which exists in our consciousness, and the noumena (things in themselves) are not at all subject to those laws.

Thus Kant's doctrine on the world of phenomena contains two elements: 1) a subjective *idealist* element: the form of our contemplation or thought, of knowledge in general; 2) a *realistic* element: the indeterminate material which the noumena give us and which is processed by our consciousness. Kant calls his philosophy *transcendental idealism.* As our concept of natural necessity is not applicable to the world of noumena, it *can* be considered—by anybody who wishes—as a kingdom of complete freedom. In this world all those spectres—God, the immortality of the soul, freedom of will—which do not fit in with the con-

cept of conformity to law—*can* find their place. Kant, who fought these spectres in his *Critique of Pure Reason,* lays down his arms before them in his *Critique of Practical Reason,* i.e., when it is a question of action, not of abstract speculation.

This *dualism* is the Achilles' heel of Kant's idealism. By the way, its inconsistency is apparent even from the standpoint of Kant's premises.

[For example, what is a *phenomenon* in the sense of Kant's philosophy? It is the resultant of two forces:

1) Action on our *ego* by those objects (noumena) which exist *outside us** and are known to us not in themselves, but only through the intermediary of the impressions they produce upon us;

2) the properties of our *ego*, which processes according to these properties the impressions which it receives from the thing in itself.

But if the phenomenon is caused by the action upon us of the thing in itself, the action of this thing is the *cause of the phenomenon.* And yet, according to Kant's doctrine, *the category of causality is applicable only within the limits of the world of phenomena but is inapplicable to the thing in itself.* There are only two ways out of this obvious contradiction which has already been pointed out in German philosophy of the end of the eighteenth century: *either* we continue to maintain that the category of causality is inapplicable to things in themselves and consequently reject the thought that the phenomenon is brought forth by the *action upon us* of the thing in itself; *or* we continue to consider this thought as correct and then admit that the category of causality is applicable to things in themselves. In the first case we are taking the direct road to *subjective idealism,* because, if the thing in itself does *not* act upon us, we know nothing of its existence and the very idea of it must be declared unnecessary, that is, superfluous in our philosophy; in the second case we enter upon the *path of materialism*, for the materialists never affirmed that we know what things are in themselves, i.e., independently of their action upon us, but only maintained that these things are known to us precisely because they act upon the organs of our

* In § 32 of Kant's well-known work *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können* which appeared *after* his *Critique of Pure Reason,* we read: "In der That, wenn wir die Gegenstände der Sinne, wie billig, als blosse Erscheinungen ansehen, so gestehen wir hierdurch doch zugleich, dass ihnen ein Ding an sich selbst zu Grunde liege, ob wir dasselbe gleich nicht, wie es an sich beschaffen sei, sondern nur seine Erscheinung, d.i. die Art, wie unsere Sinne von diesem unbekannten Etwas affiziert werden, kennen." ("In fact, if, as we should, we consider the objects of our external senses as simple phenomena, we thereby, however, acknowledge that there underlies them the thing in itself, although we do not know its properties, but only the way in which it affects our senses.")

senses and in the very measure in which they act upon them. "We do not know either the essence or the true nature of matter," says Holbach, "although by its action upon us we can judge of some of its properties. For us, matter is what acts in one way or another upon our senses."* [327] If Lange wrote in his *History of Materialism* (Vol. I, p. 349 of the Russian translation, where he deals precisely with Holbach) that "...materialism obstinately considers the world of sensuous appearance as the world of real things", [328] this is explained only by the fact that he "obstinately" *refused to understand materialism.* But however this may be, the question of the unknowableness of the external world in both the cases I have mentioned is settled *positively.* Indeed, if we go on to the standpoint of subjective idealism it will be clear to us that our *ego* is capable of knowing the *non-ego* which it itself creates. And if we prefer to be materialists, with a little reflection we must come to the conviction that if we, thanks to the action upon us of things in themselves, *know some properties of these things*, then, contrary to Holbach's opinion, *their nature is also known* to us *to a certain extent*, for *the nature* of a thing is manifest in its *properties.* The current counterposition of nature to properties is completely unfounded and it is precisely this counterposition that has led the theory of knowledge into the scholastic labyrinth in which Kant got lost and in which the present opponents of materialism continue to wander helplessly. Goethe, with his feeling of a poet and thinker of genuis, understood better than Kant, the "transcendental idealist", and even better than Holbach, the materialist, where truth lies. He said:

*Nichts ist innen, Nichts ist draussen,*
*Denn was innen, das ist aussen.*
*So ergreifet ohne Säumniss*
*Heilig öffentlich Geheimniss...* [329]

Those few words may be said to contain the whole "gnosiology" of materialism: but neither these words nor the materialist theory of knowledge can yet be understood by the scholastics who speak of nothing but the unknowableness of the external world.

Hegel revealed with extraordinary clarity the logical, or, if you prefer, the *gnosiological,* error which underlies all arguments that things in themselves are inaccessible to our knowledge. It is, indeed, impossible for us to answer the question what a thing in itself is. And the reason for this is very simple: the ques-

* Still more decisive in this sense is the English materialist Joseph Priestley (cf. his *Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit,* Vol. I, second edition, Birmingham, MDCCLXXXII, p. 134). True, according to the spirit of his variety of materialism, which is fairly close to Ostwald's "energetics", Priestley goes *too* far, but that is indifferent to us here.

tion "*what is?*" presupposes that the thing in question has properties which must be pointed out; this question has any sense *only with this presumption.* But "philosophical people" who indulge in talk about the unknowableness of things in themselves *preliminarily make abstraction of all properties of the thing* and by this abstraction make *the question absurd* and therefore *the answer impossible.* Kant's transcendental idealism, Hegel says, "transports into consciousness all the properties of things, in relation to both form and content. It is understandable that from this standpoint it depends only on me, on the subject, that the leaf of the tree appears to me green, not black; that sugar sweet, not bitter, and that when the clock strikes two, I perceive its strokes successively, not simultaneously and that I do not consider the first stroke as either the cause or the effect of the second", etc. (*Wissenschaft der Logik*, I. Band, I. Abth., S. 55; II Abth., S. 150. *Priestley* in his *Disquisitions* and also in his polemic with Price[330] made, before Hegel, many most apt remarks about what, properly, must be understood by the word *knowledge.*)

But pardon, the reader may object, is not light or sound something quite subjective? Is the perception of sound or colour similar to that kind of movement by which it is caused, according to the teaching of modern natural science? Of course, it is not. But if *iron* at different *temperature* has different *colours*, there is an *objective cause* of this which does not depend on the qualities of my "spiritual" organisation. Our famous physiologist Sechenov was perfectly right when he wrote that "every vibration or change of sound according to intensity, pitch or duration that we feel, corresponds to a perfectly definite change in the sound movement in reality. Sound and light as sensations are products of the organisation of man; but roots of the forms and movements which we see, just as the modulations of sound which we hear, lie outside us in reality" ("*Objective Thought and Reality*" in the collection *Help for the Hungry* published by *Russkiye Vedomosti*, p. 188). Sechenov adds: "*Whatever the external objects may be in themselves, independently of our consciousness—even if it be granted that our impressions of them are only conventional signs—the fact remains that the similarity or difference of the signs we perceive corresponds with a real similarity or difference.*" In other words, "*the similarities or differences man finds in the objects he perceives are real similarities or differences*" (*ibid.*, p. 207)[331] This again is true. Only we must note that Mr. Sechenov does not express himself quite precisely. When he admits that our impressions may be only conventional signs of things in themselves he seems to acknowledge that things in themselves have some kind of "appearance" that we do not know of and which is inaccessible to our consciousness. But "*appearance*" is precisely only the result of the

action upon us of the things in themselves: *outside this action they have no "appearance" whatsoever.* Hence, to oppose their "appearance" as it exists in our consciousness to that "appearance" of theirs which they supposedly have in reality means not to realise which concept is connected with the word appearance. Such an imprecision of expression underlies, as we said above, all the "gnosiology" of the scholasticism of Kantianism. I know that Mr. Sechenov is not inclined to such scholasticism; I have already said that *his* theory of knowledge is perfectly correct, but we must not make to our opponents in philosophy concessions in terminology which prevent us from expressing our own thoughts with complete precision. Another reason why I make this reservation is because in the notes to the first edition of my translation of this pamphlet by Engels I also failed to express myself quite exactly and only subsequently felt all the awkwardness of that inexactness.

And so, things in themselves have no "appearance" at all. Their "appearance" exists only in the consciousness of those subjects on whom they act. The question is now, who are those subjects? People? No, not only people, but all organisms which, thanks to certain peculiarities of their structure, have the possibility to "*see*" the external world in one way or another. But the structure of these organisms is not identical; for that reason the external world has not for them an identical "appearance"; I do not know how the snail "sees" things, but I am sure that it does not "see" things the same as people do. From this, however, it does not follow that the properties of the external world have only subjective significance. By no means! If a man and a snail move from point A to point B, the straight line will be the shortest distance between those two points for both the man and the snail; if both these organisms went along a broken line *they would have to expend a greater amount of labour for their advance.* Consequently, *the properties of space* have *also objective significance,* although they are "seen" differently by different organisms at different stages of development.

Nor is that all. What is a snail *for me*? A part of the external world which acts upon me in a definite manner determined by my organism. So that if I admit that the snail "sees" the external world in one way or another, I am obliged to acknowledge that the "appearance" in which the external world presents itself to the snail is itself determined by the properties of this really existing external world. Thus, the relation of object to subject, of being to thought, this, Engels says, basic question of modern philosophy, presents itself to us in a completely new light. The counterposition of the subject to the object disappears: the *subject* becomes *object* too; *matter* (remember Holbach's definition: "for us matter is what acts in one way or another upon our senses") turns out

under definite conditions to be endowed with *consciousness.* This is the purest materialism; but it is the only at all satisfactory answer not contradicting science to the question of the relation of subject to object.

Further. Kant places his theory of knowledge outside all connection with the *doctrine of development* which dominates science today and to the substantiation of which he himself contributed so much by his work *Allgemeine Theorie und Geschichte des Himmels.* This is a great shortcoming, which is naturally explained by the state of biology contemporaneous to Kant but is clearly felt now by certain biologists who place Kant's philosophy very high. As an example I shall point out an interesting article by Professor Reinke, "Kant's Erkenntnisslehre und die moderne Biologie" in *Deutsche Rundschau*, issue of July 1904.

Reinke finds that modern natural science, especially biology, does not fit in with Kant's teaching "on the *a priori* properties of human reason".

Kant, as we know, says that the category of causality is inapplicable *to things in themselves*, and applicable only *to phenomena*, and this because causality is introduced into phenomena by our reason, is an *a priori* law of nature. Generally, according to Kant, reason serves as the source of all order in nature, since it dictates its laws to nature. This is what embarrasses Reinke. "Does such an *a priori* exist?" he asks. And he answers as follows, "Man from his very birth, and consequently prior to any experience whatsoever, is compelled by the properties of his reason to think according to the category of causality and to imagine phenomena in time and in space (Reinke also calls time and space categories; that in not a misprint, but a peculiar way of understanding the doctrine of the categories, on which I shall not dwell here); but in just the same way he is compelled by the properties of his organism to breathe, to move, to take food, etc. As man is part of nature he is subject to its great law—the law of *adaptation* to the conditions of existence. And it would be perfectly ridiculous to think that this law of adaptation is prescribed to nature by our reason. But the *spiritual* properties of organism too are subject to this law, for they are also part of nature; they also develop with the development of the organism. All forms of adaptation of the organism to the medium around it—lungs, branchiae, etc., are given to the organism just as *a priori* as the forms of thought. Both these groups of properties of the organism are acquired by it through heredity and develop proportionally to its growth from the cell, in which such properties are quite unnoticeable. If we ask ourselves how they were acquired by a given species of animal we will have to turn to the history of the development of the earth, but if we take a separate individual—man or some other animal—all

its properties, physical as well as spiritual, are given to it a priori."

Such is Reinke's reasoning. His arguments are interesting and correct, but Kant's *a priori* acquires a completely new meaning thanks to him. And Reinke would hardly be approved by Kant. It is sufficient to say that Reinke refuses to attribute an exclusively subjective character to time, space and causality. On the contrary. "Analogy with the adaptation of bodily forms leads me to the conclusion," he says, "that *a priori* laws of thought would not exist at all if they ... did not correspond to realities outside us." This already sounds quite materialistic, although Reinke, being one of the pillars of contemporary *neovitalism*, is naturally not a materialist. And it goes without saying that the present neo-Kantians like Cohen, Lasswitz or even Riehl would not at any price agree with what Reinke says about *a priori.* But modern biology leaves them no rest.

"I do not know," says one German author, "how philosophers who adhere to Kant's theory of knowledge deal with the doctrine of development. For Kant, man's soul was a datum invariable in its elements. For him it was only a question of determining its *a priori* property and deducing all the rest from it, not of proving the origin of that property. But if we proceed from the axiom that man developed gradually out of a tiny piece of protoplasm, we shall have to deduce from the elementary vital manifestations of the cell the very thing which for Kant was the basis ... of the whole world of phenomena" (P. Beck, *Die Nachahmung und ihre Bedeutung für Psychologie und Völkerkunde*, Leipzig, 1904, S. 33). The point is, however, that up to now the Kantians have given no thought to whether their theory of knowledge fits in with the teaching on development and were even very surprised when anybody suggested that they should think of this. I remember how my Kantain friends shrugged their shoulders in scorn when arguing with Konr. Schmidt I brought forward against Kant the arguments that P. Beck advances in the passage I have just cited. But truth is coming into its own and today even such an incorrigible, we may say, Kantian as Windelband has found himself forced to ask whether "phenomenality" of time (die Phaenomenalität der Zeit) can be acknowledged by one who adheres to the theory of development (cf. his article "Nach hundert Jahren" in the collection *Zu Kant's Gedächtniss*, Berlin, 1904, S. 17-18).

Windelband finds that here science sets Kantianism a "difficult problem". But the "problem" in the present case is not "difficult", it is simply *unsolvable.*

Development takes place *in time* and yet, according to Kant, time is only a subjective form of contemplation. If I hold the

philosophy of Kant, I contradict myself when I speak of what was *before me*, i.e., when I did not exist and consequently neither did the forms of my contemplation: space and time. It is true that Kant's disciples tried to get out of this difficulty by the reference that with Kant it is a matter of the forms of contemplation and thought, not of the individual man, but of the whole of humanity. But such a reference is of no help, it only creates new difficulties.

Firstly, I must admit either one or the other: *either* other people exist *only in my imagination* and in that case they did not exist before me and will not exist after my death; *or* they exist *outside me* and independently of my consciousness, in which case the idea of their existence before and after me naturally does not contain any contradiction; but now is the time when new and insuperable difficulties arise for Kant's philosophy. If people exist *outside me*, that "*outside me*" is apparently what thanks to the structure of my brain appears to me as *space*. So that space is not only a subjective form of contemplation; to it corresponds also a certain objective "an sich" ("in itself"). If people lived *before me* and will live *after me*, then again to this "*before me*" and to this "*after me*" apparently corresponds some "an sich" which does not depend on my consciousness and is only reflected in that consciousness in the form of time. So that *time is not only subjective either*. Finally, if people exist outside me they are among those things in themselves on the possibility of knowing which we materialists are arguing with the Kantians. And if *their* actions are in any way capable of determining *my* actions, and mine are capable of influencing theirs, which he must necessarily admit, who acknowledges that human society and the development of its culture do not exist only in his consciousness—then it is clear that the category of causality is applicable to the really existing external world, i.e., to the world of noumena, to things in themselves. In a word, there is no other way out: *either subjective idealism*, leading logically to *solipsism* (i.e., the acknowledgement that other people exist only in my imagination) *or* the renunciation of Kant's premises, a renunciation whose logical consummation must be the transition to the standpoint of *materialism* as I already proved in my argument with Konrad Schmidt.[332]

Let us go further. Let us transport ourselves in thought to the time when only very remote ancestors of man existed upon the earth, for example in the Secondary Period. The question is: how did the matter of space, time and causality stand *then*? *Whose* subjective forms were they then? Subjective forms of the ichthyosaurus? And *whose reason* dictated its laws to nature *then*? The reason of the archaeopteryx? Kant's philosophy *can-*

*not give any answer* to this question. And it must be rejected as disagreeing with modern science.

Idealism says: *without a subject there is no object.* The history of the earth shows that *the object existed long before the subject appeared,* i.e., long before any organism appeared which had any perceptible degree of consciousness. The idealist says: *reason dictates its laws to nature.* The history of the organic world shows that "reason" appears only on a high rung of the ladder of development. And as this development can be explained only by the laws of nature, it follows that nature dictated its laws to reason. The theory of development *reveals the truth of materialism.*

*The history of mankind* is a particular case of *development in general.* That is why what has been said includes the answer to the question whether Kant's teaching can be united with the materialist explanation of history. Of course, the eclectic can unite everything in his mind. With the help of eclectic thinking one can unite Marx not only with Kant, but even with the "realists" of the Middle Ages. But for people who think consistently the illegal cohabitation of Marx with the philosophy of Kant must appear as something monstrous in the fullest sense of the word.

Kant says in his *Critique of Practical Reason* that the greatest obligation of the philosopher is to be *consistent,* but that this is precisely what we most seldom meet with. One cannot help recalling this remark of his in connection with Kant himself and with the journeymen and novices of philosophy who want to unite him with Marx.

The "critics of Marx", including the above-mentioned armer Konrad, have shouted much and loud that Engels showed utter misunderstanding of Kant when he said that the teaching of the unknowableness of the external world was refuted best of all by experiment and industry. In actual fact Engels was absolutely right. Every experiment and every productive activity of man represents an *active* relation on his part to the external world, a deliberate calling forth of definite phenomena. And as a phenomenon is the fruit of the action of a thing in itself upon me (Kant says: the *affecting* of me by that thing), in carrying out an experiment or engaging in production of this or that product, I force the thing in itself to "affect" my "ego" in a definite manner determined beforehand by me. Consequently, I know at least some of its properties, namely those through whose intermediary I force it to act. But that is not all. By forcing this thing to act upon me in a certain way, I enter into a relation of *cause* towards it. But Kant says that the category of cause has no relation whatsoever to "things in themselves"; consequently, experience here refutes him better than he refuted himself when he said that the category of cause is related only to *phenomena* (not to things

in themselves) and at the same time maintained that the thing "in itself" acts upon our "ego", in other words, that it is the *cause* of phenomena. From this again it follows that Kant was seriously mistaken when he said that the "forms of our thought" (categories, or "basic concepts of reason", e.g., causality, interaction, existence, necessity) are only "*a priori forms*", i.e., that things in themselves are not subjected to causal relations, interaction, etc. In reality the basic forms of our thought not only correspond completely to the relations existing between things in themselves, they *cannot fail to correspond* to them, because otherwise our existence in general, and consequently the existence of our "forms of thought" would be made impossible. It is true that we are quite capable of error in investigating these basic forms: we may take for a category what is not a category at all. But that is another question, not directly related to the present one. In connection with it we shall merely make one remark: when we speak of the knowableness of the external world, we do not at all mean thereby that any philosopher you come across has the correct conception of it.

Well, granted that Kant is wrong, granted that his dualism cannot withstand criticism. But the very existence of external objects is all the same still not proved. How will you prove that Hume is not right, that the subjective idealists, for example Berkeley, whose views you set forth at the beginning of this note, are not right?

I do not even consider it necessary to give an answer concerning subjective idealism. It is useless to argue with one whose mind can be satisfied with this philosophy which logically leads, as we have said above, to *solipsism*; but we can and must request him to be consistent. And consistency for a man like him means, for example, to deny even the act of his own birth; the solipsist who does not recognise anything but his own "ego" would, of course, commit a great error in logic, a real salto mortale of the mind, if he admitted that his mother exists or existed otherwise than in his imagination. And yet nobody "perceived" himself during the process of his birth; hence the solipsist has absolutely no grounds for saying that he was "born of woman". But only the mind of an unfortunate Poprishchin[333] can be satisfied with such idealism. This idealism is nothing but a reductio ad absurdum of criticism which doubts the knowableness of the external world. Man must act, reason and believe in the existence of the external world, said Hume. It remains for us materialists to add that such "belief" is the necessary preliminary condition for *critical* thought in the best sense of the word, that it is the inevitable salto vitale of philosophy.[334] The basic question in philosophy is not solved by opposing "ego" to "non-ego", i.e., to the exter-

nal world; such a counterposition can only lead us into the blind alley of the absurd. The solution of this particular question requires one to go beyond the limits of the "ego" and consider how "it" (an organism endowed with consciousness) stands in regard to the *external world* surrounding it. But as soon as the question assumes this—the only rational—form, it becomes obvious that the "subject" in general, and consequently my "ego" too, far from dictating laws to the objective world, represents only a component part of that world, *considered from another aspect*, from that of thought, not of extent, as Spinoza would say, he an indisputable materialist, although historians of philosophy refuse to recognise him as such.*

This decisive step of thought cuts the Gordian knot of Hume's scepticism. It goes without saying that as long as I doubt the existence of external objects, the question of the causal connection *between them* necessarily remains before me in the same form that it assumed with Hume: I am entitled to talk only of the consistency of my own impressions, the source of which is unknown. But when the work of my thought convinces me that doubt in the existence of the external world leads my mind to absurdity, and when *I, no longer "dogmatically", but "critically"*, declare the existence of the external world indubitable, I then, by the very fact, admit that my impressions are the result of the action upon me of external objects, i.e., I attribute an objective significance to causality.

Of course to a thinker in a certain state of mind the salto vitale of thought that I alluded to may appear unjustified and he will feel inclined to return to Hume. But Hume's standpoint condemns thought to complete immobility: Hume himself abandoned it every time he, in a desire to think, began to "believe" in the existence of the external world. That is why a return to Hume is, as Engels justly remarks, a step back compared with materialism. Such a step back, by the way, is made in the present time by the *empiriomonists*, whose philosophy Riehl quite correctly calls a renewal of Hume's philosophy (*Zur Einleitung in die Philosophie der Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1903, S. 101).]

(8)[335] In this connection it may perhaps be remarked that both chemistry and biology will finally be reduced, in all probability to molecular mechanics.[336] But the reader sees that Engels is not talking of the mechanics which the French materialists had not and could not have in mind, any more than Descartes, their

* Cf. Feuerbach's: "Was für mich, oder subjectiv, ein reingeistiger, immaterieller, unsinnlicher Akt, ist an sich, oder objectiv, ein materieller, sinnlicher". (What to me, or subjectively, is a purely spiritual, immaterial, nonsensuous act, is, in itself, or objectively, a material and sensuous one. *Werke*, II, 350.)

teacher, had when he spoke of building an "*animal machine*". We can see already from the first part of Descartes' work *On the Passions (Des passions en général*, etc.) what mechanical causes he resorted to in explaining phenomena accomplished in the animal organism. But how little the mechanical outlook of the French materialist tallies with the historical view of nature is shown best of all by the famous book *Système de la Nature (The System of Nature).*[337] In the sixth chapter of the first part of this book its authors come up against the question of the *origin of man.* Although the thought of his gradual (*zoological*) development does not seem to them "*contradictory*", it is clear from everything that in their eyes it is a very improbable "surmise". If anybody had objected against such a surmise, if anybody had told them that "nature acts with the help of a definite aggregate of universal and immutable laws" (as though universal and immutable laws are contradictory to development!! ); if to this they had added that "man, the quadruped, the fish, the insect, the plant, and so on, have existed for ever and remain for ever immutable", the authors "would not have opposed this either"; they would merely have remarked that neither was this view contradictory to the truths (of mechanical materialism) which they were expounding. In the end they get out of the difficulty with these considerations: "It is not given to man to know everything; it is not given to him to know his origin; it is not given to him to penetrate into the essence of things down to the primary causes; but he is capable of having reason and good intentions, he is capable of admitting sincerely that he does not know what he cannot know and of not putting incomprehensible words and absurd propositions in the place of his ignorance" (*Syst. de la Nat.*, London edition, 1781, Part I, p. 75). A warning for those who like to philosophise on "the limits to knowledge of nature".

The authors of *The System of Nature* explain all the historical evils of mankind by lack of "*reason*". "The peoples did not know the true foundations of authority, they did not dare to demand happiness of their rulers, who were obliged to give it to them.... The inevitable consequence of such opinions was the degeneration of politics into the fatal art of sacrificing the happiness of all to the caprice of a single one or of a few privileged ones", etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 291). With such views one could fight with success against existing "privileges", but one could not even think of a scientific conception of history. [For more details on this see Beltov, *The Development of the Monist View of History,* and my book *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Materialismus.*]

(9)[338] What is a categorical imperative? Why does Engels speak of it with such scorn? Is it only because it suggests too high ideals? [No, it is not.]

What is an ideal? "An ideal," the philistine answers, "is a goal towards which we are morally obliged to strive but which is so high that we will never reach it." From this the philistine draws the conclusion—an extremely pleasant one for him—that "faith in an ideal" is compatible with actions which, to say the least, have nothing in common with the "ideal". In the seventies there were such "ideal" gendarme officers in Russia who when arresting a "nihilist" assured him that socialism was indeed a very good thing, that nothing better could be imagined, but that at the same time the ideal was unattainable and that, living on earth, one must think of what was earthly, and that what was "earthly" demanded that he, the ideal gendarme officer, "having tracked down" the no less ideal nihilist, "should bring him to judgement" and so he was "tracking down and bringing to judgement". In all probability the gendarmes were lying when they spoke of their striving towards an "ideal". But let us take another example. Our "legal" Narodniks strived with complete sincerity towards their "ideals". But see what came of their sincere attitude to those ideals. Their social ideal was a free "people", developing independently, without any hindrances from the government and the higher estates. Both the government and the higher estates were completely deleted, if not completely annihilated in the Narodnik ideal. But what did the Narodniks do to fulfil their ideals? Sometimes they simply moaned over the disintegration of the "foundations" ("they wept over figures", as G. I. Uspensky[339] put it). Sometimes they advised the government to increase the peasants' allotments and to lighten the burden of taxation. Sometimes—these were the most consistent and irreconcilable—they "settled on the land". But all this did not bring Russian reality any closer to the Narodnik ideal. That is why the Narodniks wept not only over figures, but over themselves too. They were conscious of the complete impotence of their ideals. But what was the cause of this impotence? It is clear: they had *no organic connection between their ideals and reality.* Reality went in one direction and their ideals in another, or, to put it better, they remained stationary, continuing to be "*settled on the land*" with Messrs. the liberal Narodniks, so that the distance between ideals and reality kept increasing, as a result of which their ideals became more and more powerless day by day. Engels would have laughed at *such* ideals, of course, as Hegel indeed did. However, the mockery would be directed not against the loftiness of the ideals, but against their very *impotence,* their severance form the general course of the Russian movement. Engels dedicated his entire life to an extremely lofty aim: the emancipation of the proletariat. He also had his "ideal", but he was not severed for ever from reality. His ideal was reality itself, but *the*

*reality of tomorrow*, a reality which will be fulfilled, not because Engels was a man of an ideal, but because the properties of the present reality are such that out of it, by its own inner laws, there must develop that reality of tomorrow which we may call Engels' ideal. Uneducated people may ask us: if the whole point consists in the properties of the reality, then what has Engels to do with it, why does he intervene with his ideals in the inevitable historical process? Cannot the matter do without him? *From the objective standpoint* the position of Engels appears as follows: in the process of the transition from one form to another, reality seized on him as on one of the necessary instruments of the impending revolution. *From the subjective standpoint* it turns out that it was pleasant for Engels to partake in that historical movement, that he considered it his duty and the great task of his life. The laws of social development can no more be fulfilled without the intermediary of people than the laws of nature without the intermediary of matter. But this does not in any sense mean that the "*personality*" can ignore the laws of social development. In the best of cases he will be punished for this by being reduced to the position of a ridiculous Don Quixote.

[In his well-known work *Wirtschaft und Recht* Stammler expressed amazement at the Social-Democrats considering, on the one hand, that the revolution of the proletariat is *inevitable,* and, on the other, finding it necessary to promote the advent of that revolution. In his opinion this was just as strange as creating a party to promote astronomically inevitable eclipses of the moon. But his making such a remark shows—as does, by the way, the whole of his book—that he did not understand the *materialist* philosophy underlying modern socialism. Even D. Priestley says, and quite rightly: "Though the chain of events is necessary, our *own determinations* and *actions* are necessary links of that chain" (*Disquisitions,* Vol. I, p. 110). Kant considered Priestley a fatalist. But where is the fatalism in this? There is no trace of it, as Priestley pointed out in his argument with Price.

Let us now speak of the categorical imperative. What is it? Kant calls imperatives rules which have the "mark of obligation". An imperative can be *conditional* or *categorical.* A conditional imperative determines the will only in relation to a given desirable action. A *categorical* imperative determines the will *independently* of this or that end in view; it determines the will as such, "even before I ask myself whether I have sufficient ability to produce the action I have in view or what I must do to produce it". Besides the mark of obligation, the categorical imperative has, therefore, the mark of unconditional *necessity.* If somebody is told that he must work and put money aside for a rainy day, this

is a *conditional imperative*; he must put money aside only if he does not want to be in need when he is old and has no other means of protecting himself against poverty. But the rule *not to make false promises* applies only to man's will as such and does not depend on the aims pursued by that man. By this rule the act of will is determined *a priori.* This is a *categorical* imperative. "Consequently," Kant says, "practical laws apply only to the will, independently of what is created by its causality, and one can renounce the latter in order to have these laws pure." (*Critique of Practical Reason,* Russian translation by N. M. Sokolov, St. Petersburg, 1897, p. 21.)

There is, properly, only one categorical imperative which says: *act only in accordance with such a rule as you could desire to elevate to a universal law (Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten,* Leipzig, 1897, S. 44).

To explain his thought Kant cites several examples. A particular person is so unhappy that life has become a burden for him and he asks whether it is permissible to kill himself. Where must the answer to this question be sought? In the categorical imperative. What would happen if suicide were made a universal law? What would happen is that life would cease. Therefore, suicide does not conform to morality. Another example. Somebody has trusted his chattels to the safe keeping of another man. Is it permissible for the other man to keep it for himself? To Kant this question too seems just as easy to solve with the help of the categorical imperative: if all people appropriated what they had been entrusted with to them nobody would give property for safe keeping. A third example. A well-to-do man could help a poor man but refuses to do so. Is this not contrary to moral duty? It is: nobody can desire that such conduct should be the general rule, since each may find himself in difficulty.

These examples provide a good explanation of Kant's thought, but they also reveal its groundlessness. Hegel has already noted [340] that the example of giving chattels for safe keeping is not convincing, for one can ask: where is the harm if things are not entrusted for safe keeping? And if anyone replied that it would then be more difficult to guard chattels and that property itself would be impossible in the end, it could also be objected, what is property needed for? Kant's teaching, as Hegel says, does not contain a single law of morality clear in itself, without any further arguments and without contradictions, independently of other qualifications. This is correct and it is especially noticeable in the example of suicide. Indeed, in this example it is a question of the suicide not of all people generally, but only of such as are broken by the difficult struggle of life, and the suicide of such people would not put an end to life.

Besides, Hegel says that with Kant each definite law of morality is an empty statement, a meaningless tautology like the formula A=A, chattels entrusted for safe keeping are chattels entrusted for safe keeping, property is property. That is also correct and quite comprehensible. For Kant there simply existed no such questions as those which Hegel counterposes to his "empty statements": Where is the harm if things are not entrusted for safe keeping? Why is property needed? etc. *Kant's ideal,* his "kingdom of aims" *(Reich der Zwecke,* cf. *Grundlegung,* p. 58) *was an abstract ideal of bourgeois society, whose standards seemed to Kant to be unquestionable orders of* "practical reason". Kant's morality is bourgeois morality, translated into the language of his philosophy, whose main defect, as we have seen, was the complete inability to cope with the questions of *development.* To support this I shall dwell on the third example cited above and borrowed from Kant himself. But first I ask the reader to note that Kant was a resolute opponent of utilitarian morality. In his opinion, the principle of happiness contains no other bases to determine the will than those which are inherent in the ability to desire; but reason, determining the will, cannot take this lower ability into account. Reason is so different from this ability that even the slightest admixture of the impulses deriving from the latter "deprives it of force and superiority, just as the slightest empirical admixture, as a condition in a mathematical proof, debases and destroys the whole action of the demonstration" (*Critique of Practical Reason,* p. 27). The principle of morality consists in being independent of the desired object.

This being independent of the desired object has long provided occasion for jokes and epigrams (cf. for example 388-389 *Xenien* of Schiller and Goethe). I cannot give them here.* All I wish to say is that the third example cited above from Kant can be considered as convincing *only in the event of our adopting the standpoint of utilitarian morality and compelling our "practical reason" to take into account our "ability to desire"*: for according to Kant I must help others because I also may be in need of their help. What could be more utilitarian? Besides, I wish

* However, here is one from *Xenien*

*Gewissenskrupel*

Gerne dien'ich den Freunden, doch thu'ich es leider mit Neigung
Und so wurmt es mir oft, dass ich nicht tugendhaft bin.

*Decisum*

Da ist kein andrer Rat, du musst suchen sie zu verachten,
Und mit Abscheu alsdann thun, wie die Pflicht dir gebietet.[341]

(i.e., *Scruple*: I willingly render services to friends, but unfortunately I do it with inclination and I often have misgivings that I am not virtuous. *Decision*: There is no other way out: you must try to despise them and do with repulsion what duty commands you.)

to draw the reader's attention to the circumstance that while objecting to utilitarianists, Kant always has in mind the principle of "*personal happiness*" which he correctly calls the *principle of self-love.* And that is precisely why he cannot cope with the basic questions of morality. Indeed, morality is founded on the striving not for *personal happiness,* but for the *happiness of the whole:* the clan, the people, the class, humanity. *This* striving has nothing in common with *egoism.* On the contrary, it *always presupposes* a greater or lesser degree of *self-sacrifice.* And as social feelings can be transmitted from generation to generation and strengthened by natural selection (cf. Darwin's most apt remarks on this point in his book on the origin of man)[342] self-sacrifice can take a form as if it were a matter of "autonomous will", without any admixture of "the ability to desire". But this indisputable circumstance does not in the least preclude the *utilitarian principle* of this lofty ability. If self-sacrifice were not useful for the particular society, class, or, finally, the particular animal species in its struggle for existence (remember that social feelings are *not* characteristic of man *alone*), then it would be alien to the individuals belonging to this society, class or species. That is all. A particular individual is born with an *a priori* "ability for self-sacrifice" just as it is born—according to the remark by Reinke quoted above (in Note 7)—with an "a priori" ability to breathe and digest; but there is nothing mysterious in this "a prioriness": it was formed gradually in the long, long process of development.

From the standpoint of development and social usefulness it is easy to solve those questions by means of which Hegel refuted Kant's moral laws: what is the safe keeping of chattels needed for? Why is property needed? etc. But—I repeat—still more clearly in his teaching on morality than in his theory of knowledge is his inability and that of his followers to adopt the standpoint of development displayed. And here, just as often as in connection with Kant's theory of knowledge, we have to remember Kant's own words: "The greatest obligation of the philosopher is to be *consistent,* but this is precisely what we most seldom meet with".

Jacobi, a contemporary of Kant, revolted against his teaching on morality and said in a letter to Fichte: "Yes, I am an atheist and a godless man, who desires, contrary to a will which desires nothing, to lie like Desdemona when she was dying; I want to lie and deceive like Pylades when he tried to pass as Orestes; to kill like Timoleon, to break laws and oaths like Epaminondas and Jan de Witt; to commit suicide like Otto; to plunder the temple like David and even to pluck ears of corn on the Sabbath just because I am hungry and because the law is made for man and not

man for the law". That is very good, and Hegel was perfectly right in his opinion that these thoughts of Jacobi's were "perfectly pure, since their expression in the first person, 'I am', 'I desire', cannot hinder their objectivity".[343] But the absolutely correct thought that the law is made for man and not man for the law provides an *unshakable foundation for utilitarian morality understood in its true, i.e., objective significance.*]

(10)[344] Hegel had already noted that it is absurd to consider historical events from the moral point of view (cf. his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History,* p. 67 of the first edition, Vol. IX of the complete collection of his works). But our "progressive writers" still do not understand the correctness of this remark (which, I admit, they have yet hardly heard of). They lament with the utmost sincerity over the deterioration of morals which accompanies the disintegration of the ancient "foundations" of the people's life, foundations on which whole forests of birch-rods and mountains of blows have grown. The factory proletariat is in their eyes a vessel of all kinds of vices. Scientific socialism takes a different view of the matter. The representatives of scientific socialism knew long before "progressive" Russian writers noticed it, that the development of capitalism inevitably leads to what may be called the demoralisation of the workers, i.e., first and foremost a break with traditionally established morality (cf. for example Engels' *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England,* Leipzig, 1845, pp. 120 et seq.). But Engels did not dream of a resumption of patriarchal relationships, and, what is most important, he understood that out of the "*immorality*" of the factory proletariat there grows a new "*morality*", the morality *of revolutionary struggle against the existing order of things,* which in the end will create a new social system in which the workers will not be "perverted", because the *sources* of their "perversion" will disappear (pp. 256 et seq.). The contemporary condition of Russian "progressive" thought can be expressed as follows: we have not even an idea of what really progressive thought in the West already knew half a century ago. Really, there is enough to drive us to despair!

[These lines were written in 1892 when our arguments with *illegal* Narodism (still in existence as remnants of the Narodnaya Volya trend) were still going on and our polemic with the *legal* Narodniks, which became particularly sharp in the second half of the nineties, was as yet only in preparation. Now our "progressive" writers have no time to mourn over the disintegration of the "ancient foundations" and they no longer regret the appearance of the *proletariat* in our country: life itself has now shown them how great the revolutionary significance of this class is; and the "progressive" press is now lavish in praise of it.

*Better late than never,* as the saying goes. But I say: better early than late. If our "progressive" people had abandoned their absurd view of the proletariat as of a mere "*ulcer*" earlier; if, renouncing this view, they had promoted with all their might the development of consciousness in this class, the infamous *Black Hundred* would not now be playing its dangerous role in politics. Stubborn and persistent defence by the "progressive" intelligentsia of the prejudices of Narodism truly constitutes their *political crime* for which implacable history is now severely punishing them.]

(11)[345] As for primitive society, Marx's historical views are brilliantly corroborated by the studies of Morgan (cf. his *Ancient Society*[346] which was first published in English; now there is a German, [Russian] and, if we are not mistaken, a Polish translation). Some dishonest critics maintain that Morgan's conclusions regarding tribal life are founded only on the study of the social life of the Red Indians in North America. It is sufficient to read his book to be convinced that such "critical" remarks are completely unfounded. In the same way it is sufficient to become acquainted in detail, i.e., from first sources, with the history of the antique world to see how indisputable is all that Morgan and Engels say about it (cf. the latter's *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums und des Staats,* i.e., *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.*) [But notwithstanding many scientists' malevolent attitude towards Morgan's work, this man's thoughts of genius have not been lost for modern ethnology. Under his influence there has arisen in North America a whole school of ethnologists whose works are published in the annual—and extremely noteworthy—reports of the Smithsonian Institution and provide much most valuable data for the materialist explanation of the history of primitive society. Among the works in Europe based on the studies of Morgan we must include first of all the valuable works of our German comrade H. Cunow on the systems of relations among the Australian Negroes, the social structure in Mexico and the state of the Incas, and finally on matriarchy in connection with the development of the productive forces in the "savage" tribes.[347] However, one must admit when speaking of Europe, that the influence of Morgan's ideas, properly speaking, is still relatively weak. But there is no doubt that here too "ethnology" resorts with increasing frequence to purely materialist explanations of social phenomena. I do not think that an investigator such as Karl von den Steinen would take any interest in historical materialism; in his works at least there is not so much as a hint that he is even a little acquainted with this theory. But in his instructive book *Unter den Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens,* Berlin, 1894, this method, recommended by the "economic" materialists, is applied invariably from beginning to end, and in the

majority of cases successfully. Even Ratzel, who considers it necessary to defend himself against the reproach of materialism (cf. his *Völkerkunde,* II, S. 631), places the development of "spiritual" culture in causal dependence on the development of "material" culture. He says: "The sum of cultural acquisitions in each people in each stage of their development is made up of *material* and *spiritual* acquisitions. These acquisitions are achieved by various means, with differing ease and at different times.... Underlying spiritual cultural acquisitions are the material ones" (*ibid.,* Vol. I, p. 17). This is the same historical materialism but not thought out to the end and therefore partly inconsistent, partly naïve. And we come across the same, so to speak, naturally grown and therefore naïve and more or less inconsistent materialism in a large number of works on the development of different special fields of primitive "culture", or, to use Marx's expression, different *ideologies.* Thus, the investigation of primitive *art* has taken a firm stand on *materialist* ground; this could be confirmed by quoting a long list of works published in Europe and in the United States of North America, but I will confine myself to indicating the works of Grosse, *Die Anfänge der Kunst,* and of Bücher, *Arbeit und Rhythmus,* of which there are Russian translations. It is interesting that this latter work was written by a man whose view of the basic causes of social development is directly opposed to the materialist view (as can be seen from what Bücher wrote about the mutual relations of *play* and *labour*). But it is obvious that now even the bourgeois scientist cannot always avoid the influence of truth, although he finds it unpleasant to acknowledge it because of some or other prejudices. Everything shows that we are now rapidly approaching the time when what we can now observe in natural science will be repeated in social sciences: all phenomena will be given a materialist explanation but the basic thought of the materialists will be rejected as being groundless. It is not difficult to understand what explains this dual attitude to materialism: the consistent materialist outlook is *mainly a revolutionary view of the world,* and the "educated classes" in the Western countries are by no means inclined towards revolution at present. It can be seen from an interesting book written by an American, Edwin R. A. Seligman, *The Economic Interpretation of History,* New York, 1902, that I am not calumniating the "educated classes". Professor Seligman says expressly that historical materialism is doing itself a lot of harm in the eyes of scientists by its close connection with socialism (cf. p. 90 of his book) and its alleged "absurd exaggerations", including its negative attitude to religion in general and to Christianity in particular (see the whole of Chapter IV of the book quoted). As Seligman considers the materialist explanation of history to be

correct and as he wishes to have its correctness recognised by other scientists, he tries to prove that one can adhere to the materialist explanation of history and not share the atheist and socialist conclusions at which the enormous majority of its supporters have arrived so far. It must be admitted that Seligman is right in his way: *with a certain inconsistency* the logical operation which he suggests is obviously possible. And it would be useful for social sciences if bourgeois scientists listened to the advice that Seligman gives them: by renouncing the "exaggerations" of modern Marxism they would, of course, be making a big mistake. But by rejecting historical materialism outright they are making not one, but a large number of mistakes; of the two evils the former would therefore all the same be the lesser....

However this may be, the late N. Mikhailovsky was cruelly mistaken when he maintained in his argument with the "Russian pupils of Marx" that historical materialism is incapable, because of its inherent groundlessness, to attract the attention of the scientific world. The attention of the scientific world is now being drawn to it from all sides and although bourgeois scientists, due to the causes pointed out above, still show little inclination to acknowledge its scientific worth in the majority of cases, now it is not rare even for experts in *geography* to speak about it in special works and, for example, certain members of the Berlin Geographical Society have spared no efforts to fight it. This is a gratifying sign of the times, and one that is of no little importance.]

## [NOTES TO THE FIRST EDITION IN THE ORIGINAL VERSION]

### END OF NOTE 6

On German "true socialism" see the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Marx and Engels (a new Russian translation of it was published in Geneva in 1882) and also Adler (*not the* Adler, the leader of the Austrian Social-Democrats), *Geschichte der ersten sozialpolitischen Bewegungen in Deutschland.* In this same book—which by the way is far from satisfactory—the reader will also learn about the activity of *Karl Grün.* "True" German socialism was one of the varieties of utopian socialism, but it did not contain any trace of the profound thoughts for which the works of such utopians as Robert Owen, Saint-Simon and Fourier are remarkable at every step. The supporters of "true socialism" *rose* against "*politics*" and *could not at all understand what the class struggle is.* It is known that certain Russian, no less "true", socialists, still transgress in the same way. On the question of "politics" we all now reason differently from the "true" socialists, we all acknowledge it as necessary. But that still does not mean that we all have a correct view of it. Whoever counterposes socialism to politics, whoever does not understand that every class struggle is a political struggle, whoever says, for example, "let us engage *first* in politics, let us overthrow the autocracy, and then we shall go on to socialism", such a man is not a hair breadth above the views of the utopian socialists, he does not understand the policy of the working class and he will in all probability defend a policy having definitely no direct relation to the political tasks of the socialists.

### END OF NOTE 7

Thus, for example, we know that, according to Kant's teaching, things in themselves, when they act upon us give material which is processed by our consciousness. But as Überweg correctly notes (p. 233 of the Russian translation of his *History of Philosophy in Modern Times),* "action contains the notions of time and of cause, which, as a priori forms, on the other hand, Kant acknowledges as having significance only within the world of phe-

nomena, not beyond it". Many more similar contradictions could be pointed out, but not, of course, in this short note.

Some German and Russian "philosophers" like to expatiate on the subject of the unknowableness of "things in themselves". It seems to them that in doing so they are uttering very profound truths. But this is a grave error. Hegel was perfectly correct when he noted that a "thing in itself" is nothing else than the abstraction of every definite property, an empty abstraction about which *nothing can be known* for the very reason that it is an abstraction of all qualification. We do not know what a thing in itself is.... Of course, we do not. The question "what is?" presupposes definite properties of the thing which must be pointed out; but once *we make abstraction of all the properties of a thing,* we naturally cannot answer the question what it is because the impossibility to answer is already contained in the question. Transcendental idealism "transports" into consciousness all the properties of things, in relation to both form and content. It is understandable, that from this standpoint it depends only on me, on the subject, that the leaf of the tree appears to me green, not black; the sun round, not quadrangular; sugar sweet, not bitter, and that when the clock strikes *two,* I perceive its strokes successively, not simultaneously, and that I do not consider the first stroke as either the cause or the effect of the second, etc. (*Wissenschaft der Logik,* I, Bd., I Abth., S. 55, II Abth., S. 150).

But pardon, the reader may object, is not colour or sound something completely subjective, is the perception of colour and of sound the same thing as the movement which causes it? By no means, but "*every vibration or transition of sound according to intensity, pitch or duration that we feel, corresponds to a perfectly definite change in the sound movement in reality.* Sound and light as sensations are products of the organisation of man; but the roots of the forms and movements which we see, just as the modulations of sound which we hear, lie outside us in reality" (Sechenov, "Objective Thought and Reality", in the collection *Hunger Relief,* published by *Russkiye Vedomosti,* p. 188). And, generally, "whatever the external objects may be in themselves, independently of our consciousness—even if it be granted that our impressions of them are only conventional signs—the fact remains that the similarity or difference of the signs we perceive corresponds to a real similarity or difference. In other words, the similarities or differences man finds in the objects he perceives are real similarities or differences" (Sechenov, ibid., p. 207). This cannot be refuted and consequently one cannot speak of *unknowableness* of things in themselves even if it occurred to somebody to speak of these "things" after Hegel showed the *logical* origin of these alleged things.

Our sensations are in their way hieroglyphs[348] which inform us of what is taking place in reality. The hieroglyphs do not resemble the events conveyed by them. But they can *with complete fidelity* convey, both the events themselves, and—what is the main thing—the relations existing between them. Engels says that Kant's theory is refuted best of all by experiment and industry. The words we have quoted from Sechenov partly show how this is to be understood. But perhaps it will do no harm to dwell a *little* longer on this question. Every *experiment* and every *industry,* that is, production of the things man needs, the deliberate calling into being of certain *phenomena,* are an *active* attitude of man towards nature. And this active attitude sheds new light on it, a light far brighter than that which is given by a *passive* perception of impressions. Indeed, making use of his knowledge of the laws of nature, man could build an electric railway. This means that he himself *deliberately* calls into being definite phenomena (the transformation of electricity into movement properly, etc.). But what is a phenomenon in the sense of Kant's philosophy? It is the resultant of two forces: 1) our "*ego*", 2) the action produced on that "*ego*" by the thing in itself. Consequently, calling forth a definite phenomenon, I force this "thing" to act upon my "ego" in a definite manner previously determined by me. Consequently, *I know at least some of its properties*: namely those by means of which I force it to act. But that is not yet all. Forcing the thing to act upon me in a definite manner, I become *cause* in relation to it. And Kant says that the category of cause cannot have any relation to "things in themselves"; consequently, here experiment refutes him better than he refuted himself when he said that the category of cause applies only to *phenomena* (and not to things in themselves), and at the same time maintained that "things in themselves" act upon our "*ego*", that is, serve as *one of the causes* of phenomena. From this it follows that Kant was seriously mistaken when he said that the "forms of our thinking" (the categories, or "basic concepts of reason", for example causality, interaction, existence, necessity) are only "*a priori forms*", i.e., that things in themselves are not subject to the causal relation, interaction, and so forth. In reality the basic forms of our thinking not only correspond fully to the relations existing between things in themselves, *they cannot but correspond to them,* because our existence generally, and consequently our "forms of thinking", would be impossible. It is true that we are quite capable of error in the investigation of these basic forms; we can take for a category that which is not a category at all. But that is another question which has no direct relation to the present one. In connection with it we will confine ourselves to a single remark: when we speak of the identity of the basic forms of being and of thought

we do not at all mean thereby that any philosopher you came across has a completely correct conception of it.

Well, granted that Kant is wrong, granted that his dualism cannot withstand criticism, but the very existence of external objects is still not proved. How will you prove that the subjective idealists are not right, that *Berkeley*, for example, whose views you set forth at the beginning of this note, is not right? That can be proved too: read, at any rate, the works of *Überweg* on this question.

END OF NOTE 9

Concerning Kant's categorical imperative ... but do we need to speak of it? Any history of philosophy will explain it better than us in the few lines of our note. Read, for one thing, pp.245-56 of the Russian translation of Überweg-Heinze's *History of Philosophy in Modern Times.* And in particular we recommend anybody who is interested to know how Hegel ridiculed the categorical imperative pp. 550-81 (first edition of the German original) of the *Phenomenology of Spirit.* We really only wished to remark that if Engels adopts a scornful attitude to "non-realisable ideals" it is not because of some philistine-like propensity to be reconciled with every particular social system; that he scorns only the Manilov attitude, which, by the way, Kant displayed to no small degree. Our aim, we think, is achieved.

END OF NOTE 11

The role of economic needs and relations in the history of the ancient Orient is splendidly brought to light in L. I. Mechnikov's book, *La civilisation et les grands fleuves historiques (Civilisation and the Great Historic Rivers),* although its late author did not set himself exactly that aim. However, the role of these needs and relations strikes one forcibly already in the bulky *Histoire ancienne de l'Orient (Ancient History of the Orient)* by Lenormant. Concerning medieval history and the origin of medieval institutions we shall refer to Augustin Thierry, Guizot, Maurer and partly Fustel de Coulanges. Finally, the significance of economic relations and the class struggle resulting from them in modern history is brought out with amazing vividness in Marx's excellent work, *Der achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte (The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte).* To say nothing of *Capital,* which is highly remarkable also as a work of history. In fact, every step forward in the science of history brings new proofs in favour of "economic materialism". Hence the fact that many historians and writers now discover "independently of Marx" (i.e., not having the slightest idea of his theory)—or more exactly, see in a very

misty distance—small pieces of the long ago discovered America. Giraud-Teulon's book on the history of the family, for one, which has been translated into Russian, shows that such "independence" of the most important historical theory of our times does not go unpunished.

Marx's theory of history must still be the basis of many, many particular historical investigations. Its significance is far from being fully clear even to all Marxists. But when "philosophers" like Paul Barth (see his *Geschichtsphilosophie Hegel's und der Hegelianer*) ask with surprise in exactly which works the correctness of Marx's theory is proved, they thereby only display their ignorance or their lack of reasoning powers, a lack which Kant was quite right in acknowledging to be incurable.

# BOURGEOIS OF DAYS GONE BY

"The almost universal unhappiness of men and of peoples depends on the imperfection of their laws and the too unequal distribution of their wealth. In the majority of kingdoms there are only two classes of citizens: one which has not the necessary and the other which has the superfluous in abundance. The former can provide for its needs only by excessive labour. This labour is a physical evil for all and a torture for some.

"The second class lives in abundance but also in miserable boredom. And boredom is an evil almost as fearful as indigence. Most of the empires must therefore be populated only by unhappy people. What must be done to restore happiness? Diminish the wealth of some, increase that of others; place the poor man in such a state of ease *that he may provide abundantly for his needs and those of his family by working seven or eight hours. It is then that he will be about as happy as he can be.*"[349]

This was the way Helvetius reasoned more than a hundred years ago, convinced that "if in general labour is regarded as an evil, it is because in most states the means necessary for subsistence are acquired only by unbearable labour, because as a result the idea of labour is always connected with the idea of suffering".[350] "Moderate labour", he added, "is in general the happiest use that we can make of time if we do not surrender to any other feelings of delight, which, without doubt and notwithstanding all their brilliance, are less lasting."[351]

Helvetius was undeniably a convinced bourgeois. For him the right of property was the "*first and most sacred of all rights*". But the bourgeois of his time were not like those of today. The bourgeoisie were then capable of noble strivings. Fighting the clergy and the nobility, the "powers that be", the "lords" and the "privileged", they were fighting for the cause of entire humanity. The ideal of their educated representatives was not a society in which a few thousand capitalists live by the sweat of millions of workers. On the contrary, the philosophers of the eighteenth century dreamed of a society consisting of property-owners unequal in

wealth but all independent and every one working for himself. This was an impracticable dream. It contradicted all the laws of capitalist production.

But as long as the philosophers cherished this dream they could not become defenders of the exploiters. And often enough they said fairly unpleasant things to the latter.

So Helvetius already understood that the interests of employers are contradictory to the interests of the entire "nation" as a whole. "In a certain respect", he said, "nothing contradicts the national interest so much as the presence of a too large number of people who have no property. At the same time, nothing corresponds better to the interests of the merchants. The bigger the number of propertyless, the less the merchants pay for their labour.... And in a trading country the merchants are often *the effective force.*"[352] (Helvetius meant in a country with *capitalist production.*)

Holbach, another philosopher of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, was indignant at a system under which "whole nations must work and sweat, and water the land with their tears merely to feed the whims, luxury, fantasy and perverted tastes of a handful of madmen, a few useless people who cannot be happy because their disorderly imagination no longer knows any bounds".

Helvetius already foresaw what would be the moral consequences of the struggle for existence going on in bourgeois society.

He said that in all countries where "money circulation exists" there arises the striving to become rich at any cost. But the "passion for enrichment cannot extend to all classes of citizens without giving rise at the same time among the ruling classes to *a propensity to theft and abuse*".

Then they start avidly on "building ports, producing armaments, establishing trading companies, and waging wars for the honour of the nation, according to the favourite expression—in a word on any pretext for plunder. In the state there appear at the same time all vices, those offshoots of cupidity; they infect all its members and finally lead the state to ruin."[353]

Thus, the Tunisian and Panama scandals were prophesied more than a century ago.

Circumstances have undergone a great change since the time of Helvetius. In our days every self-respecting bourgeois considers it his sacred duty to oppose the eight-hour working day and all other demands of the exploited. Whereas the productive forces of modern societies are developing on a scale so far unheard of, Messrs. the exploiters will not even listen to anything about easing the labour of the workers. And while, because of the "passion for

enrichment", the perversion of the bourgeoisie exceeds everything their enemies can imagine, they try to convince us that the bourgeois world is the best of all.

Will we swallow the bait of the sycophants of the bourgeoisie?

The working day that Helvetius once dreamed of and which the working class of the whole world is now demanding will not make the worker "*about as happy as he can be*". But it will give him a new weapon in the struggle for his complete and final emancipation.

Helvetius knew no "medicine" for the "evil" which he foresaw. But we know one, and it is a reliable medicine. *It is the dictatorship of the proletariat as a means to attain the end which is the socialist organisation of production.*

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONIST VIEW OF HISTORY

*Audiatur et altera pars*

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND AND THIRD EDITIONS

I have here corrected only *slips* and *misprints* which had crept into the first edition. I did not consider it right to make any changes in my *arguments,* since this is a *polemical* work. Making alterations in the substance of a polemical work is like appearing before your adversary with a new weapon, while compelling him to fight with his old weapon. This is impermissible in general, and still less permissible in the present case because my chief adversary, N. K. Mikhailovsky, is no longer alive.[354]

The critics of our views asserted that these views are, first, wrong in themselves; secondly, that they are particularly wrong when applied to Russia, which is destined to follow its own original path in the economic field; thirdly, that they are bad, because they dispose their supporters to impassivity, to "quietism". This last stricture is not likely to be reiterated by anyone nowadays. The second has also been refuted by the whole development of Russian economic life in the past decade. As to the first stricture, it is enough to acquaint oneself with recent *ethnological* literature, if with nothing else, to be convinced of the correctness of *our explanation of history.* Every serious work on "primitive civilisation" is obliged to resort to it whenever the question under discussion is the causal connection between manifestations of the social and spiritual life of "savage" peoples. Witness, for example, the classical work of K. Steinen, *Unter der Naturvölkern Zentral-Brasiliens.* But I cannot, of course, dilate on this subject here.

I reply to some of my critics in an article appended to this edition, "A Few Words to Our Opponents", which I published under a pseudonym, and therefore refer in it to my book as if it were the work of another person whose views are also my own.[355] But this article says nothing in opposition to Mr. Kudrin, who came out against me in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*[356] after it had appeared.[357] In reference to Mr. Kudrin, I shall say a couple of words here.

It might seem that the most serious of his arguments against historical materialism is the fact he notes that one and the same religion, Buddhism for instance, is sometimes professed by peoples at very different levels of economic development. But this argument may appear sound only at first glance. Observation has revealed that "one and the same" religion *substantially differs in content* depending on the level of economic development of the peoples professing it.

I should also like to reply to Mr. Kudrin on another point. He found in my book an error in the translation of a Greek text from Plutarch (see footnote, p. 142), and is very scathing about it. Actually, I am "not guilty". Being on a journey at the time the book was published, I sent the manuscript to St. Petersburg without giving the quotation from Plutarch, but only indicating the *paragraphs* which should be quoted. One of the persons connected with the publication of the book—who, if I am not mistaken, *graduated from the same classical gymnasium* as Mr. Kudrin—translated the paragraphs I had indicated and ... made the mistake Mr. Kudrin points out. That, of course, is a pity. But it should also be said that this mistake was the only blunder our opponents could convict us of. They too had to have some moral satisfaction. So that, "humanly speaking", I am even glad of the error.

*N. Beltov*

*Chapter I*

## FRENCH MATERIALISM OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

"If you nowadays," says Mr. Mikhailovsky,[358] "meet a young man ... who, even with some unnecessary haste, informs you that he is a 'materialist', this does not mean that he is a materialist in the general philosophical sense, in which in olden days we had admirers of Büchner and Moleschott. Very often the person with whom you are talking is not in the least interested either in the metaphysical or in the scientific side of materialism, and even has a very vague idea of them. What he wants to say is that he is a follower of the theory of economic materialism, and that in a particular and conditional sense."*

We do not know what kind of young men Mr. Mikhailovsky has been meeting. But his words may give rise to the impression that the teaching of the representatives of "economic materialism" has no connection with materialism "in the general philosophical sense". Is that true? Is "economic materialism" really so narrow and poor in content as it seems to Mr. Mikhailovsky?

A brief sketch of the history of that doctrine will serve as a reply.

What is "materialism in the general philosophical sense"?

*Materialism* is the direct opposite of *idealism*. Idealism strives to explain all the phenomena of Nature, all the qualities of matter, by these or those qualities of the *spirit*. Materialism acts in the exactly opposite way. It tries to explain psychic phenomena by these or those qualities of *matter*, by this or that organisation of the human or, in more general terms, of the animal *body*. All those philosophers in the eyes of whom the prime factor is *matter* belong to the camp of the *materialists*; and all those who consider such a factor to be the *spirit* are *idealists*.

That is all that can be said about materialism in general, about "materialism in the general philosophical sense", as time built up on its fundamental principle the most varied superstructures,

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* *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, January 1894, Section II, p. 98.

which gave the materialism of one epoch quite a different aspect from the materialism of another.

Materialism and idealism exhaust the most important tendencies of philosophical thought. True, by their side there have almost always existed *dualist* systems of one kind or another, which recognise *spirit* and *matter* as separate and independent *substances. Dualism* was never able to reply satisfactorily to the inevitable question: how could these two separate substances, which have nothing in common between them, influence each other? Therefore the most consistent and most profound thinkers were always inclined to *monism,* i.e., to explaining phenomena with the help of *some one main principle* (monos in Greek means "one"). Every consistent *idealist* is a monist to the same extent as every consistent *materialist.* In *this* respect there is no difference, for example, between Berkeley and Holbach. One was a consistent *idealist,* the other a no less consistent *materialist,* but both were equally *monistic*; both one and the other equally well understood the worthlessness of the *dualist outlook on the world,* which up to this day is still, perhaps, the most widespread.

In the first half of our century philosophy was dominated by *idealistic* monism. In its second half there triumphed *in science*—with which meanwhile *philosophy* had been completely fused—*materialistic* monism, although far from always consistent and frank monism.

We do not require to set forth here all the history of materialism. For our purpose it will be sufficient to consider its development beginning with the second half of last century. And even here it will be important for us to have in view mainly one of its trends—true, the most important—namely, the materialism of Holbach, Helvetius and their supporters.

The materialists of this trend waged a hot polemic against the official thinkers of that time who, appealing to the authority of Descartes (whom they can hardly have well understood), asserted that man has certain *innate ideas,* i.e., such as appear independently of his experience. Contesting this view, the French materialists in fact were only setting forth the teaching of Locke, who at the end of the seventeenth century was already proving that there are "no innate principles". But setting forth his teaching the French materialists gave it a more consistent form, dotting such "i's" as Locke did not wish to touch upon, being a well-bred English liberal. The French materialists were fearless *sensationalists,* consistent throughout, i.e., they considered all the psychic functions of man to be *transformed sensations.* It would be valueless to examine here to what extent, in this or that particular case, their arguments are satisfactory from the point of view of present-day science. It is self-evident that the French materialists did not

know a great deal of what is now known to every schoolboy: it is sufficient to recall the views of Holbach on chemistry and physics, even though he was well acquainted with the natural science of *his* age. But the French materialists' incontestable and indispensable service lies in that they thought consistently from the standpoint of *the science of their age*—and that is all that one can and must demand of thinkers. It is not surprising that the science of our age has advanced beyond the French materialists of last century: what is important is that *the adversaries of those philosophers were backward people even in relation to science of that day.* True, the historians of philosophy usually oppose to the views of the French materialists the view of Kant, whom, of course, it would be strange to reproach with lack of knowledge. But this contraposition is quite unjustified, and it would not be difficult to show that both Kant and the French materialists took, essentially, the same view,* but made use of it differently and therefore arrived at different conclusions, in keeping with the different characteristics of the social relations under the influence of which they lived and thought. We know that this opinion will be found paradoxical by people who are accustomed to believe every word of the historians of philosophy. There is no opportunity to prove it here by circumstantial argument, but we do not refuse to do so, if our opponents should require it.

Be that as it may, everyone knows that the French materialists regarded all the psychic activity of man as transformed *sensations* (sensations transformées). To consider psychic activity from this point of view means to consider all notions, all conceptions and feelings of man to be the result of *the influence of his environment upon him.* The French materialists did adopt this very view. They declared constantly, very ardently and quite categorically that man, with his views and feelings, is what his environment, i.e., in the first place *Nature,* and secondly *society,* make of him. "L'homme est tout education" (man depends entirely on education), affirms Helvetius, meaning by the word education the sum-total of social influence. This view of man as the fruit of his environment was the principal theoretical basis for the *progressive demands* of the French materialists. For indeed, if man depends on his environment, if he owes it *all* the qualities of his character, then he owes it also his defects; and consequently if you wish to combat his defects, you must in suitable fashion change his environment, and moreover his *social* environment in particular, because Nature makes man neither bad nor good. Put people in reasonable social

* [Plekhanov's statement about "both Kant and the French materialists taking, essentially, the same view" is erroneous. In contradistinction to Kant's agnosticism and subjective idealism, the French materialists of the eighteenth century believed in cognisability of the external world.]

Н. Бельтовъ

# КЪ ВОПРОСУ

## О РАЗВИТІИ

# МОНИСТИЧЕСКАГО ВЗГЛЯДА НА ИСТОРІЮ

Отвѣтъ гг. Михайловскому, Карѣеву и комп.

*Audiatur et altera pars.*

С.-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ.
Типографія И. Н. Скороходова (Надеждинская, 43).
1895.

Title-page of the first edition of *The Development of the Monist View of History*

relations, i.e., in conditions where the instinct of self-preservation of each of them ceases to impel him to struggle against the remainder: co-ordinate the interests of the individual man with the interests of society as a whole—and virtue will appear of its own accord, just as a stone falls to the earth of its own accord when it loses any support. Virtue requires, not to be *preached,* but to be *prepared* by the reasonable arrangement of social relations. By the light-hearted verdict of the conservatives and reactionaries of last century, the morality of the French materialists is up to the present day considered to be an *egotistical* morality. They themselves gave a much truer definition: in their view it passed entirely into *politics.*

The doctrine that the spiritual world of man represents the fruit of his environment not infrequently led the French materialists to conclusions which they did not expect themselves. Thus, for example, they sometimes said that the views of man have absolutely no influence on his conduct, and that therefore the spreading of one idea or another in society cannot by a hair-breadth change its subsequent fate. Later on we shall show wherein such an opinion was mistaken, but at this stage let us turn our attention to another side of the views of the French materialists.

If the ideas of any particular *man* are determined by his environment, then the ideas of *humanity,* in their historical development, are determined by the development of the social environment, by the *history of social relationships.* Consequently, if we were to think of painting a picture of the "progress of human reason", and if we were not to limit ourselves in doing so to the question of "*how?*" (*in what particular way did the historical advance of reason take place?*), and put to ourselves the quite natural question of "*why?*" (*why did that advance take place just in this fashion, and not otherwise?*), we should have to begin with the history of the environment, the history of the development of social relations. The centre of gravity of our research would thus be shifted, at all events in the first stages, in the direction of studying the laws of social development. The French materialists came right up against this problem, but proved unable not only to solve it but even correctly to state it.

Whenever they began speaking of the historical development of mankind, they forgot their sensationalist view of "man" in general and, like all the philosophers of "enlightenment" of that age, affirmed that *the world* (i.e., the social relations of mankind) *is governed by opinions (c'est l'opinion qui gouverne le monde).** In

* "I mean by opinion the result of the mass of truths and errors diffused in a nation: a result which determines its judgements, its respect or contempt, its love or hate, which forms its inclinations and customs, its vices and virtues—in a word, its manners. This is the opinion of which it must be said that it governs the world." Suard, *Mélanges de Littérature,* Paris, An XII, tome III, p. 400.

this lies the radical contradiction from which the materialism of the eighteenth century suffered, and which, in the reasoning of its supporters, was divided into a whole series of secondary and derivative contradictions, just as a banknote is exchanged for small cash.

*Thesis.* Man, with all his *opinions,* is the product of his *environment,* and mainly of his social environment. This was the inevitable conclusion from the fundamental proposition of Locke: *there are no innate principles.*

*Antithesis. Environment,* with all its qualities, is the product of opinions. This is the inevitable conclusion from the fundamental proposition of the historical philosophy of the French materialists: *c'est l'opinion qui gouverne le monde.*

From this radical contradiction there followed, for example, the following derivative contradictions:

*Thesis.* Man considers good those social relations which are useful to him. He considers bad those relations which are harmful to him. *The opinions of people are determined by their interests.* "L'opinion chez un peuple est toujours déterminée par un intérêt dominant," says Suard.* What we have here is not even a *conclusion* from the teachings of Locke, it is simply the repetition of his words: "No innate practical principles.... Virtue generally approved; not because innate, but because profitable.... Good and Evil ... are nothing but Pleasure or Pain, or that which occasions or procures Pleasure or Pain, to us."**

*Antithesis.* The existing relations seem useful or harmful to people, according to the general system of opinions of the people concerned. In the words of the same Suard, every people "ne veut, n'aime, n'approuve que ce qu'il croit être utile" (every people desires, loves and approves only what it considers useful). Consequently in the last resort everything again is reduced to the opinions which govern the world.

*Thesis.* Those are very much mistaken who think that religious morality—for example, the commandment to love one's neighbour—even partially promoted the moral improvement of mankind. Such commandments, as ideas generally, are quite devoid of power over men. Everything depends on social environment and on social relations.***

* Suard, tome III, p. 401.

** *Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* Book I, Ch. 3; Book II, Ch. 20, 21, 28.

*** This principle is more than once repeated in Holbach's *Système de la Nature.* It is also expressed by Helvetius when he says: "Let us suppose that I have spread the most stupid opinion, from which follow the most revolting consequences; if I have changed nothing in the laws, I will change nothing in manners either" (*De l'Homme,* Section VII, Ch. 4). The same opinion is frequently expressed in his *Correspondance Littéraire* by Grimm, who lived

*Antithesis.* Historical experience shows us "que les opinions sacrées furent la source véritable des maux du genre humain"—and this is quite understandable, because if opinions generally govern the world, then mistaken opinions govern it like bloodthirsty tyrants.

It would be easy to lengthen the list of similar contradictions of the French materialists, inherited from them by many "materialists in the general philosophical sense" of our own age. But this would be unnecessary. Let us rather look more closely at the general character of these contradictions.

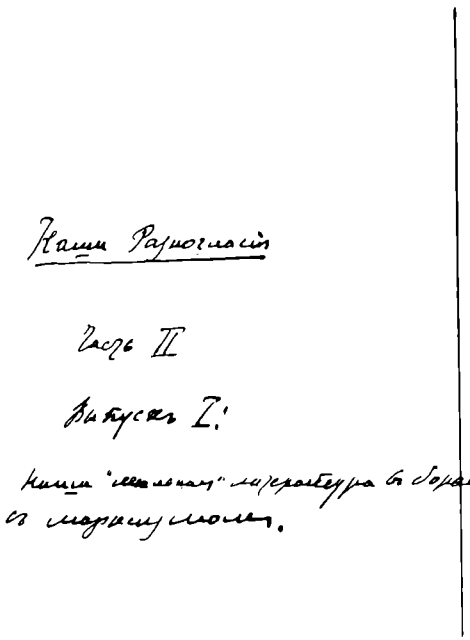
There are contradictions and contradictions. When Mr. V. V. contradicts himself at every step in his *Destinies of Capitalism* or in the first volume of his *Conclusions from an Economic Investigation of Russia,*[359] his sins against logic can be of importance only as a "human document": the future historian of Russian literature, after pointing out these contradictions, will have to busy himself with the extremely interesting question, in the sense of social psychology, of why, with all their indubitable and obvious character, they remained unnoticed for many and many a reader of Mr. V.V. In the direct sense, the contradictions of the writer mentioned are as barren as the well-known fig-tree. There are contradictions of another character. Just as indubitable as the contradictions of Mr. V.V., they are distinguished from the latter by the fact that they do not send human thought to sleep, they do not retard its development, but push it on further, and sometimes push it so strongly that, in their consequences, they prove more fruitful than the most harmonious theories. Of such contradictions one may say in the words of Hegel: Der Widerspruch ist das Fortleitende (contradiction leads the way forward). It is just among these that the contradictions of French materialism in the eighteenth century must be rightfully placed.

Let us examine their main contradiction: *the opinions of men are determined by their environment; the environment is determined by opinions.* Of this one has to say what Kant said of his "antinomies"—the *thesis* is just as correct as the *antithesis.* For there can be no doubt that the opinions of men are determined by the social environment surrounding them. It is just as much beyond doubt that not a single people will put up with a social order which contradicts all its views: it will revolt against such an order, and reconstruct it according to its own ideals. Consequently it is also true that opinions govern the world. But then in what way

for long among the French materialists and by Voltaire, who fought the materialists. In his *Philosophe ignorant,* as in many other works, the "Patriarch of Ferney" endeavoured to demonstrate that not a single philosopher had ever yet influenced the conduct of his neighbours, since they were guided in their acts by customs, not metaphysics.

can two propositions, true in themselves, contradict each other? The explanation is very simple. They contradict each other only because we are looking at them from an incorrect point of view. From that point of view it seems—and inevitably must seem—that if the thesis is right, then the antithesis is mistaken, and vice versa. But once you discover a correct point of view, the contradiction will disappear, and each of the propositions which confuse you will assume a new aspect. It will turn out to be supplementing or, more exactly, *conditioning* the other proposition, not excluding it at all; and if *this* proposition were untrue, then equally untrue would be *the other* proposition, which previously seemed to you to be its antagonist. But how is such a correct point of view to be discovered?

Let us take an example. It often used to be said, particularly in the eighteenth century, that the constitution of any given people was conditioned by the manners of that people; and this was quite justified. When the old republican manners of the Romans disappeared, their republic gave way to a monarchy. But on the other hand it used no less frequently to be asserted that the manners of a given people are conditioned by its constitution. This also cannot be doubted in the least. And indeed, how could republican manners appear in the Romans of the time, for example, of Heliogabalus? Is it not patently clear that the manners of the Romans during the Empire were bound to represent something quite opposite to the old republican manners? And if it is clear, then we come to the general conclusion that the constitution is conditioned by manners, and manners—by the constitution. But then this is a contradictory conclusion. Probably we arrived at it on account of the mistaken character of one or the other of our propositions. Which in particular? Rack your brains as you will, you will not discover anything wrong either in one or in the other; they are both irreproachable, as in reality the manners of every given people do influence its constitution, and in this sense are its *cause*, while on the other hand they are conditioned by the constitution, and in this sense are its *consequence*. Where, then, is the way out? Usually, in questions of this kind, people confine themselves to discovering *interaction*: manners influence the constitution and the constitution influences manners. Everything becomes as clear as daylight, and people who are not satisfied with clarity of this kind betray a tendency to *one-sidedness* worthy of every condemnation. That is how almost all our intellectuals argue at the present time. They look at social life *from the point of view of interaction*: each side of life influences all others and, in its turn, experiences the influence of all the others. Only such a view is worthy of a thinking "sociologist", while those who, like the Marxists, keep on seeking for some more profound reasons or other for social




Title-page of a planned edition abroad of *The Development of the Monist View of History*. Type-setting was begun in 1894, the title being *Our Differences*, Vol. 2, Part 1, "Our 'Legal' Literature"

development, simply don't see to what degree social life is complicated. The French writers of the Enlightenment were also inclined to this point of view, when they felt the necessity of bringing their views on social life into logical order and of solving the contradictions which were getting the upper hand of them. The most systematic minds among them (we do not refer here to Rousseau, who in general had little in common with the writers of the Enlightenment) did not go any further. Thus, for example, it is this viewpoint of interaction that is maintained by Montesquieu in his famous works: *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains* and *De l'Esprit des Lois.** And this, of course, is a justifiable point of view. *Interaction undoubtedly exists between all sides of social life.* But unfortunately this justifiable point of view explains very little, for the simple reason that it gives no indication as to *the origin of the interacting forces.* If the constitution itself presupposes the manners which it influences, then obviously it is not to the constitution that those manners owe their first appearance. The same must be said of the manners too: if they already presuppose the constitution which they influence, then it is clear that it is not they which created it. In order to get rid of this muddle we must discover the historical factor which produced both the manners of the given people and its constitution, and thereby *created the very possibility of their interaction.* If we discover such a factor we shall reveal the correct point of view we are seeking, and then we shall solve without difficulty the contradiction which confuses us.

As far as the fundamental contradiction of the French materialists is concerned, this means the following. The French materialists were very mistaken when, contradicting their customary view of history, they said that ideas mean *nothing*, since environment means *everything*. No less mistaken was that customary view of theirs on history (c'est l'opinion qui gouverne le monde), which proclaimed opinions to be the main fundamental reason for the existence of any given social environment. There is undoubted interaction between opinions and environment. But scientific investigation cannot stop at recognising this interaction, since interaction is far from explaining social phenomena to us. In order to understand the history of mankind, i.e., in the present case the

* Holbach in his *Politique naturelle* takes the standpoint of interaction between manners and constitution. But as he has there to deal with practical questions, this point of view leads him into a vicious circle: in order to improve manners one must perfect the constitution, and in order to improve it, one must improve manners. Holbach is rescued from this circle by an imaginary bon prince, who was desired by all the writers of the Enlightenment, and who, appearing like deus ex machina, solved the contradiction, improving both manners and constitution.

history of its opinions, on the one hand, and the history of those social relations through which it passed in its development, on the other, we must rise above the point of view of interaction, and discover, if possible, that factor which determines both *the development of the social environment* and *the development of opinions*. The problem of social science in the nineteenth century was precisely to discover that factor.

*The world is governed by opinions.* But then, opinions do not remain unchanged. What conditions their changes? "The spreading of enlightenment," replied, as early as the seventeenth century, La Mothe le Vayer. This is the most abstract and most superficial expression of the idea that opinions dominate the world. The writers of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century held to it firmly, sometimes supplementing it with melancholy reflections that the fate of enlightenment, unfortunately, is in general very unreliable. But the realisation that such a view was inadequate could already be noticed among the most talented of them. Helvetius remarked that the development of knowledge is subordinated to certain laws, and that, consequently, there are some hidden and unknown causes on which it depends. He made an attempt of the highest interest, still not assessed at its true value, to explain the social and intellectual development of man by *his material needs.* This attempt ended, and for many reasons could not but end, in failure. But it remained a testament, as it were, for those thinkers of the following century who might wish to continue the work of the French materialists.

*Chapter II*

## FRENCH HISTORIANS OF THE RESTORATION

"One of the most important conclusions which can be drawn from the study of history is that government is the most effective cause of the character of peoples; that the virtues or the vices of nations, their energy or their weakness, their talents, their enlightenment or their ignorance, are hardly ever the consequence of climate or of the qualities of the particular race, but are the work of the laws; that nature has given *all to everyone,* while government preserves or destroys, in the men subjected to it, those qualities which originally constituted the common heritage of the human race." In Italy there occurred no changes either in climate or in race (The influx of the barbarians was too insignificant to alter the latter's quality): "Nature was the same for Italians of all ages; only governments changed—and these changes always preceded or accompanied changes in the national character."

In this way Sismondi contested the doctrine which made the historical fate of peoples depend only on geographical environment.* His objections are not unfounded. In fact, *geography* is far from explaining everything in history, just because the latter is *history,* i.e., because, in Sismondi's words, governments change in spite of the fact that geographical environment remains unchanged. But this in passing: we are interested here in quite a different question.

The reader has probably already noticed that, comparing the unchanging character of geographical environment with the changeability of the historical destinies of peoples, Sismondi links these destinies with one main factor—"*government*", i.e., with the *political institutions of the given country.* The character of a people is entirely determined by the character of the government. True, having stated this proposition categorically, Sismondi immediately and very essentially modifies it: political changes, he says, preceded changes of the national character *or accompanied*

* *Histoire des Républiques italiennes du moyen âge,* Paris, t. I, Introduction, pp. v-vi.

*them.* Here the character of the government appears to be rather determined by the character of the people. But in this case the historical philosophy of Sismondi encounters the contradiction with which we are already familiar, and which confused the French writers of the Enlightenment: the manners of a given people depend on its constitution; the constitution depends on their manners. Sismondi was just as little able to solve this contradiction as the writers of the Enlightenment: he was forced to found his arguments now upon one, now upon the other branch of this antinomy. But be that as it may, having once decided on one of them—namely that which proclaims that the character of a people depends on its government—he attributed to the conception of government an exaggeratedly wide meaning: in his eyes it embraced *absolutely all the qualities of the given social environment,* all the peculiarities of the social relations concerned. It would be more exact to say that in his view absolutely all the qualities of the social environment concerned were the work of "government", the result of the constitution. This is the point of view of the eighteenth century. When the French materialists wanted briefly and strongly to express their conviction of the omnipotent influence of environment on man, they used to say: c'est la législation qui fait tout (everything depends on legislation). But when they spoke of legislation, they had in mind almost exclusively *political legislation, the system of government.* Among the works of the famous Jean-Baptiste Vico there is a little article entitled "Essay of a System of Jurisprudence, in Which the Civil Law of the Romans Is Explained by Their Political Revolutions".* Although this "Essay" was written at the very beginning of the eighteenth century, nevertheless the view it expresses on the relationship between civil law and the system of government prevailed up to the French Restoration. The writers of the Enlightenment reduced everything to "politics".

But the political activity of the "legislator" is in any event a *conscious* activity, although naturally not always expedient. The

* We translate the title of the article from the French, and hasten to remark in so doing that the article itself is known to us only from certain French extracts. We were unable to discover the original Italian text, as it was printed, so far as we know, only in one edition of Vico's works (1818); it is already missing from the Milan edition in six volumes of 1835. However what is important in the present case is not *how* Vico performed the task he had set himself, but *what task it was.*

We shall incidentally anticipate here one reproach which shrewd critics will probably hasten to level at us: "You indiscriminately make use of the term 'writers of the Enlightenment' and 'materialists', yet far from all the 'Enlighteners' were materialists; many of them, for example Voltaire, vigorously combated the materialists." This is so; but on the other hand Hegel demonstrated long ago that the writers of the Enlightenment who rose up against materialism were themselves only *inconsistent materialists.*

conscious activity of man depends on his "*opinions*". In this way the French writers of the Enlightenment without noticing it themselves returned to the idea of the *omnipotence of opinions,* even in those cases when they desired to emphasise the idea of the *omnipotence of environment.*

Sismondi was still adopting the view-point of the eighteenth century.* Younger French historians were already holding different views.

The course and outcome of the French Revolution, with its surprises that nonplussed the most "enlightened" thinkers, proved a refutation, graphic to the highest degree, of the idea that opinions were omnipotent. Then many became quite disillusioned in the power of "reason", while others who did not give way to disillusionment began all the more to incline to acceptance of the idea of the omnipotence of *environment,* and to studying the course of *its* development. But at the time of the Restoration environment too began to be examined from a new point of view. Great historic events had made such a mock, both of "*legislators*" and of political constitutions, that now it already seemed strange to make dependent on the latter, as a basic factor, all the qualities of a particular social environment. Now political constitutions began to be considered as something derivative, as a *consequence* and not as a *cause.*

"The majority of writers, scholars, historians or publicists", says Guizot in his *Essais sur l'histoire de France,*** "have attempted to explain the condition of society, the degree or the nature of its civilisation, by its political institutions. It would be wiser to begin with the study of society itself, in order to learn and understand its political institutions. Before becoming a cause, institutions are a consequence; society creates them before it begins to change under their influence; and instead of judging the condition of a people from the system or the forms of its government, we must first of all investigate the condition of the people, in order to judge what should be and what could be its government.... Society, its composition, the mode of life of individual persons in keeping with their social position, the relations of various classes of persons, in a word, the *civil condition of men* (l'état des personnes)—such, without doubt, is the first question which attracts the attention of the historian who desires to know how peoples lived, and of the publicist who desires to know how they were governed."***

This view is directly opposed to the view of Vico. The latter explained the history of civil law by political revolutions. Guizot

* He began working at the history of the Italian Republics in 1796.

** First edition appeared in 1821.

*** *Essais* (dixième édition), Paris, 1860, pp. 73-74.

explains the political order by civil conditions, i.e., by civil law. But the French historian goes even further in his analysis of "social composition". He states that, among all the peoples who appeared on the historical arena after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the "*civil condition*" of men was closely connected with *agrarian relations* (état des terres), and therefore the study of their agrarian relations must precede the study of their civil condition. "*In order to understand political institutions, we must study the various strata existing in society and their mutual relationships. In order to understand these various social strata, we must know the nature and the relations of landed property.*"* It is from this point of view that Guizot studies the history of France under the first two dynasties. He presents it as the history of the struggle of various social strata at the time. In his history of the English Revolution he makes a new step forward, representing this event as the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the aristocracy, and tacitly recognising in this way that to explain the political life of a particular country it is necessary to study not only its agrarian relations, but also all its property relations in general.**

Such a view of the political history of Europe was far from being the exclusive property of Guizot at that time. It was shared by many other historians, among whom we shall refer to Augustin Thierry and Mignet.

In his *Vues des révolutions d'Angleterre* Thierry represents the history of the English revolutions as the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the aristocracy. "Everyone whose ancestors were numbered among the conquerors of England," he writes of the first

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* *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

** The struggle of religious and political parties in England in the seventeenth century "was a screen for the social question, the struggle of various classes for power and influence. True, in England these classes were not so sharply delimited and not so hostile to one another as in other countries. The people had not forgotten that powerful barons had fought not only for their own but for the people's liberty. The country gentlemen and the town bourgeois for three centuries sat together in parliament in the name of the English Commons. But during the last century great changes had taken place in the relative strength of the various classes of society, which had not been accompanied by corresponding changes in the political system.... The bourgeoisie, country gentry, farmers and small landowners, very numerous at that time, had not an influence on the course of public affairs proportionate to their importance in the country. They had grown, but not been elevated. Hence in this stratum, as in other strata lying below it, there appeared a proud and mighty spirit of ambition, ready to seize upon the first pretext it met to burst forth". *Discours sur l'histoire de la révolution d'Angleterre*, Berlin, 1850, pp. 9-10. Compare the same author's entire six volumes relating to the history of the first English Revolution, and the sketches of the life of various public figures of that time. Guizot there rarely abandons the viewpoint of the struggle of classes.

Revolution, "left his castle and journeyed to the royal camp, where he took up a position appropriate to his rank. The inhabitants of the towns and ports flocked to the opposite camp. Then it might have been said that the armies were gathering, one in the name of *idleness* and *authority,* the other in the name of *labour* and *liberty.* All idlers, whatever their origin, all those who sought in life only enjoyment, secured without labour, rallied under the royal banner, defending interests similar to their own interests; and on the contrary, those of the descendants of the former conquerors who were then engaged in industry joined the Party of the Commons."*

The religious movement of the time was, in Thierry's opinion, only the reflection of positive lay interests. "On both sides the war was waged for positive interests. Everything else was external or a pretext. The men who defended the cause of the *subjects* were for the most part Presbyterians, i.e., they desired no subjection even in religion. Those who adhered to the opposite party belonged to the Anglican or the Catholic faith; this was because, even in the religious sphere, they strove for authority and for the imposition of taxes on men." Thierry quotes in this connection the following words of Fox in his *History of the Reign of James II*: "The Whigs considered all religious opinions with a view to politics.... Even in their hatred to popery, [they] did not so much regard the superstition, or imputed idolatry of that unpopular sect, as its tendency to establish arbitrary power in the state."**

In Mignet's opinion, "the movement of society is determined by the dominating interests. Amid various obstacles, this movement strives towards its end, halts once that end has been reached, and yields place to another movement which at first is imperceptible, and becomes apparent only when it becomes predominant. Such was the course of development of feudalism. Feudalism existed in the needs of man while it yet did not exist in fact—the first epoch; in the second epoch it existed in fact, gradually ceasing to correspond to men's needs, wherefore there came to an end, ultimately, its existence in fact. Not a single revolution has yet taken place in any other way."***

In his history of the French Revolution, Mignet regards events precisely from this point of view of the "needs" of various social classes. The struggle of these classes is, in his opinion, the mainspring of political events. Naturally, such a view could not be to the taste of eclectics, even in those good old times when their

* *Dix ans d'études historiques,* the sixth volume of Thierry's *Complete Works* (10th ed.), p. 66.

** [London, 1808, p. 275].

*** *De la féodalité des institutions de St.-Louis et de l'influence de la législation de ce prince,* Paris, 1822, pp. 76-77.

brains worked much more than they do nowadays. The eclectics reproached the partisans of the new historical theories with *fatalism,* with prejudice in favour of a *system* (esprit de système). As always happens in such cases, the eclectics did not notice at all the really weak sides of the new theories, but in return with the greater energy attacked their unquestionably strong sides. However, this is as old as the world itself, and is therefore of little interest. Much more interesting is the circumstance that these new views were defended by the *Saint-Simonist* Bazard, one of the most brilliant representatives of the socialism of that day.

Bazard did not consider Mignet's book on the French Revolution to be flawless. Its defect was, in his eyes, that among other things it represented the event it described as a separate fact, standing without any connection with "that long chain of efforts which, having overthrown the old social order, was to facilitate the establishment of the new regime". But the book also has unquestionable merits. "The author has set himself the task of characterising those parties which, one after the other, direct the revolution, of revealing the connection of these parties with various social classes, of displaying what particular chain of events places them one after the other at the head of the movement, and how finally they disappear." That same "spirit of system and fatalism", which the eclectics put forward as a reproach against the historians of the new tendency, advantageously distinguishes, in Bazard's opinion, the work of Guizot and Mignet from the works "of literary historians (i.e., historians concerned only for beauty of style) who, in spite of their number, have not moved historical science forward one step since the eighteenth century".*

If Augustin Thierry, Guizot or Mignet had been asked, do the manners of a people create its constitution, or, on the contrary, does its constitution create its manners, each of them would have replied that, however great and however unquestionable is the interaction of the manners of a people and its constitution, in the last analysis, both owe their existence to a third factor, lying deeper—"*the civil condition of men, their property relations*".

In this way the contradiction which confused the philosophers of the eighteenth century would have been solved, and every impartial person would recognise that Bazard was right in saying that science had made a step forward, in the person of the representatives of the new views on history.

But we know already that the contradiction mentioned is only a particular case of the fundamental contradiction of the views on society held in the eighteenth century: (1) man with all his thoughts and feelings is the product of environment; (2) environ-

* "Considérations sur l'histoire" in *Le Producteur,* Part IV.

ment is the creation of man, the product of his "opinions". Can it be said that the new views on history had resolved this fundamental contradiction of French materialism? Let us examine how the French historians of the Restoration explained the origin of that civil condition, those property relations, the close study of which alone could, in their opinion, provide the key to the understanding of historical events.

The property relations of men belong to the sphere of their *legal* relations; property is first of all a legal institution. To say that the key to understanding historical phenomena must be sought in the property relations of men means saying that this key lies in institutions of law. But whence do these institutions come? Guizot says quite rightly that political constitutions were a *consequence* before they became a cause; that society first created them and then began to change under their influence. But cannot the same be said of property relations? Were not they in their turn a consequence before they became a cause? Did not society have first to create them before it could experience their decisive influence on itself?

To these quite reasonable questions Guizot gives highly unsatisfactory replies.

The civil condition of the peoples who appeared on the historical arena after the fall of the Western Roman Empire was in the closest causal connection with landownership*: the relation of man to the land determined his social position. Throughout the epoch of feudalism, all institutions of society were determined in the last analysis by agrarian relations. As for those relations they, in the words of the same Guizot, "at first, during the first period after the invasion of the barbarians", were determined by the social position of the landowner: "the land he occupied acquired this or that character, according to the degree of strength of the landowner."** But what then determined the social position of the landowner? What determined "at first, during the first period after the invasion of the barbarians" the greater or lesser degree of liberty, the greater or lesser degree of power of the landowner? Was it previous political relations among the barbarian conquerors? But Guizot has already told us that political relations are

* That is, with modern peoples only? This restriction is all the more strange that already Greek and Roman writers had seen the close connection between the civil and political life of their countries, and agrarian relations. However, this strange limitation did not prevent Guizot making the fall of the Roman Empire depend upon its state economy. See his first "Essay": *Du régime municipal dans l'empire romain au V-me siècle de l'ére chrétienne.*

** That is, landownership bore this or that *legal* character, or in other words its possession involved a greater or lesser degree of dependence, according to the strength and liberty of the landowner (*loc. cit.*, p. 75).

a consequence and not a cause. In order to understand the political life of the barbarians in the epoch preceding the fall of the Roman Empire we should have, according to the advice of our author, to study their civil condition, their social order, the relations of various classes in their midst, and so forth; and such a study would once again bring us to the question of what determines the property relations of men, what creates the forms of property existing in a given society. And it is obvious that we should gain nothing if, in order to explain the position of various classes in society, we began referring to the relative degrees of their freedom and power. This would be not a reply, but a repetition of the question in a new form, with some details.

