

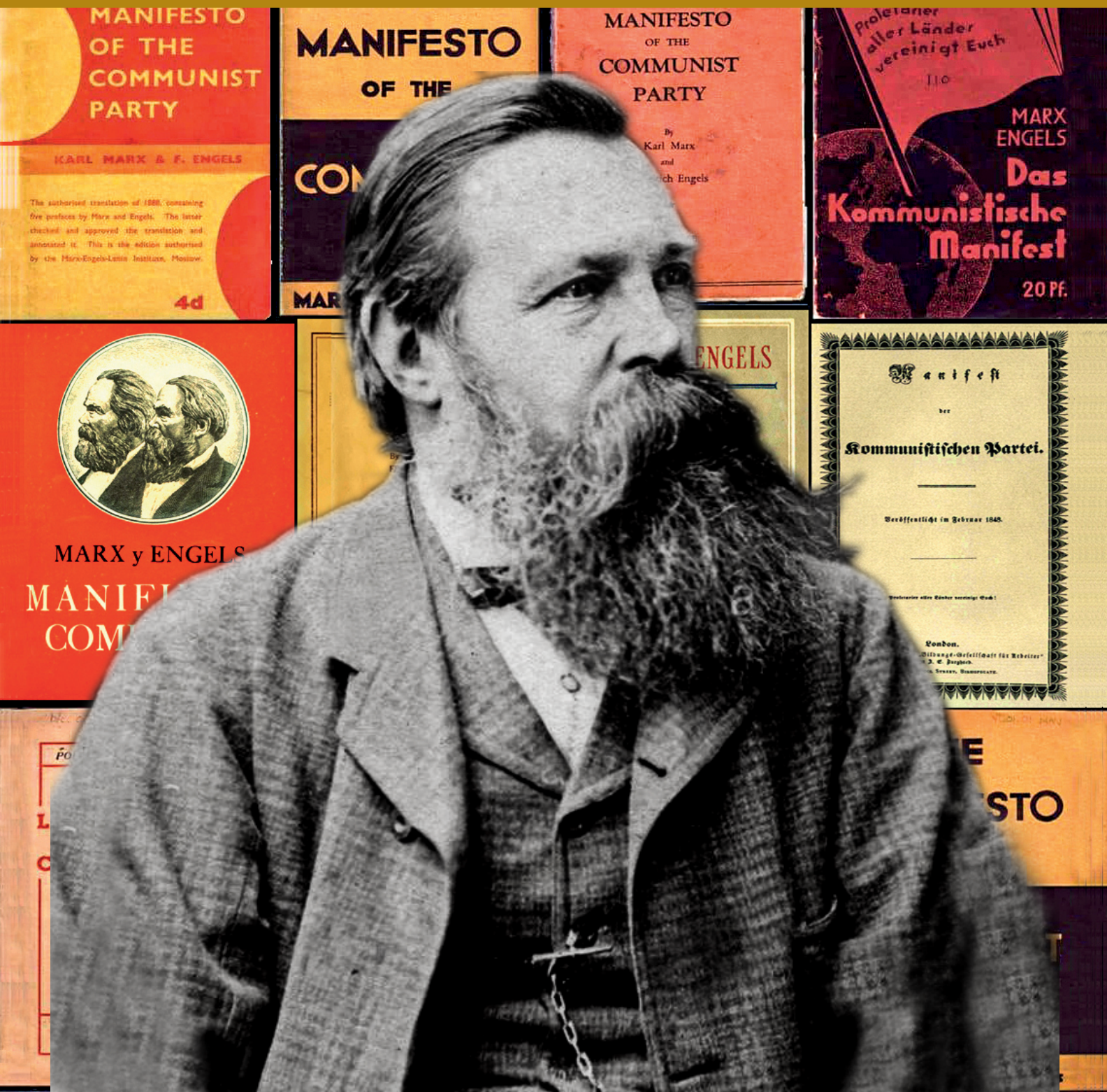


**International**  
*Correspondence*

Special Issue  
November 2020

# Frederick Engels

AT 200 YEARS OF HIS BIRTH





# International Correspondence

Special Edition • December 2020

## Magazine of the UIT–FI

International Workers Unity – Fourth  
International

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Foreword ..... 1

Frederick Engels — Teacher and guide of the world  
proletariat ..... 2

The collaboration with Marx in England ..... 5

Engels — War and revolution ..... 7

### Engels and Marx

An unbreakable friendship at the service of  
the working class ..... 9

Engels and Capital ..... 12

The validity and relevance of Engels for  
socialist feminism ..... 14

Engels and socialism as overcoming the antagonism  
between society and nature ..... 16

### Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx

From historical materialism to the Communist Manifesto  
and the First International ..... 18

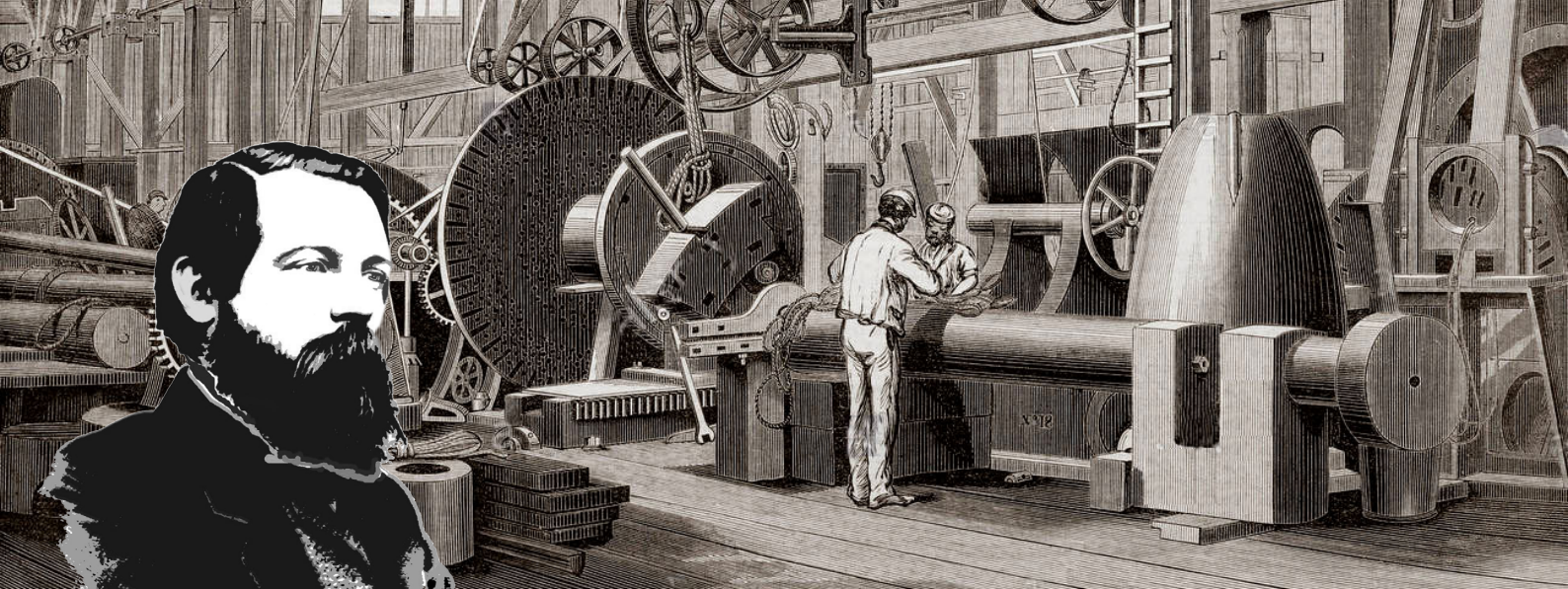
Nahuel Moreno on Engels ..... 21

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# Foreword

It is 200 years since the birth of Frederick Engels. He was born on 28 November 1820 in Barmen, then a city part of the Kingdom of Prussia, which would later become Germany. Together with his friend Karl Marx, they were the founders of scientific socialism.

This special edition of *International Correspondence* is dedicated to remembering and honouring him. Engels' militant and investigative activity developed in the 19th century. Marx and Engels were activists and scholars, scientific researchers and fighters who promoted and organized strikes, unions and workers' parties. In 1848, they published the *Communist Manifesto*, the first revolutionary program of a small, clandestine workers' party, the Communist League.

Lenin and Trotsky gave continuity to revolutionary Marxism with the Russian revolution of October 1917, the Bolshevik Party and the founding of the Third and Fourth International

Sectors such as Social Democracy and Stalinism did atrocities in the name of Engels and Marx. They distorted revolutionary Marxism and smeared the banners of socialism. They installed dictatorships against their peoples and betrayed the revolutions. It is enough to name Joseph Stalin and the communist parties. The capitalist dictatorship of the CP of China

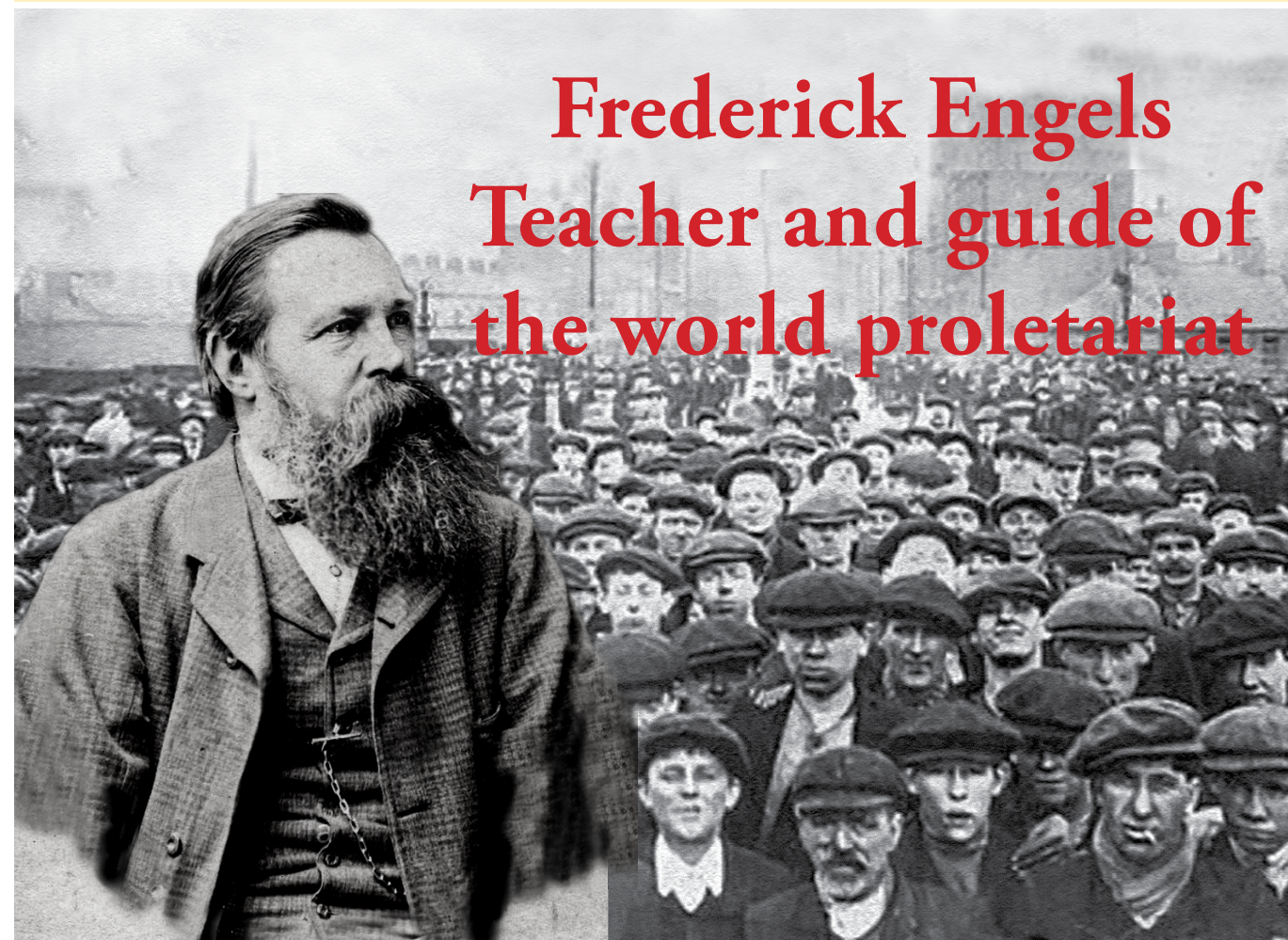
continues to use the symbols of Marx, Engels and Lenin to rule with the multinationals and exploit the working class.