The question of the origin of property relations is hardly likely even to have arisen in Guizot's mind in the shape of a scientific problem, strictly and accurately formulated. We have seen that it was quite impossible for him not to have taken account of the question, but the very confusion of the replies which he gave to it bears witness to the unclarity with which he conceived it. In the last analysis the development of forms of property was explained by Guizot by exceptionally vague reference to *human nature.* It is not surprising that this historian, whom the eclectics accused of excessively systematic views, himself turned out to be no mean eclectic, for example in his works on the history of civilisation.

Augustin Thierry, who examined the struggle of religious sects and political parties from the view-point of the "*positive interests*" of various social classes and passionately sympathised with the struggle of the third estate against the aristocracy, explained the origin of these classes and ranks in *conquest.* "Tout cela date d'une conquête; il y a une conquête là-dessous" (all this dates from a conquest; there's a conquest at the bottom of it), he says of class and estate relations among the modern peoples, which are exclusively the subject of his writing. He incessantly developed this idea in various ways, both in his articles and in his later learned works. But apart from the fact that "conquest"—an international political act—returned Thierry to the point of view of the eighteenth century, which explained all social life by the activity of the legislator, i.e., of political authority, every fact of conquest inevitably arouses the question: why were its social consequences these, and not those? Before the invasion of the German barbarians Gaul had already lived through a Roman conquest. The social consequences of *that* conquest were very different from those which were produced by the *German* conquest. The social consequences of the conquest of China by the Mongols very little resembled those of the conquest of England by the Normans. Whence do such differences come? To say that they are deter-

mined by differences in the social structure of the various peoples which come into conflict at different times means to say nothing, because what determines that social structure remains unknown. To refer in this question to some previous conquests means moving in a vicious circle. However many the conquests you enumerate, you will nevertheless arrive in the long run at the inevitable conclusion that in the social life of peoples, there is some X, some unknown factor, which is not only not determined by conquests, but which on the contrary *itself conditions the consequences* of conquests and even frequently, perhaps always, *the conquests themselves*, and is the fundamental reason for international conflicts. Thierry in his *History of the Conquest of England by the Normans* himself points out, on the basis of old monuments, the motives which guided the Anglo-Saxons in their desperate struggle for their independence. "We must fight," said one of the earls, "whatever may be the danger to us; for what we have to consider is not whether we shall accept and receive a new lord.... The case is quite otherwise. The Duke of Normandy has given our lands to his barons, to his knights and to all his men, the greater part of whom have already done homage to him for them: they will all look for their gift if their duke become our king; and he himself will be bound to deliver up to them our lands, our wives and our daughters: all this is promised to them beforehand. They come, not only to ruin us, but to ruin our descendants also, and to take from us the country of our ancestors," etc. On his part, William the Conqueror said to his companions: "Fight well and put all to death; for if we conquer we shall all be rich. What I gain, you will gain; if I conquer, you will conquer; if I take this land, you shall have it."* Here it is abundantly clear that the conquest was not an end in itself, and that "beneath it" lay certain "positive", i.e., *economic interests*. The question is, what gave those interests the form which they then had? Why was it that both natives and conquerors were inclined precisely to the feudal system of landownership, and not to any other? "Conquests" explain nothing in this case.

In Thierry's *Histoire du tiers état*, and in all his sketches of the internal history of France and England, we have already a fairly full picture of the historical advance of the bourgeoisie. It is sufficient to study even this picture to see how unsatisfactory is the view which makes dependent on conquest the origin and development of a given social system: that development progressed quite at variance with the interests and wishes of the feudal aristocracy, i.e., the conquerors and their descendants.

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* *Histoire de la conquête,* etc., Paris, t. I, pp. 296 et 300.[360]

It can be said without any exaggeration that in his historical researches Thierry himself did much to refute his own views on the historical role of conquests.*

In Mignet we find the same confusion. He speaks of the influence of landownership on political forms. But what the forms of landownership depend on, why they develop in this or that direction, this Mignet does not know. In the last analysis he, too, makes forms of landownership depend on *conquest.***

He senses that it is not abstract conceptions such as "conquerors" and "conquered", but people possessing living flesh, having definite rights and social relations that we are dealing with in the history of international conflicts; but here, too, his analysis does not go very far. "When two peoples living on the same soil mingle," he says, "they lose their weak sides and communicate their strong sides to each other."***

This is not profound, nor is it quite clear.

Faced with the question of the origin of property relations, each of the French historians of the time of the Restoration whom we have mentioned would probably have attempted, like Guizot, to escape from the difficulty with the help of more or less ingenious references to "*human nature*".

The view of "human nature" as the highest authority which decides all "knotty cases" in the sphere of law, morality, politics and economics, was inherited in its entirety by the writers of the nineteenth century from the writers of the Enlightenment of the previous century.

If man, when he appears in the world, does not bring with him a prepared store of innate "practical ideas"; if virtue is respected, not because it is innate in people, but because it is useful, as Locke asserted; if the principle of social utility is the highest law, as Helvetius said; if man is the measure of things wherever there is a question of mutual human relations—then it is quite natural to draw the conclusion that the nature of man is the view-point from which we should assess given relations as being useful or harmful, rational or irrational. It was from this standpoint that the writers

* It is interesting that the Saint-Simonists already saw *this* weak side of the historical views of Thierry. Thus, Bazard, in the article quoted earlier, remarks that conquest in reality exercised much less influence on the development of European society than Thierry thought. "Everyone understanding the laws of development of humanity sees that the role of conquest is quite subordinate." But in this case Thierry is closer to the views of his former teacher Saint-Simon than is Bazard: Saint-Simon examines the history of Western Europe from the fifteenth century from the view-point of the development of economic relations, but explains the social order of the Middle Ages merely as the product of conquest.

** *De la féodalité*, p. 50.

*** *Ibid.*, p. 212.

of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century discussed both the social order then existing and the reforms which they thought desirable. Human nature was for them the most important argument in their discussions with their opponents. How great in their eyes was the importance of this argument is shown excellently, for example, by the following observation of Condorcet: "The ideas of justice and law take shape invariably in an identical form among all beings gifted with the capacity of sensation and of acquiring ideas. Therefore they will be identical." True, it happens that people distort them (les altèrent). "But every man who thinks correctly will just as inevitably arrive at certain ideas in morality as in mathematics. These ideas are the necessary outcome of the irrefutable truth that men are perceptive and rational beings."[361] In reality the views on society of the French writers of the Enlightenment were not deduced, of course, from this more than meagre truth, but were suggested to them by their environment. The "man" whom they had in view was distinguished not only by his capacity to perceive and think: his "nature" demanded a definite bourgeois system of society (the works of Holbach included just those demands which later were put into effect by the Constituent Assembly). His "nature" prescribed free trade, non-interference of the state in the property relations of citizens (laissez faire, laissez passer! ),* etc., etc. The writers of the Enlightenment looked on human nature through the prism of particular social needs and relations. But they did not suspect that history had put some prism before their eyes. They imagined that through their lips "human nature" itself was speaking, understood and assessed at its true value at last, by the enlightened representatives of humanity.

Not all the writers of the eighteenth century had an identical conception of human nature. Sometimes they differed very strongly among themselves on this subject. But all of them were equally convinced that a correct view of that nature alone could provide the key to the explanation of social phenomena.

We said earlier that many French writers of the Enlightenment had already noticed a certain conformity to law in the development of human reason. They were led to the idea of this conformity to law first and foremost by *the history of literature*: "what

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* True, not always. Sometimes, in the name of the same nature, the philosophers advised the legislator "to smooth out the inequalities of property". This was one of the numerous contradictions of the French writers of the Enlightenment. But we are not concerned with this here. What is important for us is the fact that the abstract *"nature of man"* was in every given case an argument in favour of the quite concrete aspirations of a definite stratum of society, and moreover, of *bourgeois* society.

people," they ask, "was not first a poet and only then a thinker? "* But how is such succession to be explained? By the needs of society, which determine the development of language itself, replied the philosophers. "The art of speech, like all other arts, is the fruit of social needs and interests," asserted the Abbé Arnaud, in the address just mentioned in a footnote. [362] Social needs change, and therefore there changes also the course of development of the "arts". But what determines social needs? Social needs, the needs of men who compose society, are determined by the nature of man. Consequently it is in that nature that we must seek the explanation of this, and not that, course of intellectual development.

In order to play the part of the highest criterion, human nature obviously had to be considered as fixed once for all, as *invariable.* The writers of the Enlightenment did in fact regard it as such as the reader could see from the words of Condorcet quoted above. But if human nature is invariable, how then can it serve to explain the course of the intellectual or social development of mankind? What is the process of any development? A series of changes. Can those changes be explained with the help of something that is invariable, that is fixed once for all? Is this the reason why a variable magnitude changes, that a constant magnitude remains unchanged? The writers of the Enlightenment realised that this could *not* be so, and in order to get out of their difficulty they pointed out that the *constant* magnitude itself proves to be variable, within certain limits. Man goes through different ages: childhood, youth, maturity and so forth. At these various ages his needs are not identical: "In his childhood man has only his feelings, his imagination and memory: he seeks only to be amused and requires only songs and stories. The age of passions succeeds: the soul requires to be moved and agitated. Then the intelligence extends and reason grows stronger: both these faculties in their turn require exercise, and their activity extends to everything that is capable of arousing curiosity."

Thus develops the individual man: these changes are conditioned by his nature; and just because they are in his nature, they are to be noticed in the spiritual development of *all mankind.* It is by these changes that is to be explained the circumstance that peoples begin with epics and end with philosophy.**

It is easy to see that "explanations" of this kind, which did not explain anything at all, only imbued the description of the course of intellectual development of man with a certain picturesqueness

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* Grimm, *Correspondance Littéraire* for August, 1774. In putting this question, Grimm only repeats the idea of the Abbé Arnaud, which the latter developed in a discourse pronounced by him at the French Academy.

** Suard, *loc. cit.*, p. 383.

(simile always sets off more vividly the quality of the object being described). It is easy to see likewise that, in giving explanations of this kind, the thinkers of the eighteenth century were moving round the above-mentioned vicious circle: environment creates man, man creates environment. For in effect, on the one hand, it appeared that the intellectual development of mankind, i.e., in other words the development of human nature, was due to social needs, and on the other it turned out that the development of social needs is to be explained by the development of human nature.

Thus we see that the French historians of the Restoration also failed to eliminate this contradiction: it only took a new form with them.

*Chapter III*

## THE UTOPIAN SOCIALISTS

If human nature is invariable, and if, knowing its main qualities, we can deduce from them mathematically accurate principles in the sphere of morality and social science, it will not be difficult to invent a social order which would fully correspond to the requirements of human nature, and just for that very reason, would be an *ideal social order.* The materialists of the eighteenth century were already very willing to engage in research on the subject of a *perfect system of laws (législation parfaite).* These researches represent the *utopian element* in the literature of the Enlightenment.*

The Utopian Socialists of the first half of the nineteenth century devoted themselves to such researches with all their heart.

The Utopian Socialists of this age fully shared the anthropological views of the French materialists. Just like the materialists, they considered man to be the product of social environment around him,** and just like the materialists they fell into a vicious circle, explaining the variable qualities of the environment of man by the unchanging qualities of *human nature.*

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* Helvetius, in his book, *De l'Homme,* has a detailed scheme of such "perfect system of laws". It would be extremely interesting and instructive to compare this utopia with the utopias of the first half of the nineteenth century. But unfortunately both the historians of socialism and the historians of philosophy have not up to now had the slightest idea of any such comparison. As for the historians of philosophy in particular, they, it must be said in passing, treat Helvetius in the most impermissible way. Even the calm and moderate Lange finds no other description for him than "the superficial Helvetius". The absolute idealist Hegel was most just of all in his attitude to the absolute materialist Helvetius.

** "Yes, man is only what omnipotent society or omnipotent education make of him, taking this word in its widest sense, i.e., as meaning not only school training or book education, but the education given us by men and things, events and circumstances, the education which begins to influence us from the cradle and does not leave us again for a moment." Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie,* 1848 ed., p. 402.

All the numerous Utopias of the first half of the present century represent nothing else than attempts to invent a perfect legislation, taking *human nature* as the supreme criterion. Thus, Fourier takes as his point of departure the analysis of human *passions*; thus, Robert Owen in his *Outline of the Rational System of Society* starts from the "*first principles of human nature*", and asserts that "rational government" must first of all "ascertain what human nature is"; thus, the Saint-Simonists declare that their philosophy is founded on a new conception of human nature (sur une nouvelle conception de la nature humaine)*; thus, the Fourierists say that the social organisation invented by their teacher represents a number of irrefutable deductions from the immutable laws of human nature.**

Naturally, the view of human nature as the supreme criterion did not prevent the various socialist schools from differing very considerably in defining the qualities of that nature. Thus, in the opinion of the Saint-Simonists, "the plans of Owen contradict to such an extent the inclinations of human nature that the sort of popularity which they, apparently, enjoy at the present time" (this was written in 1825) "seems at first glance to be inexplicable".*** In Fourier's polemical pamphlet, *Pièges et charlatanisme des deux sectes Saint-Simon et Owen, qui promettent l'association et le progrès,* we can find a number of harsh statements that the Saint-Simonists' teaching also contradicts all the inclinations of human nature. Now, as at the time of Condorcet, it appeared that to agree in the definition of human nature was much more difficult than to define a geometrical figure.

To the extent that the Utopian Socialists of the nineteenth century adhered to the view-point of *human nature,* to that extent they only repeated the mistakes of the thinkers of the eighteenth century—an error which was common, however, to all social

* See *Le Producteur,* Vol. I, Paris, 1825, Introduction.

** "Mon but est de donner une *Exposition Elémentaire,* claire et facile ment intelligible, de l'organisation sociale, déduite par Fourier des lois de la nature humaine." (V. Considérant, *Destinée Sociale,* t. I, 3-me édition, Déclaration.) "Il serait temps enfin de s'accorder sur ce point: est-il à propos, avant de faire des lois, de s'enquérir de la véritable nature de l'homme, afin d'harmoniser la loi, qui est par elle-même modifiable, avec la nature, qui est immuable et souveraine? " *Notions élémentaires de la science sociale de Fourier, par l'auteur de la Défense du Fouriérisme* (Henri Gorsse, Paris, 1844, p. 35) ["My aim is to give an *Elementary Exposition,* clear and easy to understand, of the social organisation deduced by Fourier from the laws of human nature." (V. Considérant, *Social Destiny,* Vol. I, 3rd ed., Declaration.) "It is high time we reached agreement on the following point: would not it be better, before making laws, to inquire into the real nature of man in order to bring the law, which is in itself modifiable, into harmony with nature, which is immutable and supreme? "]

*** *Le Producteur,* Vol. I, p. 139.

science contemporary with them.* But we can see in them an energetic effort to break out of the narrow confines of an abstract conception, and to take their stand upon solid ground. Saint-Simon's works are especially distinguished for this.

While the writers of the French Enlightenment very frequently regarded the history of humanity as a series of more or less happy, but chance occurrences,** Saint-Simon seeks in history primarily *conformity to law.* The science of human society can and must become just as exact as natural science. We must study the facts of the past life of mankind in order to discover in them the laws of its *progress.* Only he is capable of foreseeing the *future* who has understood the *past.* Expressing the task of social science in this way, Saint-Simon in particular turned to the study of the history of Western Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire. The novelty and scope of his views can be seen from the fact that his pupil Thierry could practically effect a revolution in the study of French history. Saint-Simon was of the opinion that Guizot also borrowed his views from himself. Leaving this question of theoretical property undecided, we shall note that Saint-Simon was able to trace the mainsprings of the internal development of European societies further than his contemporary *specialists in history.* Thus, if both Thierry and Mignet, and likewise Guizot, pointed to property relations as the foundation of any social order, Saint-Si-

* We have already demonstrated this in relation to the historians of the Restoration. It would be very easy to demonstrate it also in relation to the economists. In defending the bourgeois social order against the reactionaries and the Socialists, the economists defended it precisely as the order most appropriate to human nature. The efforts to discover an abstract "law of population"—whether they came from the Socialists or the bourgeois camp—were closely bound up with the view of "human" nature as the basic conception of social science. In order to be convinced of this, it is sufficient to compare the relevant teaching of Malthus, on the one hand, and the teaching of Godwin or of the author of the *Comments on Mill,* [363] on the other. Both Malthus and his opponents equally seek a single, so to speak absolute, law of population. Our contemporary political economy sees it otherwise: it knows that each phase of social development has *its own, particular,* law of population. But of this later.

** In this respect the reproach addressed by Helvetius to Montesquieu is extremely characteristic: "In his book on the reasons for the grandeur and decadence of Rome, Montesquieu has given insufficient attention to the importance of happy accidents in the history of that state. He has fallen into the mistake too characteristic of thinkers who wish to explain everything, and into the mistake of secluded scholars who, forgetting the nature of men, attribute to the people's representatives invariable political views and uniform principles. Yet often one man directs at his discretion those important assemblies which are called *senates." Pensées et Réflexions,* CXL, in the third volume of his *Complete Works,* Paris, MDCCCXVIII. Does not this remind you, reader, of the theory of "heroes and crowd" [364] now fashionable in Russia? Wait a bit: what is set forth further will show more than once how little there is of originality in Russian "sociology".

mon, who most vividly and for the first time threw light on the history of these relations in modern Europe, went further and asked himself: why is it that precisely these, and no other relations, play such an important part? The answer is to be sought, in his opinion, in the *requirements of industrial development.* "Up to the fifteenth century lay authority was in the hands of the nobility, and this was useful because the nobles were then the most capable industralists. They directed agricultural works, and agricultural works were then the only kind of important industrial occupation."* To the question of why the needs of industry have such a decisive importance in the history of mankind, Saint-Simon replied that it was because the object of social organisation is production (le but de l'organisation sociale s'est la production). He attributed great significance to production, identifying the *useful* with the productive (l'utile—c'est la production). He categorically declared that "la politique ... c'est la science de la production".

It would seem that the logical development of these views should have brought Saint-Simon to the conclusion that the laws of production are those very laws by which in the last analysis social development is determined, and the study of which must be the task of the thinker striving to foresee the future. At times he, as it were, approaches this idea, but that only at times.

For production the implements of labour are necessary. These implements are not provided by nature ready-made, they are invented by man. The invention or even the simple use of a particular implement presupposes in the producer a certain degree of intellectual development. The development of "industry" is, therefore, the unquestionable result of the intellectual development of mankind. It seems as though opinion, "enlightenment" (lumières) here also reign unchallenged over the world. And the more apparent the important role of industry becomes, the more is confirmed, seemingly, this view of the philosophers of the eighteenth century. Saint-Simon holds it even more consistently than the French writers of the Enlightenment, as he considers the question of the origin of ideas in sensations to be settled, and has less grounds for meditation on the influence of environment on man. The development of knowledge is for him the fundamental factor of historical advance.** He tries to discover the laws of that devel-

* *Opinions littéraires, philosophiques et industrielles,* Paris, 1825, pp. 144-45. Compare also *Catéchisme politique des industriels.*

** Saint-Simon brings the idealistic view of history to its last and extreme conclusion. For him not only are *ideas* ("principles") the ultimate foundation of *social relations,* but among them "scientific ideas"—the "scientific system of the world"—play the principal part: from these follow religious ideas which, in their turn, condition the *moral conceptions of man.* This is *intellectualism,* which prevailed at the same time also among the German philosophers, but with them took quite a different form.

opment; thus he establishes the law of three stages—*theological, metaphysical and positive*—which later on Auguste Comte very successfully gave out to be his own "discovery".* But these laws, too, Saint-Simon explains in the long run by *the qualities of human nature. "Society consists of individuals"*, he says. *"Therefore the development of social reason can be only the reproduction of the development of the individual reason on a larger scale."* Starting from this fundamental principle, he considers his "laws" of social development finally ascertained and proved whenever he succeeds in discovering a successful analogy in the development of the individual confirming them. He holds, for example, that the role *of authority* in social life will in time be reduced to *zero.*** The gradual but incessant diminution of this role is one of the laws of development of humanity. How then does he prove this law? The main argument in its favour is reference to the individual development of man. In the elementary school the child is obliged unconditionally to obey his elders; in the secondary and higher school, the element of *obedience* gradually falls into the background, in order finally to yield its place to *independent* action in maturity. No matter how anyone may regard the history of "authority", everyone will nowadays agree that here, as everywhere, comparison is not proof. The embryological development of any particular *individual (ontogenesis)* presents many analogies with the history of the *species* to which this individual belongs: *ontogenesis* supplies many important indications about *phylogenesis.* But what should we now say of a biologist who would attempt to assert that the ultimate explanation of phylogenesis must be sought in

* Littré strongly contested the statement of Hubbard when the latter pointed out this ... borrowing. He attributed to Saint-Simon only "the law of two stages": theological and scientific. Flint, in quoting this opinion of Littré, remarks: "He is correct when he says that the law of three stages is not enunciated in any of Saint-Simon's writings" (*The Philosophy of History in France and Germany*, Edinburgh and London, MDCCCLXXIV, p. 158). We shall contrast to this observation the following extract from Saint-Simon: "What astronomer, physicist, chemist and physiologist does not know that in every branch of knowledge the human reason, before proceeding from purely theological to positive ideas, for a long time has used metaphysics? Does there not arise in everyone who has studied the history of sciences the conviction that this intermediate stage has been useful, and even absolutely indispensable to carry out the transition?" (*Du système industriel*, Paris, MDCCCXXI, Preface, pp. vi-vii.) The law of three stages was of such importance in Saint-Simon's eyes that he was ready to explain by this means purely political events, such as the predominance of the "legists and metaphysicians" during the French Revolution. It would have been easy for Flint to "discover" this by carefully reading the works of Saint-Simon. But unfortunately it is *much easier to write a learned history of human thought than to study the actual course of its development.*

** This idea was later borrowed from him and distorted by Proudhon, who built on it his theory of *anarchy.*

ontogenesis? Modern biology acts in the exactly opposite way: it explains the embryological history of the *individual* by the history of the *species.*

The appeal to human nature gave a very peculiar appearance to all the "laws" of social development formulated both by Saint-Simon himself and by his followers.

It led them into the vicious circle. *The history of mankind is explained by its nature.* But what is the key to the understanding of the nature of man? *History.* Obviously, if we move in this circle, we cannot understand either the nature of man or his history. We can make only some individual, more or less profound, observations concerning this or that sphere of social phenomena. Saint-Simon made some very subtle observations, sometimes truly instinct with genius: but his main object—that of discovering a firm scientific foundation for "politics"—remained unattained.

"The supreme law of progress of human reason," says Saint-Simon, "subordinates all to itself, rules over everything: men for it are only tools. And although this force [i.e., this law] arises from ourselves (dérive de nous), we can just as little set ourselves free from its influence or subordinate it to ourselves as we could at our whim change the working of the force which obliges the earth to revolve around the sun.... All we can do is consciously to submit to this law (our true Providence) realising the direction which it prescribes for us, instead of obeying it blindly. Let us remark in passing that it is just in this that will consist the grand step forward which the philosophical intelligence of our age is destined to accomplish."*

And so humanity is absolutely subordinated to the law of its own intellectual development; it could not escape the influence of that law, should it even desire to do so. Let us examine this statement more closely, and take as an example the law of the three stages. Mankind moved from theological thought to metaphysical, from metaphysical to positive. This law acted with the force of the laws of mechanics.

This may very well be so, but the question arises, how are we to understand the idea that mankind could not alter the workings of this law *should it even desire to do so*? Does this mean that it could not have avoided metaphysics if it had even realised the advantages of positive thinking while still at the end of the theological period? Evidently no; and if the answer is no, then it is no less evident that there is some lack of clarity in Saint-Simon's view of the conformity of intellectual development to law. Wherein lies this unclarity and how does it come about?

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* *L'Organisateur,* p. 119 (Vol. IV of the *Works* of Saint-Simon, or Vol. XX of the *Complete Works* of Saint-Simon and Enfantin).

It lies in the *very contrasting of the law with the desire to alter its action.* Once such a desire has made its appearance among mankind, it becomes itself a fact in the history of mankind's intellectual development, and the law must embrace this fact, not come into conflict with it. So long as we admit the possibility of such a conflict, we have not yet made clear to ourselves the conception of law itself, and we shall inevitably fall into one of two extremes: either we shall abandon the standpoint of conformity to law and will be taking up the view-point of what is *desirable,* or we shall completely let the desirable—or more truly what was *desired* by the people of the given epoch—fall out of our field of vision, and thereby shall be attributing to *law* some mystical shade of significance, transforming it into a kind of Fate. "Law" in the writings of Saint-Simon and of the Utopians generally, to the extent that they speak of conformity to law, is just such a Fate. We may remark in passing that when the Russian "subjective sociologists" rise up in defence of "personality", "ideals" and other excellent things, they are warring precisely with the *utopian,* unclear, incomplete and therefore worthless doctrine of the "natural course of things". Our sociologists appear never even to have heard what constitutes *the modern scientific conception of the laws underlying the historical development of society.*

Whence arose the utopian lack of clarity in the conception of conformity to law? It arose from the radical defect, which we have already pointed out, in the view of the development of humanity which the Utopians held—and, as we know already, not they alone. The history of humanity was explained by the nature of man. Once that nature was fixed, there were also fixed the laws of historical development, all history was given *an sich,* as Hegel would have said. Man can just as little interfere in the course of his development as he can cease being man. The *law* of development makes its appearance in the form of Providence.

This is historical fatalism resulting from a doctrine which considers the successes of knowledge—and consequently the conscious activity of man—to be the mainspring of historical progress.

But let us go further.

If the key to the understanding of history is provided by the study of the nature of man, what is important to me is not so much the study of the facts of history as the correct understanding of human nature. Once I have acquired the right view of the latter, I lose almost all interest in social life *as it is,* and concentrate all my attention on social life *as it ought to be in keeping with the nature of man.* Fatalism in history does not in the least interfere with a utopian attitude to reality in practice. On the contrary, it promotes such an attitude, by breaking off the thread of scientific

investigation. *Fatalism in general marches frequently hand in hand with the most extreme subjectivism.* Fatalism very commonly proclaims its own state of mind to be an inevitable law of history. It is just of the fatalists that one can say, in the words of the poet:

*Was sie den Geist der Geschichte nennen,*
*Ist nur der Herren eigner Geist.**

The Saint-Simonists asserted that the share of the social product which falls to the exploiters of another's labour, gradually diminishes. Such a diminution was in their eyes the most important law governing the economic development of humanity. As a proof they referred to the gradual decline in the level of *interest* and *land rent.* If in this case they had kept to the methods of strict scientific investigation, they would have discovered the economic causes of the phenomenon to which they pointed, and for this they would have had attentively to study production, reproduction and distribution of products. Had they done this they would have seen, perhaps, that the decline in the level of interest or even of land rent, if it really takes place, does not by any means prove of itself that there is a decline in the share of the property owners. Then their economic "law" would, of course, have found quite a different formulation. But they were not interested in this. Confidence in the omnipotence of the mysterious laws arising out of the nature of man directed their intellectual activity into quite a different sphere. A tendency which has predominated in history up to now can only grow stronger in the future, said they: the constant diminution in the share of the exploiters will necessarily end in its complete disappearance, i.e., in the disappearance of the class of exploiters itself. Foreseeing this, we must already today invent new forms of social organisation in which there will no longer be any place for exploiters. It is evident from other qualities of human nature that these forms must be such and such.... The plan of social reorganisation was prepared very rapidly: the extremely important scientific conception of the conformity of social phenomena to law gave birth to a couple of utopian recipes....

Such recipes were considered by the Utopians of that day to be the most important problem with which a thinker was faced. This or that principle of political economy was not important in itself. It acquired importance in view of the practical conclusions which followed from it. J.B. Say argued with Ricardo about what determined the *exchange value* of commodities. Very possibly this is an important question from the point of view of specialists. But

* ["What they call the Spirit of History is only the spirit of these gentle-

even more important is it to know what *ought* to determine value, and the specialists, unfortunately, do not attempt to think about this. Let us think for the specialists. Human nature clearly gives us facts. Once we begin to listen to its voice, we see with astonishment that the argument so important in the eyes of the specialists is, in reality, not very important. We can agree with Say, because from his theses there follow conclusions fully in harmony with the requirements of human nature. We can agree with Ricardo too, because his views likewise, being correctly interpreted and supplemented, can only reinforce those requirements. It was in this way that utopian thought unceremoniously interfered in those scientific discussions the meaning of which remained obscure for it. It was in this way that cultivated men, richly gifted by nature, for example Enfantin, resolved the controversial questions of the political economy of their day.

Enfantin wrote a number of studies in political economy which cannot be considered a serious contribution to science, but which nevertheless cannot be ignored, as is done up to the present day by the historians of political economy and socialism. The economic works of Enfantin have their significance as an interesting phase in the history of the development of socialist thought. But his attitude to the arguments of the economists may be well illustrated by the following example.

It is known that Malthus stubbornly and, by the way, very unsuccessfully contested Ricardo's theory of rent. Enfantin believed that truth was, in fact, on the side of the first, and not of the second. But he did not even contest Ricardo's theory: he did not consider this necessary. In his opinion all "discussions on the nature of rent and as to the actual relative rise or fall of the part taken by the property owners from the labourer ought to be reduced to one question: what is the nature of those relations which ought in the interests of society to exist between the producer who has withdrawn from affairs" (that was the name given by Enfantin to the landowners) "and the active producer" (i.e., the farmer)? "When these relations become known, it will be sufficient to ascertain the means which will lead to the establishment of such relations; in doing so it will be necessary to take into account also the present condition of society, but nevertheless any other question" (apart from that set forth above) "would be secondary, and would only impede those combinations which must promote the use of the above-mentioned means."*

The principal task of political economy, which Enfantin would prefer to call "*the philosophical history of industry*", consists in

* In his article, "Considérations sur la baisse progressive du loyer des objets mobiliers et immobiliers", *Le Producteur*, Vol. I., p. 564.

pointing out both the mutual relations of various strata of producers and the relationships of the whole class of producers with the other classes of society. These indications must be founded on the study of the historical development of the industrial class, and such a study must be founded on "the new conception of the human race", i.e., in other words, of human nature.*

Malthus' challenge to Ricardo's theory of rent was closely bound up with his challenge to the very well-known—as people now say—labour theory of value. Paying little attention to the substance of the controversy, Enfantin hastened to resolve it by a utopian addition (or, as people in Russia say nowadays, *amendment*) to Ricardo's theory of rent: "If we understand this theory aright," he says, "we ought, it seems to me, to add to it that ... the labourers pay (i.e., pay in the form of rent) some people for the leisure which those enjoy, and for the right to make use of the means of production."

By labourers Enfantin meant here also, and even principally, the capitalist farmers. What he said of their relations with the landowners is quite true. But his "amendment" is nothing more than a sharper expression of a phenomenon with which Ricardo himself was well acquainted. Moreover, this sharp expression (Adam Smith sometimes speaks even more sharply) not only did not solve the question either of value or of rent, but completely removed it from Enfantin's field of view. But for him these questions did not in fact exist. He was interested solely in the future organisation of society. It was important for him to convince the reader that private property on the means of production *ought not* to exist. Enfantin says plainly that, but for practical questions of this kind, all the learned disputes concerning value would be simply disputes about words. This, so to speak, is the *subjective method* in political economy.

The Utopians never directly recommended this "method". But that they were very partial to it is shown, among other ways, by the fact that Enfantin reproached Malthus (!) with excessive *objectivity*. Objectivity was, in his opinion, the principal fault of that writer. Whoever knows the works of Malthus is aware that it is precisely objectivity (so characteristic, for example, of Ricardo) that was always foreign to the author of the *Essay on the Principle of Population*. We do not know whether Enfantin read Malthus himself (everything obliges us to think that, for example, the views of Ricardo were known to him only from the extracts which the French economists made from his writings); but even if he did read them, he could hardly have assessed them at their true value,

* See in particular the article in *Le Producteur*, Vol. IV, "Considérations sur les progrès de l'économie politique".

he would hardly have been able to show that real life was in contradiction to Malthus. Preoccupied with considerations about what ought to be, Enfantin had neither the time nor the desire attentively to study what really existed. "You are right," he was ready to say to the first sycophant he met. "In present-day social life matters proceed just as you describe them, but you are excessively *objective;* glance at the question from the humane point of view, and you will see that our social life must be rebuilt on new foundations."

Utopian dilettantism was forced to make theoretical concessions to any more or less learned defender of the bourgeois order. In order to allay the consciousness rising within him of his own impotence, the Utopian consoled himself by reproaching his opponents with objectivity: let us admit you are more learned than I, but I am kinder. The Utopian did not refute the learned defenders of the bourgeoisie; he only made "footnotes" and "amendments" to their theories. A similar, quite utopian attitude to social science meets the eye of the attentive reader on every page of the works of our "subjective" sociologists. We shall have occasion yet to speak a good deal of such an attitude. Let us meanwhile quote two vivid examples.

In 1871 there appeared the dissertation by the late N. Sieber: "Ricardo's Theory of Value and Capital, in the Light of Later Elucidations". In his foreword the author benevolently, but only in passing, referred to the article of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky: "The school of Adam Smith and Positivism in Economic Science" (this article appeared in the *Sovremennik*[366] of 1864). On the subject of this passing reference Mr. Mikhailovsky remarks: "It is pleasant for me to recall that in my article 'On the Literary Activity of Y. G. Zhukovsky' I paid a great and just tribute to the services rendered by our economist. I pointed out that Mr. Zhukovsky had long ago expressed the thought that it was necessary to return to the sources of political economy, which provide all the data for a correct solution of the main problems of science, data which have been quite distorted by the modern text-book political economy. But I then indicated also that the honour of priority in this idea, which later on proved so fruitful in the powerful hands of Karl Marx, belonged in Russian literature not to Mr. Zhukovsky, but to another writer, the author of the articles 'Economic Activity and Legislation' (*Sovremennik*, 1859), 'Capital and Labour' (1860), the *Comments on Mill,* etc.[367] In addition to priority in time, the difference between this writer and Mr. Zhukovsky can be expressed most vividly in the following way. If, for example, Mr. Zhukovsky circumstantially and in a strictly scientific fashion, even somewhat pedantically, proves that labour is the measure of value and that every value is produced by labour, the author

of the above-mentioned articles, without losing sight of the theoretical aspect of the question, lays principal stress on the logical and practical conclusion from it: being produced and measured by labour, every value must belong to labour."* One does not have to be greatly versed in political economy to know that the "author of the *Comments on Mill*" entirely failed to understand the theory of value which later received such brilliant development "in the powerful hands of Marx". And every person who knows the history of socialism understands *why* that author, in spite of Mr. Mikhailovsky's assurances, did in fact "lose sight of the theoretical aspect of the question" and wandered off into meditations about the basis on which products *ought* to be exchanged in a well-regulated society. The author of the *Comments on Mill* regarded economic questions from the standpoint of a *Utopian*. This was quite natural at the time. But it is very strange that Mr. Mikhailovsky was unable to divest himself of this point of view in the 70s (and did not do so even later, otherwise the would have corrected his mistake in the latest edition of his works) when it was easy to acquire a more correct view of things, even from popular works. Mr. Mikhailovsky did not understand what "the author of the *Comments on Mill*" wrote about value. This took place because he, too, "*lost sight of the theoretical aspect of the question" and wandered off into the "logical and practical conclusion from it*", i.e., the consideration that "every value must belong to labour". We know already that their passion for practical conclusions always had a harmful effect on the theoretical reasoning of the Utopians. And how old is the "conclusion" which turned Mr. Mikhailovsky from the true path is shown by the circumstance that it was being drawn from Ricardo's theory of value by the *English Utopians even of the 1820s.* But, as a Utopian, Mr. Mikhailovsky is not interested even in the history of Utopias.

Another example. Mr. V. V., in 1882, explained in the following way the appearance of his book, *The Destinies of Capitalism in Russia*:

"The collection now offered to the reader consists of articles printed earlier in various journals. In publishing them as a separate book, we have brought them only into external unity, disposed the material in a somewhat different fashion and eliminated repetitions" (far from all: very many of them remained in Mr. V. V.'s book.—*G.P.*). "Their content has remained the same; few new facts and arguments have been adduced; and if nevertheless we venture for a second time to present our work to the attention of

* N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works*, Vol. II (Second ed.), St. Petersburg, 1888, pp. 239-40.

the reader, we do so with one sole aim—by attacking his world outlook with all the weapons at our command, to force the intelligentsia to turn its attention to the question raised" (an impressive picture: "With *all the weapons* at his command", Mr V. V. attacks the world outlook of the reader, and the terrified intelligentsia capitulates, turns its attention, etc.—*G.P.*) "and to challenge our learned and professional publicists of capitalism and Narodism to study the law of the economic development of Russia—the foundation of all the other expressions of the life of the country. Without the knowledge of this law, systematic and successful social activity is impossible, while the conceptions of the immediate future of Russia which prevail amongst us can scarcely be called a law" (*conceptions* ... can be called *law*? ! — G.P.) "and are hardly capable of providing a firm foundation for a practical world outlook" (Preface, p. 1).

In 1893 the same Mr. V. V., who had had time to become a "professional", though, alas! still not a "learned" publicist of Narodism, turned out to be very remote from the idea that the law of economic development constitutes "the foundation of all the other expressions of the life of the country". Now "with all the weapons" he attacks the "world outlook" of people who hold such a "view"; now he considers that in this "view, the historical process, instead of being the creation of man, is transformed into a creative force, and man into its obedient tool"*; now he considers social relations to be "the creation of the spiritual world of man",** and views with extreme suspicion the theory of the conformity to law of social phenomena, setting up against it "the scientific philosophy of history of Professor of History N. I. Kareyev" (hear, O tongues, and be stilled, since the Professor himself is with us! ).*** [368]

What a change, with God's help! What brought it about? Why, this. In 1882, Mr. V. V. was looking for the "*law* of the economic development of Russia", imagining that that law would be only the scientific expression of his own "*ideals*". He was even convinced that he had discovered such a "law"—namely, the "law" that Russian capitalism was stillborn. But after this he did not live eleven whole years in vain. He was obliged to admit, even though not aloud, that stillborn capitalism was developing more and more. It turned out that the development of capitalism had become all but the most unquestionable "law of the economic development of Russia". And lo, Mr. V. V. hastened to turn his "philosophy of history" inside out: he who had sought for a "law" began to say

* *Our Trends*, St. Petersburg, 1893, p. 138.
** *Loc. cit.*, pp. 9, 13, 140, and many others.
*** *Ibid.*, pp. 143 et seq.

that such a search is quite an idle waste of time. The Russian Utopian is not averse to relying on a "law"; but he immediately renounces it, as Peter did Jesus, if only the "law" is at variance with that "ideal" which he has to support, not only for fear, but for conscience' sake. However Mr. V. V. even now has not parted company with the "law" for ever. "The natural striving to systematise its views ought to bring the Russian intelligentsia to the elaboration of an independent scheme of evolution of economic relations, appropriate to the requirements and the conditions of development of this country; and this task will be undoubtedly performed in the very near future" (*Our Trends,* p.114). In "elaborating" its "independent scheme", the Russian intelligentsia will evidently devote itself to the same occupation as Mr. V. V. when, in his *Destinies of Capitalism,* he was looking for a "law". When the scheme is discovered—and Mr. V. V. takes his Bible oath that it will be discovered in the immediate future—our author will just as solemnly make his peace with the principle of conformity to law, as the father in the New Testament made his peace with his prodigal son. Amusing people! It is obvious that, even at the time when Mr. V. V. was still looking for a "law", he did not clearly realise what meaning this word could have when applied to social phenomena. He regarded "law" as the Utopians of the 20s regarded it. Only this can explain the fact that he was hoping to discover the law of development of *one country*—Russia. But why does he attribute his modes of thought to the Russian Marxists? He is mistaken if he thinks that, in their understanding of the conformity of social phenomena to law, they have gone no further than the Utopians did. And that he does think this, is shown by all his arguments against it. And he is not alone in thinking this: the "Professor of History" Mr. Kareyev himself thinks this; and so do all the opponents of "Marxism". First of all they attribute to Marxists a utopian view of the conformity to law of social phenomena, and then strike down this view with more or less doubtful success. A real case of tilting at windmills!

By the way, about the learned "Professor of History". Here are the expressions in which he recommends the subjective view of the historical development of humanity: "If in the philosophy of history we are interested in the question of progress, this very fact dictates the selection of the essential content of knowledge, its facts and their grouping. But facts cannot be either invented or placed in invented relations" (consequently there must be nothing arbitrary either in the selection or in the grouping? Consequently the grouping must entirely correspond to objective reality? Yes! Just listen! —*G.P.*) "and the presentation of the course of history from a certain point of view will remain objective, in the sense of the truth of the presentation. Here subjectivism of another kind

appears on the scene: creative synthesis may bring into existence an entire ideal world of norms, a world of what ought to be, a world of the true and just, with which actual history, i.e., the objective representation of its course, grouped in a certain way from the standpoint of essential changes in the life of humanity, will be compared. On the basis of this comparison there arises an assessment of the historical process which, however, must also not be arbitrary. It must be proved that the grouped facts, as we have them, really do have the significance which we attribute to them, having taken up a definite point of view and adopted a definite criterion for their evaluation."

Shchedrin[369] writes of a "venerable Moscow historian" who, boasting of his objectivity, used to say: "It's all the same to me whether Yaroslav beat Izyaslav or Izyaslav beat Yaroslav." Mr. Kareyev, having created for himself an "entire ideal world of norms, a world of what ought to be, a world of the true and just", has nothing to do with objectivity of that kind. He sympathises, shall we say, with Yaroslav, and although he will not allow himself to represent his defeat as though it were his victory ("facts cannot be invented"), nevertheless he reserves the precious right of shedding a tear or two about the sad fate of Yaroslav, and cannot refrain from a curse addressed to his conqueror Izyaslav. It is difficult to raise any objection to *that* kind of "subjectivism". But in vain does Mr. Kareyev represent it in such a colourless and therefore harmless plight. To present it in this way means not to understand its true nature, and to drown it in a stream of sentimental phraseology. In reality, the distinguishing feature of "subjective" thinkers consists in the fact that for them the "world of what ought to be, the world of the true and just" stands outside any connection with the objective course of historical development: on the one side is "*what ought to be*", on the other side is "*reality*", and these two spheres are separated by an entire abyss—that abyss which among the dualists separates the material world from the spiritual world[370]. The task of social science in the nineteenth century has been, among other things, to build a bridge across this evidently bottomless abyss. So long as we do not build this bridge, we shall of necessity close our eyes to *reality* and concentrate all our attention on "*what ought to be*" (as the Saint-Simonists did, for example): which naturally will only have the effect of delaying the translation into life of this "*what ought to be*", since it renders more difficult the forming of an accurate opinion of it.

We already know that the historians of the Restoration, in contradistinction to the writers of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, regarded the political institutions of any country as the result of its civil conditions. This new view became so widespread and developed that in its application to practical

questions it reached strange extremes which to us nowadays are almost incomprehensible. Thus, J. B. Say asserted that political questions should not interest an economist, because the national economy can develop equally well even under diametrically opposite political systems. Saint-Simon notes and applauds this idea of Say's, although in fact he does give it a somewhat more profound content. With very few exceptions, all the Utopians of the nineteenth century share this view of "politics".

Theoretically the view is mistaken in two respects. In the first place, the people who held it forgot that in the life of society, as everywhere where it is a case of a *process* and not of some isolated phenomenon, a consequence becomes, in its turn, a cause, and a cause proves to be a consequence. In short, they abandoned here, at quite the wrong moment, that very point of view of *interaction* to which in other cases, also at very much the wrong moment, they limited their analysis. Secondly, if *political* relations are the consequences of *social* relations, it is incomprehensible how consequences which differ to the extreme (political institutions of a diametrically opposite character) can be brought about by one and the same cause—the same state of "wealth". Evidently the very conception of the causal relationship between the political institutions of a country and its economic condition was still extremely vague; and in fact it would not be difficult to show how vague it was with all the Utopians.

In practice this vagueness brought about a double consequence. On the one hand the Utopians, who spoke so much about the *organisation of labour*, were ready occasionally to repeat the old watchword of the eighteenth century—"laissez faire, laissez passer". Thus, Saint-Simon, who saw in the organisation of industry the greatest task of the nineteenth century, wrote: "l'industrie a besoin d'être gouvernée le moins possible." ("Industry has need of being governed as little as possible.")* On the other hand the Utopians—again with some exceptions falling in the later period—were quite indifferent to current politics, to the political questions of the day.

The political system is a consequence, not a cause. A consequence always remains a consequence, never becoming in its turn a cause. Hence followed the almost direct conclusion that "politics" cannot serve as a means of realising social and economic "ideals". We can therefore understand the psychology of the Utopian who

* The writers of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century contradicted themselves in just the same way, although their contradiction displayed itself otherwise. They stood for non-interference by the state, and yet at times required the most petty regulation by the legislator. The connection of "politics" (which they considered a *cause*) with economy (which they considered a *consequence*) was also unclear to them.

turned away from politics. But what did they think would help them realise their plans of social transformation? What was it they pinned their practical hopes on? *Everything and nothing. Everything*—in the sense that they awaited help indifferently from the most opposed quarters. *Nothing*—in the sense that all their hopes were quite unfounded.

The Utopians imagined that they were extremely practical people. They hated "doctrinaires",[371] and unhesitatingly sacrificed their most high-sounding principles to their own idées fixes. They were neither Liberals, nor Conservatives, nor Monarchists, nor Republicans. They were quite ready to march indifferently with the Liberals and with the Conservatives, with the Monarchists and with the Republicans, if only they could carry out their "*practical*"—in their view, *extremely practical*—plans. Of the old Utopians Fourier was particularly noteworthy in this respect. Like Gogol's Kostanjoglo, he tried to use every piece of rubbish for the good cause. Now he allured money-lenders with the prospect of the vast interest which their capital would bring them in the future society; now he appealed to the lovers of melons and artichokes, drawing for them a seductive picture of the excellent melons and artichokes of the future; now the assured Louis Philippe that the princesses of the House of Orleans, at whom at the time other princes of the blood were turning up their noses, would have no peace from suitors under the new social order. He snatched at every straw. But, alas! neither the money-lenders, nor the lovers of melons and artichokes, nor the "Citizen King", as they say, pricked up an ear: they did not pay the slightest attention to what, it might have seemed, were the most convincing arguments of Fourier. His practicality turned out to be doomed beforehand to failure, and to be a hopeless chase after a *lucky coincidence.*

The chase of the lucky coincidence was the constant occupation of the writers of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century as well. It was just in hope of such a coincidence that they sought by every means, fair and foul, to enter into friendly relations with more or less enlightened "legislators" and aristocrats of their age. Usually it is thought that once a man has said to himself that opinion governs the world, he no longer has any reason to despair of the future: la raison finira pas avoir raison. But this is not so. When and in what way will reason triumph? The writers of the Enlightenment held that in the life of society everything depends, in the long run, on the "legislator". Therefore they went on their search for legislators. But the same writers knew very well that the character and views of man depend on his upbringing, and that generally speaking their upbringing did not predispose the "legislators" to the absorption of enlightened doctrines. Therefore they could not but realise that little hope could be placed in the

legislators. There remained only to trust to a lucky coincidence. Imagine that you have an enormous box in which there are very many black balls and two or three white ones. You take out ball after ball. In each individual case you have incomparably fewer chances of taking out a white ball than a black. But, if you repeat the operation a sufficient number of times, you will finally take out a white ball. The same applies to the "legislators". In each individual case it is incomparably more probable that the legislator will be against the "philosophers": but in the end there must appear, after all, a legislator who would be in agreement with the philosophers. This one will do everything that reason dictates. Thus, *literally thus,* did Helvetius argue.* *The subjective idealist view of history* ("opinions govern the world"), *which seems to provide such a wide field for man's freedom of action, in reality represents him as the plaything of accident.* That is why this view *in its essence is very hopeless.*

Thus, for example, we know nothing more hopeless than the views of the Utopians of the end of the nineteenth century, i.e., the Russian Narodniks and subjective sociologists. Each of them has his ready-made plan for saving the Russian village commune, and with it the peasantry generally: each of them has his "formula of progress". But, alas, life moves on, without paying attention to their formulae, which have nothing left but to find their own path, also independently of real life, into the sphere of abstractions, fantasies and logical mischances. Let us, for example, listen to the Achilles of the subjective school, Mr. Mikhailovsky.

"The labour question in Europe is a revolutionary question since it requires the *transfer* of the conditions" (? ) "of labour into the hands of the labourer, the expropriation of the present owners. The labour question in Russia is a conservative question, since here all that is needed is *preserving* the conditions of labour in the hands of the labourer, guaranteeing to the present owners the property they possess. Quite close to St. Petersburg itself ... in a district dotted with factories, works, parks, country cottages, there are villages the inhabitants of which live on their *own* land, burn their *own* timber, eat their *own* bread, wear coats and sheepskins made by their *own* labour out of the wool of their *own* sheep. Give them a firm guarantee that this property of theirs will remain their own, and the Russian labour question is solved. And for the sake of such a purpose everything else can be given up, if we properly understand the significance of a stable guarantee. It will be said: but we cannot for ever remain with wooden ploughs

* "Dans un temps plus ou moins long il faut, disent les sages, que toutes les possibilités se réalisent: pourquoi désespérer du bonheur futur de l'humanité? "

and three-field economy, with antediluvian methods of making coats and sheepskins. We cannot. There are two ways out of this difficulty. One, approved by the practical point of view, is very simple and convenient: raise the tariffs, dissolve the village commune, and that probably will be enough—industry like that of Great Britain will grow up like a mushroom. But it will devour the labourer and expropriate him. There is another way, of course much more difficult: but the simple solution of a question is not necessarily the correct solution. The other way consists in developing those relations between labour and property which already exist, although in an extremely crude and primitive form. Obviously this end cannot be achieved without broad intervention by the state, the first act of which should be the legislative consolidation of the village commune."*

*Through the wide world*
*For the free heart*
*There are two paths still.*
*Weigh your proud strength,*
*Bend your firm mind,*
*Choose which you will!* [372]

We suspect that all the arguments of our author have a strong aroma of melons and artichokes; and our sense of smell hardly deceives us. What was Fourier's mistake in his dealings with melons and artichokes? It was that he fell into "subjective sociology". The objective sociologist would ask himself: is there any probability that the lovers of melons and artichokes will be attracted by the picture I have drawn? He would then ask himself: are the lovers of melons and artichokes in a position to alter existing social relations and the present course of their development? It is most probable that he would have given himself a negative reply to each of these questions, and therefore would not have wasted his time on conversation with the "melon and artichoke lovers". But that is how an *objective* sociologist would have acted, i.e., a man who founded all his calculations upon the given course of social development in conformity to law. The subjective sociologist, on the other hand, discards *conformity to law* in the name of the "*desirable*", and therefore there remains no other way out for him but to trust in chance. As the old Russian saying has it, in a tight corner you can shoot with a stick too: that is the only consoling reflection upon which a good subjective sociologist can rely.

In a tight corner you can shoot with a stick too. But a stick has two ends, and we do not know which end it shoots from. Our Narodniks and, if I may use the expression, subjectivists have

* N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works*, Vol. II (Second ed.), pp. 102-03.

already tried a vast number of sticks (even the argument as to the convenience of collecting arrears of taxes in the village-commune system of landholding has sometimes appeared in the role of a magic stick). In the vast majority of cases the sticks proved quite incapable of playing the part of guns, and when by chance they did fire, the bullets hit the Narodniks and subjectivists themselves. Let us recall the Peasant Bank.[373] What hopes were placed upon it, in the sense of reinforcing our social "foundations"! How the Narodniks rejoiced when it was opened! And what happened? The stick fired precisely at those who were rejoicing. Now they themselves admit that the Peasant Bank—a very valuable institution in any case—only undermines the "foundations"; and this admission is equivalent to a confession that those who rejoiced were—at least for some time—also engaged in idle chatter.[374]

"But then the Bank undermines the foundations only because its statutes and its practice do not completely correspond to our idea. If our idea had been completely applied, the results would have been quite different...."

"In the first place, they would not have been quite different at all: the Bank in any case would have facilitated the development of money economy, and money economy would inexorably have undermined the 'foundations'. And secondly, when we hear these endless 'ifs', it seems all the time to us, for some reason, that there is a man with a barrow shouting under our windows: 'Here are melons, melons, and good artichokes!'"

It was already in the 20s of the present century that the French Utopians were incessantly pointing out the "conservative" character of the reforms they had invented. Saint-Simon openly tried to frighten both the government and what we nowadays call society with a popular insurrection, which was meant to present itself to the imaginations of the "conservatives" in the shape of the terrible movement of the *sansculottes,* still vividly remembered by all. But of course nothing came of this frightening, and if history really provides us with any *lessons,* one of the most instructive is that which attests the complete unpracticality of all the plans of all the would-be practical Utopians.

When the Utopians, pointing to the conservative character of their plans, tried to incline the government to put them into effect, they usually, to confirm their idea, presented a survey of the historical development of their country over a more or less prolonged epoch—a survey from which it followed that on these or those particular occasions "mistakes" were made, which had given a quite new and extremely undesirable aspect to all social relations. The government had only to realise and correct these "mistakes" immediately to establish on earth something almost resembling paradise.

Thus, Saint-Simon assured the Bourbons that before the revolution the main distinguishing feature of the internal development of France was an alliance between the monarchy and the industrialists. This alliance was equally advantageous for both sides. During the revolution the government, *through a misunderstanding,* came out against the legitimate demands of the industrialists, and the industrialists, *through just as sad a misunderstanding,* revolted against the monarchy. Hence all the evils of the age that followed. But now that the root of the evil had been laid bare things could be put straight very easily, as the industrialists had only to make their peace on certain conditions with the government. It is this that would be the most reasonable, *conservative* way out of the numerous difficulties of both sides. It is unnecessary to add now that neither the Bourbons nor the industrialists followed the sage advice of Saint-Simon.

"Instead of firmly keeping to our age-old traditions; instead of developing the principle of the intimate connection between the means of production and the direct producer, which we inherited; instead of taking advantage of the acquisitions of West European science and applying them for the development of forms of industry, founded on the possession by the peasantry of the implements of production; instead of increasing the productivity of its labour by concentrating the means of production in its hands; instead of taking advantage, not of the form of production, but of its very organisation as it appears in Western Europe ... instead of all this, we have taken a quite opposite path. We not only have not prevented the development of the capitalist forms of production, in spite of the fact that they are founded on the expropriation of the peasantry, but on the contrary have tried with all our strength to promote the complete break-up of all our economic life, a break-up which led to the famine of 1891."* Thus laments Mr. N. —on, recommending "society" to correct this mistake by solving an "extremely difficult" but not "impossible" problem: "to develop the productive forces of the population in such a form that not an insignificant minority, but the entire people could take advantage of them."** Everything depends upon correcting the "mistake".

It is interesting that Mr. N. —on imagines himself to be ever so foreign to any Utopias. Every minute he makes references to people to whom we owe the scientific criticism of utopian socialism.[375] Everything depends on the country's economy, he repeats in season and out of season, echoing these people, and

* Nikolai —on [N. Danielson], *Outlines of Our Social Economy Since the Reform*, St. Petersburg, 1893, pp. 322-23.

** *Ibid.*, p. 343.

all the evil springs from this: "Therefore the means to eliminate the evil, once it has been discovered, must consist likewise in altering the very conditions of production." To explain this he once again quotes one of the critics of utopian socialism: "These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production."*

But in what, then, consist those *"stubborn facts of the existing system of production" which will move society to solve, or at least to understand, the problem presented to it by Mr. N. —on*? This remains a mystery not only to the reader but, of course, to the author himself as well. By his "problem" he has very convincingly demonstrated that in his *historical* views he remains a full-blooded Utopian, in spite of his quotations from the works of quite non-utopian writers.**

Can it be said that the plans of Fourier contradicted the "stubborn facts" of production in his times? No, not only did they not contradict them, but they were entirely founded upon those facts, even in their defects. But this did not prevent Fourier from being a Utopian, because, once having founded his plan "by deduction" on the material conditions of the production of his age, *he failed to adapt its realisation to those same conditions, and therefore with complete futility pestered with his "great task" those social strata and classes which, in virtue of those same material conditions, could not have either the inclination to set about its solution or the possibility of solving it.* Mr. N. —on sins in this way just as much as Fourier or the Rodbertus whom he loves so little: most of all he reminds one precisely of Rodbertus, because Mr. N. —on's reference to age-old traditions is just in the spirit of that conservative writer.

* [K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 134.]

** Correspondingly, Mr. N.—on's practical plans also represent an almost literal repetition of those "demands" which long ago and, of course, quite fruitlessly were presented by our *utopian Narodniks*, like, for example, Mr. Prugavin. "The ultimate ends and tasks of social and state activity" (you see, neither society nor the state is forgotten) "in the sphere of factory economy must be: on the one hand, the purchase for the state of all implements of labour and the granting of the latter to the people for temporary use, for hire; on the other, the establishment of an organisation of the conditions of production" (Mr. Prugavin wants to say simply "production", but as is the custom of all Russian writers, headed by Mr. Mikhailovsky, he uses the expression "*conditions* of production", without understanding what it means) "which would be founded upon the requirements of the people and the state, and not on the interests of the market, of disposal and of competition, which is the case in the commodity-capitalist organisation of the economic forces of the country" (V. S. Prugavin, *The Handicraftsman at the Exhibition, Moscow, 1882, p. 15*). *Let the reader compare this passage with the above quotation from the book of Mr. N. —on.*

For the better instruction of "society", Mr. N.—on points to the terrifying example of Western Europe. By such observations our Utopians have long attempted to give themselves the aspect of positive people, who don't get carried away by fantasies but know how to take advantage of the "lessons of history". However this method, too, is *not at all new.* The French Utopians were already attempting to terrify their contemporaries and make them listen to reason by the *example of England,* where "a vast distance separates the employer from the workman" and where there hangs over the latter the yoke of a special kind of despotism. "Other countries which follow England along the path of industrial development," said the *Producteur,*[376] "must understand that they ought to search for the means to prevent such a system arising on their own soil."* The only real obstacle to the appearance of English methods in other countries could be the Saint-Simonists' "organisation of labour and labourers".** With the development of the labour movement in France it was *Germany* that became the principal theatre of day-dreams about avoiding capitalism. Germany, in the person of her Utopians, long and stubbornly set herself up against "Western Europe" (den westlichen Ländern). In the Western countries, said the German Utopians, the bearer of the idea of a new organisation of society is the working class, with us it is the educated classes (what is called in Russia the *intelligentsia*). It was precisely the German "intelligentsia" which was thought to be called upon to avert from Germany the cup of capitalism.*** Capitalism was so terrifying to

* *Le Producteur,* Vol. I, p. 140.

** On this organisation, see the *Globe*[377] for 1831-32, where it is set forth in detail, with even the preparatory transitional reforms.

*** "Unsere Nationalökonomen streben mit allen Kräften Deutschland auf die Stufe der Industrie zu heben, von welcher herab England jetzt die andern Länder noch beherrscht. England ist ihr Ideal. Gewiss: England sieht sich gern schön an; England hat seine Besitzungen in allen Welttheilen, es weiss seinen Einfluss aller Orten geltend zu machen, es hat die reichste Handels- und Kriegsflotte, es weiss bei allen Handelstraktaten die Gegenkontrahenten immer hinters Licht zu führen, es hat die spekulativsten Kaufleute, die bedeutendsten Kapitalisten, die erfindungsreichsten Köpfe, die prächtigsten Eisenbahnen, die grossartigsten Maschinenanlagen; gewiss, England ist, von dieser Seite betrachtet, ein glückliches Land, aber—es lässt sich auch ein anderer Gesichtspunkt bei der Schätzung Englands gewinnen und unter diesem möchte doch wohl das Glück desselben von seinem *Unglück* bedeutend überwogen werden. England ist auch das Land, in welchem das Elend auf die höchste Spitze getrieben ist, in welchem jährlich Hunderte notorisch Hungers sterben, in welchem die Arbeiter zu Fünfzigtausenden zu arbeiten verweigern, da sie trotz all' ihrer Mühe und Leiden nicht so viel verdienen, dass sie nothdürftig leben können. England ist das Land, in welchem die Wohlthätigkeit durch die Armensteuer zum *äusserlichen* Gesetz gemacht werden musste. Seht doch ihr, Nationalökonomen, in den Fabriken die wankenden, gebückten und verwachsenen Gestalten, seht die bleichen, abgehärmten, schwindsüchtigen Gesichter, seht all' das geistige und das

the German Utopians that, for the sake of avoiding it, they were ready in the last resort to put up with complete stagnation. The triumph of a constitutional system, they argued, would lead to the supremacy of the money aristocracy. Therefore let there rather be no constitutional system.* Germany did not avoid capitalism. Now it is the Russian Utopians who talk about avoiding it. Thus do utopian ideas journey from west to east, everywhere appearing as the heralds of the victory of that same capitalism against which they are revolting and struggling. But the further they penetrate into the east the more their historical significance changes. The French Utopians were in their day bold *innovators* of genius; the

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leibliche Elend, und ihr wollt Deutschland noch zu einem zweiten England machen? England könnte nur durch Unglück und Jammer zu dem Höhepunkt der Industrie gelangen, auf dem es jetzt steht, und Deutschland könnte nur durch *dieselben* Opfer *ähnliche* Resultate erreichen, d.h. erreichen, dass die Reichen noch reicher und die Armen noch ärmer werden." ["Our national economists strive with all their might to lift Germany on to that stage of industry from which England now still dominates other countries. England is their ideal. Of course, England likes to admire herself: she has her possessions in all parts of the world, she knows how to make her influence count everywhere, she has the richest mercantile marine and navy and knows in all trade agreements how to humbug her partner, she has the most speculative merchants, the most important capitalists, the most inventive heads, the most excellent railways, the most magnificent machine equipment. Of course, England when viewed from this aspect is a happy country, but—another point of view might gain the upper hand in assessing England, and from this point of view her happiness might nevertheless be considerably outweighed by her *unhappiness.* England is also the country in which misery has been brought to its highest point, in which it is notorious that hundreds die of hunger every year, in which the workmen by the fifty thousand refuse to work because, in spite of all their toil and suffering, they do not earn enough to provide themselves with a bare livelihood. England is the country in which philanthropy through the poor rate had to be enacted by an *extreme* measure. Look then, national economists, at the swaying, bowed and deformed figures in the factories, look at the pale, languid, tubercular faces, look at all the spiritual and bodily misery—and you still wish to make Germany into a second England? England was only able through misfortune and misery to reach the high point of industry at which she now stands, and only through the *same* sacrifices could Germany achieve *similar* results, i.e., that the rich should become still richer and the poor still poorer."] *Trierscher Zeitung,* May 4, 1846, reprinted in Vol. I of the review edited by M. Hess, under the title of *Der Gesellschaftsspiegel. Die gesellschaftlichen Zustände der Civilisierten Welt (The Social Mirror. Social Conditions of the Civilised World),* Iserlohn and Elberfeld, 1846.

* "Sollte es den Constitutionellen gelingen," said Büchner, "die deutschen Regierungen zu stürzen und eine allgemeine Monarchie oder Republik einzuführen, so bekommen wir hier einen Geldaristokratismus, wie in Frankreich, und lieber soll es bleiben, wie es jetzt ist." ["Should the Constitutionalists succeed," said Büchner, "in overthrowing the German governments and introducing a universal monarchy or republic, we should get here an aristocracy of money as in France; and better it should remain as it now is."] (Georg Büchner, *Collected Works,* ed. Franzos, p. 122.)

Germans proved much lower than they; and the Russians are now capable only of frightening Western people by their antediluvian appearance.

It is interesting that even the writers of the French Enlightenment had the idea of avoiding capitalism. Thus, Holbach was very upset by the fact that the triumph of the constitutional order in England led to the complete supremacy of *l'intérêt sordide des marchands*. He was very saddened by the circumstance that the English were tirelessly looking for new markets—this chase of markets distracted them from philosophy. Holbach also condemned the inequality of property existing in England. Like Helvetius, he would have liked to prepare the way for the triumph of reason and equality, and not of mercantile interests. But neither Holbach nor Helvetius, nor any other of the writers of the Enlightenment could put forwad anything against the then course of events except panegyrics of reason and moral instructions addressed to the "people of Albion". In this respect they were just as impotent as our own present-day Russian Utopians.

One more remark, and we shall have finished with the Utopians. The point of view of "*human nature*" brought forth in the first half of the nineteenth century that abuse of *biological* analogies which, even up to the present day, makes itself very strongly felt in Western sociological—and particularly in Russian quasi-sociological—literature.

If the cause of all historical social progress is to be sought in the nature of man, and if, as Saint-Simon himself justly remarks, society consists of individuals, then the nature of the individual has to provide the key to the explanation of history. The nature of the individual is the subject of *physiology* in the broad sense of the word, i.e., of a science which also covers *psychological phenomena*. That is why physiology, in the eyes of Saint-Simon and his followers, was the basis of *sociology*, which they called *social physics*. In the *Opinions philosophiques, littéraires et industrielles* published during Saint-Simon's lifetime and with his active participation, there was printed an extremely interesting but unfortunately unfinished article of an anonymous *Doctor of Medicine*, entitled: "De la physiologie appliquée à l'amélioration des Institutions sociales." The author considered *the science of society* to be a component part of "*general physiology*" which, enriched by the observations and experiments of "*special physiology*" of the individual, "devotes itself to considerations of a higher order". Individuals are for it "only organs of the social body", the functions of which it studies "*just as special physiology studies the functions of individuals*". General physiology studies (the author writes: "*expresses*") the laws of social existence, to which the written laws should conform. Later on the bourgeois sociologists,

as for example Spencer, made use of the doctrine of the social organism to draw the most conservative conclusions. But the Doctor of Medicine whom we quote was first of all a *reformer.* He studied "the social body" with the object of *social reconstruction,* since only "*social physiology*" and the "*hygiene*" closely bound up with it provided "the positive foundations on which it is possible to build the system of social organisation required by the present state of the civilised world". But evidently social physiology and hygiene did not provide much food for the reforming fantasy of the author because in the end he found himself obliged to turn to the *doctors,* i.e., to persons dealing with individual organisms, asking them to give to society, "*in the form of a hygienic prescription*", a "system of social organisation".

This view of "*social physics*" was later on chewed over—or, if you prefer, developed—by Auguste Comte in his various works. Here is what he said about social science still in his youth, when he was writing in the Saint-Simonist *Producteur:* "Social phenomena, being human phenomena, should without doubt be classed among physiological phenomena. But although social physics must find its point of departure in, and be in constant connection with, individual physiology, it nevertheless should be examined and developed as quite a separate science: for various generations of men progressively influence one another. If we maintain the purely physiological point of view, we cannot properly study that influence: yet its evaluation should occupy the *principal* place in social physics."*

Now you can see what hopeless contradictions confront those who regard society from this point of view.

In the first place, since "social physics" has individual physiology as its "point of departure", it is built on a purely *materialist* foundation: in physiology there is no place for an *idealist* view of an object. But the same social physics was principally to concern itself with evaluating the progressive influence of one generation on another. One generation influences the next, passing on to it both the knowledge which it inherited from previous generations, and the knowledge which it acquired itself. "Social physics" therefore examines the development of the human species from the point of view of the development of knowledge and of "enlightenment" (lumières). This is already the purely idealist point of view of the eighteenth century: *opinions govern the world.* Having "closely connected", on Comte's advice, this idealist point of view with the purely materialist point of view of individual

* "Considérations sur les sciences et les savants" in *Le Producteur,* Vol. I, pp. 355-56.

physiology, we turn out to be *dualists* of the purest water, and nothing is easier than to trace the harmful influence of this dualism on the sociological views even of the same Comte. But this is not all. The thinkers of the eighteenth century noticed that in the development of knowledge there is a certain conformity to law. Comte firmly maintained such a conformity, putting into the foreground the so-called law of three stages: theological, metaphysical and positive.

But why does the development of knowledge pass precisely through these stages? Such is the nature of the human mind, replies Comte: "By its nature (par sa nature), the human mind passes wherever it acts through three different theoretical conditions."* Excellent; but to study that "nature" we shall have to turn to individual physiology, and individual physiology does not give us an adequate explanation; and we have again to refer to previous "generations"—and the "generations" again send us back to "nature". This is called a science, but there is no trace of science in it: there is only an endless movement round a vicious circle.

Our own allegedly original, "subjective" sociologists fully share the view-point of the French Utopian of the 20s.

"While I was still under the influence of Nozhin," Mr. Mikhailovsky tells us about himself, "and partly under his guidance, I interested myself in the question of the boundaries between biology and sociology, and the possibility of bringing them together.... I cannot sufficiently highly assess the advantage I gained from communion with the ideas of Nozhin: but nevertheless there was much in them that was accidental, partly because they were still only developing in Nozhin himself, partly because of his limited knowledge in the sphere of the natural sciences. I received from Nozhin really only an impulse in a certain direction, but it was a strong, decisive and beneficent impulse. Without thinking of any special study of biology, I nevertheless read a great deal on Nozhin's suggestion and, as it were, by his testament. This new trend in my reading threw an original and most absorbing light on that considerable—though disorderly, and to some extent simply useless—material, both of facts and ideas, which I had stored up previously."**

Nozhin has been described by Mr. Mikhailovsky in his sketches *On This and That,* under the name of Bukhartsev. Bukhartsev "dreamed of reforming the social sciences with the help of natural science, and had already worked out an extensive plan for that purpose". The methods of this reforming activity can be seen from

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* *Ibid.*, p. 304.

** "Literature and Life" In *Russkaya Mysl,*[378] 1891, Vol. IV, p. 195.

the following. Bukhartsev undertakes to translate into Russian from the Latin an extensive treatise on zoology, and accompanies the translation with his own footnotes, in which he proposes "to include the results of all his independent work", while to these footnotes he adds new footnotes of a "sociological" character. Mr. Mikhailovsky obligingly acquaints the reader with one such footnote to a footnote: "Generally speaking, I cannot in my supplements to Van der Hoeven proceed too far in theoretical discussions and conclusions regarding the application of all these purely anatomical questions in solving social and economic questions. Therefore I again only draw the attention of the reader to the fact that my whole anatomical and embryological theory has as its main object the discovery of the laws of the physiology of society, and therefore all my later works will, of course, be founded on the scientific data set forth by me in this book."*

Anatomical and embryological theory "has as its main object the discovery of the laws of the physiology of society"! This is very awkwardly put, but nevertheless is very characteristic of the utopian sociologists. He constructs an anatomical theory, with the help of which he intends to write out a number of "hygienic prescriptions" for the society surrounding him. It is to these prescriptions that his social "physiology" is reduced. The social "physiology" of Bukhartsev is, strictly speaking, not "physiology" but the "hygiene" with which we are already acquainted: not a science of what is, but a science of what ought to be, on the basis ... of the "anatomical and embryological theory" of that same Bukhartsev.

Although Bukhartsev has been copied from Nozhin, he, nevertheless, represents to a certain extent the product of the artistic and creative work of Mr. Mikhailovsky (that is, if we can speak of *artistic* work in relation to the sketches quoted). Consequently even his awkward footnote, perhaps, never existed in reality. In that event it is all the more characteristic of Mr. Mikhailovsky, who speaks of it with great respect.

"I chanced nevertheless to come across the direct reflection in literature of the ideas of my unforgettable friend and teacher," says Tyomkin, in whose name the story is told. Mr. Mikhailovsky reflected, and still reflects, the ideas of Bukhartsev-Nozhin.

Mr. Mikhailovsky has his own "formula of progress". This formula declares: "Progress is the gradual approach to the integrity of the individual, to the fullest possible and most manifold division of labour between institutions and the least possible division of labour between people. Anything retarding this movement is immoral, unjust, harmful and unreasonable. Only that is moral,

* N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works*, Vol. IV (Second ed.), pp. 265-66.

just, reasonable and useful which diminishes the heterogeneity of society, thereby increasing the heterogeneity of its individual members."*

What can be the scientific significance of this formula? Does it explain the historical progress of society? Does it tell how that progress took place, and why it took place in one particular way and not in another? Not in the least: and its "main object" is not that at all. It does not speak of how history advanced, but of how it ought to have advanced to earn the approval of Mr. Mikhailovsky. This is a "hygienic prescription" invented by a Utopian on the basis of "exact investigations of the laws of organic development". It is just what the Saint-Simonist Doctor was looking for.

..."We have said that the exclusive use in sociology of the objective method would be equivalent, if it were possible, to adding up arshins and poods**: whence, by the way, it follows, not that the objective method must be completely eliminated from this sphere of research, but that the supreme control must be exercised by the subjective method."***

"This sphere of research" is precisely the "physiology" of the *desired society*, the sphere of Utopia. Naturally the use of the "subjective method" in it very much facilitates the work of the "*investigator*". But this use is based not at all on any "laws", but on the "enchantment of charming fantasy"[379] ; whoever once has given way to it, will never revolt even against the use in one and the same "sphere"—true, on different levels—of both methods, subjective and objective, even though such a confusion of methods really does mean "adding up arshins and poods".****

* *Ibid.*, pp. 186-87.

** [The first is a measure of length, the second of weight: thus it is like saying that yards should be added to hundredweights.]

*** N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works*, Vol. IV (Second ed.), p. 185.

**** Incidentally, these very expressions—"objective method", "subjective method"—represent a vast confusion, in terminology at the very least.

*Chapter IV*

## IDEALIST GERMAN PHILOSOPHY

The materialists of the eighteenth century were firmly convinced that they had succeeded in dealing the death-blow to idealism. They regarded it as an obsolete and completely forsaken theory. But a reaction against materialism began already at the end of that century, and in the first half of the nineteenth century materialism itself fell into the position of a system which all considered obsolete and buried, once for all. Idealism not only came to life again, but underwent an unprecedented and truly brilliant development. There were, of course, appropriate social reasons for this: but we will not touch on them here, and will only consider whether the *idealism* of the nineteenth century had any advantages over the *materialism* of the previous epoch and, if it had, in what these advantages consisted.

French materialism displayed an astonishing and today scarcely credible feebleness every time it came upon questions of evolution in nature or in history. Let us take, for example, *the origin of man.* Although the idea of the *gradual evolution* of this species did not seem "*contradictory*" to the materialists, nevertheless they thought such a "guess" to be most improbable. The authors of the *Système de la Nature* (see Part I, ch. 6) say that if anyone were to revolt against such a piece of conjecture, if anyone were to object "that Nature acts with the help of a certain sum of general and invariable laws", and added in doing so that "man, the quadruped, the fish, the insect, the plant, etc., exist from the beginning of time and remain eternally unaltered" they "would not object to this". They would only remark that such a view also does not contradict the truths they set forth. "Man cannot possibly know everything: he cannot know his origin"—that is all that in the end the authors of the *Système de la Nature* say about this important question.

Helvetius seems to be more inclined to the idea of the gradual evolution of man. "Matter is eternal, but its forms are variable,"

he remarks, recalling that even now human natures change under the influence of climate.* He even considered that generally speaking all animal species were variable. But this sound idea was formulated by him very strangely. It followed, in his view, that the causes of " dissimilarity" between the different species of animals and vegetables lie *either* in the qualities of their very "embryos", *or* in the differences of their environment, the differences of their "upbringing".**

Thus *heredity* excludes *mutability,* and vice versa. If we adopt the theory of mutability, we must as a consequence presuppose that from any given "embryo" there can arise, in appropriate circumstances, any animal or vegetable: from the embryo of an oak, for example, a bull or a giraffe. Naturally *such* a "conjecture" could not throw any light on the question of the origin of species, and Helvetius himself, having once made it in passing, never returned to it again.

Just as badly were the French materialists able to explain phenomena of *social* evolution. The various systems of "legislation" were represented by them solely as the product of the conscious creative activity of "legislators"; the various religious systems as the product of the cunning of priests, etc.

This impotence of French materialism in face of questions of evolution in nature and in history made its philosophical content very poor. In its view of nature, that content was reduced to combating the one-sided conception of matter held by the *dualists.* In its view of man it was confined to an endless repetition of, and some variations upon, Locke's principle that *there are no innate ideas.* However valuable such repetition was in combating out-of-date moral and political theories, it could not have serious scientific value unless the materialists had succeeded in applying their conception to the explanation of the spiritual evolution of mankind. We have already said earlier that some very remarkable attempts were made in this direction by the French materialists (i.e., to be precise, by Helvetius), but that they ended in failure (and if they had succeeded, French materialism would have proved very strong in questions of evolution). The materialists, in their view of history, took up a purely idealistic standpoint—that *opinions govern the world.* Only at times, only very rarely, did materialism break into their historical reflections, in the shape of remarks that some stray atom, finding its way into the head of the "legislator" and causing in it a disturbance of the functions of the brain, might alter the course of

* *Le vrai sens du système de la nature,* London, 1774, p. 15.

** "De l'homme", *Œuvres complètes de Helvétius,* Paris, 1818, Vol. II, p. 120.

history for entire ages. *Such* materialism was essentially *fatalism,* and left no room for the foreseeing of events, i.e., for the conscious historical activity of thinking individuals.

It is not surprising, therefore, that to capable and talented people who had not been drawn into the struggle of social forces in which materialism had been a terrible theoretical weapon of the extreme Left party this doctrine seemed *dry, gloomy, melancholy.* That was, for example, how Goethe spoke of it.[380] In order that this reproach should cease to be deserved, materialism had to leave its dry and abstract mode of thought, and attempt to understand and explain "real life"—the complex and variegated chain of concrete phenomena—from its own point of view. But in its then form it was incapable of solving that great problem, and the latter was taken possession of by *idealist philosophy.*

The main and final link in the development of that philosophy was the system of Hegel: therefore we shall refer principally to that system in our exposition.

Hegel called *metaphysical* the point of view of those thinkers—irrespective of whether they were idealists or materialists—who, failing to understand the development of phenomena, willy-nilly represent them to themselves and others as petrified, disconnected, incapable of passing one into another. To this point of view he opposed *dialectics,* which studies phenomena precisely in their development and, consequently, in their interconnection.

According to Hegel, dialectics is *the principle of all life.* Frequently one meets people who, having expressed some abstract proposition, willingly recognise that perhaps they are mistaken, and that perhaps the exactly opposite point of view is correct. These are well-bred people, saturated to their finger tips with *"tolerance":* live and let live, they say to their intellect. Dialectics has nothing in common with the sceptical tolerance of men of the world, but it, too, knows how to reconcile directly opposite abstract propositions. Man is mortal, we say, regarding death as something rooted in external circumstances and quite alien to the nature of living man. It follows that a man has two qualities: first of being alive, and secondly of also being mortal. But upon closer investigation it turns out that *life* itself bears in itself the germ of *death,* and that in general any phenomenon is *contradictory,* in the sense that it develops out of itself the elements which, sooner or later, will put an end to its existence and will transform it into its own opposite. Everything flows, everything changes; and there is no force capable of holding back this constant flux, or arresting this eternal movement. There is no force capable of resisting the dialectics of phenomena. Goethe personifies dialectics in the shape of a spirit[381] :

*In Lebensfluthen, im Thatensturm,*
*Wall'ich auf und ab,*
*Webe hin und her!*
*Geburt und Grab,*
*Ein ewiges Meer,*
*Ein wechselnd Weben,*
*Ein glühend Leben,*
*So schaff'ich am sausenden Webstuhl der Zeit*
*Und wirke der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid.**

At a particular moment a moving body is at a particular spot, but at the same time it is outside it as well because, if it were *only* in that spot, it would, at least for that moment, become *motionless.* Every motion is a dialectical process, a living contradiction, and as there is not a single phenomenon of nature in explaining which we do not have in the long run to appeal to motion, we have to agree with Hegel, who said that *dialectics is the soul of any scientific cognition.* And this applies not only to cognition of nature. What for example is the meaning of the old saw: *summum jus, summa injuria*? Does it mean that we act most justly when, having paid our tribute to law, we at the same time give its due to lawlessness? No, that is the interpretation only of "surface thinking, the mind of fools". The saw means that every abstract justice, carried to its logical conclusion, is transformed into injustice, i.e., into its own opposite. Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* serves as a brilliant illustration of this. Take a look at economic phenomena. What is the logical conclusion of "free *competition*"? Every capitalist strives to beat his competitors and to remain sole master of the market. And, of course, cases are frequent when some Rothschild or Vanderbilt succeeds in happily fulfilling this ambition. But this shows that free competition leads to monopoly, that is to the negation of competition, i.e., to its own opposite. Or look at the conclusion to which the so-called *labour principle of property,* extolled by our Narodnik literature, leads. Only that belongs to me which has been created by my labour. Nothing can be more just than that. And it is no less just that I use the thing I have created at

* *In the tides of Life, in Action's storm,*
*A fluctuant wave,*
*A shuttle free,*
*Birth and the Grave,*
*An eternal sea,*
*A weaving, flowing,*
*Life, all-glowing,*
*Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares*
*The garment of Life which the Deity wears!*
(*Faust,* Part I, Scene I [Bayard Taylor's translation].)

my own free discretion: I use it myself or I exchange it for something else, which for some reason I need more. It is equally just, then, that I make use of the thing I have secured by exchange—again at my free discretion—as I find best and most pleasant and advantageous. Let us now suppose that I have sold the product of my own labour for money, and have used the money to hire a labourer, i.e., I have bought somebody else's labour-power. Having taken advantage of this labour-power of another, I turn out to be the owner of value which is considerably higher than the value I spent on its purchase. This, on the one hand, is very just, because it has already been recognised, after all, that I can use what I have secured by exchange as is best and most advantageous for myself: and, on the other hand, it is very unjust, because I am exploiting the labour of *another* and thereby negating the principle which lay at the foundation of my conception of justice. The property acquired by my personal labour bears me the property created by the labour of another. Summum jus, summa injuria. And such injuria springs up by the very nature of things in the economy of almost any well-to-do handicraftsman, almost every prosperous peasant.*

And so *every phenomenon, by the action of those same forces which condition its existence, sooner or later, but inevitably, is transformed into its own opposite.*

We have said that the idealist German philosophy regarded all phenomena from the point of view of their evolution, and that this is what is meant by regarding then *dialectically*. It must be remarked that the *metaphysicians* know how to distort the very doctrine of evolution itself. They affirm that neither in nature nor in history are there any leaps. When they speak of the *origin* of some phenomenon or social institution, they represent matters as though this phenomenon or institution was once upon a time very tiny, quite unnoticeable, and then gradually grew up. When it is a question of *destroying* this or that phenomenon and institution, they presuppose, on the contrary, its gradual diminution,

* Mr. Mikhailovsky thinks this eternal and ubiquitous supremacy of dialectics incomprehensible: everything changes except the laws of dialectical motion, he says with sarcastic scepticism. Yes, that's just it, we reply: and if it surprises you, if you wish to contest this view, remember that you will have to contest the fundamental standpoint of modern science. In order to be convinced of this, it is sufficient for you to recall those words of Playfair which Lyell took as an epigraph to his famous work *Principles of Geology*: "Amid the revolutions of the globe, the economy of Nature has been uniform, and her laws are the only things that have resisted the general movement. The rivers and the rocks, the seas and the continents have been changed in all their parts; but the laws which direct these changes, and the rules to which they are subject, have remained invariably the same."

continuing up to the point when the phenomenon becomes quite unnoticeable on account of its microscopic dimensions. Evolution conceived of in this way explains absolutely nothing; it presupposes the existence of the phenomena which it has to explain, and reckons only with the *quantitative changes* which take place in them. The supremacy of metaphysical thought was once so powerful in natural science that many naturalists could not imagine evolution otherwise than just in the form of such a gradual increase or diminution of the magnitude of the phenomenon being investigated. Although from the time of Harvey it was already recognised that "*everything living develops out of the egg*", no exact conception was linked, evidently, with such development from the egg, and the discovery of spermatozoa immediately provided the basis for the appearance of theory according to which in the seminal cell there already existed a ready-made, completely developed but microscopical little animal, so that all its "*development*" amounted to *growth.* Some wise sages, including many famous European evolutionary sociologists, still regard the "evolution", say, of political institutions, precisely in this way: history makes no leaps: *va piano* (go softly)....

German idealist philosophy decisively revolted against such a misshapen conception of evolution. Hegel bitingly ridiculed it, and demonstrated irrefutably that both in nature and in human society *leaps* constituted just as essential a stage of evolution as gradual quantitative changes. "Changes in being," he says, "consist not only in the fact that one quantity passes into another quantity, but also that quality passes into quantity, and vice versa. Each transition of the latter kind represents an *interruption in gradualness* (ein Abbrechen des Allmählichen), and gives the phenomenon a new aspect, qualitatively distinct from the previous one. Thus, water when it is cooled grows hard, not gradually ... but all at once; having already been cooled to freezing-point, it can still remain a liquid only if it preserves a state of rest, and then the slightest impulse is sufficient for it suddenly to become hard.... In the world of moral phenomena ... there take place the same changes of quantitative into qualitative, and differences in qualities there also are founded upon quantitative differences. Thus, *a little less, a little more* constitutes that limit beyond which frivolity ceases and there appears something quite different, crime.... Thus also, states—other conditions being equal—acquire a different qualitative character merely in consequence of differences in their size. Particular laws and a particular constitution acquire quite a different significance with the extension of the territory of a state and of the numbers of its citizens."*

* *Wissenschaft der Logik* (First ed.), Part I, Book I, pp. 313-14.[Second ed., Leipzig, 1932, Part I, Book I, pp. 383-84.]

Modern naturalists know very well how frequently changes of quantity lead to changes of quality. Why does one part of the solar spectrum produce in us the sensation of a red colour, another, of green, etc.? Physics replies that everything is due here to the number of oscillations of the particles of the ether. It is known that this number changes for every colour of the spectrum, rising from red to violet. Nor is this all. The intensity of heat in the spectrum increases in proportion to the approach to the external border of the red band, and reaches its highest point a little distance from it, on leaving the spectrum. It follows that in the spectrum there are rays of a special kind which do not give light but only heat. Physics says, here too, that the qualities of the rays change in consequence of changes in the number of oscillations of the particles of the ether.

But even this is not all. The sun's rays have a certain chemical effect, as is shown for example by the fading of material in the sun. What distinguishes the violet and the so-called ultra-violet rays, which arouse in us no sensation of light, is their greatest chemical strength. The difference in the chemical action of the various rays is explained once again only by quantitative differences in the oscillations of the particles of the ether: *quantity passes into quality.*

Chemistry confirms the same thing. Ozone has different qualities from ordinary oxygen. Whence comes this difference? In the molecule of ozone there is a different number of atoms from that contained in the molecule of ordinary oxygen. Let us take three hydrocarbon compounds: $CH_4$ (marsh gas), $C_2H_6$ (dimethyl) and $C_3H_8$ (methyl-ethyl). All of these are composed according to the formula: $n$ atoms of carbon and $2n+2$ atoms of hydrogen. If $n$ is equal to 1, you get marsh gas; if $n$ is equal to 2, you get dimethyl; if $n$ is equal to 3, methyl-ethyl appears. In this way entire series are formed, the importance of which any chemist will tell you; and all these series unanimously confirm the principle of the old dialectical idealists that *quantity passes into quality.*

Now we have learned the principal distinguishing features of dialectical thought, but the reader feels himself unsatisfied. But where is the famous *triad,* he asks, the triad which is, as is well known, the whole essence of Hegelian dialectics? Your pardon, reader, we do not mention the triad for the simple reason that it *does not at all play in Hegel's work the part which is attributed to it* by people who have not the least idea of the philosophy of that thinker, and who have studied it, for example, from the "*text-book of criminal law*" of Mr. Spasovich.* Filled with sacred simplicity,

* "Aspiring to a barrister's career," Mr. Mikhailovsky tells us, "I passionately, though unsystematically, read various legal works. Among them was the text-book of criminal law by Mr. Spasovich. This work contains a

these light-hearted people are convinced that the whole argumentation of the German idealist was reduced to references to the triad; that whatever theoretical difficulties the old man came up against, he left others to rack their poor "unenlightened" brains over them while he, with a tranquil smile, immediately built up a syllogism: all phenomena occur according to a triad, I am faced with a phenomenon, consequently I shall turn to the triad.* This is simply *lunatic nonsense,* as one of the characters of Karonin puts it, or *unnaturally idle talk,* if you prefer the expression of Shchedrin. Not once in the eighteen volumes of Hegel's works does the "*triad*" play the part of an *argument,* and anyone in the least familiar with his philosophical doctrine understands that it *could not play such a part.* With Hegel the triad has the same significance as it had previously with Fichte, whose philosophy is essentially different from the Hegelian. Obviously only gross ignorance can consider the principal distinguishing feature of one philosophical system to be that which applies to *at least* two quite different systems.

We are sorry that the "triad" has diverted us from our exposition: but, having mentioned it, we should reach a conclusion. So let us examine what kind of a bird it is.

Every phenomenon, developing to its conclusion, becomes transformed into its opposite; but as the new phenomenon, being opposite to the first, also is transformed in its turn into its own opposite, the third phase of development bears a *formal resemblance to the first.* For the time being, let us leave aside the

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brief survey of various philosophical systems in their relation to criminology. I was particularly struck by the famous triad of Hegel, in virtue of which punishment so gracefully becomes the reconciliation of the contradiction between law and crime. The seductive character of the tripartite formula of Hegel in its most varied applications is well known.... And it is not surprising that I was fascinated by it in the text-book of Mr. Spasovich. Nor is it surprising that thereupon it drew me to Hegel and to much else...." (*Russkaya Mysl,* 1891, Vol. III, Part II, p. 188.) A pity, a great pity, that Mr. Mikhailovsky does not tell us how far he satisfied his yearning "for Hegel". To all appearances, he did not go very far in this direction.

* Mr. Mikhailovsky assures us that the late N. Sieber, when arguing with him about the inevitability of capitalism in Russia, "used all possible arguments, but at the least danger hid behind the authority of the immutable and unquestionable tripartite dialectical development" (*Russkaya Mysl,* 1892, Vol. VI, Part II, p. 196). He assures us also that all of what he calls Marx's prophecies about the outcome of capitalist development repose only on the "triad". We shall discuss Marx later, but of N. Sieber we may remark that we had more than once to converse with the deceased, and not once did we hear from him references to "dialectical development". He himself said more than once that he was quite ignorant of the significance of Hegel in the development of modern economics. Of course, everything can be blamed on the dead, and therefore Mr. Mikhailovsky's evidence is irrefutable.

question of the extent to which such a course of development corresponds to reality: let us admit for the sake of argument that those were wrong who thought that it does so correspond completely. But in any case it is clear that the "triad" only *follows* from one of Hegel's principles: it does not in the least serve him as a main principle itself. This is a very essential difference, because if the triad had figured as a main principle, the people who attribute such an important part to it could really seek protection under its "authority", but as it plays no such part, the only people who can hide behind it are maybe those who, as the saying has it, *have heard a bell, but where they cannot tell.*

Naturally the situation would not change one iota if, without hiding behind the "triad", dialecticians "at the least danger" sought protection "behind the authority" of the principle that every phenomenon is transformed into its own opposite. But they never behaved in that way either, and they did not do so because the principle mentioned does not at all exhaust their views on the evolution of phenomena. They say in addition, for example, that in the process of evolution quantity passes into quality, and quality into quantity. Consequently they have to reckon both with the qualitative and the quantitative sides of the process; and this presupposes an attentive attitude to its *real* course in *actual fact*; and this means in its turn that they do not content themselves with *abstract conclusions from abstract principles*—or, at any rate, must not be satisfied with such conclusions, if they wish to remain true to their outlook upon the world.