It is 200 years since Engels' birth. Yet his ideas are still current. The capitalist system only offers more misery and social marginalization, as Marx and Engels already said in the *Communist Manifesto*. In 2020, we are experiencing the most serious crisis in the history of capitalism, with the Covid-19 pandemic, the destruction of the environment and millions of unemployed people in the world.

The pillars that Engels and Marx built for the working class to advance in its liberation from capitalist exploitation and in the imposition of a new socialist world are still there, as solid as back then. In the 21st century, the revolutionary socialists of the IWU-FI, who are part of the world Trotskyist movement, continue to raise the teachings and banners of the founders of scientific socialism. We continue the struggle to end the capitalist system and exploitation and impose the liberation of the working class and world socialism.

Engels passed away on 5 August 1895 in London. There is no grave to remember him because he arranged to be cremated and for his ashes to be thrown into the North Sea. But Frederick Engels has a privileged place in the historical memory of the working class. •





# Frederick Engels

## Teacher and guide of the world proletariat

— Miguel Angel Hernandez —

On 28 November 1820, Frederick Engels, founder, with Karl Marx, of scientific socialism, was born in Barmen, German Rhineland. Together with Marx, his dear friend from Treveris, he is the other great teacher and theoretical and political guide of the world proletariat.

Two centuries after his birth, we believe it necessary for the young generations of workers and popular activists and fighters to discover the leading figure of Engels, his political role in the bitter debates with the anarchists within the First International, his central role in the leadership of the Second International, especially after the death of Marx, in 1883. And his undoubted contribution to the theoretical work carried out both in the economic, political and philosophical fields, at the service of the emancipation of the working class.

Engels was the son of the owner of a major textile factory in Manchester,

the centre of the Industrial Revolution in England and the capitalist world. His father had inherited the companies, which also had subsidiaries in Barmen and Engelskirchen, both German cities.

Despite being born into a wealthy family, ideologically conservative and influenced by the religious ideas of Calvinism, Engels from a very young age showed interest in liberal and progressive ideas, which in his time advocated republican and secular reforms.

After accompanying his father on a business trip to Great Britain in the summer of 1838, he settled in Bremen to train himself in the workings of the textile industry. At the beginning of 1841, tired of business work, he returned to his paternal home in Barmen. In September, he moved to Berlin to perform military service in an artillery company. In the Prussian capital, Engels alternated his service in the army with attending classes at the university as a listener; there he was a supporter of the ideas of the

“German Young Hegelians”, among whom was already Karl Marx. This movement, which was the left wing of Hegelianism, proposed political reforms and was opposed to feudalism and the monarchies that dominated Europe at that time.

In 1842 he had his first and very brief meeting, which seems not to have been very fortunate, with Karl Marx in the offices of the *Rheinische Zeitung* (“Rhenish Gazette”), a publication that he edited and directed.

### Manchester — meeting the harsh reality of the working class

At the end of his military service, Engels moved to Manchester at the urging of his father with the aim of introducing him into the management of the family business. In the great manufacturing city, Engels linked himself to the socialist movements, especially the followers of Richard Owen, and the Chartists. All this allowed him to know the real situation of the working class, which meant a

very important complement to the philosophical and political ideas he had acquired during his youth in Germany.

In Manchester he established a relationship with Mary Burns, a young Irish worker who became his partner and who introduced him to the world of the English working class, making him aware of the difficult circumstances in which the life of the workers in the city developed, especially the life of Irish immigrants.

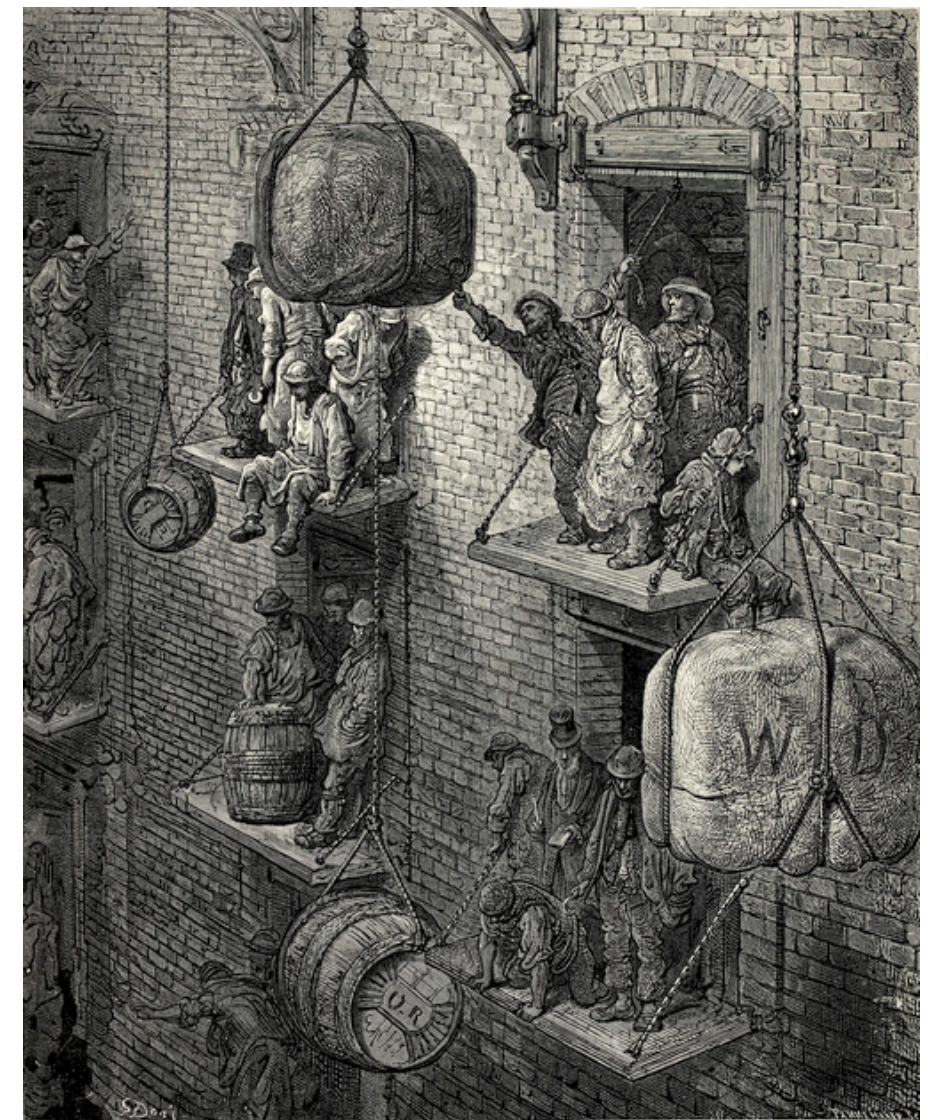
There Engels began to contrast the life of the bourgeois industrialists and proprietors with that of the workers. He began to evolve from philosophy, to which he had devoted the previous years, to political economy. The business experience he had already acquired and his approach to the concrete reality of workers in Manchester in the mid-19th century, led him to write in 1843 one of his first works on economics, *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, published in a German magazine run by Marx.

In 1845 he published a broader and more emblematic work on the misery engendered by the capitalist system, as reflected in the factories and working-class districts of Manchester, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

Engels conducted a thorough investigation in the city libraries, studying the texts published at that time on English capitalism. His direct and daily observation of the miserable life of the workers and the profuse use of up-to-date data and statistics allowed him to describe in a stark and precise way the dire situation of the English working class. The result was, as Lenin put it, “These ideas were set out in a book written in absorbing style and filled with most authentic and shocking pictures of the misery of the English proletariat. The book was a terrible indictment of capitalism and the bourgeoisie (...).”<sup>1</sup>

Engels’s conclusion was very simple but blunt, the working class not only

<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin. “Frederick Engels”, 1895, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972, p. 23.



In 1869, the French artist Gustave Doré began an extraordinary collaboration with the British journalist Blanchard Jerrold. Together, for four years, they produced a historical account of the deprivation and misery of mid-Victorian London.

suffers and endures hardships as a result of the exploitation to which it is subjected by the bosses but the situation in which it finds itself will necessarily lead it to rise up against those conditions, will encourage it to fight against the living conditions to which it is subjected. On the other hand, to the same extent, industrial development and capitalist exploitation will lead the bourgeoisie to create and develop the force that will defeat it. The workers’ struggle for their immediate needs will inevitably lead them to realize the need to fight against capitalism, and to that extent the struggle for socialism will become the objective of the working class.

Many ideas that Marx will develop later were determined by Engels’s statements in *The Condition of the*

*Working Class in England*. The class struggle, the crises of capitalism and the central role of the working class in the struggle for socialism and against capitalist exploitation, were elements that led Marx to consider the historical processes from the perspective of conflict between classes and to see to the modern working class as the subject, as the force for revolution. And Marxism owes this contribution to Engels’ thought.

In 1844, Engels moved again from England to his parents’ home in Germany but, before that he passed through Paris, where he met Marx with whom he already corresponded. This meeting was much more cordial than the last. From then on, he began his collaboration with Marx which would last for 40 years.





On the left, the house in Barmen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany where Engels was born and lived until he was 18; on the right, his residence at 122 Regent's Park Road, London

In Paris, under the influence of the French socialists, Marx also became a socialist. It was there that the two friends wrote *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, a work in which for the first time the foundations of scientific socialism were laid.

### The publication of the *Communist Manifesto* and the revolutions of 1848

In the same year 1845, Marx moved with his family to Brussels where he would live in precarious conditions after being expelled from France for his political activity. Meanwhile, Engels in Germany was being persecuted by the Prussian police. Avoiding arrest, he moved to Brussels where he met Marx.

Belgium was a place of refuge for many labour and socialist activists. There he actively participated in the political and trade union movement. Together with Marx, he established a relationship with the League of the Righteous, an organization created in France in 1836, and which in 1847 would become the Communist League, product of the merger of the League of the Righteous, based in London, and the Communist Correspondence Committee founded in Brussels in 1846 by Marx and Engels.

The League of the Righteous was already an organization with an international vocation that tried

to articulate the workers and union activity of different political groups in Europe. The Communist League would maintain this internationalist profile.

In London, on 9 June 1847, the draft Statutes of the Communist League circulated, spearheaded by the slogan that later became a battle cry of the world working class, "Proletarians of all countries unite!"

The Communist League deserves a special mention for two very significant reasons for the development of the world workers' movement. In the first place, for being the embryo of the first international organization of the working class that would see the light in 1864, the International Association of Workers. And, on the other hand, for being the organization that propitiated the founding document of Marxism and scientific socialism, the *Communist Manifesto*, of which Lenin said: "This little booklet is worth whole volumes: to this day its spirit inspires and guides the entire organised and fighting proletariat of the civilised world."<sup>2</sup>

At the second congress of the Communist League, Engels and Marx were commissioned with the drafting of the organization's program, which was published in 1848 under the title *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, where the foundations of the materialist

conception of history were laid out in a simple way and for the first time.

Engels synthesized in 1888 the central theses of the *Manifesto* as follows: "in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles form a series of evolution in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class — the proletariat — cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class — the bourgeoisie — without, at the same time, and once and for all emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class-distinctions and class-struggles."<sup>3</sup>

The publication of the *Communist Manifesto* coincided with the

3 F. Engels, "Preface to the 1888 English Edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 517.

2 Ibid., p. 24.

revolutions of 1848 against the absolutist monarchies, which shook all of Europe, beginning with France and Italy and spreading in 1849 to Germany, Hungary and Austria. In this revolutionary wave the European proletariat participated for the first time with its own profile as a class. Perhaps, it was the first great world revolutionary wave in the history of capitalism. Confirming in the facts what was raised by the *Communist Manifesto*, although it has not had any direct influence on the events.