"On every page of his works Hegel constantly and tirelessly pointed out that philosophy is identical with the *totality of empirics*, that philosophy requires nothing so insistently as going deeply into the empirical sciences.... Material facts without thought have only a relative importance, thought without material facts is a mere chimera.... Philosophy is that *consciousness* at which the empirical sciences arrive relative to themselves. It cannot be anything else."

That is the view of the task of the thinking investigator which Lassalle drew from the doctrine of Hegelian philosophy*: philosophers must be specialists in those sciences which they wish to help to reach "self-consciousness". It seems a very far cry from the special study of a subject to thoughtless chatter in honour of the "triad". And let them not tell us that Lassalle was not a "real" Hegelian, that he belonged to the "Left" and sharply reproached the "Right" with merely engaging in abstract constructions of thought. The man tells you plainly that he borrowed his view directly from Hegel.

* See his *System der erworbenen Rechte* (Second ed.), Leipzig, 1880. Preface, pp. xii-xiii.

But perhaps you will want to rule out the evidence of the author of the *System of Acquired Rights,* just as in court the evidence of relatives is ruled out. We shall not argue and contradict; we shall call as a witness a quite extraneous person, the author of the *Sketches of the Gogol Period.* We ask for attention: the witness will speak long and, as usual, wisely.

"We follow Hegel as little as we follow Descartes or Aristotle. Hegel now belongs to past history; the present has its own philosophy and clearly sees the flaws in the Hegelian system. It must be admitted, however, that the principles advanced by Hegel were indeed very near to the truth, and this thinker brought out some aspects of the truth with truly astonishing power. Of these truths, the discovery of some stands to Hegel's personal credit; others do not belong exclusively to his system, they belong to German philosophy as a whole from the time of Kant and Fichte; but nobody before Hegel had formulated them so clearly and had expressed them with such power as they were in his system.

"First of all we shall point to the most fruitful principle underlying all progress which so sharply and brilliantly distinguishes German philosophy in general, and the Hegelian system in particular, from the hypocritical and craven views that predominated at that time (the beginning of the nineteenth century) among the French and the English: 'Truth is the supreme goal of thought; seek truth, for in truth lies good; whatever truth may be, it is better than falsehood; the first duty of the thinker is not to retreat from any results; he must be prepared to sacrifice his most cherished opinions to truth. Error is the source of all ruin; truth is the supreme good and the source of all other good.' To be able to appraise the extreme importance of this demand, common to German philosophy as a whole since the time of Kant, but expressed with exceptional vigour by Hegel, one must remember what strange and narrow restrictions the thinkers of the other schools of that period imposed upon truth. They began to philosophise, only in order 'to justify their cherished convictions', i.e., they sought not truth, but support for their prejudices. Each took from truth only what pleased him and rejected every truth that was unpleasant to him, bluntly admitting that a pleasing error suited him much better than impartial truth. The German philosophers (especially Hegel) called this practice of seeking not truth but confirmation of pleasing prejudices 'subjective thinking' (Saints above! Is this, perhaps, why our subjective thinkers called Hegel a scholastic? —*Author*), philosophising for personal pleasure, and not for the vital need of truth. Hegel fiercely denounced the idle and pernicious pastime." (Listen well! ) "As a necessary precaution against inclinations to digress from truth in order to pander to personal desires and prejudices, Hegel advanced his

celebrated 'dialectical method of thinking'. The essence of this method lies in that the thinker must not rest content with any positive deduction, but must find out whether the object he is thinking about contains qualities and forces the opposite of those which the object had presented to him at first sight. Thus, the thinker was obliged to examine the object from all sides, and truth appeared to him only as a consequence of a conflict between all possible opposite opinions. Gradually, as a result of this method, the former one-sided conceptions of an object were supplanted by a full and all-sided investigation, and a living conception was obtained of all the real qualities of an object. To explain reality became the paramount duty of philosophical thought. As a result, extraordinary attention was paid to reality, which had been formerly ignored and unceremoniously distorted in order to pander to personal, one-sided prejudices." (De te fabula narratur! ) "Thus, conscientious, tireless search for truth took the place of the former arbitrary interpretations. In reality, however, everything depends upon circumstances, upon the conditions of place and time, and therefore, Hegel found that the former general phrases by which good and evil were judged without an examination of the circumstances and causes that give rise to a given phenomenon, that these general, abstract aphorisms were unsatisfactory. Every object, every phenomenon has its own significance, and it must be judged according to the circumstances, the environment, in which it exists. This rule was expressed by the formula: 'There is no abstract truth; truth is concrete', i.e., a definite judgement can be pronounced only about a definite fact, after examining all the circumstances on which it depends."*

* Chernyshevsky, *Sketches of the Gogol Period in Russian Literature*, St. Petersburg, 1892, pp. 258-59. In a special footnote the author of the *Sketches* magnificently demonstrates what is the precise meaning of this examination of all the circumstances on which the particular phenomenon depends. We shall quote this footnote too. "For example: 'Is rain good or bad? ' This is an abstract question; a definite answer cannot be given to it. Sometimes rain is beneficial, sometimes, although more rarely, it is harmful. One must inquire specifically: 'After the grain was sown it rained heavily for five hours—was the rain useful for the crop? '—only here is the answer: 'that rain was very useful' clear and sensible. 'But in that very same summer, just when harvest time arrived, it rained in torrents for a whole week—was that good for the crop? ' The answer: 'No. That rain was harmful', is equally clear and correct. That is how all questions are decided by Hegelian philosophy. 'Is war disastrous or beneficial? ' This cannot be answered definitely in general; one must know what kind of war is meant, everything depends upon circumstances, time and place. For savage peoples, the harmfulness of war is less palpable, the benefits of it are more tangible. For civilised peoples, war usually does more harm than good. But the war of 1812, for example, was a war of salvation for the Russian people. The Battle of Marathon[382] was a most beneficial event in the history of mankind. Such is the meaning of the axiom:

And so, on the one hand, we are told that the distinguishing feature of Hegel's philosophy was its most careful investigation of reality, the most conscientious attitude to any particular subject, the study of the latter in its living environment, with all those circumstances of time and place which condition or accompany its existence. The evidence of N. G. Chernyshevsky is identical in this case with the evidence of F. Lassalle. And on the other hand we are assured that this philosophy was empty scholasticism, the whole secret of which consisted in the sophistical use of the "triad". In this case the evidence of Mr. Mikhailovsky is in complete agreement with the evidence of Mr. V. V., and of a whole legion of other modern Russian writers. How is this divergence of witnesses to be explained? Explain it any way you please: but remember that Lassalle and the author of the *Sketches of the Gogol Period* did know the philosophy they were talking about, while Messrs. Mikhailovsky, V. V., and their brethren have quite certainly not given themselves the trouble of studying even a single work of Hegel.

And notice that in characterising dialectical thought the author of the *Sketches* did not say one word about the triad. How is it that he did not notice that same elephant, which Mr. Mikhailovsky and company so stubbornly and so ceremoniously bring out on view to every loafer? Once again please remember that the author of the *Sketches of the Gogol Period* knew the philosophy of Hegel, while Mr. Mikhailovsky and Co. have not the least conception of it.

Perhaps the reader may be pleased to recall certain other judgements on Hegel passed by the author of the *Sketches of the Gogol Period.* Perhaps he will point out to us the famous article: "Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices Against Communal Ownership of Land"? This article does speak about the triad and, to all appearances, the latter is put forward as the main hobby-horse of the German idealist. *But it is only in appearance.* Discussing the history of property, the writer asserts that in the third and highest phase of its development it will return to its point of departure, i.e., that private property in the land and the means of production will yield place to social property. Such a return, he says, is a general law which manifests itself in every process of development. The author's argument is in this case, in fact, nothing else than a reference to the triad. And in this lies

'There is no abstract truth; truth is concrete'— a conception of an object is concrete when it presents itself with all the qualities and specific features and in the circumstances, environment, in which the object exists, and not abstracted from these circumstances and its living specific features (as it is presented by abstract thinking, the judgement of which has, therefore, no meaning for real life)."[383]

its essential defect. *It is abstract*: the development of property is examined without relating it to concrete historical conditions—and therefore the author's arguments are ingenious, brilliant, but not convincing. They only astound, surprise, but do not convince. But is Hegel responsible for this defect in the argument of the author of the "Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices"? Do you really think his argument would have been abstract had he considered the subject just in the way in which, according to his own words, Hegel advised all subjects to be considered, i.e., keeping to the ground of reality, weighing all concrete conditions, all circumstances of time and place? It would seem that that would not be the case; it would seem that then there would not have been just that defect we have mentioned in the article. But what, in that event, gave rise to the defect? The fact that the author of the article "Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices Against Communal Ownership of Land", in controverting the abstract arguments of his opponents, forgot the good advice of Hegel, and *proved unfaithful to the method* of that very thinker to whom he referred. We are sorry that in his polemical excitement he made such a mistake. But, once again, is Hegel to blame because in this particular case the author of "Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices" proved unable to make use of his method? Since when is it that philosophical systems are judged, not by their internal content, but by the mistakes which people referring to them may happen to make?

And once again, however insistently the author of the article I have mentioned refers to the triad, even there he does not put it forward as the main hobby-horse of the dialectical method. Even there he makes it, not the foundation but, at most, an unquestionable consequence. The foundation and the main distinguishing feature of dialectics is brought out by him in the following words: "*Eternal change of forms, eternal rejection of a form brought into being by a particular content or striving, in consequence of an intensification of that striving, the higher development of that same content...*—whoever has understood this great, eternal, ubiquitous law, whoever has learnt how to apply it to every phenomenon—ah, how calmly he calls into play the chance which affrights others," etc.[384]

"Eternal change of forms, eternal rejection of a form brought into being by a particular content" ... dialectical thinkers really do look on such a change, such a "rejection of forms" as a great, eternal, ubiquitous law. At the present time this conviction is not shared only by the representatives of some branches of social science who have not the courage to look truth straight in the eyes, and attempt to defend, albeit with the help of error, the prejudices they hold dear. All the more highly must we value the

services of the great German idealists who, from the very beginning of the present century, constantly spoke of the eternal change of forms, of their eternal rejection in consequence of the intensification of the content which brought those forms into being.

Earlier we left unexamined "*for the time being*" the question of whether it is a fact that every phenomenon is transformed, as the German dialectical idealists thought, into its own opposite. Now, we hope, the reader will agree with us that, strictly speaking, this question *need not be examined at all.* When you apply the dialectical method to the study of phenomena, you need to remember that *forms change eternally in consequence of the "higher development of their content".* You will have to trace this process of rejection of forms in all its fullness, if you wish to exhaust the subject. But whether the new form is the opposite of the old you will find from experience, and it is not at all important to know this beforehand. True, it is just on the basis of the historical experience of mankind that every lawyer knowing his business will tell you that every legal institution sooner or later is transformed into its own opposite. Today it promotes the satisfaction of certain social needs; today it is valuable and necessary precisely in view of these needs. Then it begins to satisfy those needs worse and worse. Finally it is transformed into an *obstacle* to their satisfaction. From something *necessary* it becomes something *harmful*—and then it is distroyed. Take whatever you like—the history of literature or the history of species—wherever there is development, you will see similar dialectics. But nevertheless, if someone wanted to penetrate the essence of the dialectical process and were to begin, of all things, with testing the idea of the *oppositeness* of the phenomena which constitute a series in each particular process of development, he would be approaching the problem from the wrong end.

In selecting the view-point for such a test, there would always turn out to be very much that was *arbitrary*. The question must be regarded from its objective side, or in other words one must make clear to oneself what is the inevitable change of forms involved in the development of the particular content? This is the same idea, only expressed in other words. But in testing it in practice there is no place for arbitrary choice, because the point of view of the investigator is determined by *the very character of the forms and content themselves.*

In the words of Engels, Hegel's merit consists in the fact that he was the first to regard all phenomena from the point of view of their *development*, from the point of view of their origin and destruction. "Whether he was the first to do it is debatable," says Mr. Mikhailovsky, "but at all events he was not the last, and

the present-day theories of development—the evolutionism of Spencer, Darwinism, the ideas of development in psychology, physics, geology, etc.—have nothing in common with Hegelianism."*

If modern natural science confirms at every step the idea expressed with such genius by Hegel, that quantity passes into quality, can we say that it had nothing in common with Hegelianism? True, Hegel was not the "*last*" of those who spoke of such a transition, but this was just for the very same reason that Darwin was not the "last" of those who spoke of the variability of species and Newton was not the "last" of the Newtonists. What would you have? Such is the course of development of the human intellect! Express *a correct idea,* and you will certainly not be the "last" of those who defend it; talk some *nonsense,* and although people have a great failing for it, you still risk finding yourself to be its "last" defender and champion. Thus, in our modest opinion, Mr. Mikhailovsky runs a considerable risk of proving to be the "last" supporter of the "subjective method in sociology". Speaking frankly, we see no reason to regret such a course of development of the intellect.

We suggest that Mr. Mikhailovsky—who finds "debatable" everything in the world, and much else—should refute our following proposition: that wherever the idea of evolution appears "in psychology, physics, geology, etc." it always has very much "in common with Hegelianism", i.e., in every up-to-date study of evolution there are invariably repeated some of the general propositions of Hegel. We say *some*, and not *all,* because many modern evolutionists, lacking the adequate philosophical education, understand "evolution" *abstractly* and *one-sidedly.* An example are the gentry, already mentioned earlier, who assure us that neither nature nor history makes any leaps. Such people would gain a very great deal from acquaintance with Hegel's *logic.* Let Mr. Mikhailovsky refute us: but only let him not forget that we cannot be refuted by knowing Hegel only from the "text-book of criminal law" by Mr. Spasovich and from Lewes' *Biographical History of Philosophy.* He must take the trouble to study Hegel himself.

In saying that the present-day teachings of the evolutionists always have very much "in common with Hegelianism", we are not asserting that the present evolutionists have borrowed their views from Hegel. Quite the reverse. Very often they have just as mistaken a view of him as Mr. Mikhailovsky has. And if nevertheless their theories, even partially and just at those points where they turn out to be correct, become a new illustration of

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* 1894, Vol. II, Part II, p. 150.

"Hegelianism", this circumstance only brings out in higher relief the astonishing power of thought of the German idealist: people who never read him, by the sheer force of facts and the evident sense of "reality", are obliged to speak as he spoke. One could not think of a greater triumph for a philosopher: *readers* ignore him, but *life* confirms his views.

Up to this day it is still difficult to say to what extent the views of the German idealists directly influenced German natural science in the direction mentioned, although it is unquestionable that in the first half of the present century even the naturalists in Germany studied philosophy during their university course, and although *such* men learned in the biological sciences as Haeckel speak with respect nowadays of the evolutionary theories of some nature-philosophers. But the philosophy of nature was the weak point of German idealism. Its strength lay in *its theories dealing with the various sides of historical development.* As for those theories, let Mr. Mikhailovsky remember—if he ever knew—that it was just from the school of Hegel that there emerged all that brilliant constellation of thinkers and investigators who gave quite a new aspect to the study of religion, aesthetics. law, political economy, history, philosophy and so forth. In all these "disciplines", during a certain most fruitful period, there was not a single outstanding worker who was not indebted to Hegel for his development and for his fresh views on his own branch of knowledge. Does Mr. Mikhailovsky think that this, too, is "debatable"? If he does, let him just try.

Speaking of Hegel, Mr. Mikhailovsky tries "to do it in such a way as to be understood by people uninitiated in the mysteries of the 'philosophical nightcap of Yegor Fyodorovich' as Belinsky disrespectfully put it when he raised the banner of revolt against Hegel"[385]. He takes "for this purpose" two examples from Engels' book *Anti-Dühring* (but why not from Hegel himself? That would be much more becoming to a writer "initiated into the mysteries", etc.).

"A grain of oats falls in favourable conditions: it strikes root and thereby, *as such*, as a grain, *is negated.* In its place there arises a stalk, which is the *negation* of the grain; the plant develops and bears fruit, i.e., new grains of oats, and when these grains ripen, the stalk perishes: it was the *negation* of the grain, and now it is *negated* itself. And thereafter the same process of 'negation' and 'negation of negation' is repeated an endless number" *(sic!)* "of times. At the basis of this process lies *contradiction*: the grain of oats is a grain and at the same time *not* a grain, as it is always in a state of actual or potential development." Mr. Mikhailovsky naturally finds this "debatable". And this is how this attractive *possibility* passes with him into *reality.*

"The first stage, the stage of the grain, is the thesis, or proposition; the second, up to the formation of new grains, is the antithesis, or contradiction; the third is the synthesis or reconciliation" (Mr. Mikhailovsky has decided to write in a popular style, and therefore leaves no Greek words without explanation or translation) "and all together they constitute a triad or trichotomy. And such is the fate of all that is alive: it arises, it develops and provides the origin of its repetition, after which it dies. A vast number of individual expressions of this process immediately rise up in the memory of the reader, of course, and Hegel's law proves justified in the whole organic world (for the present we go no further). If however we regard our example a little more closely, we shall see the extreme superficiality and arbitrariness of our generalisation. We took a grain, a stalk and once more a grain or, more exactly, a group of grains. But before bearing fruit, a plant flowers. When we speak of oats or some other grain of economic importance, we can have in view a grain that has been sown, the straw and a grain that has been harvested: but to consider that the life of the plant has been exhausted by these three stages is quite unfounded. In the life of a plant the point of flowering is accompanied by an extreme and peculiar straining of forces, and as the flower does not arise direct from the grain, we arrive, even keeping to Hegel's terminology, not at a trichotomy but at least at a tetrachotomy, a division into four: the stalk negates the grain, the flower negates the stalk, the fruit negates the flower. The omission of the moment of flowering is of considerable importance also in the following respect. In the days of Hegel, perhaps, it was permissible to take the grain for the point of departure in the life of the plant, and from the business point of view it may be permissible to do so even today: the business year does begin with the sowing of the grain. But the life of the plant does not begin with the grain. We now know very well that the grain is something very complex in its structure, and itself represents the product of development of the cell, and that the cells requisite for reproduction are formed precisely at the moment of flowering. Thus in the example taken from vegetable life not only has the point of departure been taken arbitrarily and incorrectly, but the whole process has been artificially and once again arbitrarily squeezed into the framework of a trichotomy."* And the conclusion is: "*It is about time we ceased to believe that oats grow according to Hegel.*"[386]

Everything flows, everything changes! In our day, i.e., when the writer of these lines, as a student, studied the natural sciences, oats grew "according to Hegel", while now "*we know very well*"

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* 1894, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 154-57.

that all that is nonsense: now "nous avons changé tout cela". But really, do we quite "know" what "we" are talking about?

Mr. Mikhailovsky sets forth the example of a grain of oats, which he has borrowed from Engels, quite otherwise than as it is set forth by Engels himself. Engels says: "The grain as such ceases to exist, it is *negated*, and in its place appears the plant which has arisen from it, the negation of the grain. But what is the normal life-process of this plant? It grows, flowers, is fertilised and finally once more produces grains of oats,* and as soon as these have ripened the stalk dies, is in its turn negated. As a result of this negation of the negation we have once again the original grain of barley, but not as a single unit, but ten-, twenty-, or thirty-fold."** For Engels the negation of the grain was the *entire plant*, in the cycle of life of which are included, incidentally, both *flowering* and *fertilisation*. Mr. Mikhailovsky "negates" the word plant by putting in its place the word *stalk*. The stalk, as is known, constitutes *only part* of a plant, and naturally is *negated* by its other parts: *omnis determinatio est negatio*. But that is the very reason why Mr. Mikhailovsky "negates" the expression used by Engels, replacing it by his own: the stalk negates the grain, he shouts, the flower negates the stalk, the fruit negates the flower: there's a tetrachotomy at least! Quite so, Mr. Mikhailosky: but all that only goes to prove that in your argument with Engels you do not stop even at ... how shall I put it more mildly ... at the "*moment*" ... of *altering the words of your opponent*. This method is somewhat ... "subjective".

Once the "moment" of substitution has done its work, the hateful triad falls apart like a house of cards. You have left out the moment of flowering—the Russian "sociologist" reproaches the German Socialist—and "the omission of the moment of flowering is of considerable importance". The reader has seen that the "moment of flowering" has been omitted not by Engels, but by Mr. Mikhailovsky in setting forth the views of Engels; he knows also that "omissions" of that kind in literature are given considerable, though quite negative, importance. Mr. Mikhailovsky here, too, had recourse to a somewhat unattractive "moment". But what could he do? The "triad" is so hateful, victory is so pleasant, and "people quite uninitiated in the mysteries" of a certain "nightcap" are so gullible!

*We all are innocent from birth,*
*To virtue a great price we pin:*

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* Engels writes, strictly speaking, of barley, not oats: but this is immaterial, of course.

** *Herrn Eugen Dühring's Umwälzung der Wissenschaft*, I. Auflage, I. Teil, S. 111-12.[387]

*But meet such people on this earth*
*That truly, we can't help but sin...*[388]

The flower is an organ of the plant and, as such, as little negates the plant as the head of Mr. Mikhailovsky negates Mr. Mikhailovsky. But the "fruit" or, to be more exact, the fertilised ovum, is really the negation of the given organism being the point of departure of the development of a new life. Engels accordingly considers the cycle of life of a plant from the beginning of its development out of the fertilised ovum to its *reproduction* of a fertilised ovum. Mr. Mikhailovsky with the learned air of a connoisseur remarks: "The life of a plant does not begin with the grain. We now know very well, etc.": briefly, we now know that the seed is fertilised during the flowering. Engels, of course, knows this just as well as Mr. Mikhailovsky. But what does this prove? If Mr. Mikhailovsky prefers, we shall replace *the grain* by *the fertilised seed*, but it will not alter the essence of the life-cycle of the plant, and will not refute the "triad". The oats will still be growing "according to Hegel".

By the way, supposing we admit for a moment that the "moment of flowering" overthrows all the arguments of the Hegelians. How will Mr. Mikhailovsky have us deal with non-flowering plants? Is he really going to leave them in the grip of the triad? That would be wrong, because the triad would in that event have a vast number of subjects.

But we put this question really only in order to make clearer Mr. Mikhailovsky's idea. We ourselves still remain convinced that you can't save yourself from the triad even with "the flower". And are we alone in thinking so? Here is what, for example, the botanical specialist Ph. Van Tieghem says: "Whatever be the form of the plant, and to whatever group it may belong thanks to that form, its body always originates in another body which existed before it and from which it separated. In its turn, at a given moment, it separates from its mass particular parts, which become the point of departure, the germs, of as many new bodies, and so forth. In a word it reproduces itself in the same way as it is born: by dissociation."* Just look at that! A scholar of repute, a member of the Institute, a professor at the Museum of Natural History, and talks like a veritable Hegelian: it begins, he says, with dissociation and finishes up with it again. And not a word about the "moment of flowering"! We ourselves understand how very vexing this must be for Mr. Mikhailovsky; but there's nothing to be done—truth, as we know, is more important than Plato.

Let us once again suppose that "the moment of flowering" overthrows the triad. In that case, "keeping to Hegel's terminol-

* *Traité de Botanique* (2nd ed.), Paris, 1891, Part I, p. 24.

ogy, we arrive not at a trichotomy but at least at a tetrachotomy, a division into four". "Hegel's terminology" reminds us of his Encyclopaedia. We open its first part, and learn from it that there are many cases when *trichotomy* passes into *tetrachotomy*, and that generally speaking trichotomy, as a matter of fact, is supreme only in the sphere of the spirit.* So it turns out that oats grow "according to Hegel", as Van Tieghem assures us, and Hegel thinks about oats *according to Mr. Mikhailovsky*, as is evidenced by the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*. Marvel upon marvel! "She to him, and he to me, and I to the barman Peter...."[389]

Another example borrowed by Mr. Mikhailovsky from Engels, to enlighten the "uninitiated", deals with the teachings of Rousseau.[390]

"According to Rousseau, people in their natural state and savagery were equal with the equality of animals. But man is distinguished by his perfectibility, and this process of perfection began with the appearance of inequality: thereafter every further step of civilisation was contradictory: they were 'steps seemingly towards the perfection of the individual man, but in reality towards the decay of the race.... Metallurgy and agriculture were the two arts the discovery of which produced this great revolution. For the poet it is gold and silver, but for the philosopher iron and corn, which have civilised men and ruined the human race.' Inequality continues to develop and, reaching its apogee, turns, in the eastern despotisms, once again into the universal equality of universal insignificance, i.e., returns to its point of departure: and thereafter the further process in the same way brings one to the equality of the social contract."

That is how Mr. Mikhailovsky sets out the example given by Engels. As is quite obvious, he finds this, too, "debatable".

"One could make some remark about Engels' exposition; but is it important for us only to know what precisely Engels values in Rousseau's work (*Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes).* He does not touch upon the question of whether Rousseau rightly or wrongly understands the course of history, he is interested only in the fact that Rousseau 'thinks dialectically': he sees *contradiction* in the very content of progress, and disposes his exposition in such a way as to make it adaptable to the Hegelian formula of *negation* and *negation of the negation.* And in reality this can be done, even though Rousseau did not know the Hegelian dialectical formula."

This is only the first outpost attack on "Hegelianism" in the person of Engels. Then follows the attack sur toute la ligne.

* *Enzyklopädie,* Erster Teil, §230, Zusatz.

"Rousseau, without knowing Hegel, thought dialectically according to Hegel. Why Rousseau and not Voltaire, or not the first man in the street? Because all people, by their very nature, think dialectically. Yet it is precisely Rousseau who is selected, a man who stands out among his contemporaries not only by his gifts—in this respect many were not inferior to him—but by his very mental make-up and by the character of his perception of the world. Such an exceptional phenomenon, you might think, ought not to be taken as a test for a general rule. But we pick as we choose. Rousseau is interesting and important, first of all, because he was the first to demonstrate sufficiently clearly *the contradictory character* of civilisation, and contradiction is the essential condition of the dialectical process. We must however remark that the contradiction discerned by Rousseau has nothing in common with contradiction in the Hegelian sense of the word. The contradiction of Hegel lies in the fact that everything, being in a constant process of motion and change (and precisely by the consistent triple path), is at every given unit of time 'it' and at the same time '*not-it*'. If we leave aside the obligatory three stages of development, contradiction is here simply, as it were, the lining of changes, motion, development. Rousseau also speaks of the process of change. But it is by no means in the very fact of change that he sees contradiction. A considerable part of his argument, both in the *Discours* and in his other works, can be summarised in the following way: intellectual progress has been accompanied by moral retrogression. Evidently dialectical thinking has absolutely nothing to do with it: there is no 'negation of the negation' here, but only an indication of the simultaneous existence of good and evil in the particular group of phenomena. All the resemblance to the dialectical process is reduced to the *single word* 'contradiction'. This, however, is only one side of the case. In addition, Engels sees an obvious trichotomy in Rousseau's argument: after primitive equality follows its negation—inequality, then follows the negation of the negation—the equality of all in the eastern despotisms, in face of the power of the khan, sultan, shah. 'Here we have the extreme measure of inequality, the final point which completes the circle and meets the point from which we set out.' But history does not stop at this, it develops new inequalities, and so forth. The words we have quoted are the actual words of Rousseau, and it is they which are particularly dear to Engels, as obvious evidence that Rousseau thinks according to Hegel."*

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* All these extracts have been taken from the volume of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* already quoted.

Rousseau "stood out among his contemporaries". That is true. What made him stand out? The fact that he thought *dialectically,* whereas his contemporaries were almost without exception *metaphysicians.* His view of the origin of inequality is *precisely a dialectical view,* although Mr. Mikhailovsky denies it.

In the words of Mr. Mikhailovsky, Rousseau only pointed out that intellectual progress was accompanied in the history of civilisation by moral retrogression. No, Rousseau did not only point this out. According to him, intellectual progress was the *cause* of moral retrogression. It would be possible to realise this even without reading the works of Rousseau: it would be sufficient to recall, on the basis of the previous extract, what part he ascribed in his work to the working of metals and agriculture, which produced the great revolution that destroyed primitive equality. But whoever has read Rousseau himself has not, of course, forgotten the following passage in his *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité.* "Il me reste à considérer et á rapprocher les différents hasards qui ont pu perfectionner la raison humaine en détériorant l'espèce, rendre un être méchant en le rendant sociable...." ("It remains for me to consider and to bring together the different hazards which have been able to perfect human reason by worsening the human species, making this animal wicked by making him sociable....")

This passage is particularly remarkable because it illustrates very well Rousseau's view on the capactiy of the human race for progress. This peculiarity was spoken of a great deal by his "contemporaries" as well. But with them it was a mysterious force which, out of its own inner essence, brought about the successes of reason. According to Rousseau, this capacity "*never could develop of its own accord*". For its development it required constant impulses from outside. This is one of the most important specific features of the *dialectical* view of intellectual *progress,* compared with the *metaphysical* view. We shall have to refer to it again later. At present what is important is that the passage just quoted expresses with utmost clarity the opinion of Rousseau as to the causal connection between moral *retrogression* and intellectual *progress.** And this is very important for ascertaining the view of this writer on the course of civilisation. Mr. Mikhailovsky makes it appear that Rousseau simply pointed out a "contradiction", and maybe shed some generous tears about it. In reality Rousseau

* For doubters there is another extract: "J'ai assigné ce premier degré de la décadence des moeurs au premier moment de la culture des lettres dans tous les pays du monde." Lettre à M. l'abbé Raynal, *Œuvres de Rousseau,* Paris, 1820, Vol. IV, p. 43. ["I have assigned this first degree of the decadence of morals to the first moment of the art of letters in all countries of the world." Letter to the Abbé Raynal, in Rousseau's *Works,* Paris, 1820, Vol. IV, p. 43.]

considered this contradiction to be the mainspring of the historical development of civilisation. The founder of civil society, and consequently the grave-digger of primitive equality, was the man who first fenced off a piece of land and said: "It belongs to me." In other words, the foundation of civil society is property, which arouses so many disputes among men, evokes in them so much greed, so spoils their morality. But the origin of property presupposed a certain development of *"technique and knowledge"* (de l'industrie et del lumieres). Thus primitive relations perished precisely thanks to this development; but at the time when this development led to the triumph of private property, primitive relations between men, on their part, were already in such a state that their further existence had become *impossible.** If we judge of Rousseau by the way in which Mr. Mikhailovsky depicts the *"contradiction"* he pointed out, we might think that the famous Genevese was nothing more than a lachrymose "subjective sociologist", who at best was capable of inventing a highly moral "formula of progress" for the curing of human ills. In reality Rousseau most of all hated just that kind of "formula", and stamped it underfoot whenever he had the opportunity.

Civil society arose on the ruins of primitive relations, which had proved incapable of further existence. These relations contained within themselves the embryo of their own negation. In demonstrating this proposition, Rousseau as it were was illustrating in anticipation the thought of Hegel, that every phenomenon destroys itself, becomes transformed into its own opposite. Rousseau's reflection on despotism may be considered a further illustration of this idea.

Now judge for yourself how much understanding of Hegel and Rousseau Mr. Mikhailovsky displays when he says: "Evidently dialectical thinking has absolutely nothing to do with it"—and when he naively imagines that Engels arbitrarily registered Rousseau in the dialectical department only on the grounds that Rousseau used the expressions "contradiction", "cycle", "return to the point from which we set out", etc.

But why did Engels quote Rousseau, and not anyone else? "Why Rousseau and not Voltaire, or not the first man in the street? Because all people, by their very nature, think dialectically...."

You're mistaken, Mr. Mikhailovsky: far from all. You for one would never be taken by Engels for a dialectician. It would be sufficient for him to read your article: "Karl Marx Before the Judgement of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky",[391] for him to put you down without hesitation among the incorrigible metaphysicians.

* See the beginning of Part II of *Discours sur l'inégalité.*

On dialectical thinking Engels says: "Men thought dialectically long before they knew what dialectics was, just as they spoke prose long before the term prose existed. The law of negation of the negation, which is unconsciously operative in nature and history, and, until it has been recognised, also in our heads, was only first clearly formulated by Hegel."* As the reader sees, this refers to unconscious dialectical thinking, from which it is still a very long way to its conscious form. When we say that "*extremes meet*", we without noticing it express a dialectical view of things; when we move we, again without suspecting it, are engaged in applied dialectics (we already said earlier that motion is the application of contradiction). But neither motion nor dialectical aphorisms are sufficient to save us *from metaphysics in the sphere of systematical thought.* On the contrary. The history of thought shows that for a long time metaphysics grew more and more strong—and necessarily had to grow strong—at the expense of primitive and naive dialectics: "The analysis of nature into its individual parts, the grouping of different natural processes and objects in definite classes, the study of the internal anatomy of organic bodies in their manifold forms—these were the fundamental conditions of the gigantic strides in our knowledge of nature that have been made during the last four hundred years. But this method of work has also left us as legacy the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, outside their connection with the vast whole; of observing them in repose, not in motion; as constants, not as essentially variables; in their death, not in their life. And when this way of looking at things was transferred by Bacon and Locke from natural science to philosophy, it begot the narrow, *metaphysical mode of thought* peculiar to the last century."

Thus writes Engels, from whom we also learn that "the newer philosophy, on the other hand, although in it also dialectics had brilliant exponents (e.g., Descartes and Spinoza), had, especially through English influence, become more and more rigidly fixed in the so-called metaphysical mode of reasoning, by which also the French of the eighteenth century were almost wholly dominated, at all events in their special philosophical work. Outside philosophy in the restricted sense, the French nevertheless produced masterpieces of dialectic. We need only call to mind Diderot's *Le Neveu de Rameau* and Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes.*'**

It would seem clear why Engels speaks of Rousseau, and not of Voltaire and not of the first man in the street. We dare not think

* *Herrn Eugen Dühring's Umwälzung,* etc., II. Auflage, S. 134.[392]
** *Ibid.,* S. 4-6.[393]

that Mr. Mikhailovsky has not read that same book of Engels which he quotes, and from which he draws the "examples" which he examines. And if Mr. Mikhailovsky still pesters Engels with his "first man in the street", it remains to suppose merely that our author, here too, has recourse to the "moment" of substitution with which we are already familiar, the "moment" ... of purposeful distortion of the words of his opponent. The exploitation of such a "moment" might seem to him all the more convenient because Engels' book has not been translated into Russian, and does not exist for readers who don't know German.[394] Here "we pick as we choose". Here again there is a new temptation, and once again "*we can't help but sin*".

*Oh is it true, each god some pleasure feels*
*When 'tis our honour tumbles, head over heels?* *

But let us take a rest from Mr. Mikhailovsky, and return to the German idealists, *an und für sich.*

We have said that the *philosophy of nature* was the weak point of these thinkers, whose main services are to be sought *in various branches of the philosophy of history.* Now we shall add that it could not be otherwise at that time. Philosophy, which called itself the science of sciences, always had in it much "*worldly content*", i.e., it always occupied itself with many purely scientific questions. But at different times its "worldly content" was different.

Thus to confine ourselves here to examples from the history of modern philosophy, in the seventeenth century the philosophers mainly occupied themselves with questions of mathematics and the natural sciences. The philosophy of the eighteenth century utilised for its purposes the scientific discoveries and theories of the preceding epoch, but itself, if it studied the natural sciences, did so perhaps only in the person of Kant. In France it was *social questions* which then came to the foreground. The same questions continued mainly to preoccupy, although from a different aspect, the philosophers of the nineteenth century. Schelling, for example, said flatly that he thought *the solution of a certain historical problem to be the most important task of transcendental philosophy.* What this problem was, we shall soon see.

If everything flows and everything changes; if every phenomenon negates itself; if there is no such useful institution as will not ultimately become harmful, changing in this way into its own opposite, it follows that it is stupid to seek for "perfect legisla-

* Let the reader not blame us for these quotations from *La Belle Hélène.* We recently read again Mr. Mikhailovsky's article, "Darwinism and the Operettas of Offenbach", and are still under its potent influence.

tion" and that it is impossible to invent a structure of society which would be the *best* for all ages and peoples: everything is good in its right place and at the right time. Dialectical thinking excluded *all Utopias.*

It was all the more bound to exclude them because "*human nature*", that allegedly constant criterion which, as we have seen, was invariably used both by the writers of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and the Utopian Socialists of the first half of the the nineteenth century, experienced the common fate of all phenomena: it was itself recognised to be *variable.*

With this there disappeared that naively idealist view of history which was also maintained in equal measure both by the writers of the Enlightenment and the Utopians, and which is expressed in the words: *reason, opinions govern the world.* Of course, said Hegel, reason governs history, but in the same sense as it governs the motion of the celestial bodies, i.e., in the sense of *conformity to law.* The motion of the celestial bodies conforms to law, but they naturally have no conception of that conformity. The same applies to the historical progress of humanity. In it, without any doubt, there are particular laws at work; but this does not mean that men are conscious of them, and that therefore human reason, our knowledge, our "philosophy" are the principal factors in historical progress. The owl of Minerva begins to fly only at night. When philosophy begins tracing its grey patterns on a grey background, when men begin to study their own social order, you may say with certainty that that order has outlived its day and is preparing to yield place to a new order, the true character of which will again become clear to mankind only after it has played its historical part: Minerva's owl will once again fly out only at night.[395] It is hardly necessary to say that the periodical aerial travels of the bird of wisdom are very useful, and are even quite essential. But they explain absolutely nothing; they themselves require explanation and, probably, can be explained, because they too *conform to law.*

The recognition of conformity to law in the flights of Minerva's owl was the foundation of quite a new view of the histroy of mankind's intellectual development. The metaphysicians of all ages, all peoples and all tendencies, once they had acquired a certain philosophical system, considered it to be the truth and all other systems to be unquestionably false. They knew only the *abstract oppositeness* of abstract conceptions—*truth and error.* Therefore the history of thought was for them only a chaotic tangle of partly sad, partly ridiculous mistakes, whose wild dance continued right up to that blessed moment when, at last, the true system of philosophy was invented. That was how J. B. Say, that most confirmed metaphysician of all metaphysicians, regarded the

*history* of his branch of knowledge. He recommended not to study it, because there was nothing in it except errors. The dialectical idealists looked otherwise at things. *Philosophy is the intellectual expression of its own age,* they said: every philosophy is true for its own age, and mistaken for any other.

But if reason governs the world only in the sense of *the conformity of phenomena to law*; if it is not ideas, not knowledge, not "enlightenment" that direct men in their, so to speak, social housekeeping and in their historical progress, where then is human freedom? Where is the sphere in which man "judges and chooses" without amusing himself, like a child, with some trifling toy, without serving as a plaything in the hands of some external force, even though maybe it is not blind?

The old but eternally new question of *freedom and necessity* rose up before the idealists of the nineteenth century, just as it had arisen before the metaphysicians of the preceding century, and as it arose before absolutely all the philosophers who had concerned themselves with questions of *the relationship of being and thought.* Like a sphinx it said to each such thinker: *unravel me, or I shall devour your system!*

The question of freedom and necessity was precisely that problem the solution of which *in its application to history* Schelling considered to be the greatest task of transcendental philosophy. Did the latter solve it? How did that philosophy decide it?

And note: for Schelling, as for Hegel, this question presented difficulties in its application precisely to *history.* From the purely unthropological point of view it could already be considered solved

An explanation is necessary here, and in giving it we shall ask the reader to pay it particular attention, in view of the tremendous importance of the subject.

The magnetic needle turns to the north. This arises from the action of a particular form of matter, which itself is subordinated to certain laws: the laws of *the material world.* But for the needle the motions of that matter are unnoticed: it has not the least conception of them. It imagines that it is turning to the north quite independently of any external cause, simply because it finds it pleasant so to turn. Material *necessity presents itself* to the needle in the shape of its own *free spiritual activity.*[396]

By this example Leibniz tried to explain his view of freedom of will. By a similar example Spinoza explains his own quite identical view.[397]

A certain external cause has communicated to a stone a certain quantity of motion. The motion continues, of course, for a certain time even after the cause has ceased to act. This, its continuation, is *necessary according to the laws of the material world.* But imagine that the stone can think, that it is conscious of its own

motion which gives it pleasure, but does not know its causes, and does not even know that there was any external reason at all for that motion. How in that event will the stone conceive of its own motion? Inevitably as the result of its own desire, its own free choice. It will say to itself: I am moving because I want to move. "The same is true of that human freedom of which all men are so proud. Its essence amounts to the fact that men are conscious of their inclinations but do not know the external causes which give rise to those inclinations. Thus a child imagines that it is free to desire that milk which constitutes its sustenance...."

Many even present-day readers will find such an explanation "*crudely materialistic*", and they will be surprised that Leibniz, an idealist of the purest water, could give it. They will say in addition that in any case comparison is not proof, and that even less of a proof is the fantastic comparison of man with a magnetic needle or a stone. To this we shall observe that the comparison will cease to be fantastic as soon as we recall the phenomena which take place every day in *the human head.* The materialists of the eighteenth century were already pointing out the circumstance that to every willed movement in the brain there corresponds a certain motion of the brain fibres. What is a fantasy in respect of the magnetic needle or the stone becomes an unquestionable fact in relation to the brain: a movement of matter, taking place according to the fatal laws of necessity, is in fact accompanied in the brain by what is called the free operation of thought. And as for the surprise, quite natural at first sight, on account of the materialist argument of the idealist Leibniz, we must remember that, as has already been pointed out, all the consistent idealists were *monists,* i.e., in their outlook upon the world there was no place at all for that impassable abyss which separates matter from spirit in the view of the *dualists.* In the opinion of the dualist, a given aggregation of matter can prove capable of thought only in the event of a particle of spirit entering into it: matter and spirit, in the eyes of the dualist, are two quite independent substances which have nothing in common between them. The comparison made by Leibniz will seem wild to him, for the simple reason that the magnetic needle has no soul. But imagine that you are dealing with a man who argues in this way: the needle is really something quite material. But what is matter itself? I believe it owes its existence to the spirit, and not in the sense that it *has been created by the spirit,* but in the sense that it itself is *the spirit,* only existing in another shape. That shape does not correspond to the true nature of the spirit: it is even directly opposed to that nature; but this does not prevent it from being a form of existence of the spirit—because, by its very nature, the spirit must change into its own

opposite. You may be surprised by this argument as well, but you will agree at all events that the man who finds it convincing, the man who sees in matter only the "*other existence of the spirit*", will not be repelled by explanations which attribute to matter the functions of the spirit, or which make those functions intimately dependent upon the laws of matter. Such a man may accept a *materialist explanation* of spiritual phenomena and at the same time give it (whether by far-fetched reasoning or otherwise, is a different question) a strictly *idealist sense.* And that was how the German idealists acted.

The spiritual activity of man is subjected to the laws of material necessity. But this in no way destroys human freedom. The laws of material necessity themselves are nothing else than the laws of action of the spirit. *Freedom presupposes necessity, necessity passes entirely into freedom,* and therefore man's freedom in reality is incomparably wider than the dualists suppose when, trying to delimit *free* activity and *necessary* activity, they thereby tear away from the *realm of freedom* all that region (even in their opinion, a very wide region) which they set apart for *necessity.*

That was how the dialectical idealists argued. As the reader sees, they held firmly to the "magnetic needle" of Leibniz: only that needle was completely transformed, or so to speak spiritualised, in their hands.

But the transformation of the needle did not yet solve all the difficulties involved in the question of the relationship between freedom and necessity. Let us suppose that the individual is quite free in spite of his subordination to the laws of necessity, or moreover just *because* of that subordination. But in society, and consequently in history too, we are dealing not with a single individual but with a whole mass of individuals. The question arises, is not the freedom of *each* infringed by the freedom of *the rest*? I have the intention of doing this and that—for example, of realising truth and justice in social relations. This intention has been *freely* adopted by myself, and no less *free* will be those actions of mine with the help of which I shall try to put it into effect. But my neighbours hinder me in pursuing my aim. They have revolted against my intention, just as *freely* as I adopted it. And *just as free* are their actions directed against me. How shall I overcome the obstacles which they create? Naturally, I shall argue with them, try to persuade them, and maybe even appeal to them or frighten them. But how can I know whether this will lead to anything? The French writers of the Enlightenment used to say: *la raison finira par avoir raison.* But in order that my reason should triumph, I require that my neighbours should recognise it to be *their* reason as well. And what grounds have I for hoping that this will take place? To the extent that their activity is free—and it is

quite free—to the extent that, by paths unknown to me, material *necessity* has passed into *freedom*—and, by supposition, it has *completely passed into freedom*—to that extent the acts of my fellow-citizens evade any foretelling. I might hope to foresee them only on the condition that I could examine them as I examine all other phenomena of the world surrounding me, i.e., as the *necessary* consequences of *definite causes* which are already known, or may become known, to me. In other words, my freedom would not be an empty phrase only if *consciousness* of it could be accompanied by *understanding the reasons* which give rise to the *free* acts of my neighbours, i.e., if I could examine them from the aspect of their *necessity*. Exactly the same can my neighbours say about *my own* acts. But what does this mean? This means that *the possibility of the free (conscious) historical activity of any particular person is reduced to zero, if at the very foundation of free human actions there does not lie necessity which is accessible to the understanding of the doer.*

We saw earlier that metaphysical French materialism led, in point of fact, to *fatalism.* For in effect, if the fate of an entire people depends on one stray atom, then all we can do is to sit back, because we are absolutely incapable and never will be capable, either of foreseeing such tricks on the part of individual atoms or of preventing them.

Now we see that *idealism can lead to exactly the same fatalism.* If there is nothing of necessity in the acts of my fellow-citizens, or if they are inaccessible to my understanding from the angle of their necessity, then all I can do is to rely on beneficent Providence: my wisest plans, my most generous desires, will be broken against the quite unforeseen actions of millions of other men. In that event, as Lucretius has it, *out of everything anything may come.*

And it is interesting that the more idealism attempted to underline the aspect of freedom in *theory,* the more it would be obliged to reduce it to nothingness in the sphere of *practical activity,* where idealism would not have the strength to grapple with *chance, armed with all the powers of freedom.*

The dialectical idealists understood it perfectly well. In *their* practical philosophy *necessity was the truest and only reliable guarantee of freedom.* Even moral duty cannot reassure me as to the results of my actions, Schelling said, if the results depend only on freedom. "*In freedom there must be necessity.*"[398]

But of what necessity, then, can there be any question in this case? I am hardly likely to derive much satisfaction from constant repetition of the thought that certain willed movements necessarily correspond to certain movements of the substance of the brain. No practical calculations can be founded on such an abstract proposition, and there is no further prospect of progress

in this direction, because the head of my neighbour is not a glass beehive, and his cerebral fibres are not bees; and I could not observe their motions even if I knew with certainty—and we are still a long way from that situation—that after such and such a movement of such and such a nervous fibre there will follow such and such an intention in the soul of my fellow-citizen. Consequently we have to approach the study of the necessity of human actions from some other angle.

This is all the more necessary because the owl of Minerva flies out, as we know, only in the evening, i.e., the social relations between men *do not represent the result of their conscious activity.* Men consciously follow their private and personal ends. Each of them consciously strives, let us suppose, to round off his own property; yet out of the sum-total of their individual actions there arise certain social results which perhaps they did not at all desire, and certainly did not foresee. Wealthy Roman citizens bought up the lands of poor farmers. Each of them knew, of course, that thanks to his efforts such and such Tullies and Juliuses were becoming landless proletarians. But who among them foresaw that the great estates would destroy the republic, and with it Italy itself? Who among them realised, or *could* realise, the historical consequences of his acquisitiveness? None of them could, and none of them did. Yet these were the consequences—thanks to the great estates, both the republic and Italy perished.

Out of the conscious and free acts of individual men there necessarily follow consequences, unexpected for them and unforeseen by them, which affect the whole of society, i.e., which influence the sum-total of mutual relationships of the same men. *From the realm of freedom we thus pass into the realm of necessity.*

If the social consequences of the individual acts of men, arrived at unconsciously for themselves, lead to the alteration of the social system—which takes place always, though far from with equal speed—then new individual aims arise before men. Their free conscious activity necessarily takes a new form. *From the realm of necessity we again pass into the realm of freedom.*

Every necessary process is a process taking place in conformity to law. Changes in social relations which are unforeseen by men, but which of necessity appear as a result of their actions, evidently take place according to definite laws. Theoretical philosophy *has to discover them.*

The same evidently applies to changes introduced into the aims of life, into the free activity of men, by the changed social relations. In other words, *the passing of necessity into freedom also takes place according to definite laws, which can and must be discovered by theoretical philosophy.*

And once theoretical philosophy has performed this task, it will provide quite new and unshakable foundation for *practical* philosophy. Once I know the laws of social and historical progress, I can influence the latter according to my aims, without being concerned either by the tricks of stray atoms or by the consideration that my fellow-countrymen, as beings gifted with free will, are every moment getting ready for me whole piles of the most astonishing surprises. Naturally, I shall not be in a condition to go bail for every individual fellow-countryman, especially if he belongs to the "intellectual class"; but in broad outline I shall know the direction of the forces of society, and it will remain for me only to rely on their resultant to achieve my ends.

And so if I could arrive, for example, at the blissful conviction that in Russia, unlike other countries, it is the "foundations of society" that will triumph, this will only be to the extent that I succeed in understanding the actions of the glorious "Russ" as actions which are in conformity to law, and in examining them from the standpoint of necessity and not from the standpoint of freedom. *World history is progress in the consciousness of freedom,* says Hegel, *progress which we must understand in its necessity.* [399]

Further, however well we may have studied "the nature of man", we shall still be very far from understanding those social results which follow from the actions of individual men. Let us suppose that we have admitted, just as the economists of the old school did, that striving for profit is the chief distinguishing feature of human nature. Shall we be in a position to anticipate the forms which that striving will take? Given definite social relations, known to us—yes; but these given, definite, known social relations will themselves change under the pressure of "human nature", under the influence of the acquisitive activity of our fellow-citizens. In what direction will they change? This will be just as little known to us as that new direction which the striving for profit itself will take, in the new and changed social relations. We shall find ourselves in quite the same situation if, together with the German "Katheder Sozialisten", we begin asserting that the nature of man is not exhausted by the mere striving for profit, but that he also has a "social sense" (Gemeinsinn). This will be a new song to an old tune. In order to emerge from ignorance, covered up by more or less learned terminology, we have to pass on from the study of the *nature of man* to the study of the *nature of social relations*; we have to understand those relations as essential process conforming to law. And this brings us back to the question: *what underlies, what determines, the nature of social relations?*

We saw that neither the materialists of last century nor the

Utopian Socialists gave a satisfactory reply to this question. Did the dialectical idealists succeed in answering it?

No, they too did not succeed, and they did not succeed precisely because they were *idealists.* In order to grasp their view, let us recall the argument referred to earlier about what depends on what—the constitution on manners, or manners on the constitution. Hegel rightly remarked on this discussion that the question had been put here quite wrongly, as in reality, although the manners of a particular people undoubtedly influence its constitution, and its constitution its manners, nevertheless both of them represent the result of some "*third*" or special force, which creates both the manners influencing the constitution and the constitution influencing manners. But what, according to Hegel, is this special force, this ultimate foundation on which stand both the nature of men and the nature of social relations? This force is "*Notion*" or, what is the same thing, the "*Idea*", the realisation of which is the whole history of the particular people concerned. *Every people puts into effect its own particular idea,* and every particular idea of each individual people represents a stage in the development of the *Absolute Idea.* History thus turns out to be, as it were, applied logic: to explain a particular historical epoch means showing to what stage of the logical development of the Absolute Idea it corresponds. But what, then, is this "Absolute Idea"? Nothing else than the personification of our own logical process. Here is what a man says of it who himself passed through a thorough grounding in the school of idealism, and himself was passionately devoted to it, but noticed very soon wherein lies the radical defect of this tendency in philosophy[400]:

"If from real apples, pears, strawberries and almonds I form the general idea '*Fruit*'; if I go further and *imagine* that my ... abstract idea 'Fruit', derived from real fruit, is an entity existing outside me, is indeed the *true* essence of the pear, apple, etc.; then, in the language of *speculative philosophy*, I am declaring that 'Fruit' is the *substance* of the pear, the apple, the almond, etc. I am saying, therefore, that to be a pear is not essential to the pear, that to be an apple is not essential to the apple; that what is essential to these things is ... the essence that I have abstracted from them and then foisted on to them, the essence of my idea—'Fruit'. I therefore declare apples, pears, almonds, etc., to be mere forms of existence, *modi*, of 'Fruit'. My finite understanding, supported by my senses, does, of course, distinguish an apple from a pear and a pear from an almond; but my speculative reason declares these sensuous differences unessential, indifferent. It sees in the apple the same as in the pear, and in the pear the same as in the almond, namely '*Fruit*'. Particular

real fruits are no more than *semblances* whose true essence is 'the Substance'—'Fruit'.

"By this method one attains no particular wealth of definition. The mineralogist whose whole science consisted in the statement that all minerals are really *'Mineral'* would be a mineralogist only in his imagination....

"Having reduced the different real fruits to the one fruit of abstraction—'Fruit', speculation must, in order to attain some appearance of real content, try somehow to find its way back from 'Fruit', from *'Substance'*, to the different profane real fruits, the pear, the apple, the almond, etc. It is as hard to produce real fruits from the abstract idea *'Fruit'* as it is easy to produce this abstract idea from real fruits. Indeed, it is impossible to arrive at the opposite of an abstraction without relinquishing the abstraction.

"The speculative philosopher therefore relinquishes the abstraction 'Fruit', but in a *speculative, mystical fashion*.... Thus he rises above his abstraction only in appearance. He argues like this:

"If apples, pears, almonds and strawberries are really nothing but *Substance, Fruit*, the question arises: Why does Fruit manifest itself to me sometimes as an apple, sometimes as a pear, sometimes as an almond? Why this appearance of *diversity* which so strikingly contradicts my speculative conception of *Unity, 'Substance', 'Fruit'?*

"This, answers the speculative philosopher, is because 'Fruit' is not dead, undifferentiated, motionless, but living, self-differentiating, moving. The diversity of profane fruits is significant not only to my sensuous understanding, but also to 'Fruit' itself and to speculative reasoning. The different profane fruits are different manifestations of the life of the one 'Fruit'.... In the apple, 'Fruit' gives itself an apple-like existence, in the pear, a pear-like existence.... 'Fruit' presents itself as a pear, 'Fruit' presents itself as an apple, 'Friut' presents itself as an almond, and the differences which distinguish apples, pears and almonds from one another are the self-differentiations of 'Fruit' making the particular fruits subordinate members of the *life-process of 'Fruit'*."*

All this is very biting, but at the same time undoubtedly just. By personifying our own process of thought in the shape of an Absolute Idea and by seeking in this Idea the explanation of all phenomena, idealism thereby led itself into a blind alley, out of which it could emerge only by abandoning the "Idea", i.e., *by saying good-bye to idealism.* Here, for exam-

* [The quotation is from K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family (Gesamtausgabe,* Abt. I, Bd. 3, S. 228-29).]

ple: do the following words of Schelling explain to you to any extent the nature of magnetism? "Magnetism is a general act of animation, the embedding of Unity into Multitude, Concept into Diversity. That same invasion of the subjective into the objective, which in the ideal ... is self-consciousness, is here expressed in being."[401] These words don't explain anything at all, do they? Just as unsatisfactory are similar explanations in the sphere of *history*. Why did Greece fall? Because the idea which constituted the principle of Greek life, the centre of the Greek spirit (*the Idea of the Beautiful*), could be only a very shortlived phase in the development of the world spirit.[402] Replies of this kind only repeat the question in a positive and, moreover, a pompous form, as it were on stilts. Hegel, who gave the explanation of the fall of Greece which has just been quoted, seems himself to have felt this, and hastens to supplement his idealist explanation by a reference to the economic reality of ancient Greece. He says: "*Lacedaemon fell mainly on account of inequality of property.*" And he acts in this way not only where Greece is concerned. This, one may say, is his invariable approach in the philosophy of history: first a few vague references to the qualities of the Absolute Idea, and then much more extensive and, of course, much more convincing indications of the character and development of the property relations of the people to whom he is referring. Strictly speaking, in explanations of this latter kind there's really nothing at all idealist left and, in having recourse to them, Hegel—who used to say that "*idealism proves to be the truth of materialism*"—was signing a certificate about the poverty of idealism, tacitly admitting as it were that in essence matters stand in exactly the opposite way, and that *materialism proves to be the truth of idealism.*

However, the *materialism* which Hegel here approached was a quite undeveloped, embryonic materialism, and immediately passed once more into *idealism* as soon as he found it necessary to explain whence came these or those particular property relations. True, here also it would happen that Hegel frequently expressed quite materialist views. But as a rule he regarded property relations as the realisation of conceptions of Right which developed by their own internal force.

And so what have we learned about the dialectical idealists?

They abandoned the standpoint of human nature and, thanks to this, got rid of the utopian view of social phenomena: they began to examine social life as a necessary process, with its own laws. But in a roundabout fashion, by personifying the process of our logical reason (i.e., one of the sides of *human nature*), they returned to the same unsatisfactory point of view, and *therefore the true nature of social relations remained incomprehensible for them.*

Now once again a little digression into the sphere of our own domestic, Russian philosophy.

Mr. Mikhailovsky has heard from Mr. Filippov, who in his turn has heard from the American writer Frazer, that all the philosophy of Hegel amounts to "*galvanic mysticism*". What we have said already of the aims which the idealist German plilosophy set before itself will be enough to show the reader how nonsensical is Frazer's opinion. Messrs. Filippov and Mikhailovsky themselves feel that their American has gone too far: "It is sufficient to recall the successive course and influence (on Hegel) of preceding metaphysics, beginning with the ancients, with Heraclitus..." says Mr. Mikhailovsky, adding immediately, however: "Nevertheless the remarks of Frazer are in the highest degree interesting, and undoubtedly contain a certain element of truth." We must admit, although we cannot but recognise.... Shchedrin long ago held up this "formula" to ridicule. But what would you have his former contributor, Mr. Mikhailovsky,[403] do, when he has undertaken to interpret to the "uninitiated" a philosopher whom he knows only by hearsay? Willy-nilly you will go on repeating, with the learned air of a scholar, phrases which say nothing....

Let us however recall the "successive course" of development of German idealism. "The experiments in galvanism produce an impression on all the thinking people of Europe, including the then young German philosopher Hegel," says Mr. Mikhailovsky. "Hegel creates a colossal metaphysical system, thundering throughout the world, so that there's no getting away from it even on the banks of the River Moskva." ... The case is represented here as though Hegel had become infected with "galvanic mysticism" direct from the physicists. But Hegel's system represents only the further development of the views of Schelling: clearly the infection must have previously influenced the latter. So it did, reassuringly replies Mr. Mikhailovsky, or Mr. Filippov, of Frazer: "Schelling, and particularly some doctors who had been his pupils, carried the teaching of polarity to the last extreme." Very good. But the predecessor of Schelling was as is known, Fichte. How did the galvanic infection affect him? Mr. Mikhailovsky says nothing about this: probably he thinks that it had no influence at all. And he is quite right if he really does think so; in order to be convinced of this, it is sufficient to read one of the first philosophical works of Fichte, *Grundlage der gesammten Wissenschaftslehre*, Leipzig, 1794. In this work no microscope will discover the influence of "galvanism"; yet there, too, appears that same notorious "triad" which, in the opinion of Mr. Mikhailovsky, constitues the main distinguishing feature of the Hegelian philosophy, and the genealogy of which Frazer, allegedly with "a certain element of truth", traces from the "experiments of Galvani and Volta".... We

must admit that all this is very strange, although we cannot but recognise that nevertheless Hegel, etc., etc.

The reader knows already what were Schelling's views on magnetism. The defect of German idealism lay not at all in its being founded allegedly on an excessive and unjustified captivation (in a mystical form) by the scientific discoveries of its age, but, on the contrary, in its attempt to explain all the phenomena of nature and history with the help of the process of thought which it had personified.

In conclusion, one comforting piece of news. Mr. Mikhailovsky has discovered that "metaphysics and capitalism are most intimately connected; that, to use the language of economic materialism, metaphysics is an essential component part of the 'superstructure' over the capitalist form of production, although at the same time capital swallows up and adapts to itself all the technical advances of science, founded on experiment and observation, which is hostile to metaphysics". Mr. Mikhailovsky promises to discuss "this curious contradiction" some other time. Mr. Mikhailovsky's examination will be "curious" indeed! Just think: what he calls metaphysics underwent a brilliant development both in ancient Greece and in Germany of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. Up to now it was thought that ancient Greece was not a capitalist country at all, and in Germany, at the time indicated, capitalism had only just begun to develop. Mr. Mikhailovsky's research will demonstrate that from the point of view of "*subjective sociology*" this is quite untrue, and that precisely ancient Greece and Germany in the days of Fichte and Hegel were classical countries of capitalism. You see now why this is important. Let our author, then, hasten to publish his remarkable discovery. Sing, my dear, don't be shy!

*Chapter V*

## MODERN MATERIALISM

The bankruptcy of the idealist point of view in explaining the phenomena of nature and of social development was bound to force, and really did force, *thinking* people (i.e., *not* eclectics, *not* dualists) to return to the materialist view of the world. But the new materialism could no longer be a simple repetition of the teachings of the French materialists of the end of the eighteenth century. Materialism rose again enriched by all the acquisitions of idealism. The most important of these acquisitions was the *dialectical method,* the examination of phenomena in their development, in their origin and destruction. The genius who represented this new direction of thought was Karl Marx.

Marx was not the first to revolt against idealism. The banner of revolt was raised by Ludwig Feuerbach. Then, a little later than Feuerbach, the Bauer brothers appeared on the literary scene: their views merit particular attention on the part of the present-day Russian reader.

The views of the Bauers were a reaction against Hegel's idealism. Nevertheless, they themselves were saturated through and through with a very superficial, one-sided and eclectic idealism.

We have seen that the great German idealists did not succeed in understanding the real nature or discovering the real basis of social relations. They saw in social development a necessary process, conforming to law, and in this respect they were quite right. But when it was a question of the prime mover of historical development, they turned to the Absolute Idea, the qualities of which were to give the ultimate and most profound explanation of that process. This constituted the weak side of idealism, against which accordingly a philosophical revolution first broke out. The extreme Left wing of the Hegelian school revolted with determination against the "Absolute Idea".

The Absolute Idea exists (if it exists at all) outside time and space and, in any case, outside the head of each individual man. Reproducing in its historical development the course of the logical development of the Absolute Idea, mankind obeys a force alien to

itself, standing outside itself. In revolting against the Absolute Idea, the young Hegelians revolted first of all in the name of the independent activity of man, in the name of ultimate human reason.

"Speculative philosophy," wrote Edgar Bauer, "is very mistaken when it speaks of reason as some abstract, absolute force.... Reason is not an objective abstract force, in relation to which man represents only something subjective, accidental, passing; no, the dominating force is man himself, his consciousness of self, and reason is only the strength of that consciousness. Consequently there is no Absolute Reason, but there is only reason which changes eternally with the development of consciousness of self: it does not exist at all in its final form, it is eternally changing."*

And so there is no Absolute Idea, there is no abstract Reason, but there is only man's consciousness, the ultimate and eternally changing human reason. This is quite true; against this even Mr. Mikhailovsky would not argue, although as we already know he can find anything "debatable" ... with more or less doubtful success. But, strangely enough, the more we underline this correct thought, the more difficult becomes our position. The old German idealists adapted the conformity to law of every process in nature and in history to the Absolute Idea. The question arises, to what will we adapt this conformity to law when we have destroyed its carrier, the Absolute Idea? Let us suppose that in relation to nature a satisfactory reply can be given in a few words: we adapt it to the qualities of matter. But in relation to history things are far from being as simple: the dominating force in history turns out to be man's consciousness of self, eternally changing, ultimate human reason. Is there any conformity to law in the development of this reason? Edgar Bauer would naturally have replied in the affirmative, because for him man, and consequently his reason, were not at all something accidental, as we have seen. But if you had asked the same Bauer to explain to you his conception of conformity to law in the development of human reason; if you had asked him, for example, why in a particular historical epoch reason developed in this way, and in another epoch in that way, practically speaking you would have received no reply from him. He would have told you that "eternally developing human reason creates social forms", that "historical reason is the motive force of world history" and that consequently every particular social order proves to be obsolete as soon as reason makes a new step in its development.** But all these and similar assurances would not be

* Edgar Bauer, *Der Streit der Kritik mit Kirche und Staat,* Berne, 1844, S. 184.

** *Loc. cit.,* p. 185.

a reply to the question, but rather a wandering around the question of why human reason takes new steps in its development, and why it takes them in this direction and not in that. Obliged by you to deal precisely with this question, E. Bauer would have hastily put it aside with some meaningless reference to the qualities of the ultimate, eternally changing human reason, just as the old idealists confined themselves to a reference to the qualities of the Absolute Idea.

To treat reason as the motive force of world history, and to explain its development by some kind of special, immanent, internal qualities meant to transform it into something unconditional—or, in other words, to resurrect in a new form that same Absolute Idea which they had just proclaimed to be buried for ever. The most important defect of this resurrected Absolute Idea was the circumstance that it peacefully coexisted with the most absolute dualism or, to be more precise, even unquestionably presupposed it. As the processes of nature were not conditioned by ultimate, eternally changing human reason, two forces turned out to be in existence: in nature—matter, in history—human reason. And there was no bridge connecting the motion of matter with the development of reason, the realm of necessity with the realm of freedom. That was why we said that the views of Bauer were saturated through and through with a very superficial, one-sided and eclectical idealism.

"Opinion governs the world"—thus declared the writers of the French Enlightenment. Thus also spoke, as we see, the Bauer brothers when they revolted against Hegelian idealism. But if opinion governs the world, then the prime movers of history are those men whose thought criticises the old and creates the new opinions. The Bauer brothers did in fact think so. The essence of the historical process was reduced, in their view, to the refashioning by the "critical spirit" of the existing store of opinions, and of the forms of life in society conditioned by that store. These views of the Bauers were imported in their entirety into Russian literature by the author of the *Historical Letters*[404] —who, by the way, spoke not of the critical "spirit" but of critical "thought", because to speak of the spirit was prohibited by *Sovremennik*.

Once having imagined himself to be the main architect, the demiurge of history, the "critically thinking" man thereby separates off himself and those like him into a special, higher variety of the human race. This higher variety is contrasted to the *mass*, foreign to critical thought, and capable only of playing the part of clay in the creative hands of "critically thinking" personalities. "*Heroes*" are contrasted to the "*crowd*". However much the hero loves the crowd, however filled he may be with sympathy for its age-long needs and its continuous sufferings, he cannot but look

down on it from above, he cannot but realise that everything depends upon him, the hero, while the crowd is a mass alien to every creative element, something in the nature of a vast quantity of ciphers, which acquire some positive significance only in the event of a kind, "critically thinking" entity condescendingly taking its place at their head. The eclectic idealism of the Bauer brothers was the basis of the terrible, and one may say repulsive, self-conceit of the "critically thinking" German "intellectuals" of the 1840s; today, through its Russian supporters, it is breeding the same defect in the intelligentsia of Russia. The merciless enemy and accuser of this self-conceit was Marx, to whom we shall now proceed.

Marx said that the contrasting of "critically thinking" personalities with the "mass" was nothing more than a caricature of the Hegelian view of history: a view which in its turn was only the speculative consequence of the old doctrine of the oppositeness of Spirit and Matter. "In Hegel the Absolute Spirit of history* already treats the mass as material and finds its true expression only in *philosophy*. But with Hegel the philosopher is only the organ through which the creator of history, the Absolute Spirit, arrives at self-consciousness by retrospection after *the movement has ended*. The participation of the philosopher in history is reduced to this retrospective consciousness, for real movement is accomplished by the Absolute Spirit unconsciously,** so that the philosopher appears post festum. Hegel is doubly inconsistent: first because, while declaring that philosophy constitutes the Absolute Spirit's existence, he refuses to recognise the real philosophical individual as the Absolute Spirit; secondly because according to him the Absolute Spirit makes history only *in appearance*. For as the Absolute Spirit becomes conscious of itself as the creative World Spirit only in the philosopher and post festum, its making of history exists only in the consciousness, in the opinion of the philosopher, i.e., only in the speculative imagination. Herr Bruno Bauer*** eliminates Hegel's inconsistency.

"First, he proclaims Criticism to be the Absolute Spirit and himself to be Criticism. Just as the element of Criticism is banished from the mass, so the element of mass is banished from Criticism. Therefore Criticism sees itself incarnate not in a *mass*,

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* The same as the Absolute Idea.

** The reader will not have forgotten the expression of Hegel quoted earlier: the owl of Minerva begins to fly only in the evening.

*** Bruno Bauer was the elder brother of Edgar, mentioned earlier, and the author of a book famous in its day, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker.*

but in a small *handful* of chosen men, exclusively in Herr Bauer and his followers.

"Herr Bauer further does away with Hegel's other inconsistency. No longer, like the Hegelian spirit, does he make history post festum and in imagination. He *consciously* plays the part of the *World Spirit* in opposition to the mass of the rest of mankind; he enters in the present into a *dramatic* relation with that mass; he invents and carries out history with a purpose and after mature meditation.

"On the one side stands the Mass, that *material,* passive, dull and unhistorical element of history. On the other side stand the Spirit, Criticism, Herr Bruno and Co. as the active element from which arises all *historical* action. The act of social transformation is reduced to the *brain work* of Critical Criticism."*

These lines produce a strange illusion: it seems as though they were written, not fifty years ago, but some month or so ago, and are directed, not against the German Left Hegelians, but against the Russian "subjective" sociologists. The illusion becomes still stronger when we read the following extract from an article of Engels:

"Self-sufficient Criticism, complete and perfect in itself, naturally must not recognise history as it really took place, for that would mean recognising the base mass in all its massy massiness, whereas the problem is to redeem the mass from massiness. History is therefore freed from its massiness, and Criticism, which has a *free* attitude to its object, calls to history, saying: 'You ought to have happened in such and such a way!' All the laws of Criticism have retroactive force: history behaved quite differently before the decrees of Criticism than it did after them. Hence massy history, the so-called real history, deviates considerably from critical history...."**

Who is referred to in this passage? Is it the German writers of the 40s, or some of our contemporary "sociologists", who gravely discourse on the theme that the Catholic sees the course of historical events in one way, the Protestant in another, the monarchist in a third, the republican in a fourth: and that therefore a good subjective person not only can, but must, invent for himself, for

* F. Engels und K. Marx, *Die heilige Familie, oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik. Gegen Bruno Bauer und Consorten,* Frankfurt am Main, 1845, pp. 126-28. This book is a collection of articles by Engels and Marx directed against various opinions expressed in the "Critical Criticism". The passage quoted is taken from an article by Marx[405] against an article by Bruno Bauer. It was also from Marx that the passage quoted in the preceding chapter was taken.

[The passage is in chapter 6—by Marx—of *The Holy Family (Gesamtausgabe,* Abt. I, Bd. 3, S. 257-58).]

** *Ibid., S. 6.*[406]

his own spiritual use, such a history as would fully correspond to the best of ideals? Did Engels really foresee our Russian stupidities? Not at all! Naturally, he did not even dream of them, and if his irony, half a century later, fits our subjective thinkers like a glove, this is to be explained by the simple fact that our subjective nonsense has absolutely nothing original in it: it represents nothing more than a cheap Suzdal[407] print from a caricature of the same "Hegelianism" against which it wars so unsuccessfully....

From the point of view of "Critical Criticism", all great historical conflicts amounted to the conflict of *ideas*. Marx observes that *ideas* "were worsted" every time they did not coincide with the real economic interests of that social stratum which at the particular time was the bearer of historical progress. It is only the understanding of those interests that can give the key to understanding the true course of historical development.

We already know that the French writers of the Enlightenment themselves did not close their eyes to interests, and that they too were not averse to turning to them for an explanation of the given condition of a given society. But their view of the decisive importance of *interests* was merely a variation of the "formula" that opinions govern the world: according to them, the interests themselves depend on men's opinions, and change with changes in the latter. *Such* an interpretation of the significance of interests represents the triumph of idealism in its application to history. It leaves far behind even German dialectical idealism, according to the sense of which men discover new material interests every time the Absolute Idea finds it necessary to take a new step in its logical development. Marx understands the significance of material interests quite otherwise.

To the ordinary Russian reader the historical theory of Marx seems some kind of disgraceful libel on the human race. G. I. Uspensky, if we are not mistaken, in his *Ruin*, has an old woman, the wife of some official who even in her deathbed delirium obstinately goes on repeating the shameful rule by which she was guided all her life: "Aim at the pocket, the pocket!" The Russian intelligentsia naively imagines that Marx attributes this base rule to all mankind: that he asserts that, whatever the sons of man have busied themselves with, they have always, exclusively and consciously, "*aimed at the pocket*". The selfless Russian "intellectual" naturally finds such a view just as "disagreeable" as the theory of Darwin is "disagreeable" for some official dame who imagines that the whole sense of this theory amounts to the outrageous proposition that she, forsooth, a most respectable official's lady, is nothing more than a monkey dressed up in a bonnet. In reality Marx slanders the "intellectuals" just as little as Darwin does official dames.

In order to understand the historical views of Marx, we must recall the conclusions at which philosophy and social and historical science had arrived in the period immediately preceding his appearance. The French historians of the Restoration came as we know to the conclusion that "civil conditions", "property relations", constitute the basic foundation of the entire social order. We know also that the same conclusion was reached, in the person of Hegel, by idealist German philosophy—against its will, against its spirit, simply on account of the inadequacy and bankruptcy of the idealist explanation of history. Marx, who took over all the results of the scientific knowledge and philosophic thought of his age, completely agrees with the French historians and Hegel about the conclusion just mentioned. I became convinced, he said, that "legal relations as well as forms of state are to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life, the sum-total of which Hegel, following the example of the Englishmen and Frenchmen of the eighteenth century, combines under the name of 'civil society', that, however, the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy".[408]

But on what does the *economy* of the given society depend? Neither the French historians, nor the Utopian Socialists, nor Hegel have been able to reply to this at all satisfactorily. All of them, directly or indirectly, referred to human nature. The great scientific service rendered by Marx lies in this, that he approached the question from the diametrically opposite side, and that he regarded man's nature itself as the eternally changing result of historical progress, the cause of which lies *outside* man. In order to exist, man must support his organism, borrowing the substances he requires from the *external nature surrounding him*. This borrowing presupposes a certain action of man on that external nature. But, "acting on the external world, he changes his own nature". In these few words is contained the essence of the whole historical theory of Marx, although naturally, taken by themselves, they do not provide an adequate understanding of it, and require explanations.

Franklin called man "a tool-making animal". The use and production of tools in fact does constitute the distinguishing feature of man. Darwin contests the opinion that only man is capable of the use of tools, and gives many examples which show that in an embryonic form their use is characteristic for many mammals. And he naturally is quite right from his point of view, i.e., in the sense that in that notorious "human nature" there is not a single feature which is not to be found in some other variety of animal, and that therefore there is absolutely no foundation for considering man to be some special being and separating him

off into a special "kingdom". But it must not be forgotten that *quantitative differences pass into qualitative.* What exists as an *embryo* in one species of animal can become the *distinguishing feature* of another species of animal. This particularly applies to the use of tools. An elephant breaks off branches and uses them to brush away flies. This is interesting and instructive. But in the history of the evolution of the species *"elephant"* the use of branches in the fight against flies probably played no essential part; elephants did not become elephants because their more or less elephant-like ancestors brushed off flies with branches. It is quite otherwise with man.*

The whole existence of the Australian savage depends on his boomerang, just as the whole existence of modern Britain depends on her machines. Take away from the Australian his boomerang, make him a tiller of the soil, and he of necessity will change all his mode of life, all his habits, all his manner of thinking, all his "nature".

We have said: make him *a tiller of the soil.* From the example of agriculture it can clearly be seen that the process of the productive action of man on nature presupposes not only the implements of labour. The implements of labour constitute only part of the means necessary for production. Therefore it will be more exact to speak, not of the development of the *implements of labour,* but more generally of the development of the *means of production,* the *productive forces*—although it is quite certain that the most important part in this development belongs or at least belonged up to the present day (until important *chemical* industries appeared) precisely to the *implements of labour.*

In the implements of labour man acquires new organs, as it were, which change his anatomical structure. From the time that he rose to the level of using them, he has given quite a new aspect to the history of his development. Previously, as with all the other animals, it amounted to changes in his natural organs. Since that time it has become first of all *the history of the perfecting of his artificial organs, the growth of his productive forces.*

Man—*the tool-making animal*—is at the same time a *social animal,* originating in ancestors who for many generations lived in more or less large herds. For us it is not important at this point why our ancestors began to live in herds—the *zoologists* have to ascertain, and are ascertaining, this—but from the point of view of the philosophy of history it is extremely important to note that

* "So thoroughly is the use of tools the exclusive attribute of man that the discovery of a single artificially shaped flint in the drift or cave-breccia is deemed proof enough that man has been there." Daniel Wilson, *Prehistoric Man,* Vol. I, pp. 151-52, London, 1876.

from the time the artificial organs of man began to play a decisive part in his existence, his social life itself began to change, in accordance with the course of development of his productive forces.

"In production, men not only act on nature but also on one another. They produce only by co-operating in a certain way and mutually exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does production, take place."*

The artificial organs, the implements of labour, thus turn out to be organs not so much of individual as of *social man.* That is why every essential change in them brings about changes in the social structure.

"These social relations into which the producers enter with one another, the conditions under which they exchange their activities and participate in the whole act of production, will naturally vary according to the character of the means of production. With the invention of a new instrument of warfare, fire-arms, the whole internal organisation of the army necessarily changed; the relationships within which individuals can constitute an army and act as an army were transformed and the relations of different armies to one another also changed. Thus the social relations within which individuals produce, the social relations of production, change, are transformed, with the change and development of the material means of production, the productive forces. The relations of production in their totality constitute what are called the social relations, society, and, specifically, a society at a definite stage of historical development, a society with a peculiar, distinctive character. Ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois society are such totalities of production relations, each of which at the same time denotes a special stage of development in the history of mankind."**

It is hardly necessary to add that the earlier stages of human development represent also no less distinct totalities of production relations. It is equally unnecessary to repeat that, at these earlier stages too, the state of the productive forces had a decisive influence on the social relations of men.

At this point we must pause in order to examine some, at first sight fairly convincing, objections.

The first is as follows.

No one contests the great importance of the implements of labour, the vast role of the forces of production in the historical

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* K. Marx, *Lohnarbeit und Kapital.*[409]

** *Ibid.*[410]

progress of mankind—the Marxists are often told—but it was man who invented the implements of labour and made use of them in his work. You yourselves recognise that their use presupposes a comparatively very high degree of intellectual development. Every new step forward in the perfecting of the implements of labour requires new efforts of the human intellect. Efforts of the intellect are the *cause*, and the development of the productive forces the *consequence*. Therefore the intellect is the prime mover of historical progress, which means that those men were right who asserted that opinions govern the world, i.e., that human reason is the governing element.

Nothing is more natural than such an observation, but this does not prevent it from being groundless.

Undoubtedly the use of the implements of labour presupposes high development of the intellect in the animal man. But see the reasons which modern natural science gives as an explanation for this development.

"Man could not have attained his present dominant position in the world without the use of his hands, which are so admirably adapted to act in obedience to his will," says Darwin.* This is not a new idea: it was previously expressed by Helvetius. But Helvetius, who was never able to take his stand firmly on the view-point of evolution, was not able to clothe his own thought in a more or less convincing form. Darwin put forward in its defence an entire arsenal of arguments, and although they all naturally have a purely hypothetical character, still in their sum-total they are sufficiently convincing. What does Darwin say, then? Whence did quasi-man get his present, quite human hands, which have exercised such a remarkable influence in promoting the successes of his "intellect"? Probably they were formed in virtue of certain peculiarities of the *geographical environment* which made useful a physiological division of labour between the front and rear limbs. The successes of "intellect" appeared as the *remote consequence* of this division and—again in favourable external circumstances—became in their turn the *immediate reason* for the appearance of man's artificial organs, the use of tools. These new artificial organs rendered new services to his intellectual development, and the successes of the "intellect" again reflected themselves upon the organs. We have before us a long process in which cause and consequence are constantly alternating. But it would be a mistake to examine this process from the standpoint of *simple interaction*. In order that man should take advantage of the successes already achieved by his "intellect" to perfect his artificial implements, i.e., *to increase his power over*

* *La descendance de l'homme, etc.*, Paris, 1881, p. 51.[411]

*nature,* he had to be in a *certain* geographical environment, capable of providing him with (1) materials necessary for that perfecting, (2) the object the working up of which would presuppose perfected implements. Where there were no metals, the intellect of social man alone could not in any circumstances lead him beyond the boundaries of the "polished stone period"; and in just the same way in order to pass on to the pastoral and agricultural life he required certain fauna and flora, without which "intellect would have remained motionless". But even this is not all. The intellectual development of primitive societies was bound to proceed the more quickly, the greater were the mutual connections between them, and these connections were, of course, the more frequent, the more varied were the geographical conditions of the localities which they inhabited, i.e., the less similar, consequently, were the products of one locality and those of another.* Lastly, all know how important in this respect are the natural means of communication. It was already Hegel who said that mountains divide men, while seas and rivers bring them together.**

Geographical environment exercises no less decisive an influence on the fate also of large societies, the fate of states arising on the ruins of the primitive clan organisations. "It is not the mere fertility of the soil, but the differentiation of the soil, the variety of its natural products, the changes of the seasons, which form the physical basis for the social division of labour, and which, by changes in the natural surroundings, spur man on to the multipli-

* In the well-known book of von Martius, on the primitive inhabitants of Brazil,[412] several interesting examples can be found which show how important are what seem to be the most insignificant peculiarities of various localities, in developing mutual relations between their inhabitants.

** However, it must be observed about the sea that it does not always bring men together. Ratzel (*Anthropo-Geographie,* Stuttgart, 1882, p. 92) justly remarks that at a certain low stage of development the sea is an *absolute* frontier, i.e., it renders impossible any relations whatsoever between the peoples it divides. For their part, relations which are made possible originally only by the characteristics of geographical environment leave their impression on the physiognomy of primitive tribes. Islanders are markedly distinguished from those dwelling on continents.

"Die Bevölkerungen der Inseln sind in einigen Fällen völlig andere als die des nächstgelegenen Festlandes oder der nächsten grösseren Insel; aber auch wo sie ursprünglich derselben Rasse oder Völkergruppe angehören, sind sie immer weit von derselben verschieden; und zwar, kann man hinzusetzen, in der Regel weiter als die entsprechenden festländischen Abzweigungen dieser Rasse oder Gruppe untereinander" (Ratzel, *loc. cit.,* S. 96). ["The inhabitants of islands are in some cases totally different from those of the nearest mainland or the nearest large island; but even where they originally belonged to the same race or group of peoples, they are always widely different from the latter; and indeed one can add, as a rule, that they differ more widely than do the corresponding branches of this race or group on the mainland among themselves."] Here is repeated the same law as in the formation of the species and varieties of animals.

cation of his wants, his capabilities, his means and modes of labour. It is the necessity of bringing a natural force under the control of society, of economising, of appropriating or subduing it on a large scale by the work of man's hand, that first plays the decisive part in the history of industry. Examples are, the irrigation works in Egypt, Lombardy, Holland, or in India and Persia where irrigation, by means of artificial canals, not only supplies the soil with the water indispensable to it, but also carries down to it, in the shape of sediment from the hills, mineral fertilisers. The secret of the flourishing state of industry in Spain and Sicily under the dominion of the Arabs lay in their irrigation works."*

Thus *only thanks to certain particular qualities of the geographical environment could our anthropomorphic ancestors rise to that height of intellectual development which was necessary to transform them into tool-making animals. And in just the same way only certain peculiarities of the same environment could provide the scope for using in practice and constantly perfecting this new capacity of "tool-making".*** In the historical process of the deve-

* Marx, *Das Kapital*, 3. Aufl., S. 524-26.[413] In a footnote Marx adds: "One of the material bases of the power of the State over the small disconnected producing organisms in India, was the regulation of the water supply. The Mohammedan rulers of India understood this better than their English successors". We may compare with the opinion of Marx, quoted above, the opinion of a most recent investigator: "Unter dem, was die lebende Natur dem Menschen an Gaben bietet, ist nicht der Reichtum an Stoffen, sondern der an Kräften oder, besser gesagt, Kräfteanregungen am höchsten zu schätzen" (Ratzel, *loc. cit.*, S. 343).[—"Among the gifts which living Nature offers to men, that to be prized most highly is not material wealth, but energy, or rather the means of producing energy."]

** *Editor's Note:* Plekhanov's arguments about the significance of the geographical environment in social progress (see pp. 591-92 and 663-66 of this edition) cannot be regarded as absolutely correct. In his later works Plekhanov even speaks of the determining influence of the geographical environment on the entire course of social progress.

While pointing out quite rightly that the geographical environment influences man through social relations, that the latter, once they have arisen, develop in conformity with their inner laws, Plekhanov is mistaken when he says that social structure "is determined in the long run by the characteristics of the geographical environment" (p. 664) and that "the capacity of man for 'tool-making' must be regarded first of all as a *constant magnitude*, while the surrounding external conditions for the use of this capacity in practice have to be regarded as a *constantly varying magnitude*" (p. 592).

Geographical environment is unquestionably one of the constant and indispensable conditions of development of society and, of course, influences the development of society, accelerates or retards its development. But its influence is not the *determining* influence, inasmuch as the changes and development of society proceed at an incomparably faster rate than the changes and development of geographical environment. In the space of three thousand years three different social systems have been successively superseded in Europe: the primitive communal system, the slave system and the

lopment of productive forces, the capacity of man for "tool-making" must be regarded first of all as a *constant magnitude*, while the surrounding external conditions for the use of this capacity in practice have to be regarded as a *constantly varying magnitude.* *

The difference in results (*the stages of cultural development*) achieved by various human societies is explained precisely by the fact that environment did not permit the various human tribes to make practical use to an equal extent of their capacity to "invent". There is a school of anthropologists who trace the origin of the difference in results mentioned in the different qualities of *the races of man.* But the view of this school does not hold water: it is merely a new variation of the old method of explaining historical phenomena by references to "human nature" (or here, references to *racial nature*), and in its scientific profundity it has not gone very much farther than the views of Molière's doctor, who sagely proclaimed that opium sends one to sleep because it has the

feudal system. In the eastern part of Europe, in the U.S.S.R., even four social systems have been superseded. Yet during this period geographical conditions in Europe have either not changed at all, or have changed so slightly that geography takes no note of them. And that is quite natural. Changes in geographical environment of any importance require millions of years, whereas a few hundred or a couple of thousand years are enough for even very important changes in the system of human society.

It follows from this that geographical environment cannot be the chief cause, the *determining* cause of social development, for that which remains almost unchanged in the course of tens of thousands of years cannot be the chief cause of development of that which undergoes fundamental changes in the course of a few hundred years.

* "We must beware," says L. Geiger, "of ascribing to premeditation too great a part in the origin of implements. The discovery of the first implements of the highest importance took place, of course, by accident, like many great discoveries of modern times. They were of course rather discovered than invented. I arrived at this view in particular on account of the circumstance that the names of implements never arise from their manufacture, that those names never have a genetic character, but arise from the use which is made of the implement. Thus, in the German language Schere (scissors), Säge (saw), Hacke (pick-axe) are objects which shear (scheren), saw (sägen), hack (hacken). This law of language must all the more attract our attention because the names of devices which do not represent tools are formed by a genetic or passive method, from the material or from the work of which or thanks to which they arise. Thus, a skin as a receptacle for wine in many languages originally means the skin torn off an animal: to the German Schlauch corresponds the English slough (snakeskin): the Greek ascós is simultaneously a skin in the sense of receptacle, and the skin of a beast. Here, consequently, language shows us quite evidently how and out of what was manufactured the device called a skin. It is otherwise in relation to implements; and they at first—if we base ourselves on language—were not manufactured at all. Thus the first knife could be found by accident, and I would say made use of in play, in the shape of a sharpened stone." L. Geiger, *Die Urgeschichte der Menschheit im Lichte der Sprache. Mit besonderer Beziehung auf die Entstehung des Werkzeugs,* pp. 36-37 (in the collection *Zur Entwickelungsgeschichte der Menschheit,* Stuttgart, 1878).

quality of sending to sleep (a race is backward because it has the quality of backwardness).

Acting on external nature, man changes his own nature. He develops all his capacities, among them also the capacity of "tool-making". *But at any given time the measure of that capacity is determined by the measure of the development of productive forces already achieved.*

Once an implement of labour has become an object of production, the very possibility—as well as the greater or lesser degree—of perfecting its manufacture entirely depends on the implements of labour with the help of which it is manufactured. This is comprehensible to anyone even without explanation. But this is what, for example, may seem quite incomprehensible at first glance. Plutarch, when mentioning the inventions made by Archimedes during the siege of Syracuse by the Romans, finds it necessary to *apologise* for the inventor. It is, of course, indecent for a philosopher to occupy himself with things of this kind, he reflects, but Archimedes was justified by the extremity in which his country found itself. We ask, who would now think of seeking for circumstances which extenuate the guilt of Edison? We nowadays do not consider shameful—quite the opposite—the use by man in practice of his capacity for mechanical inventions, while the Greeks (or if you prefer the Romans), as you see, took quite a different view of this. Hence the course of mechanical discovery and invention among them was bound to proceed—and actually did proceed—incomparably more slowly than amongst ourselves. Here once again it might seem that *opinions govern the world.* But whence did the Greeks derive such a strange "opinion"? Its origin cannot be explained by the qualities of the human "intellect". It remains only to recall their social relations. The societies of Greece and Rome were, as we know, societies of *slave-owners.* In such societies all physical labour, all the work of production, fell to the lot of the slaves. The free man was *ashamed* of such labour, and therefore naturally there was established a contemptuous attitude even to the most important inventions which bore on the processes of production—and among them to the mechanical inventions. That is why Plutarch looked on Archimedes in a very different way from that in which we now regard Edison.*

* "For the art of mechanics ... was first originated by Eudoxus and Archytas, who embellished geometry with its subtleties, and gave to problems incapable of proof by word and diagram a support derived from mechanical illustrations that were patent to the senses.... But Plato was incensed at this, and inveighed against them as corrupters and destroyers of the pure excellence of geometry, which thus turned her back upon the incorporeal things of abstract thought and descended to the things of sense, making use, moreover, of objects which required much mean and manual labour. For this reason mechanics was made entirely distinct from geometry, and being for a long

But why was slavery established in Greece? Was it not because the Greeks, on account of some errors of their "intellect", considered the slaveowning order to be the best? No, it was not because of that. There was a time when the Greeks also had no slavery, and at that time they did not at all consider the slaveowning social order to be natural and inevitable. Later on, slavery arose among the Greeks, and gradually began to play a more and more important part in their life. Then the view of the citizens of Greece also changed: they began to defend slavery as a quite natural and unquestionably essential institution. But why, then, did slavery arise and develop among the Greeks? Evidently, for the same reason that it arose and developed in other countries as well, at a certain stage of their social development. And this reason is well known: it consists in the state of the productive forces. For, in fact, in order that it should be more profitable for me to make my conquered enemy into a slave, rather than into roast meat, it is necessary that the product of his unfree labour should be able to maintain not only his own existence but, at least in part, mine too: in other words, a certain stage of development of the productive forces at my disposal is essential. And it is precisely through this door that slavery enters history. Slave labour is not very favourable to the development of the productive forces; in conditions of slavery it advances extremely slowly, but still it does advance. Finally there arrives a moment at which the exploitation of slave labour proves to be less advantageous than the exploitation of free labour. Then slavery is *abolished*, or gradually *dies out*. It is shown to the door by that same development of the productive forces which introduced it into history.* Thus we, returning to Plutarch, see that his view of Archimedes' inventions was conditioned by the state of the productive forces of his age. And as views of this kind undoubtedly have a

time ignored by philosophers came to be regarded as one of the military arts" (Plutarchi, *Vita Marcelli*, edit. Teubneriana, C. Sintenis, Lipsiae, 1883, Ch. XIV, pp. 135-36). As the reader will see, Plutarch's view was far from new at that time.

* It is known that for a long time the Russian peasants themselves could have, and not infrequently did have, their own serfs. The condition of a serf could not be attractive to a peasant. But in the then state of the productive forces of Russia not a single peasant could find that condition abnormal. A "muzhik" who had made some money just as naturally began to think about buying serfs as a Roman freeman strove to acquire slaves. The slaves who revolted under the leadership of Spartacus waged war with their lords, but not with slavery; if they had succeeded in winning their freedom, they would themselves, in favourable circumstances, and with the most tranquil conscience, have become slave-owners. Willy-nilly one recalls at this point the words of Schelling, which acquire a new meaning, that *freedom must be necessary*. History shows that any of the forms of freedom makes its appearance only where it becomes an economic necessity.

vast influence on the further course of discovery and invention, we can say all the more that *for every given people, at every given period of its history, the further development of its productive forces is determined by their condition in the period under examination.*[414]

Naturally, wherever we have to deal with inventions and discoveries, we deal also with "reason". Without reason discoveries and inventions would have been just as impossible as they were before man appeared on the earth. The teaching we are setting forth does not at all leave out of account the role of reason; it only tries to explain why reason at every given time *acted in this way, and not otherwise*; it does not despise the successes of reason, but only seeks to find a sufficient cause for them.

Lately another objection has been raised to the same teaching, and we shall leave Mr. Kareyev to set it forth:

"In course of time," says this writer, having more or less successfully expounded the historical philosophy of Engels, "Engels supplemented his view by new considerations which introduced an essential alteration. If previously he had recognised as the foundation of the material conception of history only the investigation of the economic structure of society, later on he recognised as equally important the study of family structure. This took place under the influence of new conceptions of the primitive forms of marriage and family relations, which forced him to take into account not only the process of the production of products but also the process of the reproduction of human generations. In this respect the influence came in part form Morgan's *Ancient Society*," etc.*[415]

And so, if earlier Engels "recognised as the foundation of the material" (? ) "conception of history the investigation of the economic structure of society", later on, "having recognised as equally important", etc., he, practically speaking, ceased to be an "economic" materialist. Mr. Kareyev sets forth this event in the tone of a dispassionate historian, while Mr. Mikhailovsky "skips and jumps" on the same subject; but both of them say essentially one and the same thing, and both repeat what before them was said by the extremely superficial German writer Weisengrün in his book, *Entwickelungsgesetze der Menschheit.*[416]

It is quite natural that such a remarkable man as Engels, who during whole decades followed attentively the advance of science of his time, should very substantially "supplement" his basic view of the history of humanity. But there are supplements and supplements, as there are "fagot et fagot". In this case the whole question is, did Engels *change his views* as a result of the "supple-

* See "Economic Materialism in History", in *Vestnik Yevropy*, August 1894, p. 601.

ments" which were introduced in them? Was he really obliged to recognise, side by side with the development of "production", the action of another factor, allegedly "equally important" with the first? It is easy for anyone to reply to this question who has even the least willingness to make an attentive and serious approach to it.

Elephants sometimes beat off flies with branches, says Darwin. We have remarked in this connection that nevertheless these branches play no essential part in the life of elephants, and that the elephant did not become an elephant because he used branches. But the elephant multiplies. The male elephant has a certain relationship with the female. The male and the female have a certain relationship with their young. It is clear that these relations have not been created by "branches": they have been created by the general conditions of life of this species, conditions in which the role of a "branch" is so infinitely small that it can without error be equated to *zero.* But imagine that in the life of the elephant the branch begins to play a more and more important part, in the sense that it begins more and more to influence the structure of those general conditions on which depend all the habits of elephants, and in the long run their very existence. Imagine that the branch has acquired at length a *decisive* influence in creating these conditions. Then we shall have to recognise that it determines in the long run also the relations of the male elephant with the female and with his young. Then we shall have to recognise that there was a time when the "family" relations of elephants developed independently (in the sense of their relation with the branch), but that later on there came a time when those relations began to be determined by the "branch". Will there be anything strange in such an admission? Absolutely nothing, except the strangeness of the very hypothesis that a branch might suddenly acquire a decisive importance in the life of the elephant. And we know ourselves that in relation to the elephant this hypothesis cannot but seem strange; but in application to the history of *man* things are different.

Man only gradually separated off from the animal world. There was a time when in the life of our anthropoid ancestors tools played just as insignificant a part as branches play in the life of the elephant. During this very long period, the relations between the anthropoid males and the anthropoid females, just as the relations between each and their anthropoid young, were determined by the general conditions of life of this species, which bore no relation whatsoever to the *implements of labour.* On what did then depend the "family" relations of our ancestors? It is the naturalists who must explain this: the historian has as yet nothing to do in this sphere. But now the implements of labour begin to play a

more and more important part in the life of man, the productive forces develop more and more, and there comes at length a moment when they acquire a decisive influence on the whole structure of social, and among them of family, relations. It is at this point that *the work of the historian* begins: he has to show how and why the family relations of our ancestors changed in connection with the development of their productive forces, how the family developed in accordance with economic relations. But obviously, once he sets about such an explanation, he has in studying the primitive family to reckon not only with economics: for people multiplied even before the implements of labour acquired their decisive significance in human life: even before this time there existed some kind of family relations which were determined by the general conditions of existence of the species homo sapiens. What then has the historian to do here? He will have, first of all, to ask for a service record of this species from the naturalist, who is passing over to him the further study of the development of man; and he will have secondly to supplement this record "out of his own resources". In other words he will have to take the "family", as it came into existence, shall we say, in the zoological period of the development of humanity, and then show what changes were introduced into it during the *historical* period, under the influence of the development of the productive forces, in consequence of changes in economic relations. That is all Engels says. And we ask: when he says this, is he in the least changing his "original" view of the significance of the productive forces in the history of humanity? Is he accepting, side by side with the working of this factor, the working of some other, "of equal importance"? It would seem that he is changing nothing, it would seem that he is accepting no such factor. Well, but if he is not, then why do Messrs. Weisengrün and Kareyev talk about a change in his views, why does Mr. Mikhailovsky skip and jump? Most probably because of their own thoughtlessness.

"But after all, it is really strange to reduce the history of the family to the history of economic relations, even during what you call the historical period," shout our opponents in chorus. It may be strange, and maybe it is not strange: this is debatable, we shall say in the words of Mr. Mikhailovsky. And we don't mind debating it with you, gentlemen, but only on one condition: during the debate behave seriously, study attentively the meaning of our words, don't attribute to us your own inventions, and don't hasten to discover in us contradictions which neither we nor our teachers have, or ever had. Are you agreed? Very well, let's debate.

One cannot explain the history of the family by the history of economic relations, you say: it is narrow, one-sided,

unscientific. We assert the contrary, and turn to the mediation of specialist investigators.

Of course you know the book of Giraud-Teulon: *Les origines de la famille*? We open this book which you know, and we find in it for example the following passage:

"The reasons which brought about the formation within the primitive tribe" (Giraud-Teulon says, in point of fact, "within the horde"—de la horde) "of separate family groups are evidently connected with the growth in wealth of this tribe. The introduction into use, or the discovery, of some grain, the domestication of new species of animals, could be a sufficient reason for radical transformations in savage society: all great successes of civilisation always coincided with profound changes in the economic life of the population" (p. 138).*

A few pages further on we read:

"Apparently the transition from the system of female kinship to the system of male kinship was particularly heralded by conflicts of a juridical character on the basis of property right" (p.141).

And further on: "The organisation of the family in which male right predominates was everywhere aroused, it seems to me, by the action of a force as simple as elemental: *the right of property*" (p. 146).

You know, of course, what significance in the history of the primitive family McLennan attributes to the killing of children of the female sex? Engels, as we know, has a very negative attitude to McLennan's researches; but all the more interesting is it for us in the present case to learn the views of McLennan on the reason which gave rise to the appearance of infanticide, which allegedly exercised such a decisive influence on the history of the family.

"To tribes surrounded by enemies, and, unaided by art, contending with the difficulties of subsistence, sons were a source of strength, both for defence and in the quest for food, daughters a source of weakness."**

What was it, then, that brought about, in McLennan's opinion, the killing of children of the female sex by the primitive tribes? The insufficiency of the means of existence, the weakness of the productive forces: if these tribes had enough food, probably they would not have killed their little girls merely out of fear that one day an enemy might come and possibly kill them, or take them away into captivity.

We repeat that Engels does not share McLennan's view of the history of the family, and we too find it very unsatisfying; but

* We quote from the French edition of 1874.

** J. F. McLennan, *Studies in Ancient History: Primitive Marriage*, 1876, p. 111.

what is important at this stage is that McLennan, too, shares in the sin with which Engels is reproached. He, too, seeks in the state of the productive forces the answer to the riddle of the history of family relations.

Need we continue our extracts, and quote from Lippert or Morgan? We see no need of this, for whoever has read them knows that in this respect they are just as great sinners as McLennan and Engels. Not without sin on this occasion, as is well known, is Herbert Spencer himself, although his sociological views have absolutely nothing in common with "economic materialism".

Of course it is possible to take advantage of this last circumstance for polemical purposes, and to say: there you are! So one can agree with Marx and Engels on this or that individual question, and not share their general historical theory! Of course one can. The only question is, on whose side will logic be.

Let us go further.

The development of the family is determined by the development of property right, says Giraud-Teulon, adding that all successes of civilisation in general coincide with changes in the economic life of humanity. The reader probably has noticed himself that Giraud-Teulon is not quite precise in his terminology: his conception of "property right" is covered, as it were, by the conception of "economic life". But after all, right is right, and economy is economy, and the two conceptions should not be mixed up. Where has this property right come from? Perhaps it arose under the influence of the economy of the given society (civil law always serves merely as the expression of economic relations, says Lassalle), or perhaps it owes its origin to some quite different reason. Here we must continue the analysis, and not interrupt it precisely at the moment when it is becoming of particularly profound and most vital interest.

We have seen already that the French historians of the Restoration did not find a satisfactory reply to the question of the origin of property right. Mr. Kareyev, in his article "Economic Materialism in History", deals with the German historical school of law. It will not be a bad thing for us also to recall the views of this school.

Here is what our professor says about it. "When at the beginning of the present century there arose in Germany the so-called 'historical school of law',[417] which began to examine law not as a motionless system of juridical norms, as it was conceived of by previous jurists, but as something moving, changing, developing, there appeared in this school a strong tendency to contrast the historical view of law, as the sole and exclusively correct view, with all other possible views in this sphere. The historical view never tolerated the existence of scientific truths applicable to all

ages, i.e., what in the language of modern science are called general laws, and even directly denied these laws, and together with them any general theory of law, in favour of the idea that law depends on local conditions—a dependence which has always and everywhere existed, but does not exclude principles which are common to all nations."*

In these few lines there are very many ... how shall we put it?... shall we say, inexactitudes, against which the representatives and supporters of the historical school of law would have raised a protest. Thus, for example, they would have said that, when Mr. Kareyev ascribes to them the denial of "what in the language of science are called general laws", he either deliberately distorts their view, or else is confusing conceptions in a way most unbefitting a "historiosophist", mixing up those "laws" which fall within the scope of the history of law, and those which determine the historical development of nations. The historical school of law never dreamed of denying the existence of the second kind of law, and always tried to discover them although its efforts were not crowned with success. But the very cause of its failure is extremely instructive, and if Mr. Kareyev were to give himself the trouble of thinking about it, perhaps—who knows—he too would make clear for himself, at last, the "*substance of the historical process*".

In the eighteenth century people were inclined to explain the history of law by the action of the "legislator". The historical school strongly revolted against this inclination. As early as 1814, Savigny formulated the new view in this way: "The sum-total of this view consists of the following: every law arises from what in common usage, but not quite exactly, is called *customary law*, i.e., it is brought into being first of all by the custom and faith of the people, and only afterwards by jurisprudence. Thus it is everywhere created by internal forces, which act unnoticed, and not by the personal will of the legislator."**

This view was later developed by Savigny in his famous work *System des heutigen römischen Rechts*. "Positive law," he says in this work, "lives in the general consciousness of a people, and therefore we have to call it *popular law*.... But this must not in any event be understood as meaning that law has been created by individual members of the people arbitrarily.... Positive law is created by the spirit of a people, living and acting in its individual members, and therefore positive law, not by accident but of neces-

* *Vestnik Yevropy*, July 1894, p. 12.

** Friedrich Karl von Savigny, *Vom Beruf unserer Zeit für Gesetzgebung und Rechtswissenschaft*, 3rd ed., Heidelberg, 1840, p. 14. The first edition appeared in 1814.

sity, is one and the same law in the consciousness of individual persons."*

Savigny continues: "If we consider the question of the origin of the State, we shall have in the same way to locate it in supreme necessity, in the action of a force building outward from within, as was shown earlier in the case of law in general; and this applies not only to the existence of the State in general, but also to that particular form which the State assumes in every individual nation."**

Law arises in exactly the same "invisible way" as language, and it lives in the general consciousness of a people, not in the shape "of abstract rules, but in the shape of a living conception of institutions of law and in their organic connection, so that, when necessity arises, the abstract rule has to be formed in its logical shape from this general conception, by means of a certain artificial process (durch einen künstlichen Prozess)".***

We are not interested here in the practical aspirations of the historical school of law; but as far as its *theory* is concerned, we can already say, on the basis of the words of Savigny here quoted, that it represents:

1. A reaction against the view held widely in the eighteenth century that law is created by the arbitrary will of individual persons ("legislators"); and an attempt to furnish a scientific explanation of the history of law, to understand that history as a process which is necessary, and which, therefore, conforms to law.

2. An attempt to explain that process, starting from a completely *idealist point of view*: "the spirit of a people", the "consciousness of a people", is the final authority to which the historical school of law appealed.

Puchta expressed the idealist character of the views of this school even more sharply.

Primitive law, with Puchta, just as with Savigny, is customary law. But how does customary law arise? The opinion is often expressed that this law is created by everyday practice (Uebung), but this is only a particular case of the materialist view of the origin of popular conceptions. "Exactly the opposite view is the right one: everyday practice is only the last moment, it only expresses and embodies the law which has arisen, and which lives in the conviction of the individuals belonging to the particular people. Custom influences conviction only in the sense

* Berlin edition, 1840, Vol. I, p. 14.
** *Ibid.*, p. 22.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 16.

that the latter, thanks to custom, becomes more conscious and more stable."*

And so the conviction of a people concerning this or that legal institution arises independently of everyday practice, and earlier than "custom". Whence does this conviction come from, then? It arises from the depth of the spirit of the people. The particular form this conviction takes with a particular people is to be explained by the particular features of the spirit of the people concerned. This is very obscure—so obscure that it does not contain any symptom of a scientific explanation. Puchta himself feels that things here are not quite satisfactory, and tries to put them right with an observation of this kind: "Law arises by an imperceptible path. Who could take upon himself to trace those paths which lead to the origin of the given conviction, to its conception, its growth, its flourishing, its manifestation? Those who tried to do so, for the most part started from mistaken ideas."**

"For the most part...." That means that there also existed investigators whose initial ideas were correct. To what conclusions, then, about the genesis of popular views on law did these persons arrive? We must suppose that this remained a secret for Puchta, because he does not go one step further than meaningless references to the qualities of the spirit of the people.

Nor is any explanation provided by the above-quoted remark of Savigny that law lives in the general consciousness of a people, not in the shape of abstract rules, but "in the shape of a living conception of legal institutions in their organic connection". And it is not difficult to understand what it was that impelled Savigny to give us this somewhat muddled information. If we had presumed that law exists in the consciousness of a people "in the shape of abstract rules", we should thereby in the first place have come up against the "general consciousness" of the jurists, who know very well with what difficulty a people grasps these abstract rules, and secondly, our theory of the origin of law would have assumed a too incredible form. It would have appeared that before entering into any practical relations one with another, before acquiring any practical experience whatsoever, the men constituting the given people work out definite legal conceptions for themselves, and having laid in a store of these, as a tramp does of crusts, they set

* *Cursus der Institutionen*, Leipzig, 1841, Vol. I, p. 31. In a footnote Puchta speaks sharply of the eclectics who strive to reconcile contradictory views of the origin of law, and uses such expressions that willy-nilly the question arises: can he possibly have anticipated the appearance of Mr. Kareyev? But on the other hand it must be said that in Germany at the time of Puchta they had quite enough eclectics of their own. Whatever else there may be a shortage of, there are always and everywhere inexhaustible reserves of that type of mind.

** *Ibid.*, p. 28.

forth into the sphere of everyday practice, enter upon their historical path. Nobody, of course, would believe this, and so Savigny eliminates the "abstract rules": law exists in the consciousness of the people not in the shape of definite conceptions, it represents, not a collection of already fully shaped crystals, but a more or less saturated solution out of which, "when necessity for this arises", i.e., when coming up against everyday practice, the required juridical crystals are precipitated. Such an approach is not without its ingenuity, but naturally it does not in the least bring us nearer to a scientific understanding of phenomena.

Let us take an example:

The Eskimos, Rink tells us, scarcely have any regular property; but in so far as it can be spoken of, he enumerates three forms which it takes:

"1. Property owned by an association of generally more than one family—e.g., the winter-house....

"2. Property, the common possession of one, or at most of three families of kindred—viz., a tent and everything belonging to the household, such as lamps, tubs, dishes of wood, soapstone pots; a boat, or *umiak,* which can carry all these articles along with the tent; one or two sledges with the dogs attached to them;:.. the stock of winter provisions....

"3. As regards personal property—i.e., owned by every individual ... his clothes ... weapons, and tools or whatever was specially used by himself. These things were even regarded as having a kind of supernatural relation to the owner, reminding us of that between the body and the soul. Lending them to others was not customary."*

Let us try and conceive of the origin of these three kinds of property from the standpoint of the old historical school of law.

As, in the words of Puchta, convictions precede everyday practice, and do not arise on the basis of custom, one must suppose that matters proceeded in the following way. Before living in winter-houses, even before they began to build them, the Eskimos came to the conviction that once winter-houses appeared among them, they must belong to a union of several families. In the same way, our savages came to the conviction that, once there appeared among them summer tents, barrels, wooden plates, boats, pots, sledges and dogs, all these would have to be the property of a single family or, at most, of three kindred families. Finally, they formed no less firm a conviction that clothes, arms and tools must constitute personal property, and that it would be wrong even to lend these articles. Let us

* H. J. Rink, *Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo,* 1875, pp. 9-10, 30.

add to this that probably all these "convictions" existed, not in the shape of abstract rules, but "in the shape of a living conception of legal institutions in their organic connection", and that out of this solution of legal conceptions there were precipitated—"when necessity for this arose", i.e., as they encountered winter dwellings, summer tents, barrels, stone pots, wooden plates, boats, sledges and dogs—the norms of customary Eskimo law in their more or less "logical form". And the qualities of the above-mentioned legal solution were determined by the mysterious qualities of the Eskimo spirit.

This is not a scientific explanation at all, but a mere "way of talking"—Redensarten, as the Germans say.

*That variety of idealism which was maintained by the supporters of the historical school of law proved in its explanation of social phenomena to be even more fallacious than the much more profound idealism of Schelling and Hegel.*

How did science emerge from that blind alley in which idealism found itself? Let us hear what Mr. M. Kovalevsky, one of the most distinguished representatives of modern comparative law, has to say.

Pointing out that the social life of primitive tribes bears on itself the stamp of communism, Mr. Kovalevsky (listen, Mr. V. V.: he also is a "professor") says:

"If we enquire as to the real foundations for such an order of things, if we try and discover the reasons which forced our primitive forefathers, and still oblige modern savages, to maintain a more or less sharply expressed communism, we shall have in particular to learn the primitive modes of production. For the distribution and consumption of wealth must be determined by the methods of its creation. And as to this, ethnography states the following: hunting and fishing peoples secure their food as a rule in hordes.... In Australia the kangaroo is hunted by armed detachments of several tens, and even hundreds, of natives. The same takes place in northern countries when hunting the reindeer.... It is beyond doubt that man is incapable of maintaining his existence alone; he needs help and support, and his forces are multiplied tenfold by association.... Thus we see social production at the beginning of social development and, as the necessary natural consequence of this, social consumption. Ethnography abounds in facts which prove this."*

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* M. Kovalevsky, *Tableau des origines et de l'évolution de la famille et de la propriété*, Stockholm, 1890, pp. 52-53. The late N. Sieber's *Outlines of Primitive Economic Culture* contains numerous facts demonstrating with the utmost clarity that modes of appropriation are determined by modes of production.

Having quoted the idealist theory of Lerminier,[418] according to which private property arises from the self-consciousness of the individual, Mr. Kovalevsky continues:

"No, this is not so. It is not for this reason that primitive man arrives at the idea of the personal appropriation of the chipped stone which serves him as a weapon, or of the skin which covers his body. He arrives at this idea in consequence of the application of his individual forces to the production of the object concerned. The flint which serves him as an axe has been chipped by his own hands. At the hunt in which he engaged together with many comrades, he struck the final blow at the animal, and therefore the skin of that animal becomes his personal property. The customary law of savages is distinguished by great exactness on this question. It carefully provides beforehand, for example, for the case in which the hunted animal fell under the joint blows of two hunters: in that event the animal's skin becomes the property of the hunter whose arrow penetrated nearest to the heart. It also provides for the case in which an already wounded animal was given the finishing blow by a hunter who turned up accidentally. The application of individual labour logically gives rise, consequently, to individual appropriation. We can trace this phenomenon through all history. He who planted a fruit tree becomes its owner.... Later a warrior who won a certain booty becomes its exclusive owner, so that his family no longer has any right to it. In just the same way a priest's family has no right to the sacrifices which are made by the faithful, and which become his personal property. All this is equally well confirmed by the Indian laws and by the customary law of the South Slavs, Don Cossacks or ancient Irish. And it is important not to make any mistake as to the true principle of such appropriation, which is the result of the application of personal effort to the procuring of a definite object. For when the personal efforts of a man are supplemented by the help of his kin ... the objects secured no longer become private property."*

After all that has been said, it will be comprehensible why it is arms, clothes, food, adornments, etc., that first become objects of personal appropriation. "Already from the first steps taken, the domestication of animals—dogs, horses, cats, working cattle—constitutes the most important fund of personal and family appropriation...."** But to what extent the organisation of production continues to influence the modes of appropriation is shown, for example, by such a fact: among the Eskimos the hunting of whales takes place in big boats and big detachments, and the boats which serve for this prupose

* *Ibid.*, p. 95.
** *Ibid.*, p. 57.

represent social property. But the little boats which serve for transporting the objects of family property themselves belong to separate families, or "at most to three kindred families".

With the appearance of agriculture, the land also becomes an object of appropriation. The subjects of property in land become more or less large unions of kindred. This, naturally, is one of the forms of *social* appropriation. How is its origin to be explained? "It seems to us," says Mr. Kovalevsky, "that its reasons lie in that same social production which once upon a time involved the appropriation of the greater part of movable objects."*

Naturally, once it has arisen, *private* property enters into contradiction to the more ancient mode of *social* appropriation. Wherever the rapid development of productive forces opens a wider and wider field for "individual efforts", social production fairly rapidly disappears, or continues to exist in the shape, so to speak, of a *rudimentary* institution. We shall see later on that this process of the disintegration of primitive social property at various times and in various places through the most natural, *material* necessity, was bound to be marked by great variety. At present we will only stress the general conclusion of the modern science of law that *legal conceptions*—or convictions, as Puchta would have said—are everywhere *determined by the modes of production.*

Schelling said on one occasion that the phenomenon of magnetism must be understood as the embedding of the "subjective" in the "objective". All attempts to discover an idealist explanation for the history of law represent no more than a supplement, a "Seitenstück", to idealist natural philosophy. It amounts always to the same, sometimes brilliant and ingenious, but always arbitrary and always groundless meditations, on the theme of the self-sufficing, *self-developing* spirit.

Legal conviction could not *precede* everyday practice for this one reason alone that, if it had not *grown out of that practice,* it would have *no reason* for existence whatsoever. The Eskimo stands for the personal appropriation of clothes, arms and implements of labour for the simple reason that such appropriation is much more convenient, and is suggested by *the very qualities of the things involved.* In order to learn the proper use of his weapon, his bow or his boomerang, the primitive hunter must *adapt himself to it,* study all its individual peculiarities, and if possible *adapt it* to his own individual peculiarities.** Private

* *Ibid.,* p. 93.

** It is known that the intimate connection between the hunter and his weapon exists in all primitive tribes. "Der Jäger darf sich keiner fremden Waffen bedienen" ["The hunter must not make use of a stranger's weapons."], says Martius of the primitive inhabitants of Brazil, explaining at

property here is in the nature of things much more than any other form of appropriation, and therefore the savage is "convinced" of its advantages: as we know, he even attributes to the implements of individual labour and to arms some kind of mysterious connection with their owner. But his conviction grew up on the basis of everyday practice, and did not precede it: and it owes its origin, not to the qualities of his "spirit", but to the qualities of the articles which he is using, and to the character of those modes of production which are inevitable for him in the existing state of his productive forces.

To what extent everyday practice precedes legal "conviction" is shown by the numerous symbolic acts existing in primitive law. The modes of production have changed, with them have likewise changed the mutual relations of men in the process of production, everyday practice has changed, yet "conviction" has retained its old shape. It contradicts the new practice, and so fictions appear, symbolic signs and actions, the sole purpose of which is formally to eliminate this contradiction. In the course of time the contradiction is at last eliminated in an essential way: on the basis of the new economic practice a new legal conviction takes shape.

It is not sufficient to register the appearance, in a given society, of private property in this or that object, to be able thereby to determine the character of that institution. Private property always has limits which depend entirely on the economy of society. "In the savage state man appropriates only the things which are directly useful to him. The surplus, even though it is acquired by the labour of his hands, he usually gives up gratuitously to others: to members of his family, or of his clan, or of his tribe," says Mr. Kovalevsky. Rink says exactly the same about the Eskimos.[419] But whence did such ways arise among the savage peoples? In the words of Mr. Kovalevsky, they owe their origin to the fact that savages are not acquainted with *saving*.* This is not a very clear expression, and is particularly unsatisfacto-

the same time whence these savages derived such a "conviction": "Besonders behaupten diejenigen Wilden, die mit dem Blasrohr schiessen, dass dieses Geschoss durch den Gebrauch eines Fremden verdorben werde, und geben es nicht aus ihren Händen." *(Von dem Rechtszustande unter den Ureinwohnern Brasiliens,* München, 1832, S. 50.) ("In particular these savages who shoot with a blowpipe, insist that this weapon is spoiled when used by a stranger, and don't allow it out of their hands."—*Ed.)* "Die Führung dieser Waffen (bows and arrows) erfordert eine grosse Geschicklichkeit und beständige Uebung. Wo sie bei wilden Völkern im Gebrauche sind, berichten uns die Reisenden, dass schon die Knaben sich mit Kindergeräten im Schiessen üben." (Oscar Peschel, *Völkerkunde,* Leipzig, 1875, S. 190) ["The use of these weapons (bows and arrows) requires great skill and constant practice. Where they are in use among savage peoples, we are told by travellers, the boys already practise shooting with toy weapons."]

* *Loc. cit.,* p. 56.

ry because it was very much abused by the vulgar economists. Nevertheless, it can be understood in what sense our author uses the expression. "Saving" is really unknown to primitive peoples, for the simple reason that it is inconvenient and, one may say, impossible for them to practise it. The flesh of an animal that has been killed can be "saved" only to an inconsiderable extent: it goes bad, and then becomes quite unsuitable for use. Of course, if it could be sold, it would be very easy to "save" the money got for it. But money does not yet exist at this stage of economic development. Consequently, the economy of primitive society itself fixes narrow limits within which the spirit of "thrift" can develop. Moreover, today I was lucky enough to kill a big animal, and I shared its meat with others, but tomorrow (hunting is an uncertain business) I will return with empty hands, and others of my kin will share their booty with me. The custom of sharing thus appears as something in the nature of mutual insurance, without which the existence of hunting tribes would be quite impossible.

Finally, one must not forget that private property among such tribes exists only in an embryo form, while the prevailing property is *social.* The habits and customs which have grown up on this basis, in their turn, set limits to the arbitrary will of the owner of private property. Conviction, here too, follows economy.

The connection of the legal conceptions of men with their economic life is well illustrated by the example which Rodbertus readily and frequently used in his works. It is well known that the ancient Roman writers energetically protested against *usury*. Cato the Censor considered that a usurer was twice as bad as a thief (that was just what the old man said: exactly twice). In this respect the Fathers of the Christian Church were completely at one with the heathen writers. But—a remarkable fact—both revolted only against interest produced by *money* capital. But to loans in kind, and *to the surplus which they brought*, there was an incomparably milder attitude. Why this difference? Because it was precisely money or usurers' capital that was effecting terrible devastations in society at that time: because it was precisely this that was "*ruining Italy*". Legal "conviction", here too, went hand-in-hand with economy.

"Law is the pure product of necessity or, more exactly, of need," says Post. "In vain should we seek in it any ideal basis whatsoever."* We should say that this was quite in the spirit of the most modern science of law, if our scholar did not display a fairly considerable confusion of conceptions, very harmful in its consequences.

* Dr. Albert Hermann Post, *Der Ursprung des Rechts. Prolegomena zu einer allgemeinen vergleichenden Rechtswissenschaft,* Oldenburg, 1876, S. 25.

Speaking generally, every social union strives to work out such a system of law as would best satisfy its needs and would be most useful for it at the given time. The circumstance that the particular sum-total of legal institutions is useful or harmful for society cannot in any way depend on the qualities of any "idea" whatsoever, from whomsoever the idea might come; *it depends*, as we have seen, *on the modes of production and on those mutual relations between people which are created by those modes.* In this sense law has not and cannot have any *ideal* foundations, as its foundations are always *real.* But the *real foundations* of every given system of law do not exclude *an ideal attitude* towards that system on the part of the members of the given society. Taken as a whole, society only gains from such an attitude of its members towards that system. On the contrary, in its transitional epochs, when the system of law existing in society no longer satisfies its needs, which have grown in consequence of the further development of productive forces, the advanced part of the population can and must idealise a *new system of institutions*, more in keeping with the "spirit of the time". French literature is full of examples of such an idealisation of the new advancing order of things.

The origin of law in "*need*" excludes an "*ideal*" basis of law only in the conception of those people who are accustomed to relegate *need* to the sphere of *crude matter*, and to contrast this sphere to the "pure spirit", foreign to need of every kind. In reality, only that is "ideal" which is useful to men, and every society in working out its *ideals* is guided only by its needs. The seeming exceptions from this incontestably general rule are explained by the fact that, *in consequence of the development of society*, its *ideals* frequently lag behind its *new needs.**

The realisation of the dependence of social relations on the state of productive forces is penetrating more and more into modern social science, in spite of the inevitable eclecticism of many scientists and in spite of their idealist prejudices. "Just as comparative anatomy has raised to the level of a scientific truth the Latin proverb that 'from the claws I recognise the lion', so the

* Post belongs to the category of these people who have far from parted with idealism yet. Thus, for example, he shows that the union of kindred corresponds to hunting and nomad society, and that with the appearance of agriculture and the stable settlement bound up with it, the union of kindred yields place to "Gaugenossenschaft" (we should call it the neighbour-community). It would seem clear that the man is seeking the key to the explanation of the history of social relations in nothing else than the development of productive forces. In individual cases Post is almost always true to such a principle. But this does not prevent him regarding "im Menschen schaffend ewigen Geist" ("the Eternal Spirit creating in Man".—*Ed.*) as the fundamental cause of the history of law. This man has been, as it were, specially created in order to delight Mr. Kareyev.

study of peoples can from the armament of a particular people form an exact conclusion as to the degree of its civilisation," says Oscar Peschel, whom we have already quoted.*... "With the mode of procuring food is bound up most intimately the dissection of society. Wherever man joins with man a certain authority appears. Weakest of all are the social ties among the wandering hunter hordes of Brazil. But they have to defend their areas and need at least a military chief.... The pastoral tribes are for the most part under the authority of patriarchal sovereigns, as the herds belong as a rule to a single master, who is served by his fellow-tribesmen or by previously independent but later impoverished possessors of herds. The pastoral form of life is mostly, though not exclusively, characterised by great migrations of peoples, both in the north of the Old World and in South Africa; on the other hand, the history of America knows only of individual attacks by wild hunter tribes on the fields of civilised peoples which attract them. Entire peoples which leave their previous places of habitation could make great and prolonged journeys only when accompanied by their herds, which provided them with the necessary food on their way. Furthermore, prairie cattle-breeding itself impels a change of pastures. But with the settled mode of life and agriculture there appears the striving to make use of the labour of slaves.... Slavery leads sooner or later to tyranny, since he who has the largest number of slaves can with their help subject the weakest to his will.... The division into free men and slaves is the beginning of the division of society into estates."**

Peschel has many considerations of this kind. Some of them are quite just and very instructive; others are "debatable" for more than Mr. Mikhailovsky. But what we are concerned with here are not particular details but the general direction of Peschel's thought. And that general direction completely coincides with what we have already seen in the work of Mr. Kovalevsky: *it is in the modes of production, in the state of the productive forces, that he seeks the explanation of the history of law and even of the whole organisation of society.*

And this is precisely what Marx long ago and insistently advised writers on social science to do. And in this lies to a considerable extent, though not completely (the reader will see later why we say: not completely), the sense of that remarkable pre-

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 139. When we were making this extract, we imagined Mr. Mikhailovsky quickly rising in his seat, crying: "I find this debatable: the Chinese may be armed with English rifles. Can one on the basis of these rifles judge of the degree of their civilisation? " Very well asked, Mr. Mikhailovsky: from English rifles it is not logical to draw conclusions about Chinese civilisation. It is of English civilisation that one must judge from them.

** *Loc. cit.*, pp. 252-53.

face to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* which had such bad luck here in Russia, which was so terribly and so strangely misunderstood by the majority of Russian writers who read it in the original or in extracts.

"In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, *relations of production* which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum-total of these relations of production constitutes the *economic structure* of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure...."[420]

Hegel says of Schelling that the fundamental principles of the system of that philosopher remain undeveloped, and his absolute spirit appears unexpectedly, *like a pistol-shot* (wie aus der Pistole geschossen). When the average Russian intellectual hears that in Marx "everything is reduced to the economic foundation" (others say simply: "to the economic"), he loses his head, as though someone had suddenly fired a pistol by his ear. "But why to the economic?" he asks dejectedly and uncomprehendingly. "Of course the economic is also important (especially for the poor peasants and workmen). But after all, no less important is the intellectual (particularly for us intellectuals)." What has just been set forth has, we hope, shown the reader that the perplexity of the average Russian intellectual occurs in this case only because he, that intellectual, was always a little careless about what was "*particularly important intellectually*" for himself. When Marx said that "*the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy*", he did not at all intend to upset the world of learning by sudden pistol-shots: he was only giving a direct and exact reply to the "damned questions" which had tormented thinking heads *for a whole century*.

The French materialists, consistently developing their sensationalist views, came to the conclusion that man, with all his thoughts, feelings and aspirations, is the product of his social environment. In order to go further in applying the materialist view to the study of man, it was necessary to solve the problem of what conditions the structure of the social environment, and what are the laws of its development. The French materialists were unable to reply to this question, and thereby were forced to be false to themselves and return to the old *idealist* point of view which they had so strongly condemned: they said that environment is created by the "*opinion*" of men. Dissatisfied with this superficial reply, the French historians of the Restoration set themselves the task of analysing social environment. The result of their analysis was the conclusion, extremely important for science, that *political constitutions* are rooted in *social relations*, while

social relations are determined by the *state of property*. With this conclusion there arose before science a new problem, without solving which it could not proceed: *what then determines the state of property*? The solution of this problem proved to be beyond the powers of the French historians of the Restoration, and they were obliged to dismiss it with remarks on the qualities of human nature which explained absolutely nothing at all. The great idealists of Germany—Schelling and Hegel—who were their contemporaries in life and work, already well understood how unsatisfactory was the point of view of human nature: Hegel made caustic fun of it. They understood that the key to the explanation of the historical advance of humanity must be sought *outside* human nature. This was a great service which they rendered: but in order that that service should prove completely fruitful for science, it was necessary to show *where precisely that key should be sought*. They looked for it in the *qualities of the spirit*, in the logical *laws of development of the absolute idea*. This was a radical error of the great idealists, which returned them by roundabout ways to the *point of view of human nature*, since the absolute idea, as we have already seen, is nothing else than the personification of our logical process of thought. The discovery of the genius of Marx corrects this radical error of idealism, thereby inflicting on it a deadly blow: the state of property, and with it all the qualities of the social environment (we saw in the chapter on idealist philosophy that Hegel, too, was forced to recognise the decisive importance of the "state of property") are determined, not by the qualities of the absolute spirit and not by the character of human nature, but by those mutual relations into which men of necessity enter one with another "in the social production of their life", i.e., in their struggle for existence. Marx has often been compared with Darwin—a comparison which arouses Messrs. Mikhailovsky, Kareyev and their fraternity to laughter. Later we shall say in what sense that comparison should be understood, although probably many readers already see it without our help. Here we shall permit ourselves, with all due respect to our subjective thinkers, another comparison.

Before Copernicus, astronomy taught that the earth is a motionless centre, around which revolve the sun and the other celestial bodies. This view made it impossible to explain very many phenomena of celestial mechanics. The Polish genius approached their explanation from quite the opposite point of view: he presupposed that it was not the sun that revolves around the earth, but on the contrary the earth around the sun. The correct view had been discovered, and much became clear that had been unclear before Copernicus.

Before Marx, writers on social science had taken human nature as their point of departure, and thanks to this, the most important questions of human development had remained unanswered. Marx's teaching gave affairs quite a different turn: *while man, to maintain his existence, acts on the external world, he changes his own nature,*[421] said Marx. Consequently the scientific explanation of historical development should be begun at the opposite end: it is necessary to ascertain in what way does this process of the productive action of man on external nature take place. In its great importance for science, this discovery can be boldly placed on a par with that of Copernicus, and on a par with the greatest and most fruitful discoveries of science in general.

Strictly speaking, previous to Marx social science had much less in the way of a firm foundation than astronomy before Copernicus. The French used to call, and still call, all the sciences bearing on human society, "sciences morales et politiques" as distinct from "sciences" in the strict sense of the word, under which name were understood, and are still understood, only the exact sciences. And it must be admitted that, before Marx, social science was not and could not be exact. So long as learned men appealed to human nature as to the highest authority, of necessity they had to explain the social relations of men by their views, their *conscious activity*; but the conscious activity of man necessarily has to present itself to him as *free* activity. But free activity excludes the *conception of necessity*, i.e., of conformity to law; and conformity to law is the necessary foundation of any scientific explanation of phenomena. *The idea of freedom obscured the conception of necessity, and thereby hindered the development of science.* This aberration can up to the present day be observed with amazing clarity in the "sociological" works of "subjective" Russian writers.

But we already know that *freedom must be necessary.* By obscuring the conception of necessity, the idea of freedom itself became extremely dim and a very poor comfort. Driven out at the door, necessity flew in at the window; starting from their idea of freedom, investigators every moment came up against necessity, and in the long run arrived at the melancholy recognition of its fatal, irresistible and utterly invincible action. To their horror, freedom proved to be an eternally helpless and hopeless tributary, an impotent plaything in the hands of blind necessity. And truly pathetic was the despair which at times seized upon the clearest and most generous idealistic minds. "For several days now I have been taking up my pen every minute," says Georg Büchner, "but cannot write a word. I have been studying the history of the revolution. I have felt myself crushed, as it were, by the frightful fatalism of history. I see in human nature the most repulsive

dullness, but in human relations an invincible force, which belongs to all in general and to no one in particular. The individual personality is only foam on the crest of the wave, greatness is only an accident, the power of genius is only a puppet-show, a ridiculous attempt to fight against iron law, which at best can only be discovered, but which it is impossible to subject to one's will."* It may be said that, to avoid such bursts of what naturally was quite legitimate despair, it was worth while even for a time abandoning one's old point of view, and attempting to *liberate freedom*, by appealing to that same *necessity* which made a mock of her. It was necessary once again to review the question which had already been put by the *dialectical* idealists, as to whether freedom does not follow from necessity, and whether the latter does not constitute the only firm foundation, the only stable guarantee and inevitable condition of human freedom.

We shall see to what such an attempt led Marx. But as a preliminary let us try and clear up for ourselves his historical views, so that no misunderstandings should remain in our minds on that subject.

On the basis of a particular state of the productive forces there come into existence certain relations of production, which receive their ideal expression in the legal notions of men and in more or less "abstract rules", in unwritten customs and written laws. We no longer require to demonstrate this: as we have seen, the present-day science of law demonstrates it for us (let the reader remember what Mr. Kovalevsky says on this subject). But it will do no harm if we examine the question from the following different point of view. Once we have ascertained in what way the legal *notions* of men are created by their *relations in production,* we shall not be surprised by the following words of Marx: "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being" (i.e., the form of their social existence), "but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."[422] Now we know already that at least in relation to one sphere of consciousness this is really so, and why it is so. We have only to decide whether it is always so, and, if the answer is in the affirmative, why it is always so? Let us keep for the time being to the same legal notions.

"At a certain stage of their development, the *material productive forces* of society come in conflict with the existing *relations of production,* or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive

* In a letter to his betrothed, written in 1833. *Footnote for Mr. Mikhailovsky*: This is not the Büchner who preached materialism in the "general philosophical sense"; it is his brother, who died young, the author of a famous tragedy, *The Death of Danton.*

forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution."[423]

Social ownership of movable and immovable property arises because it is convenient and moreover necessary for the process of primitive production. It maintains the existence of primitive society, it facilitates the further development of its productive forces, and men cling to it, they consider it natural and necessary. But now, *thanks to those property relations and within them*, the productive forces have developed to such an extent that a wider field has opened for the application of individual efforts. Now social property becomes in some cases *harmful* for society, it impedes the further development of its productive forces, and therefore it yields place to *personal appropriation*: a more or less rapid revolution takes place in the legal institutions of society. This revolution necessarily is accompanied by a revolution in the legal conceptions of men: people who thought previously that only social property was good, now began to think that in some cases individual appropriation was better. But no, we are expressing it inaccurately, we are representing as two separate processes what is completely inseparable, what represents only two sides of one and the same process: *in consequence of the development of the productive forces, the actual relations of men in the process of production were bound to change, and these new de facto relations expressed themselves in new legal notions.*

Mr. Kareyev assures us that materialism is just as one-sided in its application to history as idealism. Each represents, in his opinion, only a "moment" in the development of complete scientific truth. "After the first and second moments must come a third moment: the one-sidedness of the thesis and that of the antithesis will find their application in the synthesis, as the expression of the complete truth."* It will be a most interesting synthesis. "In what that synthesis will consist, I shall not for the time being say," the professor adds. A pity! Fortunately, our "historiosophist" does not very strictly observe this vow of silence which he has imposed upon himself. He immediately gives us to understand in what will consist and whence will arise that complete scientific truth which will, in time, be understood by all enlightened humanity, but for the time being is known only to Mr. Kareyev. It will grow out of the following considerations: "Every human personality, consisting of body and soul, leads a twofold life—physical and psychical—appearing before us neither exclusively as flesh with its material requirements, nor exclusively as spirit with its intellectual and moral requirements. Both the body and the soul of man have their requirements, which seek satisfaction and which place the

* *Vestnik Yevropy*, July 1894, p. 6.

individual personality in different relationships to the external world, i.e., to nature and to other men, i.e., to society, and these relationships are of a twofold character."*

That man consists of soul and body is a just "synthesis", though hardly what one would call a very new discovery. If Mr. Professor is acquainted with the history of modern philosophy, he must know that it has been breaking its teeth on this same synthesis for whole centuries, and has not been able to cope with it properly. And if he imagines that this "synthesis" will reveal to him "the essence of the historical process", Mr. V. V. will have to agree that something is going wrong with his "professor", and that it is not Mr. Kareyev who is destined to become the Spinoza of "historiosophy".

With the development of the productive forces, which lead to changes in the mutual relationships of men in the social process of production, there change all property relations. But it was already Guizot who told us that political constitutions are rooted in property relations. This is fully confirmed by modern knowledge. The union of kindred yields place to the territorial union precisely on account of the changes which arise in property relations. More or less important territorial unions amalgamate in organisms called states, again in consequence of changes which have taken place in property relations, or in consequence of new requirements of the social process of production. This has been excellently demonstrated, for example, in relation to the large states of the East.** Equally well this has been explained in relation to the states of the ancient world.*** And, speaking generally, it is not difficult to demonstrate the truth of this for any particular state on whose origin we have sufficient information. In doing so we only need not to narrow, consciously or unconsciously, Marx's view. What we mean is this.

The particular state of productive forces conditions the *internal* relations of the given society. But the same state of the productive forces also conditions *its external relations* with other societies. On the basis of these external relations, society forms *new requirements*, to satisfy which *new organs* arise. At a superficial glance, the mutual relations of individual societies present themselves as a

* *Ibid.*, p. 7.

** See the book of the late L. Mechnikov on the *great historical rivers.*[424] In this book the author in essence only summarised the conclusions arrived at by the most authoritative specialist historians, such as Lenormant. Elisée Reclus says in his introduction to the book that Mechnikov's view will mark an epoch in the history of science. This is untrue, in the sense that the view is not a new one: Hegel expressed it in the most definite way. But undoubtedly science will gain a great deal if it consistently adheres to that view.

*** See Morgan's *Ancient Society* and Engels' book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.*

series of "political" acts, having no direct bearing on economics. In reality, what underlies relations between societies is precisely *economics*, which determines both the real (not only external) causes of inter-tribal and international relations, and their results. To each stage in the development of the productive forces corresponds its own particular system of armament, its military tactics, its diplomacy, its international law. Of course many cases may be pointed out in which international conflicts have no direct relationship with economics. And none of the followers of Marx will dream of disputing the existence of such cases. All they say is: don't stop at the surface of phenomena, go down deeper, ask yourself on what basis did this international law grow up? What created the possibility of international conflicts of this kind? And what you will arrive at in the long run is economics. True, the examination of individual cases is made more difficult by the fact that not infrequently the conflicting societies are going through *dissimilar phases of economic development.*

But at this point we are interrupted by a chorus of shrewd opponents. "Very well," they cry. "Let us admit that political relations are rooted in economic relations. But once political relations have been given, then, wherever they came from, they, in turn, influence economics. Consequently, there is interaction here, and nothing but interaction."

This objection has not been invented by us. The high value placed upon it by opponents of "economic materialism" is shown by the following fact.

Marx in his *Capital* cites facts which show that the English aristocracy used the political power to achieve its own ends in the sphere of landownership. Dr. Paul Barth, who wrote a critical essay entitled *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Hegel's und der Hegelianer*, has seized on this to reproach Marx with contradicting himself[425] : you yourself, he says, admit that there is interaction here: and to prove that interaction really exists, our doctor refers to the book of Sternegg, a writer who has done much for the study of the economic history of Germany. Mr. Kareyev thinks that "the pages devoted in Barth's book to the criticism of economic materialism may be recommended as a model of how the problem of the role of the economic factor in history should be solved". Naturally, he has not failed to point out to his readers the objections raised by Barth and the authoritative statement of Inama-Sternegg, "who even formulates the general proposition that interaction between politics and economy is the fundamental characteristic of the development of all states and peoples". We must bring at least a little light into this muddle.

First of all, what does Inama-Sternegg actually say? On the subject of the Carolingian period in the economic history of Ger-

many he makes the following remark: "The interaction between politics and economics which constitutes the main feature of development of all states and all peoples can be traced here in the most exact fashion. As always the political role which falls to the lot of a given people exercises a decisive influence on the further development of its forces, on the structure and elaboration of its social institutions; on the other hand, the internal strength innate in a people and the natural laws of its development determine the measure and the nature of its political activity. In precisely this way the political system of the Carolings no less influenced the changing of the social order and the development of the economic relations in which the people lived at that time than the elemental forces of the people—its economic life—influenced the direction of that political system, leaving on the latter its own peculiar imprint."* And that's all. It's not very much; but this is thought sufficient to refute Marx.

Now let us recall, in the second place, what Marx says about the relations between economics on the one hand, and law and politics on the other.

"Legal and political institutions are formed on the basis of the actual relations of men in the social process of production. For a time these institutions *facilitate* the further development of the productive forces of a people, the prosperity of its economic life." These are the exact words of Marx; and we ask the first conscientious man we meet, do these words contain any denial of the importance of political relations in economic development, and is Marx refuted by those who remind him of that importance? Is it not true that there is not a trace of any such denial in Marx, and the people just mentioned are refuting nothing at all? To such an extent is it true that one has to consider the question, not of whether Marx has been refuted, but of why he was so badly understood? And to this question we can reply only with the French proverb: la plus belle fille du monde ne peut donner que ce qu'elle a (the most beautiful girl in the world can only give what she has got.—*Ed.*). The critics of Marx cannot surpass the measure of understanding with which a bountiful Nature has endowed them.**

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* *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte bis zum Schluss der Karolingenperiode*, Leipzig, 1889, Band I, S. 233-34.

** Marx says that *"every class struggle is a political struggle". Consequently, concludes Barth, politics in your opinion does not influence economics at all, yet you yourself quote facts proving ... etc.* Bravo, exclaims Mr. Kareyev, that's what I call a model of how one ought to argue with Marx! The "model" of Mr. Kareyev displays a remarkable power of thought altogether. "Rousseau," says the model, "lived in a society where class distinctions and privileges were carried to the extreme, where all were subjected to an all-powerful despotism; and yet the method of the rational

Interaction between politics and economics exists: that is just as unquestionable as the fact that Mr. Kareyev does not understand Marx. But does the existence of interaction prohibit us from going further in our analysis of the life of society? No, to think that would mean almost the same as to imagine that the lack of understanding displayed by Mr. Kareyev can prevent *us* from attaining correct "historiosophical" conceptions.

Political institutions influence economic life. They *either facilitate* its development *or impede* it. The first case is in no way surprising from the point of view of Marx, because the given political system has been created for the very purpose of *promoting the further development of the productive forces* (whether it is consciously or unconsciously created is in this case all one to us). The second case does not in any way contradict Marx's point of view, because historical experience shows that once a given political system ceases to correspond to the state of the productive forces, once it is transformed into an obstacle to their further development, it begins to decline and finally is eliminated. Far from contradicting the teachings of Marx, this case confirms them in the best possible way, because it is this case that shows in what sense economics dominates politics, in what way the development of productive forces outdistances the political development of a people.

Economic evolution brings in its wake legal revolutions. It is not easy for a *metaphysician* to understand this because, although he does shout about interaction, he is accustomed to examine phenomena one after another, and one independently of another. But it will be understood without difficulty by anyone who is in the least capable of *dialectical* thinking. He knows that *quantitative changes,* accumulating gradually, *lead* in the end to *changes of quality,* and that these changes of quality represent *leaps, interruptions in gradualness.*

At this point our opponents can stand it no longer, and pronounce their "word and deed"[426] : why, that's how Hegel used to talk, they shout. That's how *all Nature acts,* we reply.

structure of the state borrowed from antiquity—the method which was also used by Hobbes and Locke—led Rousseau to create an ideal of society based on universal equality and popular self-government. This ideal completely contradicted the order existing in France. Rousseau's theory was carried out in practice by the Convention; consequently, philosophy influenced politics, and through it economics" (*loc. cit.,* p. 58). How do you like this brilliant argument, to serve which Rousseau, the son of a poor Genevese Republican, turns out to be the product of aristocratical society? To refute Mr. Barth means to repeat oneself. But what are we to say of Mr. Kareyev, who applauds Barth? Ah, Mr. V. V., your "professor of history" is poor stuff, really he is. We advise you quite disinterestedly: find yourself a new "professor".

A tale is soon told, but work goes more slowly. In its application to history, this proverb may be altered in this way: a tale is told very simply, but work is complex in the extreme. Yes, it's easy to say that the development of productive forces brings in its train revolutions in legal institutions. These revolutions represent complex processes, in the course of which the interests of individual members of society group themselves in the most whimsical fashion. For some it is profitable to support the old order, and they defend it with every resource at their command. For others the old order has become already harmful and hateful, and they attack it with all the strength at their disposal. And this is not all. The interests of the innovators are also far from similar in all cases: for some one set of reforms is more important, for others another set. Disputes arise in the camp of the reformers itself, and the struggle becomes more complicated. And although, as Mr. Kareyev so justly remarks, man consists of soul and body, the struggle for the most indisputably material interests necessarily raises before the disputing sides the most undoubtedly spiritual problem of *justice.* To what extent does old order contradict justice? To what extent are the new demands in keeping with justice? These questions inevitably arise in the minds of those who are contesting, although they will not always call it simply justice, but may personify it in the shape of some goddess in human, or even in animal shape. Thus, notwithstanding the injunction pronounced by Mr. Kareyev, the "body" gives birth to the "soul": the *economic* struggle arouses *moral* questions—and the "soul" at closer examination proves to be the "body". *The "justice" of the old believers* not infrequently turns out to be *the interests of the exploiters.*

Those very same people who, with such astounding inventiveness, attribute to Marx the denial of the significance of politics assert that he attached no significance whatsoever to the moral, philosophical, religious or aesthetic conceptions of men, everywhere and anywhere seeing only "the economic". This once again is unnatural chatter, as Shchedrin put it. Marx did not deny the "*significance*" of all these conceptions, but only ascertained whence they came.

"What is electricity? A particular form of motion. What is heat? A particular form of motion. What is light? A particular form of motion. Oh, so that's it. So you don't attach any meaning either to light, or to heat, or to electricity. It's all one motion for you; what one-sidedness, what narrowness of conception." Just so, gentlemen, narrowness is the word. You have understood perfectly the meaning of the doctrine of the transformation of energy.

Every given stage of development of the productive forces

necessarily involves *definite grouping of men* in the social process of production, i.e., *definite relations of production,* i.e., *a definite structure of the whole of society.* But once the structure of society has been given, it is not difficult to understand that the character of that structure will be reflected generally in the entire *psychology* of men, in all their habits, manners, feelings, views, aspirations and ideals. Habits, manners, views, aspirations and ideals will necessarily have to adapt themselves to men's way of life, to their *mode of procuring their subsistence* (to use Peschel's expression). *The psychology of society is always expedient in relation to its economy, always corresponds to it, is always determined by it.* The same phenomenon is repeated here which the Greek philosophers themselves noticed in nature: expediency triumphs, for the reason that that which is inexpedient is by its very character doomed to perish. Is it advantageous for society, in its struggle for existence, that there should be this adaptation of its psychology to its economy, to the conditions of life? Very advantageous, because habits and views which did not correspond to its economy and which contradicted the conditions of existence would interfere with the maintenance of that existence. An expedient psychology is just as useful for society as organs which are well fitted for their task are useful for the organism. But to say that the organs of animals must be appropriate to the conditions of their existence—does that mean the same as saying that the organs have no significance for the animal? Quite the contrary. It means recognising their colossal and *essential significance.* Only very weak heads could understand matters otherwise. Now the same, the very same, gentlemen, is the case with psychology. Recognising that it adapts itself to the economy of society, Marx thereby was recognising its vast and irreplaceable significance.

The difference between Marx and, for example, Mr. Kareyev reduces itself in this case to the fact that the latter, in spite of his inclination to "synthesis", remains a dualist of the purest water. In his view, economics is here and psychology is there: the soul is in one pocket and the body in another. Between these two substances there is interaction, but each of them maintains its independent existence, the origin of which is wrapped in the darkest mystery.* The point of view of Marx eliminates this dualism. With him *the economy of society* and its *psychology* represent two sides of one and the same phenomenon of the

* Don't imagine that we are slandering the worthy professor. He quotes with great praise the opinion of Barth, according to which "law carries on a separate, though not independent existence". Now, it's just this "separateness, though not independence" that prevents Mr. Kareyev from mastering "the essence of the historical process". How precisely it prevents him will be immediately shown by points *in the text.*

"production of life" of men, their struggle for existence, in which they are grouped in a particular way thanks to the particular state of the productive forces. The struggle for existence creates their *economy*, and on the same basis arises their *psychology* as well. Economy itself is something derivative, just like psychology. And that is the very reason why the economy of every progressing society *changes*: the new state of productive forces brings with it a new economic structure just as it does a new psychology, a new "spirit of the age". From this it can be seen that only in a popular speech could one talk about economy as the *prime cause* of all social phenomena. Far from being a prime cause, it is itself a consequence, a "function" of the productive forces.

And now follow the points promised in the footnote. "Both the body and the soul of man have their requirements, which seek satisfaction and which place the individual personality in different relationships to the external world, i.e., to nature and to other men.... The relation of man to nature, according to the physical and spiritual needs of the personality, therefore creates, on the one hand, various kinds of arts aiming at ensuring the material existence of the personality and, on the other hand, all intellectual and moral culture...."[427] The materialist attitude of man to nature rests upon the requirements of the body, the qualities of matter. It is in the requirements of the body that one must discover "the causes of hunting, cattle-breeding, agriculture, manufacturing industry, trade and monetary operations".

From a common sense point of view this is so, of course: for if we have no body, why should we need cattle and beasts, land and machines, trade and gold? But on the other hand, we must also say: what is body without soul? No more than matter, and matter after all is dead. Matter of itself can create nothing if in its turn it does not consist of soul and body. Consequently matter traps wild beasts, domesticates cattle, works the land, trades and presides over the banks not of its own intelligence, but by direction of the soul. Consequently it is in the soul that one must seek the ultimate cause for the origin of the materialist attitude of man to nature. Consequently the soul also has dual requirements; consequently it also consists of soul and body—and that somehow sounds not quite right. Nor is that all. Willy-nilly "doubt" arises about the following subject as well. According to Mr. Kareyev it appears that the materialist relation of man to nature arises on the basis of his bodily requirements. But is that exact? Is it only to nature that such relations arise? Mr. Kareyev, perhaps, remembers how the abbé Guibert condemned the municipal communes who were striving for their liberation from the feudal yoke as "base" institutions, the sole purpose of existence of which was, he said, to avoid the proper fulfilment of feudal obligations. What was then speaking in

the abbé Guibert—"body" or "soul"? If it was the "body" then, we say again, that body also consisted of "body" and "soul"; and if it was the "soul" then it consisted of "soul" and "body", for it displayed in this case under examination very little of that unselfish attitude to phenomena which, in the words of Mr. Kareyev, represents the distinctive feature of the "soul". Try and make head or tail of that. Mr. Kareyev will say, perhaps, that in the abbé Guibert it was the soul that was speaking, to be exact, but that it was speaking under dictation from the body, and that the same takes place when man is occupied with hunting, with banks, etc. But first of all, in order to dictate, the body again must consist both of body and of soul. And secondly, a vulgar materialist may remark: well, there's the soul talking under the dictation of the body, consequently the fact that man consists of soul and body does not in itself mean anything at all. Perhaps throughout history all the soul has been doing is to talk under dictation from the body? Mr. Kareyev, of course, will be indignant at such a supposition, and will begin refuting the "vulgar materialist". We are firmly convinced that victory will remain on the side of the worthy professor; but will he be greatly helped in the fray by that unquestionable circumstance that man consists of soul and body?

And even this is not all. We have read in Mr. Kareyev's writings that on the basis of the spiritual requirements of personality there grow up "mythology and religion ... literature and arts" and in general "the theoretical attitude to the external world" (and to oneself also), "to questions of being and cognition", and likewise "the unselfish creative reproduction of external phenomena" (and of one's own intentions). We believed Mr. Kareyev. But ... we have an acquaintance, a technological student, who is passionately devoted to the study of the technique of manufacturing industry, but has displayed no "theoretical" attitude to all that has been listed by the professor. And so we find ourselves asking, can our friend be composed only of a body? We beg Mr. Kareyev to resolve as quickly as he can this doubt, so tormenting for ourselves and so humiliating for a young, extremely gifted technologist, who maybe is even a genius.

If Mr. Kareyev's argument has any sense, it is only the following: man has requirements of a higher and lower order, he has egotistical strivings and altruistic feelings. This is the most incontestable truth, but quite incapable of becoming the foundation of "historiosophy". You will never get any further with it than hollow and long-since hackneyed reflections on the theme of human nature: it is no more than such a reflection itself.

While we have been chatting with Mr. Kareyev, our perspicacious critics have had time to catch us contradicting ourselves, and above all Marx. We have said that economy is not the prime cause of all social phenomena, yet at the same time we assert that the psychology of society adapts itself to its economy: the first contradiction. We say that the economy and the psychology of society represent two sides of one and the same phenomenon, whereas Marx himself says that economy is the real foundation on which arise the ideological superstructures: a second contradiction, all the more lamentable for us because in it we are diverging from the views of the man whom we undertook to expound. Let us explain.

That the principal cause of the social historical process is the development of the productive forces, we say word for word with Marx: so that here there is no contradiction. Consequently, if it does exist anywhere, it can only be in the question of the relationship between the economy of society and its psychology. Let us see whether it exists.

The reader will be good enough to remember how private property arises. The development of the productive forces places men in such relations of production that the personal appropriation of certain objects proves to be more convenient for the process of production. In keeping with this the legal conceptions of primitive man change. The *psychology* of society adapts itself to its *economy*. On the given *economic foundation* there rises up fatally the *ideological superstructure* appropriate to it. But on the other hand each new step in the development of the productive forces places men, in their daily life, in new mutual relations which do not correspond to the relations of production now becoming outdated. These new and unprecedented situations reflect themselves in the psychology of men, and very strongly change it. In what direction? Some members of society defend the old order: these are the people of stagnation. Others—to whom the old order is not advantageous—stand for progress; their psychology changes in the direction of *those relations of production which* in time *will replace the old economic relations, now becoming outdated.* The adaptation of psychology to economy, as you see, continues, but slow psychological evolution *precedes* economic revolution.*

Once this revolution has taken place, a complete harmony is established between the psychology of society and its economy. Then on the basis of the new economy there takes place the full flowering of the new psychology. For a certain time this harmony remains unbroken, and even becomes stronger and stronger.

* In essence this is the very psychological process which the proletariat of Europe is now going through: its psychology is already adapting itself to the new, future relations of production.

But little by little the first shoots of a new discord make their appearance; the psychology of the foremost class, for the reason mentioned above, again outlives old relations of production: without for a moment ceasing to adapt itself to economy, it again adapts itself to the *new* relations of production, constituting the germ of the future economy. Well, are not these two sides of one and the same process?

Up to now we have been illustrating the idea of Marx mainly by examples from the sphere of the law of property. This law is undoubtedly the same ideology we have been concerned with, but ideology of the first or, so to speak, lower sort. How are we to understand the view of Marx regarding ideology of the higher sort—science, philosophy, the arts, etc.?

In the development of these ideologies, economy is the foundation in this sense, that society must achieve a certain degree of prosperity in order to produce out of itself a certain stratum of people who could devote their energies exclusively to scientific and other similar occupations. Furthermore, the views of Plato and Plutarch* which we quoted earlier show that the very *direction* of intellectual work in society is determined by the *production relations of the latter.* It was already Vico who said of the sciences that they grow out of social needs. In respect of such a science as political economy, this is clear for everyone who has the least knowledge of its history. Count Pecchio justly remarked that political economy particularly confirms the rule that practice always and everywhere precedes science.** Of course, this too can be interpreted in a very abstract sense; one may say: "Well, naturally science needs experience, and the more the experience the fuller the science." But this is not the point here. Compare the economic views of Aristotle or Xenophon with the views of Adam Smith or Ricardo, and you will see that between the economic science of ancient Greece, on the one hand, and the economic science of bourgeois society, on the other, there exists not only a *quantitative* but also a *qualitative* difference—the point of view is

* [See pages 618-21 of this edition.]

** "Quand'essa cominciava appena a nascere nel diciasettesimo secolo, alcune nazioni avevano già da più secoli fiorito colla loro sola esperienza, da cui poscia la scienza ricavò i suoi dettami." (*Storia della Economia publica in Italia, etc.*, Lugano, 1829, p. 11.) ["Even before it (political economy) began to take shape in the seventeenth century, some nations had been flourishing for several centuries relying solely on their practical experience. That experience was later used by this science for its propositions."]

John Stuart Mill repeats: "In every department of human affairs, Practice long precedes Science.... The conception, accordingly, of Political Economy as a branch of Science is extremely modern; but the subject with which its enquiries are conversant has in all ages necessarily constituted one of the chief practical interests of mankind." *Principles of Political Economy*, London, 1843, Vol. I, p. 1.

quite different, the attitude to the subject is quite different. How is this difference to be explained? Simply by the fact that *the very phenomena have changed:* relations of production in bourgeois society don't resemble production relations in ancient society. Different relations in production create different views in science. Furthermore, compare the views of Ricardo with the views of some Bastiat, and you will see that these men have different views of production relations which were the same in their *general character,* being *bourgeois* production relations. Why is this? Because at the time of Ricardo these relations were still only flowering and becoming stronger, while in the time of Bastiat they had already begun to decline. Different conditions of the same production relations necessarily had to reflect themselves in the views of the persons who were defending them.

Or let us take the science of public law. How and why did its theory develop? "The scientific elaboration of public law," says Professor Gumplowicz, "begins only where the dominating classes come into conflict among themselves regarding the sphere of authority belonging to each of them. Thus, the first big political struggle which we encounter in the second half of the European Middle Ages, the struggle between the secular and the ecclesiastic authority, the struggle between the Emperor and the Pope, gives the first impetus to the development of the German science of public law. The second disputed political question which brought division into the midst of the dominating classes, and gave an impulse to the elaboration by publicists of the appropriate part of public law, was the question of the election of the Emperor",* and so on.

What are the mutual relations of classes? They are, in the first place, just those relations which people adopt to one another in the social process of production—*production relations.* These relations find their expression in the political organisation of society and in the political struggle of various classes, and that struggle serves as an impetus for the appearance and development of various *political theories*: on the economic foundation there necessarily arises its appropriate ideological superstructure.

Still, all these ideologies, too, may be of the first quality, but are certainly not of the highest order. How do matters stand, for example, with philosophy or art? Before replying to this question we must make a certain digression.

Helvetius started from the principle that l'homme n'est que sensibilité. From this point of view it is obvious that man will avoid unpleasant sensations and will strive to acquire only those which are pleasant. This is the inevitable, natural egotism of sen-

* *Rechtsstaat und Sozialismus,* Innsbruck, 1881, S. 124-25.

tient matter. But if this is so, in what way do there arise in man quite unselfish strivings, like love of truth or heroism? Such was the problem which Helvetius had to solve. He did not prove capable of solving it, and in order to get out of his difficulty he simply crossed out that same X, that same unknown quantity, which he had undertaken to define. He began to say that there is not a single learned man who loves truth unselfishly, that every man sees in it only the path to glory, and in glory the path to money, and in money the means of procuring for himself pleasant physical sensations, as for example, by purchasing savoury food or beautiful slave girls. One need hardly say how futile are such explanations. They only demonstrated what we noted earlier—the incapacity of French *metaphysical* materialism to grapple with *questions of development.*

The father of modern *dialectical* materialism is made responsible for a view of the history of human thought which would be nothing else than a repetition of the metaphysical reflections of Helvetius. Marx's view of the history of, say, philosophy is often understood approximately as follows: if Kant occupied himself with questions of transcendental aesthetics, if he talked of the categories of mind or of the antinomies of reason, these were only empty phrases. In reality he wasn't at all interested in either aesthetics, or antinomies, or categories. All he wanted was one thing: to provide the class to which he belonged, i.e., the German petty bourgeoisie, with as many savoury dishes and "beautiful slave girls" as possible. Categories and antinomies seemed to him an excellent means of securing this, and so he began to "breed" them.

Need I assure the reader that such an impression is absolute nonsense? When Marx says that a given theory corresponds to such and such a period of the economic development of society, he does not in the least intend to say thereby that the thinking representatives of the class which ruled during this period deliberately adapted their views to the interests of their more or less wealthy, more or less generous benefactors.

There have always and everywhere been sycophants, of course, but it is not they who have advanced the human intellect. And those who really moved it forward were concerned for truth, and not for the interests of the great ones in this world.*

"Upon the different forms of property," says Marx, "upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire superstructure of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them

* This did not prevent them from sometimes fearing the strong. Thus, for example, Kant said of himself: "No one will force me to say that which is against my beliefs; but I will not venture to say *all* I believe."

out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations."[428] The process by which the ideological superstructure arises takes place *unnoticed by men.* They regard that superstructure, not as the temporary product of temporary relations, but as something natural and essentially obligatory. Individuals whose views and feelings have been formed under the influence of education and environment may be filled with the most sincere, most *devoted* attitude to the views and forms of social existence which arose historically on the basis of more or less *narrow class interests.* The same applies to whole parties. The French democrats of 1848 expressed the aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie naturally strove to defend its class interests. But "one must not form the narrow-minded notion that the petty bourgeoisie, on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interests. Rather, it believes that the *special* conditions of its emancipation are the *general* conditions within the frame of which alone modern society can be saved and the class struggle avoided. Just as little must one imagine that the democratic representatives are indeed all shopkeepers or enthusiastic champions of shopkeepers. According to their education and their individual position they may be as far apart as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not get beyond the limits which the latter do not get beyond in life, that they are consequently driven, theoretically, to the same problems and solutions to which material interest and social position drive the latter practically. This is, in general, the relationship between the political and literary representatives of a class and the class they represent".*

* Proving that the conditions of life (les circonstances) influence the organisation of animals, Lamarck makes an observation which it will be useful to recall here in order to avoid misunderstandings. "It is true, if this statement were to be taken literally, I should be convicted of an error; for whatever the environment may do, it does not work any direct modification whatever in the shape and organisation of animals." Thanks to considerable changes in that environment, however, new requirements, different from those previously existing, make their appearance. If these new requirements last a long time, they lead to the appearance of new *habits.* "Now, if a new environment ... induces new *habits* in these animals, that is to say, leads them to new activities which have become habitual, the result will be the use of some one part in preference to some other part, and in some cases the total disuse of some part no longer necessary." The increasing of use or its absence will not remain without influence on the *structure* of organs, and consequently of the whole organism. (Lamarque, *Philosophie zoologique etc.*, nouvelle édition par Charles Martin, 1873, t. I, pp. 223-24.)[429]

In the same way must also be understood the influence of economic requirements, and of others following from them, on the psychology of a people. Here there takes place a slow process of adaptation by exercise or non-exercise; while our opponents of "economic" materialism imagine that, in Marx's opinion, people when they experience new requirements im-

Marx says this in his book on the coup d'état of Napoleon III.[430] In another of his works he perhaps still better elucidates for us the psychological dialectics of *classes.* He is speaking of the emancipatory role which sometimes individual classes have to play.

"No class in civil society can play this part unless it calls forth a phase of enthusiasm in its own ranks and those of the masses: a phase when it fraternises and intermingles with society in general, is identified with society, is felt and recognised to be the *universal representative* of society, and when its own demands and rights are really the demands and rights of society itself, and it is in truth the social head and the social heart. Only in the name of society and its rights in general can a particular class vindicate its general domination. The position of liberator cannot be taken by storm, simply through revolutionary energy and intellectual self-confidence. If the emancipation of a particular class is to be identified with the revolution of a people, if one social class is to be treated as the whole social order, then, on the other hand, all the deficiencies of society must be concentrated in another class; a definite class must be the universal stumbling-block, the embodiment of universal fetters.... If one class is to be the liberating class par excellence, then another class must contrariwise be the obvious subjugator. The general negative significance of the French aristocracy and clergy determined the general positive significance of the bourgeoisie, the class immediately confronting and opposing them."*

After this preliminary explanation, it will no longer be difficult to clear up for oneself Marx's view on ideology of the highest order, as for example philosophy and art. But to make it still clearer, we shall compare it with the view of H. Taine:

"In order to understand a work of art, an artist, a group of artists," says this writer, "one must picture to oneself exactly the general condition of minds and manners of their age. There lies the ultimate explanation, there is to be found the first cause which determines all the rest. This truth is confirmed by experience. In fact, if we trace the main epochs of the history of art, we shall find that the arts appear and disappear together with certain conditions of minds and manners with which they are connected. Thus Greek tragedy—the tragedy of Aeschylus, Sophocles and

mediately and deliberately change their views. Naturally this seems to them a piece of stupidity. But it is they themselves who invented this stupidity: Marx says nothing of the kind. Generally speaking, the objections of these thinkers remind us of the following triumphant refutation of Darwin by a certain clergyman: "Darwin says, throw a hen into the water and she will grow webbed feet. I assert that the hen will simply drown."

* *Contribution to the Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law.* Introduction *(Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher,* 1844).

Euripides—appears together with the victory of the Greeks over the Persians, in the heroic epoch of the little city republics, at the moment of that great effort thanks to which they won their independence and established their hegemony in the civilised world. That tragedy disappears, together with that independence and that energy, when the degeneration of characters and the Macedonian conquest hand over Greece to the power of foreigners.

"In exactly the same way Gothic architecture develops together with the final establishment of the feudal order, in the semi-renaissance of the eleventh century, at a time when society, freed from Northmen and robbers, begins to settle down. It disappears at the time when this military regime of small independent barons is disintegrating, towards the end of the fifteenth century, together with all the manners which followed from it, in consequence of the coming into existence of the new monarchies.

"Similarly Dutch art flourishes at that glorious moment when, thanks to its stubbornness and its valour, Holland finally throws off the Spanish yoke, fights successfully against England, and becomes the wealthiest, freest, most industrious, most prosperous state in Europe. It declines at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Holland falls to a secondary role, yielding the first to England, and becomes simply a bank, a commercial house, maintained in the greatest order, peaceful and well-kept, in which man may live at his ease like a sagacious bourgeois, with no great ambitions or great emotions. Finally, just in the same way does French tragedy appear at the time when, under Louis XIV, the firmly established monarchy brings with it the rule of decorum, court life, the brilliance and elegance of the domestic aristocracy; and disappears when noble society and court manners are abolished by the Revolution.... Just as naturalists study the physical temperature in order to understand the appearance of this or that plant, maize or oats, aloes or pine, in exactly the same way must one study the moral temperature in order to explain the appearance of this or that form of art: pagan sculpture or realistic painting, mystic architecture or classical literature, voluptuous music or idealistic poetry. The works of the human spirit, like the works of living Nature, are explained only by their environment."*

Any follower of Marx will unquestionably agree with all this: yes, any work of art, like any philosophical system, can be explained by the state of minds and manners of the particular age. But what explains this general state of minds and manners? The followers of Marx think that it is explained by the social order, the qualities of the social environment. "When a great change takes place in the condition of humanity, it brings by degrees a correspond-

* *Philosophie de l'art* (deuxième édition), Paris, 1872, pp. 13-17.

ing change in human conceptions," says the same Taine.* That, too, is correct. The only question is, what is it that causes changes in the position of social man, i.e., in the social order? It is only on this question that "economic materialists" differ from Taine.

For Taine the task of history, as of science, is in the last resort a "*psychological task*". According to him, the general state of minds and manners creates not only the different forms of art, literature and philosophy but also the *industry of the given people* and all its social institutions. And this means that social environment has its ultimate cause in "the state of minds and manners".

Thus it turns out that the *psychology* of social man is determined by his *position*, and his *position* by his *psychology*. This is once again the antinomy we know so well, with which the writers of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century failed to grapple. Taine did not resolve this antinomy. He only gave, in a number of remarkable works, numerous brilliant illustrations of its first proposition—the thesis that *the state of minds and manners is determined by the social environment*.

Taine's contemporaries in France, who contested his aesthetic theory, put forward the *antithesis* that *the qualities of the social environment are determined by the state of minds and manners*.** This kind of discussion could be carried on until the second advent, not only without resolving the fateful antinomy, but even without noticing its existence.

It is only the historical theory of Marx that resolves the antinomy and thereby brings the argument to a satisfactory conclusion or, at any rate, provides the *possibility* of concluding it satisfactorily, if people have ears to hear and a brain wherewith to think.

The qualities of the social environment are determined by the state of the productive forces in every given age. Once the state of

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* *Philosophie de l'art dans les Pays-Bas*, Paris, 1869, p. 96.

** "Nous subissons l'influence du *milieu* politique ou historique, nous subissons l'influence du milieu social, nous subissons aussi l'influence du milieu physique. Mais il ne faut pas oublier que si nous la subissons, nous pouvons pourtant aussi lui resister et vous savez sans doute qu'il y en a de mémorables exemples.... Si nous subissons l'influence du milieu, un pouvoir que nous avons aussi, c'est de ne pas nous laisser faire, ou pour dire encore quelque chose de plus, c'est de conformer, c'est d'adapter le milieu lui-même, à nos propres convenances." (F. Brunetière, *L'évolution de la critique depuis la renaissance jusqu'à nos jours*, Paris, 1890, pp. 260-61.) ["We experience the influence of the political or historical environment, we experience the influence of the social environment, we also experience the influence of the physical environment. But it must not be forgotten that, if we experience it, we can however also resist it, and you know doubtless that there are memorable examples of this.... If we experience the influence of environment, a power which we also have is not to let ourselves be swayed, or to say more, it is the power of making the environment conform, of adapting it to our own convenience."]

the productive forces is determined, the qualities of the social environment are also determined, and so is the psychology corresponding to it, and the interaction between the environment on the one side and minds and manners on the other. Brunetière is quite right when he says that we not only adapt ourselves to our environment, but also adapt it to our needs. You will ask, but whence come the needs which do *not* correspond with the qualities of the environment around us? They arise in us—and, in saying this, we have in view not only the material but also all the so-called spiritual needs of men—thanks to that same historical movement, that same development of the productive forces, owing to which every particular social order sooner or later proves to be unsatisfactory, out of date, requiring radical reconstruction, and maybe fit only for the scrapheap. We have already pointed earlier to the example of legal institutions to show how the psychology of men may outdistance the particular forms of their social life.

We are sure that, on reading these lines, many readers—even those favourably inclined towards us—have remembered a mass of examples and of historical phenomena which apparently cannot in any way be explained from our point of view. And the readers are already prepared to tell us: "You are right, but not entirely; equally right, but also not entirely, are the people who hold views opposite to yours; both you and they see only half the truth." But wait, reader, don't seek salvation in *eclecticism* without grasping all that the *modern monist*, i.e., *materialist*, view of history can give you.

Up to this point our propositions, of necessity, were very abstract. But we already know that *there is no abstract truth, truth is always concrete.* We must give our propositions a more concrete shape.

As almost every society is subjected to the influence of its neighbours, it may be said that *for every society there exists*, in its turn, *a certain social, historical environment which influences its development.* The sum of influences experienced by every given society at the hands of its neighbours can never be equal to the sum of the influences experienced at the same time by another society. Therefore *every society lives in its own particular historical environment, which may be, and very often is, in reality very similar to the historical environment surrounding other nations and peoples, but can never be, and never is, identical with it.* This introduces an extremely powerful element of diversity into that process of social development which, from our previous abstract point of view, seemed most schematic.

For example, the clan is a form of community characteristic of all human societies at a particular stage of their development. But the influence of the historical environment greatly varies the

destinies of the clan in different tribes. It attaches to the clan itself a particular, so to speak individual, character, it retards or accelerates its disintegration, and in particular it diversifies the process of that disintegration. But diversity in the process of the disintegration of the clan determines the diversity of those forms of community which succeed clan life. Up to now we have been saying that the development of the productive forces leads to the appearance of private property and to the disappearance of primitive communism. Now we must say that the character of the private property which arises on the ruins of primitive communism is diversified by the influence of the historical environment which surrounds each particular society. "The careful study of the Asiatic, particularly Indian, forms of communal property would show how from different forms of primitive communal property there follow different forms of its disintegration. Thus, for example, different original types of Roman and German private property could be traced back to different forms of the Indian communal property."*

The influence of the historical environment of a given society tells, of course, on the development of its ideologies as well. Do foreign influences weaken, and if so to what extent do they weaken, the dependence of this development on the economic structure of society?

Compare the Aeneid with the Odyssey, or the French classical tragedy with the classical tragedy of the Greeks. Compare the Russian tragedy of the eighteenth century with classical French tragedy. What will you see? The Aeneid is only an imitation of the Odyssey, the classical tragedy of the French is only an imitation of Greek tragedy; the Russian tragedy of the eighteenth century has been composed, although by unskilful hands, after the image and likeness of the French. Everywhere there has been imitation; but the imitator is separated from his model by all that distance which exists between the society which gave him, the *imitator*, birth and the society in which the *model* lived. And note that we are speaking not of the greater or lesser perfection of *finish*, but of what constitutes the *soul* of the work of art in question. Whom does the Achilles of Racine resemble—a Greek who has just emerged from a state of barbarism, or a marquis—talon rouge—of the seventeenth century? The personages of the Aeneid, it has been observed, were Romans of the time of Augustus. True, the characters of the Russian so-called tragedies of the eighteenth century can hardly be described as giving us a picture of the Russian people of the time, but their very worthlessness bears witness to the state of Russian society: they bring out before us *its immaturity*. [431]

* Marx, *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*, Anmerkung, S. 10.

Another example. Locke undoubtedly was the teacher of the vast majority of the French philosophers of the eighteenth century (Helvetius called him the greatest metaphysician of all ages and peoples). Yet, between Locke and his French pupils there is precisely that same distance which separated English society at the time of the "Glorious Revolution" from French society as it was several decades before the "Great Rebellion" of the French people.[432]

A third example. The "true Socialists" of Germany in the 40s imported their ideas direct from France. Yet nevertheless these ideas, one may say, had already at the frontier stamped on them the mark of the society in which they were destined to spread.

Thus *the influence of the literature of one country on the literature of another is directly proportional to the similarity of the social relations of these countries. It does not exist at all when that similarity is equal to zero.* As an example, the African Negroes up to the present time have not experienced the least influence of the European literatures. *This influence is one-sided when one people through its backwardness can give nothing to another, either in the sense of form or in the sense of content.* As an example, the French literature of last century, influencing Russian literature, did not itself experience the least Russian influence. Finally, *this influence is reciprocal when, in consequence of the similarity of social life, and consequently of cultural development, each of the two peoples making the exchange can borrow something from the other.* As an example, French literature, influencing English, experienced the influence of the latter in its turn.

The pseudo-classical French literature[433] was very much to the liking, at one time, of the English aristocracy. But the English imitators could never equal their French models. This was because all the efforts of the English aristocrats could not transport into England those relations of society in which the French pseudo-classical literature flourished.

The French philosophers were filled with admiration for the philosophy of Locke; but they went much further than their teacher. This was because the class which they represented had gone in France, fighting against the old regime, much further than the class of English society whose aspirations were expressed in the philosophical works of Locke.

When, as in modern Europe, we have an entire system of societies, which influence one another extremely powerfully, *the development of ideology* in each of these societies becomes just as increasingly complex as its *economic development* becomes more and more complex, under the influence of constant trade with other countries.

We have in these conditions one literature, as it were, common to all civilised mankind. But just as a zoological genus is subdi-

vided into species, so this world literature is subdivided into the literatures of the individual nations. Every literary movement, every philosophical idea assumes its own distinctive features, sometimes quite a new significance, with every particular civilised nation.* When Hume visited France, the French "philosophers" greeted him as their fellow-thinker. But on one occasion, when dining with Holbach, this undoubted fellow-thinker of the French philosophers began talking about "natural religion". "As regards atheists," he said, "I do not admit their existence: I have never met a single one." "You have not had much luck up to now," retorted the author of the *System of Nature*. "Here, for a start, you can see seventeen atheists seated at table." The same Hume had a decisive influence on Kant, whom he, as the latter himself admitted, awakened from his *dogmatic drowsiness*. But the philosophy of Kant differs considerably from the philosophy of Hume. The very same fund of ideas led to the militant atheism of the French materialists, to the religious indifferentism of Hume and to the "practical" religion of Kant. The reason was that the religious question in England at that time did not play the same part as it was playing in France, and in France not the same as in Germany. And this difference in the significance of the religious question was caused by the fact that in each of these three countries the social forces were not in the same mutual relationship as in each of the others. Similar in their *nature*, but dissimilar in their degree of development, the elements of society combined differently in the different European countries, with the result that in each of them there was a very particular "*state of minds and manners*", which expressed itself in the national literature, philosophy, art, etc. In consequence of this, one and the same question might excite Frenchmen to passion and leave the English cold; one and the same argument might be treated by a progressive German with respect, while a progressive Frenchman would regard it with bitter hatred. To what did German philosophy owe its colossal successes? To German realities, answers Hegel: the French have no time to occupy themselves with philosophy, life pushes them into the practical sphere (zum Praktischen), while German realities are more reasonable, and the Germans may perfect theory in peace and quiet (beim Theoretischen stehen bleiben). As a matter of fact, this imaginary reasonableness of German realities reduced itself to the poverty of German social and political life, which left educated Germans at that time no other choice than to serve as officials of unattractive "realities" (to adapt themselves to the "Practical") or to seek consolation in *theory*, and to concentrate in this sphere all the strength of their passion, all the energy of their

* [This sentence is to be found only in the first Russian edition.]

thought. But if the more advanced countries, going away into the "Practical", had not pushed forward the theoretical reasoning of the Germans, if they had not awakened the latter from their "dogmatic drowsiness", never would that negative quality—the poverty of social and political life—have given birth to such a colossal positive result as the brilliant flowering of German philosophy.

Goethe makes Mephistopheles say: "Vernunft wird Unsinn, Wohlthat—Plage." ("Reason has become unreason and right wrong."—*Ed.*) In its application to the history of German philosophy, one may almost venture such a paradox: nonsense gave birth to reason, poverty proved a benefaction.

But I think we may finish this part of our exposition. Let us recapitulate what has been said in it.

Interaction exists in international life just as it does in the internal life of peoples; it is quite natural and unquestionably inevitable; nevertheless *by itself* it explains nothing. In order to understand interaction, one must ascertain the attributes of the interacting forces, and these attributes cannot find their ultimate explanation in the fact of interaction, however much they may change thanks to that fact. In the case we have taken, the qualities of the interacting forces, the attributes of the social organisms influencing one another, are explained in the long run by the cause we already know: *the economic structure of these organisms, which is determined by the state of their productive forces.*

Now the historical philosophy we are setting forth has assumed, we hope, a somewhat more concrete shape. But it is still abstract, it is still far from "real life". We have to make yet a further step towards the latter.

At first we spoke of "society": then we went on to the interaction of societies. But societies, after all, are not homogeneous in their composition: we already know that the break-up of primitive communism leads to inequality, to the origin of classes which have different and often quite opposed interests. We already know that classes carry on between themselves an almost uninterrupted, now hidden, now open, now chronic, now acute struggle. And this struggle exercises a vast and in the highest degree important influence on the development of ideology. It may be said without exaggeration that we shall understand nothing of this development *without taking into account the class struggle.*

"Do you wish to discover, if one may put it that way, the true cause of the tragedy of Voltaire? " asks Brunetière. "Look for it, first, in the personality of Voltaire, and particularly in the necessity which hung over him of doing something different from what Racine and Quinault had already done, yet at the same time of following in their footsteps. Of the romantic drama, the drama of Hugo and Dumas, I will permit myself to say that its definition

is fully comprised in the definition of the drama of Voltaire. If romanticism did not want to do this or that on the stage, it was because it wanted to do the opposite of classicism.... In literature as in art, after the influence of the individual, the most important influence is that of some works on others. Sometimes we strive to compete with our predecessors in their own field, and in that way certain methods become stable, schools are established, traditions formed. Or sometimes we try to act otherwise than they did, and then development proceeds in contradiction to tradition, new schools appear, methods are transformed."*

Leaving aside for the time being the question of the role of the individual, we shall remark that it has long been time to ponder over "the influence of some works on others". In absolutely all ideologies development takes place in the way indicated by Brunetière. The ideologists of one epoch *either* move in the tracks of their predecessors, developing *their* thoughts, applying *their* methods and only allowing themselves to "compete" with their forerunners, *or else* they revolt against the old ideas and methods, *enter into contradiction to them. Organic* epochs, Saint-Simon would have said, are replaced by *critical* epochs. The latter are particularly noteworthy.

Take any question, like for example that of money. For the Mercantilists money was wealth par excellence: they attributed to money an exaggerated, almost exceptional importance. The people who revolted against the Mercantilists, entering "*into contradiction*" to them, not only corrected their exceptionalism but themselves, at least the most headstrong among them, fell into exceptionalism, and precisely into the opposite extreme: they said that money is simply a symbol, which in itself has absolutely no value. That was the view of money held, for example, by Hume. If the view of the Mercantilists can be explained by the immaturity of commodity production and circulation in their day, it would be strange to explain the views of their opponents simply by the fact that commodity production and circulation had developed very strongly. For that subsequent development did not for a moment actually transform money into a mere symbol, deprived of internal value. Whence did the exceptionalism of Hume's view, then, originate? It originated in the fact of struggle, in "*contradiction*" to the Mercantilists. He wanted to "do the opposite" to the Mercantilists, just as the Romantics "wanted to do the opposite" to the classics. Therefore one may say, just as Brunetière says of the romantic drama, that Hume's view of money is completely included in the view of the Mercantilists, being *its opposite.*

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* *Loc. cit.*, pp. 262-63.

Another example. The philosophers of the eighteenth century resolutely and sharply struggled against any kind of mysticism. The French Utopians are all more or less imbued with religious feeling. What brought about this return of mysticism? Did such men as the author of *The New Christianity*[434] have less "lumières" than the Encyclopaedists? No, they had no less lumières, and, generally speaking, their views were very closely linked with the views of the Encyclopaedists: they were descended from the latter in the direct line. But they entered into "contradiction" to the Encyclopaedists on some questions—particularly, that is, on the question of the organisation of society—and there appeared in them the striving to "do the opposite" to the Encyclopaedists. Their attitude to religion was simply the opposite of the attitude to it taken up by the "philosophers"; their view of religion was already included in the view of the latter.