The outbreak of the revolution determined that Marx and Engels returned to their homeland. In Germany, they assumed the leadership of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* ("New Rhenish Gazette"), a newspaper published in the city of Cologne, in which Marx and Engels reflected the democratic-revolutionary aspirations of the people of Rhenish Prussia. The *New Rhenish Gazette* expressed the yearnings for freedom and the fight against absolutism. The publication was

banned. Marx was expelled from the country. For his part, Engels actively participated in the armed uprising of 1849, being part a column of 800 workers and students. Defeated the uprising, he was forced to take refuge in Switzerland. From there he left for London, where Marx had moved.

### Engels and the international organization of the working class

From their first common writings, both Marx and Engels insisted on the need to form an international organization that would unite the workers' struggles. Along with their theoretical work, this will be the most important political undertaking that both men will carry out until the end of their days.

The First International, officially known as the International Workers' Association (IWA), was founded in London in 1864. English trade union leaders, anarchists, French socialists and Italian republicans participated in its creation.

It was no accident that this first major international workers' organization was born in England, it was the most industrially developed country in the world. It was the cradle of capitalism and the unions. And within it, the class contradictions within capitalism were more clearly expressed.

It did not appear like a bolt of lightning in a clear sky, it was brewing since the mid-1840s in the struggles of the workers against the conditions of exploitation. It was a genuine product of the working class movement and the initiative of its vanguard, especially in England and France. Accompanying the struggles, solidarity and proletarian internationalism were its central objectives.

Engels, along with Marx, played a fundamental role. He was elected secretary, which allowed him to contribute to the organization of workers in different European countries.

With Marx concentrated on the development of *Capital*, it was Engels who had to participate actively

## The collaboration with Marx in England

In the 1850s they settled in England, Marx in London and Engels in Manchester, until 1870 when he moved to London. Both lived in the English capital until their deaths, in 1883 and 1895, respectively.

It was a very important period in their lives, of arduous and frantic political and intellectual collaboration, favoured by their geographical proximity. In these years, theoretical production was combined with political activity and the organisation of the workers' movement, especially in the formation of the First International in 1864 and, later, the Second International, which was founded in London in 1889.

Capital was published in those years, the first volume in 1867. Later, in 1885 and 1894, the other two volumes, which could not be completed by Marx. Fate would want Engels, his great comrade and lifelong collaborator, to write his name in gold letters in this

central work for scientific socialism.

Established in Manchester, Engels began working in the company where he had worked in his first stay. Late on, he became a partner although he hated business. This allowed him to financially support Marx and his family, which was essential for Marx to devote himself fully to work on Capital.

Engels' collaboration was not limited to financial assistance. The exchange of letters between the two friends was almost daily. Engels contributed numerous statistical data. Many practical elements that Marx could not find in books were contributed by Engels, thanks to his direct experience in a capitalist enterprise. By letter, or on regular visits to London, Engels was involved in the elaboration and analysis.

The detachment and personal sacrifice to support Marx in his titanic task was even expressed in

the fact that many newspaper articles commissioned from Marx were written by Engels, in whom his friend had absolute political and intellectual trust.

Marx died leaving a large number of notes and drafts of what would be the other volumes of Capital. Engels was responsible for drafting them and preparing their publication, becoming, unwittingly, co-author of two volumes of Capital, his friend's masterpiece.

Capital is one of the most influential works in the economy and society since its publication in 1867. As Marx himself says in the preface, his goal was to "examine the capitalist mode of production, and the conditions of production and exchange corresponding to that mode."<sup>1</sup>

1 K Marx, "Preface to the First German Edition of Capital", 1867, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 35, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 8.





First International or International Workers' Association (IWA)

and directly in the debates with the anarchists led by Bakunin, as well as against the followers of Proudhon and Lassalle.

Against the background of the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, the fierce struggle against anarchist tendencies affected the unity of the International Workers' Association (IWA), which was formally dissolved in 1872 at the congress in The Hague.

Marx died in 1883 and it took more than a decade for the Marxist groups to strengthen themselves and attempt again the enterprise of founding a workers' international that would take on the task of organizing the world revolution.

Many years after its dissolution, it fell to Engels to point out the scope and limitations of the First International:

"When the working class of Europe had again gathered sufficient strength for a new onslaught upon the power of the ruling classes, the International Working Men's Association came into being. Its aim was to weld together

into one huge army the whole militant working class of Europe and America. Therefore it could not set out from the principles laid down in the Manifesto. It was bound to have a programme which would not shut the door on the English Trade Unions, the French, Belgian, Italian and Spanish Proudhonists and the German Lassalleans. This programme — the preamble to the Rules of the International — was drawn up by Marx with a master hand acknowledged even by Bakunin and the anarchists. For the ultimate triumph of the ideas set forth in the Manifesto Marx relied solely and exclusively upon the intellectual development of the working class, as it necessarily had to ensue from united action and discussion. The events and vicissitudes in the struggle against capital, the defeats even more than the successes, could not but demonstrate to the fighters the inadequacy hitherto of their universal panaceas and make their minds more receptive to a thorough understanding of the true conditions

for the emancipation of the workers. And Marx was right. The working class of 1874, at the dissolution of the International, was altogether different from that of 1864, at its foundation."<sup>4</sup>

### The Second International – Engels warns of the opportunistic danger

After the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, a period of reaction began which was accompanied by a great dynamism of capitalism, which was beginning to enter its imperialist phase. In many countries, including Germany, revolutionary parties were outlawed and fierce persecution developed against socialist leaders.

The debacle of the First International occurred within the framework of this terrible defeat. Contradictorily, this period of political reaction was characterized by the strengthening of

<sup>4</sup> F. Engels, "Preface to the fourth (1890) German Edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*", Marx and Engels Collected Works, Vol. 27, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 58–59.

workers' organizations amid the rise of capitalism.

On 14 July 1889, the Second International was founded in London coinciding with the centenary of the French Revolution. It fell to Engels, Marx now deceased, to be the founder and fundamental guide of the new workers' organization.

Unlike the IWA, the Second International emerged in a period in which the socialist ideas disseminated by Marx and Engels were more deeply rooted among European workers. This is how the Second International was born strongly influenced by Marxism.

However, the heated debates continued within. It fell to Engels to lead the fight against anarchist ideas and against anti-parliamentarism. And he warned early on the opportunistic danger that loomed over the German party and the Second International.

Just as the axis of the world capitalist economy on the eve of the founding of the IWA was England, when the Second International arose, Germany was developing an unprecedented industrial expansion. As the economy advanced, the workers' movement grew and organized to fight to improve their living conditions. In this way, the German Social Democratic Party, founded in 1875, had an extraordinary growth, gaining more and more influence among the workers, making Germany the centre of the Second International.

After the death of Engels, in the bosom of the most important party of the International, possibilist ideas began to acquire preponderance, starting from the presumption that it would be possible to reach socialism through progressive reforms, without making a social revolution. This was a reformist vision far from the approaches of Marx and Engels. Eduard Bernstein, leader of the party, was the one who led this deeply opportunistic current.

The parliamentary and trade union successes of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, and the emergence of what Lenin called the "labour aristocracy", will be the basis for this vision.

Engels drew attention early on the opportunist and reformist drift that the main party of the International was already experiencing. In 1891, he already warned about the first elements of opportunism, when making critical remarks to the draft program of the German party: "How necessary this is is shown precisely at the present time by opportunism, which is gaining ground in a large section of the Social-Democratic press. Fearing a renewal of the Anti-Socialist Law, or recalling all manner of over-hasty pronouncements made during the reign of that law, they now want the party to find the present legal order in Germany adequate for putting through all party demands by peaceful means. These are attempts to convince oneself and the party that 'present-day society is developing towards socialism' without asking oneself whether it does not thereby just as necessarily outgrow the old social order and whether it will not have to

burst this old shell by force, as a crab breaks its shell, and also whether in Germany, in addition, it will not have to smash the fetters of the still semi-absolutist, and moreover indescribably confused political order."<sup>5</sup>

For a reissue of Marx's *The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850*, Engels wrote an "introduction" in 1895, precisely the year he died. Fragments of this work were published with amendments and mutilations by the leadership of the Social Democratic Party of Germany in its newspaper *Vortwärts* without Engels's consent. Fragments that were considered highly subversive by the party leadership were excluded. And others were left where Engels emphasized the use of elections and parliament by the organization. All with the aim of endorsing, with the immense political and moral authority of Engels, the increasingly reformist positions of the party.

## Engels — War and revolution

A less well-known aspect of Engels's interests was that of military matters. In *The Peasant War in Germany* (1850), he delved into the study of the subject, to which he would dedicate himself for many years, becoming a diligent analyst and commentator on the main military conflicts of his time, such as the Crimean War and the Franco-Prussian War.

Engels not only studied military matters, but he also went through a military school, specialising in artillery. He also had direct participation in the European revolutions that began in 1848. In Prussia, he fought as aide-de-camp to a revolted general in a column of about 800 workers and students in 1849.

Not for nothing, his friends called him "the Manchester War Minister", and Marx's daughters called him "the general".

In his writings, Engels tried to show the class content of the war. For him, the future of military

conflagrations was contingent on the overcoming of class society. On the other hand, the form that war takes would be determined by the economic base and industrial development.

Engels's interest in military affairs had revolutionary causes. On Engels's concern with the relationship of the war to the revolution, Trotsky stated:

"Engels regarded the question of the conquest of power by the proletariat as a purely practical question, whose solution depended not least of all upon war problems. (...) He investigates every new war, discloses its possible connection with revolution, and seeks for ways of assuring the future revolution by the power of arms. Herein lies the explanation for the lively and active, by no means academic and not merely agitational treatment of army and war problems that we find in Engels."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> L Trotsky, *Engels's War Articles*, 19 March 1924, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/03/engels.html>.





From left to right: Dr. Simon and wife (August Bebel's daughter), Clara Zetkin, Frederick Engels, Bebel's wife, August Bebel, Ernst Satter, Bernstein's wife, and Eduard Bernstein. Meeting of the Socialist International, Zurich, 1893

Before publication, the management insisted to Engels on the need to relax the terms of the introduction, which Engels questioned. He would later complain about this situation in a letter he sent to Karl Kautsky on 1 April 1895, in which he said: "I was amazed to see today in the *Vorwärts* an excerpt from my 'Introduction' that had been printed without my prior knowledge and tricked out in such a way as to present me as a peace-loving proponent of legality *quand meme* [at any price]."<sup>6</sup>

The distorted Engels text served Bernstein and the opportunist sector of the party to consolidate their positions.

Engels never renounced the need for revolution, nor insurrection as his armed preamble. Until the end of his days he faced the reformist tendencies that were already gaining ground in the main party of the Second International.

In a letter to of 3 April 1895, Engels expresses his annoyance: "Liebknecht has just played me a fine trick. He has taken from my introduction to Marx's articles on France 1848–50 everything

that could serve his purpose in support of peaceful and anti-violent tactics at any price, which he has chosen to preach for some time now, particularly at this juncture when coercive laws are being drawn up in Berlin. But I preach those tactics only for the *Germany of today* and even then with many reservations. For France, Belgium, Italy, Austria, such tactics could not be followed as a whole and, for Germany, they could become inapplicable tomorrow."<sup>7</sup> {Emphasis by Engels}

The debacle of the Second International will take place in 1914 with the start of World War I, when the deputies of the German party, except Karl Liebknecht, voted in favour of war credits for their government, which will be replicated throughout Europe by the other parties of the International.

#### He died in London in 1895

Frederick Engels died on August 5, 1895 in London. He was a worldly man, to whom nothing human was strange. As given to participate in concrete political processes and intellectual

debate as to enjoy the small pleasures of life. Good dancer, seasoned horseman and fond of hunting. He chose to leave the bourgeois privileges that his origin offered him to dedicate his entire life to fighting for the emancipation of the working class and to collaborate loyally in this task with Karl Marx.

Of great sensitivity, he always understood with sincere humility that Marx should be the one to dedicate himself to the theoretical and intellectual work that would produce the great theoretical edifice of scientific socialism. On one occasion he said: "If one has been fortunate enough to spend forty years collaborating with a man like Marx, one tends, during one's lifetime, to receive less recognition than one feels is due to one; when the greater man dies, however, the lesser may easily come to be overrated — and that is exactly what seems to have happened in my case; all this will eventually be put right by history, and by then one will be safely out of the way and know nothing at all about it."<sup>8</sup> •

6 F. Engels, "Letter to Karl Kautsky, 1 April 1895", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 50, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 486.

7 F. Engels, "Letter to Paul Lafargue, 3 April 1895", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 50, op. cit., p. 489–490.

8 F. Engels, "Letter to Franz Mehring, 14 July 1893", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 50, op. cit., p. 163.

## Engels and Marx

# An unbreakable friendship at the service of the working class

Silvia Santos

Frederick Engels and Karl Marx actually met in Paris on 18 August 1844; previously, in 1842, they had had a very brief meeting. Witnesses to this meeting in Paris say they talked for ten days and nights, discovering an affinity they did not know.<sup>1</sup> From that moment they established a mutual collaboration that would last a lifetime. Later, Engels said: "our complete agreement in all theoretical fields became evident and our joint work dates from that time."<sup>2</sup> They corresponded almost daily since they usually lived in different cities. These true giants understood each other perfectly and, together, through proficient theoretical elaboration and intense practical activity, they worked for decades to equip the working class with a program and an organisation to fight for their liberation.

Difficult to separate them, Leon Trotsky defined them from a comparison: "Engels was quicker on the uptake, more mobile, enterprising and many-sided; Marx, more ponderous, more stubborn, harsher to himself and to others. Himself a luminary of the first magnitude, Engels recognised Marx's intellectual authority with the self-same simplicity that he generally established his personal and political relationships."<sup>3</sup> Lenin, for his part,

1 David McLellan, *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought*, The Macmillan Press Ltd, London 1973, p. 131.

2 F. Engels, "On the History of the Communist League", 1885, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 318.

3 Leon Trotsky, *Engels' Letters to Kautsky*, October 1935, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1935/10/engels.htm>.

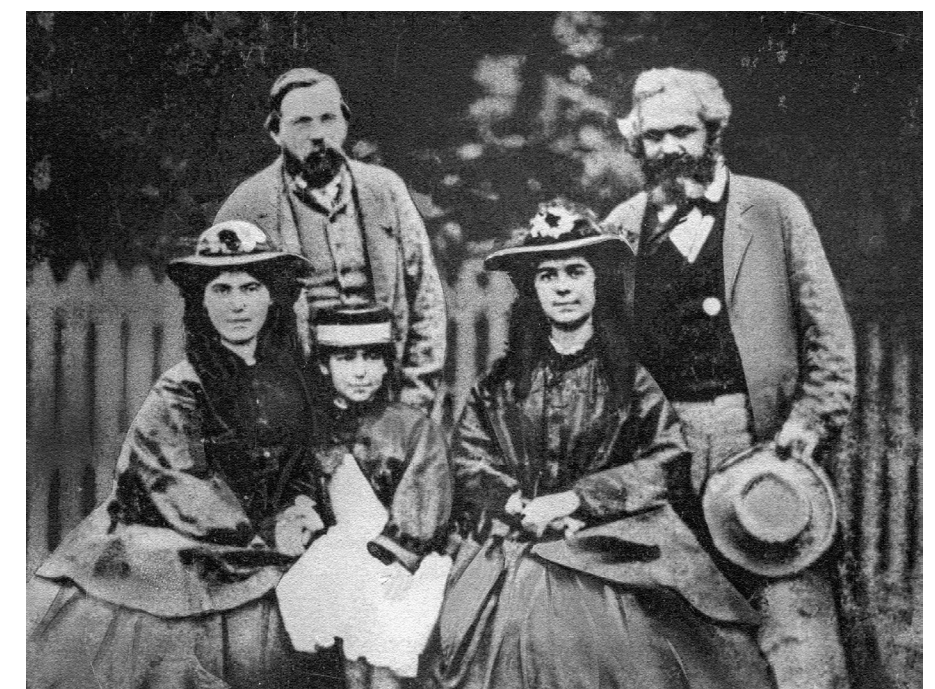
remembers them thus: "After his friend Karl Marx (who died in 1883), Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the modern proletariat in the whole civilised world. From the time that fate brought Karl Marx and Frederick Engels together, the two friends devoted their life's work to a common cause."<sup>4</sup>

#### Young Engels learned together with the working class

Frederick Engels was born on 28 November 1820, in Barmen, Prussian Germany. He was the oldest of nine children in a family that owned a flourishing textile industry. His father wanted him to take over the family business and sent him to Bremen as an apprentice. A rebel from a young age, the revolutionary life of

the industrialist's son began there. Impacted by the social relations of the time, he began to write about the life of the workers in the small town of Wuppertal. He described their terrible poverty, the squalid quarters where they lived, the diseases they suffered from, such as syphilis and lung problems. He wrote about child labour and the employers' preference to employ children who were paid half that of an adult, although they had to breathe the same smoke and intense dust as their elders, ending their lives early.

His works, signed under a pseudonym to hide his identity, were a success and began to be published in liberal newspapers in Germany and England. However, his father was still betting on his career as an industrialist,



Frederick Engels and Karl Marx with their daughters Laura, Eleonor and Jenny (from left to right), May 1864



so he sent him to Manchester to continue his training at the English headquarters of the company. The young Engels continued to learn, but more than anything from the working class, which he began to know deeply and to connect with through its incipient organisations.

### Engels and the Marx family — more than an ideological identity

Around 1845, the Marx family would incorporate into their most intimate environment two people with whom they were to share their life. One was Helene Demuth, better known as Lenchen, who as a child worked in the parental home of Jenny von Westphalen, Marx's partner, and ended up officiating as a kind of housekeeper in the family. The other person was Frederick Engels, who after going back and forth to the Rhineland, where he shared work in his father's factory with his activism as a militant, caught the attention of the police who described him as a "rabid communist who wanders around as a man of letters". Worried about the possibility of being arrested by the Prussian police, Engels left his country and went to Brussels to join, definitively, his inseparable friend, Marx.

But Belgium was just one stage in that long journey that meant the hectic relationship of these two geniuses. The following year they travelled to England, where they were to produce the best chapters of their work. The first stop was in Manchester, where already half a million people worked in the textile industry, of which the Engels' company was part. An industry that had left craftsmanship behind and had become a large-scale company, where the deafening noise of the shuttles on the looms rang everywhere. With that, social relations had also changed. The friendly treatment between the workers and their master craftsman turned into companies without face and obligations, with paltry salaries that allowed them the maximum of profits. This new social reality was the



House where Federico Engels was born, v Wuppertal, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

basis on which Marx and Engels built their writings.

From Manchester, they went to London, where they met with German and Breton workers who were beginning to organise in the clandestine League of the Righteous, a group they had already met in Paris a couple of years earlier. At that time, in the British capital, there were about 300 militants who concealed their revolutionary actions through study groups, choirs and sports activities. Marx and Engels learned from these fledgling revolutionaries both concerning the teachings the older ones passed on to the young, and to the organisational issues to keep the group in difficult conditions. It was a trip that also served to consolidate the relationship between them; they began to see that they had a great coincidence in their thoughts and a unique personal affinity. They returned to Brussels full of energy. Marx reflecting on everything he had seen. Engels, with the same enthusiasm but also with his new partner, Mary Burns, a beautiful militant Irish textile worker who worked in Manchester and whom he had met in 1843 during a previous trip.

In 1847, Engels went to London to participate in the first congress of

the League of the Righteous which, for economic and documentation reasons, Marx was unable to attend but his friend played an important role in the changes that were to take place. In the first place, it was renamed the Communist League and, from the long debate, its old slogan — too broad in nature, according to Engels — "all men are brothers" would get a class character by becoming "workers of all countries unite". From the meeting, Engels was one of those in charge of drafting a "communist creed" with the main definitions of principles to distribute among the sympathisers, a first essay of what would end up being the *Communist Manifesto*, finished jointly with Marx in 1848 and baptised by the riots in Paris.

### Engels' sacrifice for *Capital*

Once settled in England, the Marx family would continue to suffer economic difficulties since the articles produced for newspapers and magazines were never enough to keep the house, so they had to live on loans, pawns and aid from Jenny's family, which were increasingly rare. Again, Engels would go on to play a fundamental role in the life of Marx. Aware that

these difficulties would prevent his friend from producing the work on political economy, a work on which they had been working and that would end up being known as *Capital*, Engels put aside his personal aspirations and decided to choose to return to work in his father's company to support Marx and his family.

Engels continued to collaborate in the elaborations with his friend. Those who knew them claim that Marx listened carefully to the criticisms and observations of two people, those of his friend Frederick Engels, whom he consulted practically daily, and those of his wife, Jenny von Westphalen. It was a relationship that extended to the family group, to the point that Marx's daughters called him "uncle" and, curiously, the only family photo of Marx with his three daughters is not completed with the figure of Jenny, but with that of Engels, a fundamental part of that extended family.

### Eternal memory to Frederick Engels!

Without a doubt, it is impossible to separate the work of Marx from Frederick Engels; the two complemented each other perfectly. This is how Lenin described this magnificent relationship: "In 1870 Engels moved to London [he was living in Manchester], and their joint intellectual life, of the most strenuous nature, continued until 1883 when Marx died. Its fruit was, on Marx's side, *Capital*, the greatest

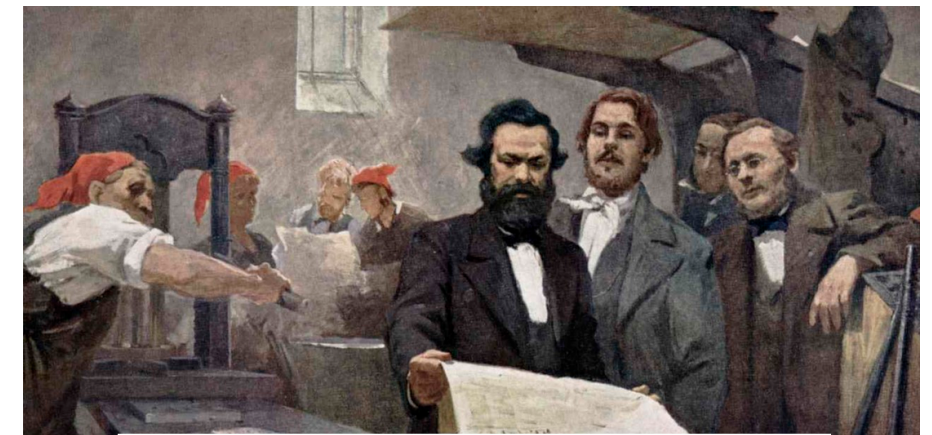


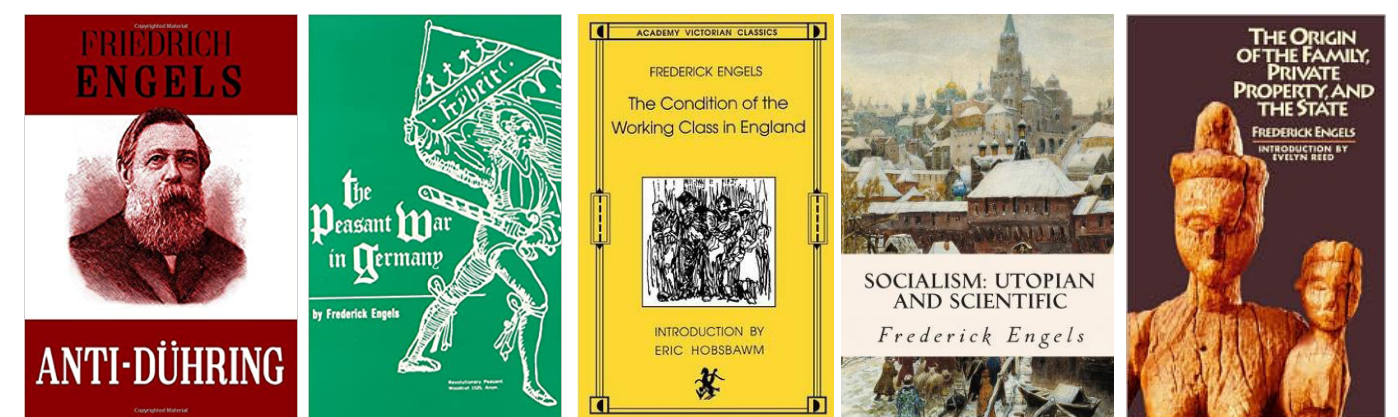
Illustration: Marx and Engels looking at proofs in the editorial office of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung (New Rhenish Gazette)

work on political economy of our age, and on Engels' side, several works both large and small. (...) Marx died before he could put the final touches to his vast work on capital. The draft, however, was already finished, and after the death of his friend, Engels undertook the onerous task of preparing and publishing the second and the third volumes of *Capital*. He published Volume 2 in 1885 and Volume 3 in 1894 (his death prevented the preparation of Volume IV). (...) By publishing volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital*, Engels erected a majestic monument to the genius who had been his friend, a monument on which, without intending it, he indelibly carved his own name."<sup>5</sup>

As executor of Marx's work, Engels maintained a close relationship with Laura and Eleanor, the two daughters who survived their father (Jennychen, the eldest, died of cancer two months

earlier) to whom he was an advisor even in personal matters. He worked together with them in the selection of manuscripts, translations and editions, everything that had to do with Marx's elaborations. Before, he had had the hard task of fare-welling each of those who passed away, Jenny, Jennychen, Marx himself, Lenchen and, later, young Eleanor. At each of these funerals, he was in charge of saying the farewell words, through which it was shown he suffered them as much as if they were of his own blood. They were really his family. On 5 August 1895, he died in London, aged 74. He left Laura, Marx's middle daughter, and Jenny, the last survivor of the group, his personal assets, and the working class an unmeasurable legacy. Together with Lenin, we say eternal memory to Frederick Engels, great fighter and teacher of the proletariat! •

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 25.