Take, finally, the history of philosophy. *Materialism* triumphed in France during the second half of the eighteenth century; under its banner marched the extreme section of the French tiers état (Third Estate.—*Ed.*). In England in the seventeenth century materialism was the passion of the defenders of the old regime, the aristocrats, the supporters of absolutism. The reason, here too, is clear. Those to whom the English aristocrats of the Restoration were "in contradiction" were extreme religious fanatics; in order "to do the opposite" to what they were doing, the *reactionaries* had to go as far as *materialism*. In France of the eighteenth century things were exactly opposite: the defenders of the *old* order stood for religion, and it was the extreme revolutionaries who arrived at *materialism*. The history of human thought is full of such examples, and all of them confirm one and the same thing: *in order to understand the "state of minds" of each particular critical epoch, in order to explain why during this epoch precisely these, and not those, teachings gain the upper hand, we must as a preliminary study the "state of minds" in the preceding epoch, and discover what teachings and tendencies were then dominant.* Without this we shall not understand at all the intellectual condition of the epoch concerned, however well we get to know its economy.

But even this must not be understood in abstract fashion, as the Russian "intelligentsia" is accustomed to understand everything. The ideologists of one epoch never wage against their predecessors a struggle sur toute la ligne, on all questions of human knowledge and social relations. The French Utopians of the nineteenth century were completely at one with the Encyclopaedists on a number of anthropological views; the English aristocrats of the Restoration were quite at one with the Puritans, whom they so hated, on a number of questions, such as civil law, etc. The territory of psychology is subdivided into provinces, the provinces

into counties, the counties into rural districts and communities, and the communities represent unions of individuals (i.e., of individual questions). When a "contradiction" arises, when struggle blazes up, its passion seizes, as a rule, only upon individual provinces—if not individual counties—and only its reflection falls upon the neighbouring areas. First of all that province to which *hegemony belonged* in the preceding epoch is subjected to attack. It is only gradually that the "miseries of war" spread to the nearest neighbours and most faithful allies of the province which has been attacked. Therefore we must add that, in ascertaining the character of any particular critical epoch, it is necessary to discover not only the general features of the psychology of the previous organic period, but also the individual peculiarities of that psychology. During one period of history hegemony belongs to religion, during another to politics, and so forth. This circumstance inevitably reflects itself in the character of the corresponding critical epochs, each of which, according to circumstances, either continues formally to recognise the old hegemony, introducing a new, *opposite* content into the dominating conceptions (as, for example, the first English Revolution), or else completely rejects them, and hegemony passes to new provinces of thought (as, for example, the French literature of the Enlightenment). If we remember that these disputes over the hegemony of individual psychological provinces also extend to their neighbours, and moreover extend to a different degree and in a different direction in each individual case, we shall understand to what an extent here, as everywhere, one cannot confine oneself to abstract proposition.

"All that may be so," retort our opponents. "But we don't see what the class struggle has got to do with all this, and we strongly suspect that, having begun with a toast to its health, you're now finishing with one for rest to its soul. You yourself now recognise that the movements of human thought are subjected to certain specific laws, which have nothing in common with the laws of economics or with that development of the productive forces which you have talked about till we are sick of hearing it." We hasten to reply.

That in the development of human thought, or, to speak more exactly, *in the co-ordination of human conceptions and notions there are specific laws*—this, so far as we know, not a single one of the "economic" materialists has ever denied. None of them has ever identified, for example, the laws of logic with the laws of the circulation of commodities. But nevertheless not one of this variety of materialists has found it possible to seek in the laws of thought the ultimate cause, the *prime mover* of the intellectual development of humanity. And it is precisely this which distinguishes, and *advantageously distinguishes,* "economic materialists" from idealists, and particularly from eclectics.

Once the stomach has been supplied with a certain quantity of food, it sets about its work in accordance with the general laws of stomachic digestion. But can one, with the help of these laws, reply to the question of why savoury and nourishing food descends every day into your stomach, while in mine it is a rare visitor? Do these laws explain why some eat too much, while others starve? It would seem that the explanation must be sought in some other sphere, in the working of some other kind of laws. The same is the case with the mind of man. Once it has been placed in a definite situation, once its environment supplies it with certain impressions, it co-ordinates them according to certain general laws (moreover here, too, the results are varied in the extreme by the variety of impressions received). But what places it in that situation? What determines the influx and the character of new impressions? That is the question which cannot be answered by any laws of thought.

Furthermore, imagine that a resilient ball falls from a high tower. Its movement takes place according to a universally known and very simple *law of mechanics.* But suddenly the ball strikes an inclined plane. Its movement is changed in accordance with another, also very simple and universally known *mechanical law.* As a result, we have a broken line of movement, of which one can and must say that it owes its origin to the joint action of the two laws which have been mentioned. But where did the inclined plane which the ball struck come from? This is not explained either by the first or the second law, or yet by their joint action. Exactly the same is the case with human thought. Whence came the circumstances thanks to which its movements were subjected to the combined action of such and such laws? This is not explained either by its individual laws or by their combined action.

The circumstances which condition the movement of thought must be looked for where the writers of the French Enlightenment sought for them. But nowadays we no longer halt at that "limit" which they could not cross. We not only say that man with all his thoughts and feelings is the product of his social environment; we try to *understand the genesis of that environment.* We say that its qualities are determined by such and such reasons, lying outside man and hitherto independent of his will. The multiform changes *in the actual mutual relations of men* necessarily bring in their train changes in the "state of minds", *in the mutual relations of ideas, feelings, beliefs.* Ideas, feelings and beliefs are co-ordinated according to their own particular laws. But these laws are brought into play by external circumstances which have nothing in common with these laws. Where Brunetière sees only the influence of some literary works on others we see in addition the mutual influences of social groups, strata and classes, influences that lie more deeply. Where he simply says: contradiction appeared, men

wanted to do the opposite of what their predecessors had been doing, we add: and the reason why they wanted it was because a new contradiction had appeared in their *actual relations,* because a new social stratum or class had come forward, which could no longer live as the people had lived in former days.

While Brunetière only knows that the Romantics wished to contradict the classics, Brandes tries to explain their propensity to "contradiction" by the position of the class in society to which they belonged. Remember, for example, what he says of the reason for the romantic mood of the French youth during the period of the Restoration and under Louis Philippe.

When Marx says: "If one class is to be the liberating class par excellence, then another class must contrariwise be the obvious subjugator",[435] he also is pointing to a particular, and moreover very important, law of development of social thought. But this law operates, and can operate, only in societies which are divided into classes; it does not operate, and cannot operate, in primitive societies where there are neither classes nor their struggle.

Let us consider the operation of this law. When a certain class is the enslaver of all in the eyes of the rest of the population, then the ideas which prevail in the ranks of that class naturally present themselves to the population also as ideas worthy only of slave-owners. The social consciousness enters into "contradiction" to them: it is attracted by *opposite* ideas. But we have already said that this kind of struggle is never carried on all along the line: there always remain a certain number of ideas which are equally recognised both by the revolutionaries and by the defenders of the old order. The strongest attack, however, is made on the ideas which serve to express the most injurious sides of the dying order at the given time. It is on *those* sides of ideology that the revolutionaries experience an irrepressible desire to "*contradict*" their predecessors. But in relation to other ideas, even though they did grow up on the basis of old social relations, they often remain quite indifferent, and sometimes by tradition continue to cling to them. Thus the French materialists, while waging war on the philosophical and political ideas of the old regime (i.e., against the clergy and the aristocratic monarchy), left almost untouched the old traditions in *literature.* True, here also the aesthetic theories of Diderot were the expression of the new social relations. But the struggle in this sphere was very weak, because the main forces had been concentrated on another field.* Here the standard of revolt was raised only later and, moreover, by people who, warmly

* In Germany the struggle between literary views, as is known, went on with much greater energy, but here the attention of the innovators was not distracted by political struggle.

sympathising with the old regime overthrown by the revolution, ought, it would seem, to have sympathised with the literary views which were formed in the golden age of that regime. But even this seeming peculiarity is explained by the principle of "contradiction". How can you expect, for example, that Chateaubriand should sympathise with the old aesthetic theory, when Voltaire—the hateful and harmful Voltaire—was one of its representatives?

"Der Widerspruch ist das Fortleitende" ("Contradiction leads the way forward."—*Ed.*), says Hegel. The history of ideologies seems once more to demonstrate that the old "metaphysician" was not mistaken. It also demonstrates apparently the passing of quantitative changes into qualitative. But we ask the reader not to be upset by this, and to hear us out to the end.

Up to now we have been saying that once the productive forces of society have been determined, its structure also has been determined and, consequently, its psychology as well. On this foundation the idea might be attributed to us that from the economic state of a given society one can with precision form a conclusion as to the make-up of its ideas. But this is not the case, because the ideologies of every particular age are always most closely connected—whether positively or negatively—with the ideologies of the preceding age. The "state of minds" of any given age can be understood only in connection with the state of the minds of the previous epoch. Of course, not a single class will find itself captivated by ideas which contradict its aspirations. Every class excellently, even though unconsciously, always adapts its "ideals" to its economic needs. But this adaptation can take place in various ways, and why it takes place in this way, not in that, is explained not by the situation of the given class taken in isolation, but by all the particular features of the relations between this class and its antagonist (or antagonists). With the appearance of classes, *contradiction* becomes not only *a motive force*, but also a *formative* principle.*

But what then is the role of the individual in the history of ideology? Brunetière attributes to the individual a vast importance, independent of his environment. Guyau asserts that a genius always creates something new.**

We shall say that in the sphere of social ideas a genius outdistances his contemporaries, in the sense that *he grasps earlier than*

* One might ask, what relation to the class struggle has the history of such an art as, shall we say, architecture? Yet it too is closely connected with that struggle. See E. Corroyer, *L'architecture gothique* (Paris, 1891), particularly Part IV: "L'architecture civile".

** "Il introduit dans le monde des idées et des sentiments, des types nouveaux." ["He introduces into the world new ideas, sentiments, types."] *L'art au point de vue sociologique*, Paris, 1889, p. 31.

*they do the meaning of new social relations which are coming into existence.* Consequently it is impossible in this case even to speak of the genius being independent of his environment. In the sphere of natural science a genius discovers laws the operation of which does not, of course, depend upon social relations. But the role of the social environment in the history of any great discovery is manifested, first of all, in the accumulation of that store of knowledge without which not a single genius will do anything at all and, secondly, in turning the attention of the genius in this or that direction.* In the sphere of art the genius gives the best possible expression of the prevailing aesthetic tendencies of the given society, or given class in society.** Lastly, in all these three

* However, it is only in the formal sense that this influence is of a dual nature. Every given store of knowledge has been accumulated just because social needs impelled people to its accumulation, turned their attention in the appropriate direction.

** And to what extent the aesthetic inclinations and judgements of any given class depend on its economic situation was well known to the author of *Aesthetic Relations of Art and Reality.* (Chernyshevsky.—*Ed.*) The beautiful is life, he said, and explained his thought by such considerations as the following. "Among the common people, the 'good life', 'life as it should be', means having enough to eat, living in a good house, having enough sleep; but at the same time, the peasant's conception of life always contains the concept—work: it is impossible to live without work; indeed, life would be dull without it. As a consequence of a life of sufficiency, accompanied by hard but not exhausting work, the peasant lad or maiden will have a very fresh complexion—and rosy cheeks—the first attribute of beauty according to the conceptions of the common people. Working hard, and therefore being sturdily built, the peasant girl, if she gets enough to eat, will be buxom—this too is an essential attribute of the village beauty: rural people regard the 'ethereal' society beauty as decidedly 'plain', and are even disgusted by her, because they are accustomed to regard 'skinniness' as the result of illness or of a 'sad lot'. Work, however, does not allow one to get fat: if a peasant girl is fat, it is regarded as a kind of malady, they say she is 'flabby', and the people regard obesity as a defect. The village beauty cannot have small hands and feet, because she works hard—and these attributes of beauty are not mentioned in our songs. In short, in the descriptions of feminine beauty in our folk songs you will not find a single attribute of beauty that does not express robust health and a balanced constitution, which are always the result of a life of sufficiency, and constant real hard, but not exhausting, work. The society beauty is entirely different. For a number of generations her ancestors have lived without performing physical work; with a life of idleness, little blood flows to the limbs; with every new generation the muscles of the arms and legs grow feebler, the bones become thinner. An inevitable consequence of all this are small hands and feet—they are the symptoms of the only kind of life the upper classes of society think is possible—life without physical work. If a society lady has big hands and feet, it is either regarded as a defect, or as a sign that she does not come from a good, ancient family.... True, good health can never lose its value for a man, for even in a life of sufficiency and luxury, bad health is a drawback; hence, rosy cheeks and the freshness of good health are still attractive also for society people; but sickliness, frailty, lassitude and languor also have the virtue of beauty in their eyes as long as it seems to be the consequence of a life of idleness and luxury. Pallid cheeks, languor and

spheres the influence of social environment shows itself in the affording of a lesser or greater possibility of development for the genius and capacities of individual persons.

Of course we shall never be able to explain the entire *individuality* of a genius by the influence of his environment; but this does not prove anything by itself.

Ballistics can explain the movement of a shell fired from a gun. It can foresee its motion. But it will never be able to tell you exactly into how many pieces the given shell will burst, and where precisely each separate fragment will fly. However this does not in any way weaken the authenticity of the conclusions at which ballistics arrives. We do not need to take up an idealist (or eclectic) point of view in ballistics: mechanical explanations are quite enough for us, although who can deny that these explanations do leave in obscurity for us the "individual" destinies, size and form of the particular fragments?

A strange irony of fate! That same principle of contradiction against which our subjectivists go to war with such fire, as an empty invention of the "metaphysician" Hegel, seems to be bringing us closer to nos chers amis les ennemis. If Hume denies the inner value of money for the sake of contradicting the Mercantilists; if the Romantics created their drama only in order "to do the opposite" to what the classics did; then there is no objective truth, there is only that which is true for me, for Mr. Mikhailovsky, for Prince Meshchersky and so forth. Truth is subjective, all is true that satisfies our need of cognition.

No, that is not so! The principle of contradiction does not destroy objective truth, but only leads us to it. Of course, the path along which it forces mankind to move is *not at all a straight line.* But in mechanics, too, cases are known when what is lost in distance is gained in speed: a body moving along a *cycloid* sometimes moves more quickly from one point to another, lying below it, than if it had moved along a *straight* line. "Contradiction" appears where, and only where, there is struggle, where there is movement; and where there is movement, thought goes *forward*, even though by roundabout ways. Contradiction to the Mercantilists brought Hume to a mistaken view of money. But the movement of social

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sickliness have still another significance for society people: peasants seek rest and tranquility, but those who belong to educated society, who do not suffer from material want and physical fatigue, but often suffer from ennui resulting from idleness and the absence of material cares, seek the 'thrills, excitement and passions', which lend colour, diversity and attraction to an otherwise dull and colourless society life. But thrills and ardent passions soon wear a person out; how can one fail to be charmed by a beauty's languor and paleness when they are a sign that she has lived a 'fast life'."

(See Чернышевский, «Эстетика и поэзия », стр. 6–8.) [436]

life, and consequently of human thought too, did not stop at the point which it reached at the time of Hume. It placed us in a state of "contradiction" to Hume, and this contradiction resulted in a correct view of money. And this correct view, being the result of the examination of reality from all sides, is now *objective truth*, which no further contradictions will eliminate. It was the author of the *Comments on Mill* who said with enthusiasm:

> *"What Life once has taken*
> *Fate cannot snatch from us...."*[437]

In the case of knowledge, this is unquestionably true. No fate is now strong enough to take from us the discoveries of Copernicus, or the discovery of the transformation of energy, or the discovery of the mutability of species, or the discoveries of the genius of Marx.

Social relations change, and with them change scientific theories. As a result of these changes there appears, finally, the examination of reality from all sides, and consequently objective truth. Xenophon had economic views which were different from those of Jean-Baptiste Say. The views of Say would certainly have seemed rubbish to Xenophon; Say proclaimed the views of Xenophon to be rubbish. But we know now whence came the views of Xenophon, whence came the views of Say, whence came their one-sidedness. And this knowledge is now objective truth, and no "fate" will move us any more from this correct point of view, discovered at last.

"But human thought, surely, is not going to stop at what you call the discovery or the discoveries of Marx? " Of course not, gentlemen! It will make new discoveries, which will supplement and confirm this theory of Marx, just as new discoveries in astronomy have supplemented and confirmed the discovery of Copernicus.

The "subjective method" in sociology is the greatest nonsense. But every nonsense has its sufficient cause, and we, the modest followers of a great man, can say—not without pride—that we know the sufficient cause of that nonsense. Here it is:

The "subjective method" was first discovered not by Mr. Mikhailovsky and not even by the "angel of the school", i.e., not by the author of the *Historical Letters*. It was held by Bruno Bauer and his followers—that same Bruno Bauer who gave birth to the author of the *Historical Letters*, that same author who gave birth to Mr. Mikhailovsky and his brethren.

"The objectivity of the historian is, like every objectivity, nothing more than mere chatter. And not at all in the sense that objectivity is an unattainable ideal. To objectivity, i.e., to the view characteristic of the majority, to the world outlook of the mass,

the historian can only *lower himself.* And once he does this, he ceases to be a creator, he is working for piece-rate, he is becoming the hireling of his time."*

These lines belong to Szeliga, who was a fanatical follower of Bruno Bauer, and whom Marx and Engels held up to such biting ridicule in their book *The Holy Family.* Substitute "sociologist" for "historian" in these lines, substitute for the "artistic creation" of history the creation of social "ideals", and you will get the "subjective method in sociology".

Try and imagine the psychology of the idealist. For him the "opinions" of men are the fundamental, ultimate cause of social phenomena. It seems to him that, according to the evidence of history, very frequently the most stupid opinions were put into effect in social relations. "Why then," he meditates, "should not my opinion too be realised, since, thank God, it is far from being stupid. Once a definite ideal exists, there exists, at all events, the possibility of social transformations which are desirable from the standpoint of that ideal. As for testing that ideal by means of some objective standard, it is impossible, because such a standard does not exist: after all, the opinions of the majority cannot serve as a measure of the truth."

And so there is a possibility of certain transformations because my ideals call for them, because I consider these transformations useful. And I consider them useful because I want to do so. Once I exclude the objective standard, I have no other criterion than my own desires. Don't interfere with my will! —that is the ultimate argument of subjectivism. The subjective method is the reductio ad absurdum of idealism, and certainly of eclecticism too, as all the mistakes of the "respectable gentlemen" of philosophy, eaten out of hearth and home by that parasite, fall on the latter's head.

From the point of view of Marx it is impossible to counterpose the "*subjective*" views of the individual to the views of "the mob", "the majority", etc., as to something *objective.* The mob consists of men, and the views of men are always "*subjective*", since to have views of one kind or another is one of the qualities of the *subject.* What are objective are not the views of the "mob" but the *relations,* in nature or in society, *which are expressed in those views.* The criterion of truth lies not in me, but in the relations which exist outside me. Those views are *true* which correctly present those relations; those views are *mistaken* which distort them. That theory of natural science is *true* which correctly grasps the mutual relations between the phenomena of nature; that histo-

* Szeliga, *Die Organisation der Arbeit der Menschheit und die Kunst der Geschichtschreibung Schlosser's, Gervinus's, Dahlmann's und Bruno Bauer's,* Charlottenburg, 1846, S. 6.

rical description is *true* which correctly depicts the social relations existing in the epoch described. Where the historian has to describe the struggle of opposite social forces, he will inevitably sympathise with one or another, if only he himself has not become a dry pedant. In this respect he will be *subjective,* independently of whether he sympathises with *the minority* or *the majority*. But such subjectivism will not prevent him from being a *perfectly* objective historian if he does not only begin *distorting those real economic relations on the basis of which there grew up the struggling social forces.* The follower of the "subjective" method, however, forgets these *real relations,* and therefore he can produce nothing but his precious sympathy or his terrible antipathy, and therefore he makes a big noise, reproaching his opponents for insulting morality, every time he is told that that's not enough. He feels that he cannot penetrate into the secret of real social relations and therefore every allusion to their objective force seems to him an insult, a taunt at his own impotence. He strives to drown these relations in the waters of his own moral indignation.

From the point of view of Marx it turns out, consequently, that ideals are of all kinds: base and lofty, true and false. *That ideal is true which corresponds to economic reality.* The subjectivists who hear this will say that if I begin adapting my ideals to reality, I shall become a miserable lickspittle of "the jubilant idlers". But they will say this only because, in their capacity of metaphysicians, they don't understand the dual, *antagonistic* character of all reality. *"The jubilant crowd of idlers" are relying on reality which is already passing away,* under which a *new* reality is being born, the reality of the future, to serve which means to promote the triumph of *"the great cause of love".*

The reader now sees whether that conception of the Marxists, according to which they *attribute no importance to ideals,* corresponds to *"reality".* This picture of them proves to be *the exact opposite of "reality".* If one is to speak in the sense of "ideals", one must say that the theory of Marx is *the most idealistic theory which has ever existed in the history of human thought.* And this is equally true in respect both of its purely *scientific* tasks and of its *practical* aims.

"What would you have us do, if Mr. Marx does not understand the significance of consciousness of self and its strength? What would you have us do, if he values so low the recognised truth of self-consciousness? "

These words were written as long ago as 1847 by one of the followers of Bruno Bauer*; and although nowadays they do not

* Theodor Opitz, *Die Helden der Masse. Charakteristiken,* Grünberg, 1848, pp. 6-7. We very much advise Mr. Mikhailovsky to read this work. He will find in it many of his own *original* ideas.

speak in the language of the 40s, the gentlemen who reproach Marx with ignoring the element of thought and feeling in history have even now not gone any further than Opitz. All of them are still convinced that Marx values very low the force of human self-consciousness; all of them in various ways assert one and the same thing.* In reality Marx considered the explanation of human "*self-consciousness*" to be the most important task of social science.

He said: "The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that the thing (Gegenstand), reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object* (Objekt) or of *contemplation* (Anschauung), but not as *human sensuous activity, practice,* not *subjectively.* Hence it happened that the *active* side, in contradistinction to materialism, was developed by idealism—but only abstractly, since, of course, idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such."[438] Have you tried to understand, gentlemen, the meaning of these words of Marx? We shall tell you what they mean.

Holbach, Helvetius and their followers bent all their efforts on proving the possibility of a materialist explanation of nature. Even the denial of innate ideas did not lead these materialists further than the examination of man as a member of the animal kingdom, as matière sensible. They did not attempt to explain the *history of man* from their point of view, and if they did (Helvetius) their attempts ended in failure. But man becomes a "*subject*" *only in history,* because only in the latter is his *self-consciousness* developed. To confine oneself to examining man as a member of the animal kingdom means to confine oneself to examining him as an "*object*", to leave out of account his historical development, his social "practice", concrete human activity. But to leave all this out of account means to make materialism "*dry, gloomy, melancholy*" (Goethe). More than that, it means making materialism—as we have already shown earlier—*fatalistic,* condemning man to complete subordination to blind matter. Marx noticed this failing of French materialism, and even of Feuerbach's, and set himself the task of *correcting* it. His "economic" materialism is the reply to the question of how the "*concrete activity*" of man develops, how in virtue of it there developes his *self-consciousness,* how the *subjective side of history* comes about. When this question is answered even in part, materialism will cease to be dry, gloomy, melancholy, and it will cease to yield idealism first place

* But no, not all: no one has yet conceived of beating Marx by pointing out that "man consists of soul and body". Mr. Kareyev is doubly original, (1) no one before him has argued with Marx in this way, (2) no one after him, probably, will argue with Marx thus. From this footnote Mr. V. V. will see that we, too, can pay our tribute of respect to his "professor".

in explaining the active side of human existence. Then it will free itself of its characteristic fatalism.

Sensitive but weak-headed people are indignant with the theory of Marx because they take its *first* word to be its *last*. Marx says: in explaining the *subject,* let us see into what mutual relations people enter under the influence of *objective* necessity. Once these relations are known, it will be possible to ascertain how human self-consciousness develops under their influence. *Objective reality* will help us to clarify the *subjective side* of history. And this is the point at which the sensitive but weak-headed people usually interrupt Marx. It is here that is usually repeated something astonishingly like the conversation between Chatsky and Famusov.[439] "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production...." "Oh, good heavens, he's a fatalist! ..." "On the economic foundation rise ideological superstructures...." "What is he saying? And he talks as he writes. He simply does not recognise the role of the individual in history! ..." "But hear me out, if only for once; from what I said earlier, it follows that...." "I won't listen, send him for trial! Send him for moral trial by actively progressive personalities, under open observation by subjective sociology."

Chatsky was rescued, as you know, by the appearance of Skalozub.[440] In the arguments between the Russian followers of Marx and their strict subjective judges, matters have hitherto taken another turn. Skalozub gagged the mouth of Chatskys, and then the Famusovs of subjective sociology took the fingers out of their ears and said, with a full consciousness of their superiority: "There you are, they've only said two words. Their views have remained completely unclarified."[441]

It was Hegel who said that any philosophy may be reduced to *empty formalism,* if one confines oneself to the simple repetition of its fundamental principles. But Marx is not guilty of that sin either. He did not confine himself to repeating that the development of the productive forces lies at the basis of the entire historical progress of mankind. You will hardly find another thinker who has done so much as he to develop his fundamental propositions.

"But where precisely, where did he develop his views? " the subjectivist gentry sing, howl, appeal and thunder in various voices. "Look at Darwin, now: he's got a *book.* But Marx hasn't even got a book, and one has to *reconstruct* his views."

Undoubtedly, "reconstruction" is an unpleasant and difficult business, particularly for those who have no "*subjective*" gifts of correctly understanding, and therefore of "reconstructing" other people's ideas. But there's no need for reconstruction, and the book whose absence the subjectivists lament has long ago been in

existence. There are even several books, one explaining better than another the historical theory of Marx.

*The first book* is the history of philosophy and social science, beginning with the end of the eighteenth century. Study that interesting book (of course, it won't be enough to read *Lewes*): it will show you why there appeared, why *there had to appear,* the theory of Marx, to what previously unanswered and unanswerable questions it provided the replies, and consequently what is its real significance.

*The second book* is *Capital*, that same *Capital* which you have all "read", with which you are all "at one", but which not one of you, dear sirs, has understood.

*The third book* is the history of European events beginning with 1848, i.e., with the appearance of a famous "Manifesto"[442]. Give yourselves the trouble of penetrating into the contents of that vast and instructive book and tell us, in all fairness—if only there is impartiality in your "subjective" fairness—did not the theory of Marx provide him with an astounding, previously unknown, capacity to foresee events? What has now become of the Utopians of reaction, stagnation, or progress who were his contemporaries? Into what putty has gone the dust into which their "*ideals*" were transformed at their first contact with *reality*? Not a trace has been left even of the dust, while what Marx said comes into effect —naturally, in broad outlines—every day, and will invariably come into effect until, at last, *his* ideals are fully realised.

Is not the evidence of these three books sufficient? And it seems to us that you cannot deny the existence of any of them? You will say, of course, that we are reading from them what is not written in them? Very well, say it and prove it; we await your proofs with impatience, and in order that you should not be too muddled in them, we shall for a beginning explain to you the meaning of the second book.

You recognise the *economic* views of Marx while denying his historical theory, you say. One must admit that this says a very great deal—namely, *that you understand neither his historical theory nor his economic views.*[443]

What does the first volume of *Capital* discuss? It speaks, for example, of value. It says that value is a *social relation of production.* Do you agree to this? If not, then you are denying your own words about agreement with the economic theory of Marx. If you do, then you are admitting his *historical theory*, although evidently you don't understand it.

Once you recognise that men's own relations in production, existing independently of their will, acting behind their back, are reflected in their heads in the shape of various categories of political economy: *in the shape of value, in the shape of money, in*

*the shape of capital*, and so forth, you thereby admit that on a certain economic basis there invariably arise certain ideological superstructures which correspond to its character. In that event the cause of your conversion is already three parts won, for all you have to do is to apply your "own" view (i.e., borrowed from Marx) to the analysis of ideological categories of the higher order: law, justice, morality, equality and so forth.

Or perhaps you are in agreement with Marx only in regard to the second volume of his *Capital*? For there are people who "recognise Marx" only to the extent that he wrote the so-called letter to Mr. Mikhailovsky.[444]

You don't recognise the historical theory of Marx? Consequently, in your opinion, he was mistaken in his assessment, for example, of the events of French history from 1848 to 1851 in his newspaper, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, and in the other periodicals of that time, and also in his book *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*? What a pity that you have not taken the pains to show where he was mistaken; what a pity that your views remained *undeveloped*, and that *it is impossible even to "reconstruct" them for insufficiency of data.*

You don't recognise Marx's historical theory? Therefore in your opinion he was mistaken in his view, for example, of the importance of the philosophical teachings of the French materialists of the eighteenth century?[445] It is a pity that you have not refuted Marx in this case either. Or perhaps you don't even know where he discussed that subject? Well, in that event, we don't want to help you out of your difficulty; after all, you must know the "literature of the subject" on which you undertook to argue; after all, many of you—to use the language of Mr. Mikhailovsky—bear the title of ordinary and extraordinary bellmen of science. True, that title did not prevent you from concerning yourselves mainly with "private" sciences: subjective sociology, subjective historiosophy, etc.

"But why did not Marx write a book which would have set forth his point of view of the entire history of mankind from ancient times to our day, and which would have examined all spheres of development: economic, juridical, religious, philosophical and so forth?"

The first characteristic of any cultivated mind consists in the ability to formulate questions, and in knowing what replies can and what cannot be required of modern science. But among the opponents of Marx this characteristic seems to be conspicuous by its absence, in spite of their *extraordinary*, and sometimes even *ordinary* quality—or maybe, by the way, just because of it. Do you really suppose that in biological literature there exists a book which has fully set forth the entire history of the animal and vege-

table kingdom from the point of view of Darwin? Have a talk about this with any botanist or zoologist, and he, after first having a hearty laugh at your childish simplicity, will let you know that the presentation of all the long history of species from the point of view of Darwin is the *ideal* of modern science, and we do not know when it will attain that ideal. What we have discovered is the *point of view* which alone can give us the key to the understanding of the history of species.* Matters stand in exactly the same way in modern historical science.

"What is essentially the work of Darwin?" asks Mr. Mikhailovsky. "A few generalising ideas, most intimately interconnected, which crown a whole Mont Blanc of factual material. Where is the corresponding work of Marx? It does not exist.... And not only is there no such work of Marx, but there is no such work in all Marxist literature, in spite of all its extensiveness and wide distribution.... The very foundations of economic materialism, repeated as axioms innumerable times, still remain unconnected among themselves and untested by facts, which particularly deserves attention in a theory which in principle relies upon material and tangible facts, and which arrogates to itself the title of being particularly 'scientific'."**

That the very foundations of the theory of economic materialism remain unconnected among themselves is *sheer untruth.* One need only read the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy,* to see how intimately and harmoniously they are interconnected. That these propositions have not been tested is also untrue: they have been tested with the help of an analysis of social phenomena, both in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* and in *Capital,* and moreover not at all "particularly" in the chapter on primitive accumulation, as Mr. Mikhailovsky[446] thinks, but *absolutely in all the chapters, from the first to the last.* If nevertheless this theory has not once

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* "Alle diese verschiedenen Zweige der Entwickelungsgeschichte, die jetzt noch teilweise weit auseinanderliegen und die von den verschiedensten empirischen Erkenntnisquellen ausgegangen sind, werden von jetzt an mit dem steigenden Bewusstsein ihres einheitlichen Zusammenhanges sich höher entwickeln. Auf den verschiedensten empirischen Wegen wandelnd und mit den mannigfaltigsten Methoden arbeitend werden sie doch alle auf ein und dasselbe Ziel hinstreben, auf das grosse Endziel einer universalen monistischen *Entwickelungsgeschichte."* (E.Haeckel, *Ziele und Wege der heutigen Entwickelungsgeschichte,* Jena, 1875, S. 96.) ["All these different branches of the history of evolution, which now to some extent lie widely scattered, and which have proceeded from the most varied empirical sources of knowledge, will from now onward develop with the growing consciousness of their interdependence. Walking along different empirical paths, and working with manifold methods, they will nevertheless all strive towards the same goal, that great final goal of a universal monist history of evolution." ]

** *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* January 1894, Part II, pp. 105-06.

been set forth in connection with "a whole Mont Blanc" of factual material, which in Mr. Mikhailovsky's opinion distinguishes it to its disadvantage from Darwin's theory, there's again a misunderstanding here. With the help of the factual material making up, for example, *The Origin of Species,* it is chiefly the *mutability* of species that is demonstrated; *when Darwin touches on the history of a few separate species, he does it only in passing, and only hypothetically*; history might have gone this way or other, but one thing was certain—that *there had been a history, and that species had varied.* Now we shall ask Mr. Mikhailovsky: was it necessary for Marx to prove that mankind doesn't stand still, that social forms change, that the views of men replace one another—in a word, was it necessary to prove the *mutability* of this kind of phenomena? Of course it was not, although in order to prove it, it would have been easy to pile up a dozen "Mont Blancs of factual material". What did Marx have to do? The preceding history of social science and philosophy had piled up a "whole Mont Blanc" of *contradictions,* which urgently demanded solution. *Marx did precisely solve them with the help of a theory which, like Darwin's theory, consists of "a few generalising ideas, most intimately connected among themselves".* When these ideas appeared, it turned out that, with their help, all the contradictions which threw previous thinkers into confusion could be resolved. Marx required, not to accumulate mountains of factual material—which had been collected by his predecessors—but to take advantage of this material, among other matter, and to begin the study of the real history of mankind from the new point of view. And this is what Marx did, turning to the study of the history of the capitalist epoch, as a result of which there appeared *Capital* (not to speak of monographs such as *The Eighteenth Brumaire*).

But in *Capital,* Mr. Mikhailovsky remarks, "only one historical period is discussed, and even within those limits the subject, of course, is not even approximately exhausted". That is true. But we shall again remind Mr. Mikhailovsky that the first sign of a cultivated mind is knowledge of what demands can be made of men of learning. Marx simply could not in his research cover all historical periods, just as Darwin could not write the history of *all* animal and vegetable species.

"Even in respect of one historical period the subject is not exhausted, even approximately." No, Mr. Mikhailovsky, it is not exhausted even approximately. But, in the first place, tell us what subject has been exhausted in Darwin, even "approximately". And secondly, we shall explain to you now, how it is and why it is that the subject is not exhausted in *Capital.*

According to the new theory, the historical progress of humanity is determined by the development of the productive forces,

leading to changes in economic relations. Therefore any historical research has to begin with studying the condition of the productive forces and the economic relations of the given country. But naturally research must not stop at this point: it has to show how the dry skeleton of economy is covered with the living flesh of social and political forms, and then—and this is the most interesting and most fascinating side of the problem—of human ideas, feelings, aspirations and ideals. The investigator receives into his hands, one may say, *dead matter* (here the reader will see that we have even begun to use partly the style of Mr. Kareyev), but *an organism full of life* has to emerge from his hands. Marx succeeded in exhausting—and that, of course, only approximately—solely questions which referred in the main to the material conditions of the period he had selected. Marx died not a very old man. But if he had lived another twenty years, he would probably still have continued (apart again from, perhaps, individual monographs) to exhaust the questions of the *material conditions of the same period.* And this is what makes Mr. Mikhailovsky angry. With his arms akimbo, he begins lecturing the famous thinker: "How now, brother? ... only one period ... and that not fully.... No, I can't approve of it, I simply can't.... Why didn't you follow Darwin's example? " To all this subjective harangue the poor author of *Capital* only replies with a deep sigh and a sad admission: "Die Kunst ist lang und kurz ist unser Leben! " ("Art is long and life is short! "—*Ed.*)

Mr. Mikhailovsky rapidly and sternly turns to the "*crowd*" of followers of Marx: "In that case, what have *you* been doing, why didn't you support the old man, why haven't you exhausted all the periods? "—"We hadn't the time, Mr. Subjective Hero," reply the followers, bowing from the waist, and cap in hand: "We had other things to think about, we were fighting against those conditions of production which lie like a crushing yoke on modern humanity. Don't be hard on us! But, by the way, we have done something, all the same, and if you only give us time we will do still more."

Mr. Mikhailovsky is a little mollified: "So you yourselves now see that it wasn't fully exhausted? " "Of course, how couldn't we but see! And it's not fully exhausted even among the Darwinists,* and not even in subjective sociology—and that's a different story."

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* It is interesting that the opponents of Darwin long asserted, and even up to the present day have not stopped asserting, that what's lacking in his theory is precisely a "Mont Blanc" of factual proofs. As is well known, Virchow spoke in this sense at the Congress of German Naturalists and Doctors at Munich in September 1877. Replying to him, Haeckel justly remarked that, if Darwin's theory has not been proved by the facts which we know already, no new facts will say anything in its favour.

Mention of the Darwinists arouses a new attack of irritation in our author. "What do you come pestering me with Darwin for?" he shouts. "Darwin was the passion of decent people, many professors approved of him: but who are the followers of Marx? Only workmen, and a few private bellmen of science, without diplomas from anybody."

The dressing-down is assuming such an interesting character that willy-nilly we continue to take notice of it.

"In his book on *The Origin of the Family*, Engels says in passing that Marx's *Capital* was 'hushed up' by the professional German economists, and in his book *Ludwig Feuerbach* he remarks that the theoreticians of economic materialism 'from the outset addressed themselves by preference to the working class, and here found the response which they neither sought nor expected from officially recognised science'. To what extent are these facts correct, and what is their significance? First of all, to 'hush up' anything valuable for a long time is hardly possible even here in Russia, with all the weakness and pettiness of our scientific and literary life. All the more is it impossible in Germany with its numerous universities, its general literacy, its innumerable newspapers and sheets of every possible tendency, with the importance of the part played there not only by the printed but also the spoken word. And if a certain number of the official high priests of science in Germany did meet *Capital* at first in silence, this can hardly be explained by the desire to 'hush up' the work of Marx. It would be more true to suppose that the motive for the silence was failure to understand it, by the side of which there rapidly grew up both warm opposition and complete respect; as a result of which the theoretical part of *Capital* very rapidly took an unquestionably high place in generally recognised science. Quite different has been the fate of economic materialism as a historical theory, including also those prospects in the direction of the future which are contained in *Capital*. Economic materialism, in spite of its half-century of existence, has not exercised up to the present any noticeable influence in the sphere of learning, but is really spreading very rapidly in the working class."*

Thus, after a short silence, an opposition rapidly grew up. That is so. To such an extent is it a warm opposition, that not a single lecturer will receive the title of professor if he declares that even the "economic" theory of Marx is correct. To such an extent is it a warm opposition that any crammer, even the least talented, can reckon on rapid promotion if he only succeeds in inventing even a couple of objections to *Capital* which will be forgotten by every-

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, January 1894, Part II, pp. 115-16.

body the next day. Yes, it must be admitted—a very warm opposition.

And complete respect.... That's true also, Mr. Mikhailovsky, it is really respect. Exactly the same kind of respect with which the Chinese must now be looking at the Japanese army: they fight well, and it's most unpleasant to come under their blows. With such respect for the author of *Capital* the German professors were and still remain filled, up to the present day. And the cleverer the professor, the more knowledge he has, the more respect he has—because all the more clearly does he realise that he stands no chance of refuting *Capital.* That is why not a single one of the leading lights of official science ventures to attack *Capital.* The leading lights prefer to send into battle the young, inexperienced "private bellmen" who want promotion.

*No use to waste a clever lad,*
*You just send along Réad*
*And I'll wait and see.*[447]

Well, what can you say: great is respect of that kind. But we haven't heard of any other kind of respect, and there can be none in any professor—because they don't make a man a professor in Germany who is filled with it.

But what does this respect show? It shows the following. The field of research covered by *Capital* is precisely that which *has already been worked over* from the new point of view, from the point of view of the *historical theory of Marx.* That's why adversaries don't dare to attack that field: they "respect it". And that, of course, is very sensible of the adversaries. But one needs to have all the simplicity of a "subjective" sociologist to ask with surprise why these adversaries don't up to this day set about cultivating the neighbouring fields with their own forces, in the spirit of Marx. "That's a tall order, my dear hero! Even the one field worked over in this spirit gives us no rest! Even with that we don't know where to turn for trouble—and you want us to cultivate the neighbouring fields as well in the same system? ! " Mr. Mikhailovsky is a bad judge of the inner essence of things, and therefore he doesn't understand "the destinies of economic materialism as a historical theory", or the attitude of the German professors to "prospects of the future" either. They haven't time to think about the *future,* sir, when the *present* is slipping from under their feet.

But after all, surely not all professors in Germany are to such an extent saturated with the spirit of class struggle and "scientific" discipline? Surely there must be specialists who think of nothing else but science? Of course there must be, and there are naturally such men, and not only in Germany. But these specialists—precisely because they are specialists—are entirely *absorbed in*

*their subject;* they are cultivating their own little plot in the scientific field, and take no interest in any general philosophical and historical theories. Such specialists have rarely any idea of Marx, and if they have, it's usually of some unpleasant person who worried someone, somewhere. How do you expect them to write in the spirit of Marx? Their monographs usually contain *absolutely no spirit of philosophy.* But here there takes place something similar to those cases when stones cry out, if men are silent. The specialist research workers themselves know nothing about the theory of Marx; but the results they have secured shout loudly in its favour. And there is not a single serious specialist piece of research in the history of political relations, or in the history of culture, which does not confirm that theory in one way or another. There are a number of astonishing examples which demonstrate to what great extent the whole spirit of modern social science obliges the specialist unconsciously to adopt the point of view of the historical theory of Marx (precisely the *historical* theory Mr. Mikhailovsky). The reader saw earlier two examples of this kind—Oscar Peschel and Giraud-Teulon. Now let us give a third. In his work: *La Cité Antique,* the famous Fustel de Coulanges expressed the idea that religious views lay at the bottom of all the social institutions of antiquity. It would seem that he ought to have stuck to this idea in studying individual questions of the history of Greece and Rome. But Fustel de Coulanges had to touch on the question of *the fall of Sparta;* and it turned out that, according to him, the reason for the fall was purely economic.* He had occasion to touch on the question of the fall of the Roman Republic: and once again he turned to economics.** What conclusion can we draw? In particular cases the man confirmed the theory of Marx: but if you were to call him a Marxist, he would probably begin waving both his arms in protest, which would have given untold pleasure to Mr. Kareyev. But what would you have, if not everybody is consistent to the bitter end?

But, interrupts Mr. Mikhailovsky, allow me also to quote some examples. "Turning ... to ... the work of Blos,[448] we see that this is a very worthy work which, however, bears no special signs of a radical revolution in historical science. From what Blos says about the class struggle and economic conditions (comparatively very

* See his book, *Du droit de propriété à Sparte.* We are not at all concerned here with the view of the history of primitive property which it contains.

** "Il est assez visible pour quiconque a observé *le détail*" (precisely le détail, Mr. Mikhailovsky) "et les textes, que ce sont les intérêts matériels du plus grand nombre qui en ont été le vrai mobile", etc. (*Histoire des institutions politiques de l'ancienne France. Les origines du système féodal,* Paris, 1890, p. 94). ["It is sufficiently visible for anyone who has observed *the details*" (precisely "the details", Mr. Mikhailovsky) "and the texts, that it is the material interests of the greatest number which were its true motive force", etc.]

little) it does not yet follow that he builds his history on the self-development of the forms of production and exchange: it would be even difficult to avoid mentioning economic conditions in telling the story of the events of 1848. Strike out of the book of Blos his panegyrics of Marx, as the creator of a revolution in historical science, and a few hackneyed phrases in Marxist terminology, and you would not even imagine that you were dealing with a follower of economic materialism. Individual good pages of historical content in the works of Engels, Kautsky and some others could also do without the label of economic materialism, as in practice they take into account the whole totality of social life, even though the economic string may prevail in this chord."*

Mr. Mikhailovsky evidently keeps firmly before him the proverb: "You called yourself a mushroom, now get into the basket." He argues in this way: if you are an economic materialist, that means that you must keep your eyes fixed on *the economic,* and not deal with "the whole totality of social life, even though the economic string may prevail in this chord". But we have already reported to Mr. Mikhailovsky that the scientific task of the Marxists lies precisely in this: having begun with the "string", they must explain the whole totality of social life. How can he expect them, in that case, to renounce this task and to remain Marxists at one and the same time? Of course, Mr. Mikhailovsky has never wanted to think seriously about the meaning of the task in question: but naturally that is not the fault of the historical theory of Marx.

We quite understand that, so long as we don't renounce that task, Mr. Mikhailovsky will often fall into a very difficult position: often, when reading "a good page of historical content" he will be very far from thinking ("you wouldn't even imagine") that it has been written by an "economic" materialist. That's what they call "landing in a mess"! But is it Marx who is to blame that Mr. Mikhailovsky will find himself so placed?

The Achilles of the subjective school imagines that "economic" materialists must only talk about "the self-development of the forms of production and exchange". What sort of a thing is that "self-development", oh profound Mr. Mikhailovsky? If you imagine that, in the opinion of Marx, the forms of production can develop "of themselves", you are cruelly mistaken. What are *the social relations of production*? They are relations between men. How can they develop, then, without men? If there were no men, surely there would be no relations of production! The chemist says: matter consists of atoms which are grouped in molecules, and the molecules are grouped in more complex combinations. All

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* January 1894, Part II, p. 117. [The reference is to W. Blos, *History of the German Revolution of 1848* (1891).]

chemical processes take place according to definite laws. From this you unexpectedly concluded that, in the chemist's opinion, it's all a question of laws, that matter—atoms and molecules—needn't move at all, and that this wouldn't in the least prevent the "self-development" of chemical combinations. Everyone would see the stupidity of such a conclusion. Unfortunately, not everyone yet sees the stupidity of an exactly similar (so far as its internal value is concerned) contrasting of *individuals* to the *laws of social life,* and of the activity of men to the internal logic of the form in which they live together.

We repeat, Mr. Mikhailovsky, that the task of the new historical theory consists in explaining "*the whole totality of social life*" by what you call the economic string, i.e., in reality *the development of productive forces.* The "string" is in a certain sense the basis (we have already explained in what particular sense): but in vain does Mr. Mikhailovsky think that the Marxist "breathes only with the string", like one of the characters in G. I. Uspensky's "Budka".[449]

It's a difficult job to explain the entire historical process, keeping consistently to one principle. But what would you have? Science generally is not an easy job, providing only it's not "subjective" science: in that, all questions are explained with amazing ease. And since we have mentioned it, we shall tell Mr. Mikhailovsky that it is possible that in questions affecting the development of ideology, even those best acquainted with the "string" will sometimes prove powerless if they don't possess a certain particular gift, namely *artistic feeling.* Psychology adapts itself to economy. But this adaptation is a complex process, and in order to understand its whole course and vividly to represent it to oneself and to others as it actually takes place, more than once the talent of the artist will be needed. For example, Balzac has already done a great deal to explain the psychology of various classes in the society in which he lived.[450] We can learn a lot from Ibsen too, and from not a few more. Let's hope that in time there will appear many such artists, who will understand on the one hand the "iron laws" of movement of the "string", and on the other will be able to understand and to show how, on the "string" and precisely thanks to its movement, there grows up the "*living garment*" *of ideology.* You will say that where poetical fantasy has crept in there cannot but occur the whim of the artist, the guesswork of fantasy. Of course, that is so: that will happen too. And Marx knew it very well: that is just why he says that we have strictly to distinguish between the *economic condition* of a given epoch, *which can be determined with the exactness of natural science, and the condition of its ideas.* Much, very much is still obscure for us in this sphere. But there is even

more that is obscure for the idealists, and yet more for eclectics, who have never understood the significance of the difficulties they encounter, imagining that they will always be able to settle any question with the help of their notorious "*interaction*". In reality, they never settle anything, but only hide behind the back of the difficulties they encounter. Hitherto, in the words of Marx, concrete human activity has been explained solely from the idealist point of view. Well, and what happened? Did they find many satisfactory explanations? Our judgements on the activity of the human "spirit" lack firm foundation and remind one of the judgements on nature pronounced by the ancient Greek philosophers: at best we have hypotheses of genius, sometimes merely ingenious suppositions, which, however, it is impossible to confirm or prove, for lack of any fulcrum of scientific proof. Something was achieved only in those cases where they were forced to connect social psychology with the "string". And yet, when Marx noticed this, and recommended that the attemtps which had begun should not be abandoned, and said that we must always be guided by the "string", he was accused of one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness! If there is any justice in this, it is only the subjective sociologist, possibly, who knows where it is.

Yes, you can talk, Mr. Mikhailovsky sarcastically continues: your new discovery "was made fifty years ago". Yes, Mr. Mikhailovsky, about that time! And all the more regrettable that you have still failed to understand it. Are there not many such "discoveries" in science, made tens and hundreds of years ago, but still remaining unknown to millions of "*personalities*" carefree in respect of science? Imagine that you have met a Hottentot and are trying to convince him that the earth revolves around the sun. The Hottentot has his own "original" theory, both about the sun and about the earth. It is difficult for him to part with his theory. And so he begins to be sarcastic: you come to me with your new discovery, and yet you yourself say that it's several hundred years old! What will the Hottentot's sarcasm prove? Only that the Hottentot is a Hottentot. But then that did not need to be proved.

However, Mr. Mikhailovsky's sarcasm proves a great deal more than would be proved by the sarcasm of a Hottentot. It proves that our "sociologist" belongs to the category of people who forget their *kinship*. His subjective point of view has been inherited from Bruno Bauer, Szeliga and other *predecessors* of Marx in the *chronological sense*. Consequently, Mr. Mikhailovsky's "discovery" is in any case a bit older than ours, even chronologically, while in its internal content it is much older, because the historical idealism of Bruno Bauer was a return to the views of the materialists of last century.*

* As for the application of biology to the solution of social problems, Mr. Mikhailovsky's "discoveries" date, as we have seen, in their "nature"

Mr. Mikhailovsky is very worried because the book of the American Morgan on "ancient society" appeared many years after Marx and Engels had advanced the fundamental principles of economic materialism,[452] and quite "independently of it". To this we shall observe:

In the first place, Morgan's book is not "independent" of so-called economic materialism for the simple reason that Morgan himself adopts that view-point, as Mr. Mikhailovsky will easily see for himself if he reads the book to which he refers. True, Morgan arrived at the view-point of economic materialism independently of *Marx and Engels,* but that's all the better for their theory.

Secondly, what's wrong if the theory of Marx and Engels was "many years later" confirmed by the discoveries of Morgan? We are convinced that there will yet be very many discoveries confirming that theory. As to Mr. Mikhailovsky, on the other hand, we are convinced of the contrary: not a single discovery will justify the "subjective" point of view, either in five years or in five thousand.

From one of Engels' prefaces Mr. Mikhailovsky has learned that the knowledge of the author of the *Condition of the Working Class in England,* and of his friend Marx, in the sphere of economic history was in the 40s "inadequate" (the expression of Engels himself).[453] Mr. Mikhailovsky skips and jumps on this subject: so you see, the entire theory of "economic materialism", which arose precisely in the 40s, was built on an inadequate foundation. This is a conclusion worthy of a witty fourth-form schoolboy. A grown-up person would understand that, in their application to scientific knowledge as to everything else, the expressions "adequate", "inadequate", "little", "big" must be taken in their relative sense. After the fundamental principles of the new historical theory had been proclaimed Marx and Engels went on living for several decades. They zealously studied economic history, and achieved vast successes in that sphere, which is particularly easy to understand in view of their unusual capacity. Thanks to these successes, their former information must have seemed to them "*inadequate*"; but this does not yet prove that their theory was *unfounded.* Darwin's book on the origin of species appeared in 1859. One can say with certainty that, ten years later, Darwin already thought inadequate the knowledge which he possessed when his book was published. But what does that matter?

Mr. Mikhailovsky displays not a little irony also on the theme that "for the theory which claimed to throw light on world his-

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from the 20s of the present century. Very respectable ancients are the "discoveries" of Mr. Mikhailovsky! In them the "*Russian mind and Russian soul*" truly "*repeats old stuff and lies for two*".[451]

tory, forty years after it had been enunciated" (i.e., allegedly up to the appearance of Morgan's book) "ancient Greek and German history remained an unsolved problem".* This irony is only founded on a "misunderstanding".

That *the class struggle underlay Greek and Roman history* could not but be known to Marx and Engels at the end of the 40s, if only for the simple reason that it had already been known to the Greek and Roman writers. Read Thucydides, Xenophon, Aristotle, read the Roman historians, even though it be Livy, who in his description of events too often passes, by the way, to a "subjective" point of view—and in each of them you will find the firm conviction that economic relations, and the struggle of classes which they aroused, were the foundation of the internal history of the societies of that day. This conviction took in them the direct form of the simple recording of a simple, well-known everyday fact: although in Polybius there is already something in the nature of a philosophy of history, based on recognition of this fact. However that may be, the fact was recognised by all, and does Mr. Mikhailovsky really think that Marx and Engels "had not read the ancients"? What remained unsolved problems for Marx and Engels, as for *all men of learning,* were questions concerning the forms of *prehistoric life* in Greece and Rome and among the German tribes (as Mr. Mikhailovsky himself says elsewhere). *These* were the questions answered by Morgan's book. But does our author by any chance imagine that no unsolved questions in biology existed for Darwin at the time he wrote his famous book?

"The category of necessity," continues Mr. Mikhailovsky, "is so universal and unchallengeable that it embraces even the most fantastic hopes and the most senseless apprehensions, with which it apparently has been called upon to fight. From its point of view, the hope of breaking through a wall by striking it with one's forehead is not stupidity but necessity, just as Quasimodo was not a hunchback but necessity, Cain and Judas were not evil-doers but necessity. In brief, if we are guided in practical life only by necessity, we come into some fantastic, boundless expanse where there are no ideas and things, no phenomena, but only inconspicuous shadows of ideas and things."** Just so, Mr. Mikhailovsky: even deformities of all kinds represent just as much a product of necessity as the most normal phenomena, although it does not at all follow from this that Judas was not a criminal, since it is absurd to contrast the conception of "criminal" with the conception of "necessity". But if, my dear sir, you are aspiring to the rank of hero (and every subjective thinker is a hero, so to speak, by pro-

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* January 1894, Part II, p. 108.
** *Ibid.,* pp. 113-14.

fession), then try and prove that you are not a "mad" hero, that your "hopes" are not "fantastic", that your "apprehensions" are not "senseless", that you are not a "Quasimodo" in thought, that you are not inviting the *crowd* to "break through a wall with its forehead". In order to prove all this, you should have to turn to the category of necessity: but you don't know how to operate with it, your subjective point of view excludes the very possibility of such operations. Thanks to this "category", reality for you becomes the kingdom of shadows. Now that's just where you get into your blind alley, it's at this point you sign the "testimonium paupertatis" for your "sociology", it's just here that you begin asserting that the "category of necessity" proves nothing, because allegedly it proves too much. A certificate of theoretical poverty is the only document with which you supply your followers, searching for higher things. It's not very much, Mr. Mikhailovsky!

A tom-tit asserts that it is a heroic bird and, in that capacity, it would think nothing of setting fire to the sea.[454] When it is invited to explain on what physical or chemical *laws* is founded its plan for setting fire to the sea, it finds itself in difficulties and, in order to get out of them somehow, begins muttering in a melancholy and scarcely audible whisper that "laws" is only a manner of speaking, but in reality laws explain nothing, and one can't found any plans on them; that one must hope for a lucky accident, since it has long been known that at a pinch you can shoot with a stick too; but that generally speaking *la raison finit toujours par avoir raison*. What a thoughtless and unpleasant bird!

Let us compare with this indistinct muttering of the tom-tit the courageous, astonishingly harmonious, historical philosophy of Marx.

Our anthropoid ancestors, like all other animals, were in complete subjection to *nature*. All their development was that completely unconscious development which was conditioned by adaptation to their environment, by means of natural selection in the struggle for existence. This was the dark kingdom of *physical necessity*. At that time even the *dawn of consciousness*, and therefore of *freedom*, was not breaking. But physical necessity brought man to a stage of development at which he began, little by little, to separate himself from the remaining animal world. He became a *tool-making animal*. The tool is an organ with the help of which man acts on nature to achieve his ends. It is an organ which subjects *necessity* to the human *consciousness*, although at first only to a very weak degree, by fits and starts, if one can put it that way. *The degree of development of the productive forces determines the measure of the authority of man over nature.*

The development of the productive forces is itself determined by the qualities of the geographical environment surrounding man.

In this way nature itself gives man the means for its own subjection.

But man is not struggling with nature individually: the struggle with her is carried on, in the expression of Marx, by social man (der Gesellschaftsmensch), i.e., a more or less considerable social union. The characteristics of *social* man are determined at every given time by the degree of development of the productive forces, because on the degree of the development of those forces depends the entire structure of the social union. Thus, this structure is determined in the long run by the characteristics of the geographical environment, which affords men a greater or lesser possibility of developing their productive forces.* But once definite social relations have arisen, their further development takes place according to *its own inner laws*, the operation of which accelerates or retards the development of the productive forces which conditions the historical progress of man. The dependence of man on his geographical environment is transformed from *direct* to *indirect*. The *geographical* environment influences man through the *social* environment. But *thanks to this*, the relationship of man with his geographical environment becomes extremely changeable. At every new stage of development of the productive forces it proves to be different from what it was before. The geographical environment influenced the Britons of Caesar's time quite otherwise than it influences the present inhabitants of Great Britain. That is how modern *dialectical materialism* resolves the contradictions with which the writers of the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century could not cope.**

*The development of the social environment is subjected to its own laws.* This means that its characteristics depend just as little on the will and consciousness of men as the characteristics of the geographical environment. The productive action of man on nature gives rise to a new form of dependence of man, a new variety of his slavery: *economic necessity*. And the greater grows man's

* [See Editor's Note on pp. 591-92.]

** Montesquieu said: once the geographical environment is given, the characteristics of the social union are also given. In one geographical environment only despotism can exist, in another—only small independent republican societies, etc. No, replied Voltaire: in one and the same geographical environment there appear in the course of time various social relations, and consequently geographical environment has no influence on the historical fate of mankind. It is all a question of the opinions of men. Montesquieu saw one side of the antinomy, Voltaire and his supporters another: the antinomy was usually resolved only with the help of *interaction*. *Dialectical materialism* recognises, as we see, the existence of interaction, but explains it by pointing to the development of the productive forces. The antinomy which the writers of the Enlightenment could at best only hide away in their pockets, is resolved very simply. *Dialectical reason*, here too, proves infinitely stronger than the *common sense* ("reason") of the writers of the Enlightenment.

authority over nature, the more his productive forces develop, the more stable becomes this new slavery: *with the development of the productive forces the mutual relations of men in the social process of production become more complex*; the course of that process completely slips from under their control, *the producer proves to be the slave of his own creation* (as an example, the capitalist anarchy of production).

But just as the nature surrounding man itself gave him the first opportunity to develop his productive forces and, consequently, gradually to emancipate himself from nature's yoke—so the relations of production, social relations, by the very logic of their development bring man to realisation of the causes of his enslavement by *economic* necessity. This provides the opportunity for a new and final triumph of *consciousness* over *necessity*, of *reason* over blind *law*.

Having realised that the cause of his enslavement by his own creation lies in the anarchy of production, the producer ("social man") organises that production and thereby subjects it to his will. Then terminates the kingdom of *necessity*, and there begins the reign of *freedom*, which itself proves to be *necessity*. The prologue of human history has been played out, history begins.*

* After all that has been said it will be clear, we hope, what is the relation between the teaching of Marx and the teaching of Darwin. Darwin succeeded in solving the problem of how there originate vegetable and animal species in the struggle for existence. Marx succeeded in solving the problem of how there arise different types of social organisation in the struggle of men for their existence. Logically, the investigation of Marx begins precisely where the investigation of Darwin ends. Animals and vegetables are under the influence of their *physical* environment. The physical envirionment acts on social man through those social relations which arise on the basis of the productive forces, which at first develop more or less quickly according to the characteristics of the physical environment. Darwin explains the origin of species not by an allegedly *innate* tendency to develop in the animal organism, as Lamarck did, but by the adaptation of the organism to the conditions existing outside it: not by the *nature of the organism* but by the influence of *external nature*. Marx explains the historical development of man not by the *nature of man*, but by the characteristics of those social *relations* between men which arise when social man is acting on *external nature*. The spirit of their research is absolutely the same in both thinkers. That is why one can say that Marxism is Darwinism in its application to social science (we know that *chronologically* this is not so, but that is unimportant). And that is its only *scientific* application; because the conclusions which were drawn from Darwinism by some bourgeois writers were not its scientific application to the study of the development of social man, but a mere bourgeois Utopia, a moral sermon with a very ugly content, just as the subjectivists engage in sermons with a beautiful content. The bourgeois writers, when referring to Darwin, were in reality recommending to their readers *not the scientific method of Darwin, but only the bestial instincts* of those animals about whom Darwin wrote. Marx forgathers with *Darwin*: the bourgeois writers forgather *with the beasts and cattle which Darwin studied.*

Thus dialectical materialims not only does not strive, as its opponents attribute to it, to convince man that it is absurd to revolt against economic necessity, but it is the first to point out *how to overcome* the latter. Thus is eliminated the *inevitably fatalist* character inherent in *metaphysical materialism*. And in exactly the same way is eliminated every foundation for that pessimism to which, as we saw, consistent *idealist* thinking leads of necessity. The individual personality is only foam on the crest of the wave, men are subjected to an iron law which can only be discovered, but which cannot be subjected to the human will, said Georg Büchner. No, replies Marx: once we have *discovered* that iron law, it depends on us to overthrow its yoke, it depends on us to make *necessity* the obedient slave of *reason*.

I am a worm, says the idealist. I am a worm while I am ignorant, retorts the dialectical materialist: but I am a god when I *know*. Tantum possumus, quantum scimus (we can do as much as we know.—*Ed.*)!

And it is against this theory, which for the first time established the rights of human reason on firm foundations, which was the first that began examining reason, not as the impotent plaything of accident but as a great and invincible force, that they revolt—in the name of the rights of that same reason which it is alleged to be treading underfoot, in the name of ideals which it is alleged to despise! And this theory they dare to accuse of quietism, of striving to reconcile itself with its environment and almost of ingratiating itself with the environment, as Molchalin ingratiated himself with all who were superior to him in rank! Truly one may say that here is a case of laying one's own fault at another man's door.

Dialectical materialism* says that human reason could not be the demiurge of history, because it is itself the *product* of history. But once that product has appeared, it *must* not—and in its nature it *cannot*—be obedient to the reality handed down as a heritage by previous history; of necessity it strives to transform that reality after its own likeness and image, *to make it reasonable*.

Dialectical materialism says, like Goethe's Faust:

*Im Anfang war die That!*
[*In the Beginning was the Deed!*]

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* We use the term "dialectical materialism" because it alone can give an accurate description of the philosophy of Marx. Holbach and Helvetius were *metaphysical* materialists. They fought against *metaphysical* idealism. Their materialism gave way to *dialectical idealism*, which in its turn was overcome by *dialectical materialism*. The expression "economic materialism" is extremely inappropriate. Marx never called himself an economic materialist.

*Action* (the activity of men in conformity to law in the social process of production) explains to the dialectical materialist the historical development of the reason of social man.* It is to action also that is reduced all his *practical philosophy. Dialectical materialism is the philosophy of action.*

When the subjective thinker says "*my ideal*", he thereby says: *the triumph of blind necessity.* The subjective thinker is unable to found his ideal upon the process of development of reality; and therefore immediately beyond the walls of the tiny little garden of his ideal there begins the boundless field of chance—and consequently, of blind necessity. Dialectical materialism points out the methods with the help of which all that boundless field can be transformed into the flourishing *garden of the ideal.* It only adds that the means for this transformation are buried *in the heart of that same field, that one only must discover them and be able to use them.*

Unlike subjectivism, dialectical materialism does not limit the rights of human reason. It knows that the rights of reason are as boundless and unlimited as its powers. It says that all that is reasonable in the human head, i.e., all that represents not an illusion but the true knowledge of reality, will unquestionably pass into that reality, and will unquestionably bring into it its own share of reason.

From this one can see what constitutes, in the opinion of dialectical materialists, the role of the individual in history. Far from reducing the role to zero, they put before the individual a task which—to make use of the customary though incorrect term—one must recognise as *completely and exceptionally idealistic.* As human reason can triumph over blind necessity only by becoming aware of the latter's peculiar inner laws, only by beating it with its own strength, the development of knowledge, the development of human consciousness is the greatest and most noble task of the thinking personality. "Licht, mehr Licht"[456] —that is what is most of all needed.

It has long ago been said that no one kindles a torch in order to leave it under a bushel. So that the dialectical materialist adds that one should not leave the torch in the narrow study of the "intellectual". So long as there exist "heroes" who imagine that it is sufficient for them to enlighten their own heads to be able to lead the crowd wherever they please, and to mould it, like clay, into anything that comes into their heads, the kingdom of reason remains a pretty phrase or a noble dream. It begins to

* "Social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice."[455]

approach us with seven-league strides only when the "crowd" itself becomes the hero of historical action, and when in it, in that colourless "crowd", there develops the appropriate consciousness of self. Develop human consciousness, we said. Develop the self-consciousness of the producers, we now add. Subjective philosophy seems to us harmful just because it prevents the intelligentsia from helping in the development of that self-consciousness, opposing heroes to the crowd, and imagining that the crowd is no more than a totality of ciphers, the significance of which depends only on the ideals of the hero who gives them the lead.

If there's only a marsh, there'll be devils enough, says the popular proverb in its coarse way. If there are only heroes, there'll be a crowd for them, say the subjectivists; and these heroes are we ourselves, the subjective intelligentsia. To this we reply: your contrasting of heroes to the crowd is mere conceit and therefore self-deception. And you will remain mere ... talkers, until you understand that for the triumph of your own ideals you must eliminate the very possibility of such contrasting, you must awaken in the crowd the heroic consciousness of self.*

Opinions govern the world, said the French materialists, we are the representatives of opinion, therefore we are the demiurges of history: we are the heroes, and for the crowd it remains only to follow us.

This narrowness of views corresponded to the exceptional position of the French writers of the Enlightenment. They were representatives of the *bourgeoisie*.

Modern dialectical materialism strives for the elimination of classes. It appeared, in fact, when that elimination became an historical necessity. Therefore it turns to the producers, who are to become the heroes of the historical period lying immediately ahead. Therefore, for the first time since our world has existed and the earth has been revolving around the sun, there is taking place the coming together of science and workers: science hastens to the aid of the toiling mass, and the toiling mass relies on the conclusions of science in its conscious movement.

If all this is no more than metaphysics, we really don't know what our opponents call metaphysics.

"But all you say refers only to the realm of prophecy. It's all mere guesswork, which assumes a somewhat systematic form only because of the tricks of Hegelian dialectics. That's why we call you metaphysicians," reply the subjectivists.

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* "Mit der Gründlichkeit der geschichtlichen Action wird der Umfang der Masse zunehmen, deren Action sie ist." Marx, *Die heilige Familie*, S. 120. ["Together with the thoroughness of the historical action will grow the volume of the mass whose action it is."]

We have already shown that to drag the "triad" into our dispute is possible only when one has not the least idea of it. We have already shown that with Hegel himself it never played the part of an *argument*, and that it was not at all a distinguishing feature of his philosophy. We have also shown, we make bold to think, that it is not references to the triad but scientific investigation of the historical process that constitutes the strength of historical materialism. Therefore we might now pay no attention to this retort. But we think it will not be useless for the reader to recall the following interesting fact in the history of Russian literature in the 70s.

When examining *Capital*, Mr. Y. Zhukovsky remarked[457] that the author in his guesses, as people now say, relies only on "*formal*" considerations, and that his line of argument represents only an unconscious play upon notions. This is what the late N. Sieber replied to this charge:

"We remain convinced that the investigation of the material problem everywhere in Marx precedes the formal side of his work. We believe that, if Mr. Zhukovsky had read Marx's book more attentively and more dispassionately, he would himself have agreed with us in this. He would then undoubtedly have seen that it is precisely by investigating the material conditions of the period of capitalist development in which we are living that the author of *Capital* proves that mankind sets itself only such tasks as it can solve. Marx step by step leads his readers through the labyrinth of capitalist production and, analysing all its component elements, makes us understand its provisional character."*

"Let us take ... factory industry," continues N. Sieber, "with its uninterrupted changing from hand to hand at every operation, with its feverish motion which throws workmen almost every day from one factory to another. Do not its material conditions represent a preparatory environment for new forms of social order, of social co-operation? Does not the operation of periodically repeated economic crises move in the same direction? Is it not to the same end that the narrowing of markets, the reduction of the working day, the rivalry of various countries in the general market, and the victory of large-scale capital over capital of insignificant dimensions tend? ..." Pointing out also the incredibly rapid growth of the productive forces in the process of development of capitalism, N. Sieber again asks: "Or are all these not material, but purely formal transformations? ... Is not a real contradiction of capitalist production, for example, the circumstance that periodically it floods the world market with goods, and forces

* N. Sieber, "Some Remarks on the Article of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky 'Karl Marx and His Book on Capital'" (*Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, November 1877, p. 6).

millions to starve at a time when there are too many articles of consumption?... Is it not a real contradiction of capitalism, furthermore—one which, be it said in passing, the owners of capital themselves willingly admit—that it sets free a great number from work and at the same time complains of lack of working hands? Is it not a real contradiction that the means for reducing physical labour, such as mechanical and other improvements and betterments, are transformed by it into means for lengthening the working day? Is it not a real contradiction that, while proclaiming the inviolability of property, capitalism deprives the majority of the peasants of land, and keeps the vast majority of the population on a mere pittance? Is all this, and much else, mere metaphysics, non-existent in reality? But it is sufficient to take up any issue of the English *Economist* to become immediately convinced of the contrary. And so the investigator of present social and economic conditions does not have artificially to adapt capitalist production to preconceived formal and dialectical contradictions: he has more than enough real contradictions to last him his lifetime."

Sieber's reply, convincing in its content, was mild in its form. Very different was the character of the reply to the same Mr. Zhukovsky which followed from Mr. Mikhailovsky.

Our worthy subjectivist even up to the present day understands the work, which he then defended, extremely "*narrowly*", not to say one-sidedly, and even tries to convince others that his one-sided understanding is the proper assessment of the book. Naturally, such a person could not be a reliable defender of *Capital*; and his reply was therefore filled with the most childish curiosities. Here, for example, is one of them. The charge against Marx of formalism and of abusing Hegelian dialectics was supported by Mr. Zhukovsky with a quotation, among other things, from a passage in the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*. Mr. Mikhailovsky found that Marx's opponent "rightly saw a reflection of Hegelian philosophy" in this preface, and that "*if Marx had only written this preface to the 'Critique', Mr. Zhukovsky would have been quite right*",* i.e., it would have been proved that Marx was only a formalist and Hegelian. Here Mr. Mikhailovsky so successfully missed the mark, and to such a degree "exhausted" the act of missing the mark, that willy-nilly one asks oneself, had our then hopeful young author read the preface he was quoting? ** One might refer to several other similar curiosities (one of them will be mentioned later on): but they are not the question at issue here. However badly Mr.

* N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works*, Vol. II, p. 356.

** In this passage Marx sets forth his materialist conception of history.

Mikhailovsky understood Marx, he nevertheless saw immediately that Mr. Zhukovsky had "*talked nonsense*" about "*formalism*"; and had nevertheless realised that such nonsense is the simple product of *unceremoniousness.*

"If Marx had said," Mr. Mikhailovsky justly observed, "that the law of development of modern society is such that itself it spontaneously negates its previous condition, and then negates this negation, reconciling the contradictions of the stages gone through in the unity of individual and communal property; if he had said this and *only* this (albeit in many pages), he would have been a pure Hegelian, building laws out of the depths of his spirit, and resting on principles that were purely formal, i.e., independent of content. But everyone who has read *Capital* knows that he said more than this." In the words of Mr. Mikhailovsky, the Hegelian formula can just as easily be removed from the economic content allegedly forced into it by Marx as a glove from the hand or a hat from the head. "Regarding the stages of economic development passed through there can be hardly any doubts.... Just as indubitable is the further course of the process: the concentration of the means of production more and more in a smaller number of hands. As regards the future there can, of course, be doubts. Marx considers that as the concentration of capital is accompanied by the socialisation of labour, the latter is what will constitute the economic and moral basis (how can socialisation of labour "constitute" the *moral* basis? And what about the "self-development of forms"? —*G.P.*) on which the new legal and political order will grow up. Mr. Zhukovsky was fully entitled to call this guesswork, but had no right (moral right, of course.—*G.P.*) to pass by in complete silence the significance which Marx attributes to the process of socialisation."*

"The whole of *Capital,*" Mr. Mikhailovsky rightly remarks, "is devoted to the study of how a social form, once it has arisen, constantly develops, intensifies its typical features, subordinating to itself and assimilating" (? ) "discoveries, inventions, improvements in the means of production, new markets, science itself, forcing them to work for it, and how finally the given form becomes incapable of withstanding further changes of the material conditions."**

With Marx "it is precisely the analysis of the relations between the social form (i.e., of capitalism, Mr. Mikhailovsky, isn't that so? —*G.P.*) and the material conditions of its existence (i.e., the productive forces which make the existence of the capitalist form of production more and more unstable, isn't that so, Mr. Mi-

* N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works,* Vol. II, pp. 353-54.
** *Ibid.,* p. 357.

khailovsky? —*G.P.*) that will always remain a monument of the logical system and vast erudition of the author. Mr. Zhukovsky has the moral courage to assert that this is the question which Marx evades. There's nothing more one can do here. It remains only to watch with amazement the further puzzling exercises of the critic, performing his somersaults for the amusement of the public, part of which undoubtedly will understand at once that a courageous acrobat is performing before it, while another part may perchance attribute quite a different meaning to this amazing spectacle."*

Summa summarum: if Mr. Zhukovsky accused Marx of formalism, this charge, in the words of Mr. Mikhailovsky, represented "one big lie composed of a number of little lies".

Severe is the sentence, but absolutely just. And if it was just in respect of Zhukovsky, it is just also in relation to all those who now repeat that the "guesses" of Marx are based only on the Hegelian triad. And if that sentence is just in respect of all such people, then ... have the goodness to read the following extract:

"He [Marx] to such an extent filled the empty dialectical scheme with a content of fact that it could be removed from that content, as a cover from a cup, without changing anything, without damaging anything except for one point—true, of vast importance. Namely, regarding the future, the 'immanent' laws of society are formulated only dialectically. For the orthodox Hegelian it is sufficient to say that 'negation' must be followed by the 'negation of the negation'; but those who are not privy to the Hegelian wisdom cannot be satisfied with that, for them a dialectical deduction is not a proof, and a *non*-Hegelian who has believed it must know that he has only believed it, not been convinced by it."**

*Mr. Mikhailovsky has pronounced his own sentence.*

Mr. Mikhailovsky knows himself that he is now repeating the words of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky regarding the "formal character" of Marx's arguments in favour of his "guesses". He has not forgotten his article "Karl Marx Before the Judgement of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky", and even fears lest his reader might recall it at some untimely moment. Therefore he begins by making it appear that he is saying the same now as he said in the 70s. With this object he repeats that the "dialectical scheme" may be removed "like a cover", etc. Then there follows "*only one point*" in relation to which Mr. Mikhailovsky, unbeknown to his reader, is completely at one with Mr. Y. Zhukovsky. But this

* *Ibid.*, pp. 357-58.

** *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, February 1894, Part II, pp. 150-51.

"one point" is that same point of "*vast importance*" which served as a pretext for exposing Mr. Zhukovsky as an "acrobat".

In 1877 Mr. Mikhailovsky said that Marx in relation to the future also, i.e., precisely in relation to "one point of vast importance", did not confine himself to a reference to Hegel. Now it appears from Mr. Mikhailovsky that he *did* so confine himself. In 1877 Mr. Mikhailovsky said that Marx with astonishing "logical force", with "vast erudition", demonstrated how the "given form" (i.e., capitalism) "becomes incapable of withstanding" further changes in the "*material conditions*" of its existence. That referred precisely to "one point of vast importance". Now Mr. Mikhailovsky has forgotten how much that was convincing Marx had said about this point, and how much logical strength and vast erudition he had displayed in doing so. In 1877 Mr. Mikhailovsky wondered at the "moral courage" with which Mr. Zhukovsky had passed over in silence the fact that Marx, in confirmation of his guesses, had referred to the socialisation of labour which was already taking place in capitalist society. This also had reference to "one point of vast importance". At the present day Mr. Mikhailovsky assures his readers that Marx on this point is guessing "purely dialectically". In 1877 "everyone who has read *Capital*" knew that Marx "said *more than this*". Now it turns out that he said "only this", and that the conviction of his followers as to the future "holds exclusively by the end of a Hegelian threetailed chain".* What a turn, with God's help!

Mr. Mikhailovsky has pronounced his own sentence, and knows that he has pronounced it.

But what made Mr. Mikhailovsky bring himself under the operation of the ruthless sentence he himself had pronounced? Did this man who so passionately, once upon a time, exposed literary "acrobats", in his old age himself feel an inclination to "the acrobatic art"? Are such transformations really possible? All transformations are possible, oh reader! And people with whom such transformations occur are worthy of every condemnation. It is not we who will justify them. But even they should be treated as human creatures, as people say. Remember the profoundly humane words of the author of the *Comments on Mill*: when a man behaves badly, it is often not so much his fault as his misfortune. Remember what the same author said about the literary activity of N. A. Polevoi:

"N. A. Polevoi was a follower of Cousin, whom he considered to be the solver of all riddles and the greatest philosopher in the world.... The follower of Cousin could not reconcile himself to the Hegelian philosophy, and when the Hegelian philosophy pene-

* *Ibid.*, p. 166.

trated into Russian literature, the pupils of Cousin turned out to be backward people; and there was nothing morally criminal on their part in the fact that they defended their convictions, and called stupid that which was said by people who had outdistanced them in intellectual progress. One cannot accuse a man because others, gifted with fresher forces and greater resolution, have outpaced him. They are right because they are nearer to the truth, but it is not his fault: he is only mistaken."*

Mr. Mikhailovsky all his life has been an *eclectic.* He could not reconcile himself to the historical philosophy of Marx by the very make-up of his mind, by the whole character of his previous philosophical education—if one can use such an expression in connection with Mr. Mikhailovsky. When the ideas of Marx began to penetrate into Russia, he tried at first to defend them, and even then did not do so, naturally, without numerous reservations and very considerable "failures to understand". He thought then that he would be able to grind down these ideas, too, in his eclectical mill, and thereby introduce still greater variety into his intellectual diet. Then he saw that the ideas of Marx are not at all suitable as decorations for those mosaics which are called world outlook in the case of eclectics, and that their diffusion threatens to destroy the mosaics he loves so well. So he declared war against these ideas. Of course he immediately turned out to be lagging behind intellectual progress: but really it seems to us that it is not his fault, that he is only making a mistake.

"But then all that does not justify 'acrobatics'! "

And we are not attempting to justify them: we are only pointing out extenuating circumstances. Quite without noticing it, Mr. Mikhailovsky, owing to the development of Russian social thought, has fallen into a state from which one can only get out by means of "acrobatics". There is, true, another way out, but only a man filled with *genuine* heroism would choose it. That way out is to *lay down the arms of eclecticism.*

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* *Sketches of the Gogol Period in Russian Literature,* St. Petersburg, 1892, pp. 24-25. [The author in question is N. G. Chernyshevsky.]

## CONCLUSION

Up to this point, in setting forth the ideas of Marx, we have been principally examining those objections which are put forward against him from the theoretical point of view. Now it is useful for us to become acquainted also with the "*practical reason*" of at any rate a certain part of his opponents. In doing so we shall use the method of *comparative history*. In other words we shall first see how the "practical reason" of the *German Utopians* met the ideas of Marx, and will thereafter turn to the reason of our dear and respected fellow countrymen.

At the end of the 40s Marx and Engels had an interesting dispute with the well-known Karl Heinzen.[458] The dispute at once assumed a very warm character. Karl Heinzen tried to laugh out of court, as they call it, the ideas of his opponents, and displayed a skill in this occupation which in no way was inferior to the skill of Mr. Mikhailovsky. Marx and Engels, naturally, paid back in kind.[459] The affair did not pass off without some sharp speaking. Heinzen called Engels "a thoughtless and insolent urchin"; Marx called Heinzen a representative of "der grobianischen Literatur", and Engels called him "the most ignorant man of the century".[460] But what did the argument turn about? What views did Heinzen attribute to Marx and Engels? They were these. Heinzen assured his readers that from the point of view of Marx *there was nothing to be done in Germany of that day* by anyone filled with any generous intentions. According to Marx, said Heinzen, "there must first arrive the supremacy of the bourgeoisie, which must manufacture the factory proletariat", which only then will begin acting on its own.*

Marx and Engels "did not take into account *that* proletariat which has been created by the thirty-four German Vampires", i.e., the whole German people, with the exception of the factory workers (the word "proletariat" means on the lips of Heinzen only the miserable condition of that people). This numerous

* *Die Helden des deutschen Kommunismus*, Bern, 1848, S. 21.

proletariat had not in Marx's opinion, he alleged, any right to demand a better future, because it bore on itself "*only the brand of oppression, and not the stamp of the factory*; it must patiently starve and die of hunger (hungern und verhungern) until Germany has become England. The factory is the school which the people must go through beforehand in order to have the right of setting about improving its position".*

Anyone who knows even a little of the history of Germany knows nowadays how absurd were these charges by Heinzen. Everyone knows whether Marx and Engels closed their eyes to the miserable condition of the German people. Everyone understands whether it was right to attribute to them the idea that there was nothing for a man of generous character to do in Germany so long as it had not become England: it would seem that these men did something even without waiting for such a transformation of their country. But why did Heinzen attribute to them all this nonsense? Was it really because of his bad faith? No, we shall say again that this was not so much his fault as his misfortune. He simply did not understand the views of Marx and Engels, and therefore they seemed to him harmful; and as he passionately loved his country, he went to war against these views which were seemingly harmful to his country. But lack of comprehension is a bad adviser, and a very unreliable assistant in an argument. That was why Heinzen landed in the most absurd situation. He was a very witty person, but wit alone without understanding will not take one very far: and now the last laugh *is not on his side.*

The reader will agree that Heinzen must be seen in the same light as our quite similar argument, for example, with Mr. Mikhailovsky. And is it only Mr. Mikhailovsky? Do not all those who attribute to the "disciples"** the aspiration to enter the service of the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs[461] —and their name is legion—do not they all repeat the mistake of Heinzen? Not one of them has invented a single argument against the "economic" materialists which did not already figure, *nearly fifty years ago,* in the arguments of Heinzen. If they have anything original, it is only this—their naive ignorance of how *unoriginal* they really are. They are constantly trying to find "new paths" for Russia, and owing to their ignorance "poor Russian thought" only stumbles across tracks of European thought, full of ruts and long ago abandoned. It is strange, but quite comprehensible if we apply to the explanation of this seemingly strange phenomenon "the category of necessity". *At a certain stage of the*

* *Ibid.*, p. 22.

** [ "Disciples" was the "Aesopian" word for Marxists.]

*economic development of a country, certain well-meaning stupidities "necessarily" arise in the heads of its intellectuals.*

How comical was the position of Heinzen in his argument with Marx will be shown by the following example. He pestered his opponents with a demand for a detailed "ideal" of the future. Tell us, he said to them, how property relations ought to be organised according to your views? What should be the limits of private property, on the one hand, and social property on the other? They replied to him that at every given moment the property relations of society are determined by the state of its productive forces, and that therefore one can only point out the general direction of social development, but not work out beforehand any exactly formulated draft legislation. We can already say that the socialisation of labour created by modern industry must lead to the nationalisation of the means of production. But one cannot say to what extent this nationalisation could be carried out, say, in the next ten years: this would depend on the nature of the mutual relations between small- and large-scale industry at that time, large landowning and peasant landed property, and so forth. Well, then you have no ideal, Heinzen concluded: a fine ideal which will be *manufactured only later, by machines*!

Heinzen adopted the *utopian* standpoint. The Utopian in working out his "ideal" always starts, as we know, from some abstract *notion*—for example, the notion of human nature—or from some abstract *principle*—for example, the principle of such and such rights of personality, or the principle of "individuality", etc., etc. Once such a principle has been adopted, it is not difficult, starting from it, to define with the most perfect exactness and to the last detail what *ought to be* (naturally, we do not know at what time and in what circumstances) the property relations between men, for example. And it is comprehensible that the Utopian should look with astonishment at those who tell him that there cannot be property relations which are good in themselves, without any regard for the circumstances of their time and place. It seems to him that such people have absolutely no "ideals". If the reader has followed our exposition not without attention, he knows that in that event the Utopian is often wrong. Marx and Engels had an ideal, and a very definite *ideal*: the subordination of *necessity* to *freedom,* of blind *economic forces* to the *power of human reason.* Proceeding from this ideal, they directed their practical activity accordingly—and it consisted, of course, not in serving the bourgeoisie but in developing the self-consciousness of those same producers who must, in time, become masters of their products.

Marx and Engels had no reason to "worry" about transforming Germany into England or, as people say in Russia nowadays, serving the bourgeoisie: the bourgeoisie developed without their

assistance, and it was impossible to arrest that development, i.e., there were no social forces capable of doing that. And it would have been needless to do so, because the old economic order was in the last analysis no better than the bourgeois order, and in the 40s had to such an extent grown out of date that it had become *harmful for all.* But the impossibility of arresting the development of capitalist production was not enough to deprive the thinking people of Germany of the possibility of *serving the welfare of its people.* The bourgeoisie has its inevitable fellow-travellers: all those who really serve its purse *on account of economic necessity.* The more developed the consciousness of these unwilling servants, the easier their position, the stronger their resistance to the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs of all lands and all peoples. Marx and Engels accordingly set themselves this particular task of developing that self-consciousness: in keeping with the spirit of dialectical materialism, from the very beginning they set themselves a *completely and exclusively idealistic task.*

The criterion of the ideal is economic reality. That was what Marx and Engels said, and on this foundation they were suspected of some kind of economic Molchalinism,[462] readiness to tread down into the mud those who were economically weak and to serve the interests of the economically strong. The source of such suspicion was a *metaphysical conception of what* Marx and Engels meant by the words "*economic reality*". When the metaphysician hears that one who serves society must take his stand on reality, he imagines that he is being advised to make his peace with that reality. He is unaware that in every economic reality there exist *contradictory elements,* and that to make his peace with reality would mean making his peace with only one of its elements, namely that which *dominates* for the moment. The dialectical materialists pointed, and point, to another element of reality, hostile to the first, and *one in which the future is maturing.* We ask: if one takes one's stand on *that* element, if one takes *it* as the criterion of one's "ideals", does this mean entering the service of the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs?

But if it is economic reality that must be the criterion of the ideal, then it is comprehensible that a *moral* criterion for the ideal is *unsatisfactory,* not because the moral feelings of men deserve indifference or contempt, but because these feelings are not enough to show us the right way of serving the interests of our neighbour. It is not enough for the doctor to sympathise with the condition of his patient: he has to reckon with the *physical reality* of the organism, to start from it in fighting it. If the doctor were to think of confining himself to moral indignation against the disease, he would deserve the most malicious ridicule. It was in this sense that Marx ridiculed the "*moralising criticism*" and "*crit-*

*ical morality"* of his opponents. But his opponents thought that he was laughing at "*morality*". "Human morality and will have no value in the eyes of men who themselves have neither morality nor will," exclaimed Heinzen.*

One must, however, remark that if our Russian opponents of the "economic" materialists in general only repeat—without knowing it—the arguments of their German predecessors, nevertheless they do diversify their arguments to some extent in minor detail. Thus, for example, the German Utopians did not engage in long dissertations about the "law of economic development" of Germany. With us, however, dissertations of that kind have assumed truly terrifying dimensions. The reader will remember that Mr. V. V., even at the very beginning of the 80s, promised that he would reveal the law of economic development of Russia.[463] True, Mr. V. V. began later on to be frightened of that law, but himself showed at the same time that he was afraid of it only temporarily, only until the time that the Russian intellectuals discovered a very good and kind law. Generally speaking, Mr. V. V., too, willingly takes part in the endless discussions of whether Russia must or must not go through the phase of capitalism. As early as the 70s the teaching of Marx was dragged into these discussions.

How such discussions are carried on amongst us is shown by the latest and most up-to-date work of Mr. S. Krivenko. This author, replying to Mr. P. Struve, advises his opponent to think harder about the question of the "necessity and good consequences of capitalism".

"If the capitalist regime represents a fatal and inevitable stage of development, through which any human society must pass, if it only remains to bow one's head before that historical necessity, should one have recourse to measures which can only delay the coming of the capitalist order and, on the contrary, should not one try to facilitate the transition to it and use all one's efforts to promote its most rapid advent, i.e., strive to develop capitalist industry and capitalisation of handicrafts, the development of kulakdom ... the destruction of the village commune, the expropriation of the people from the land and, generally speaking, the smoking-out of the surplus peasantry from the villages into the factories."** [464]

Mr. S. Krivenko really puts two questions here, (1) does capitalism represent a fatal and inevitable stage, (2) if so, what practical tasks follow from it? Let us begin with the first.

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* *Die Helden des deutschen Kommunismus,* Bern, 1848, S. 22.

** *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* December 1893, Part II, p. 189.

Mr. S. Krivenko formulates it correctly in this sense that one, and moreover the overwhelming, part of our intellectuals did precisely concern itself with the question in that form: does capitalism represent a fatal and inevitable stage through which every human society must pass? At one time they thought that Marx replied in the affirmative to this question, and were very upset thereby. When there was published the well-known letter of Marx, allegedly to Mr. Mikhailovsky,*[465] they saw with surprise that Marx did not recognise the "inevitability" of this stage, and then they decided with malignant joy: hasn't he just put to shame his Russian disciples! But those who were rejoicing forgot the French proverb: bien rira qui rira le dernier [he laughs best who laughs last].

From beginning to end of this dispute the opponents of the "Russian disciples" of Marx were indulging in the most "unnatural idle chatter".

The fact is that, when they were discussing whether the historical theory of Marx was applicable to Russia, they forgot one trifle: they forgot to ascertain what that theory consists of. And truly magnificent was the plight into which, thanks to this, our subjectivists fell, with Mr. Mikhailovsky at their head.

Mr. Mikhailovsky read (*if* he has read) the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, in which the philosophical-historical theory of Marx is set forth, and decided it was nothing more than Hegelianism. Without noticing the elephant where the elephant really was,** Mr. Mikhailovsky began looking round, and it seemed to him that he had at last found the elephant he was looking for in the chapter about primitive capitalist accumulation—where Marx is writing about the historical progress of Western capitalism, and not at all of the whole history of humanity.

Every process is unquestionably "inevitable" where it exists. Thus, for example, the burning of a match is inevitable for it, once it has caught fire: the match "inevitably" goes out, once the process of burning has come to an end. *Capital* speaks of the course of capitalist development which was "inevitable" for those countries where that development has taken place. Imagining that in the chapter of *Capital* just mentioned he has before him an entire historical philosophy, Mr. Mikhailovsky decided that, in the opinion of Marx, capitalist production is

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* In this draft unfinished sketch of a letter, Marx writes not to Mr. Mikhailovsky, but to the Editor of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*! Marx speaks of Mr. Mikhailovsky in the third person.

** [There is the well-known Russian story of the man who went to the managery and "didn't notice" the elephant.]

inevitable for all countries and for all peoples.* Then he began to *whine* about the embarrassing position of those Russian people who, etc.; and—the joker!—having paid the necessary tribute to his subjective necessity to whine, he importantly declared, addressing himself to Mr. Zhukovsky: you see, we too know how to criticise Marx, we too do not blindly follow what "the master has said"! Naturally all this did not advance the question of "inevitability" one inch; but after reading the whining of Mr. Mikhailovsky, Marx had the intention of going to his assistance. He sketched out in the form of a letter to the editor of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* his remarks on the article by Mr. Mikhailovsky. When, after the death of Marx, this draft appeared in our press, Russian people who, etc., had at least the *opportunity* of finding a correct solution to the question of "inevitability".

What could Marx say about the article of Mr. Mikhailovsky? A man had fallen into misfortune, by taking the philosophical-historical theory of Marx to be that which it was not in the least. It was clear that Marx had first of all to rescue from misfortune a hopeful young Russian writer. In addition, the young Russian writer was complaining that Marx was sentencing Russia to capitalism. He had to show the Russian writer that dialectical materialism doesn't sentence any countries to anything at all, that it doesn't point out a way which is general and "inevitable" for all nations at all times; that the further development of every given society always depends on the relationships of social forces within it; and that therefore any serious person must, without guessing or whimpering about some fantastic "inevitability", first of all study those relations. Only such a study can show what is "inevitable" and what is not "inevitable" for the given society.

* See the article, "Karl Marx Before the Judgement of Mr. Zhukovsky" in *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* for October 1877. "In the sixth chapter of *Capital* there is a paragraph headed: 'The So-called Primitive Accumulation'. Here Marx had in view a historical sketch of the first steps in the capitalist process of production, but he provided something which is much more—an entire philosophical-historical theory." We repeat that all this is absolute nonsense: the historical philosophy of Marx is set forth in the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, so incomprehensible for Mr. Mikhailovsky, in the shape of "a few generalising ideas, most intimately interconnected". But this in passing. Mr. Mikhailovsky has managed not to understand Marx even in what referred to the "inevitability" of the capitalist process for the West. He has seen in factory legislation a "correction" to the fatal inflexibility of the historical process. Imagining that according to Marx "*the economic*" acts on its own, without any part played by men, he was consistent in seeing a correction in every intervention by men in the course of their process of production. The only thing he did not know was that according to Marx that very intervention, *in every given form*, is the inevitable product of the given economic relations. Just try and argue about Marx with men who don't understand him with such notable consistency!

And that's just what Marx did. First of all he revealed the "misunderstanding" of Mr. Mikhailovsky: "The chapter on primitive accumulation does not pretend to do more than trace the path by which, in Western Europe, the capitalist order of economy emerged from the womb of the feudal order of economy. It therefore describes the historic movement which, by divorcing the producers from their means of production, converts them into wage-workers (proletarians in the modern sense of the word) while it converts those who possess the means of production into capitalists. In that history, 'all revolutions are epoch-making that act as levers for the advancement of the capitalist class in course of formation.... But the basis of this whole development is the expropriation of the agricultural producer'.... At the end of the chapter the historical tendency of production is summed up thus ... that capitalist property ... cannot but transform itself into social property. At this point I have not furnished any proof, for the good reason that this statement is itself nothing else but a general summary of long expositions previously given in the chapters on capitalist production."[466]

In order better to clear up the circumstance that Mr. Mikhailovsky had taken to be an historical theory what was not and could not be such a theory, Marx pointed to the example of ancient Rome. A very convincing example! For indeed, if it is "inevitable" for all peoples to go through capitalism, what is to be done with Rome, what is to be done with Sparta, what is to be done with the State of the Incas, what is to be done with the many other peoples who disappeared from the historical scene without fulfilling this imaginary obligation? The fate of these peoples did not remain unknown to Marx: consequently he could not have spoken of the universal "inevitability" of the capitalist process.

"My critic," says Marx, "feels he absolutely must metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into an historico-philosophic theory of the general path every people is fated to tread, whatever the historical circumstances in which it finds itself.... But I beg his pardon. (He is both honouring and shaming me too much.)"[467]

We should think so! Such an interpretation was transforming Marx into one of those "people with a formula" whom he had already ridiculed in his polemics against Proudhon.[468] Mr. Mikhailovsky attributed to Marx a "formula of progress", and Marx replied: no, thank you very much, I don't need these goods.

We have already seen how the Utopians regarded the laws of historical development (let the reader remember what we said about Saint-Simon). The conformity to law of historical movement assumed in their eyes a *mystical* appearance; the path

along which mankind proceeds was in their imagination *marked out beforehand*, as it were, and no historical events could change the direction of that path. An interesting psychological aberration! "Human nature" is for the Utopians the point of departure of their investigation. But the laws of development of that nature, immediately acquiring in their eyes a mysterious character, *are transferred somewhere outside man and outside the actual relationship of men* into some "*superhistorical*" sphere.

Dialectical materialism, here also, transfers the question to quite another ground, thereby giving it quite another appearance.

The dialectical materialists "reduce everything to economics". We have already explained how this is to be understood. But what are economics? They are the sum-total of the actual relationships of the men who constitute the given society, in their process of production. These relationships do not represent a motionless metaphysical essence. They are eternally changing under the influence of the development of the productive forces, and under the influence of the historical environment surrounding the given society. Once the actual relations of men in the process of production are given, there fatally follow from these relations certain consequences. In this sense social movement conforms to law, and no one ascertained that conformity to law better than Marx. But as the economic movement of every society has a "*peculiar*" form in consequence of the "*peculiarity*" of the conditions in which it takes place, there can be no "formula of progress" covering the past and foretelling the future of the economic movement of *all* societies. The formula of progress is that abstract truth which, in the words of the author of the *Sketches of the Gogol Period in Russian Literature*, was so pleasing to the metaphysicians. But, as he remarks himself, there is no abstract truth; truth is always concrete: everything depends on the circumstances of time and place. And if everything depends on these circumstances, it is the latter that must be studied by people who, etc.[469]

"In order that I might be specially qualified to estimate the economic development in Russia, I learnt Russian and then for many years studied the official publications and others bearing on this subject."[470]

The Russian disciples of Marx are faithful to him in this case also. Of course one of them may have greater and another less extensive economic knowledge, *but what matters here is not the amount of the knowledge of individual persons, but the point of view itself.* The Russian disciples of Marx are not guided by a subjective ideal or by some "formula of progress", but turn to the economic reality of their country.

To what conclusion, then, did Marx come regarding Russia? "If Russia continues to pursue the path she has followed since 1861, she will lose the finest chance ever offered by history to a people and undergo all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist regime." A little further on Marx adds that in recent years Russia "has been taking a lot of trouble" in the sense of proceeding along the path mentioned. Since the letter was written (i.e., since 1877, we will add for our part), Russia has been moving along that path still further and ever more quickly.

What then follows from Marx's letter? Three conclusions:

1. He shamed by his letter not his Russian disciples, but the subjectivist gentlemen who, not having the least conception of his scientific point of view, were attempting to refashion Marx himself after their own likeness and image, and to transform him into a *metaphysician and Utopian.*

2. The subjectivist gentlemen were not *ashamed* of the letter for the simple reason that—true to their "ideal"—they didn't understand the letter either.

3. If the subjectivist gentlemen want to argue with us on the question of how and where Russia is moving, they must at every given moment start from an *analysis of economic reality.*

The study of that reality in the 70s brought Marx to the *conditional* conclusion: "If Russia continues to pursue the path she has followed since the emancipation of the peasantry ... she will become a perfect capitalist nation ... and after that, once fallen in the bondage of the capitalist regime, she will experience the pitiless laws of capitalism like other profane peoples. That is all."[471]

That is all. But a Russian desiring to work for the welfare of his native land cannot be satisfied with such a conditional conclusion. The question will inevitably arise in his mind, will Russia continue to proceed along this path? Do data by any chance exist which allow one to hope that she will leave this path?

In order to reply to this question, one must once again turn to a study of the actual position of the country, an analysis of its present-day internal life. The Russian disciples of Marx, *on the basis of such an analysis,* assert that *she will continue. There are no data allowing one to hope that Russia will soon leave the path of capitalist development upon which she entered after 1861. That is all!*

The subjectivist gentlemen think that the "disciples" are mistaken. They will have to prove it with the help of data supplied by the same Russian *actuality.* The "disciples" say: Russia will continue to proceed along the path of capitalist development, not because there exists some external force, some mysterious law

# ПИСЬМО КАРЛА МАРКСА.

Въ бумагахъ покойнаго Карла Маркса оказалось письмо его, — повидимому не отправленное — на французскомъ языкѣ, относящееся къ статьѣ „Отечественныхъ Записокъ": „Карлъ Марксъ передъ судомъ г. Жуковскаго". Мы давно имѣли это письмо въ рукахъ, но зная, что Фридрихъ Энгельсъ передалъ его другимъ лицамъ для напечатанія на русскомъ языкѣ, воздерживались отъ его публикованія. Оно до сихъ поръ въ русской заграничной прессѣ не появлялось. Въ прошломъ году оно было издано въ Россіи нашими товарищами, но большая часть изданія попала въ руки полиціи. Теперь мы получили отъ нашихъ товарищей русскій переводъ его съ просьбою напечатать, такъ какъ имъ не удалось распространить его, а оно вызвало значительный интересъ въ русской соціалистической молодежи. Считаемъ пріятною обязанностью исполнить ихъ просьбу и украсить страницы нашего журнала произведеніемъ знаменитаго соціалиста. Упоминаемые въ письмѣ русскіе писатели суть А. И. Герценъ и Н. Г. Чернышевскій.

*Ред.*

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Авторъ статьи „Карлъ Марксъ передъ судомъ г. Жуковскаго" очевидно человѣкъ остроумный, и еслибы онъ въ моемъ изложеніи, трактующемъ о „первоначальномъ накопленіи", нашелъ хотя одну страницу въ подтвержденіе своихъ выводовъ, онъ бы на нее сдѣлалъ ссылку. За отсутствіемъ таковой, онъ принужденъ былъ взять ее не изъ самой книги, а изъ полемической выходки противъ одного русскаго беллетриста, напечатанной въ приложеніи къ первому нѣмецкому изданію „Капитала". Въ чемъ я тамъ упрекалъ русскаго

Marx's letter to the editorial board of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (in the magazine *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*)

pushing her along that path, but because there is no effective internal force capable of pushing her from that path. If the subjectivist gentlemen think that there is such a force, let them say what it consists of, and let them prove its presence. We shall be very glad to hear them out. Up to now we have not heard anything definite from them on this score.

"What do you mean: there is no force? And what about our ideals?" exclaim our dear opponents.

Oh gentlemen, gentlemen! Really you are touchingly simple! The very question is, how to realise, even for the sake of argument, your ideals—though they represent something fairly muddled? Put in this way, the question, naturally, sounds very prosaic, but so long as it is unanswered, your "ideals" will have only an "ideal" significance.

Imagine that a young hero has been brought into a prison of stone, put behind iron bars, surrounded by watchful guards. The young hero only smiles. He takes a bit of charcoal he has put away beforehand, draws a little boat on the wall, takes his seat in the boat and ... farewell prison, farewell watchful guards, the young hero is once again at large in the wide world.

A beautiful story! But it is ... *only a story*. In reality, a little boat drawn on the wall has *never carried anyone away anywhere.*

Already since the time of the abolition of serfdom Russia has patently entered the path of capitalist development. The subjectivist gentlemen see this perfectly well, and themselves assert that our old economic relations are breaking up with amazing and constantly increasing speed. But that's nothing, they say to one another: we shall embark Russia in the little boat of our ideals, and she will float away from this path beyond distant lands, into far-off realms.

The subjectivist gentlemen are good story-tellers, but ... "*that is all!*" That is all—and that's terribly little, and never before have stories changed the historical movement of a people, for the same prosaic reason that not a single nightingale has ever been well fed on fables.[472]

The subjectivist gentlemen have adopted a strange classification of "Russian people who..."—into two categories. Those who *believe* in the possibility of floating away on the little boat of the subjective ideal are recognised as good people, true well-wishers of the people. But those who say that that faith is *absolutely unfounded* are attributed a kind of unnatural malignancy, the determination to make the Russian muzhik die of hunger. No melodrama has ever had such villains as must be, in the opinion of the subjectivist gentlemen, the consistent Russian "economic" materialists. This amazing opinion is just as well founded as was that of Heinzen, which the readers already know, when he at-

tributed to Marx the intention of leaving the German people "hungern und verhungern".

Mr. Mikhailovsky asks himself why is it that just now gentlemen have appeared who are capable "with a tranquil conscience to condemn millions of people to starvation and poverty"? Mr. S. N. Krivenko thinks that once a consistent person has decided that capitalism is inevitable in Russia it remains for him only to strive to develop ... capitalisation of handicrafts, the development of kulakdom ... the destruction of the village commune, the expropriation of the people from the land and, generally speaking, the smoking-out of the surplus peasantry from the villages". Mr. S. N. Krivenko thinks so only because he himself is incapable of "*consistent*" *thinking*.

Heinzen did at least recognise in Marx a prejudice in favour of toilers who bore the "factory stamp". The subjectivist gentlemen evidently do not recognise even this little weakness in the "Russian disciples of Marx": they, forsooth, consistently hate all the sons of man, without exception. They would like to starve them all to death, with the exception possibly of the representatives of the merchant estate. In reality, if Mr. Krivenko had admitted any good intentions in the "disciples", as regards the factory workers, he would not have written the lines just quoted.

"To strive ... generally speaking, for the smoking-out of the surplus peasantry from the villages." The saints preserve us! Why strive? Surely the influx of new labour into the factory population will lead to a lowering of wages. And even Mr. Krivenko knows that a lowering of wages cannot be beneficial and pleasant for the workers. Why should the consistent "disciples", then, try to do harm to the workman and bring him unpleasantness? Obviously these people are consistent only in their hatred of mankind, they don't even love the factory worker! Or perhaps they do love him, but in their own peculiar way—they love him and therefore they try to do him harm: "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Strange people! Remarkable consistency!

"To strive ... for the development of kulakdom, the destruction of the village commune, the expropriation of the people from the land." What horrors! But why strive for all this? Surely the development of kulakdom and the expropriation of the people from the land may reflect themselves in the lowering of their purchasing power, and the lowering of their purchasing power will lead to a reduction of demand for factory goods, will reduce the demand for labour, i.e., will lower wages. No, the consistent "disciples" don't love the working man; and is it only the working man? For surely the reduction in the purchasing power of the people will harmfully affect even the interests of the employers who constitute, the subjectivist gentlemen assure us, the object of the

disciples' most tender care. No, you can say what you like, but these disciples are really queer people!

"To strive ... for the capitalisation of handicrafts" ... not to "stick at either the buying-up of peasant land, or the opening of shops and public houses, or at any other shady occupation". But why should consistent people do all this? Surely they are convinced of the inevitability of the capitalist process; consequently, if the opening of public houses were an essential part of that process, there would inevitably appear public houses (which, one must suppose, do not exist at present). It seems to Mr. Krivenko that shady activity must accelerate the capitalist process. But, we shall say again, if capitalism is inevitable, "shadiness" will appear of its own accord. Why should the consistent disciples of Marx so "strive" for it?

"Here their theory grows silent before the demands of moral feeling: they see that shadiness is inevitable, they adore it for that inevitability, and from all sides they hasten to its assistance, or else maybe that poor inevitable shadiness will not get the upper hand soon enough, without our assistance."

Is that so, Mr. Krivenko? If it is not, then all your arguments about the "consistent" disciples are worthless. And if it is, then your personal consistency and your own "capacity of cognition" are worthless.

Take whatever you like, even though it be the capitalisation of handicrafts. It represents a twofold process: there appear first of all people who *accumulate* in their hands the means of production, and secondly people who *make use* of these means of production for a certain payment. Let us suppose that shadiness is the distinguishing feature of persons of the first category; but surely the people who work for them for hire may, it might seem, escape that "phase" of moral development? And if so, what will there be shady in my activity if I devote it to those people, if I develop their self-consciousness and defend their material interests? Mr. Krivenko will say perhaps that such activity will delay the development of capitalism. Not in the least. The example of England, France and Germany will show him that in those countries such activity has not only not delayed the development of capitalism but, on the contrary, has accelerated it, and by the way has thereby brought nearer the practical solution of some of their "accursed" problems.

Or let us take the destruction of the village commune. This also is a twofold process: the peasant holdings are being concentrated in the hands of the kulaks, and an ever-growing number of previously independent peasants are being transformed into proletarians. All this, naturally, is accompanied by a clash of interests, by struggle. The "Russian disciple" appears on the

scene, attracted by the noise: he lifts up his voice in a brief but deeply felt hymn to the "category of necessity" and ... *opens a public house*! That's how the most "consistent" among them will act: the more moderate man will confine himself to opening a *little shop.* That's it, isn't it, Mr. Krivenko? But why shouldn't the "disciple" take the side of the village poor?

"But if he wants to take their side, he will have to try and interfere with their expropriation from the land?" *All right, let's admit it: that's what he must try for.* "But that will delay the development of capitalism." *It won't delay it in the least.* On the contrary, it will even accelerate it. The subjectivist gentlemen are always imagining that the village commune "of itself" tends to pass into some "higher form". They are mistaken. The only real tendency of the village commune is *the tendency to break up,* and the better the conditions of the peasantry, the sooner would the commune break up. Moreover, that break-up can take place in conditions which are *more or less advantageous for the people.* The "disciples" must "strive" to see to it that the break-up takes place in conditions *most advantageous for the people.*

"But why not prevent the break-up itself?"

And why didn't you prevent the famine of 1891? You couldn't? We believe you, and we should consider our cause lost if all we had left were to make *your morality* responsible for such *events* which were independent of your will, instead of refuting your *views* with the help of *logical arguments.* But why then do you pay us back in a different measure? Why, in arguments with us, do you represent the poverty of the people as though we were responsible for it? Because where *logic* cannot help you, sometimes *words* can, particularly *pitiful words.* You could not prevent the famine of 1891? Who then will vouch that you will be able to prevent the break-up of the village commune, the expropriation of the peasantry from their land? Let us take the middle path, so dear to eclectics: let's imagine that in some cases you will succeed in preventing all this. Well, but in those cases where your efforts prove unsuccessful, where in spite of them the commune nevertheless breaks up, where the peasants nevertheless prove landless—how will you act with these victims of the fateful process? Charon carried across the Styx only those souls who were able to pay him for his work. Will you take into your little boat, for transporting into the realm of the subjective ideal, only genuine members of the village commune? Will you use your oars to beat off the village proletarians? Probably you yourselves will agree, gentlemen, that this would be very "*shady*". And once you agree with this, you will have to act in their regard in just the same way as, in your opinion, any decent

man will have to act, i.e., not to set up public houses to sell them dope, but to increase their strength of resistance *to* the public house, to the publican and to every other dope which history serves up, or will serve up, to them.

Or perhaps it is *we* now who are beginning to tell fairy tales? Perhaps the village commune is *not* breaking up? Perhaps the expropriation of the people from the land is *not* in fact taking place? Perhaps we invented this with the sole aim of plunging the peasant into poverty, after he had hitherto been enjoying an enviably prosperous existence? Then open any investigation by your own partisans, and it will show you how matters have stood up to now, i.e., before even a single "disciple" has opened a public house or started a little shop. When you argue with us, you represent matters as though the people are already living in the realm of your subjective ideals, while we, through our inherent hatred of mankind, are dragging them down by the feet, into the prose of capitalism. But matters stand in exactly the opposite way. It is the capitalist prose that exists, and we are asking ourselves, how can this prose be fought, how can we put the people in a situation even somewhat approaching the "ideal"? You may find that we are giving the wrong answer to the question: but why distort our intentions? [473] Really, you know, that is "shady": really such "*criticism*" is unworthy even of "*Suzdal folks*".[474]

But how then can one fight the capitalist prose which, we repeat, already exists independently of our and your efforts? You have one reply: to "consolidate the village commune", to strengthen the connection of the peasant with the land. And we reply that that is an answer worthy only of Utopians. Why? Because it is an abstract answer. According to your opinion, the village commune is good always and everywhere, while in our opinion there is no abstract truth, truth is always concrete, everything depends on the circumstances of time and place. There was a time when the village commune could be advantageous for the *whole* people; there are probably even now places where it is of advantage to the agriculturists. It is not we who will begin a revolt against *such* a commune. But in a number of cases the village commune has been transformed into a means of *exploiting* the peasant. Against *such* a commune we revolt, just as against everything that is harmful for the people. Remember the peasant whom G. I. Uspensky makes pay "*for nothing*".[475] What should one do with him, in your opinion? Transport him into the realm of the ideal, you reply. Very good, transport him with God's help. But while he has not yet been transported, while he has not yet taken his seat on the little boat of the ideal, while the little boat has not yet sailed up to him and as yet we don't know when it will do so,

wouldn't it be better for him to be free from paying "for nothing"? Wouldn't it be better for him to stop being a member of a village commune which only means that he will have absolutely unproductive expenses, and perhaps in addition only a periodical flogging at the *Volost* office? We think it *would,* but you charge us for this with intending to starve the people to death. Is that just? Isn't there something "shady" about it? Or perhaps you really are incapable of understanding us? Can that really be so? Chaadayev said once that the Russian doesn't even know the syllogism of the West.[476] Can that really be just your case? We will admit that Mr. S. Krivenko quite sincerely does not understand this; we admit it also in relation to Mr. Kareyev and Mr. Yuzhakov. But Mr. Mikhailovsky always seemed to us a man of a much more "acute" mind.

What have you invented, gentlemen, to improve the lot of the millions of peasants who have in fact lost their land? When it is a question of people who pay "for nothing", you are able only to give one piece of advice: although he does pay "for nothing", nevertheless he mustn't destroy his connection with the village commune because, once it has been destroyed, it can never be restored. Of course, this will involve temporary inconvenience for those who pay "for nothing", but ... "what the muzhik suffers is no disaster".[477]

And that's just how it turns out that our subjectivist gentlemen are ready to bring the most vital *interests of the people* as a sacrifice to *their ideals. And that is just how it turns out that their preaching in reality is becoming more and more hurtful for the people.*

"To be an enthusiast had become her social vocation," says Tolstoy about Anna Pavlovna Sherer.[478] To hate capitalism has become the social vocation of our subjectivists. What good could the enthusiasm of an old maid do Russia? None whatsoever. What good does the "subjective" hatred of capitalism do the Russian producers? Also none whatsoever.

But the enthusiasm of Anna Pavlovna was at least harmless. The utopian hatred of capitalism is beginning to do positive harm to the Russian producer, because it makes our intellectuals extremely unsqueamish about the means of consolidating the village commune. Scarcely does anyone mention such consolidation when immediately a darkness falls in which all cats seem grey, and the subjectivist gentlemen are ready warmly to embrace the *Moskovskiye Vedomosti.* And all this "subjective" darkening of the intellect goes precisely to aid that *public house* which the "disciples" are alleged to be ready to cultivate. It's shameful to say it, but sinful to hide, that *the utopian enemies of capitalism prove in reality to be the accomplices of capitalism in its most coarse, shameful and harmful form.*

Up to now we have been speaking of Utopians who have tried, or nowadays try, to invent some argument or other *against Marx.* Let us see now how those Utopians behave, or behaved, who were *inclined to quote from him.*

Heinzen, whom the Russian subjectivists now reproduce with such astonishing accuracy in their arguments with the "Russian disciples", was a Utopian of a democratic-bourgeois tendency. But there were many Utopians of an opposite tendency[479] in Germany in the 40s.

The social and economic position of Germany was then in broad outline as follows.

On the one hand, the bourgeoisie was rapidly developing, and insistently demanding every kind of assistance and support from the German governments. The well-known Zollverein was entirely the result of its work, and advocacy in favour of it was carried on not only with the help of "petitions", but also by means of more or less scientific research: let us recall the name of Friedrich List.[480] On the other hand, the destruction of the old economic "foundations" had left the German people defenceless in relation to capitalism. The peasants and handicraftsmen were already sufficiently involved in the process of capitalist advance to experience on themselves all its disadvantageous sides, which make themselves felt with particular force in *transitional periods.* But the working mass was at that time still little capable of resistance. It could not as yet withstand the representatives of capital to any noticeable extent. Way back *in the 60s* Marx said that Germany was suffering simultaneously both *from the development of capitalism and from the insufficiency of its development.* In the 40s her sufferings from the insufficiency of development of capitalism were even greater. Capitalism had destroyed the old foundations of peasant life; the *handicraft* industry, which had previously flourished in Germany, now had to withstand the competition of *machine* production, which was much too strong for it. The handicraftsmen grew poorer, falling every year more and more into helpless dependence on the *middlemen.* And at the same time the peasants had to discharge a long series of such services, in relation to the landlords and the state, as might perhaps have been bearable in previous days, but in the 40s became all the more oppressive because they less and less corresponded to the actual conditions of peasant life. The poverty of the peasantry reached astounding dimensions; the kulak became the complete master of the village; the peasant grain was frequently bought by him while it was still not yet reaped; begging had become a kind of seasonal occupation. Investigators at that time pointed out village communes in which, out of several thousand families, only a few hundred were not engaged in begging. In other places--a thing

almost incredible, but placed on record at the time by the German press—*the peasants fed on carrion.* Leaving their villages, they could not find sufficient employment in the industrial centres, and the press pointed out the growing unemployment and the increasing emigration which it was producing.

Here is how one of the most advanced organs of the time describes the position of the working mass: "One hundred thousand spinners in the Ravensberg district, and in other places of the German Fatherland, can no longer live by their own labour, and can no longer find an outlet for their manufacture" (it was a question chiefly of handicraftsmen). "They seek work and bread, without finding one or the other, because it is difficult if not impossible for them to find employment outside spinning. There exists a vast competition among the workers for the most miserable wage."*

The morality of the people was undoubtedly declining. The destruction of old *economic relations* was paralleled by the shattering of old *moral notions.* The newspapers and journals of that time were filled with complaints of drunkenness among the workers, of sexual dissoluteness in their midst, of coxcombry and extravagance which developed among them, side by side with the decrease in their wages. There were no signs as yet in the German workman of a *new* morality, that morality which began rapidly to develop later, on the basis of the new movement of emancipation aroused by the very development of capitalism. The mass movement for emancipation was not even beginning at that time. The dull discontent of the mass made itself felt from time to time only in hopeless strikes and aimless revolts, in the senseless destruction of machines. But the sparks of consciousness were beginning to fall into the heads of the German workmen. Books which had represented an unnecessary luxury under the old order became an article of necessity in the new conditions. A passion for reading began to take possession of the workers.

Such was the state of affairs with which the right-thinking portion of the German intellectuals (der Gebildeten—as they said then) had to reckon. What was to be done, how could the people be helped? *By eliminating capitalism,* replied the intellectuals. The works of Marx and Engels which appeared at that time were joyfully accepted by part of the German intellectuals as constituting a number of new scientific arguments *in favour of the necessity of eliminating capitalism.* "While the liberal politicians have with new strength begun to sound List's trumpet of the protective tariff, trying to assure us ... that they are worrying about an expansion of industry mainly in the interests of the working class, while their opponents, the enthusiasts of free trade,

* *Der Gesellschafts-Spiegel,* Band I, S. 78. A letter from Westphalia.

have been trying to prove that England has become the flourishing and classical country of trade and industry not at all in consequence of protection, the excellent book of Engels on the condition of the working class in England has made a most timely appearance, and has destroyed the last illusions. All have recognised that this book constitutes one of the most remarkable works of modern times.... By a number of irrefutable proofs it has shown into what an abyss that society hurries to fall which makes its motive principle personal greed, the free competition of private employers, for whom money is their God."*

And so capitalism must be eliminated, or else Germany will fall into that abyss at the bottom of which England is already lying. This has been proved by Engels. And who will eliminate capitalism? The intellectuals, die Gebildeten. The peculiarity of Germany, in the words of one of these Gebildeten, was precisely that it was the German intellectuals who were called upon to eliminate capitalism in her, while "in the West" (in den westlichen Ländern) "it is more the workmen who are fighting it".** But how will the German intellectuals eliminate capitalism? By organising production (Organisation der Arbeit). And what must the intellectuals do to organise production? *Allgemeines Volksblatt* which was published at Cologne in 1845 proposed the following measures:

1. Promotion of popular education, organisation of popular lectures, concerts, etc.

2. Organisation of big workshops in which workmen, artisans and handicraftsmen could work for themselves, not for an employer or a merchant. *Allgemeines Volksblatt* hoped that in time these artisans and handicraftsmen would themselves, on their own initiative, be grouped in associations.

3. Establishment of stores for the sale of the goods manufactured by the artisans and handicraftsmen, and also by national workshops.

These measures would save Germany from the evils of capitalism. And it was all the more easy to adopt them, added the paper we have quoted, because "here and there people have already begun to establish permanent stores, so-called industrial bazaars, in which artisans can put out their goods for sale", and immediately receive a certain advance on account of them.... Then followed an exposition of the advantages which would follow from all this, both for the producer and for the consumer.

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* *Ibid.*, S. 86. *Notizen und Nachrichten.*

** See the article by Hess in the same volume of the same review, p.1 *et seq.* See also *Neue Anekdoten,* herausgegeben von Karl Grün, Darmstadt, 1845, p. 220. In Germany, as opposed to France, it is the educated minority which engages in the struggle with capitalism and *"ensures victory over it".*

The elimination of capitalism seems easiest of all where it is *still poorly developed.* Therefore the German Utopians frequently and willingly underlined the circumstance that Germany was not yet England: Heinzen was even ready flatly to deny the existence of a factory proletariat in Germany. But since, for the Utopians, the chief thing was to prove to "society" the necessity of organising production, they passed at times, without difficulty and without noticing it, over to the standpoint of people who asserted that *German capitalism could no longer develop any further, in consequence of its inherent contradictions, that the internal market had already been saturated, that the purchasing power of the population was falling, that the conquest of external markets was improbable and that therefore the number of workers engaged in manufacturing industry must inevitably and constantly diminish.* This was the point of view adopted by the journal *Der Gesellschafts-Spiegel,* which we have quoted several times, and which was one of the chief organs of the German Utopians of that day after the appearance of the interesting pamphlet of L. Buhl: *Andeutungen über die Noth der arbeitenden Klassen und über die Aufgabe der Vereine zum Wohl derselben (Suggestions on the Needy State of the Working Class and on the Tasks of the Unions for the Welfare Thereof.—Ed.*), Berlin, 1845. Buhl asked himself, were the unions for promoting the welfare of the working class in a position to cope with their task? In order to reply to this question, he put forward another, namely, whence arose at the present time the poverty of the working class? The poor man and the proletarian are not at all one and the same thing, says Buhl. The poor man won't or can't work; the proletarian seeks work, he is capable of doing it, but it does not exist, and he falls into poverty. Such a phenomenon was quite unknown in previous times, although there always were the poor and there were always the oppressed—for example, the serfs.

Where did the proletarian come from? He was created by *competition.* Competition, which broke the old bonds that fettered production, brought forth an unprecedented industrial prosperity. But it also forces employers to lower the price of their goods. Therefore they try to reduce wages or the number of the employed. The latter object is achieved by the perfecting of machinery, which throws many workers on to the streets. Moreover, artisans cannot stand up to the competiton of machine production, and are also transformed into proletarians. Wages fall more and more. Buhl points to the example of the cotton print industry, which was flourishing in Germany as late as the 20s. Wages were then very high. A good workman could earn from 18 to 20 thalers a week. But machines appeared, and with them female and child labour—and wages fell terribly. The principle of free competition

acts thus always and everywhere, wherever it achieves predominance. *It leads to overproduction,* and overproduction to unemployment. And the more developed becomes large-scale industry, the more unemployment grows and the smaller becomes the number of workmen engaged in industrial undertakings. That this is really so is shown by the fact that the disasters mentioned occur only in industrial countries. Agricultural countries don't know them. But the state of affairs created by free competition is extremely dangerous for society (für die Gesellschaft), and therefore society cannot remain indifferent to it. What then must society do? Here Buhl turns to the question which holds first place, so to speak, in his work: is any *union* at all able to eradicate the poverty of the working class?

The local Berlin union for assisting the working class has set itself the object "not so much of eliminating existing poverty, as of preventing the appearance of poverty in the future". It is to this union that Buhl now turns. How will you prevent the appearance of poverty in the future, he asks: what will you do for this purpose? The poverty of the modern worker arises from the lack of demand for his labour. The worker needs not charity but work. But where will the union get work from? In order that the demand for labour should increase, it is necessary that the demand for the products of labour should increase. But this demand is diminishing, thanks to the diminution of the earnings of the working mass. Or perhaps the unions will discover new markets? Buhl does not think that possible either. He comes to the conclusion that the task which the Berlin union has set itself is merely a "*well-intentioned illusion*".

Buhl advises the Berlin union to meditate more deeply on the causes of the poverty of the working class, before beginning the struggle against it. He considers *palliatives* to be of no importance. "Labour exchanges, savings banks and pension funds, and the like, can of course improve the position of a few individuals: but they will not eradicate the evil." Nor will associations do that: "Associations also will not escape the harsh necessity (dura necessitas) of competition."

Where Buhl himself discerned the means of eradicating the evil, it is difficult to ascertain exactly from his pamphlet. It seems as though he hints that the interference of the state is necessary to remedy the evil, adding however that the result of such interference would be *doubtful.* At any rate, his pamphlet made a deep impression on the German intellectuals at that time; and not at all in the sense of disillusioning them. On the contrary, they saw in it a new proof of *the necessity of organising labour.*

Here is what the journal *Der Gesellschafts-Spiegel* wrote of Buhl's pamphlet:

"The well-known Berlin writer L. Buhl has published a work entitled *Andeutungen,* etc. He thinks—and we share his opinion—that the miseries of the working class follow from the excess of productive forces; that that excess is the consequence of free competition and of the latest discoveries and inventions in physics and mechanics; that a return to guilds and corporations would be just as harmful as impeding discoveries and inventions; that therefore *in existing social conditions*" (the italics are those of the writer of the review) "there are no effective means of helping the workmen. Assuming that present-day egotistical private-enterprise relations remain unchanged, one must agree with Buhl that no union will be in a position to abolish the existing poverty. But such an assumption is not at all necessary; on the contrary, there could arise and already do arise unions the aim of which is to eliminate by peaceful means the above-mentioned egotistical basis of our society. All that is necessary is that the government should not handicap the activity of such unions."

It is clear that the reviewer had not understood, or had not wished to understand, Buhl's idea: but this is not important for us. We turned to Germany only in order, with the help of the lessons provided by *her* history, better to understand certain intellectual tendencies in present-day Russia. And in this sense the movement of the German intellectuals of the 40s comprises much that is instructive for us.

In the first place, the line of argument of Buhl reminds us of that of Mr. N. —on. Both one and the other begin by pointing to the development of the productive forces as the reason for the decline in the demand for labour, and consequently for the relative reduction of the number of workers. Both one and the other speak of the saturation of the internal market, and of the necessity arising therefrom of a further diminution in the demand for labour. Buhl did not admit, apparently, the possibility that the Germans might conquer foreign markets; Mr. N. —on resolutely refuses to recognise this possibility as regards the Russian manufacturers. Finally, both one and the other leave this question of foreign markets entirely without investigation: neither brings forward a single serious argument in favour of his opinion.[481]

Buhl makes no obvious conclusion from his investigation, except that one must meditate more deeply on the position of the working class before helping it. Mr. N. —on comes to the conclusion that our society is faced with, true, a difficult but not an insoluble task—that of organising our national production. But if we supplement the views of Buhl by the considerations set forth in connection with them by the reviewer of *Der Gesellschafts-Spiegel* whom we have quoted, the result is precisely the conclusion of

Mr. N. —on. *Mr. N. —on =Buhl + the reviewer.* And this "formula" leads us to the following reflections.

Mr. N. —on in our country is called a Marxist, and even the only "true" Marxist. But can it be said that the sum of the views of Buhl and his reviewer on the position of Germany in the 40s was equivalent to the views of Marx on the same position? In other words, was Buhl, supplemented by his reviewer, a Marxist—and withal the only true Marxist, the Marxist par excellence? Of course not. From the fact that Buhl pointed out the contradiction into which capitalist society falls, thanks to the development of the productive forces, it does not yet follow that he adopted the point of view of Marx. He examined these contradictions from a very abstract point of view, and already thanks to this alone his investigation had not, *in its spirit,* anything in common with the views of Marx. After hearing Buhl one might have thought that German capitalism, *today or tomorrow,* would be suffocated under the weight of its own development, that it had nowhere any longer to go, that handicrafts had been finally capitalised, and that the number of German workers would rapidly decline. Such views Marx never expressed. On the contrary, when he had occasion to speak of the immediate future of German capitalism, at the end of the 40s and particularly at the beginning of the 50s, he said something quite different. Only people who did not in the least understand his views could have considered the German N.—ons to be true Marxists.*

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* There were many N.—ons in Germany at that time, and of the most varying tendencies. The most remarkable, perhaps, were the *conservatives.* Thus for example, Dr. Karl Vollgraf, ordentlicher Professor der Rechte, in a pamphlet bearing an extremely long title (*Von der über und unter ihr naturnothwendiges Mass erweiterten und herabgedrückten Concurrenz in allen Nahrungs- und Erwerbszweigen des bürgerlichen Lebens, als der nächsten Ursache des allgemeinen, alle Klassen mehr oder weniger drückenden Nothstandes in Deutschland, insonderheit des Getreidewuchers, sowie von den Mitteln zu ihrer Abstellung,* Darmstadt, 1848) [*On the Competition Extended Over and Depressed Below Its Natural Level in All Branches of Trade and Industry in Civil Life, As the Immediate Cause of the Depression Affecting More or Less All Classes in Germany, Particularly of the Usurous Trade in Corn, and on the Measures for Ending the Same*], represented the economic situation of the "German Fatherland" amazingly like the way the Russian economic situation is represented in the book *Sketches of Our Social Economy since the Reform.* Vollgraf also presented matters as though the development of productive forces had *already* led, "under the influence of free competiton", to the relative diminution of the number of workers engaged in industry. He described in greater detail than Buhl the influence of unemployment on the state of the internal market. Producers in one branch of industry are at the same time consumers for products of other branches, but as unemployment deprives the producers of purchasing power, demand diminishes, in consequence of it unemployment becomes general and there arises complete pauperism (völliger Pauperismus). "*And as the peasantry is*

The German N.—ons argued just as abstractly as our present Buhls and Vollgrafs. To argue abstractly means to make mistakes, even in those cases when you start from an absolutely correct principle. Do you know, reader, what were the *antiphysics* of D'Alembert? D'Alembert said that, on the basis of the most unquestionable physical laws, he would prove the inevitability of phenomena which were quite impossible in reality. One must only, in following the operation of every given law, forget for the time being that there exist other laws altering its operation. The result would certainly be quite nonsensical. To prove this D'Alembert gave several really brilliant examples, and even intended to write a complete *antiphysics* in his leisure moments. The Messrs. Vollgrafs and N.—ons are already writing an *antieconomics,* not as a joke but quite seriously. Their method is as follows. They take a certain indisputable economic law, and correctly indicate its *tendency;* then they forget that the realisation of this law in life is an *entire historical process,* and represent matters as though the tendency of the law in question had already been *completely put into effect* by the time they began writing their work. If at the same time the Vollgraf, Buhl or N.—on in question accumulates a pile of ill-digested statistical material, and sets about relevantly and irrelevantly quoting Marx, his "sketch" acquires the appearance of a scientific and convincing piece of research, in the spirit of the author of *Capital.* But this is an optical illusion, no more.

That, for example, Vollgraf left out a great deal in analysing the economic life of the Germany of his day is shown by an indubitable fact: his prophecy about "*the decomposition of the social organism*" of that country completely failed to materialise. And that Mr. N.—on quite in vain makes use of the name of Marx, just as Mr. Y. Zhukovsky in vain used to have recourse to the integral calculus, even the most worthy S. N. Krivenko will understand without difficulty.

In spite of the opinion of those gentlemen who reproach Marx with one-sidedness, that writer never examined the economic

*also ruined owing to excessive competition, a complete stagnation of business arises. The social organism decomposes, its physiological processes lead to the appearance of a savage mass, and hunger produces in this mass a ferment against which public penalties and even arms are impotent."* Free competition leads in the villages to reduction of peasant holdings to tiny dimensions. *In no peasant household do the working hands find sufficient employment all the year round.* "Thus in thousands of villages, particularly those in areas of poor fertility, almost exactly as in Ireland, the poor peasants stand without work or employment before the doors of their houses. None of them can help one another, for they all have too little, all need wages, all seek work and do not find it." Vollgraf for his part invented a number of "measures" for combating the destructive operation of "free competition", though not in the spirit of the socialist journal *Der Gesellschafts-Spiegel.*

progress of a particular country *apart from its connection with those social forces which, growing up on its basis, themselves influenced its further development.* (This is not yet quite clear to you, Mr. S. N. Krivenko: but patience! ) Once a certain economic condition is known, certain social forces become known, and their action will necessarily affect the further development of that condition (is patience deserting you, Mr. Krivenko? Here is a practical example for you). We know the economy of England in the epoch of primitive capitalist accumulation. Thereby we know the social forces which, by the way, sat in the English parliament of that day. The action of those social forces was the necessary condition for the further development of the known economic situation, while the direction of their action was conditioned by the characteristics of that situation.

Once we know the economic situation of modern England, we know thereby her modern social forces, the action of which will tell on her future economic development. When Marx was engaged in what some please to call his guesswork, he took into account these social forces, and did not imagine that their action could be stopped at will by this or that group of persons, strong only in their excellent intentions ("Mit der Gründlichkeit der geschichtlichen Action wird der Umfang der Masse zunehmen, deren Action sie ist") ["Together with the thoroughness of the historical action will also grow the volume of the mass whose action it is"].

The German Utopians of the 40s argued otherwise. When they set themselves certain tasks, they had in mind only the adverse sides of the economic situation of their country, forgetting to investigate the social forces which had grown up from that situation. The economic situation of our people is distressful, argued the above-mentioned reviewer: consequently we are faced with the difficult but not insoluble problem of organising production. But will not that organisation be prevented by those same social forces which have grown up on the basis of the distressful economic situation? The well-meaning reviewer did not ask himself this question. The Utopian never reckons sufficiently with the social forces of his age, for the simple reason that, to use the expression of Marx, he always *places himself above society.* And for the same reason, again to use the expression of Marx, all the calculations of the Utopian prove to be "ohne Wirth gemacht" ("made without reckoning with his host".—*Ed.*), and all his "criticism" is no more than complete absence of criticism, incapacity critically to look at the reality around him.

The organisation of production in a particular country could arise only as a result of the operation of those social forces which existed in that country. What is necessary for the organisation of

production? The conscious attitude of the producers to the process of production, *taken in all its complexity and totality.* Where there is no such conscious attitude as yet, only those people can put forward the idea of organising production as the immediate task of society who remain incorrigible Utopians all their lives, even though they should repeat the name of Marx five milliard times with the greatest respect. What does Mr. N.—on say about the consciousness of the producers in his notorious book? Absolutely nothing: he pins his hope on the consciousness of "society". If after this he can and must be recognised as a true Marxist, we see no reason why one should not recognise Mr. Krivenko as being the only true Hegelian of our age, the Hegelian par excellence.

But it is time to conclude. What results have we achieved by our use of the comparative historical method? If we are not mistaken, they are the following:

1. The conviction of Heinzen and his adherents that Marx was condemned by his own views to inaction in Germany proved to be nonsense. Equally nonsense will also prove the conviction of Mr. Mikhailovsky that the persons who nowadays, in Russia, hold the views of Marx cannot bring any benefit to the Russian people, but on the contrary must injure it.

2. The views of the Buhls and Vollgrafs on the economic situation of Germany at that time proved to be narrow, one-sided and mistaken because of their abstract character. There is ground for fear that the further economic history of Russia will disclose the same defects in the views of Mr. N.—on.

3. The people who in Germany of the 40s made their immediate task the organisation of production were Utopians. Similar Utopians are the people who talk about organising production in present-day Russia.

4. History has swept away the illusions of the German Utopians of the 40s. There is every justification for thinking that the same fate will overtake the illusions of our Russian Utopians. Capitalism laughed at the first; with pain in our heart, we foresee that it will laugh at the second as well.

But did these illusions really bring no benefit to the German people? In the economic sense, absolutely none—or, if you require a more exact expression, *almost* none. All these bazaars for selling handicraft goods, and all these attempts to create producers' associations, scarcely eased the position of even a hundred German producers. But they promoted the awakening of the self-consciousness of those producers, and thereby did them a great deal of good. The same benefit, but this time directly and not in a roundabout way, was rendered by the educational activity of the German intellectuals: their schools, people's reading-rooms, etc.

The consequences of capitalist development which were harmful for the German people could be, at every particular moment, weakened or eliminated only to the extent to which the self-consciousness of the German producers developed. Marx understood this better than the Utopians, and therefore his activity proved more beneficial to the German people.

The same, undoubtedly, will be the case in Russia too. No later than in the October issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* for 1894, Mr. S. N. Krivenko "worries"—as we say—about the organisation of Russian production.[482] Mr. Krivenko will eliminate nothing and make no one happy by these "worries". His "worries" are clumsy, awkward, barren: but if they, in spite of all these negative qualities, awaken the self-consciousness of even one producer, they will prove beneficial—and then it will turn out that Mr. Krivenko has lived on this earth not only in order to make mistakes in logic, or to give wrong translations of extracts from foreign articles which he found "disagreeable". It will be possible in our country, too, to fight against the harmful consequences of our capitalism only to the extent that there develops the self-consciousness of the producer. And from these words of ours the subjectivist gentlemen can see that we are not at all "vulgar materialists". If we are "narrow", it is only in one sense: that we set before ourselves, first and foremost, a perfectly *idealistic aim*.

And now until we meet again, gentlemen opponents! We anticipate all that greatest of pleasures which your objections will bring us. Only, gentlemen, do keep an eye on Mr. Krivenko. Even though he doesn't write badly, and at any rate does so with feeling, yet "to put two and two together"—that has not been vouchsafed him.

# ONCE AGAIN MR. MIKHAILOVSKY, ONCE MORE THE "TRIAD"

In the October issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, Mr. Mikhailovsky, replying to Mr. P. Struve, again has made some observations on the philosophy of Hegel and on "economic" materialism.[483]

According to him, the materialist conception of history and economic materialism are not one and the same thing. The economic materialists draw everything from economics. "Well, but if I seek the root or foundation not only of the legal and political institutions, of the philosophical and other views of society, but also of its economic structure, in the racial or tribal peculiarities of its members, in the proportions of the longitudinal and transverse diameters of their skulls, in the character of their facial angle, in the size and inclination of their jaws, in the size of their thorax, the strength of their muscles, etc.: or, on the other hand, in purely geographical factors—in the island position of England, in the steppe character of part of Asia, in the mountainous character of Switzerland, in the freezing of rivers in the north, etc.—will not this be the materialist conception of history? It is clear that economic materialism, as an historical theory, is only a particular case of the materialist conception of history...."*

Montesquieu was inclined to explain the historical fate of peoples by "purely geographical factors". To the extent that he consistently upheld these factors, he was undoubtedly a materialist. Modern dialectical materialism does not ignore, as we have seen, the influence of geographical environment on the development of society. It only ascertains better in what way geographical factors influence "social man". It shows that the geographical environment provides men with a greater or lesser possibility of developing their productive forces, and thereby pushes them, more or less energetically, along the path of historical progress. Montesquieu argued thus: A certain geographical environment determines certain physical and psychical qualities of men, and these qualities bring in their train this or that structure of society.

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* *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, October 1894, Part II, p. 50.

Dialectical materialism reveals that such an argument is unsatisfactory, and that the influence of geographical environment shows itself first of all, and in the strongest degree, in the character of *social relations*, which in their turn influence the views of men, their customs and even their physical development infinitely more strongly than, for example, climate. Modern geographical science (let us again recall the book of Mechnikov and its foreword by Elisée Reclus) fully agrees in this respect with dialectical materialism. This materialism is, of course, a particular case of the materialist view of history. But it explains it more fully, more universally, than could those other "particular cases". *Dialectical materialism is the highest development of the materialist conception of history.*

Holbach said that the historical fate of peoples is sometimes determined for a whole century ahead by the motion of an atom which has begun to play tricks in the brain of a powerful man. This was also a materialist view of history. But it was of no avail in explaining historical phenomena. Modern dialectical materialism is incomparably more fruitful in this respect. It is of course a particular case of the materialist view of history but precisely that particular case which alone corresponds to the modern condition of science. The impotence of Holbach's materialism showed itself in the return of its supporters to idealism: "Opinions govern the world." Dialectical materialism now drives idealism from its last positions.

Mr. Mikhailovsky imagines that only that man would be a consistent materialist who explains all phenomena with the help of molecular mechanics. Modern dialectical materialism cannot discover the *mechanical* explanation of history. This is, if you like, *its weakness*. But is modern biology able to give a mechanical explanation of the origin and development of species? It is not. That is *its weakness*.* The genius of whom Laplace dreamed would have been, of course, above such weakness. But we simply don't know when that genius will appear, and we satisfy ourselves with such explanations of phenomena as best correspond to the science of our age. Such is *our* "particular case".

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* *Editor's Note*: Plekhanov's statement is radically at variance with the basic principles of Marxist-Leninist dialectics. Dialectical materialism has never aimed at reducing all natural and social phenomena to mechanics, giving mechanical explanations of the origin and development of species and of the historic process. Mechanical motion is by no means the only form of motion. "...The motion of matter," Engels says, "is not merely crude mechanical motion, mere change of place, it is heat and light, electric and magnetic tension, chemical combination and dissociation, life and, finally, consciousness." (F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1966, pp. 36-37.)

Dialectical materialism says that it is not the consciousness of men which determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness; that it is not in the philosophy but in the economics of a particular society that one must seek the key to understanding its particular condition. Mr. Mikhailovsky makes several remarks on this subject. One of them reads as follows:

"...The negative halves" (! ) "of the basic formula of the materialist sociologists contain a protest or a reaction not against philosophy in general, but evidently against that of Hegel. It is to the latter that belongs 'the explanation of being from consciousness'.... The founders of economic materialism are Hegelians and, in that capacity, they insist so stubbornly 'not from philosophy', 'not from consciousness', that they cannot, and do not even attempt to, burst out of the circle of Hegelian thought."*

When we read these lines we thought that here our author, like Mr. Kareyev, was groping his way to the "synthesis". Of course, we said to ourselves, the synthesis of Mr. Mikhailovsky will be a little higher than that of Mr. Kareyev; Mr. Mikhailovsky will not confine himself to repeating that thought of the deacon in G. I. Uspensky's tale "The Incurable",[484] that "the spirit is a thing apart" and that, "as matter has various spices for its benefit, so equally has the spirit". Still, Mr. Mikhailovsky too will not refrain from synthesis. Hegel is the thesis, economic materialism is the antithesis, and the eclecticism of the modern Russian subjectivists is the synthesis. How could one resist the temptation of such a "triad"? And then it occurred to us what was the real relationship between the historical theory of Marx and the philosophy of Hegel.

First of all we "noted" that in Hegel historical movement is *not at all* explained *by the views of men or by their philosophy.* It was *the French materialists of the eighteenth century* who explained history by the views, the "opinions" of men. Hegel ridiculed such an explanation: of course, he said, reason rules in history—but then it also rules the movement of the celestial bodies, and are they conscious of their movement? The historical development of mankind is reasonable in the sense that it is law-governed; but the law-governed nature of historical development does not yet prove at all that its ultimate cause must be sought in the views of men or in their opinions. Quite on the contrary: that conformity to law shows that men make their history unconsciously.

We don't remember, we continued, what the historical views of Hegel look like according to *Lewes*; but that we are not distorting them, anyone will agree who has read the famous *Philosophie der*

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo,* October 1894, Part II, pp. 51-52.

*Geschichte* (*Philosophy of History.—Ed.*). Consequently, in affirming that it is not the philosophy of men which determines their social existence, the supporters of "economic" materialism are not controverting Hegel at all, and consequently *in this respect* they represent no antithesis to him. And this means that Mr. Mikhailovsky's synthesis will not be successful, even should our author not confine himself to repeating the idea of the deacon.

In the opinion of Mr. Mikhailovsky, to affirm that philosophy, i.e., the views of men, does not explain their history, was possible only in Germany in the 40s, when a revolt against the Hegelian system was not yet noticeable. We now see that such an opinion is founded, at best, only on *Lewes*.

But how poorly *Lewes* acquaints Mr. Mikhailovsky with the course of development of philosophical thought in Germany is demonstrated, apart from the foregoing, by the following circumstance. Our author quotes with delight the well-known letter of Belinsky, in which the latter makes his bow to the "philosophical nightcap" of Hegel.[485] In this letter Belinsky says, among other things: "The fate of a subject, an individual, a personality is more important than the fate of the world and the weal of the Chinese Emperor, viz., the Hegelian Allgemeinheit" [Universality]. Mr. Mikhailovsky makes many remarks on the subject of this letter, but he does not "*remark*" that Belinsky has dragged in the Hegelian Allgemeinheit quite out of place. Mr. Mikhailovsky evidently thinks that the Hegelian Allgemeinheit is just the same as the spirit or the absolute idea. But Allgemeinheit does not constitute in Hegel even the main distinguishing feature of the absolute idea. Allgemeinheit occupies in his work a place no more honourable than, for example, Besonderheit or Einzelheit (Individuality or Singleness. — *Ed.*). And in consequence of this it is incomprehensible why precisely Allgemeinheit is called the Chinese Emperor, and deserves—unlike its other sisters—an attentive and mocking bow. This may seem a detail, unworthy of attention at the present time; but it is not so. Hegel's Allgemeinheit, badly understood, still prevents Mr. Mikhailovsky, for example, from understanding the history of German philosophy—prevents him to such an extent that even *Lewes* does not rescue him from misfortune.

In the opinion of Mr. Mikhailovsky, worship of Allgemeinheit led Hegel to complete negation of the *rights of the individual.* "There is no system of philosophy," he says, "which treats the individual with such withering contempt and cold cruelty as the system of Hegel" (p. 55) This can be true only according to *Lewes*. Why did Hegel consider the history of the East to be the first, *lowest* stage in the development of mankind? Because in

the East the *individual* was not developed, and had not up till then been developed. Why did Hegel speak with enthusiasm of ancient Greece, in the history of which modern man feels himself at last "at home"? Because in Greece individual personality was developed ("beautiful individuality"—"schöne Individualität"). Why did Hegel speak with such admiration of Socrates? Why did he, almost first among the historians of philosophy, pay a just tribute even to the *sophists*? Was it really because he despised the individual?

Mr. Mikhailovsky has heard a bell, but where he cannot tell.

Hegel not only did not despise the individual, but created a whole cult of *heroes*, which was inherited in its entirety thereafter by Bruno Bauer. For Hegel heroes were the instruments of the universal spirit, and in that sense they themselves were *not free*. Bruno Bauer revolted against the "*spirit*", and thereby set free his "*heroes*". For him the heroes of "*critical thought*" were the real demiurges of history, *as opposed to the "mass"*, which, although it does irritate its heroes almost to tears by its slow-wittedness and its sluggishness, still does finish up in the end by marching along the path marked out by the heroes' self-consciousness. The contrasting of "*heroes*" and "*mass*" ("mob") passed from Bruno Bauer to his Russian illegitimate children, and we now have the pleasure of contemplating it in the articles of Mr. Mikhailovsky. Mr. Mikhailovsky does not remember his philosophical kinship: that is not praiseworthy.

And so we have suddenly received the elements of a new "synthesis". The Hegelian cult of heroes, serving the universal spirit, is the *thesis*. The Bauer cult of heroes of "critical thought", guided only by their "self-consciousness", is the *antithesis*. Finally, the theory of Marx, which reconciles both extremes, eliminating the universal spirit and explaining the origin of the heroes' self-consciousness by the development of environment, is the *synthesis*.

Our opponents, so partial to "synthesis", must remember that the theory of Marx was not at all the first *direct* reaction against Hegel: that that first reaction—superficial on account of its one-sidedness—was constituted in Germany by the views of Feuerbach *and particularly of Bruno Bauer*, with whom our subjectivists should long ago have acknowledged their kinship.

Not a few other incongruities have also been piled up by Mr. Mikhailovsky about Hegel and about Marx in his article against Mr. P. Struve. Space does not permit us to enumerate them here. We will confine ourselves to offering our readers the following interesting problem.

*We know Mr. Mikhailovsky; we know his complete ignorance of Hegel; we know his complete incomprehension of Marx; we know*

*his irresistible striving to discuss Hegel, Marx and their mutual relations; the problem is, how many more mistakes will Mr. Mikhailovsky make thanks to his striving?*

But it is hardly likely that anyone will succeed in solving this problem; it is an equation with too many unknowns. There is only one means of replacing *unknown* magnitudes in it by definite magnitudes; it is to read the articles of Mr. Mikhailovsky carefully and *notice his mistakes.* True, that is a far from joyful or easy task: there will be very many mistakes, if only Mr. Mikhailovsky does not get rid of his bad habit of discussing philosophy without consulting beforehand people who know more about it than he does.

We shall not deal here with the attacks made by Mr. Mikhailovsky on Mr. P. Struve. As far as these attacks are concerned, Mr. Mikhailovsky now belongs to the author of *Critical Remarks on the Question of the Economic Development of Russia,* and we do not wish to aspire to the property of another. However, Mr. P. Struve will perhaps forgive us if we permit ourselves to make two small "observations".

Mr. Mikhailovsky is insulted because Mr. P. Struve "struck at him" with a question-mark. He is so insulted that, not confining himself to pointing out faults of style in the language of Mr. Struve, he accuses him of being a "non-Russian", and even recalls the story of two Germans, one of whom said he had "shooted" a crow, and the other corrected him, saying that grammar required "shotted". Why did Mr. Struve, however, raise his hand, armed with a question-mark, against Mr. Mikhailovsky? It was because of his words: "The modern economic order in Europe began to come into existence at a time when the science which manages this sphere of phenomena was not yet in existence, etc." The question-mark accompanies the word "manages". Mr. Mikhailovsky says: "In German that may not perhaps sound well" (how biting: "In German"! ), "but in Russian, I assure you, Mr. Struve, it arouses no question in any one, and requires no question-mark." The writer of these lines bears a purely Russian name, and possesses just as much of the Russian soul as Mr. Mikhailovsky: the most sarcastic critic will not venture to call him a German: and nevertheless the word "manages" arouses a question in him. He asks himself: if one can say that science *manages* a certain sphere of phenomena, could not one after this promote the technical arts to be *chiefs of particular units*? Could not one say, for example: the art of assaying commands alloys? In our opinion, this would be awkward, it would give the arts *too military an appearance,* in just the same way as the word "*manages*" gives science the appearance of a *bureaucrat.* Consequently, Mr. Mikhailovsky is wrong. Struve failed to react to the question; it is hard to say how he

would have corrected Mikhailovsky's unhappy expression. Let us assume that he would have "shotted" a crow. But it is unfortunately an *accomplished fact* that Mikhailovsky has already "shooted" several crows. And yet he does not seem to be a "non-Russian".

Mr. Mikhailovsky in his article raised an amusing outcry about the words of Mr. Struve: "No, let us recognise our lack of culture and go into training by capitalism."[486] Mr. Mikhailovsky wants to represent affairs as though these words meant: "*Let us hand over the producer as a victim to the exploiter.*" It will be easy for Mr. P. Struve to demonstrate the vanity of Mr. Mikhailovsky's efforts, and it will probably be seen now by anyone who has carefully read the *Critical Remarks.* But Mr. Struve nevertheless did express himself very carelessly, whereby he probably led into temptation many simpletons and rejoiced the heart of some acrobats. *That will teach you a lesson,* we shall say to Mr. Struve, and we shall remind the acrobatic gentry how Belinsky, at the very end of his life, when he had long ago said good-bye to Allgemeinheit, expressed the idea in one of his letters that the cultural future of Russia can *only* be ensured by the *bourgeoisie.*[487] In Belinsky this was also a very clumsy threat. But what was his clumsiness aroused by? *Generous fascination by the West.* It is the same fascination that brought about, we are convinced, the awkwardness of Mr. Struve. It is permissible to make a noise on the subject of that clumsiness only for those who have no reply, for example, to his economic arguments.

Mr. Krivenko too has declared war on Mr. P. Struve.[488] He has his own cause of offence. He wrongly translated an extract from a German article by Mr. P. Struve, and the latter has exposed him. Mr. Krivenko justifies himself, and tries to show that the translation is almost correct; but his are lame excuses and he still remains guilty of distorting the words of his opponent. But you can't ask too much of Mr. Krivenko, in view of his undoubted resemblance to a certain bird, of whom it has been said:

*Siren, that heavenly bird,*
*Its voice in singing is loudly heard;*
*When the Lord's praise it sings,*
*To forget its own self it begins.* [489]

When Mr. Krivenko is shaming the "disciples", to forget his own self he begins. Why can't you let him alone, Mr. Struve?

# A FEW WORDS TO OUR OPPONENTS

The question is again being raised in our literature: what path will the economic development of Russia follow? It is being discussed lengthily and passionately, so passionately that people who are known in common parlance as sensible minds are even perturbed by what would seem the excessive heat of the contending parties. Why, the sensible ones say, get excited and hurl proud challenges and bitter reproaches at your opponents? Why jeer at them? Would it not be better to examine dispassionately a question which is indeed of immense importance to our country, but which, just because of its immense importance, calls for dispassionate examination?

As always, the sensible minds are right and wrong at one and the same time. Why, indeed, such excitement and passion on the part of writers belonging to two different camps each of which—whatever its opponents might say—is striving to the best of its understanding, strength and ability to uphold the most important and most essential interests of the people? Evidently, the question has only to be put to have it answered immediately and once and for all with the help of two or three platitudes which might find a place in any copybook, such as: tolerance is a good thing; respect the opinions of others even if they radically differ from your own, and so on. All this is very true, and it has been "told the world" a very long time now. But it is no less true that human beings were, are, and will be inclined to get passionate wherever the issue affected, affects, or will affect their vital interests. Such is human nature—we might have said, if we did not know how often and how greatly this expression has been abused. Nor is this the whole matter. The chief thing is that we human beings have no reason to regret that such is our "nature". No great step in history has ever been taken without the aid of passion, which, multiplying as it does the moral strength and sharpening the intellectual faculties of people, is itself a great force of progress. Only such social questions are discussed dispassionately as are quite unimportant in themselves, or have not yet become *immediate* questions for the

given country and the given period, and are therefore of interest only to a handful of arm-chair thinkers. But once a big social question has become an immediate question, it will infallibly arouse strong passions, no matter how earnestly the advocates of moderation may call for calmness.

The question of the economic development of our country is precisely that great social question which we cannot now discuss with moderation for the simple reason that it has become an *immediate question.* This of course does not mean that economics has only now acquired decisive importance in our social development. It has always and everywhere been of such importance. But in our country—as everywhere else—this importance has not always been consciously recognised by people interested in social matters, and their passion was therefore concentrated on questions that had only the most remote relation to economics. Recall, for instance, the 40s in our country. Not so now. Now the great and fundamental importance of economics is realised in our country even by those who passionately revolt against Marx's "*narrow*" theory of history. Now all thinking people realise that our whole future will be shaped by the way the question of our *economic* development is answered. That indeed is why even thinkers who are anything but "narrow" concentrate all their passion on this question. But if we cannot now discuss this question with *moderation,* we can and should see to it even now that there is no *licence* either in the defining of our own thoughts or in our polemical methods. This is a demand to which no objection can possibly be offered. Westerners know very well that earnest passion precludes all licence. In our country, to be sure, it is still sometimes believed that passion and licence are kin sisters, but it is time we too became civilised.

As far as the literary decencies are concerned, it is apparent that we are already civilised to quite a considerable degree—so considerable that our "progressive", Mr. Mikhailovsky, lectures the Germans (Marx, Engels, Dühring) because in their controversies one may allegedly find things "that are absolutely fruitless, or which distort things and repel by their rudeness". Mr. Mikhailovsky recalls Börne's remark that the Germans "have always been rude in controversy"! "And I am afraid," he adds, "that together with other German influences, this traditional German rudeness has also penetrated into our country, aggravated moreover by our own barbarousness, so that controversy becomes the tirade against Potok-Bogatyr which Count A. Tolstoy puts into the mouth of his princess:

> "'*You cadger, mumper, ignorant sot!*
> *Plague on your entrails, may you rot!*

*You calf, pig, swine, you Ethiop,*
*You devil's spawn, you dirty snob!*
*Were it not that my virginal shame*
*Forbids me stronger words to name,*
*'Tis not such oaths, you insolent cad,*
*I'd shower down upon your head."** 490

This is not the first time Mr. Mikhailovsky alludes to Tolstoy's coarse-mouthed princess. He has on many a previous occasion advised Russian writers not to resemble her in their controversies. Excellent advice, there's no denying. 'Tis only a pity that our author does not always follow it himself. We know, for example, that he called one of his opponents a *louse*, and another a *literary acrobat*. He ornamented his controversy with M. de la Cerda with the following remark: "Of all the European languages, it is only in the Spanish that the word la cerda has a definite signification, meaning in Russian pig." Why the author had to say this, it is hard to imagine.

"Nice, is it not?" M. de la Cerda observed in this connection. Yes, very nice, and quite in the spirit of Tolstoy's princess. But the princess was blunter, and when she felt like swearing she shouted simply: calf, pig, swine, etc., and did not do violence to foreign languages in order to say a rude word to her opponent.

Comparing Mr. Mikhailovsky with Tolstoy's princess, we find that he scorns such words as "Ethiop", "devil's spawn" and so on, and concentrates, if we may say so, on rude epithets. We find him using "swine" and "pig", and pigs moreover of the most different kinds: Hamletised, green, etc. Very forcible this, if rather monotonous. Generally speaking, if we turn from the vituperative vocabulary of Tolstoy's princess to that of our subjective sociologist, we see that *the living charms bloom in different pattern*, but in power and expressiveness they are in no way inferior to the polemical charms of the lively princess. "Est modus in rebus (there is a measure in all things.—*Ed.*) or, as the Russian has it, you must know where to stop," says Mr. Mikhailovsky. Nothing could be truer, and we heartily regret that our worthy sociologist often forgets it. He might tragically exclaim:

*Video meliora, proboque,*
*Deteriora sequor!* ** 491

However, it is to be hoped that in time Mr. Mikhailovsky too will become civilised, that in the end his good intentions will prevail over "our own barbarousness", and he will cease hurling

* *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, Vol. I, 1895, article "Literature and Life".
** ["I see the best and approve, but follow the worst!"]

"swine" and "pig" at his opponents. Mr. Mikhailovsky himself rightly thinks that la raison finit toujours par avoir raison. (Reason always triumphs in the end.—*Ed.*)

Our reading public no longer approves of virulent controversy. But, in its disapproval, it confuses virulence with rudeness, when they are very far from being the same. The vast difference between virulence and rudeness was explained by Pushkin:

> *Abuse at times, of course, is quite unseemly.*
> *You must not write, say: "This old dodderer's*
> *A goat in spectacles, a wretched slanderer,*
> *Vicious and vile."—These are personalities.*
> *But you may write and print, if so you will,*
> *That "this Parnassian Old Believer is*
> *(In his articles) a senseless jabberer,*
> *For ever languorous, for ever tedious,*
> *Ponderous, and even quite a dullard".*
> *For here there is no person, only an author.*[492]

If, like Tolstoy's princess or Mr. Mikhailovsky, you should think of calling your opponent a "swine" or a "louse", these "*are personalities*"; but if you should argue that such and such a sociological or historical-sophistical or economic Old Believer is, in his articles, "works" or "essays", "for ever languorous, for ever tedious, ponderous and even" ... dull-witted, well "here there is no person, only an author", and it will be virulence, not rudeness. Your verdict, of course, may be mistaken, and your opponents will be doing well if they disclose your mistake. But they will have the right to accuse you only of a mistake, not of virulence, for without such virulence literature cannot develop. If literature should attempt to get along without virulence, it would at once become, as Belinsky expressed it, *a flattering reiterator of stale platitudes*, which only its enemies can wish it.

Mr. Mikhailovsky's observation regarding the traditional German rudeness and our own barbarousness was provoked by Mr. N. Beltov's "interesting book", *The Development of the Monist View of History*. Many have accused Mr. Beltov of unnecessary virulence. For instance, a *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer has written in reference to his book: "Without sharing the, in our opinion one-sided, theory of economic materialism, we would be prepared in the interest of science and our social life to welcome the exponents of this theory, if some of them (Messrs. Struve and Beltov) did not introduce far too much virulence into their polemics, if they did not jeer at writers whose works are worthy of respect! "[493]

This was written in the selfsame *Russkaya Mysl* which only a little while ago was calling the advocates of "economic" materialism "numskulls" and asserting that Mr. P. Struve's book was a

product of undigested erudition and a total incapacity for logical thinking. *Russkaya Mysl* does not like excessive virulence and therefore, as the reader sees, spoke of the advocates of economic materialism in the mildest terms. Now it is prepared, in the interest of science and our social life, to welcome the exponents of this theory. But why? Can much be done for our social life by numskulls? Can science gain much from undigested erudition and a total incapacity for logical thinking? It seems to us that fear of excessive virulence is leading *Russkaya Mysl* too far and compelling it to say things that might induce the reader to suspect it itself of being incapable of digesting something, and of a certain incapacity for logical thinking.

Mr. P. Struve never resorts to virulence (to say nothing of excessive virulence), and if Mr. Beltov does, it is only to the kind of which Pushkin would probably have said that it refers only to authors and is therefore quite permissible. The *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer maintains that the works of the writers Mr. Beltov derides are worthy of respect. If Mr. Beltov shared this opinion, it would of course be wrong of him to deride them. But what if he is convinced of the contrary? What if the "works" of these gentlemen seem to him tedious and ponderous, and quite vacuous, and even pernicious in our day, when social life has become so complicated and demands a new mental effort on the part of those who are not in the habit, to use Gogol's expression, of "picking their noses" as they look on the world. To the *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer these writers may probably seem regular torches of light, beacons of salvation. But what if Mr. Beltov considers them extinguishers and mind-druggers? The reviewer will say that Mr. Beltov is mistaken. That is his right; but he has to prove his opinion, and not content himself with simply condemning "excessive virulence". What is the reviewer's opinion of Grech and Bulgarin? We are confident that if he were to express it, a certain section of our press would consider it excessively virulent. Would that mean that the *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer is not entitled to say frankly what he thinks of the literary activities of Grech and Bulgarin? We do not of course bracket the people with whom Messrs. P. Struve and N. Beltov are disputing in the same category as Grech and Bulgarin. But we would ask the *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer why literary decency permits one to speak virulently of Grech and Bulgarin, but forbids one to do so of Messrs. Mikhailovsky and Kareyev? The reviewer evidently thinks that there is no beast stronger than the cat,[494] and that the cat, therefore, in distinction to other beasts, deserves particularly respectful treatment. But, after all, one has the right to doubt that. We, for instance, think that the subjective cat is not only a beast that is not very strong, but even one that has quite

considerably degenerated, and is therefore not deserving of any particular respect. We are prepared to argue with the reviewer if he does not agree with us, but before entering into argument we would request him to ponder well on the difference which undoubtedly exists between *virulence of judgement* and *rudeness of literary expression*. Messrs. Struve and Beltov have expressed judgements which to very many may seem virulent. But has either of them ever resorted, in defence of his opinions, to such coarse abuse as that which has been resorted to time and again in his literary skirmishes by Mr. Mikhailovsky, that veritable Miles Gloriosus (Glorious Warrior.—*Ed.*) of our "progressive" literature? Neither of them has done so, and the *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer would himself give them credit for this if he were to reflect on the difference we have indicated between virulence of judgement and coarseness of expression.

Incidentally, this *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer says: "Mr. Beltov unceremoniously, to say the least, scatters accusations to the effect that such and such a writer talks of Marx without having read his works, condemns the Hegelian philosophy without having acquainted himself with it personally, etc. It would be well, of course, if he did not at the same time commit blunders himself, especially on most essential points. Yet precisely about Hegel Mr. Beltov talks the wildest nonsense: 'If modern natural science,' we read on p. 86 of the book in question (p. 557 of this edition.—*Ed.*), 'confirms at every step the idea expressed with such genius by Hegel, that quantity passes into quality, can we say that it has nothing in common with Hegelianism?' But the misfortune is, Mr. Beltov, that Hegel did not affirm this and argued the very opposite: with him, 'quality passes into quantity'."

If we were to say what we thought of the reviewer's notion of Hegel's philosophy, our judgement would probably seem to him "excessively virulent". But the blame would not be ours. We can assure the reviewer that very virulent judgements of his philosophical knowledge were passed by all who read his review and have any acquaintance at all with the history of philosophy.

One cannot, of course, insist that every reviewer must have a thorough philosophical education, but one can insist that he does not take the liberty of arguing about matters of which he has no knowledge. Otherwise, very "virulent" things will be said of him by people who are acquainted with the subject.

In Part I of his *Encyclopaedia*, in an addendum to § 108, on Measure, Hegel says: "To the extent that quality and quantity are still differentiated and are not altogether identical, these two definitions are to some degree independent of each other, so that, on the one hand, the quantity may change without the quality of the object changing, but, on the other, its increase or decrease, to

which the object is at first indifferent, has a limit beyond which the quality changes. Thus, for example, alterations in the temperature of water at first do not affect its liquid state, but if the temperature is further increased or decreased, there comes a point when this state of cohesion undergoes a qualitative change and the water is transformed into steam or into ice. It seems at first that the quantitative change has no effect whatever on the essential nature of the object, but there is something else behind it, and this apparently simple change of quantity has the effect of changing the quality."[495]

"The misfortune is, Mr. Beltov, that Hegel did not affirm this and argued the very opposite! " Do you still think that this is the misfortune, Mr. Reviewer? * Or perhaps you have now changed your opinion on this matter? And if you have, what is really the misfortune? We could tell you if we were not afraid that you would accuse us of excessive virulence.

We repeat that one cannot insist that every reviewer must be acquainted with the history of philosophy. The misfortune of the *Russkaya Mysl* reviewer is therefore not as great as might appear at first glance. But "*the misfortune is*" that this *misfortune* is not the reviewer's last. There is a second which is the main and worse than the first: he did not take the trouble to read the book he was reviewing.

On pp. 75-76 of his book (p. 548 of this edition.—*Ed.*) Mr. Beltov gives a rather long excerpt from Hegel's Greater Logic (*Wissenschaft der Logik*) (*The Science of Logic.—Ed.*). Here is the beginning of the excerpt: "Changes in being consist not only in the fact that one quantity passes into another quantity, but also that quality passes into quantity, and vice versa, etc." (p. 75).

If the reviewer had at least read this excerpt he would not have fallen into misfortune, because then he would not have "affirmed" that "Hegel did not affirm this and argued the very opposite".

We know how the majority of reviews are written in Russia—and not only Russia, unfortunately. The reviewer runs through the book, rapidly scanning, say, every tenth or twentieth page and marking the passages which seem to him most characteristic. He then writes out these passages and accompanies them with expressions of censure or approval: he "is perplexed", he "very much regrets", or he "heartily welcomes"—and, hey presto! the review is ready. One can imagine how much nonsense is printed as a result, especially if (as not infrequently happens) the reviewer

* The reviewer continues to adhere to his opinion in the third issue of *Russkaya Mysl*, and advises those who do not agree with him to consult "at least" the Russian translation of Überweg-Heinze's *History of Modern Philosophy*. But why should not the reviewer consult "at least" Hegel himself?

has no knowledge whatever of the subject discussed in the book he is examining!

It would not enter our heads to recommend reviewers to rid themselves of this bad habit *completely*: only the grave can cure the hunchback. All the same, they ought at least to take their business a little more seriously when—as in the dispute on Russia's economic development, for example—the vital interests of our country are concerned. Do they really propose to go on misleading the reading public on this subject, too, with their frivolous reviews? After all—as Mr. Mikhailovsky rightly says—one must know when to stop.

Mr. Mikhailovsky is likewise displeased with Mr. Beltov's polemical methods. "Mr. Beltov," he says, "is a man of talent and is not devoid of wit, but with him unfortunately it often passes into unpleasant buffoonery."[496] Why buffoonery? And to whom, indeed, is Mr. Beltov's alleged buffoonery unpleasant?

When, in the 60s, *Sovremennik* scoffed at Pogodin, say, it probably seemed to Pogodin that the journal was guilty of unpleasant buffoonery. And it seemed so not only to Pogodin alone, but to all who were accustomed to respect the Moscow historian. Was there any lack of attacks in those days on "the knights of the whistle"[497] ? Was there any lack of people who were outraged by the "schoolboyish pranks of the whistlers"? Well, in our opinion, the brilliant wit of the "whistlers" never passed into unpleasant buffoonery; and if the people they scoffed at thought otherwise, it was only because of that human weakness which led Amos Fyodorovich Lyapkin-Tyapkin[498] to consider "*far too long*" the letter in which he was described as "very much of a boor".

"So that's it! You mean to suggest that Mr. Beltov possesses the wit of Dobrolyubov and his fellow-contributors to *The Whistle*? Well, that's the limit! "—will exclaim those who find Mr. Beltov's polemical methods "not nice".

But wait a moment, sirs! We are not comparing Mr. Beltov with the "whistlers" of the 60s; we are only saying that it is not for Mr. Mikhailovsky to judge whether, and where exactly, Mr. Beltov's wit passes into unpleasant buffoonery. Who can be a judge in his own case?

But Mr. Mikhailovsky not only accuses Mr. Beltov of "unpleasant buffoonery". He levels a very serious charge against him. To make it easier for the reader to understand what it is all about, we shall allow Mr. Mikhailovsky to formulate his charge in his own words:

"In one of my articles in *Russkaya Mysl* I recalled my acquaintance with the late N. I. Sieber and incidentally said that when discussing the future of capitalism that worthy savant 'used all possible arguments, but at the least danger hid behind

the authority of the immutable and unquestionable tripartite dialectical development'. Citing these words of mine, Mr. Beltov writes: 'We had more than once to converse with the deceased, and never did we hear from him references to dialectical development; he himself said more than once that he was quite ignorant of the significance of Hegel in the development of modern economics. Of course, everything can be blamed on the dead, and therefore Mr. Mikhailovsky's evidence is irrefutable! ' I would put it differently: everything cannot always be blamed on the dead, and Mr. Beltov's evidence is fully refutable....

"In 1879 an article of Sieber's was printed in the magazine *Slovo*, entitled: 'The Application of Dialectics to Science'.[499] This (unfinished) article was a paraphrase, even almost entirely a translation, of Engels' *Herrn Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft.** Well, to remain, after having translated this book, 'quite ignorant of the significance of Hegel in the development of modern economics' would have been fairly difficult not only for Sieber but even for Potok-Bogatyr in the princess's polemical description quoted above. This, I think, must be clear to Mr. Beltov himself. In any case, I shall quote a few words from Sieber's brief foreword: 'Engels' book deserves particular attention both because of the consistency and aptness of the philosophical and socio-economic concepts it expounds, and because, in order to explain the practical application of the method of dialectical contradictions, it gives several new illustrations and factual examples which in no little degree facilitate a close acquaintance with this so strongly praised and at the same time so strongly deprecated method of investigating the truth. One might probably say that this is the first time in the existence of what is called dialectics that it is presented to the eyes of the reader in so realistic a light.'

"Hence Sieber was acquainted with the significance of Hegel in the development of modern economics; he was greatly interested in 'the method of dialectical contradictions'. Such is the truth, documentarily certified, and it fully decides the piquant question of who is lying for two."**

The truth, especially when documentarily certified, is an excellent thing! Also in the interest of truth we shall carry on just a little further the quotation given by Mr. Mikhailovsky from Sieber's article, "The Application of Dialectics to Science".

Right after the words that conclude the passage Mr. Mikhailovsky quoted, Sieber makes the following remark: "However, we for our part shall refrain from passing judgement as to the worth of this method in application to the various branches of science,

* [*Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Anti-Dühring).*]
** *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, January 1895, Part II, pp. 140-41.

and also as to whether it represents or does not represent—to the extent that actual significance may be attached to it—a mere variation or even prototype of the method of the theory of evolution or universal development. It is precisely in this latter sense that the author regards it; or, at least, he endeavours to indicate a confirmation of it with the help of the truths obtained by the theory of evolution—and it must be confessed that in a certain respect quite a considerable resemblance is here revealed."

We thus see that the late Russian economist, even after having translated Engels' *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, still remained in ignorance of the significance of Hegel in the development of modern economics, and even, generally, whether dialectics could be suitably applied to the various branches of science. At all events, he was unwilling to pass judgement on it. And so we ask: is it likely that this selfsame Sieber, who did not venture to judge of the suitability of dialectics generally, yet in his disputes with Mr. Mikhailovsky "at the least danger hid behind the authority of the immutable and unquestionable dialectical development"? Why was it only in these cases that Sieber changed his usually irresolute opinion of dialectics? Was it because he stood in too great a "danger" of being demolished by his terrible opponent? Scarcely! Sieber, with his very weighty fund of knowledge, was the last person to whom such an opponent could have been "dangerous".

Yes, indeed, an excellent thing is truth documentarily certified! Mr. Mikhailovsky is absolutely right when he says that it fully decides the piquant question of who is lying for two!

But if the "Russian soul", having incarnated itself in the person of a certain individual, undoubtedly resorts to distorting the truth, it is not content with distorting it for two only once; for the late Sieber alone it distorts it *twice*: once when it asserts that Sieber hid behind the authority of the triad, and again, when, with astonishing presumption, it cites the very statement that proves up to the hilt that Mr. Beltov is right.

Fie, fie, Mr. Mikhailovsky!

"It would be difficult to remain in ignorance of the significance of Hegel in the development of modern economics after having translated Engels' *Dühring's Revolution*," Mr. Mikhailovsky exclaims. Is it really so difficult? Not at all, in our opinion. It would really have been difficult for Sieber, having translated the said book, to remain in ignorance of *Engels'* (and, of course, Marx's) *opinion of the significance of Hegel in the development of the said science*. Of that opinion, Sieber was not ignorant, as is self-evident and as follows from his foreword. But Sieber might not be content with the *opinion of others*. As a serious scientist who does not rely on the opinion of others but is accustomed to

studying a subject first-hand, he, though he knew Engels' opinion of Hegel, did not consider himself for all that entitled to say: "I am acquainted with Hegel and his role in the history of development of scientific concepts." This modesty of a scientist may perhaps be incomprehensible to Mr. Mikhailovsky; he himself tells us that he "does not claim" to be acquainted with Hegel's philosophy, yet he has the presumption to discuss it very freely. But quod licet bovi, non licet Jovi. Having all his life been nothing but a smart journalist, Mr. Mikhailovsky possesses the presumption natural to members of this calling. But he has forgotten the difference between him and men of science. Thanks to this forgetfulness, he ventured to say things that make it quite clear that the "soul" is certainly "lying for two".

Fie, fie, Mr. Mikhailovsky!

But is it only for two that the worthy "soul" is distorting the truth? The reader will perhaps remember the incident of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "omission" of the "moment of flowering". The omission of this "flowering" is of "vast significance"; it shows that he has distorted the truth also for Engels. Why has not Mr. Mikhailovsky said a single word about this instructive episode?

Fie, fie, Mr. Mikhailovsky!

But do you know what? Perhaps the "Russian soul" is not distorting the truth; perhaps, poor thing, it is telling the sheerest truth. Its veracity will be above all suspicion if we only assume that Sieber was just playing a joke on the young writer, was trying to frighten him with the "*triad*". Indeed, that looks like the truth: Mr. Mikhailovsky assures us that Sieber was familiar with the dialectical method; being familiar with this method, Sieber must have known very well that the celebrated triad never did play the role of an argument with Hegel. On the other hand, Mr. Mikhailovsky, not being familiar with Hegel, might in conversation with Sieber have expressed the thought—which later he expressed time and again—that the whole argumentation of Hegel and the Hegelians consisted in invoking the triad. This must have been amusing to Sieber, so he began calling in the triad to tease the excitable but ill-informed young man. Of course, if Sieber had foreseen into what a deplorable position his interlocutor would in time land as a result of his joke, he certainly would have refrained from it. But this he could not foresee, and so he allowed himself to joke at Mr. Mikhailovsky's expense. The latter's veracity is beyond all doubt if our assumption is correct. Let Mr. Mikhailovsky dig down into his memory: perhaps he will recall some circumstance which shows that our assumption is not altogether unfounded. We, for our part, would be heartily glad to hear of some such circumstance that would save the honour of the "Russian soul". Mr. Beltov would be glad too, of course.

Mr. Mikhailovsky is a very amusing fellow. He is much annoyed with Mr. Beltov for having said that in the "discoveries" of our subjective sociologist the "Russian mind and Russian soul repeats old stuff and lies for two". Mr. Mikhailovsky believes that, while Mr. Beltov is not responsible for the substance of the quotation, he may nevertheless be held responsible for choosing it. Only the rudeness of our polemical manners compels our worthy sociologist to admit that to level this rebuke at Mr. Beltov would be too much of a subtlety. But where did Mr. Beltov borrow this "quotation"? He borrowed it from Pushkin. Eugene Onegin was of the opinion that in all our journalism the Russian mind and Russian soul repeats old stuff and lies for two. Can Pushkin be held responsible for his hero's virulent opinion? Till now, as we know, nobody has ever thought—although it is very likely—that Onegin was expressing the opinion of the great poet himself. But now Mr. Mikhailovsky would like to hold Mr. Beltov responsible for not finding anything in his, Mr. Mikhailovsky's, writings save a repetition of old stuff and "lying for two". Why so? Why must this "quotation" not be applied to the "works" of our sociologist? Probably because these works, in the eyes of this sociologist, deserve far more respectful treatment. But, in Mr. Mikhailovsky's own words, "this is debatable".

"The fact is," says Mr. Mikhailovsky, "that in this passage Mr. Beltov has not convicted me of any lies; he just blethered, to make it sound hotter, and used the quotation as a fig leaf" (p. 140). Why "blethered", and not "expressed his firm conviction"? What is the meaning of the sentence: Mr. Mikhailovsky in his articles repeats old stuff and lies for two? It means that Mr. Mikhailovsky is only pronouncing old opinions that have long been refuted in the West, and in doing so, *adds to the errors of Westerners his own, home-grown errors.* Is it really absolutely necessary to use "a fig leaf" when expressing such an opinion of Mr. Mikhailovsky's literary activities? Mr. Mikhailovsky is convinced that such an opinion can only be "blether", and not the fruit of a serious and thoughtful evaluation. But—again to use his own words—this is debatable.

The writer of these lines declares quite calmly and deliberately, and without feeling the need for any fig leaf, that in his conviction *a not very high opinion of Mr. Mikhailovsky's "works" is the beginning of all wisdom*

But if, when speaking of the "Russian soul", Mr. Beltov did not convict Mr. Mikhailovsky of any lie, why did our "sociologist" pick precisely on this "quotation" to start the luckless conflict over Sieber? Probably in order to make it sound "hotter". In reality, there is nothing hot at all about methods like these, but there are people to whom they seem very hot indeed. In one of

G. I. Uspensky's sketches an official's wife is quarrelling with a janitor. The janitor happens to use the word *podlye* (near.—*Ed.*). "What," cries the official's wife, "I'm *podlaya* (vile.—*Ed.*), am I? I'll show you! I have a son serving in Poland", etc., etc. Like the official's wife, Mr. Mikhailovsky pounces upon an individual word, and heatedly cries: "I'm lying for two, am I? You dare to doubt my veracity? Well, now I'll convict you of lying for many. Just look what you said about Sieber!" We look at what Mr. Beltov said about Sieber, and find that he spoke the honest truth. Die Moral von der Geschichte (the moral of the story.—*Ed.*) is that excessive heat can lead to no good either for officials' wives or for Mr. Mikhailovsky.

"Mr. Beltov undertook to prove that the final triumph of materialist monism was established by the so-called theory of economic materialism in history, which theory is held to stand in the closest connection with 'general philosophical materialism'. With this end in view, Mr. Beltov made an excursion into the history of philosophy. How desultory and incomplete this excursion is may be judged even from the titles of the chapters devoted to it: 'French Materialism of the Eighteenth Century', 'French Historians of the Restoration', 'Utopians', 'Idealist German Philosophy', 'Modern Materialism'" (p. 146). Again Mr. Mikhailovsky gets heated without any need, and again his heatedness leads him to no good. If Mr. Beltov had been writing even a brief sketch of the *history of philosophy*, an excursion in which he passed from French materialism of the eighteenth century to the French historians of the Restoration, from these historians to the Utopians, from the Utopians to the German idealists, etc., would indeed be desultory and incomprehensible. But the whole point is that it was not a history of philosophy that Mr. Beltov was writing. On the very first page of his book he said that he intended to give a brief sketch of the theory that is wrongly called *economic* materialism. He found some faint rudiments of this theory among the French materialists and showed that these rudiments were considerably developed by the French historical specialists of the Restoration; then he turned to men who were not historians by profession, but who nevertheless had to give much thought to cardinal problems of man's historical development, that is, the Utopians and the German philosophers. He did not by a long way enumerate all the eighteenth-century materialists, Restoration historians, Utopians, or dialectical idealists. But he mentioned the chief of them, those who had contributed more than others to the question that interested him. He showed that all these richly endowed and highly informed men got themselves entangled in contradictions from which the only logical way out was Marx's theory of history. In a word, il prenait son bien où il le trouvait.

(He took his goods wherever he found them.—*Ed.*) What objection can be raised to this method? And why doesn't Mr. Mikhailovsky like it?

If Mr. Mikhailovsky has not only *read* Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach* and *Dühring's Revolution in Science*, but also—which is more important—*understood* them, he knows for himself what importance the views of the French materialists of the last century, the French historians of the Restoration, the Utopians and the dialectical idealists had in the development of the ideas of Marx and Engels. Mr. Beltov underscored this importance by giving a brief description of what in this respect was most essential in the views of the first, the second, the third, and the fourth. Mr. Mikhailovsky contemptuously shrugs his shoulders at this description; he does not like Mr. Beltov's plan. To which we rejoin that every plan is a good plan if it helps its author to attain his end. And that Mr. Beltov's end was attained, is not, as far as we know, denied even by his opponents.

Mr. Mikhailovsky continues:

"Mr. Beltov speaks both of the French historians and the French 'Utopians', and measures both by the extent of their understanding or non-understanding of economics as the foundation of the social edifice. But strangely enough, he makes no mention whatever of Louis Blanc, although the introduction to the *Histoire de dix ans*[500] [*History of Ten Years*] is in itself enough to give him a place of honour in the ranks of the first teachers of so-called economic materialism. In it, of course, there is much with which Mr. Beltov cannot agree, but in it there is the struggle of classes, and a description of their economic earmarks, and economics as the hidden mainspring of politics, and much, generally, that was *later* incorporated into the doctrine which Mr. Beltov defends so ardently. I mention this omission because, firstly, it is astonishing in itself and hints at certain parallel aims which have nothing in common with impartiality" (p. 150).