Covers of some books by Frederick Engels



# Engels and *Capital*

Jose Castillo

*Karl Marx's masterpiece, in its final form, came to be published thanks to Frederick Engels, who will order and edit volumes 2 and 3. Capital would not have taken the final form that we know without the monumental task carried out by Frederick Engels. There appear fundamental concepts to understand the current dynamics of capitalism in its imperialist phase.*

It is March 1883. A few days after Marx's death, Engels writes to Laura Lafargue: "Today Nim found among Mohr's manuscripts a large parcel containing the best part if not the whole of the second volume of the *Capital* — above 500 pages in folio." <sup>1</sup> There is another letter, now addressed to Piotr Lavrov, dated 2 April 1883: "I have found the manuscript of the *Zirkulation des Kapitals* [Circulation of capital] and of the third book: *Die Gestaltungen des Gesamtprozesses* [The designs of the

overall process] — some 1,000 in-folio pages."<sup>2</sup>

From that moment on, Frederick Engels made the publication of the two pending volumes of *Capital* a central task in his life. The task is immense. But Engels will do it. Volume 2 will be published in 1885 and Volume 3 in 1894.

## Engels, Marx and the critique of political economy

Engels was not a newcomer to debates in political economy. Let us remember the materialist conception of history that Marx and Engels will develop arises from classical German philosophy, French utopian socialism, and classical English political economy. The young Marx had studied and made his first experiences with the so-called "left Hegelians". Starting in 1843, with his move to Paris, he added his knowledge of the debates that would

later be generically called "utopian socialism".

However, it will be Frederick Engels who will first call Marx's attention to the existence of a "third source": classical English political economy — mainly the work of Adam Smith and David Ricardo — born in the heat of the development of the industrial revolution and capitalism in Britain. Engels reads these authors before Marx, and writes an article entitled "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy". There he says:

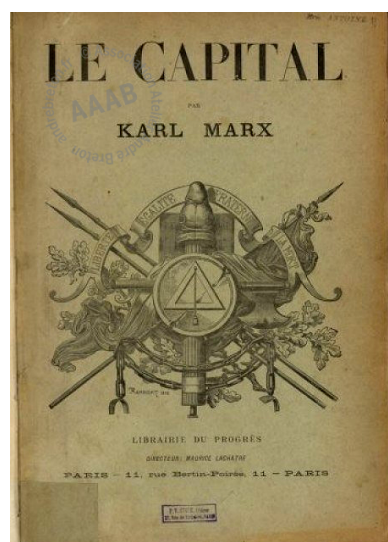
"Political economy came into being as a natural result of the expansion of trade, and with its appearance elementary, unscientific huckstering was replaced by a developed system of licensed fraud, an entire science of enrichment.

"This political economy or science of enrichment born of the merchants' mutual envy and greed, bears on its brow the mark of the most detestable selfishness."<sup>3</sup>

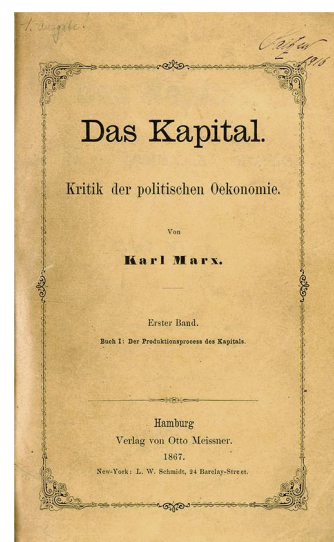
<sup>3</sup> F. Engels, "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy", 1843, *Marx and Engels Collected*

<sup>1</sup> F. Engels, "Letter to Laura Lafargue, 25 March 1883", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 46, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 465.

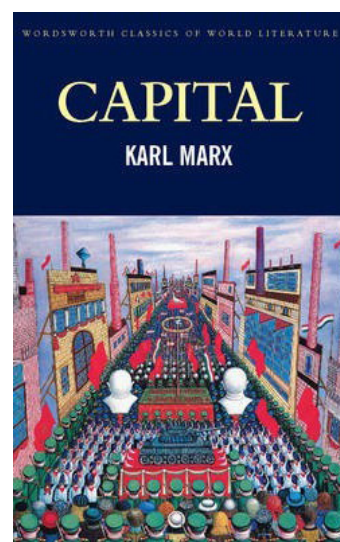
<sup>2</sup> F. Engels, "Letter to Piotr Lavrov, 2 April 1883", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 47, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 3.



French edition published in pamphlets between 1872 and 1875, revised by Karl Marx



Cover of the first edition *Das Kapital* (Hamburg, 1867)



Cover of one of the many current editions

He will force Marx to immerse himself in this dismal and "detestable" science. Engels knew this was the secret of misery amid abundance, the origin of exploitation and the dynamics of capitalism that led to its own crisis. In the secret of misery amid abundance, in the origin of exploitation and the dynamics of capitalism towards its crisis is the scientific explanation for a revolutionary program of the working class.

Marx and Engels reflect and write together *The Holy Family*, or *Critique of Critical Criticism*, *The German Ideology* and the *Communist Manifesto*, while they are active in the *Communist League*. At the same time, Engels insists and practically forces Marx to immerse himself in the critique of political economy and to materialise it in a book.

It is the beginning of a very long period. Finally, Marx succeeded in publishing Volume I of *Capital* in 1867. This task is followed, commented on and criticised by Engels in hundreds of letters that come and go. In the years from then until 1883, Engels, though dedicated to studying other issues, will closely follow Marx's unsuccessful efforts to finish his work.

## A titanic task

Once he has the manuscripts in his hands, Engels realises the difficulties. Let us remember that, chronologically, Marx had already written drafts of what should be volumes 2 and 3 even before the publication of volume I in 1867. But the disorder was enormous.

Marx had produced a "first version" of volume 2 culminating in 1865, with rework in 1870, 1877 and 1878. The texts repeated and corrected one another. Engels finally published Volume 2 in 1885.

Volume 3, meanwhile, will be incredibly more complex. The task will take Engels nine years. There are scattered manuscripts of different chapters ranging from 1863 to 1882. He is forced to work hard on them,

*Works*, Vol. 3, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 418.

to decide among the tangle of diverse texts, to make "insertions" and even "tidying up" chapters. He finally succeeds and *Capital*, in its final three-volume form, will be released in 1894.

## The importance of volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital*

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the task carried out by Engels.

In Volume 2, the schemes for understanding how capital is reproduced are displayed in detail. There, both the anarchy and waste reached with this reproduction in capitalism are demonstrated, and also it lays the foundations to be able to think specifically about the fundamentals to carry out a planned economy in socialism.

But undoubtedly the greatest importance of Engels' work is found in the publication of Volume 3. There are innumerable topics of theoretical and political importance, such as the transformation of values to prices of production or the theory of land rent. Or the explanation of how the rate of surplus-value is transformed into the average rate of profit and from there the mechanisms by which the different factions of the bourgeoisie appropriate it, such as industrial and commercial profit, the interest of the financial speculator or the income of the landowner.

Among all these issues, the most important, without a doubt, is the explanation of the origin of the capitalist crisis, the tendency for the rate of profit to fall. Regardless of the different concrete forms that each crisis and its outbursts take (whether they are the product of a currency devaluation, a stock market crisis, the bursting of a speculative real estate bubble or, as is currently the case, the consequence of a pandemic), capitalist crises explode because of the central indicator that the bourgeoisie has to decide whether or not to reinvest its capital falls: the rate of profit of the most important

productive branches of the economy. When this rate falls, the bourgeoisie does not invest or redirect their capital to speculative businesses. Factories close, unemployment and misery grow. Immense masses of surplus capital remain "floating", without productive valorisation, generating the most perverse phenomena.

The capitalists and their governments then seek to impose their plan to get out of the crisis: to increase the super-exploitation of workers and thus recover their rate of profit. If they manage to defeat the workers, the capitalist economy is relaunched, only to fall again into a new crisis, worse than the previous one, later on.

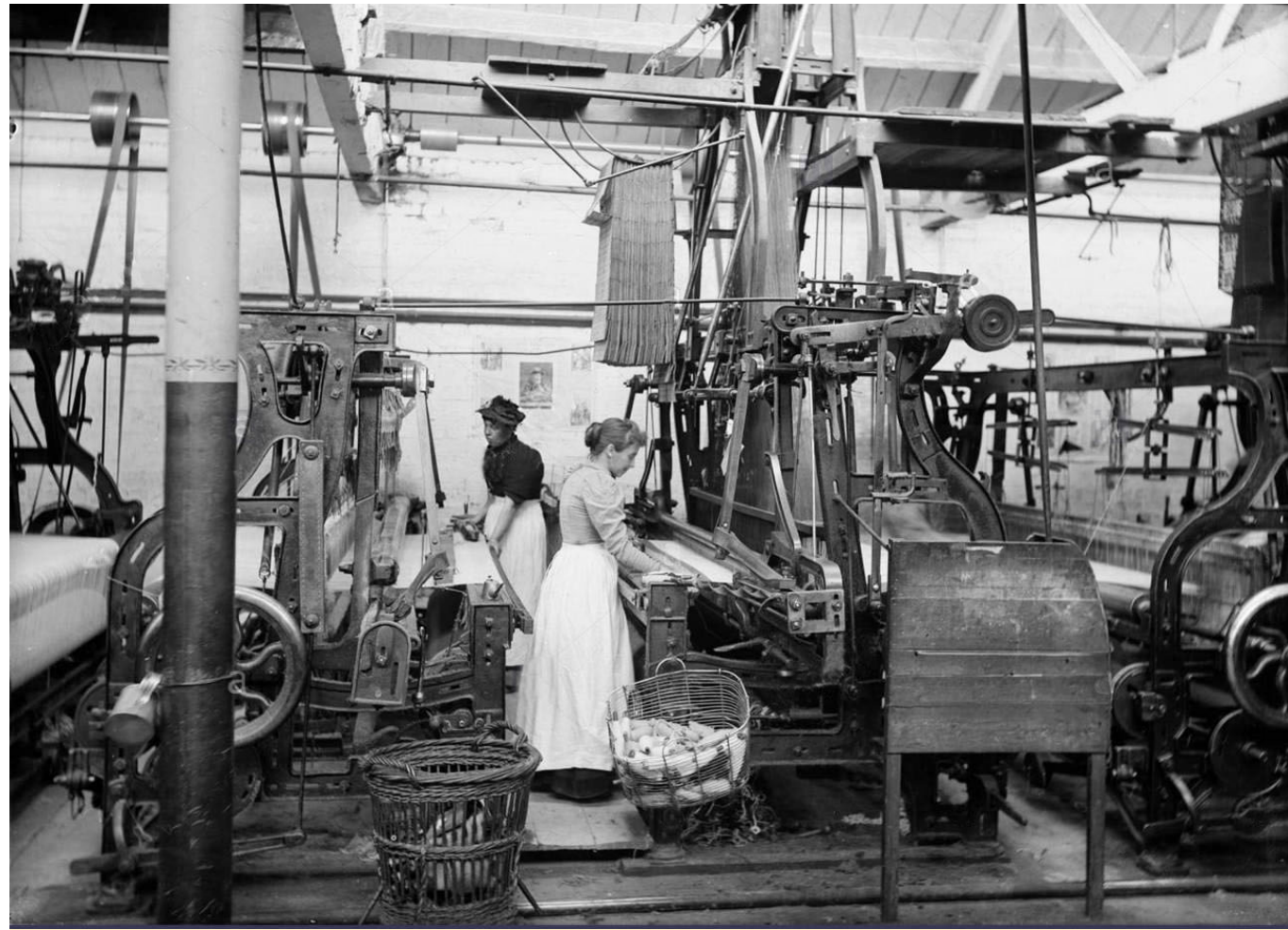
If, on the other hand, the strength of the workers' struggle manages to prevent the adjustment from being applied to it, the crisis becomes chronic. That is what has been happening systematically in the world imperialist economy since the 1970s. Hence the absolute topicality of these analyses of Marx published thanks to Engels. Within the framework of imperialist capitalism, there are two paths, both terrible for the peoples of the world: either the imposition of a genuine economic counterrevolution against the workers or the continuity of a chronic crisis that keeps sinking us more and more.

This is the basis for understanding then that the only way out for the working people is to fight for power, for the workers' government, expropriate the bourgeoisie and impose socialism. "Socialism or barbarism" will say Rosa Luxemburg a few years later. "Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. [...] The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership",<sup>4</sup> Leon Trotsky will add.

Old Engels would agree, no doubt, 200 years after his birth. ♦+

<sup>4</sup> L. Trotsky, *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973.





Early's Blanket Factory, Witney, Oxfordshire, 1897, artist Henry Taunt

# The validity and relevance of Engels for socialist feminism

Mercedes Trimarchi

***The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*** is one of the essential books when it comes to thinking about socialist feminism. With unprecedented clarity, Engels argues that the subordination of women cannot be explained as a natural or religious phenomenon. On the contrary, its origin is historical, social and is linked to the emergence of private property and the consolidation of the patriarchal family. With

total validity and relevance, his proposals help to understand how patriarchal oppression and capitalist exploitation are two sides of the same coin affecting over half of humanity.

A year had passed since the death of Karl Marx when Engels, reviewing the manuscripts left by his friend, discovered a detailed critical record on the book *Ancient society*, by Lewis H. Morgan, an American researcher who had studied for almost 40 years the kinship relations in primitive societies.

Convinced that Morgan's book was a confirmation of the materialist

conception of history, Engels, at age 64, decided to write a work compiling the data in the book, Marx's conclusions and the results of his own research. Thus *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* emerged and, with it, a scientific analysis of the different stages of human development, from primitive communism to the formation of class society based on private property.

## The loss of maternal rights was the historical defeat of women

Engels argues that one of the most absurd notions spread by eighteenth-century philosophy was that, at the origin of societies, women were slaves

to men. In contrast, the author points out: "Woman occupied not only a free but also a highly respected position among all savages and all barbarians of the lower and middle stages and partly even of the upper stage."<sup>2</sup>

In the early communities all the people had to work, they could not afford not to do it since the conditions were very hostile for survival. Even with the division of tasks between genders or by age, there was no place for the subordination of one sex over another. Each person took care of itself and was the owner of their tools with which they produced the goods. Hence, sons and daughters belonged to mothers, who were the ones who gave birth. In these societies, there was no State, no private property, but collective property and sex-affective relationships could vary in terms of durability and the number of spouses. This form of social organisation is characterised as primitive communism.

Thousands of years passed from the emergence of these nomadic communities to the first settlements in villages. During this long period, there were many discoveries and significant technical advances took place. Everything contributed to increasing the production of goods and food, generating an important surplus which was appropriated by men, who possessed the tools of work. In this way, equality between the genders was eliminated. To formalise this transformation, not only was necessary the appearance of the State as a tool for organisation and social domination, but it was also necessary to institutionalize inheritance through "legitimate descent", embodied by male owners. For this, matrilineality was destroyed and the sons and daughters came to belong to the father.

Engels argues in this regard: "The overthrow of mother-right was the world-historic defeat of the female sex. The man seized the reins in the house too, the woman was degraded, enthralled, became the slave of the man's lust, a

mere instrument for breeding children. This humiliated position of women, especially manifest among the Greeks of the Heroic and still more of the Classical Age, has become gradually embellished and dissembled and, in part, clothed in a milder form, but by no means abolished."<sup>3</sup>

## Each stage of human development has a type of family

Today it is very common to speak of different types of families and it is also accepted that society has changed throughout history. However, it was not an easy thing to assume two centuries ago. This scientific and materialistic explanation of the history of humankind is due, to a large extent, to the contributions of Marx and Engels. Based on Morgan's book and contributions from other researchers, they were able to account for how different societies evolved and developed. Until 1860 there was no explanation of the evolution of the family or of sex-affective relationships that was not religious.

"The patriarchal form of the family, described there [in the Five Books of Moses] in greater detail than anywhere else, was not only implicitly accepted as the oldest form of the family, but also — after excluding polygamy — identified with the present-day bourgeois family, as if the family had really undergone no historical development at all."<sup>4</sup>

Thanks to the contributions of historical materialism, it was possible to demonstrate that there were different types of family according to the different stages of development of societies. "For savagery — group marriage; for barbarism — pairing marriage; for civilisation — monogamy, supplemented by adultery and prostitution."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> F Engels, "Preface to the Fourth German Edition of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*", 1891, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 204.

<sup>5</sup> F Engels, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", op. cit., p. 182.

The appearance of new elements, tools and discoveries produced qualitative changes. There was not only an increase in the production of goods but also in the way of organising society, revolutionising all its institutions, and the family was no exception.

## Ending the patriarchal family and freeing women from domestic slavery

During primitive communism, there were numerous conjugal couples with their sons and daughters and the direction of the home was entrusted to women. The activities that took place there were considered as valuable as those of getting food, which were carried out by the men. This sexual division of tasks did not imply the contempt or subordination of one gender over the other; both were equally necessary and respected. With the emergence of the patriarchal family and, even more, with the monogamous family model, the tasks of care and reproduction lost their social character and passed into the private sphere. From that moment on, women became servants of the home, resigning their place in social production.

It is true that with the incorporation of female workers into industry women regained a certain place in social production but at too high a price. For one thing, they were (and still are) undervalued in the world of work. Moreover, they were not freed from the burdens of reproductive tasks and work at home. Engels considers that "modern society is a mass composed solely of individual families as its molecules."<sup>6</sup> These families are based on the domestic slavery of women. Hence the importance the author gives to the struggle to suppress the individual family as an economic unit of society and recover that space for social production. This is currently valid for socialist feminism, which seeks a radical transformation that ends all oppressions, including the domination and subordination of women. •

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 191.





October 2019: Fires devour part of the Brazilian Pantanal, a region of great biodiversity in southern Brazil

## Engels and socialism as overcoming the antagonism between society and nature

Mercedes Trimarchi

*The greatest challenge humanity has at this time is to interrupt the suicidal journey it travels under the blind leadership of the world bourgeoisie, towards the abyss of environmental destruction and mass extinction. Engels, along with Marx, warned about the radical need to restore the metabolic balance of society with nature by eliminating capitalist exploitation and the plundering of natural resources.*

When in the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels in 1848, incorporated into the ten-point program the collective and planned management of agriculture and its articulation with industrial production, tending to gradually overcome the antagonism between the countryside and the city, they were setting a strategic task.<sup>1</sup>

Of the two, it was Engels who made the first approaches to the problem of

the destruction of nature. Already at age 18, he had written about social inequality and environmental problems in his hometown of Barmen, about rivers reddened by waste from dye-works and workers who breathed “more coal fumes than oxygen”, with the consequence of an extension of lung diseases “on a scale difficult to conceive.” His first important writing, *Outline of a Critique of Political Economy*, of 1843, relates the capitalist desire for profit and the degradation of nature.<sup>2</sup>

In *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, a year later, Marx states that the private property of the means of production is the result of alienated work, of an alienated relationship of the worker with nature and with himself, of which socialism would be the overcoming.<sup>3</sup> Engels wrote *The Condition of the Working Class in*

*England in 1845*, giving an account of the very harsh living conditions of the proletariat, including the environmental precariousness and the unhealthy neighbourhoods, with polluted air and water.<sup>4</sup>

Marx would capture in *Capital* the notion of metabolic fracture under the influence of the German physiologist Justus von Liebig. This scientist, studying the second agrarian revolution of the British Empire, introduced in 1840 the concept of metabolic process, which later acquired great importance in biochemistry and ecology. Liebig described a cycle in which soil nutrients pass from plants to animals that consume them and return as waste; the disruption of this process by the extraction of food to the cities implied looting of nutrients that was later attempted to be remedied by

*Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, pp. 229–348.

See F Engels, “The Condition of the Working Class in England”, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 4, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, pp. 295–583.

another looting, importing guano from Peru, bones from the Sicilian catacombs and other fertilisers. In *Capital*, he warns about this capitalist metabolic breakdown, noting the destruction of forests and the growing concentration of the population in urban centres that intensifies damage to the soil and “destroys both the physical health of urban workers and the spiritual life of agricultural workers”. Marx asserts that it is only possible to access the kingdom of freedom, as opposed to that of necessity, based on a rational regulation of the exchange of raw materials with nature, an exchange that society would place “under its common control, rather than being dominated by it as if by a blind power. Capitalist production destroys its sources of wealth, nature and the working person.”<sup>5</sup>

Mindful of the social consequences of this environmental imbalance inherent in the capitalist mode of production, Marx and Engels denounced, for example, that it was the economic model imposed by the English colonisers that had generated the depletion of the soil in Ireland and the famine of 1846.<sup>6</sup>

In *The Housing Question* (1873), Engels returns to the theme of the pollution of cities: “In London alone, a greater quantity of manure than is produced by the whole kingdom of Saxony is poured away every day into the sea with an expenditure of enormous sums, and what colossal structures are necessary in order to prevent this manure from poisoning the whole of London (...). And even comparatively unimportant Berlin has been suffocating in the malodours of its own filth for at least thirty years.”<sup>7</sup> Only when science corroborates that the epidemics originating in the precarious working-class quarters later

spread to bourgeois homes and “the angel of death rages in the ranks of the capitalists as ruthlessly as in the ranks of the workers”<sup>8</sup> do the authorities take initiatives to mitigate the most serious threats to the public health. “Nevertheless, the capitalist order of society reproduces again and again the evils to be remedied (...). Far from being able to abolish this antithesis (between town and country), capitalist society, on the contrary, is compelled to intensify it day by day.”<sup>9</sup> Engels ridicules those who seek “to maintain the basis of all the evils of present-day society and at the same time to want to abolish the evils themselves.”<sup>10</sup> In short, only the abolition of capitalist relations of production can pave the way to the solution of the pressing social and environmental problems, such as chronic housing shortages or unsanitary conditions in overcrowded cities.

Works such as *Anti-Dühring* (1878) and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880) also address the destruction of nature in capitalism, the need to achieve harmonious development based on socialist democratic economic planning. But perhaps it is in *Dialectics of Nature*, a work of magnificent erudition published posthumously, where Engels bequeaths us his most penetrating plea against the bourgeoisie and the capitalist mode of production, regarding their incompatibility with nature:

“Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory, nature takes its revenge on us. Each victory, it is true, in the first place brings about the results we expected, but in the second and third places, it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first. (...) Thus at every step, we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature — but that we, with flesh, blood

and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly.

“In particular, after the mighty advances made by the natural sciences in the present century, we are more than ever in a position to realise, and hence to control, also the more remote natural consequences of at least our day-to-day production activities. But the more this progresses the more will men not only feel but also know their oneness with nature, and the more impossible will become the senseless and unnatural idea of a contrast between mind and matter, man and nature, soul and body, such as arose after the decline of classical antiquity in Europe and obtained its highest elaboration in Christianity. (...)”

“This regulation, however, requires something more than mere knowledge. It requires a complete revolution in our hitherto existing mode of production, and simultaneously a revolution in our whole contemporary social order.

“All hitherto existing modes of production have aimed merely at achieving the most immediately and directly useful effect of labour. The further consequences, which appear only later and become effective through gradual repetition and accumulation, were totally neglected. (...)”