Mr. Beltov spoke of Marx's *predecessors*. Louis Blanc was rather his *contemporary*. To be sure, the *Histoire de dix ans* appeared at a time when Marx's historical views had not yet finally evolved. But the book could not have had any decisive influence upon them, if only for the reason that Louis Blanc's views regarding the inner springs of social development contained absolutely nothing new compared, say, with the views of Augustin Thierry or Guizot. It is quite true that "in it there is the struggle of classes, and a description of their economic earmarks, and economics", etc. But all this was already in Thierry and Guizot and Mignet, as Mr. Beltov irrefutably showed. Guizot, who viewed things from the angle of the struggle of classes, sympathised with the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the

aristocracy, but was very hostile to the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie, which had just begun in his time. Louis Blanc *did* sympathise with this struggle.* [In this he differed from Guizot. But the difference was not of an essential nature. It contributed nothing new to Louis Blanc's *view* of "economics as the hidden mainspring of politics".]**

Louis Blanc, like Guizot, would have said that political constitutions are rooted in the social being of a nation, and that social being is determined in the final analysis by property relations; but where these property relations spring from was as little known to Louis Blanc as to Guizot. That is why, despite his "economics", Louis Blanc, like Guizot, was compelled to revert to *idealism*. That he was an idealist in his views of philosophy and history is known to everyone, even if he has not attended a seminary.***

At the time the *Histoire de dix ans* appeared, the immediate problem of social science was the problem, solved "*later*" by Marx, *where property relations spring from.* On this question Louis Blanc had nothing new to say. It is natural to assume that it is precisely for this reason that Mr. Beltov said nothing about Louis Blanc. But Mr. Mikhailovsky prefers to make insinuations about parallel aims. Chacun a son goût! (Each has his own taste.—*Ed.*)

In the opinion of Mr. Mikhailovsky, Mr. Beltov's excursion into the history of philosophy "is even weaker than might have been thought from these (above-enumerated) chapter heads". Why so? Why, because Mr. Beltov said that "Hegel called metaphysical the point of view of those thinkers—irrespective of whether they were idealists or materialists—who, not being able to understand the process of development of phenomena, willy-nilly represent them to themselves and others as petrified, disconnected, incapable of passing one into another. To this point of view he opposed *dialectics,* which studies phenomena precisely in their development and, consequently, in their mutual connection". To this, Mr. Mikhailovsky slyly observes: "Mr. Beltov considers himself an expert in the philosophy of Hegel. I should be glad to learn from him, as from any well-informed person, and for a beginning I would request Mr. Beltov to name the place in Hegel's work from which he took this supposedly Hegelian definition of the 'meta-

* But in his own peculiar manner, which accounted for the wretched role he played in 1848. A veritable gulf lies between the class struggle as it was "later" understood by Marx and the class struggle as Louis Blanc conceived it. Anyone who does not notice this gulf is like the sage who failed to notice the elephant in the menagerie.[501]

** [Note to the 1905 edition.]

*** As an idealist of the lowest grade (i.e., non-dialectical), Louis Blanc naturally had his "*formula of progress*", which, for all its "*theoretical insignificance*", was at least no worse than Mr. Mikhailovsky's "formula of progress".

physical point of view'. I make bold to affirm that he will not be able to name it. To Hegel, metaphysics was the doctrine of the absolute essence of things, lying beyond the limits of experience and observation, of the innermost substratum of phenomena.... Mr. Beltov borrowed his supposedly Hegelian definition not from Hegel but from Engels (all in the same polemical work against Dühring), who quite arbitrarily divided metaphysics from dialectics by the earmark of immobility or fluidity" (p. 147).

We do not know what Mr. Beltov will say in reply to this. But, "*for a beginning*", we shall take the liberty, without awaiting his explanation, to reply to the worthy subjectivist ourselves.

We turn to Part I of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia,* and there, in the addendum to § 31 (p. 57 of Mr. V. Chizhov's Russian translation), we read: "The thinking of this metaphysics was not free and true in the objective sense, as it did not leave it to the object to develop freely out of itself and itself find its definitions, but took it as something ready-made.... This metaphysics is dogmatism, because, in accordance with the nature of final definitions, it had to assume that, of two antithetical assertions ... one was necessarily true, and the other necessarily false" (§ 32, p. 58, of the same translation).[502]

Hegel is referring here to the old pre-Kantian metaphysics which, he observes, "has been torn out by the roots, has vanished from the ranks of science" ("ist sozusagen, mit Stumpf und Stiel ausgerottet worden, aus der Reihe der Wissenschaften verschwunden! ").* To this metaphysics Hegel opposed his *dialectical philosophy,* which examines all phenomena in their development and in their interconnection, not as ready-made and separated from one another by a veritable gulf. "Only the whole is the truth," he says, "but the whole reveals itself in all its fullness only through its development" ("Das Wahre ist das Ganze. Das Ganze aber ist nur das durch seine Entwickelung sich vollendende Wesen").** Mr. Mikhailovsky asserts that Hegel fused metaphysics with dialectics, but the person he heard this from did not explain the thing to him properly. With Hegel, the *dialectical factor* is supplemented by the *speculative factor,* owing to which his philosophy becomes an *idealist philosophy. As an idealist,* Hegel did *what all other idealists* do: he attached particular philosophical importance to such "results" (concepts) as the old "metaphysics" also prized. But with him, thanks to the "dialectical factor", these concepts (the Absolute in the various aspects of its development) appeared precisely *as results,* and not as original data. He dissolved metaphysics in logic, and for that reason he would have been very surprised to

* *Wissenschaft der Logik,* Vorrede, S. 1.
** *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes,* Vorrede, S. XXIII.

hear that he, a speculative thinker, was being called a metaphysician ohne Weiteres. He would have said that people who called him that "lassen sich mit Thieren vergleichen, welche alle Töne einer Musik mit durchgehört haben, an deren Sinn aber das Eine, die Harmonie dieser Töne, nicht gekommen ist" ["might be compared to beasts who have heard all the sounds of a given piece of music, but have not grasped the whole, the harmony of these sounds"] (the expression he himself used to brand learned pedants).

We repeat, this speculative thinker, who despised the *metaphysics of common sense* (his own expression again), was an *idealist,* and in this sense had his own *metaphysics of the reason.* But did Mr. Beltov forget this or fail to mention it in his book? He neither forgot it, nor did he fail to mention it. He quoted from *Die heilige Familie* of Marx and Engels long passages in which Hegel's "speculative" results are very mordantly criticised. We believe that these quoted passages bring out quite distinctly that dialectics must not be fused with what Mr. Mikhailovsky calls Hegel's *metaphysics.* Hence if Mr. Beltov forgot anything, it was only that, in view of the astonishing "indifference" of our "advanced" people to the history of philosophy, he should have taken care to explain how sharp was the distinction made in Hegel's time between *metaphysics* and *speculative philosophy.** From all of which it follows that Mr. Mikhailovsky "makes bold to affirm" what cannot possibly be affirmed.

Mr. Beltov says that Hegel called metaphysical even the point of view of those materialists who were unable to examine phenomena in their interconnection. Is this true or not? Well, take the trouble to read this page of § 27, Part I of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia:* "We find the fullest application of this point of view to philosophy in the old metaphysics, as expounded before Kant. However, the days of this metaphysics have passed only in respect to the history of philosophy; in itself, it continues to exist as always, representing the common sense view of objects." What is this common sense view of objects? It is the old metaphysical view of objects, as opposed to the dialectical. All the materialist philosophy of the eighteenth century was *essentially "common sense"* philosophy: it was able to examine phenomena solely from the standpoint of final definitions. That Hegel was very well aware of this weak side of French materialism, as of eighteenth-century French philosophy generally, anyone can convince himself who takes the

* Incidentally, if after all this Mr. Mikhailovsky should want to have at least a partial understanding of the historical significance of Hegel's "metaphysics", we would recommend him to read a very popular book that was quite well known in its time: *Die Posaune des jüngsten Gerichts über Hegel, den Atheisten und Antichristen,* [*The Last Judgement Over Hegel, the Atheist and Antichrist*]. A jolly little book.[503]

trouble to read the pertinent passages in Part III of his *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie. (Lectures on the History of Philosophy.—Ed.)* Hence he could not but regard the view-point of the French materialists also as the old metaphysical view-point.* Well then, is Mr. Beltov right or not? It is clear, we think, that he is absolutely right. Yet Mr. Mikhailovsky "makes bold to affirm".... However, neither Mr. Beltov nor the writer of these lines can do anything about that. Mr. Mikhailovsky's trouble is that, having entered into a controversy with the "Russian disciples" of Marx, he "made bold" to discuss things about which he knows absolutely nothing.

O, man of much experience, thy boldness is thy undoing!

Anyone acquainted with philosophy will have had no difficulty in observing that when Mr. Beltov expounds the philosophical views of Hegel or Schelling *he nearly always uses these thinkers' own words.* For example, his description of dialectical thinking is almost a word-for-word translation of the *note* and first addendum to § 81, Part I of the *Encyclopaedia*; next, he quotes almost word for word certain passages from the preface to the *Philosophie des Rechts* and from the *Philosophie der Geschichte.* But this author, who so very accurately quotes men like Helvetius, Enfantin, Oscar Peschel and so on, hardly ever indicates precisely which works of Schelling or Hegel, or which passages in these works, he is referring to in his exposition. Why, in this instance, did he depart from his general rule? It seems to us that Mr. Beltov was resorting to a military stratagem. His line of thought, we believe, was as follows: our subjectivists proclaim German idealist philosophy metaphysical, and rest content at that; they have not studied it, as the author of the comments on Mill, for instance, did. When I refer to certain remarkable thoughts of the German idealists, the subjectivist gentlemen, seeing no references to the works of these thinkers, will imagine that I invented these thoughts myself or borrowed them from Engels, and will cry: "That is debatable", "I make bold to affirm", etc. That's where I'll bring their ignorance into the light of day; that's where the fun will begin! If Mr. Beltov really did resort in his polemic to this little military stratagem, it must be confessed that it has eminently succeeded: there has indeed been a lot of fun!

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* [Note to the 1905 edition.] However, he said of materialism: "Dennoch muss man in dem Materialismus das begeisterungsvolle Streben anerkennen, über den zweierlei Welten als gleich substantiell und wahr annehmenden Dualismus hinauszugehen, diese Zerreissung des ursprünglich Einen aufzuheben."(*Enzyklopädie,* Teil III, S. 54.) ["We must nevertheless acknowledge the inspired desire of materialism to transcend the dualism which accepts the two worlds as equally substantial and true, and to eliminate this division of the original unity." (*Encyclopaedia,* Part III, p. 54.)]

But let us proceed. "Any philosophical system which, with Mr. Beltov, declares that 'the rights of reason are as boundless and unlimited as its powers', and hence that it has disclosed the absolute essence of things—be it matter or spirit—is a metaphysical system.... Whether it has, or has not, arrived at the idea that its presumed essence of things develops, and, if it has, whether it ascribes to this development the dialectical or any other way, is of course very important in defining its place in the history of philosophy, but does not alter its metaphysical character" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, January 1895, p. 148). As far as can be gathered from these words, Mr. Mikhailovsky, shunning metaphysical thinking, does not believe that the rights of reason are unlimited. It is to be hoped that this will earn him the praises of Prince Meshchersky. Nor, apparently, does Mr. Mikhailovsky believe that the *powers* of reason are unlimited and unbounded either. This may seem astonishing in a man who has so often assured his readers that la raison finit toujours par avoir raison: with the powers (and even the rights! ) of reason limited, this assurance seems hardly appropriate. But Mr. Mikhailovsky will say that he is assured of the ultimate triumph of reason only as far as practical affairs are concerned, but doubts its powers when it comes to cognising the absolute essence of things ("be it matter or spirit"). Excellent! But what is this absolute essence of things?

It is, is it not, what Kant called the *thing in itself* (Ding an sich)? If so, then we categorically declare that we do know what the "thing in itself" is, and that it is to Hegel that we owe the knowledge. ("Help! " the "sober-minded philosophers" will cry, but we beg them not to get excited.)

"The thing in itself ... is the object from which knowledge, everything that can be definitely felt and thought about it, has been abstracted. It is easy to see what remains—a pure abstraction, a sheer emptiness, and that carried beyond the bounds of knowledge; the negation of all idea, feeling, definite thought, etc. But it is just as easy to judge that this caput mortuum (worthless residium.—*Ed.*) is itself but a product of the thought which made this pure abstraction, of the empty *I* which makes an object of its abstract identity. The negative definition which holds this abstract identity as an object is likewise included among the Kantian categories, and is just as well known. It is therefore surprising to read so often that it is not known [what the thing in itself is], when nothing is easier to know."*

We therefore repeat that we know very well what the absolute essence of things, or the thing in itself, is. It is a sheer abstraction. And Mr. Mikhailovsky wants to use this sheer abstraction to

* Hegel, *Encyclopaedia*, Part I, pp. 79-80, § 44.

frighten people who follow Hegel in proudly saying: "Von der Grösse und Macht seines Geistes kann der Mensch nicht gross genug denken! " ("Men cannot think highly enough of the greatness and power of his mind."—*Ed.*)* The song is an old one, Mr. Mikhailovsky! Sie sind zu spät gekommen! (You have come too late! —*Ed.*)

We are certain that the lines we have just written will seem sheer sophistry to Mr. Mikhailovsky. "But pardon me," he will say, "what in that case do you mean by the materialist interpretation of nature and history? " This is what we mean.

When Schelling said that magnetism is the introduction of the subjective into the objective, that was an *idealist* interpretation of nature; but when magnetism is explained from the view-point of modern physics, its phenomena are given a *materialist* interpretation. When Hegel, or even our Slavophiles, attributed certain historical phenomena to the properties of the national spirit, they were regarding these phenomena from an *idealist* view-point, but when Marx attributed, say, the events of 1848-50 in France to the class struggle in French society, he was giving these events a *materialist* interpretation. Is that clear? We should say so! So clear, that it requires a considerable dose of obstinacy not to understand this.

"But there's something wrong here," Mr. Mikhailovsky conceives, his thoughts darting hither and thither (c'est bien le moment!). "Lange says...." But we shall take the liberty of interrupting Mr. Mikhailovsky. We know very well what Lange says, but we can assure Mr. Mikhailovsky that his authority is very much mistaken. In his *History of Materialism*, Lange forgot to cite, for example, the following characteristic remark of one of the most prominent of the French materialists: Nous ne connaissons que l'écorce des phénomènes (we only know the skin of phenomena.—*Ed.*) Other, and no less prominent, French materialists expressed themselves time and again in a similar vein. So you see, Mr. Mikhailovsky, the French materialists did not yet know that the thing in itself is only the caput mortuum of an abstraction, and held precisely to the view-point which is now called by many the *view-point of critical philosophy*.

All this, it need not be said, will seem to Mr. Mikhailovsky very novel and absolutely incredible. But we shall not tell him for the present to which French materialists and to which of their works we are referring. Let him first *"make bold to affirm"*, and then we shall have a word with him.

If Mr. Mikhailovsky is willing to know how we understand the relation between our sensations and external objects, we would

* *Geschichte der Philosophie,* Part I, p. 6.

refer him to the article of Mr. Sechenov, "Objective Thought and Reality", in the book *Aid to the Hungry*. We presume that Mr. Beltov and all other disciples of Marx, Russian and non-Russian, will fully agree with our celebrated physiologist. And this is what Mr. Sechenov says: "Whatever the external objects may be in themselves, independently of our consciousness—even if it be granted that our impressions of them are only conventional signs—the fact remains that the similarity or difference of the signs we perceive corresponds with a real similarity or difference. In other words: the similarities or differences man finds in the objects he perceives are real similarities or differences."*

When Mr. Mikhailovsky refutes Mr. Sechenov, we shall agree to recognise the limitation not only of the *powers*, but also of the *rights* of human reason.**

Mr. Beltov said that in the second half of our century there triumphed in science—with which meanwhile philosophy had been completely fused—materialistic monism. "I am afraid he is mistaken," Mr. Mikhailovsky observes. In justification of his fear, he appeals to Lange, in whose opinion "die gründliche Naturforschung durch ihre eignen Consequenzen über den Materialismus hinausführt". ("Sound natural research, by its own findings, transcends materialism."—*Ed.*) If Mr. Beltov is mistaken, the materialistic monism has *not* triumphed in science. So, then, scientists to this day explain nature by means of the introduction of the subjective into the objective and the other subtleties of idealist natural philosophy? We are afraid he would be "mistaken" who assumed this, and the more afraid for the fact that a man of very great renown in science, the English *naturalist* Huxley, reasons as follows.

"Surely no one who is cognisant of the facts of the case, nowadays, doubts that the roots of psychology lie in the physiology of the nervous system. What we call the operations of the mind are functions of the brain, and the materials of consciousness are products of cerebral activity."*** This, note, is said by a man who is what is known in England as an *agnostic*. He believes that the view he expresses on the activity of the mind is fully compatible with pure idealism. But we, who are familiar with the interpretations of natural phenomena consistent idealism is capable of

* *Aid to the Hungry*, p. 207.

** [Note to the 1905 edition.] Here is a very good opportunity for our opponents to convict us of contradicting ourselves: on the one hand we declare that the Kantian "thing in itself" is a sheer abstraction, on the other we cite with praise Mr. Sechenov who speaks of objects as they exist in themselves, independently of our consciousness. Of course, people who understand will see no contradiction, but are there many people of understanding among our opponents?

*** Th. Huxley, *Hume. Sa vie, sa philosophie*, p. 108.

giving, and who understand the reasons for the shamefacedness of the worthy Englishman, repeat with Mr. Beltov that *in the second half of the nineteenth century materialistic monism triumphed in science.*

Mr. Mikhailovsky is probably acquainted with Sechenov's psychological researches. This scientist's views were at one time passionately controverted by Kavelin. We are afraid that the now deceased Liberal was very much mistaken. But perhaps Mr. Mikhailovsky agrees with Kavelin? Or perhaps he needs some further explanations on the point? Well, we withhold them for the event that he again begins to "affirm".

Mr. Beltov says that the point of view of "human nature" that prevailed in social science before Marx led to "an abuse of biological analogies which even up to the present day makes itself strongly felt in Western sociological, and particularly in Russian quasi-sociological, literature". This induces Mr. Mikhailovsky to accuse the author of the book on historical monism of outrageous injustice and once again to suspect the integrity of his polemical methods.

"I appeal to the reader, even though he be quite ill-disposed towards me but has some acquaintance with my writings—if not with all, at least with one article, say, 'The Analogical Method in Social Science' or 'What Is Progress?' It is not true that Russian literature particularly abuses biological analogies: in Europe, thanks to the good offices of Spencer, this stuff is far more extensive, to say nothing of the times of the comical analogies of Bluntschli and his fraternity. And if in our country the matter has gone no further than the analogical exercises of the late Stronin ('History and Method', 'Politics as a Science'), Mr. Lilienfeld ('The Social Science of the Future'), and a few newspaper articles, a little of the credit presumably belongs to me. For nobody has spent as much effort combating biological analogies as I have. And at one time I suffered no little for this at the hands of the 'Spencerian lads'. I shall hope that the present storm will also pass in time...." (pp. 145-46). This peroration bears such an air of sincerity that indeed even a reader ill-disposed towards Mr. Mikhailovsky might think: "It does look as if Mr. Beltov has gone too far in his polemical ardour." But this is not so, and Mr. Mikhailovsky himself knows that it is not: if he pathetically appeals to the reader, it is solely for the same reason that Plautus' Tranion said to himself: "Pergam turbare porro: ita haec res postulat." ("I shall go on being riotous, for the case demands it."—*Ed.*)

What did Mr. Beltov really say? He said: "If the explanation of all historical social progress is to be sought in the nature of man, and if, as Saint-Simon himself justly remarks, society con-

sists of individuals, then the nature of the individual has to provide the key to the explanation of history. The nature of the individual is the subject of physiology in the broad sense of the word, i.e., of a science which also covers *psychological* phenomena. That is why physiology, in the eyes of Saint-Simon and his followers, was the basis of sociology, which they called social physics. In the *Opinions philosophiques, littéraires et industrielles* published during Saint-Simon's lifetime and with his active participation, there was printed an extremely interesting but unfortunately unfinished article of an anomymous *doctor of medicine,* entitled: 'On Physiology Applied to the Improvement of Social Institutions'. The author considered the *science of society* to be a component part of '*general physiology*', which, enriched by the observations and experiments of special physiology of the individual, devotes itself to considerations of a 'higher order'. Individuals are for it only 'organs of the social body', the functions of which it studies, 'just as special physiology studies the functions of individuals'. General physiology studies (the author writes: 'expresses') the laws of social existence, with which the written laws should be accordingly co-ordinated. Later on the bourgeois sociologists, as for example Spencer, made use of the doctrine of the social organism to draw the most conservative conclusions. But the doctor of medicine whom we quote was first of all a *reformer.* He studied the social body with the object of social *reconstruction,* since only *social physiology* and the *hygiene* closely bound up with it provided the positive foundations on which it is possible to build the system of social organisation required by the present state of the civilised world."

From these words alone it is apparent that, in Mr. Beltov's opinion, biological analogies may be abused not only in the sense of Spencer's bourgeois conservatism, but also *in the sense of utopian plans of social reform.* Here the likening of society to an organism is absolutely of *second-rate,* if not of tenth-rate, significance: the important thing is not the likening of society to an organism, but the desire to found "*sociology*" on *biological* conclusions. Mr. Mikhailovsky has passionately objected against likening society to an organism; in the struggle against this tendency "a little of the credit" does undoubtedly belong to *him.* But that is not of essential importance. The essentially important question is, did, or did not, Mr. Mikhailovsky believe that sociology could be founded on biological conclusions? And on this point no doubt is possible, as anyone can see by reading, for example, the article "The Darwinian Theory and Social Science". In this article Mr. Mikhailovsky says, in part: "Under the general heading 'The Darwinian Theory and Social Science', we shall speak of various questions dealt with, settled or resettled by the Darwinian theory

or by one or another of its supporters, whose numbers are swelling from day to day. Our chief task, however, will consist in determining, from the standpoint of the Darwinian theory, the interrelation between physiological division of labour, i.e., division of labour between the organs of one indivisible whole, and economic division of labour, i.e., division of labour between whole indivisible species, races, peoples or societies. In our view, this task resolves itself into a search for the basic laws of co-operation, i.e., the foundation of social science."* To search for the basic laws of co-operation, i.e., the *foundation of social science, in biology* is to adopt the view-point of the French Saint-Simonists of the 20s—in other words, "to repeat old stuff and lie for two".

Here Mr. Mikhailovsky might exclaim: "But, you know, the Darwinian theory didn't exist in the 20s." The reader, however, will understand that the point here is not the Darwinian theory, but the utopian tendency—common to Mr. Mikhailovsky and the Saint-Simonists—*to apply physiology to the improvement of social institutions.* In the article referred to Mr. Mikhailovsky entirely agrees with Haeckel ("Haeckel is absolutely right") when he says that future statesmen, economists and historians will have to turn their attention chiefly to comparative zoology, that is, to the comparative morphology and physiology of animals, if they want to have a true conception of their special subject. Say what you like, but if Haeckel is "absolutely right", that is, if sociologists (and even historians! ) must turn their attention "*chiefly*" to the morphology and physiology of animals, then there is bound to be abuse of biological analogies *in one direction or another.* And is it not clear that Mr. Mikhailovsky's view of sociology is the old Saint-Simonist view?

Well, that is all Mr. Beltov said, and it is in vain that Mr. Mikhailovsky tries, so to speak, to disavow responsibility for the sociological ideas of Bukhartsev-Nozhin. In his own sociological inquiries he has not retreated very far from the views of his late friend and teacher. Mr. Mikhailovsky has not grasped what Marx's discovery consists in, and he has therefore remained an incorrigible Utopian. That is a very deplorable situation, but our author might escape from it only by another effort of thought; fearful appeals to the reader, even the quite ill-disposed reader, will not help our poor "sociologist" at all.

Mr. Beltov said a couple of words in defence of Mr. P. Struve. This induced Messrs. Mikhailovsky and N.—on to say that Beltov had taken Mr. Struve under his "*protection*". We have said a great deal in defence of Mr. Beltov. What will Mr. Mikhailovsky

* N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Works*, Vol. V, p. 2.

and Mr. N.—on say about us? They will probably consider Mr. Beltov our vassal. Apologising in advance to Mr. Beltov for anticipating his retort to Messrs. the subjectivists, we shall ask the latter: does agreeing with an author necessarily mean taking him under one's protection? Mr. Mikhailovsky is in agreement with Mr. N.—on on certain current questions of Russian life. Must we understand their agreement to mean that Mr. Mikhailovsky has taken Mr. N.—on under his protection? Or, perhaps, that Mr. N.—on is the protector of Mr. Mikhailovsky? What would the late Dobrolyubov have said on hearing this strange language of our present-day "progressive" literature?

It seems to Mr. Mikhailovsky that Mr. Beltov has misrepresented his doctrine of heroes and the crowd. Again we think that Mr. Beltov is quite right and that, in controverting him, Mr. Mikhailovsky is playing the role of Tranion. But before supporting this opinion of ours, we think it necessary to say a few words about Mr. N.—on's contribution—"What Does Economic Necessity Really Mean?"—in the March issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*.

In this note Mr. N.—on sets up two batteries against Mr. Beltov. We shall consider them one by one.

The target of the first battery is Mr. Beltov's statement that "in order to reply to the question—will Russia follow the path of capitalist development, or not?—one must turn to a study of the actual position of the country, to an analysis of its present-day internal life. On the basis of such an analysis, the Russian disciples of Marx say: there are no data allowing one to hope that Russia will soon leave the path of capitalist development". Mr. N.—on slyly repeats: "There is *no* such analysis." Really not, Mr. N.—on? First of all, let us agree on terminology. What do you call an *analysis*? Does an analysis provide new data for forming a judgement on a subject, or does it operate with already existing data, obtained in other ways? At the risk of incurring the charge of being "metaphysical", we adhere to the old definition which holds that an analysis does not provide new data for forming a judgement on a subject, but operates with ready-made data. From this definition it follows that the Russian disciples of Marx, in their analysis of Russian internal life, might not offer any independent observations of that life, but content themselves with material collected, say, in Narodist literature. If from this material they drew a new conclusion, that in itself implies that they subjected these data to a new analysis. Hence the question arises: what data on the development of capitalism are to be found in Narodist literature, and did the Russian disciples of Marx really draw a new conclusion from these data? In order to answer this question we shall take, if only for one, Mr. Dementyev's book, *The Factory, What It Gives to, and What It Takes from, the Population*. In this

book (pp. 241 et seq.) we read: "Our industry, before it assumed the form of capitalist factory production in which we find it now, passed through all the same stages of development as in the West.... One of the strongest reasons why we are now lagging behind the West was serfdom. Because of it, our industry passed through a far longer period of handicraft and home production. It was only in 1861 that capital acquired the possibility of instituting that form of production to which, in the West, it had passed nearly a century and a half earlier, and only from that year on did there begin a more rapid decline of handicraft and home production and their conversion into factory production.... But in the thirty years (since the abolition of serfdom) everything has changed. Having embarked on the same path of economic development as Western Europe our industry had inevitably, fatally to assume—and did assume—the form into which it had evolved in the West. The possession of land by the popular masses, to which there is such a fondness to refer in proof of the impossibility in our country of a special class of workers who are free from everything—a class that is an inevitable concomitant of the modern form of industry—undoubtedly has been, and still is, a strong retarding factor, but by no means so strong as is usually thought. The very frequent inadequacy of the land allotment and the complete decline of agriculture, on the one hand, and the deep concern of the government to develop the manufacturing industries as an essential element in maintaining the economic equilibrium of the country, on the other, are conditions that eminently tended, and still tend, to detract from the importance of land possession. We have seen the result of this state of things: the formation of a special class of factory workers, a class which continues to bear the name of 'peasant', but which has practically nothing in common with the peasant tillers, has retained to only an insignificant degree its association with the land, and half of which, already in the third generation, never quits the factory and has no property whatever in the countryside, save a legal and practically almost unrealisable right to land."

The *objective data* given by Mr. Dementyev show very eloquently that capitalism, with all its consequences, is developing fast in Russia. These data Mr. Dementyev supplements with reflections which would imply that the further advance of capitalist production can be halted, and that to do so, all that is necessary is to recall the maxim: gouverner—c'est prévoir (to govern is to foresee.—*Ed.*) (p. 246). The Russian disciples of Marx subject this conclusion of Mr. Dementyev's to their *own* analysis, and find that *in this matter nothing can be halted,* that Mr. Dementyev is mistaken, like the whole *crowd* of Narodniks who, in their researches, communicate a whole mass of objective data quite similar to those

he, Mr. Dementyev, communicates.* Mr. N.—on asks where this analysis is to be found. What he apparently wants to say is, when, and where, did such an analysis appear in the Russian press. To this question we can give him at least two answers.

First, in the book of Mr. Struve which he finds so disagreeable there is a competent discussion of *the limits to which government interference in the economic life of Russia is possible at this time.* This discussion is already, in part, the analysis which Mr. N.—on demands, and against this analysis Mr. N.—on has nothing competent to offer.

Second, does Mr. N.—on remember the dispute which took place in the 40s between the Slavophiles and the Westerners? In this dispute, too, an "analysis of internal Russian life" played a very important part, but in the press this analysis was applied almost exclusively to purely literary themes. For this there were historical reasons, which Mr. N—on must certainly take into account if he does not want to be reputed a ridiculous pedant. Will Mr. N—on say that these reasons have no bearing today on the analysis of the "Russian disciples"? [504]

So far the "disciples" have not published any independent investigations of Russian economic life. The explanation is that the trend to which they belong is extremely new in Russia. It is the *Narodist* trend that has until now predominated in Russian literature, thanks to which investigators, when communicating objective data testifying to the crumbling of the ancient "foundations", have always drowned them in the waters of their "*subjective*" hopes. But it is precisely the abundance of the data communicated by the Narodniks that has impelled the appearance of a new view of Russian life. This new view will unquestionably become the basis of new, independent observations. Even now we can draw Mr. N.—on's attention, for example, to the writings of Mr. Kharizomenov, which strongly contradict the Narodist catechism, as was duly sensed by Mr. V. V., who tried often and vainly

* "Among the several hundred statistical and other inquiries made in the last twenty years or thereabouts," says Mr. N.—on, "we have not met any works whose conclusions agreed in any respect with the economic conclusions of the Beltovs, Struves and Skvortsovs." The authors of the inquiries to which you, Mr. N.—on, refer usually draw two kinds of conclusion: one which accords with objective truth and says that capitalism is developing and the ancient "foundations" are crumbling; the other, a "subjective" conclusion, which holds that the development of capitalism might be halted, if, etc., etc. *But no data are ever adduced in confirmation of this latter conclusion, so that it remains literally unsupported,* notwithstanding the more or less abundant statistical material contained in the inquiries which it adorns. Mr. N.—on's *Essays* suffer from a similar weakness—what might be called the *anaemia of "subjective" conclusion.* What "analysis", indeed, confirms Mr. N.—on's idea that our society can organise production already at this stage? *There is no such analysis.*

to refute the worthy investigator. The author of *The South-Russian Peasant Economy* is anything but a Marxist, but Mr. N.—on will scarcely say that Mr. Postnikov's views on the present state of the village commune, and peasant land tenure generally, in Novorossia agree with the customary views of our Narodniks.

Then there is Mr. Borodin, the author of a remarkable investigation of the Urals Cossack organisation, who already stands foursquare on the point of view which we uphold and which has the misfortune of not being agreeable to Mr. N.—on. Our Narodist publicists paid no attention to this investigation, not because it is devoid of intrinsic value, but solely because these publicists are imbued with a specific "subjective" spirit.[505] And there will be more of them, Mr. N.—on, as time goes on: the era of Marxist research is only beginning in Russia.*

Mr. N.—on also considers himself a Marxist. He is mistaken. He is nothing but an *illicit* offspring of the great thinker. His world outlook is the fruit of an illegitimate cohabitation of the Marxian theory with Mr. V. V. From "Mütterchen" Mr. N.—on derived his terminology and several economic theorems which, incidentally, he understands very abstractly and therefore incorrectly. From "Väterchen" he inherited a utopian attitude to social reform, and it is with its help that he set up his second battery against Mr. Beltov.

Mr. Beltov says that social relations, by the very logic of their development, bring man to a realisation of the causes of his enslavement by economic necessity. "Having realised that the cause of his enslavement lies in the anarchy of production, the producer ('social man') organises that production and thereby subjects it to his will. Then terminates the kingdom of necessity, and there begins the reign of freedom, which itself proves a necessity." In the opinion of Mr. N.—on, all this is quite true. But to Mr. Beltov's true words he adds the following remark: "Consequently, the task is that society, instead of passively observing the manifestation of the given law which retards the development of its productive forces, should, with the help of the existing material economic conditions, find a means of bringing this law under its power, by surrounding its manifestation with such conditions as would not only not retard, but facilitate the development of the

* We say nothing of Mr. P. Struve's book, because Mr. N. —on finds it disagreeable. But it is in vain that Mr. N. —on so decidedly stamps this book as worthless. In controversy with Mr. N.—on, Mr. P. Struve is quite capable of taking care of himself. And as to Mr. N. —on's own "analysis", when somebody undertakes to "*analyse*" it from the Marxian standpoint, nothing will remain of it but general platitudes. And it is to be hoped that this analysis will not be long in forthcoming.

productive forces of labour [forces of labour! ] of all society taken as a whole."[506]

Without himself noticing it, Mr. N.—on has drawn from the "quite true" words of Mr. Beltov an extremely confused conclusion.

Mr. Beltov is talking of social man, of the sum-total of producers, before whom there really does lie the task of vanquishing economic necessity. But for the *producers* Mr. N.—on substitutes *society*, which, "as a producing whole, cannot look on indifferently, 'objectively', at the development of such social and economic relations as condemn the majority of its members to progressive impoverishment".

"Society as a producing whole...." Marx's "analysis", to which Mr. N.—on allegedly adheres, did not stop at the idea of society being a producing *whole*. It *divided* society, in accordance with its true nature, into separate *classes*, each of which has its own economic interest and its own special task. Why does not Mr. N.—on's "analysis" do likewise? Why, instead of speaking of the task of the Russian producers, does Mr. N.—on speak of the task of society as a whole? This society, taken as a whole, is usually, and not without reason, contrasted to the people, and it then turns out to be, despite its "wholeness", only a small part, only an insignificant minority of the Russian population. When Mr. N.—on assures us that this tiny minority will organise production, we can only shrug our shoulders and say: it is not from Marx Mr. N.—on has taken this; he has inherited it from his "Väterchen", from Mr. V. V.

According to Marx, organisation of production presumes a conscious attitude to it on the part of the producers, whose economic emancipation must therefore be the work of their own hands. With Mr. N.—on, organisation of production presumes a conscious attitude to it on the part of society. If this is Marxism, then surely Marx was never a Marxist. But let us assume that society does really act as the organiser of production. In what relation does it then stand to the producers? It *organises them*. Society is the *hero*; the producers are the *crowd*.

We ask Mr. Mikhailovsky, who "affirms" that Mr. Beltov has misrepresented his doctrine of heroes and the crowd, does he, like Mr. N.—on, think that society can organise production? If he does, then he in fact holds to the view that society, the "*intelligentsia*", is the *hero*, the demiurge of our future historical development, while the millions of producers are the *crowd*, out of which the hero will mould whatever he considers necessary in accordance with his ideals. Now let the impartial reader say: was Mr. Beltov right when he said that the "subjective" view regarded the people as a crowd?

Mr. Mikhailovsky declares that he, too, and those who think like him are not opposed to the development of the self-consciousness of the producers. "It only seems to me," he says, "that for so simple and clear a programme there was no need to rise above the clouds of the Hegelian philosophy and sink down to a hotch-potch of the subjective and objective." But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Mikhailovsky, that in the eyes of people of your type of thought the self-consciousness of the producers cannot have the same meaning as it has in the eyes of your opponents. From your point of view production can be organised by "society"; from the point of view of your opponents it can be organised only by the producers themselves. From your point of view "society" acts, and the producer assists. From the point of view of your opponents the producers do not assist, they just act. It stands to reason that assistants need a smaller degree of consciousness than actors, for it has been said long ago and very justly: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory." *Your attitude to the producers is that of the French and German Utopians of the 30s and 40s.* Your opponents condemn *any and every utopian attitude to the producers.* If you were better acquainted with the history of economic literature, Mr. Mikhailovsky, you would have known that in order to get rid of the utopian attitude to the producers, it was indeed necessary to rise to the clouds of the Hegelian philosophy and then sink down to the prose of political economy.

Mr. Mikhailovsky does not like the word "producer": it smacks, don't you see, of the stable.* Well, all we can say is that he is welcome to the best we have. The word "*producer*", as far as we know, was first used by Saint-Simon and the Saint-Simonists. Since the existence of the journal *Le Producteur*, that is, since 1825, it has been used in Western Europe countless numbers of times, and has never reminded anyone of the stables. Then the Russian *repentant nobleman* began to speak of producers, and the stables came to his mind at once. To what are we to attribute this strange phenomenon? Evidently, to the memories and traditions of the repentant nobleman.

Mr. N.—on, with an air of deep slyness, cites the following words of Mr. Beltov: "Of course one of them" [the Russian disciples of Marx] "may have greater and another less extensive economic knowledge, but what matters here is not the amount of knowledge of individual persons, but the point of view itself." Mr. N.—on asks: "What has become of all the demands to adhere to the ground of reality, of the necessity for a detailed study of the

* [Russian word "proizvoditel" (producer) also means "stallion".]

course of economic development?" ("Demands of the necessity for a detailed study"—that doesn't sound very lucid, Mr. N.—on.) Now it appears that all this is something secondary, that "what matters is not the amount of knowledge but the point of view".

Mr. N.—on, as we see, likes to say something funny every now and again. But we would advise him, when he wants to make people laugh, not to forget common sense. Otherwise the laugh will not be on his side.

Mr. N.—on has not understood Mr. Beltov. Let us try to rescue him from his difficulty. In the same issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* in which Mr. N.—on's contribution appeared, we find in an article by Mr. Mokievsky called "What Is an Educated Man?" (p. 33, note) some lines that might be very instructive to Mr. N.—on: "An Arab savant once said to his disciples: 'If anyone should tell you that the laws of mathematics are erroneous and, in proof, should transform a stick into a snake, do not regard such a proof as convincing.' This is a typical example. An educated man will reject such proof, even if (unlike the savant) he is not acquainted with the laws of mathematics. He will say that the transformation of a stick into a snake is an extraordinary miracle, but it does not follow from it that the laws of mathematics are erroneous. On the other hand, it is not to be doubted that uneducated people would at once lay all their convictions and beliefs at the feet of the miracle-workers."

One of the disciples of the wise Arab may have had greater and another less extensive mathematical knowledge, but neither of them, probably, would have fallen at the feet of the miracle-worker. Why? Because both had had a good schooling; because what matters here is not the amount of knowledge, but *that point of view* from which the transformation of a stick into a snake cannot serve as a refutation of mathematical truths. Is that clear to you, Mr. N.—on? We hope so, for it is so very simple, quite elementary in fact. Well, then, if it is clear, you should now see yourself that what Mr. Beltov says about the point of view, etc., does not do away with what he also says about the necessity of adhering to the ground of reality.

But we are afraid you are not clear on the matter, after all. Let us give another example. God knows, you haven't much economic knowledge, but you do have more than Mr. V. V. That, however, does not prevent you from holding to the same point of view. *You are both Utopians.* And when anyone undertakes to describe your common views, he will leave aside the amount of your respective knowledge, and will say: What matters is these people's point of view, which they have borrowed from the Utopians of the days of Old King Cole.

Now it should be quite clear to you, Mr. N.—on, that you were quite off the mark when you implied that Mr. Beltov had resorted to the subjective method, that you blundered egregiously.

At all events, let us put the same thing in different words. However much the Russian followers of Marx may differ in the extent of their knowledge, not one of them, if he remains true to himself, will believe you, or Mr. V. V., when you assert that "society"—whatever that is—will organise our production. Their point of view will prevent them from *laying their convictions* at the feet of social miracle-workers.*

Enough of this. But once we have touched upon the subjective method, let us remark how contemptuously Mr. N.—on treats it. It follows from what he says that this method did not have the slightest grain of science in it, but was only furnished with a sort of cloak that "lent it the mere tinge of a 'scientific' exterior". Excellent, Mr. N.—on! But what will your "protector", Mr. Mikhailovsky, say of you?

Generally speaking, Mr. N.—on deals very discourteously with his subjectivist "protectors". His article, "Apologia of the Power of Money as the Sign of the Times",[507] bears the epigraph: "L'ignorance est moins éloignée de la vérité que le préjugé." [Ignorance is less far from the truth than prejudice."] The Truth is undoubtedly Mr. N.—on himself. He says as much: "If anybody should really follow the subjective method of investigation unswervingly, one may be quite certain that he would arrive at conclusions akin to, if not identical with, those we have arrived at." (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, March, p. 54). Prejudice is of course Mr. Struve, against whom Truth directs the sting of its "analysis". And who is Ignorance, which is nearer to Truth (i.e., Mr. N.—on) than Prejudice, i.e., Mr. Struve? Ignorance, evidently, is Mr. N.—on's present subjectivist allies. Excellent, Mr. N.—on! You have hit the weak spot of your allies to a nicety. But again, what will Mr. Mikhailovsky say of you? He will surely recall the moral of the well-known fable:

> *Though help in time of need we highly prize,*
> *Not everyone knows how to give it....* [508]

But enough of argument! We think we have left none of our opponents' objections unanswered. And if we have by chance lost sight of any of them, we shall certainly have plenty of occasion to return to the dispute. So we may lay down the pen. But before parting with it, we should like to say another word or two to our opponents.

* [Note to the 1905 edition.] Let me refer again to the above-mentioned statement of Feuerbach that it is the point of view which distinguishes man from the ape.

Now you, sirs, are always "exerting yourselves" to do away with capitalism. But just see what comes of it: capitalism goes sweetly on and does not even notice your "exertions", while you, with your "ideals" and your splendid intentions, keep marking time in one spot. And to what purpose? Neither you benefit, nor anyone else! What can be the reason? The reason is that you are Utopians, you nourish *utopian* plans of social reform and fail to see those direct and urgent tasks which, excuse the expression, lie under your very noses. Ponder well on it. Then, perhaps, you will say yourselves that we are right. However, on this subject we shall talk to you on another occasion. Meanwhile—Dominus vobiscum.

# NOTES

The titles and footnotes in square brackets have been inserted by those who prepared Plekhanov's texts for the present five-volume edition. Square brackets in the text contain phrases and passages omitted in certain previous editions.

## SOCIALISM AND THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE

This work, in which Plekhanov gave the first Marxist criticism in Russia of the ideology of the Narodniks, was called by Lenin the "first *profession de foi* [profession of faith] of Russian socialism". (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 287.) It was the first work published by the Emancipation of Labour group.

Plekhanov planned and wrote the pamphlet in the summer of 1883, when he broke with the Narodnaya Volya party.

The work was originally intended for the first issue of the journal *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli (Herald of Narodnaya Volya)*, but contemporary correspondence now kept in Plekhanov House, Leningrad, and letters published in *Dyela i Dni (Matters and Days)* No. 2, 1921, show that negotiations between Plekhanov and the editors of *Vestnik* were unsuccessful.

Lavrov and Tikhomirov, the editors of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, refused to publish this essay, which describes the Narodnaya Volya trend as "a most unprincipled trend". (Cf. Tikhomirov's letter of August 3, 1883, to Lavrov, "The Emancipation of Labour group", Coll. I, 1924, p. 245.) The Emancipation of Labour group published this essay in October 1883 as a separate pamphlet, the first publication in the *Library of Modern Socialism*.

Lavrov published a review of *Socialism and the Political Struggle (Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, Section 2, 1884, pp. 64-67), expressing extreme disapproval of the polemic section. This review was set forth in detail in Plekhanov's letter to Lavrov, given as a preface to the pamphlet *Our Differences*. (Cf. this volume, pp. 107-11.)

*Socialism and the Political Struggle* was reprinted in 1905 in *On Two Fronts*, a collection of articles by Plekhanov, and in the same year in Volume I, the only one printed, of the Geneva edition of Plekhanov's *Works*, in which new notes were given; in 1906 it was again printed as a separate pamphlet. It was translated into Polish and Bulgarian in the nineties.

In this edition it is given according to a text which has been checked with the first edition and the collection *On Two Fronts*.

1 *Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom)*—a journal of the revolutionary Narodniks, published in Petersburg from November 1878 to April 1879

by the Zemlya i Volya organisation. Five issues came out, the first four edited by S. Kravchinsky and N. Morozov, Plekhanov being a member of the editorial board of the fifth issue. p. 49

2 *Chorny Peredel (General Redistribution)*—a journal published from the beginning of 1880 to the end of 1881 by the revolutionary Narodnik organisation of the same name. Originally its editors were G. Plekhanov, P. Axelrod, Y. Stephanovich and L. Deutsch. Its printshop in Petersburg was seized when the first issue was being printed, but that issue and also the second were published abroad. The remaining issues (3-5) were put out in Minsk. p. 49

3 *Zhelyabov*—his biography was written by L. Tikhomirov and appeared anonymously in London in 1882 under the title *Andrei Ivanovich Zhelyabov.* p. 50

4 Epigraph taken from the *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* p. 51

5 An international socialist congress which took place at Chur, Switzerland, at the beginning of October 1881. The *Russian guest* was P. Axelrod. p. 52

6 Plekhanov here alludes to an article by L. Tikhomirov which appeared as an editorial in *Narodnaya Volya*, No. 7, December 23, 1881. It contained a sharp criticism of the speech made by P. Axelrod, the *Russian guest* at the Chur Congress. p. 52

7 The first volume of *Capital* was published in Hamburg in 1867. p. 55

8 F. Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.* Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 126. p. 55

9 *Vperyod group*—followers of P. L. Lavrov in the revolutionary Narodnik movement. They got their name from the journal and the newspaper *Vperyod (Forward)*, published by Lavrov in Zurich and London from 1873 to 1877. Only five issues appeared. Lavrov corresponded with Marx and Engels, and he and his followers tried to establish contact with the European, particularly German Social-Democratic movement. p. 56

10 *Bakuninists*—followers of the anarchist Narodnik M. A. Bakunin. They regarded the peasants as born rebels and professed the adventurous tactics of immediate revolts, for which they were dubbed "the rebels".

Bakunin was the leader of a secret anarchist organisation inside the First International (1864-1872). He waged a fierce struggle against Marx and was expelled from the International at the Hague Congress in 1872. p. 56

11 *La Voix du peuple (The Voice of the People)*—Proudhon's paper which began publication in Paris in 1849. p. 56

12 *Les confessions d'un révolutionnaire (Confessions of a Revolutionary)*—a book by Proudhon setting forth his world outlook and printed in 1849. His petty-bourgeois anarchist views are more completely expounded in another book mentioned later by Plekhanov—*Idée générale de la révolution au XIX siècle (General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century)*, which was published in 1851. p. 56

13 *The System of Economic Contradictions* was written by Proudhon. p. 57

14 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1954, p. 587. p. 58

15 The polemic between Engels and P. N. Tkachov, one of the Narodnik ideologists, took place in 1874-1875. In 1874 Tkachov published in German his *Offener Brief an Herrn Fr. Engels (Open Letter to Mr. Fr. Engels)*, Zurich, 1874. (Cf. P. N. Tkachov, *Selected Works*, Russ.

ed., Vol. 3, 1933, pp. 88-98.) In reply to this letter Engels wrote his article "Soziales aus Russland" in the newspaper *Volksstaat*, 1875, No. 36 and following. Republishing his reply in 1894, Engels provided it with a note in which he said that Tkachov's letter carried, in its form and content, the "usual Bakuninist imprint". (*Der Volksstaat*, Nos. 44, 45, 1875.) Engels ridiculed Tkachov's conspiratorial illusions. "One cannot imagine an easier or more pleasant revolution," he wrote. "A revolt has only to be started simultaneously in three or four places and the 'revolutionary by instinct', 'practical necessity' and the 'instinct of self-preservation' will do the rest 'of themselves'. One simply cannot understand how, if it is so easy, the revolution has not already been carried out, the people emancipated and Russia transformed into a model socialist country." p. 59

16 *Nabat (The Tocsin)*—a Narodnik journal published under the editorship of Tkachov from the end of 1875 to 1881, first in Geneva and then in London. It raised the question of setting up a militant organisation of conspiratorial revolutionaries to seize power and socially reorganise Russia. p. 59

17 *Blanquism* "expects that mankind will be emancipated from wage slavery, not by the proletarian class struggle, but through a conspiracy hatched by a small minority of intellectuals." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 392.) p. 59

18 F. Schiller, *Wilhelm Tell*. p. 60

19 See Note 9. p. 61

20 From 1879 to 1882 Plekhanov was a member of the Narodnik revolutionary organisation Chorny Peredel, which denied the necessity of terror as a means of political struggle, whereas Narodnaya Volya placed terror action in the foreground. p. 62

21 Zemlya i Volya split into two organisations—Narodnaya Volya and Chorny Peredel—at the Voronezh Congress in 1879. p. 62

22 The explosion in the Winter Palace was effected on February 5, 1880, by the famous revolutionary Stepan Khalturin, an active member of the Northern Union of Russian Workers, whom the Narodovoltsi drew into terrorist activity. p. 64

23 The first edition of the pamphlet had: "the period of free trade in the West." p. 64

24 This quotation is from the leading article in the first issue of *Narodnaya Volya*, October 1, 1879, in which we read: "Shall we take upon ourselves the initiative of a campaign against the Government and of a political revolution, or shall we go on ignoring political activity, wasting our energy beating about the people like a fish on the ice? " p. 65

25 Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*, Berlin, 1857. p. 66

26 K. Marx and F. Engels, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Preface. Cf. *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 503-04. p. 67

27 "True socialism"—one of the trends of petty-bourgeois socialism which spread in Germany in the middle of the forties of the 19th century. Marx and Engels severely criticised the "true socialists" in *The German Ideology*, in Engels' article "True Socialists" and in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 130-32. p. 68

28 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Cf. *Selected*

*Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 132. p. 68

29 A. I. Herzen, *My Life and Thoughts*. p. 68

30 This expression was used by Marx and Engels in their Preface to the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, first Russian edition, dated January 21, 1882. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 100. p. 68

31 Plekhanov's translation of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was published in Geneva in 1882 by the publishers of the "Russian Social-Revolutionary Library". This was the first correct translation of the *Manifesto* into Russian; before it there had been only Bakunin's unsuccessful attempt, printed in 1869 at the *Kolokol* printing shop in Geneva. p. 69

32 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Cf. *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 133. p. 70

33 Plekhanov here refers to a book by the Russian bourgeois economist I. Ivanyukov, *Basic Propositions of the Theory of Political Economy from Adam Smith to the Present Day*, Moscow, 1880, in which the author tried to prove among other things that Marx was opposed to a revolution in Russia. p. 70

34 The reference is to Proudhon's book. See Note 12. p. 71

35 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, p. 32. p. 72

36 *The Anti-Corn Law League* headed by Richard Cobden fought in the thirties of the 19th century for the abolition of taxes on corn. It expressed the interests of capitalists who strove to lower wages and make labour cheaper. p. 74

37 *Lujo Brentano*—a representative of the bourgeois apologetic school in political economy, professed "social peace" in capitalist society. He praised the English trade unions as the bulwark against revolutionary infatuations. In the book referred to in the text—*Ueber das Verhältniss von Arbeitslohn und Arbeitszeit zur Arbeitsleistung*, Leipzig, 1876, he maintained that a rise in wages and a shortening of the working day would be profitable not to the workers only but also to the capitalists, since they would raise the productivity of labour. p. 75

38 *The Democratic Federation* (after 1884 the Social-Democratic Federation) was founded in England in 1881 and professed views combining badly assimilated Marxism with demands for bourgeois-democratic reforms.

The *Manifesto* mentioned by Plekhanov was a pamphlet written for the Federation by its founder. (H. M. Hyndman, *England for All*, London, 1881. Cf. Lenin's article "Hyndman on Marx". V. I. Lenin, *On Britain*, Moscow, p. 135.) p. 75

39 *The Northern Union of Russian Workers* was formed out of workers' study groups in Petersburg at the end of 1878. It had more than 200 members and existed until 1880. The Union's programme said that in its tasks it was close to the Social-Democratic parties in the West and that its final aim was to carry out the socialist revolution and its immediate task—the political emancipation of the people and their winning of political rights.

This programme gave rise to no little alarm among the Russian Narodniks. (Cf. G.V. Plekhanov, *The Russian Worker in the Revolutionary*

*Movement, Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. III, p. 184). p. 80

40 *Zerno (Grain)*—a newspaper for workers, published illegally by the organisation Chorny Peredel, 1880-1881. Only six issues appeared: No. 1, October 25, 1880, in Geneva, Nos. 2-6 in Russia. The paper gave particular attention to the spreading of Narodnik ideas among the urban proletariat. p. 80

41 The members of the Northern Union of Russian Workers wrote a "Letter to the Editors" which was published in No. 5, April 8, 1879, of *Zemlya i Volya,* in reply to the Zemlya i Volya organisation, proving that their "demands would remain nothing more than demands" until they fought the autocracy. "We also know," the Letter said, "that political freedom can guarantee us and our organisation against the tyranny of the authorities and give us the possibility to develop our outlook more correctly and achieve greater success in our propaganda." p. 80

42 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Cf. *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 119. p. 80

43 Plekhanov borrowed this statement from the book *Briefe und sozialpolitische Aufsätze von Dr. Rodbertus Jagetzow,* published by Rud. Meyer, Berlin, 1882. p. 81

44 Plekhanov here refers to the studies of the English bourgeois economist and historian Thorold Rogers, in particular to his book *Six Centuries of Work and Wages,* Oxford, 1884, and to the works of the French journalist and statesman, the Malthusianist Charles du Châtelet, author of *Traité de la charité dans ses rapports avec l'état moral et le bien-être matérial des classes inférieures de la société (Treatise on Charity in Its Relations with the Moral State and the Material Welfare of the Lower Classes of Society),* 2nd ed., 1836. p. 81

45 Cf. G. Plekhanov, *Mr. P. Struve in the Role of Critic of the Marxian Theory of Social Development.* (Vol. II of this edition.) p. 81

46 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Cf. *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 117-18. p. 83

47 *Katheder Sozialisten*—representatives of the liberal bourgeois trend which arose in the latter half of the 19th century and united a group of German bourgeois professors who, from their university chairs, taught reformist "theories" on the transformation of capitalism into socialism. p. 84

48 F. Engels, *Marx's Capital.* Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 151-52. p. 85

49 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Cf. *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 117. p. 87

50 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Cf. *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 136. p. 88

51 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Cf. *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 131-32. p. 88

52 *Narodnoye Dyelo (The People's Cause)*—a journal founded in Geneva by the Russian Narodnik revolutionaries. With the exception of the first issue, which was prepared by Bakunin, it was edited by N. I. Utin, former member of Zemlya i Volya and secretary of the Russian section of the First International. *Narodnoye Dyelo* actively collaborated with Marx and Engels in defending their line of tactics in the International and exposing the Bakuninist anarchists. But in the main it adhered to Na-

rodnik standpoints, idealised the Russian village commune and failed to understand the historical necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat. p. 88

53 Plekhanov here means his book *The Development of the Monist View of History*, which he wrote under the pen-name of Beltov. See this volume. p. 89

54 From *The Little Humpbacked Horse* by P. Yershov. Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1957, p. 70. p. 92

55 The editorial of No. 2 of *Narodnaya Volya*, November 15, 1879, says of the Constituent Assembly: "In this assembly 90 per cent of the deputies are from the peasants, and if we assume that our Party is sufficiently skilful in its work, from the Party. What decisions can such an assembly take? It is highly probable that it would give us a complete revolution in all our economic and state relationships...." p. 92

56 The question of the seizure of power by a revolutionary organisation is dealt with in the leading article of No. 8-9 of *Narodnaya Volya*, February 5, 1882. p. 92

57 The article "Preparatory Work of the Party", which Plekhanov quotes here and later, was a programmatic article published on pp. 122-34 of the *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli za 1883*, Geneva. p. 92

58 The programme of the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya was published in No. 3 of the paper *Narodnaya Volya*. The proposition quoted by Plekhanov is in Section C, para 2 (p. 6). p. 93

59 The *Letter of the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya to the Emperor Alexander III* was printed as a leaflet immediately after Alexander II was killed on March 10, 1881. A reprint was published in *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli za 1883*, pp. 9-14. p. 93

60 The Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya suggested that Alexander III should introduce the freedoms which they listed as "a temporary measure pending the decision of the national assembly". p. 94

61 *Zemsky Sobor*—a central representative assembly is referred to. In 1873 Marx and Engels wrote the following on this subject: "At that time the demand was raised for the convention of a Zemsky Sobor. Some demanded it with a view to settling financial difficulties, others—so as to end the monarchy. Bakunin wanted it to demonstrate Russia's unity and to consolidate the tsar's power and might." (L'alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste et l'association Internationale des travailleurs. Rapport et documents publiés par ordre du congrès international de La Haye, 1873, p. 113.)

Many Russian revolutionaries equated the convocation of a Zemsky Sobor with the overthrow of the tsarist dynasty.

The convocation of a Zemsky Sobor representing all citizens to draw up a constitution was one of the programmatic demands of the Russian Social-Democratic Party. p. 95

62 *Raznochintsi* (people of different ranks and titles)—a section of Russian society at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries. Educated people who came of merchants, small townspeople, clergy and the peasantry and not of the nobility. From them came a whole generation of revolutionaries, fighters against absolutism and serfdom. p. 95

63 All the quotations in this paragraph are from the leading article of No.

8-9 of *Narodnaya Volya*, February 5, 1882, p. 3. p. 96

64 The first edition has "estates". p. 97

65 Séyan, prefect of the Praetorian Guards. Mistrusting those around him, Tiberius, Roman Emperor, made Séyan one of his trustees. Séyan gradually won exceptional influence at the court and in the state. Overcome by ambition he poisoned Drusus, Tiberius' son, and organised a plot against Tiberius. The plot was disclosed and Séyan was put to death. p. 100

66 *Rabochaya Gazeta (The Workers' Gazette)*—an illegal newspaper published from December 1880 to December 1881 by a group of workers who were members of Narodnaya Volya in Petersburg, under the editorship of A. I. Zhelyabov. In all three issues were published. Its publication ceased after the crash of the Narodnaya Volya organisation. p. 103

67 *Rabotnik (The Worker)*—an illegal newspaper of the Bakuninist trend published in Geneva, 1875-1876. In all fifteen issues were published. It was intended for the "Russian working people"—the factory workers and the peasants—and called on them to revolt. p. 103

68 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Cf. *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 137. p. 104

69 *Nedelya (Week)*—a weekly paper published in Petersburg from 1866 to 1901. After 1876 it went over to the hands of the liberal Narodniks and professed the theory of "minor matters", i.e., called on the intelligentsia to give up the revolutionary struggle and to pursue "cultural work". p. 105

70 The "Announcement of the Publication of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*" was printed in No. 1 of that journal, issued in 1883. The first lines of the Announcement say: "*Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* intends to be the organ abroad of Russian socialism as expressed in the party of Narodnaya Volya, which is fighting for absolutely definite aims under absolutely definite conditions." p. 106

## OUR DIFFERENCES

The book *Our Differences* was written by Plekhanov in the summer of 1884 and published at the beginning of 1885 in the third volume of the *Library of Modern Socialism*. It was the second big theoretical work of the Emancipation of Labour group, following *Socialism and the Political Struggle*. The significance of this work was rated very high by Engels in his letter of April 23, 1885, to Vera Zasulich. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 383-85.)

An interesting reaction to the publication of *Our Differences* was a letter of the Petersburg workers' group called Blagoyevtsi (after Blagoyev), one of the first Social-Democratic groups in Russia, to the Emancipation of Labour group. The letter dates to 1884 or 1885 and is kept in the Plekhanov Archives. In it the workers wrote: "If this book does not induce people to adhere to the opinions of our group (though examples of this have already been observed), there can be no doubt that it provides a mass of material for the criticism of the Narodnaya Volya programme, and a recasting of that programme is positively necessary for the struggle. If possible, send us large numbers of this pamphlet...."

Plekhanov himself attributed particular significance to this book as a most

important stage in the ideological fight against Narodism. Ten years after its publication he made two attempts to publish under the same title, as a second part of this book, his new works directed, this time, against liberal Narodniks, Mikhailovsky, Vorontsov and others. But as both these works were published legally, Plekhanov, in order not to reveal their author, was obliged to give them other names, *The Development of the Monist View of History* and *Justification of Narodism in the Works of Mr. Vorontsov (V.V.).* Later, fighting the Epigoni of Narodism, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Plekhanov again proposed to give the same title to a book directed against them. But this book was never completed and was published in the form of several articles in *Iskra,* in 1903 under the title "Proletariat and Peasantry". (Cf. *Iskra,* Nos. 32-35 and 39.)

Like other early works of Plekhanov published in the eighties and nineties, *Our Differences* was not republished until 1905 and became a bibliographical rarity. In 1905 it was republished in Vol. I (the only one published) of the Geneva edition of his *Works.*

The text published in the present edition has been checked with the first edition and with the first volume of the Geneva edition of Plekhanov's *Works.*

71 This article by Lavrov was published in the bibliography section of *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli,* No. 2, Section 2, pp. 64-67, April 1884. It contains an analysis of two new pamphlets published by the *Library of Modern Socialism: Socialism and the Political Struggle* by Plekhanov, and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Engels. The article is signed *P. L.*. p. 107

72 From Nekrasov's poem "The honest, bravely fallen are silenced". (N. A. Nekrasov, *Selected Works,* Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1945, p. 328.) p. 111

73 *Nonconformists*—a Protestant sect in England which did not conform to the dominant Church of England and was therefore subject to persecution. p. 112

74 In the seventies, Plekhanov belonged to one of the groups of revolutionary Narodism, the Bakuninist "rebels". See Note 10. p. 113

75 The reference is to the article "Bankruptcy of Bourgeois Science" by Tarasov (N. Rusanov) in *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli,* No. 1, pp. 59-97. p. 114

76 Plekhanov is referring to Tarasov's article "Political and Economic Factors in the Life of Peoples", the beginning of which was published in *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli,* No. 2, Section 1, 1884, pp. 1-36. In this article Tarasov bases himself on Dühring to affirm that the political factor plays the primary role in historical evolution. p. 117

77 Character in Voltaire's tale *Histoire de Genni ou l'athée et le sage. Oeuvres complètes,* Vol. XXI, Paris, 1879, p. 529. p. 117

78 Words from Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe.* p. 117

79 The "Announcement of the Publication of the *Library of Modern Socialism*" by the Emancipation of Labour group was published in Geneva, signed by editors P. Axelrod and G. Plekhanov, and dated September 25, 1883. It was printed in October of the same year as a supplement to the first edition of the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle* and in 1905 it was included in the first volume of the Geneva edition of Plekhanov's *Works,* pp. 139-40. In this last edition the footnote written by Deutsch was omitted. It was given under the title "For the Reader's Information"

on an unnumbered page (the third). In the *Works*, Vol. II (post-revolutionary edition) the announcement is on pp. 21-23. p. 118

80 L. Tikhomirov's article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" was printed in *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, Section 1, 1884, pp. 227-62. p. 119

81 On the substance of "Tkachovism" see Introduction, Section 6 "P. N. Tkachov" (pp. 156-61 of this volume) and Note 15. p. 119

82 V. V.—V. P. Vorontsov. p. 119

83 On March 1, 1881, by decision of Narodnaya Volya, Alexander II was assassinated in Petersburg by I. I. Grinevitsky. The organisers of this act of terror, A.I. Zhelyabov, N. I. Kibalchich, S. L. Perovskaya, T. M. Mikhailov and N. I. Rysakov, were executed. Many members of Narodnaya Volya were imprisoned and exiled. A period of fierce reaction set in. p. 119

84 Nechayev's organisation Narodnaya Rasprava (The People's Vengeance) (1869) was based on the principles of Jesuitism, intimidation, and terrorism professed by Nechayev and his inspirer Bakunin. To quote Bakunin, Nechayev's task was "not to teach the people, but to revolt". Marx and Engels resolutely opposed the ideas and activity of the Nechayev organisation and described their plans for reorganising society as "barracks communism". p. 120

85 Quotation from P. Lavrov's review "Outside Russia". (*Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, Section 2, 1884, p. 3.) p. 121

86 The reference here is to the first programme of the Emancipation of Labour group, put out in 1884. It was accompanied by notes pointing out that it was not final but admitted of corrections and additions, provided they did not contradict the basic ideas of scientific socialism. (See this volume, p. 359.) p. 121

87 *Famusov*—a character in Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe*, a domineering obscurantist and hypocrite. p. 121

88 Paraphrase of Dante's words, "Go your way and let people say what they will", with which Marx ends the Preface to the first edition of the first volume of *Capital*. p. 123

89 Quotations from the first part of Plekhanov's article "The Law of Economic Development of Society and Socialism's Tasks in Russia", in which the author still adhered to Narodnik positions, and which was published in *Zemlya i Volya*, Nos. 3 and 4. (G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Russ. ed., 1923-1927, Vol. I, pp. 62-66.) p. 126

90 Margarete's reply to Faust's pantheist speech: "With words a little different." (Cf. Goethe, *Faust*.) p. 127

91 *Khlestakov*—a character in Gogol's comedy *Inspector-General*—a liar and boaster. p. 128

92 Quotation from Marx's Preface to the first edition of the first volume of *Capital*. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, pp. 88-89.) p. 129

93 A. I. Herzen's three letters to the English politician Linton were published in 1854 in English and then in 1858 they were translated into Russian under the title "The Old World and Russia". They were included in the complete collection of Herzen's works and letters under the editorship of M. K. Lemke, Vol. VIII, St. Petersburg, 1919. Plekhanov here

quotes from the third letter, dedicated to Russia. (Cf. Vol. VIII, pp. 45-46.)
p. 129

94 N. G. Chernyshevsky's article "Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices Against Communal Land Tenure" was published in *Sovremennik*, No. 12, 1858. (Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works* in 15 volumes, Vol. V, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1950, pp. 357-92.) p. 131

95 G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Russ. ed. (1923-1927), Vol. V, pp. 21-22. p. 133

96 All the quotations made above are from Chernyshevsky's article "Studien", devoted to an analysis of Haxthausen's *Studien über die Inneren Zustände, das Volksleben und insbesondere die ländlichen Einrichtungen Russlands.* The article was published in *Sovremennik*, No. 7, 1857. (Cf. N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. IV, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1948, pp. 303-48.) p. 134

97 Describing Vera Pavlovna's fourth dream in his novel *What Is To Be Done?* Chernyshevsky gives a utopian picture of socialist society. (Cf. N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. XI, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1939, pp. 269-84.) p. 134

98 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 134. p. 136

99 From Goethe's *Faust*. p. 137

100 F. Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. p. 138

101 From Heine's "Germany. *A Winter Tale*". p. 138

102 From Chernyshevsky's article on Haxthausen. (See Note 96.) p. 139

103 Chernyshevsky's article "The Struggle of the Parties in France under Louis XVIII and Charles X" was published in *Sovremennik*, Nos. 8 and 9, 1858. (N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. V, Russ. ed., 1950, pp. 213-91.) p. 140

104 N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. V, Russ. ed., 1950, pp. 216-17. p. 141

105 Quotation from the Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association (First International), written by Marx in 1864. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 17. p. 141

106 Plekhanov refers to the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* as published in 1882. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 118.) p. 142

107 Quotation from the pamphlet *Ingenious Mechanism* by V. Y. Varzar, Narodnik and follower of Lavrov, published in the early seventies when peaceful propagandists used to go "among the people". p. 145

108 The article "The Russian People and Socialism" was a letter from Herzen to the French historian J. Michelet, written in 1851. (Cf. A. I. Herzen, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Moscow, 1956, p. 470.) p. 151

109 The editor of *Rus* was the Slavophile I. S. Aksakov, and the editor of *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* was the reactionary M. N. Katkov. p. 151

110 Quotation from L. Tikhomirov's article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" p. 152

111 Herzen in his letter to J. Michelet mentioned on p. 151. p. 152

112 Quotation from G. R. Derzhavin's (1743–1816) poem. p. 152

113 This is the title of a series of tales written by G. I. Uspensky. p. 152

114 In the ancient Persian religion Ormuzd was the supreme god, the principle of good, and Ahriman was the principle of evil and calamities. p. 153

115 The Chinese side of the question is to be understood as hardened, invariable, secluded life, as though fenced off published by the journal Nabat, London, 1879. (Cf. P. N. Tkachov, the Chinese wall.) p. 153

116 P. N. Tkachov, *Tasks of Revolutionary Propaganda in Russia,* Letter to the editor of *Vperyod!* 1874. (Cf. P. N. Tkachov, *Selected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. 3, pp. 55-87.) p. 157

117 P. N. Tkachov, *Open Letter to Mr. Fr. Engels,* author of the articles "*Emigrant Literature*" in Nos. 117 and 118 of *Volksstaat,* 1874. (Cf. P. N. Tkachov, *Selected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. 3, 1933, pp. 88-98.) p. 158

118 *Anarchy of Thought*—a collection of critical essays by P. N. Tkachov published by the journal *Nabat,* London, 1879. (Cf. P. N. Tkachov, *Selected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. 3, pp. 303-37.) p. 161

119 *Russian Social-Revolutionary Youth*—a polemical pamphlet written by P. L. Lavrov against Tkachov's *Tasks of Revolutionary Propaganda in Russia.* It was published in London in 1874 and signed: Editor of the journal *Vperyod!* (Cf. P. L. Lavrov, *Selected Works on Social and Political Subjects* in 8 volumes, Russ. ed., 1934, Vol. 3, pp. 335-72.) p. 161

120 Editorial articles under the general title "Revolutionary Propaganda" were printed in a number of issues of *Nabat,* 1877-1878. p. 161

121 Quotations from P. N. Tkachov's *What Is To Be Done Now? (Selected Works,* Russ. ed., Vol. 3, pp. 442, 446.) p. 162

122 Quotation from Engels' article "Position of England". (A review of Thomas Carlyle's *Past and Present.* Marx/Engels, *Werke,* Bd. I, S. 525-50.) p. 165

123 *Thinking realists*—an expression used in the works of D. I. Pisarev. The revolutionary Narodniks sometimes gave themselves this name. p. 165

124 Quotation from P. Lavrov's review of *Socialism and the Political Struggle. (Vestnik Narodnoi Voli,* No. 2, Section 2, 1884, p. 65.) p. 168

125 Quotation from Engels' *Emigrant Literature,* Section 2, "The Programme of the Blanquist Emigrés of the Commune". The article was printed in *Volksstaat* in 1874. p. 168

126 Plekhanov's quotation from Lermontov's poem "Journalist, Reader and Writer" is not quite accurate. p. 170

127 The journal *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* was edited by Marx and Arnold Ruge in Paris in 1844. Only one issue, a double one, appeared. Plekhanov here refers to Marx's article "Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law", published in that issue. p. 171

128 K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* Moscow, p. 197. p. 171

129 Plekhanov here refers to Tarasov's article "Bankruptcy of Bourgeois Science", devoted to the analysis of Ivanyukov's book *Basic Propositions of the Theory of Political Economy from Adam Smith to the Present Day.* (See Note 33.) p. 172

130 P. L. Lavrov. (See Note 119.) p. 173

131 Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte,* Berlin, 1848, S. 536. p. 173

132 Words of the poet in Pushkin's poem "The Hero". The original says: *"Self-glorifying lies are dearer to us than many a bitter truth."* p. 174

133 The author of "A Letter to Former Comrades" was O. V. Aptekman. The letter gave a historical and theoretical substantiation of the programme and work of the Chorny Peredel group. p. 174

134 This leading article was written by Plekhanov. p. 175

135 *Independents*—a political party during the English Revolution of the 17th century, expressing the interests of the middle bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisified nobles. By their demands of religious freedom and independence they drew the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry in their wake for a time. p. 176

136 All quotations from Tikhomirov in this and the following chapters are taken from his article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution? " p. 177

137 Words from Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe.* p. 178

138 From Krylov's fable "The Crow and the Fox". p. 178

139 This formulation is the one given by Lassalle in his famous pamphlet *Programme of Workers.* p. 179

140 See this volume, p. 101 et seq. p. 180

141 In the article "Preparatory Work of the Party." (*Kalendar Narodnoi Voli za 1883,* pp. 122-34.) p. 181

142 See Note 66. p. 182

143 In one of his unpublished notes kept in Plekhanov House, Leningrad, Plekhanov quotes significant pronouncements of French public figures on the eve of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71.

"Marshal Leboeuf: 'We are ready, more than ready; if the war lasts even as much as a year we shall not be short of anything, not even buttons for the soldiers' gaiters!'

"The President of the Senate: 'Sire, thanks to your solicitude, France is prepared.'

"The War Minister: 'There is no Prussian army; I deny it.'" p. 182

144 *Pangloss*—Candide's tutor in Voltaire's tale *Candide.* Pangloss followed Leibniz's proposition "All is for the best in this, the best of worlds". p. 186

145 According to tradition the Roman patrician Lucretia (6th cent. B. C.), raped by the Emperor's son Sextus, committed suicide, and this, it is said, provided a pretext for the revolt which ended in the banning of the Roman emperors and the establishment of an aristocratic republic. p. 186

146 Quotation from Heine's poem "Fragen". p. 188

147 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Cf. *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 111-13. p. 190

148 Cf. Letter of January 6, 1873, in *Briefe und sozial-politische Aufsätze von Dr. Rodbertus-Jagetzow,* edited by Rud. Meyer, Berlin, 1882, Bd. I, S. 291. p. 190

149 K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Britain,* Moscow, 1962, pp. 36-38. p. 191

150 N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works,* Vol. VII, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1950, p. 223. p. 192

151 V. V. (Vorontsov)'s book *The Destinies of Capitalism in Russia* was published in 1882. p. 193

152 Quotation from Goethe's *Faust.* p. 193

153 Quotation from K. Marx's *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Moscow, p. 197. p. 194

154 *"The iron law of wages"*—a dogma of bourgeois political economy based on Malthus' reactionary population theory. It was Lassalle who described it as "iron". Marx expounded this law as follows: "According to them, wages rise in consequence of accumulation of capital. The higher wages stimulate the working population to more rapid multiplication, and this goes on until the labour-market becomes too full, and therefore capital, relatively to the supply of labour, becomes insufficient. Wages fall, and now we have the reverse of the medal." (K. Marx, *Capital,* Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 637.) Proceeding from the doctrine that wages find in the growth of the population "natural", "inherent" limits, bourgeois economists maintained that the poverty and unemployment of the working classes were the fault not of the capitalist mode of production, but of nature. Both in *Capital* and his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Marx proved that "the iron law", as opposed to the Lassallean theory of wages, is completely unfounded. p. 195

155 Quotation from Tikhomirov's article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" (*Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, 1884, p. 240.) p. 197

156 The first edition has "Western". p. 198

157 K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Moscow, p. 45. p. 200

158 *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76. p. 200

159 *The Peace of Nymwegen* was concluded between France and the Netherlands in 1678. p. 202

160 *The Peace of Versailles* was signed on September 3, 1783, between the U.S.A. and its allies, France, Spain and Holland, on the one side, and England on the other. p. 202

161 Quotation from Friedrich List, *Das nationale System der politischen Oekonomie*, 2-te Aufl., Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1842, Bd. 1, Kap. 9, S. 154. p. 204

162 *Ibid.*, S. 155. p. 204

163 *Communist League*—the first organisation of the revolutionary proletariat, founded by Marx and Engels in the summer of 1847 in London. Marx and Engels were charged by this organisation to write the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* which was published in February 1848. The defeat of the revolution in Germany 1848-1849 led in 1850 to a split between Marx and Engels' supporters and the Willich-Schapper group within the Communist League. At the end of 1852, on Marx's initiative, the League was officially dissolved. The Communist League was one of the predecessors of German Social-Democracy and the First International. p. 207

164 This and the following quotations are from Marx's article "Revelations about the Cologne Communist Trial". p. 207

165 Plekhanov here refers to the proclamation of the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya "To the Ukrainian People", dated August 30, 1881, in connection with the anti-Jewish pogroms. The editorial board of the

paper *Narodnaya Volya* expressed its solidarity with that proclamation in "Home Review". (*Narodnaya Volya*, No. 6, October 23, 1881.) p. 209

166 *Walka Klas (The Class Struggle)*—organ of the International Social-Revolutionary Party published in Geneva in the Polish language. p. 210

167 K. Marx, *Enthullüngen über den Kommunisten-Prozeß zu Köln* (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 8, Berlin, 1969, S. 413). p. 210

168 *Physiocrats*—a group of French bourgeois economists in the second half of the 18th century (Quesnay, Turgot and others) who considered agricultural labour as the only productive work and supported the development of industrial agriculture. p. 213

169 *Manchester School*—a group of English economists (Cobden, Bright and others) who in the first half of the 19th century expressed the interests of industrial bourgeoisie of the premonopolistic epoch, aspirations of that bourgeoisie for free trade, and its protest against any state interference in economic life. These economists fiercely fought against corn taxes, on the one hand, and against restricting the length of the working day by legislation, on the other. They considered free competition to be the main motive force of production. Marx showed that Manchesterian demagogy covered up the desire to achieve freedom of capitalist enterprise and to intensify the exploitation of the working class. p. 214

170 *Polyakov*—a Russian capitalist—used to bribe the ministers to obtain concessions in railway building. p. 215

171 *Vestnik Yevropy (European Messenger)*—a monthly magazine devoted to politics and history, bourgeois liberal in trend, that appeared in St. Petersburg from 1866 to 1918. From the nineties it fought Marxism. p. 217

172 Vorontsov borrowed this table from V. I. Veshnyakov's article "Russian Industry and Its Needs". *Vestnik Yevropy*, No. 10, 1870. p. 217

173 *Weaving hall* (Russian *svetyolka*)—here it is a special light, roomy loghouse used for work. p. 220

174 The reference to the All-Russia Arts and Industry Exhibition held in Moscow in 1882. p. 224

175 *Manilov*—a character from Gogol's *Dead Souls*—a vain and fruitless dreamer. p. 234

176 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, pp. 748-49. p. 236

177 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 470. p. 236

178 John, Chap. 13. Words of Jesus to Judas when the latter hesitated to give his treacherous signal to the Roman soldiers. p. 237

179 In the article " 'Novelties in Economic Literature' (bibliography). V. V. *Destinies of Capitalism in Russia*, Petersburg, 1882." (*Yuridichesky Vestnik* [*The Legal Herald*], January 1883, pp. 89-110.) p. 237

180 Quotation from Plekhanov's Note 8 to the pamphlet *What Do the Social-Democrats Want?* p. 242

181 The reference is to M. Tugan-Baranovsky's book: *Industrial Crises. Essays on the Social History of England*, 2nd ed., St. Petersburg, 1900. There was an edition in 1923. p. 242

182 Plekhanov's statements about Lenin referring to the year 1905 are absolutely untrue. Here one can plainly see the Menshevik Plekhanov's tendency to injure Bolshevism by representing Lenin's defence and sub-

stantiation of the Marxist theory of markets as a repetition of the theories of the vulgar economist J.-B. Say. It was precisely in his work *Note on the Theory of Markets* that Lenin criticised Smith's and Say's market theory. p. 242

183 *Razuvayev*—a character in several tales by Saltykov-Shchedrin. (See Note 268.) p. 243

184 Cf. *Correspondence of Marx and Engels with Russian Political Figures*, Gospolitizdat Publishing House, 1951, pp. 340-42. p. 245

185 Inaccurate quotation from Nekrasov's poem "Father Frost, Red Nose". p. 246

186 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 358. p. 246

187 *State peasants*—peasants who lived on the land belonging to the state to which they were obliged to pay feudal rent in addition to the state tax. Money dues of these peasants were extremely burdensome. However, their conditions were somewhat better than those of the landlords' serfs. The law gave them more rights in the use of the land, recognised them as free peasants (*selskiye obyvateli*) and allowed them to change their place of residence.

*Appanage peasants*—a category of peasants who were the personal serfs of the tsar and his family and lived on special plots provided for the maintenance of the tsarist court.

The conditions of these peasants hardly differed from those of the landlords' peasants.

*Temporarily-bound peasants*—former serfs released from personal dependence on the landlords. After the abolition of serfdom in 1861, the peasants received not the ownership but the use of land allotments, for which they were obliged to perform labour services and pay money to the landlords until they had paid the redemption fees, i.e., they were "temporarily bound". (See also Note 195.) p. 253

188 By popular economy as such Plekhanov understands peasant communal economy. p. 256

189 *The Invincible Armada*—a Spanish fleet sent by Philip II of Spain against England in 1588. It was defeated by the English and Dutch fleets and destroyed by storms. p. 258

190 The Cat and the Cook—from Krylov's fables. Here he represents the autocracy. p. 258

191 At the end of the second volume of his poem *Dead Souls*, Gogol gave a symbolical figure of Russia in the form of a troika rushing forward while "other peoples and states give way to it". p. 259

192 *Sazhen*—an old Russian measure of length = 2.25 yds. p. 262

193 *Mera*—an old Russian measure of weight = 144 lbs. p. 263

94 This is apparently a mistake. On page 40 of Prugavin's book, from where the quotation is taken, the following volosts of Yuryev Uyezd are mentioned: Spasskoye, Esiplevo, Davydovo, Petrovskoye, Gorkino and Simskaya. p. 265

*edemption*—a step taken by the tsarist government after the abolition serfdom. The Reform of 1861 provided that the temporarily-bound ants were to redeem their allotments. On concluding the redemption the temporarily-bound peasants became property owners and were rom former obligatory services to their landlords. p. 269

*ysl*—first prince or *posadnik* of Novgorod according to some of

the later chronicles. p. 272

197 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, Introduction, p. 31. p. 276

198 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, p. 31. p. 277

199 *"Devoted without flattery"*—motto on the crest of Arakcheyev, bestowed on him by Paul I. Thanks to Pushkin's epigram it became a symbol of servility towards influential personages. p. 281

200 *Credo, quia absurdum*—a saying attributed to the Christian writer Tertullian (3rd cent. A. D.). p. 283

201 Quotation from P. L. Lavrov's review of Plekhanov's *Socialism and the Political Struggle*, published in *Vestnik Norodnoi Voli*, No. 2, Section 2, 1884, pp. 64-67. p. 283

202 Plekhanov here means Vera Ivanovna Zasulich. p. 283

203 K. T.—K. Tarasov. Plekhanov refers to his review of E. Laverdays' book, *Les assemblées parlantes. Critique du gouvernement représentatif*, Paris, 1883. Cf. *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, Section 2, 1884, pp. 67-85. p. 286

204 *Akaky Akakiyevich*—a minor official in Gogol's tale *The Coat*. p. 291

205 Reference to an article by I. Luchitsky, "The Land Commune in the Pyrenees". *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, No. 9, 1883, pp. 57-78. p. 292

206 The edict, which was issued by the Emperor Peter III on February 18, 1762, freed the gentry from compulsory military or state service. p. 293

207 From Krylov's fable "The Tomtit". The tomtit attained fame but did not set the sea on fire. p. 303

208 The words italicised here are not so in the pamphlet *Socialism and the Political Struggle*. p. 306

209 The expression *"fear the Greeks"*—*"timeo danaos et dona ferentes"* ("I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts")—is connected with the legend of the Trojan Laocoon who tried to convince his fellow citizens not to bring into the city the wooden horse left by the Greeks. His fears came true—the soldiers hidden in the horse helped to capture Troy. p. 306

210 *The Battle of Sadowa*, in July 1866, ended the Austro-Prussian War and determined Prussia's leading role in the unification of Germany. p. 308

211 The *"repentant nobleman"* is an expression introduced into literature by N. K. Mikhailovsky and characterising the type of man who regards himself as owing a debt he cannot pay to his people for the sins of his fathers and the horrors of serfdom. p. 308

212 From Goethe's *Faust*. p. 312

213 See M. Kovalevsky's book *Communal Land Tenure, the Causes, Course and Consequences of Its Disintegration*, Moscow, 1879. p. 318

214 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, p. 31. p. 324

215 From Goethe's *Faust*. p. 324

216 Arthur Arnoult, *L' état et la révolution*, Geneva and Brussels, *Rabotnik*, 1877. p. 324

217 The reference is to K. Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in Berlin in 1859. p. 328

218 F. Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Moscow, 1956, pp. 138-39. p. 335

219 K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Cf. K. Marx and

F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 398. p. 335

220 In his article "What Can We Expect from the Revolution?" Tikhomirov opposes the views of the members of Narodnaya Volya to those of the Emancipation of Labour group, which, he maintains, had no other way out than to promote the development of Russian capitalism and to fight for a liberal constitution. According to his assertion, Narodnaya Volya fought for a constitution to hand over power to the people, not "to give the bourgeoisie a new instrument for organising and disciplining the working class by depriving them of land, by fines and manhandling." (Cf. *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, 1884, p. 237.) p. 337

221 A tale by A. Ertel, a liberal writer who in his writings represented merchants and businessmen as the organisers of the economy and vehicles of progress, was published in *Vestnik Yevropy*, Nos. 6-8, 1883. p. 337

222 *Otechestvenniye Zapiski (Fatherland Notes)*—a literary political magazine published in Petersburg from 1820. In 1839 it became the best progressive publication of its day. Among its contributors were V. G. Belinsky, A. I. Herzen, T. N. Granovsky, and N.P. Ogaryov. In 1868 the magazine came under the direction of M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin, N. A. Nekrasov and G. Z. Yeliseyev. This marked the onset of a period in which the magazine flourished anew, gathering around itself the revolutionary-democratic intellectuals of Russia. The *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* was continually harassed by the censors, and in April 1884 was closed down by the tsarist government. p. 337

223 Words of Repetilov in Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe*. p. 338

224 A reference to the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Alexander II made by A. I. Brzozowski, a Polish revolutionary, in Paris on June 6, 1867. p. 338

225 From Nekrasov's poem "The Forsaken Village". p. 338

226 Here Plekhanov probably refers to the passage in Tikhomirov's article where he draws a parallel between the conservative, who sees the salvation of Russia in a strong gentry, and the Social-Democrat, who sees it in the working class. p. 340

227 *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 2, 1884, p. 236. p. 343

228 Plekhanov's comparison bears on the conduct of the Narodnaya Volya member Goldenberg after his arrest. He broke the rules of conspiracy and was caught by the secret police. Realising that he had involuntarily betrayed the cause, he committed suicide in the Peter and Paul Fortress. Zhelyabov is contrasted with Goldenberg as the type of strong-willed underground conspirator. p. 345

229 Plekhanov here quotes the programmatic article in *Kalendar Narodnoi Voli za 1883*—"Preparatory Work of the Party". The section of this article on the urban workers begins with the words: "The working population of the towns, which is of particularly great significance for the revolution both by its position and its great development, must be the object of the Party's serious attention." (p. 130.) p. 345

230 The explosion in the Winter Palace, carried out by Stepan Khalturin, and the sapping of the Malaya Sadovaya were stages in the plans for the assassination of Alexander II, worked out by the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya and ending in the terrorist act of March 1, 1881—the assassination of Alexander II. p. 346

231 On the Northern Union of Russian Workers see Notes 39 and 41. p. 346

232 The end of the seventies was marked by a wave of strikes embracing a number of branches of industry, chiefly the textile industry, in which the exploitation of the workers was most intense. During the three years from 1878 to 1880 there were over a hundred strikes. These were of a purely economic character, the workers still believed in the tsar and even addressed a "petition" to Alexander III, who succeeded to the throne. Some Narodnaya Volya members, in particular Plekhanov, took an active part in the organisation of these strikes. (See Plekhanov's correspondence and the article "The Russian Workers in the Revolutionary Movement".) p. 347

233 K. Marx, *General Rules of the International Working Men's Association.* Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, p. 19. p. 350

234 Tikhomirov's contribution—signed L. T.—"G. Plekhanov—*Our Differences*, Geneva, 1885." (*Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, No. 5, Section 2, 1886, p. 40, Notes on New Books.) p. 358

235 Plekhanov wrote the article "Inevitable Change" in connection with Tikhomirov's foreword to the second edition of his book *La Russie politique et sociale*. The article "A New Champion of Autocracy, or Mr. L. Tikhomirov's Grief" was a reply to Tikhomirov's pamphlet *Why I Ceased to Be a Revolutionary*, on which Plekhanov also wrote a short review. The article "A New Champion of Autocracy" is included in this volume. p. 358

## PROGRAMME OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC EMANCIPATION OF LABOUR GROUP

The writing of this first draft programme apparently coincided with the organisation of the Emancipation of Labour group in the autumn of 1883. This is borne out by correspondence of its members. (Cf. *The Emancipation of Labour Group*, Coll. I, p. 187.) and by the mention of the programme in L. Deutsch's letter to his comrades in Russia. (Cf. *The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. I, p. 225.)

The programme was published later, in 1884, in Geneva, as a separate pamphlet. In 1905 it was included in the first volume of Plekhanov's *Works*, published in Geneva.

The present edition conforms to the text of the second volume of Plekhanov's *Works* (1923-1927), checked with the last edition during the author's lifetime in 1905.

236 Regarding the point of direct popular legislation, which was also included in the second draft, Lenin wrote in 1899 in his article "A Draft Programme of Our Party" that this point should not be introduced into the programme, since the "victory of socialism must not be connected, in principle, with the *substitution* of direct people's legislation for parliamentarism". (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 238.) p. 360

237 Here, as in the later formulations of the draft on the subject of the "socialist intelligentsia", one can feel the Narodnik past of the authors of the programme. p. 361

238 In 1907, in his work *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907*, Lenin said of this and similar

formulations: "The error of that programme is not that its principles or partial demands were wrong. No. Its principles are correct.... The error of that programme is its abstract character, the absence of any concrete view of the subject.... Of course, it would be absurd to put the blame for this mistake on the authors of the programme, who for the first time laid down certain principles long before the formation of a workers' party. On the contrary, it should be particularly emphasised that in that programme the inevitability of a 'radical revision' of the Peasant Reform was recognised twenty years before the Russian Revolution." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 256.) p. 362

239 The point about production associations, which was again included in the second draft, reflected the influence of Lassalleanism. There was an analogous point in the Gotha Programme—the programme of German Social-Democracy adopted in May 1875. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 24-25.)

Lenin spoke of the need to omit this point from the Programme of the R.S.D.L.P., being of the opinion, however, that its inclusion in the programme was natural in the period of the Emancipation of Labour group. (Cf. V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 241.) p. 363

240 The erroneous point of the First Draft of the programme dealing with the necessity of individual terror is an echo of and a concession to Narodnaya Volya. In the Second Draft there is no longer any question of individual terror, but of the transition, at a convenient time, to "general and resolute attacks" on the Government, terror no longer being considered necessary under all circumstances as a means of struggle. (Cf. "Second Draft Programme", p. 366 of this volume.) p. 363

241 Calling on the intelligentsia to work among the industrial proletariat, the authors of the Draft admitted the possibility of "an independent revolutionary movement" of the peasantry. This admission is omitted from the Second Draft. Neither the First nor the Second Draft underlines with sufficient clarity the revolutionary role of the peasantry in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, or the thought that the proletariat could be victorious over tsarism only in alliance with the peasantry. p. 363

## SECOND DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

The Second Draft Programme of the Emancipation of Labour group was written in 1887. It was highly appraised by Lenin. (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 231-32.)