“As individual capitalists are engaged in production and exchange for the sake of the immediate profit, only the nearest, most immediate results must first be taken into account. As long as the individual manufacturer or merchant sells a manufactured or purchased commodity with the usual coveted profit, he is satisfied and does not concern himself with what afterwards becomes of the commodity and its purchasers. The same thing applies to the natural effects of the same actions.”<sup>11</sup> •

<sup>5</sup> See John Bellamy Foster, *Marx's Ecology: Materialism and Nature*, Monthly Review, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> See Marx & Engels on Ireland and the Irish Question, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1971.

<sup>7</sup> F Engels, “The Housing Question”, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 384.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 347.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 340.

<sup>11</sup> F Engels, “Dialectics of Nature”, *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, pp. 461, 462, 463.



Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx

# From historical materialism to the Communist Manifesto and the First International

Adolfo Santos

Talking about Friedrich Engels without associating him with Karl Marx is impossible. But the same can be said if we change the order. Since Engels and Marx, or Marx and Engels, met in 1844, not only did they become inseparable for 40 years, until Marx died in 1883, but they also began a close working partnership through which they produced the greatest works on the social and economic relationships that have been known. And it was a relationship that lasted beyond that date, insofar as, as Trotsky put it, "(Engels) put aside his own researches to spend years deciphering the hieroglyphic manuscripts of Marx, painstakingly checking translations, and no less painstakingly correcting his writings in almost all the European languages."<sup>1</sup> Especially in the edition of the last two volumes of *Capital*.

Engels, born in Barmen, Germany, in 1820, even came before Marx to some conclusions that would be key to his elaborations, centrally the revolutionary character of the working class. Marx, for his part, in early 1840, made contact with some small socialist groups in Paris through which he reached Proudhon.<sup>2</sup> From that moment

on, he began to incorporate the idea that, since the working class was the most exploited, it would therefore be the most revolutionary. A little earlier, Engels, who was two years younger, had also come to the same conclusion, albeit by a different path.

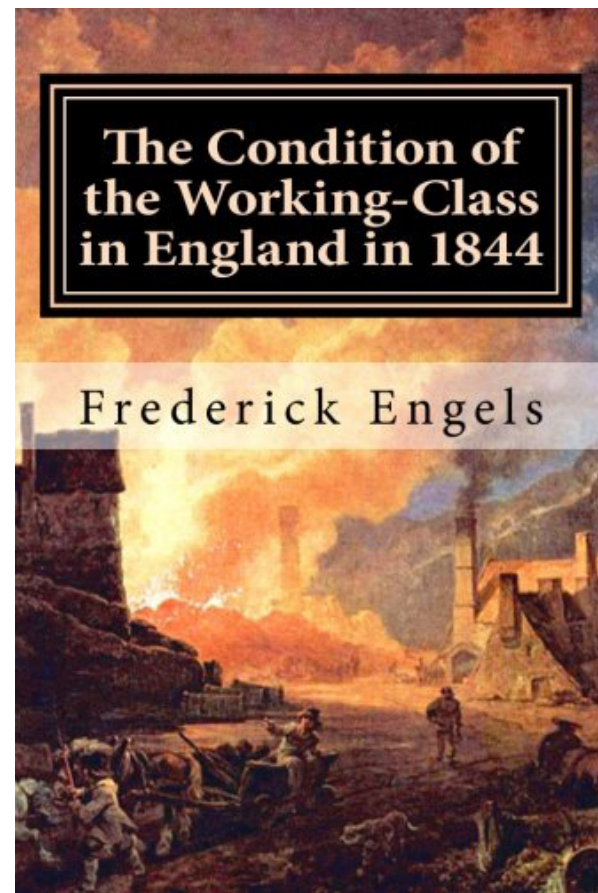
The son of a textile industrialist, Engels did not manage to finish his university studies and, under pressure from his father, ended up assuming responsibilities in the English branch of his family's company. Hegelian, like Marx, in the 1830s joined the absolutist monarchical opposition reigning in his country, a regime that was beginning to be strongly questioned. But it was his obligatory trips to England, in the service of his father's company, which led him to make contact with the workers' movement of that country and with socialist ideas. Thus, he began to collaborate with publications of Chartism<sup>3</sup> and

*Philosophy of misery*, with his book *Poverty of philosophy* (1847).

<sup>3</sup> **Chartism.** It was a movement of the English working class that began in 1830 and lasted until 1948. Initially, it fought for the inclusion of the working class, represented

learned about the foundations of English political economy, where he had access to the theory of "work-value" formulated by the English economists Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Of these concrete experiences, in 1845 he wrote *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, where he makes a detailed description of the terrible living

by the General Association of Workers, in politics. The name of the movement derives from a manifesto called *The People's Charter*, written in 1838, which constituted its program.



conditions of the working class in that country.

**From Hegel to Ludwig Feuerbach, the path of historical materialism**

At the time when Engels and Marx first met, Ludwig Feuerbach, who was also a disciple of Hegel, was all the rage with his writings critical of idealism. In 1841, amid a great political upheaval against the Prussian absolutist monarchy, this author had published *The Essence of Christianity*, where he questioned the German regime from a religious bias, from idealistic positions, especially those defended by the Hegelians, confronting his own teacher. From this criticism, Feuerbach developed the elements of materialism. The young Engels and Marx, who had already produced several publications<sup>4</sup> in books and newspapers, reflecting the agitated social processes of the time, were able to understand the importance of this new philosophical thought, not to repeat it, but to critically overcome it and elaborate a new philosophical conception from materialism.

Although Marx and Engels acknowledged the importance of Hegel regarding dialectics, they always maintained a critical attitude, especially because of the idealistic nature of that conception. In the same way, despite their enthusiasm for Feuerbach's work, they did not adhere to it completely either, since it was a partial vision that did not integrate Hegel's dialectical aspect. This was the genius of Marx and Engels, synthesising two thought processes that even confronted each other, integrating dialectics with materialism to cause a leap in human thought, giving rise to historical materialism. This

<sup>4</sup> In 1844 Marx wrote *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, which were only published in 1932, but which contained criticisms of the conceptions of David Ricardo and Adam Smith and the Hegelian dialectic for its idealistic position, approaching the materialist dialectic. Engels, for his part, had written *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, a book that fascinated Marx and probably sealed that historical relationship between the two.

new philosophical concept was embodied in *The German Ideology*, completed in 1846. This work was a first great step to mark a before and after of socialist ideas. It would mean a quality leap in relation to the socialist thought known until that moment, fundamentally utopian socialism. Thus was born what Engels called scientific socialism.

A little earlier, in 1845, the first work written jointly by Engels and Marx, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism*, came out.

At a time when the absolutist monarchy was losing all sustenance, this work strongly attacks the conception of the Young Hegelians who, against the Prussian regime, defended a merely liberal policy, the dominant thought in Germany at that time. The authors develop their criticism of Neo-Hegelian conceptions arguing with their main representatives, the brothers Bruno, Edgar and Egbert Bauer, editors of the *General Literary Gazette*. It was a work that, in addition to demonstrating the unity of thought between Marx and Engels, brought a new vision of the development of society, of the character of social struggles in the perspective of social transformation.

**United by revolutionary activity, they write the Communist Manifesto and found the First International**

This unbreakable four-decade partnership carried out the greatest political, economic and social elaboration in human history at the service of the working class. Although



Frederick Engels in 1845

Marx and Engels only organically incorporated into a revolutionary organisation in 1847, the League of the Righteous, later renamed the Communist League, they had been active for years and had contacts with workers' organisations. Hence, it is important to point out they were two thinkers who elaborated a philosophical framework at the service of the proletariat, from within the working class, from their experiences, their demands and their struggles. Regardless of being two intellectuals, they produced a political and social work that they subjected to criticism from the class to which they dedicated their lives.

At the end of 1847, the Communist League, which Engels and Marx were members of, met in London. Militants from various countries who sympathised with the new ideas that were beginning to overcome utopian socialism attended the event. For several days they discussed the new directions of the organisation in English, German, Italian and French. In



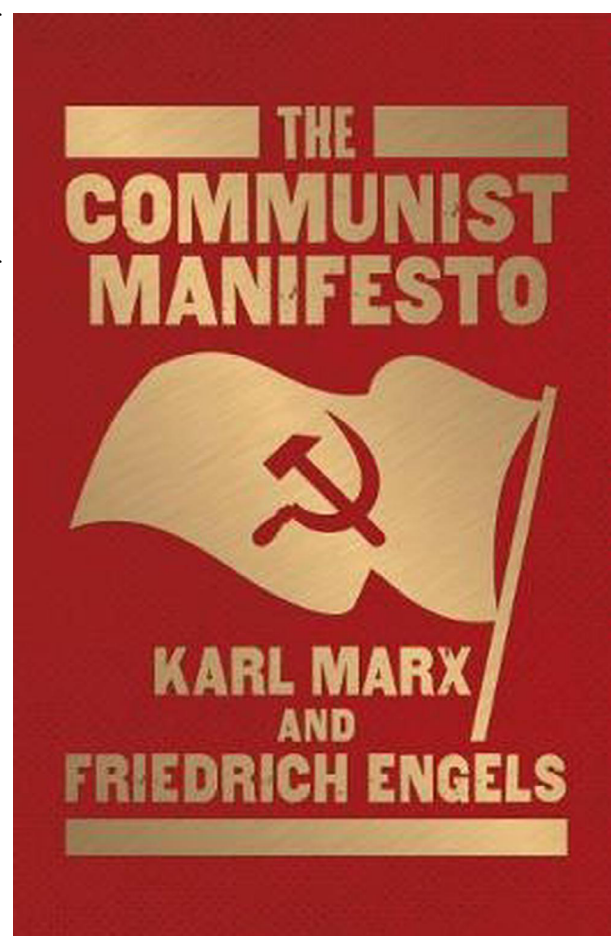
the end, they defined the fundamental objectives: "The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society which rests on the antagonism of classes, and the foundation of a new society without classes and without private property."<sup>5</sup> On these principles, Marx, 29, and Engels, just 27, were entrusted to write a document that would expose this program to all those who wanted to join in this task.

Between the last days of 1847 and the first days of 1848, the two German leaders undertook this intellectual and militant task. Engels had already been sketching since June 1847 some writings to present to the meeting of the League, but surely the hectic meeting in London inspired him to improve his proposal. In a letter to Marx, who was living in Brussels at that time, he suggested that he rethink his draft, called *Communist Confession of Faith*, and proposed to rewrite the text with the name of the *Communist Manifesto*, later defined by Leon Trotsky as "displaying greater genius than any other in world literature".<sup>6</sup> Baptized by Engels, it was elaborated on the

incipient foundations of historical materialism. Let us remember that it begins by stating: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

The partnership of these two great geniuses remained unshakeable, at that time they did not stop producing or being militant for a moment. They had in common the revolutionary activity that they developed intellectually and practically. Each moment of their lives meant a step of improvement where the previous text was the stepping stone that allowed them to conquer a new stage of knowledge at the service of the revolution. Together they produced the best texts and, as great militants that they were, they built the first steps of a revolutionary organisation, such as the Communist League, or the First International, and they participated in the main events of the class struggle of their time.

It was an unprecedented and unrepeatable human team so far. Probably neither of the two would have



reached the same historical dimension separately, either because of the almost perfect intellectual complementation or because of the personal, human and almost family affinity, which allowed them to support each other at all times, even in the personal difficulties they had to face. It is difficult to imagine Engels without Marx, but in the same way, it is also difficult to imagine Marx without Engels. •

5 K Marx & F Engels, "Rules of the Communist League", *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010, p. 633.

6 L Trotsky, "Ninety years of the Communist Manifesto", 30 October 1937, *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1976, p. 18.