The Second Draft was first published in Geneva in 1888 under the title "Draft Programme of the Russian Social-Democrats", as an appendix to the pamphlet *What Do the Social-Democrats Want?* It was published a second time ten years later as an appendix to Axelrod's pamphlet *On the Question of the Contemporary Tasks and Tactics of the Russian Social-Democrats* which appeared in Geneva in 1898. Its next publication was in the *Social-Democratic Calendar for 1902*, published by the Struggle group in Geneva. In 1903 the Draft was published by G. A. Kuklin as a separate pamphlet with the "Announcement on the Resumption of the Publications of the Emancipation of Labour Group". This was its last edition during the author's lifetime.

In the present volume the Draft is printed according to the text of the second volume of Plekhanov's *Works* (1923-1927) checked with the first,

second and the last impressions during the author's lifetime. p. 364

242 See Note 236.

243 All these "statements on the causes of 'instability', etc., of the intelligentsia" ought, in Lenin's opinion, to have been omitted from the section on the principles in the programme. (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 237.) p. 366

244 In connection with this point Lenin wrote in 1899: "We believe that the programme of a *working-class party* is no place for indications of the means of activity that were necessary in the programme of a group of revolutionaries abroad...." And further: "In order to leave nothing unsaid, we will make the reservation that, in our personal opinion, terror is *not* advisable as a means of struggle *at the present moment*, that the Party (*as a party*) must renounce it (until there occurs a change of circumstances that might lead to a change of tactics)...." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 236.) p. 366

245 The first two editions read: "basing itself on these ... *rights*, the workers' party will *put forward*...." The change was introduced in the last edition during the author's lifetime, in 1903, and it is probable that the text in the *Works* was printed according to that edition. p. 367

246 Lenin wrote in connection with this point: "It seems to me that the basic idea here expressed is perfectly correct and that the Social-Democratic working-class party should, in point of fact, include a relevant demand in its programme." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 241.) However, he considered that this demand was not precise enough for the end of the nineties. Plekhanov himself also admitted this in his *Commentary on the Draft Programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party*, explaining the formulation of the draft by "diplomatic" considerations. p. 367

247 For changes and additions to this point see V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 240-41. p. 367

248 See Note 239. p. 367

249 Concerning this note Lenin wrote in 1899: "...When the traditions of revolutionary Narodism were still alive, such a declaration was sufficient; but today we must ourselves begin to discuss the 'basic principles of work' among the peasantry if we want the Social-Democratic working-class party to become a vanguard fighter for democracy." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 247.) p. 368

## A NEW CHAMPION OF AUTOCRACY, OR Mr. L. TIKHOMIROV'S GRIEF
(Reply to the Pamphlet: *Why I Ceased to be a Revolutionary)*

The occasion for the pamphlet *A New Champion of Autocracy, or Mr. L. Tikhomirov's Grief* was Mr. Tikhomirov's pamphlet *Why I Ceased to Be a Revolutionary*, which was published in Russian in Paris in 1888 and caused a great sensation.

Lev Tikhomirov, a former member of Zemlya i Volya, member of the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya, betrayed the revolutionary struggle and calumniated the Russian revolutionaries. After the publication of this shameful booklet he filed an appeal for pardon in 1888 and in 1889 he

returned to Russia from emigration. Soon he became one of the most devoted champions and ideologists of the autocracy and a contributor to, and later the editor of the reactionary newspaper *Moskovskiye Vedomosti.*

In August 1888, as soon as Tikhomirov's booklet was published, Plekhanov wrote a review of it, saying, among other things, with great foresight: "There is the man to trust with editing *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*! Mr. Tikhomirov's creative mind would be a real find for our reactionary press."

*A New Champion of Autocracy* was first published in Geneva in 1889 in the *Library of Modern Socialism* (ninth volume). A second edition was put out legally in 1906 in Petersburg as an appendix to the journal *Sokol.* This was a reprint of the first edition and it bore very noticeable traces of censorship: particularly sharp points, especially in the characterisation of the Russian autocrats, were considerably toned down.

In the present edition the work is printed according to the text of the third volume of Plekhanov's *Works* (1923-1927), checked with the first Geneva edition of 1889.

250 See Belinsky's well-known letter to N. V. Gogol. (V. G. Belinsky, *Selected Philosophical Works,* Moscow, 1956, p. 536.) p. 370

251 *Russky Vestnik (Russian Messenger)*—a monthly journal which became the mouthpiece of aristocratic reaction and the Russian autocracy after the sixties. p. 370

252 *Molchalin*—a character from Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe,* the type of the careerist, toady and time-server. p. 375

253 Quotation from Heine's *Zum Lazarus.* "Laß die heil'gen Parabolen. Laß die frommen Hypothesen...." Plekhanov gives the lines in a translation distorted by the censor. The correct translation by M. Mikhailov was first published in the journal *Byloye* (Past), No. 2, 1906, p. 279. It runs:

*"Or is not everything on earth accessible to God's will?"* (H. Heine.)

p. 377

254 *Ilya Muromets*—a hero of Russian legends in the 12-16th centuries, one of the principal defenders of Ancient Rus. Tradition has it that before his famous exploits he was deprived of the use of his legs. p. 378

255 The Programme of the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya was published in the paper *Narodnaya Volya,* No. 3, January 1, 1880, pp. 5-7. p. 379

256 In connection with the sharpening of the contradictions inside the Zemlya i Volya organisation on the methods of struggle, a congress of the members was convened in Voronezh in June 1879. Preparing for it, the supporters of the terrorist struggle assembled at a separate congress in Lipetsk. The Voronezh Congress adopted a half-hearted decision demanding "special development" of the terrorist struggle against the Government, as well as continuation of the work among the people.

Plekhanov here refers to his own position at the Voronezh Congress, when he came forward as a determined opponent of terror. Getting no support, he left the Congress, but set forth in writing his reasons for leaving the Zemlya i Volya organisation. In this connection see his article "Unsuccessful History of the Narodnaya Volya Party". p. 380

257 Plekhanov's reference is to a book by De Custine published in Paris in 1843 under the title *La Russie en 1839.* De Custine gave his impressions of a journey through Russia and severely condemned the autocracy. The reactionary journalist N. I. Grech, with the approval of the tsar and the 3rd Department, published a pamphlet in French and German, attempt-

ing to refute what De Custine wrote. (On this see Herzen's *Diary. Collected Works,* in 30 volumes, Russ. ed., Vol. II, 1954, pp. 311-12 and 340.) p. 385

258 *Moskovskiye Vedomosti (Moscow Recorder)*—a daily which began to appear in 1756. From the sixties of the 19th century it was taken over by Katkov and expressed the views of the most reactionary and monarchist elements. p. 386

259 *Kostanjoglo* and *Murazov*—characters in the second volume of Gogol's *Dead Souls.* p. 388

260 Plekhanov here alludes to the following historical events: As a result of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, the Treaty of San Stefano recognised the independence of Rumania, which was formed in 1859 by the union of the principalities of Moldova and Walakhia. Soon, in 1883, Rumania allied with Austria-Hungary against Russia. By the Treaty of San Stefano Bulgaria and Serbia also received their independence. But the policy of the tsarist government, which was subordinate to the interests of reaction in Europe, led to a considerable drop in the prestige of Russian tsarism in those countries. At the same time, the peoples of Rumania, Serbia and Bulgaria were full of sympathy for the Russian people, who had helped them to free themselves from Turkish domination. p. 390

261 *Kit Kitych*—distorted name of Tit Titych Bruskov, a merchant in A. N. Ostrovsky's comedy *Shouldering Another's Troubles.* He came to symbolise the petty tyrant. p. 390

262 A. K. Tolstoy, *History of the Russian State from Gostomysl to Timashev.* (Cf. *Collection of Poetry,* published by Sovietsky Pisatel Publishing House, 1937, p. 364.) p. 391

263 *Leibkampantsi*—grenadiers of the Guards Company of the Preobrazhensky Regiment, with whose help a palace revolution was effected in 1741 and the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna was placed on the throne. p. 392

264 Alexander III, intimidated by the increasing terror activities of Narodnaya Volya, and fearing a revolutionary outbreak, remained in his palace at Gatchina for two years in the early eighties after the assassination of Alexander II, voluntarily confining himself and his family to isolation. His contemporaries called him the Gatchina prisoner. In the Preface to the Russian edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1882) Marx and Engels called him a "prisoner of war of the revolution". p. 393

265 From the poem *Mtsyri* by Lermontov. p. 394

266 George Kennan, an American traveller, went to Siberia in 1884-1886 by arrangement with *Century Magazine* in which he undertook to publish his observations. Since Kennan had publicly condemned the terrorists in 1882, the Russian authorities willingly allowed him to enter Russia and visit prisons and forced labour camps, in the hope that owing to his negative attitude to the Russian revolutionaries he would help to attract world opinion to the side of the Russian Government. But Kennan disappointed them. On his return from Siberia he published a number of books describing Russian prisons and the living conditions of the Russian revolutionary exiles. His books produced a powerful impression and caused his readers to censure the tsarist regime. His books were prohibited in Russia until 1905-1906. p. 394

267 At the trial of the revolutionary Narodniks known as the "trial of the 193" (1877-1878) the State Prosecutor Zhelekhovsky made a speech which acquired ill repute for its dishonesty and lack of conviction and his obvious calumny of the accused. During the trial one of the accused wrote a poem parodying this speech. In 1883, it was published by Narodnaya Volya members in a hectographed booklet entitled *Speech for the Prosecution by State Prosecutor Zhelekhovsky at the Trial of the 193, 1877-1878. (Krasny Arkhiv*, 1929, Vol. 3 (34), pp. 228-30.) p. 398

268 *Kolupayevs* and *Razuvayevs*—characters in several tales by Saltykov-Shchedrin (e.g. the *Poshekhonye Tales*). Their names came to symbolise merchants, kulaks and other representatives of the rural bourgeoisie noted for their conservatism, vulgarity and tendency to brutal exploitation. p. 400

269 *He will get it (yon dostanet)*—words of the merchant Razuvayev in Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Refuge of Mon Repos.* Asked where he would get his profits from if the people become "utterly impoverished", he answered: *yon dosta-a-net (he will get it).* p. 400

270 *What Now?* —Lassalle's second speech "On the Essence of the Constitution" delivered before the parliamentary elections in Prussia in 1862. p. 401

## SPEECH AT THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN PARIS

### *(July 14-21, 1889)*

The International Workers' Socialist Congress in Paris was the first congress of the Second International. It took place from July 14 to 21, 1889.

At that time the Emancipation of Labour group did not have firm contacts in Russia and obtained no mandate for the Congress. Yet it understood that its participation in the work of the Congress would be of great significance not only to the Russian revolutionary movement but also to international Social-Democracy.

The group settled the question of its participation in the Congress in the affirmative. ("*Emancipation of Labour group*", Coll. III, pp. 238-39.)

Plekhanov attended the Congress and made a speech ending with the famous words on the victory of the revolutionary movement in Russia as a *working-class movement.*

In a conversation with Voden Engels said that "he and many other comrades liked the speech of Plekhanov at the Paris Congress." (Cf. *Reminiscences of Marx and Engels,* Moscow, 1957, p. 329.)

There are two Russian translations of Plekhanov's speech: one was published in the Geneva *Sozial-Demokrat,* No. 1, 1890, Section 2, pp. 28-29, the other, after his death, in the journal *Letopisi Marksizma (Annals of Marxism),* 1926, No. 1, pp. 78-79.

The *Works* of Plekhanov include the first version in Vol. IV, pp. 53-54, and the second in Vol. XXIV, pp. 319-20. Both versions differ considerably and are entitled to publication, the first as having been made during Plekhanov's life and certainly having passed through his hands, the second as having been made from the French original found in the archives of Guesde, among other documents of the Congress.

For the present edition the texts have been checked with the first Russian impressions in *Sozial-Demokrat* and *Letopisi Marksizma.*

## FOR THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HEGEL'S DEATH

Plekhanov wrote this article in German for the journal *Die Neue Zeit*. It was published in Nos. 7, 8 and 9 in November 1891 under the title "Zu Hegel's sechzigstem Todestag". Immediately after the publication of the article in *Die Neue Zeit* Engels appraised it very highly. In a letter dated December 3, 1891 he wrote to Kautsky: "Plekhanov's articles are excellent." ("Zu Hegel's sechzigstem Todestag", *Die Neue Zeit*, Nr. 7, 1891.)

Hearing of this appraisal Plekhanov wrote to Engels: "I have been told that you wrote a few benevolent words about me to Kautsky on my article about Hegel. If that is true, I desire no other praise. All that I should like is to be your pupil not quite unworthy of such teachers as Marx and you." G. V. Plekhanov to Engels, March 25, 1893. (Cf. *Correspondence of Marx and Engels with Russian Political Figures*, Russ. ed., 1951, p. 325.)

In 1892 Plekhanov's article was translated into Bulgarian and published in the second issue of the Bulgarian symposium *Social-Democrat*. This time, too, Engels commented on its publication. "It has given me great pleasure," he wrote to the editors of the symposium on June 9, 1893, "to see Plekhanov's works translated into Bulgarian." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 458.)

In 1894 Plekhanov's article was published in the French journal *L'ère nouvelle (New Era)* in Nos. 10 and 11. It was not published in Russian till 1906 when it appeared in Plekhanov's collection *Criticism of Our Critics*, St. Petersburg, 1906, pp. 203-28.

In preparing the present edition the text of the *Works*, Vol. VII, pp. 29-55 (1923-1927) has been taken as a basis, checked with the first Russian edition prepared by Plekhanov. The German edition has also been used for precision. In the Russian translation Plekhanov left out some passages which were in *Die Neue Zeit*, and added some new sentences.

271 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I. Afterword to the second German edition and Marx's Letter to Kugelmann, June 27, 1870. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 240.) p. 407

272 *Die Neue Zeit (New Times)*—a theoretical journal of German Social-Democracy. It carried a number of works and letters by Marx and Engels. But even during Engels' lifetime the editorial board headed by Kautsky did not pursue a consistently Marxist line but included in the journal articles which distorted Marxism. Later they even falsified the literary legacy of Marx and Engels. p. 408

273 *Brahma*—one of the highest gods in the Hindu religious teaching. According to Hinduism the first source of all that exists is the impersonal and unqualified substance of God, the universal spirit. p. 417

274 *The Peloponnesian War* (431-404 B. C.) was between the slave-holding democracy of Athens and the slave-holding oligarchy of Sparta—city-states in Ancient Greece. There was a bitter struggle between the political groupings inside the cities which took part in it, especially in Athens towards the end of the war. p. 418

275 Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, Berlin, 1848, S. 323. p. 418

276 *The Reformation*—social, political and ideological struggle in various countries of Europe in the 16th century, against the Catholic Church and feudalism. By undermining the clerical and political foundations of feudalism the Reformation prepared the early bourgeois revolutions. p. 419

277 *Protestantism*—a variety of Christianity (Lutheranism, Calvinism, etc.) which appeared in Germany and a number of other European countries as a result of the Reformation. p. 419

278 A vivid example of the arguments of Montesquieu referred to by Plekhanov is Chapter Two, "How Different People Are in Different Climates", of the fourteenth book of his work *De l'esprit des lois*. (Montesquieu, *Oeuvres complètes*, t. I, Paris, p. 305.) p. 420

279 Hegel, *Geographische Grundlage der Weltgeschichte*, S.109. p. 421

280 Plekhanov wrote a special article "On Mechnikov's Book". (*Works*, Vol. VII, pp. 15-28.) p. 421

281 *Attica*—in antiquity, a region in the south-east of Central Greece with a very peculiar relief. In 594 B.C. Solon carried out in Athens, the capital of Attica, social and political reforms which played a progressive historical role. p. 421

282 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958. Afterword to the second German edition, p. 19. p. 428

## FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION (FROM THE TRANSLATOR) AND PLEKHANOV'S NOTES TO ENGELS' BOOK *LUDWIG FEUERBACH AND THE END OF CLASSICAL GERMAN PHILOSOPHY*

Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* was first published in 1886 in Nos 4 and 5 of *Die Neue Zeit*. In 1888 Engels made minor changes while editing it and published it in the form of a small book with a foreword and Karl Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* as an appendix. The first Russian translation of Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach* by Plekhanov was published in 1892 in Geneva by the Emancipation of Labour group in the series *Library of Modern Socialism*.

Plekhanov prefaced his translation with a short foreword "From the Translator" and wrote notes to it. In 1905 the second edition of Plekhanov's translation of *Ludwig Feuerbach* was published by the *Library of Scientific Socialism* in Geneva and the translator wrote a long foreword to it introducing changes and additions in the notes.

Both versions of the notes are given in the present edition. The additions and changes made by Plekhanov in 1905 are given in square brackets. When the text of the first edition is replaced by a different one in the 1905 text, the 1892 version is given separately. Plekhanov's foreword to the 1905 edition will be given in the third volume of *Selected Philosophical Works*.

Plekhanov's notes are given according to the text of his *Works* (1923-1927) checked with the Geneva editions of 1892 and 1905 and with the manuscripts, which are preserved in Plekhanov House.

283 *Questions of Philosophy and Psychology*—a reactionary journal published in Moscow from 1889 to 1918, the rallying centre for representatives of various idealist schools and trends which succeeded one another over a number of years, first Neo-Kantians and then Machists, Vekhovtsi, etc. p. 433

284 Plekhanov calls the materialist trend of the sixties negational for its revolutionary negation of the Russian reality of the day and for its fight against serfdom and autocracy. p. 433

285 Plekhanov here refers to Y. Kolubovsky's bibliographical appendix to Überweg-Heinze's *History of Modern Philosophy*, St. Petersburg, 1890. In the third section of the appendix—"Philosophy with the Russians"—the following short lines are devoted to the philosophy of the sixties: "The stormy sixties were marked by the appearance of materialism. *Chernyshevsky, Antonovich* and *Pisarev* were the supporters of this teaching, whose force lay not so much in their thoroughness as in the significance they then had. *Yurkevich* had no difficulty in coping with this trend as far as its philosophical principles were concerned, but on the other hand it was more difficult for him to counteract the influence of these writers."(P. 529) p. 433

286 K. Marx and F. Engels' *Die heilige Familie (The Holy Family)* appeared in 1845. One can see from V. D. Perazich's letter to Plekhanov how difficult it was to get this book in the nineties. Replying to Plekhanov's request to obtain the book for him on loan, Perazich wrote from Vienna on December 19, 1892: "Concerning the *heil[ige] Fam[ilie]*, yesterday I was to be told the results of the negotiations with Dr. Adler, the only possessor of the book in spheres to which I have access.... I shall try to have it copied and I can send you the manuscript." (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. I, pp. 265-66.) p. 433

287 The section "Critical Battle Against French Materialism" from a chapter in *The Holy Family* was pulished in *Die Neue Zeit*, No. 9, 1885, pp. 385-95 under the title "Der französische Materialismus des XVIII Jahrhunderts". Plekhanov translated this extract and had it printed as an appendix to the booklet *Ludwig Feuerbach*. But prior to that, in 1885, he partially expounded it for the newspaper *Nedelya (The Week)*, before the latter became the organ of the Liberal Narodniks. This article was not published, possibly because of a change in the trend of *Nedelya*. It was published posthumously in *The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. I, pp. 164-68. p. 433

288 The Russian translation of this book was not published until 1906 and then not entirely: K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism. Against Bruno Bauer and Co.* Selected Passages, I. On Contemplative Philosophy. On the Occasion of Proudhon, *New Voice*, St. Petersburg, 1906. p. 434

289 F. A. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus und Kritik seiner Bedeutung in der Gegenwart*, 1866. p. 434

290 C.N. Starcke, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Stuttgart, F. Enke, 1885. p. 434

291 Plekhanov's note follows Engels' words: "...this man was indeed none other than Heinrich Heine." (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 337. All further references to Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach* will be according to that same edition.) p. 435

292 Heine's splendid work, *On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany*. p. 435

293 Heinrich Heine, *Sämtliche Werke*, herausgegeben von Ernst Elster, B. 6, Leipzig und Wien, S. 535. p. 435

294 Note 2 concerns pages 360-66 of Engels' work. It follows the words: "The Prussians of that day had the government that they deserved." (p. 338.) p. 436

295 Essays: "The Anniversary of Borodino by V. Zhukovsky", and "Menzel, Critic of Goethe". Cf. V.G. Belinsky, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol.

III, 1953, pp. 240-50, 385-419. p. 436

296 The essay "Young Moscow" in the fourth section of the Memoirs of A. I. Herzen, *My Life and Thoughts.* (Cf. A. I. Herzen, *Selected Philosophical Works,* Vol. II, 1948, Gospolitizdat Publishing House, pp. 183-85.) p. 436

297 Belinsky's Letter to V. P. Botkin, March 1, 1841. (Cf. V. G. Belinsky. *Selected Letters* in 2 volumes, Vol. 2, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1955, pp. 141-42.) Plekhanov is doubtless mistaken when he speaks of a lowering of the level of Belinsky's "theoretical demands" from the beginning of the forties, i.e., after his refusal to be "reconciled with reality". p. 439

298 Belinsky's Letter to P. V. Annenkov, February 15 (27), 1848, *Ibid.*, p. 389. p. 439

299 The article "For the Sixtieth Anniversary of Hegel's Death". See this volume.

"V. G. Belinsky (Speech made in spring 1898 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Belinsky's death at Russian meetings in Geneva, Zurich and Bern)." p. 440

300 Note 3 follows Engels' words: "...used the meagre cloak of philosophy only to deceive the censorship." (P. 343). p. 440

301 The only issue of *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher,* a double one, appeared in February 1844. The works of Marx referred to by Plekhanov are: "On the Jewish Question", "Introduction to the Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of Law"; of Engels: "Sketch of a Criticism of National Economy".

Besides, *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* carried Engels' review of Thomas Carlyle's book *Past and Present* entitled *The Position of England.* p. 440

302 *Rheinische Zeitung für Politik, Handel und Gewerbe (Rhenish Gazette for Politics, Trade and Industry)* appeared daily in Cologne from January 1, 1842, till March 31, 1843. Founded by radical representatives of the Rhenish bourgeoisie in opposition to the Prussian Government and with the support of certain Left Hegelians, it became revolutionary democratic under Marx's editorship. (Cf. V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works,* Vol. 21, p. 47.) p. 440

303 In his article "Karl Marx" Lenin points out that the period of his work with the *Rhenish Gazette* was marked by Marx's transition from idealism to materialism and from revolutionary democratism to communism. p. 440

304 Here the *Rhenish Gazette* is also meant. The name *Cologne Gazette* may be misleading, for in Cologne there appeared at the same time the reactionary *Cologne Gazette (Kölnische Zeitung)* under the editorship of Hermes, a secret agent of the Prussian Government. p. 441

305 Articles by Marx in the *Rhenish Gazette.* (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Gesamtausgabe,* Erste Abt., Bd. I, Erster Halbband, Frankfurt, 1927, S. 179-397.) p. 441

306 The *New Rhenish Gazette (Neue Rheinische Zeitung)* was published from June 1, 1848 to May 19, 1849. In his article "Marx and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*" Engels wrote in 1884 that Marx's editorship "made the *New Rhenish Gazette* the most famous German newspaper of the years of revolution". "No German newspaper, before or since, has ever

had the same power and influence or been able to electrify the proletarian masses as effectively as the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung.*" (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, pp. 167, 172.)

Lenin called the *New Rhenish Gazette* "the finest and unsurpassed organ of the revolutionary proletariat". (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 21, p. 81.) p. 441

307 Note 4 follows Engels' words: "'substance' or 'self-consciousness'". p. 343.) p. 441

308 The full title of Bauer's book was: *The Good Cause of Freedom and My Own Cause (Die gute Sache der Freiheit und meine eigene Angelegen heit).* p. 447

309 *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism. Against Bruno Bauer and Co.,* Moscow, 1956. p. 449

310 Mikhailovsky came out against Spencer's theory on progress in a number of works: "What is Progress? ", "What is Happiness? ", "Notes by a Profane". (N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works,* Vols. I, III, St. Petersburg, 1906, 1909.) These works illustrated the disagreement between two trends in bourgeois positivist sociology. p. 450

311 Note 5 comes after Engels' words: "are only the fantastic reflection of our own essence". (P. 344.) p. 450

312 See Note 285. p. 450

313 In his exposition Plekhanov uses mainly Chapter Two, "The General Essence of Religion". p. 450

314 The inquiry undertaken by the socialist journal *Mouvement socialiste* which appeared in Paris from January 1899 under the editorship of Lagardel was called forth by the bitter struggle which the French Republican Government waged against the Catholic Church at the beginning of the century and which ended in the separation of the Church from the State in 1905.

Answers received from the socialists in different countries were published in four issues of the journal in 1902—Nos. 107-110, November 1 and 15, December 1 and 15. p. 452

315 F. Engels, *The Position of England.* p. 452

316 K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law. Introduction.* p. 452

317 Plekhanov meant Berdyayev, Bulgakov and other "Legal Marxists" who, at the end of the nineties, "criticised" Marx from Kantian positions and later, after the 1905 Revolution, went over to the God-seekers and religious mysticism. p. 452

318 Note 6 comes after Engels' words: "typified by Herr Karl Grün". (p. 344.) p. 452

319 F. Mehring, *Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie.* p. 453

320 The critical analysis of Karl Grün's book takes up a chapter of *The German Ideology.* p. 453

321 *Das Westphälische Dampfboot (Westphalian Steamboat)*—a monthly paper issued by the "true socialist" D. Lüning in Bielefeld and later in Paderborn from January 1845 to March 1848. p. 453

322 *Osvobozhdeniye (Liberation)*—a journal published under the editorship of P. B. Struve in Stuttgart and Paris, 1902-1905. Since 1904 it was an

organ of the liberal bourgeois League of Liberation, which in 1905 formed the nucleus of the Cadet Party.

The counter-revolutionary and anti-proletarian character of this paper was exposed in a resolution suggested by Plekhanov and Lenin and adopted by the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903. p. 454

323 *Proletary*—the central organ of the R.S.D.L.P., was published in Geneva from May 14 (27) to November 12 (25), 1905. Lenin was its editor. It was the successor of Lenin's *Iskra (The Spark)* and the Bolshevik *Vperyod (Forward)*, and became the ideological and organisational centre of Bolshevism during the period of the First Russian Revolution. The paper exposed the Menshevik tactics of compromising with the bourgeoisie. In the additions he made to the notes on Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach* in 1905 Plekhanov, as a Menshevik, tried to discredit the theory of the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution followed by *Proletary*, representing it as a return to the ideas of the Narodnaya Volya party. p. 454

324 F. Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, pp. 138-39.

These same propositions of Engels are analysed in Lenin's article "Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 280-81) in which Lenin shows the "difference between the point of view of revolutionary Social-Democracy and that of tail-ism". (P. 281.) p. 455

325 To benefit Menshevism and harm the Bolshevism by factional activity, Plekhanov ascribed Blanquism to Lenin in 1905. He opposed the decisions of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. on the necessity for establishing a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants, limiting the tasks of the First Russian Revolution to the establishment of a bourgeois-democratic parliamentary republic. Lenin, on the other hand, regarded the creation and the work of the Provisional revolutionary government as the most important condition for the passing of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution. p. 455

326 Note 7 comes after Engels' words: "...surreptitiously accepting materialism, while denying it before the world". (P. 347.) p. 455

327 P. Holbach, *The System of Nature or On the Laws of the Physical World and the Spiritual World. (Système de la nature ou Des Lois du Monde Physique et du Monde Moral*, Par. M. Mirabeau, Première partie, Londres, 1781.) p. 459

328 F. A. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus und Kritik seiner Bedeutung in der Gegenwart*, 1866. p. 459

329 *Goethes Werke*, Berlin, Ausgabe Gustav Humpel, T. 2, S. 230. p. 459

330 Priestley's polemic with Price was recorded in a book published in London in 1778, D. Priestley, *A Free Discussion on the Doctrines of Materialism and Philosophical Necessity*. p. 460

331 I. M. Sechenov, *Selected Philosophical and Psychological Works*, Gospolitizdat Publishing House, 1947, pp. 350, 359. p. 460

332 Plekhanov's articles against Schmidt are published in the second volume of this edition. p. 464

333 *Poprishchin*—a character in Gogol's tale *A Madman's Diary*—a minor official with a mania for greatness. His name has become a symbol of a maniac obsessed by delirious ideas. p. 466

334 In this case Plekhanov "discloses a confusion of terms", Lenin points

out. (*Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 141.) p. 466

335 Note 8 comes after Engels' words: "...limitation of classical French materialism". (P. 349.) p. 467

336 The dialectical-materialist solution of the question of the impermissibility of glossing over the specific character of qualitatively different forms of motion of matter, of the impermissibility of reducing these forms to one of them was given by Engels. (*Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1954, pp. 328, 332-33.) p. 467

337 *The System of Nature or On the Laws of the Physical World and the Spiritual World*, Holbach's most important work, was published in Amsterdam in 1770 under the pseudonym of M. Mirabeau and with an imaginary place of publication in London. For a long time it was ascribed to a group of authors. p. 468

338 Note 9 follows Engels' words: "the complete idealist Hegel". (P. 352.) p. 468

339 In Uspensky's series of tales *Living Figures* we find the words: "There is the kind of complicated thing sometimes hidden in statistic fractions. You ponder and ponder these little ciphers, you do all sorts of calculations, and suddenly a tear drops and smudges it all!" (G. I. Uspensky, *Collected Works*, Vol. X, Book 2, edition of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., 1954, p. 179.) p. 469

340 Cf. Hegel, *Werke*, Bd. I, Berlin, 1832, S. 349-59. p. 471

341 End of Schiller's "The Philosopher", 1796. p. 472

342 Ch. Darwin, *The Origin of Man and Sexual Selection*, Chapter V. The attempt to transpose biological concepts to the domain of social science was criticised by Lenin in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. (Collected Works*, Vol. 14, pp. 328-29.) p. 473

343 Cf. Hegel, *Werke*, Bd. I, Berlin, 1832, S. 105-106. The passage quoted by Hegel is from Jacobi. (Jacobi, *Werke*, Bd. 3, S. 37-38.) p. 474

344 Note 10 follows Engels' words: "a fact of which the history of feudalism and of the bourgeoisie, for example, constitutes a single continual proof". (P. 357.) p. 474

345 Note 11 follows Engels' words: "But, of course, this cannot be gone into here." (P. 370.) p. 475

346 L. Morgan, *Ancient Society or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery Through Barbarism to Civilisation*, New York, 1878. p. 475

347 Cf. H. Cunow, *Die soziale Verfassung des Inkareichs. Eine Untersuchung des altperuanischen Agrarkommunismus*, Stuttgart, Dietz, 1896, and his article, "Les bases économiques du matriarcat" published in the journal *Le devenir social*, 1898, Nos. 1, 2 and 4. p. 475

348 Lenin criticised Plekhanov's error on "hieroglyphs" in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. (Collected Works*, Vol. 14, pp. 232-38.) p. 480

## BOURGEOIS OF DAYS GONE BY

Plekhanov wrote "Bourgeois of Days Gone By" in connection with the international proletarian holiday of May 1 for the French journal *Le Socialiste*. It was published in No. 135 of that journal, April 23, 1893, under the

title "Les bourgeois d'autrefois". In Russian it was first published in Plekhanov's *Works* after his death.

In the present edition it is given according to the text of the *Works* (1923-1927) checked with the French edition of the article in *Le Socialiste.*

349 See Claude-Adrien Helvétius, *De l'homme, de ses facultés intellectuelles et de son éducation.* p. 483

350 *Ibid.* p. 483

351 *Ibid.* p. 483

352 *Ibid.* p. 484

353 *Ibid.* p. 484

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONIST VIEW OF HISTORY

When first written for illegal publication, Plekhanov's *The Development of the Monist View of History,* the best of his Marxist works, was given the title *Our Differences,* Part II. However, as the opportunity presented itself of publishing the book legally, the original title was discarded, for it would have immediately revealed the identity of the author. (See Note to the present edition of *Our Differences,* pp. 750-51.)

Under the title *The Development of the Monist View of History,* the book appeared in January 1895, the author using the pseudonym Beltov. The history of this book has become recently clear from early versions kept in the Plekhanov archives, from proofs printed abroad which have been found and from other materials which were previously not known of. (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov,* Coll. IV.)

It is not without interest to note that the first chapter of the book which Plekhanov wrote was the concluding one, dealing with the applicability of Marxism to Russia and with Marx's own views on the subject, disclosed in his famous letter to the editorial board of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski.* An examination of the Plekhanov archives brought to light two original versions of this chapter which seem from all available data to have been written at the end of 1892 for publication in a legal journal. Plekhanov wished to publish it in *Severny Vestnik,* but was unable to do so. In one version the title is "Strange Misunderstanding", and in the other "Slight Misunderstanding". The chapter was not published at the time and did not appear in print until after the author's death, in *The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov,* Coll. IV, 1937.

*The Development of the Monist View of History* is here printed according to the text of the seventh volume (1925) of Plekhanov's *Works* (1923-27), checked for the present publication with the first edition of 1895 and the second of 1905.

354 The proximity of the 1905 Revolution allowed the second edition of the book to be published in Russia and therefore it did not appear abroad. At this time (1904) the main opponent, Mikhailovsky, against whom Plekhanov's polemic shafts were directed in the first place, died. Both the second edition in 1905 and the third in 1906 appeared without substantial alterations. Meanwhile the need had arisen to make additions to the first edition, as Plekhanov mentioned in his letter of February 9, 1904, to the Bern group for promoting the work of the R.S.D.L.P. (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov,* Coll. IV, 1937, p. 203.) An interesting document was found in the archives, namely, a succinct draft of such additions and a number of hints intended perhaps to be developed in

Beltov's book. This document was deciphered and published in *The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, pp. 203-36. Some of these additions are given in the following commentary. p. 486

355 See Note on p. 785 of this volume to the article "A Few Words to Our Opponents". p. 486

356 *Russkoye Bogatstvo (Russian Wealth)*—a monthly magazine published in St. Petersburg, from 1876 to 1918. The organ of the Liberal Narodniks since the early nineties, it waged a bitter struggle against Marxism. N. K. Mikhailovsky was one of its editors. p. 486

357 The reference is to N. Kudrin's article "On the Heights of Objective Truth", a review of Beltov's book printed in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 5, 1895, pp. 144-70. p. 486

358 The quotations here and further are from N. K. Mikhailovsky's article in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 1, 1894. One of his customary reviews which were printed in the magazine under the general title "Literature and Life", it was among the first articles in which the Liberal Narodniks opened their campaign against the Marxists. p. 488

359 V. V. (Vorontsov)'s symposium *Conclusions from an Economic Investigation of Russia According to Zemstvo Statistics*, Vol. I, *The Village Commune*, appeared in 1892. p. 495

360 Augustin Thierry, *History of the Conquest of England by the Normans*, London, 1841, pp. 67, 68. p. 509

361 Condorcet develops these thoughts in his *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*, t. 1-2, Paris, 1794, to which Plekhanov repeatedly refers also in other works. p. 511

362 F. Arnaud, l'abbé, *Discours, prononcé dans l'Académie française le 13 mai 1771 à la réception de M. l'abbé Arnaud*, Paris, 1771. p. 512

363 The author of the *Comments on Mill* is N. G. Chernyshevsky, who devoted a number of pages to criticism of Malthusianism. (Cf. N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. IX, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1949, pp. 251-334.) p. 516

364 For the first time Mikhailovsky used the term "heroes and crowd" in his article of the same title which he wrote in 1882. (Cf. N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1907, pp. 95-190.) p. 516

365 Goethe, *Faust*, Part I. p. 521

366 *Sovremennik (Contemporary)*—a political, scientific and literary monthly founded by A. S. Pushkin. It was published in St. Petersburg from 1836 to 1866. From 1847 it came out under the editorship of N. A. Nekrasov and I. I. Panayev. Among its contributors were the outstanding figures of Russian revolutionary democracy V. G. Belinsky, N. G. Chernyshevsky, N. A. Dobrolyubov and M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin. *Sovremennik* was the most progressive magazine of its time, the mouthpiece of the Russian revolutionary democrats. It was suppressed by the tsarist government in 1866. p. 524

367 The reference is made to N. G. Chernyshevsky. p. 524

368 This is a slightly changed phrase from the Manifesto issued by Nicholas I in 1848 in connection with the revolutions in Vienna, Paris and Berlin. The original phrase read: "Hear, O tongues and be stilled, since the Lord Himself is with us." The Manifesto was intended to restrain the liberal

elements of Russian society and to intimidate revolutionary Europe. p. 526

369 *Shchedrin*—pen-name of M.Y. Saltykov (1829-1889), great Russian satirist and revolutionary democrat. The words of a "Moscow historian" freely rendered by G. V. Plekhanov (Shchedrin mentions Mstislav and Rostislav), are borrowed from Shchedrin's *Modern Idyll* which describes the feuds of Russian dukes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. p. 528

370 As formulated by Mikhailovsky, dualism maintained the existence of two truths—"the truth of verity", i.e., what actually is, and "the truth of justice"—what ought to be. p. 528

371 *Doctrinaires*—a group of moderate bourgeois liberals who played a prominent role in the political life of France during the Restoration. They were bitter opponents of democracy and the Republic. They rejected the very principles of the revolution and its legitimacy but recognised the new civil order, i.e., the new bourgeois economic system. p. 530

372 Quotation from Nekrasov's poem "Who Lives Well in Russia", Part 2, Chap. IV. p. 532

373 The Peasant Bank, on which the Liberal Narodniks placed their hopes, was instituted by the tsarist government in 1882, allegedly to help the peasants to buy land. In actual fact, it favoured the nobility, inflated prices on the landed gentry's estates and was a means of implanting and consolidating kulak elements in the countryside. p. 533

374 A paraphrase of a line from Nekrasov's *Knight for an Hour*. The relevant passage reads:

*From the jubilant crowd of idlers*
*Whose hands are stained with blood,*
*Lead me on to the camp of fighters*
*For the great cause of love!* p. 533

375 *Nikolai*—on (Danielson)—a Russian Narodnik who was the first to translate Marx's *Capital* into Russian, as a result of which he got the undeserved reputation of being a Marxist. The first volume of *Capital*, which he translated with Hermann Lopatin, appeared in 1872, the second in 1885, and the third in 1896. In consequence a lively correspondence arose between Nikolai—on and Marx and Engels. p. 534

376 *Le Producteur (The Producer)*—organ of the Saint-Simonists, was published in Paris in 1825-26. It was founded by Saint-Simon not long before he died and was edited by his followers Bazard, Enfantin, Rodriguez and others. The magazine had as epigraph:
"L'âge d'or, qu'une aveugle tradition a placé jusqu'ici dans le passé, est devant nous." p. 536

377 *Globe*—organ of the Saint-Simonists after 1831, was founded by Pierre Leroux in 1824. p. 536

378 *Russkaya Mysl (Russian Thought)*—a monthly of a Liberal Narodnik trend. Started publication in 1880. p. 540

379 A line from the unfinished poem "Ilya Muromets" by N. M. Karamzin (1786-1826). p. 542

380 On this Goethe wrote in *Wahrheit und Dichtung (Truth and Poetry)*: "Forbidden books, doomed to be burned, which caused such an uproar at the time, had no influence whatever on us. As an example I shall cite *Système de la Nature*, which we acquainted ourselves with out of curiosity. We could not understand how such a book could be dangerous: it

seemed to us so gloomy, so Cimmerian, so deathlike, that it was difficult for us to endure it and we shuddered at it as at a spectre." p. 545

381 Quotation from *Faust* by Goethe. p. 545

382 *The Battle of Marathon,* in which the Athenians beat the Persians in 490 B. C., predetermined the favourable outcome of the Second Greek-Persian War for the Greeks and promoted the prosperity of the Athenian democracy. p. 553

383 N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. III, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1947, p. 208. p. 554

384 N. G. Chernyshevsky, "Criticism of Philosophical Prejudices Against Communal Land Tenure". (Cf. *Collected Works*, Vol. V, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1950, p. 391.) p. 555

385 In a letter to Botkin dated March 1, 1841, Belinsky jokingly referred to Hegel as Yegor Fyodorovich, the Russian form of Georg Friedrich: "No thank you, Yegor Fyodorovich, with all due respect for your philosophical cap; let me inform you, with all respect for your philosophical philistinism, that if I did succeed in reaching the top of the evolution ladder, I would demand even there an account from you of all the victims of the conditions of life and history, of all the victims of accident, superstition, the Inquisition, Philip II, etc., etc.: otherwise I will throw myself headlong from the top rung." (Cf. V. G. Belinsky, *Selected Letters*, Vol. 2, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1955, p. 141.) p. 558

386 The article by Mikhailovsky from which this and the following quotation are taken, "On Dialectical Development and the Triple Formulae of Progress", was included in his *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, St. Petersburg, 1909, pp. 758-80. p. 559

387 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 162-63. p. 560

388 Lines from Offenbach's operetta *La Belle Hélène* (text by Meilhac and Halévy). p. 561

389 Somewhat changed words of a character from A. Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe.* p. 562

390 The reference is to what Engels says about Rousseau in Chapter XIII of *Anti-Dühring.* p. 562

391 Mikhailovsky's article "Karl Marx Before the Judgement of Mr. Y. Zhukovsky" was printed in *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, 1877, No. 10. (Cf. N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. IV, St. Petersburg, 1909, pp. 165-206.) p. 565

392 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, p. 170. p. 566

393 F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1969, pp. 31, 29-30. p. 566

394 The first complete Russian edition of *Anti-Dühring* appeared in 1904. p. 567

395 Hegel wrote in the Preface to his *Philosophy of Law*: "When philosophy begins to paint in grey colours on the grey background of reality its youth cannot be restored, it can only be cognized; Minerva's owl flies only at night."

Plekhanov speaks of these propositions of Hegel in his article "For the Sixtieth Anniversary of Hegel's Death" (see pp. 413-38 of this volume). p. 568

396 Leibniz, *Essais de Théodicée.* In the book: *Die philosophischen Schriften*

*von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, Bd. 6, Berlin, 1885, S. 130. p. 569

397 Cf. B. Spinoza, Letter to G. G. Schuller, October 1674, in Spinoza's *Correspondence*. p. 569

398 Cf. F. W. J. Schelling, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*, Hamburg, 1957, S. 271. p. 572

399 Hegel develops these thoughts in his *Philosophy of History*. p. 574

400 Plekhanov has Marx in mind. The quotation given lower is from *The Holy Family*, Moscow, 1956, pp. 78-80. p. 575

401 Cf. Schelling, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*, Landshut, 1803, S. 223. p. 577

402 See Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*. p. 577

403 At one time Mikhailovsky contributed to *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, of which Shchedrin was an editor (from 1868 to 1884). p. 578

404 *Historical Letters* were written by P.L. Lavrov and published in St. Petersburg in 1870 under the pen-name of P. L. Mirtov. p. 582

405 K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family*, Moscow, 1956, pp. 115-17. p. 584

406 K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family*, Moscow, 1956, p. 21. p. 584

407 *Suzdal*—from Suzdal locality in old Russia where icon painting was widespread. Icon prints produced in Suzdal in great quantities were cheap and inartistic. Hence, the adjective Suzdal has come to denote something that is cheap and inartistic. p. 585

408 K. Marx, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 503.) p. 586

409 K. Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital*. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 159.) p. 588

410 K. Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital*. (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 159-60.) p. 588

411 Ch. Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, London, 1875, p. 51. p. 589

412 Plekhanov's reference is to Martius' book *Von dem Rechtszustande unter den Ureinwohnern Brasiliens*, München, 1832. p. 590

413 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 513. p. 591

414 Plekhanov develops these thoughts far more fully in additions not included in the second edition. (Cf. *The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, 1937, p. 209.) p. 595

415 L. Morgan, *Ancient Society or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery Through Barbarism to Civilization*, New York, 1878. p. 595

416 Plekhanov's posthumous article against Weisengrün, one of the early "critics" of Marx, is to be found in *The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. V, pp. 10-17. p. 595

417 *The historical school of law* was a reactionary trend in German jurisprudence at the end of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century defending feudalism and feudal monarchy against the conception of state law advanced by the French Revolution. Its chief representatives were Hugo, Savigny and Puchta. p. 599

418 In the work mentioned by Plekhanov, Kovalevsky quotes a book by the well-known French jurist Lerminier. (p. 54.) p. 605

419 The reference is to H. Rink's *Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo with a Sketch of Their Habits, Religion, Language and Other Peculiarities*, Edinburgh and London, 1875. p. 607

420 K. Marx and F. Engels, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. (Cf. *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 503.) p. 611

421 K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 177. p. 613

422 K. Marx and F. Engels, Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. (Cf. *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 503.) p. 614

423 F. Engels, "Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*". (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, pp. 503-04.) p. 615

424 Plekhanov here refers to L. I. Mechnikov's book *La civilisation et les grands fleuves historiques*. Avec une préface de M. Elisée Reclus, Paris, 1889. p. 616

425 Plekhanov refers to Paul Barth's objections to Marx in *Die Geschichtsphilosophie Hegels und der Hegelianer bis auf Marx und Hartmann*, Leipzig, 1890, S. 49-50. p. 617

426 *Word and Deed of His Majesty*—the conventional name for tsarist political police method in the Russian Empire in the 18th century. To say "word and deed" meant to report high treason. p. 619

427 Quotation from N. I. Kareyev's "Economic Materialism in History". *Vestnik Yevropy*, July 1894, p. 7. p. 622

428 K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.(Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 421.) p. 628

429 Lamarck, *Zoological Philosophy*, Vol. I, Ch. VII, in Elliot's translation, London, 1914, pp. 107-08. p. 628

430 Quotation from Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 400. p. 629

431 The reference is to the tragedies of Sumarokov, Knyazhnin, Kheraskov and other Russian dramatists of the 18th century. p. 633

432 The "Glorious Revolution"—the English revolution of 1688-89; the "Great Rebellion"—the French revolution at the end of the 18th century. p. 634

433 All editions contain the mistake: "Pseudo-classical English literature." p. 634

434 *The New Christianity* was written by Saint-Simon. p. 638

435 Quotation from *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*. Introduction. p. 641

436 Quotation from Chernyshevsky's dissertation *Aesthetic Relations of Art and Reality*. (N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Selected Philosophical Essays*, Moscow, 1953, pp. 287-88.) p. 644

437 Quotation from Nekrasov's poem "New Year". p. 645

438 Quotation from Marx's first thesis on Feuerbach. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 13. p. 648

439 *Chatsky*—a character in Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe*.
Chatsky personifies the progressive section of Russian noble youth in the first quarter of the 19th century. He is a man of lofty ideals and advanced views. p. 649

440 *Skalozub*—a character in Griboyedov's comedy *Wit Works Woe*, an ignorant and presumptious officer, enemy of free thinking. p. 649

441 In the new edition Plekhanov intended to make clear this passage, which had been intentionally obscured because of the censorship. Among the additions preserved in the archives which he did not make use of, the following remark applies to this passage: "Skalozub stands for censorship. This should be explained by what happened to the same Beltov or *Collection, Novoye Slovo* and *Nachalo*". This list includes editions which suffered from persecution by the censorship: the book of Beltov (Plekhanov) *The Development of the Monist View of History*, the first edition of which was quickly sold out and besides confiscated from libraries, could not be republished for ten years, until 1905; the Marxist symposium *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development*, printed in 1895, was held up for a year and a half by the censorship and then the whole edition was burned, except for a few copies which were fortuitously preserved; the magazine *Novoye Slovo (New Word)* was suppressed in December 1897; the magazine *Nachalo (Beginning)*, its successor in 1899, was prohibited at the fifth issue. Thus, Marxists were almost without any legal publication while the Narodniks enjoyed almost entire liberty in this respect. p. 649

442 The reference is to the *Communist Manifesto* by K.Marx and F. Engels. p. 650

443 In the unpublished supplement Plekhanov makes the following comment on this passage: "People did not understand that it was impossible to recognise Marx's *economic* views while denying his *historic* views: *Capital* is also an historical study. Many 'Marxists' also failed to understand *Capital* properly. The fate of Volume Three was that Struve, Bulgakov, Tugan-Baranovsky distorted Marx's economic theories". (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, p. 223.) p. 650

444 This refers to the famous letter Marx wrote to the editors of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* at the end of 1877 about an article by one of the editors of the magazine, N. K. Mikhailovsky, "Karl Marx Before the Judgement of Mr. Zhukovsky". (*Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, No. 10, 1877). The letter was not sent and was found by Engels in Marx's papers after his death. It was published in *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli*, 1886, No. 5 and in the legal *Yuridichesky Vestnik* No. 10, 1888. The letter was usually wrongly called the letter to Mikhailovsky, although in it Marx only speaks of Mikhailovsky in the third person. (Cf. *Correspondence of K. Marx and F. Engels with Russian Political Figures*, Gospolitizdat Publishing House, 1951, pp. 220-23.)

In this letter Marx protests against the distortion of his views, against the desire to turn his "historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into an historico-philosophical theory of the general path every people is fated to tread, whatever the historical circumstances in which it finds itself...." It was this passage in the letter that the Narodniks seized upon, interpreting it as a justification of their hopes for a peculiar way of development for Russia. (Cf. N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII. St. Petersburg, 1909, p. 327; also in the present editon, Note 465.) p. 651

445 Marx speaks of the French materialists of the 18th century in *The Holy Family*, in the section "Critical Battle Against French Materialism" of the chapter "Absolute Criticism's Third Campaign" and also in *The German Ideology*. p. 651

446 In 1892, Mikhailovsky wrote in *Russkaya Mysl*, No. 6, p. 90, that Marx's philosophical theory "is expounded in the sixth chapter of *Capital* under the modest title 'So-Called Primitive Accumulation'". (Cf. N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, St. Petersburg, 1909, p. 321.) p. 652

447 From the Russian soldiers' song which derided Russian incapable generals (General Réad among them) during the Crimean War (1853-56). The author of the song is Lev Tolstoy, then an officer in the field. p. 656

448 The reference is to Wilhelm Blos' book *Die deutsche Revolution. Geschichte der deutschen Bewegung von 1848 und 1849*, Berlin, 1923. p. 657

449 In Gleb Uspensky's tale "Budka" (The Sentry Post), an old man whose job is to supply a small wandering orchestra with strings proudly says that his strings are expensive, "not some rotten trash", because he cannot have it any other way: "If I can breathe only with the strings" (if my only means of living is by strings), "I must make sure that they give out a fine sound." p. 659

450 Characterising Balzac's work in a letter to Margaret Harkness at the beginning of April 1888, Engels wrote that from Balzac's novels he "even in economic details ... has learned more than from all the professed historians, economists and statisticians of the period together". K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 402.

This passage is commented as follows by Plekhanov: "G. Uspensky can be safely placed alongside Balzac in this respect. His *Power of the Soil.* See my article 'G. I. Uspensky' in the collection *Sotsial-Demokrat*". (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, p. 224.) In Plekhanov's *Works* his article on Uspensky is in Vol. X. p. 659

451 The quoted words are taken from Pushkin's draft copy of one of the chapters in *Eugene Onegin.* p. 661

452 Morgan's book was published in 1877. p. 661

453 Engels speaks of this in the preface to his book *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, dated February 21, 1888. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, pp. 335-36. p. 661

454 From I.A. Krylov's fable "Tomtit". p. 663

455 Plekhanov quotes Marx's eighth thesis on Feuerbach. Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 15. p. 667

456 Goethe's last words. p. 667

457 Y. Zhukovsky analyses *Capital* in his article "Karl Marx and His Book on Capital" (*Vestnik Yevropy*, 1877, Vol. 9.) p. 669

458 Engels characterises Karl Heinzen as follows: "Herr Heinzen is a former liberal small official who as early as 1844 dreamed of progress within the framework of the law and of a paltry German constitution."(K. Marx and F. Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Erste Abt., Bd. 6, S. 282-98.) p. 675

459 Here Plekhanov has in mind articles by Marx and Engels against Heinzen published in 1847 in the *Deutsche-Brüsseler Zeitung.* The paper carried two articles by Engels: "The Communists and Karl Heinzen", and one by Marx: "Moralising Criticism and Critical Morality". p. 675

460 The words of Engels quoted are taken from the following passage: "Herr Heinzen of course imagines that the relations of property, the right of inheritance, etc., can be changed and trimmed into shape at one's own convenience. Herr Heinzen, one of the most ignorant men of this cen-

tury, may not know of course that the relations of property at each given period are the necessary result of this period's mode of production and intercourse." (Marx, Engels, *Werke*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1969, Bd. 4, S. 314.) p. 675

461 The Liberal Narodniks accused the Marxists of being glad of the capitalisation of the countryside, of welcoming the painful separation of the peasants from their lands and of being ready to promote this process by all means at their disposal, hand in hand with the country kulaks and plunderers, the heroes of "primitive accumulation", the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs depicted in Saltykov-Shchedrin's satirical work *The Refuge of Mon Repos.* p. 676

462 *Molchalinism*—from Molchalin (see Note 252). p. 678

463 Plekhanov here refers to the preface of V. V. (V. P. Vorontsov) to the collection of his articles *Destinies of Capitalism in Russia*, published in 1882. In that preface Vorontsov gives as the reason for reprinting his articles the fact that he wishes "to stir our learned and sworn publicists of capitalism and Narodism to study the laws of Russia's economic development, the basis of all other phenomena in the life of the country. Without knowledge of this law, systematic and successful social activity is impossible". (P. 1.) p. 679

464 Quotation from S. N. Krivenko's article "In Connection with Cultural Recluses". (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, December 1893, Section II, p. 189.) p. 679

465 In 1884 Engels sent Vera Zasulich a copy of Marx's letter. (The letter had not been dispatched by Marx.) "Enclosed herewith is a manuscript (copy) by Marx", he wrote to her on March 6, "of which please make such use as you deem best. I do not recall whether it was the *Slovo* or the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* where he found the article: 'Karl Marx Before the Judgement of Mr. Zhukovsky'. He drew up this reply which bears the imprint of something written for publication in Russia, but he never sent it off to Petersburg for fear that his name alone would be sufficient to jeopardise the existence of the journal that would publish his reply." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 370.) p. 680

466 This and a number of the following quotations are from Marx's letter to the editorial board of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski.* See Note 444. p. 682

467 On the substance of the question Marx's thought comes to this: the village commune "may be the starting point of the communist development" if "the Russian revolution serves as a signal for the proletarian revolution in the West". Marx and Engels also expressed this thought in 1882 in the Preface to the first Russian edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party.* Still earlier Engels expressed the same thought in his article "Soziales aus Russland" printed in 1875 in *Volksstaat* in reply to P. N. Tkachov's "Open Letter". (Cf. F. Engels, "On Social Relations in Russia". K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1973, pp. 387-98.)

By the nineties, however, it was already clear to Engels that the village commune in Russia was rapidly disintegrating under the pressure of developing capitalism. He mentioned this in a number of his works of that time: "The Foreign Policy of Russian Tsarism" (1890), "Socialism in Germany" (1891), "Can Europe Disarm? "(1893), and others. Finally, in 1894, in his "Afterword" to "Reply to P. N. Tkachov", he wrote: "Has this village commune still survived to such an extent that at the required

moment, as Marx and I still hoped in 1882, it could, combined with a revolution in Western Europe, become the starting point of communist development of this I will not undertake to judge. But of one thing there is no doubt; for anything at all of this commune to survive, first of all tsarist despotism must be overthrown, there must be a revolution in Russia." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Correspondence with Russian Political Figures*, Russ. ed., 1951, p. 297.) p. 682

468 K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy.* p. 682

469 Chernyshevsky developed his view on the concreteness of truth in *Sketches of the Gogol Period in Russian Literature.* (N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. III, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1947.) p. 683

470 Marx says this in his letter to the editorial board of *Otechestvenniye Zapiski.* (Cf. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Correspondence with Russian Political Figures*, Russ. ed., 1951, p. 221.) p. 683

471 Plekhanov does not quote the exact words of K. Marx. Below we give the French original and the exact translation of this passage:

"Si la Russie tend à devenir une nation capitaliste, à l'instar des nations de l'Europe occidental—et pendant les dèrnieres années elle s'est donnée beaucoup de mal dans ce sens—elle n'y réussira pas sans avoir préalablement transformé une bonne partie de ses paysans en prolétaires; et après cela, une fois amenée au giron du régime capitaliste, elle en subira les lois impitoyables, comme d'autres peuples profanes. Voilà tout." Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Ausgewählte Briefe*, Berlin, 1953.

("If Russia is tending to become a capitalist nation after the example of West European countries—and during the last few years she has been taking a lot of trouble in this direction—she will not succeed without having first transformed a good part of her peasants into proletarians; and after that, once taken to the bosom of the capitalist regime, she will experience its pitiless laws like other profane peoples. That is all." K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p 313). p. 684

472 One of the most popular Russian proverbs: "The nightingale is not fed on fables"—"fine words butter no parsnips." p. 687

473 Plekhanov wanted to make the following addition to this passage: "Here I have in mind the activity of the Social-Democrats. It has promoted the development of capitalism by removing antiquated modes of production, for instance home industry. The attitude of Social-Democracy in the West to capitalism is briefly defined by the following words of Bebel at the Breslau Congress of the Party (1895): 'I always ask myself whether a given step will not harm the development of capitalism. If it will, I am *against it....*'" (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, p. 229.) p. 691

474 See Note 407. p. 691

475 In G. Uspensky's tale "Nothing", from his series *Living Figures*, a peasant who pays "for nothing", i.e., pays tax on land he does not cultivate, is quite convinced that to pay "for nothing" is far better than to cultivate his allotment. p. 691

476 P. Y. Chaadayev said this in his first "Philosophical Letter". (P. Y. Chaadayev, *Philosophical Letters*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1906, p. 11.) p. 692

477 From Nekrasov's poem "Meditations at the Main Entrance". p. 692

478 In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. p. 692

479 Plekhanov intended to give the following explanation of these words: "i.e., I mean *socialist*". (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, p. 230.) p. 693

480 Friedrich List, a German economist, and ideologist of the German industrial bourgeoisie when capitalism was still weak in Germany, put special emphasis on the development of the productive forces of the separate national economies. For this he considered it necessary to have the cooperation of the state (e.g., protective tariffs on industrial goods). p. 693

481 Plekhanov has the following remarks on this passage: "Concerning N.—on. What was his principal mistake? He had a poor understanding of 'the law of value'. He considered it *statically*, not *dynamically*.... What Engels said on the possibility of error in Struve and N.—on." (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, pp. 230-31.)

On February 26, 1895, Engels wrote to Plekhanov: "As for Danielson (N.—on), I'm afraid nothing can be done about him.... It is quite impossible to argue with the generation of Russians to which he belongs and which still believes in the spontaneous communist mission that distinguishes Russia, the truly *holy Russia*, from the other, profane, nations." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Correspondence with Russian Political Figures*, Russ. ed., 1951, p. 341.) p. 698

482 Plekhanov here refers to S. N. Krivenko's article "On the Needs of People's Industry", the end of which was printed in No. 10 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894. p. 703

## ONCE AGAIN Mr. MIKHAILOVSKY, ONCE MORE THE "TRIAD"

This appendix (*Once Again Mr. Mikhailovsky, Once More the "Triad"*) was given in the very first edition of the book *The Development of the Monist View of History*.

483 In the review "Literature and Life", ("On Mr. P. Struve and his 'Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia's Economic Development'"), *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894, No. 10. (N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, St. Petersburg, 1909, pp. 885-924.) p. 704

484 G. Uspensky's tale "The Incurable" is from the series *New Times, New Troubles*. p. 706

485 Quotation from Belinsky's Letter to Botkin, March 1, 1841, See Note 385. p. 707

486 Struve's *Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia's Economic Development* was the object of profound criticism by V. I. Lenin in his *Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book* published in 1894. Lenin exposed the liberal views of Struve and advanced the viewpoint of the revolutionary Marxism. Struve's call "to go into training by capitalism" was defined by Lenin as a purely bourgeois slogan. p. 710

487 In a letter to P. V. Annenkov on February 15 (27), 1848, Belinsky wrote: "When, arguing with you about the bourgeoisie, I called you a conservative, I was a real ass and you were a clever man.... Now it is clear that the internal process of Russia's civil development will not begin before the time when the Russian nobility are transformed into bour-

geois." (V. G. Belinsky, *Selected Letters*, Vol. 2, Goslitizdat Publishing House, 1955, p. 389.) p. 710

488 Krivenko wrote about P. Struve's book *Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia's Economic Development* which was published in 1894, in the afterword to his article "On the Needs of People's Industry". (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1894, No. 10, pp. 126-30.) p. 710

489 *The heavenly bird Sirin*—an image of a mythical heavenly bird with a woman's face and breast used in old Russian manuscripts and legends. p. 710

## A FEW WORDS TO OUR OPPONENTS

This appendix is a reply to Mikhailovsky's article "Literature and Life (*The Development of the Monist View of History* by N. Beltov)" printed in No. 1 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1895. (Cf. N. K. Mikhailovsky, *Collected Works*, Vol. VIII, St. Petersburg, 1914, pp. 17-36.)

The article "A Few Words to Our Opponents" was first published in 1895 under the signature of Utis in the Marxist symposium *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development* (pp. 225-59) which was burned by the censorship. The hundred copies which were preserved became bibliographical rarities and the article was made accessible to the public only ten years later, when it was included as an appendix in the second edition of the book *The Development of the Monist View of History*.

The article is here printed according to the text of the seventh volume of Plekhanov's *Works* (1923-27). The text has been checked with the manuscript which is preserved complete in the Plekhanov archives, with the first publication of the symposium *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development* and with the second edition of *The Development of the Monist View of History* in which it was included as the second appendix.

490 From the ballad "Potok-Bogatyr" by A. K. Tolstoy. (Cf. *Collected Poems*, published by Sovietsky Pisatel Publishing House, 1937, p. 288.) p. 713

491 From Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. p. 713

492 Excerpt from Pushkin's epigram "Cruelly Offended by Journals...." (A. S. Pushkin, *Collected Works* in 10 volumes, Vol. III, published by the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., 1949, p. 108.) p. 714

493 The reviewer of *Russkaya Mysl*—the liberal V. Goltsev. His short review, quoted here by Plekhanov, was published in No. 1 of *Russkaya Mysl*, 1895, pp. 8-9. p. 714

494 From I. A. Krylov's fable "The Mouse and the Rat". p. 715

495 See Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*. p. 717

496 Quotation from the same article by Mikhailovsky "Literature and Life". (Introductory Note.) p. 718

497 The reference is to the satirical section of the magazine *Sovremennik*, "Svistok" (Whistle) (1859-63). One of the main contributors to this section was Dobrolyubov, who wrote under the pen-name Konrad Lilienschwager. p. 718

498 *Lyapkin-Tyapkin*—a personage in Gogol's comedy *Inspector-General*. p. 718

499 N. Sieber's article "The Application of Dialectics to Science" was signed N. S. and published in *Slovo*, 1879, No. 11, pp. 117-69. p. 719

500 *Histoire de dix ans*—a work in five volumes written by Louis Blanc in 1841-44. In it the author severely criticises the policy of the Orleanist Government in France and depicts the economic and social relations in the ten years from 1830 to 1840. Engels assessed this book very highly. p. 724

501 The planned supplement to the second edition was slightly altered in form: "On how Louis Blanc urged the *reconciliation of the classes*. In this respect he cannot be compared with Guizot who was irreconcilable. Mikhailovsky evidently read only *Histoire de dix ans*". (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, p. 233.) p. 725

502 Quoted from Hegel. In unpublished additions to the present article we find the following lines: "To page 22, reverse, appendix I. Give a more exact quotation from the first part of Hegel's *Enzyklopädie*." In all probability these words apply to the passage in question. The "more exact quotation" from Hegel is apparently § 80 and in particular the "addition" to it in which the dialectical and metaphysical methods of thought are characterised. p. 726

503 The author of this book, published anonymously in 1841, was Bruno Bauer. p. 727

504 There is the following addition to this passage: "Refer to our *illegal* literature, which N.—on cannot have been ignorant of. It was not honest to act as if it did not exist, knowing that the censorship will not allow illegal books to be quoted." (*The Literary Legacy of G. V. Plekhanov*, Coll. IV, p. 234.) p. 737

505 Plekhanov here has in mind the works of Russian economists and statisticians: "The Pokrovsk and Alexandrovsk Uyezds" by S. Kharizomenov (in the book *Industries in the Vladimir Gubernia*, Issue 3, Moscow, 1882), *South-Russian Peasant Economy* by V. Y. Postnikov (Moscow, 1891) and *The Urals Cossack Troops. Statistical Description in Two Volumes* by N. A. Borodin (Uralsk, 1891). p. 738

506 All the quotations made by Plekhanov here are from N. —on's article "What is 'Economic Necessity'? " which was published in No. 3 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1895. p. 739

507 The article by Nikolai —on "Apologia of the Power of Money as the Sign of the Times" was published in Nos. 1 and 2 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1885. p. 742

508 From Krylov's fable *The Hermit and the Bear*. p. 742

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*Frederick II*, King of Prussia (1740-86)—390
*Freiligrath, Ferdinand* (1810-75), German revolutionary poet; in 1848-49 was one of editors of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*—441
*Fustel de Coulanges, Numa Denis* (1830-89), French historian, represented evolutionary trend in science of history—441, 481, 657

G

*Galvani, Luigi* (1737-98), Italian physiologist and anatomist, discovered phenomenon of galvanism—578
*Geiger, Ludwig* (1848-1919), German historian, investigator and publisher of Goethe—592
*George Sand*, pseudonym, see *Dudevant, Aurore*
*Gervinus, Georg Gottfried* (1805-71), German bourgeois politician, historian of literature—646
*Giraud-Teulon, Alexis* (born 1839), historian of primitive society, professor in Geneva—482, 598, 599, 657
*Godwin, William* (1756-1836), English petty-bourgeois writer, publicist and historian of literature, initiator of anarchism—516
*Goethe, Johann Wolfgang* (1749-1832)—193, 459, 472, 545, 546, 636, 648, 666

*Gogol, Nikolai Vasilyevich* (1809-52)—259, 414, 530, 552-54, 674, 715
*Goldenberg, Grigory Davydovich* (died 1880), Narodnaya Volya member, took part in terrorist activity—345
*Gorsse, Henri*, pseudonym of *Dameth*
*Grech, Nikolai Ivanovich* (1787-1867), Russian reactionary journalist and writer—385, 386, 389, 394, 401, 715
*Grigoryev Vasily Nikolayevich* (1852-1925), Zemstvo statistician economist and public figure of Narodnik trend—251, 252
*Grimm, Friedrich Melchior* (1723-1807), man of letters, diplomatist, member of Encyclopaedists' group, publisher of *Literary Correspondence*—494,512
*Grosse, Ernst* (1862-1927), German bourgeois sociologist, ethnographer and historian of arts—476
*Grün, Karl* (1817-87), German petty-bourgeois publicist, theoretician of "true socialism"—101, 453, 454, 478, 695
*Guibert of Nogent* (1053-c.1124), French theologian and historian—622-23
*Guillaume, James* (1844-1917), Swiss anarchist, opponent of Marxism, one of leaders of secret "Alliance"—326
*Guizot, François Pierre Guillaume* (1787-1874), French bourgeois historian and reactionary statesman—481, 503, 504, 506-08, 510, 516, 661, 724-25
*Gumplowicz, Ludwig* (1838-1909), Austrian reactionary jurist and and sociologist, racist—626
*Guyau, Jean Marie* (1854-88), French bourgeois idealist philosopher and sociologist—642

## H

*Haeckel, Ernst Heinrich* (1834-1919), German naturalist, Darwinist, supported natural-historical materialism—558, 652, 654, 734
*Hans, Eduard* (1798-1839), German jurist, Hegelian in theory of right (law)—407
*Hansemann, David-Justus* (1790-1864), one of leaders of Phenish liberal bourgeoisie, Prussian Minister in 1848—440
*Harvey William* (1578-1657), prominent English anatomist and surgeon, established blood circulation—548
*Haxthausen, August* (1792-1866), reactionary Prussian official, author of work describing vestiges of village commune system in Russia—134, 139, 145, 249
*Haym, Rudolf* (1821-1901), German historian of literature and philosophy, positivist—66
*Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich* (1770-1831)—66-68, 81, 89, 90,154, 165, 166, 173, 186, 373, 375, 376, 407, 408, 411-423, 425-432, 435-40, 450, 460, 469, 471-74, 479, 482, 485, 502, 514, 520, 545, 548-59, 561-63, 565, 566, 568, 569, 574, 575, 577-80, 583-84, 586, 590, 604, 611-12, 616, 619, 635, 642, 644, 649, 669, 704, 706-09, 716-17, 720-21, 725-30
*Heine, Heinrich* (1797-1856)—435, 440
*Heinze, Max* (1835-1909), German professor of philosophy, dualist—433, 450, 481, 717
*Heinzen, Karl* (1809-80), German publicist of radical trend, petty-bourgeois republican—675-77, 679, 687-88, 693, 696, 702
*Heliogabalus* (204-222), Roman emperor—496
*Helvétius, Claude Adrien* (1715-71)—483-85, 489, 490, 494, 514, 516, 531, 538, 543, 544, 589, 626-27, 634, 648, 666, 728
*Henning, Leopold* (1791-1866), professor of philosophy in Berlin, Right Hegelian—440
*Henry IV*, King of France (1594-1610)—212

*Heraclitus of Ephesus* (c. 530-470 B.C.)—578
*Herostratus of Ephesus*, Greek who burnt temple of Artemis in Ephesus in 356 B.C. to immortalise his name—369
*Herzen, Alexander Ivanovich* (pseudonym, *Iskander*) (1812-70)—68, 112, 129-31, 146, 148, 151, 166, 399, 437
*Hess, Moses* (1812-75), German petty-bourgeois publicist, one of chief representatives of "true socialism"—453, 537, 695
*Hildebrand, Bruno* (1812-78), German bourgeois vulgar economist, represented so-called historical school in political economy—191
*Hobbes, Thomas* (1588-1679)—619
*Holbach, Paul Heinrich* (1723-89) —459, 461, 489, 490, 494, 499, 511, 538, 635, 648, 666, 705
*Hubbard, Nicolas Gustav* (1828-88), French historian and economist—518
*Hugo, Victor* (1802-85)—636
*Hume, David* (1711-76)—456, 466, 467, 635, 637, 644-45, 731
*Huxley, Thomas Henry* (1825-95), English naturalist, Darwinist—731

## I

*Ibsen, Henrik* (1828-1906), Norwegian dramatist, classic of Norwegian national literature—659
*Inama-Sternegg, Karl Theodor* (1843-1908), German bourgeois economist and historian—617
*Isayev, Andrei Alexeyevich* (1851-1924), Russian bourgeois economist and statistician—233, 237, 238
*Ivan IV Vasilyevich*, Great Duke of Russia (1533-47), Tsar and Great Duke of all Russia (1547-84)—245, 395
*Ivanov G.*, pseudonym of *Uspensky G.*
*Ivanyukov, Ivan Ivanovich* (1844-1912), Russian bourgeois economist, professor, author of then well-known textbook of political economy—70, 71, 171
*Izyaslav Mstislavich*, Great Duke of Kiev (1146-54)—528

## J

*Jacobi, Friedrich Heinrich* (1743-1819), German poet, philosopher, friend of Goethe—59, 473, 474
*Jacobi, Johann* (1805-77), German bourgeois politician, democrat, participated in Revolution of 1848; opponent of Bismarck—142
*Jaurès, Jean Léon* (1859-1914), prominent figure in international socialist movement, leader of Right Wing of French Socialist Party, historian, active fighter against war and militarism—55
*James II*, King of England and Ireland (1685-88), dethroned by Glorious Revolution of 1688-89—505

## K

*Kant, Immanuel* (1724-1804)—67, 165, 412, 431, 435, 456-58, 460, 461, 463-65, 470-73, 478, 480-82, 490, 495, 552, 627, 635, 727, 729
*Kareyev, Nikolai Ivanovich* (1850-1931), Russian liberal historian and publicist, opponent of Marxism—244, 255, 526-28, 595, 597, 599, 600, 602, 609, 612-24, 648, 654, 657, 692, 706, 715
*Karonin, S.*, pseudonym of *Petropavlovsky, N.Y.*
*Katkov, Mikhail Nikiforovich* (1818-87), Russian publicist, liberal, later monarchist—151, 370, 386
*Kautsky, Karl* (1854-1938), one of leaders of German Social-Democracy and of Second International. Marxist, then ideo-

logist of Centrism, opportunist—658
*Kavelin, Konstantin Dmitriyevich* (1818-85), Russian historian and jurist, liberal, opponent of revolutionary-democratic movement—732
*Kennan, George* (1845-1924), American journalist and traveller—394
*Kharizomenov, Sergei Andreyevich* (1854-1917), Russian revolutionary Narodnik of seventies, author of works on agrarian statistics—737
*Kolubovsky, Yakov Nikolayevich* (born 1863), historian and bibliographer of Russian philosophy—433
*Kostylkov, I. N.*, handicraftsman, inventor—232
*Kovalevsky, Maxim Maximovich* (1851-1916), Russian scientist, jurist, historian and sociologist—260, 318, 604-07, 610, 614
*Kravchinsky, S. M.* See *Stepnyak-Kravchinsky*
*Kriege, Hermann* (1820-50), German utopian socialist, follower of Weitling, organiser of New York group of League of the Just—453
*Krivenko, Sergei Nikolayevich* (1847-1907), liberal Narodnik of 1890s, opponent of Marxism—679-80, 688-90, 692, 700-03, 710
*Krupp, Alfred* (1812-87), owner of arms factories in Germany—198
*Krylov, Ivan Andreyevich* (1769-1844)—282
*K. T. (Tarasov, K.),* See *Rusanov, N. S.*
*Kudrin, N.* See *Rusanov, N. S.*

## L

*Lamarck, Jean Baptiste* (1744-1829), prominent French naturalist, evolutionist, predecessor of Darwin—628, 665
*La Mothe le Vayer, François* (1588-1672), French philosopher, sceptic, opposed theological dogmas and scholastic "absolute truths"—500
*Lange, Friedrich Albert* (1828-75), German bourgeois philosopher, Neokantian—79, 434, 459, 514, 730-31
*Laplace, Pierre Simon* (1749-1827), prominent French astronomer, mathematician and physicist—705
*Lassalle, Ferdinand* (1825-64), petty-bourgeois socialist, active participant in German labour movement, initiated opportunist trend in German Social-Democracy—70, 78, 102, 122, 155, 336, 349, 401, 407, 551, 554, 599
*Lasswitz, Kurt* (1848-1910), German man of letters and philosopher, Neokantian—463
*Laurent, François* (1810-87), Belgian jurist and historian—74
*Lavrov, Pyotr Lavrovich,* (pseudonym *Mirtov*) (1823-1900), one of prominent ideologists of Narodism, represented subjective school in sociology, author of *Historical Letters*—89, 107, 168, 173, 199, 283-85, 287, 291, 296, 297, 299, 301-03, 334, 356
*Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm* (1646-1716), prominent German idealist philosopher—450, 569-71
*Lenin (Ulyanov), Vladimir Ilyich* (1870-1924)—455
*Lenormant, François* (1837-83), French archaeologist, historian and traveller—481, 616
*Lerminier, Jean-Louis-Eugène* (1803-57), French jurist, liberal publicist, Conservative since late thirties of the 19th cent.—605
*Lermontov, Mikhail Yuryevich* (1814-41)—385
*Leroy-Beaulieu, Pierre Paul* (1843-1916), French bourgeois economist—84
*Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim* (1729-

81), most prominent German writer, critic, philosopher and 18th-century enlightener—407, 443

*Levasseur, Pierre Emile* (1828-1911), French bourgeois economist and historian—202

*Lewes, George Henry* (1817-78), English bourgeois philosopher, positivist, physiologist—557, 650, 706-07

*Lichkov, Leonid Semyonovich* (born 1855), Russian statistician and publicist—259, 269, 273

*Lilienfeld, Pavel Fyodorovich* (1829-1903), Russian sociologist, follower of so-called organic school—732

*Linton, William James* (1812-97), English politician and journalist—129, 130

*Lippert, Julius* (1839-1909), Austrian historian of culture and ethnographer—599

*List, Friedrich* (1789-1846), German vulgar economist, one of founders of so-called historical school in political economy—65, 205-07, 694

*Littré, Émile* (1801-81), French philosopher, positivist and politician—518

*Livy, Titus* (59 B.C.-17 A.D.), Roman historian—662

*Locke, John* (1632-1704)—489, 494, 510, 544, 566, 619, 634

*Lopatin*—433

*Louis Bonaparte.* See *Napoleon III.*

*Louis IX the "Saint"*, King of France (1226-70)—506

*Louis XI*, King of France (1461-83)—374

*Louis XIV*, King of France (1643-1715)—212, 630

*Louis XVI*, King of France (1774-92), sentenced to death by Convent and executed—213

*Louis XVIII*, King of France (1814-24)—140, 141

*Louis Philippe*, King of France (1830-48), enthroned by Revolution of 1830, and dethroned by Revolution of 1848—169, 530, 641

*Luchitsky, Ivan Vasilyevich* (1845-1918), Russian bourgeois historian, Cadet, author of works on French history—292

*Lucretia* (6th cent. B.C.), noble Roman woman, as legend says, who was dishonoured by son of king and committed suicide—186

*Lucretius, Titus* (99-55 B.C.), outstanding Roman poet, materialist philosopher, author of *On the Nature of Things*—572

*Luther, Martin* (1483-1546), founder of Protestantism (Lutheranism) in Germany—117

*Lyell, Charles* (1797-1875), prominent English geologist, founder of evolutional geology—547

## M

*Mably, Gabriel Bonnot de* (1709-85), French utopian communist—213

*Magnitsky, Mikhail Leontyevich* (1778-1855), inspector of Kazan educational district, extreme reactionary and obscurantist—386

*Malet, Claude François* (1754-1812), French general, organised unsuccessful conspiracy against Napoleon—307, 308

*Malon, Benoît* (1841-93), French petty-bourgeois socialist, member of First International, later headed Right Wing of French Workers' Party and organisation of Possibilists—75

*Malthus, Thomas Robert* (1766-1834), English reactionary bourgeois economist, advocated misanthropic theory of population—516, 522-24

*Marcellus, Marcus Claudius* (c. 270-208 B.C.), Roman general—593

*Martius, Karl Friedrich* (1798-1868), German naturalist and traveller—590, 606

*Marx, Karl* (1818-83)—51, 52, 62, 66-71, 77, 79-81, 85, 89, 90, 101, 104, 114-16, 121, 136, 142, 154, 171, 180, 181, 186, 190, 194, 207-10, 276, 310, 327, 329, 331, 335-37, 357, 361, 371-73, 377, 378, 407, 412, 427-29, 433, 434, 439, 440, 441, 449, 452-54, 465, 475-78 481, 482, 524, 525, 535, 550, 565, 576, 580, 583-86, 588, 591, 599, 610-14, 616-21, 624-25, 627-31, 633, 641, 645-66, 668-84, 688, 693-94, 699-703, 708-09, 712, 716, 720, 723-25, 727-28, 730-32, 734-36, 739, 742

*Maurer, Georg Ludwig* (1790-1872), German historian, investigator of social system of ancient and medieval Germany—481

*McLennan, John Ferguson* (1827-81), Scottish jurist, investigator of history of primitive society—598-99

*Mechnikov, Lev Ilyich* (1838-88), Russian geographer, sociologist and publicist, supporter of geographical trend in sociology—421, 481, 616, 705

*Mehring, Franz* (1846-1919), prominent representative of revolutionary Marxism in Germany, member of Spartacus Union, literary critic and historian of Social-Democratic movement—434, 441, 453

*Mendelssohn, Moses* (1729-86), German petty-bourgeois idealist philosopher—407

*Menzel, Wolfgang* (1798-1873), German critic and writer, criticised Goethe—437

*Meshchersky, Vladimir Petrovich* (1839-1914), conservative publicist and writer, extreme monarchist—644, 729

*Meyer, Moritz*—204

*Meyer, Rudolf* (1839-99), German economist, follower of Rodbertus—190

*Mignet, François Auguste* (1796-1884), French bourgeois historian of Restoration epoch—504-06, 510, 516, 724

*Mikhail Fyodorovich Romanov,* Tsar of Russia (1613-45)—391

*Mikhailov, Mikhail Larionovich* (1829-65), Russian poet and publicist, revolutionary democrat. In 1861 he was sentenced to deportation for life in Siberia, where he died—385

*Mikhailovsky, Nikolai Konstantinovich* (1842-1904), Russian sociologist and publicist, leader of liberal Narodism, violent opponent of Marxism—89, 450, 477, 486, 488, 524, 525, 531, 532, 535, 540-42, 547, 549, 550, 554, 556-62, 564, 565, 567, 578, 579, 581, 595, 597, 610, 612, 614, 644-45, 647, 651-54, 656-63, 670-76, 680-82, 688, 692, 702, 704-10, 712-16, 718-35, 739-42

*Mill, John Stuart* (1806-73), English bourgeois economist, prominent positivist—133, 625, 728

*Moleschott, Jacob* (1822-93), physiologist, vulgar materialist—488

*Molière*—292, 592

*Montesquieu, Charles* (1689-1755), French enlightener and sociologist—420, 499, 516, 704

*Moreau de Jonnés, Alexandre* (1778-1870), French economist and statistician—217, 664

*Morgan, Lewis Henry* (1818-81), American scientist, ethnographer, investigator of primitive society—475, 595, 599, 616, 661-62

*Morozov, Timofei Savvich,* (1823-89), factory-owner—222, 236

## N

*Napoleon I (Bonaparte),* Emperor Of France (1804-14 and 1815)—203, 305, 306, 629

*Napoleon III (Louis Bonaparte),* Emperor of France (1852-70)—347

*Nechayev, Sergei Gennadiyevich* (1847-82), Russian revolutionary, conspirator, terrorist—161, 162
*Nekrasov, Nikolai Alexeyevich* (1821-78)—392
*Newton, Isaac* (1642-1727)—186, 557
*Nikolai —on.* See *Danielson.*
*Nicholas I,* Emperor of Russia (1825-55)—145, 315, 384, 385, 386, 389, 390, 392, 404, 405
*Nicholas II,* last emperor of Russia (1894-1917)—384
*Novikov, Nikolai Ivanovich* (1744-1818), Russian enlightener, satiric writer, journalist, publisher, whom Catherine II imprisoned in Schlüsselburg fortress for his free-thinking—385
*Nozhin, Nikolai Dmitriyevich* (1843-66), publicist, biologist, participated in revolutionary movement of sixties in Russia—540, 541, 734

O

*Octavius.* See *Augustus Gaius Julius*—438
*Offenbach, Jacques* (1819-80), French composer, past master in French classic comic operas—567
*Opitz, Theodor,* German Young Hegelian, publicist—647-48
*Orlov, Vasily Ivanovich* (1848-85), Zemstvo statistician of Moscow Gubernia. Marx, Lenin and Plekhanov made use of data collected in his works—252-55, 257, 262, 264, 269, 274
*Ostwald, Wilhelm Friedrich* (1853-1932), German chemist and idealist philosopher, author of reactionary Machian theory of energy—459
*Owen, Robert* (1771-1858)—478, 515

P

*Paul I,* Emperor of Russia (1796-1801)—390-92
*Paulus, Heinrich* (1761-1851), Protestant theologian—443
*Pecchio, Giuseppe* (1785-1835), Italian jurist and economist—625
*Pericles*—429
*Périgot, Charles*—202
*Perovskaya, Sophia Lvovna* (1853-81), Russian revolutionary, prominent member of Narodnaya Volya, took active part in attempt at life of Alexander II—403
*Peschel, Oskar* (1826-75), German geographer, ethnologist and publicist—607, 610, 621, 657, 728
*Peter I,* Tsar of Russia (1682-1721), Emperor of all Russia (1721-25)—245, 248, 375, 384, 388, 395, 396, 397, 399
*Peter III,* Emperor of Russia (1761-62)—390
*Peters,* German architect, correspondent of Rodbertus—331
*Petropavlovsky, Nikolai Yelpidiforovich* (1853-92), Russian Narodnik writer—550
*Petrashevsky (Butashevich), Mikhail Vasilyevich* (1821-66), prominent figure of Russian liberation movement in middle of 19th century, leader of political circle known as "Petrashevtsi" (1848)—370, 560
*Pisarev, Dmitry Ivanovich* (1840-68), prominent critic, materialist philosopher, revolutionary democrat. After one of his articles, he was imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress—385
*Pitt, William (the Elder) (Chatham)* (1708-78), English statesman, leader of party of Whigs—203-04
*Plato* (427-347 B.C.)—561, 593, 625
*Plautus, Titus Maccius* (c. 254-184 B.C.), Roman poet—732
*Plutarch* (c. 46-126 A.D.), moralist writer in Ancient Greece, author of biographies of prominent Greek and Roman figures—487, 593, 594, 625
*Pogodin, Mikhail Petrovich* (1800-75), Russian reactionary

historian and publicist, ideologist of monarchy and nobility—717

*Polevoi, Nikolai Alexeyevich* (1796-1846), Russian journalist, writer and historian, one of first bourgeois ideologists in Russia of twenties and thirties, later reactionary—673

*Polezhayev, Alexander Ivanovich* (1804-38), Russian poet, was sent to army as private for his satirical poem "Sashka" which was directed against police-feudal regime—385

*Polyakov, S. S.* (1837-88), Russian capitalist, became rich through railway concessions—215

*Polybius* (c. 201-120 B.C.), historian of Ancient Greece—662

*Pompey, Cnaeus* (106-48 B.C.), Roman general—437

*Post, Albert Hermann* (1839-95), German ethnologist and lawyer—608-09

*Postnikov, Vladimir Yefimovich* (1844-1908), Russian economist, statistician, investigator of peasant economy in South Russia. His statistical data were analysed by Lenin in his *Development of Capitalism in Russia* —798

*Price, Richard* (1723-91)—English economist and publicist—460, 470

*Priestley, Joseph* (1733-1804), prominent English chemist, materialist philosopher and progressive public figure—459, 460, 470

*Prince-Smith, John* (1809-74), economist, founder of Free Trade trend in Germany—84

*Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph* (1809-65), French publicist, economist and sociologist, one of founders of anarchism, ideologist of petty bourgeoisie—56-58, 62, 76, 87, 170-72, 174, 194, 202, 275, 326-29, 331, 518, 682

*Prugavin, Victor Stepanovich* (1858-95), Russian economist, Zemstvo statistician, liberal Narodnik—225-27, 230, 232-34, 245, 253, 254, 263, 265, 271, 535

*Puchta, Georg Friedrich* (1798-1846), German jurist, professor, represented reactionary historical school of right—601-03, 606

*Pugachov, Yemelyan Ivanovich* (c. 1742-75), headed biggest peasant uprising against serfdom in Russia in 18th century—148, 149

*Pushkin, Alexander Sergeyevich* (1799-1837)—160, 385, 396, 714, 722

## Q

*Quinault, Philippe* (1635-88), French poet and dramatist—636

## R

*Racine, Jean* (1639-99), French dramatist, prominent representative of 17th-century classicism—633, 636

*Radishchev, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1749-1802), prominent Russian revolutionary, writer, materialist philosopher. For his accusatory book *Travel from Petersburg to Moscow* he was sentenced to death by order of Catherine II, this sentence being changed then for deportation to Siberia—385

*Rambaud, Alfred Nicolas* (1842-1905), French bourgeois historian of liberal trend—395, 398

*Razin, Stepan Timofeyevich* (died 1671), Don Cossack, headed biggest popular uprising against feudalism in Russia in second half of 17th century—49, 148, 149, 326, 327

*Ratzel, Friedrich* (1844-1904), German geographer and ethnographer, founder of reactionary so-called anthropo-geographical school—476, 590

*Raynal, Guillaume Thomas François* (1713-96), French historian close to Encyclopaedists—564

*Reclus, Jean Jacques Elisée* (1830-1905), French geographer and sociologist, participated in Paris Commune, 1871, theoretician of anarchism—616, 705

*Reinke, Johannes* (1849-1931), German botanist—462, 463, 473

*Ricardo, David* (1772-1823), English economist, prominent representative of classical bourgeois political economy—84, 85, 421, 521-24, 625, 626

*Richelieu, Armand Jean de* (1585-1642), prominent French statesman, cardinal—201

*Riehl, Alois* (1844-1925), German philosopher, Neokantian—463, 467

*Rink, Henrik Johann* (1819-93), Danish ethnographer, traveller, explorer of Greenland—603, 607

*Rittinghausen, M.* (1814-90), German Social-Democrat, contributor to *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*—58, 141

*Robespierre, Maximilien* (1758-94), outstanding figure of French Bourgeois Revolution of 1789, headed Revolutionary Government of Jacobin Dictatorship—388

*Rochet,* inventor of milling loom in ribbon production—230, 231

*Rodbertus-Jagetzow, Johann Karl* (1805-75), German vulgar economist, ideologist of reactionary Prussian junkerdom—70, 83, 84, 155, 190, 198, 328, 331, 535, 608

*Rogers, James Edwin Thorold* (1823-90), English bourgeois economist and historian—81

*Rothschild,* the family of millionaire bankers—546

*Rousseau, Jean Jacques* (1712-78)—499, 562-66, 618-19

*Ruge Arnold* (1802-80), German radical publicist, Left Hegelian, published *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* in co-operation with Marx, in sixties adhered to Bismarck—440

*Runich, Dmitry Pavlovich* (1778-1860), inspector of Petersburg educational district, enemy of education—386

*Rusanov, Nikolai Sergeyevich* (pseudonyms, *Tarasov, K.; Kudrin, N.*) (born 1859), publicist, Narodnaya Volya member in his youth, later socialist-revolutionary, and white émigré after October Revolution—114, 286, 486, 487

## S

*Saint-Just, Louis Antoine Léon* (1767-94), prominent figure in French Bourgeois Revolution of 1789, leader of Jacobins, member of Committee of Public Security. Executed after Thermidor 9th—388

*Saint-Simon, Claude Henri* (1760-1825)—478, 510, 515-20, 529, 533, 534, 538, 637, 682, 732-33, 740

*Saltykov, (Saltykov-Shchedrin), Mikhail Yevgrafovich* (pseudonym, *N. Shchedrin)* (1826-89), great Russian satiric writer, revolutionary democrat—112, 177, 395, 528, 550, 578, 620

*Savigny, Friedrich Karl* (1779-1861), German jurist, one of founders of reactionary so-called historical school of right—600-03

*Say, Jean-Baptiste* (1767-1832), French bourgeois economist, represented vulgar political economy—242, 411, 521, 522, 529, 568, 645

*Schapper, Karl* (c. 1812-70), German socialist, one of founders of League of the Just; in 1850 was leader of "Lefts" in League of Communists—207-210

*Schäffle, Albert* (1831-1903), German economist and sociologist, Katheder-Socialist—77

*Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm* (1775-1854)—412, 413, 426, 427, 567, 569, 572, 577-79,

594, 604, 606, 611-12, 728, 730
*Schiller, Johann Friedrich* (1759-1805)—52, 472
*Schlosser, Friedrich Christoph* (1776-1861), German bourgeois historian, liberal—377
*Schmidt, Konrad* (1863-1932), German Social-Democrat, revisionist, Neokantian—463, 464
*Sechenov, Ivan Mikhailovich* (1829-1905), prominent Russian naturalist, founder of materialist physiology—460, 461, 479, 480, 731-32
*Seligman, Edwin* (1861-1939), American economist, professor of Columbia University, New York, advocated Anglo-American psychological school in sociology—476, 477
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