Pictures of Engels and Marx at different stages of their life

## Nahuel Moreno on Engels

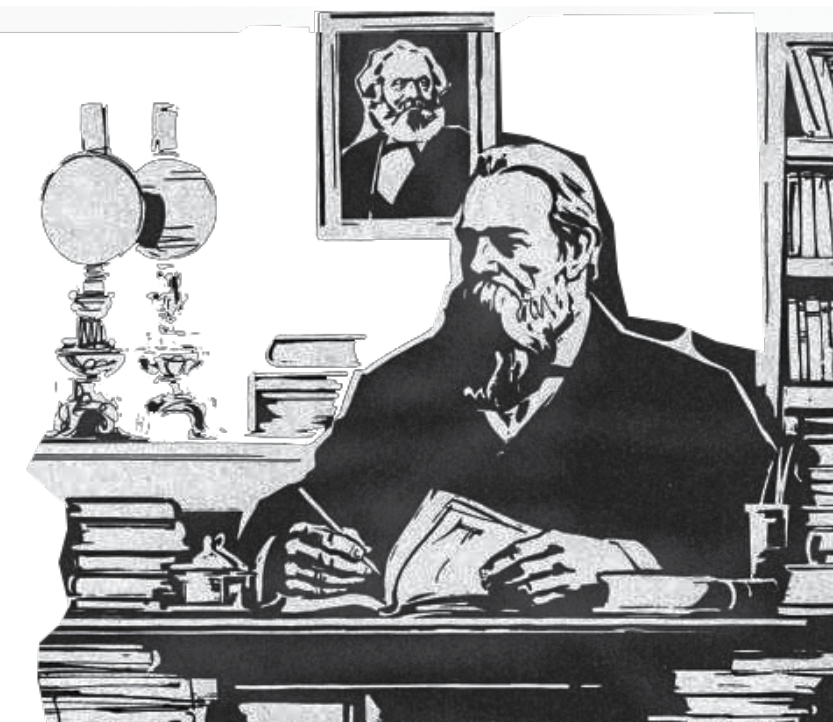
In chapter III of his book *Marxist Logic and Modern Sciences* (available at [www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org)), written in 1973, Moreno assumed Engels's "defence" against the attacks of currents inside and outside Marxism that had taken place throughout the 20th century. It had been intended to confront Marx with Engels, who would have made a mistake in his work on the laws of nature and its dialectical character.

Earlier, in 1908, in his fight against the advance of reformist revisionism, Lenin himself rejected the "attempt to counterpose Marx to Engels, accusing the latter of 'naïve dogmatic materialism', of 'the crudest materialist dogmatism'".<sup>1</sup>

The best-known and most important reference of the anti-Engelsian approach within the Stalinist Marxism was the Hungarian theorist György Lukács, who in the postwar period was part of the country's official academy. In his classic *History and Class Consciousness*, he argues that the laws of dialectics cannot be applied to nature and that Marx's method is only for history.<sup>2</sup>

1 V.I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-criticism", 1908, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972, p.99.

2 Lukács says in this book: "The misunderstandings that the



The academic stream of the Frankfurt school (Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer) also shared this approach.

In the post-war period, Lucien Goldman and Roger Garaudy in France

Engelsian way of exposing the dialectic has caused essentially stem from the fact that Engels [...] extended the dialectical method to the knowledge of nature."

will join this tradition, for example. Most of today's Gramscians are also in the camp of "Marx against Engels".

Nahuel Moreno will specifically argue against the anti-Engelism of the Marxist existentialist Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980), and of the Italian Communist Party theorist Galvano Della Volpe (1895-1968). We reproduce the aforementioned chapter III.

## Sartre and Della Volpe against Engels

All modern revisionist currents attack Engels in the name of Marxism. They accuse him, mainly Sartre and Della Volpe, of having left Marx, for having generalised the laws of dialectics to all nature and, therefore, of "Hegelian".

The problem of either the coincidence or mismatch between Marx and Engels must be analysed, in our opinion, taking into account the division of tasks between them<sup>1</sup>

1 Jean-Paul Sartre in *Between existentialism and Marxism*, Verso, London, 1963, p.

35 considers that the laws or dialectical concepts that Engels imposes on nature, like Hegel, are not "in addition", "but praxis"; besides "the upshot of this is paradoxical: Engels criticises Hegel for imposing the laws of thought on matter, but he does precisely the same himself, in that he expects the sciences to verify a dialectical reason which he discovered in the social world. But, in the historical and social world, as we shall see, there *really* is a dialectical reason; by transferring it into the 'natural' world, and forcibly inscribing it there, Engels stripped it of its rationality: there was no longer a dialectic which man produced by producing himself, and which, in turn, produced

man; there was only a contingent law, of which nothing could be said except it is so and not otherwise. In short, Reason once more becomes a bone, since it is merely a fact and has no knowable necessity. It so happens that opposites interpenetrate. Rationality is merely a final and universal law; and therefore it is irrationality pure and simple" (Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol 1, *Theory of Practical Ensembles*, Verso, London, 1991, p. 32). For Della Volpe and his disciples, those laws only apply to man or to a specific historical moment. They also insist on the "error" of Engels, of having taken from the Hegelian left the false illusion that



and carrying out a careful reading of the texts and correspondence of Marx, which has not been done by the authors we criticise.

This will allow us, in addition to settling the question about Engels, to approach the true thought of Marx himself.

### 1. A total coincidence

Both Marx and Engels vindicate Hegel as the discoverer of two new logical concepts that encompass all natural and human phenomena: there is no pure unity since it is always a totality of relations and everything is a historical process. Engels says: "Everything consists of cells. The cell is Hegelian 'being-in-itself' and its development follows the Hegelian process step by step right up to the final emergence of the 'idea' — i.e. each completed organism." [...] Another result that would have delighted old Hegel is the correlation of forces in physics, or the law whereby mechanical motion, i.e. mechanical force (e.g. through friction), is, in given conditions, converted into heat, heat into light, light into chemical affinity, chemical affinity (e.g. in the voltaic pile) into electricity, the latter into magnetism. [...] This much is certain — comparative physiology gives one a healthy contempt for man's idealistic arrogance in regard to other animals."<sup>2</sup>

Hegel's method serves and the system does not, i.e., that "[...] what has prevented mainly, from Engels onwards, capturing the true nature of the dialectic [...] is a gross logical simplification [...]" (*Critique of Contemporary Ideology*, op. cit., p. 57) and that, therefore, it is necessary to achieve "the elimination also of a (mythical) 'dialectic of nature' of Hegelian-Engelsian memory". "The interpretative tendency of these studies reflects in substance the Engelsian thesis [...] of 'the distinction between method and system' which 'is decidedly contrary to the letter and spirit of Hegelian philosophy' (page 18). Mario Rossi extensively develops this criticism in *Marx and Hegelian Dialectics*.

2 What is inadmissible in "specialists of Marxism" is not in our possible young readers; hence we clarify: Marx and Engels, who had fundamentally in common the revolutionary activity, imposed themselves from the beginning a division of tasks that,



Jean Paul Sartre

Concerning man's agreement with nature, Marx says: "[Man] can work only as Nature does, that is by changing the form of matter." And in a note, he clarifies his concept by quoting another author who states: "All the phenomena of the universe, whether produced by the hand of man or through the universal laws of physics, are not actual new creations, but merely a modification of matter. Joining together and separating are the only elements which the human mind always finds on analysing the concept of reproduction and it is just the same with the reproduction of value."<sup>3</sup>

Not only can we see Marx here agreeing with Engels, but also, this is a brilliant anticipation of the discoveries of modern epistemology (the categories of reunion and separation in the construction of thought).

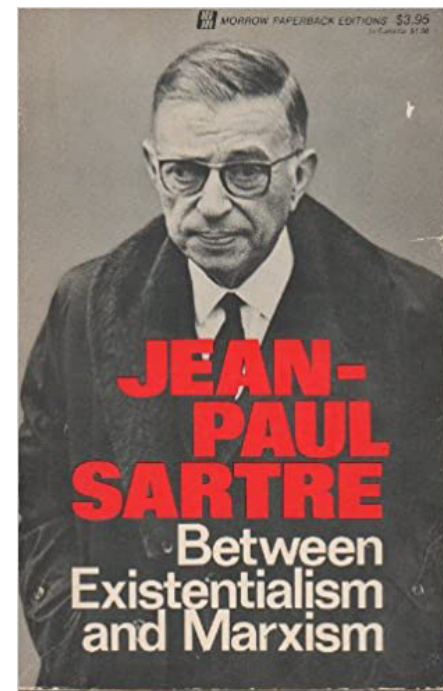
at the time of their maturity, materialised in Marx devoting himself primarily to the economy and Engels to the philosophy and science of nature. The correspondence between them clearly shows that it was only this and not different conceptions. But it would be naive to think that both Sartre and Della Volpe have not noticed this. We explain later the reason for the orientation that these modern "Marxists" give to their reading.

3 In an Engel's letter to Marx in which he requested Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*. (Letter Engels to Marx, 14 July 1858, *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol 40, Lawrence & Wishart, London, p. 326-327.)

What remains of the Marx of Sartre and Della Volpe, who disagreed with the unification that Engels made of the laws of nature and man?

### 2. Engels is not the only one ignored by dramatist Sartre

We start from the assumption that ignoring Engels, Marx is the second ignored or not understood. But there is more. With an incomparable literary audacity, Sartre describes the relations of modern science with dialectics: "Until now the dialectical method has not yet really intervened to interpret



the material facts of the organism."<sup>4</sup> "It may be said that the metaphysical hypothesis of a dialectic of Nature becomes more interesting when it is used to explain the passage from inorganic matter to organic bodies, and the evolution of life on earth. This is true. But it should be noted that this *formal* interpretation of life and evolution will never be more than a pious dream as long as scientists have no way of using the notions of 'totality' and 'totalisation' as a guiding hypothesis. Nothing is gained by proclaiming that the evolution of the species or the appearance of life are moments of the 'dialectic of Nature' as long as we are ignorant of *how* life appeared and *how* species are transformed. For the present, biology, in its actual research, remains positivistic and analytical. It is possible that a deeper knowledge of its object, through its contradictions, will force biology to consider the organism in its totality, that is to say, dialectically, and to consider all biological facts in their relation of interiority. This is *possible*, but it is not *certain*."<sup>5</sup>

However, even if Sartre ignores it, biologists — from the middle of the last century — have used as "the notions of 'totality' and 'totalisation' as a guiding hypothesis" and have been able to explain "how species are transformed". François Jacob says: "For Darwin, a living being becomes from the time of its birth part of the immense organised system formed by the earth and everything on it. Natural selection represents a regulatory factor that maintains the harmony of the system. Today we consider that a system of this kind can survive only if the 'feedback' loops automatically adjust its functioning. Evolution thus becomes the result of feedback from environment to reproduction."<sup>6</sup> And regarding the organism he also insists

4 Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Between existentialism and Marxism*, op. cit., p. 31.

5 Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Critique of Dialectical Reason, Vol 1, Theory of Practical Ensembles*, op. cit., p. 34.

6 Jacob, François, *The Logic of Life: A History of Heredity*, Vintage Books, 1976, pp. 175-176.



Galvano Della Volpe

on the character of totality discovered by Darwin and Wallace: "What gave living beings their intrinsic properties was the interplay of relationships secretly uniting the parts so that the whole should function. It was the organisation hidden behind the visible structure. Thereby the idea became of a nexus of qualities peculiar to living beings; what the nineteenth century was to call 'life'."<sup>7</sup> "The form, properties and characters of living beings, therefore, were subject to regulation from within the system — that is, to the play of interactions coordinating the activity of its elements."<sup>8</sup>

That is why Marx's admiration for Darwin is not accidental, in him he saw a scientist who had discovered in biology laws similar to his in economics.

From Darwin onwards, the concepts of totality and evolution are dominant, whether consciously or unconsciously applied. The merit of Engels is that he was the first one who, together with Marx, demanded from the sciences the use of these two concepts, which,

7 Ibid, p. 44.

8 Ibid, p. 173.

by themselves, do not advance research one millimetre, but combined with it, they are the only ones that allow the discoveries to be interpreted coherently.

### 3. Modern epistemology confirms Engels

Research has shown there are common laws between human praxis, thought as part of it, and organic and inorganic nature and that these common laws are dialectical. Piaget has pointed out that this profound agreement between the creations of thought and the real world (which is not total or copy, but isomorphic) occurs because man is a biological and also a physical being and, therefore, his actions obey the laws of biology and physics. Thought does nothing but perfect and create new combinations of those laws that are implicit. The agreement arises from the common root — nature — and not from confrontation.

Science has thus liquidated one bastion of idealism: the privileged character of pure deductive, logical-mathematical thought, which often, a



posteriori, applied or coincided with reality.<sup>9</sup>

Piaget gives great importance to the opposing actions of gathering and separating, on which, mainly, thought and knowledge are structured. These actions, unconscious, in a mechanical way, also occur in nature, which separates and unites in its development as Marx had already foreseen. This creates similar forms between the laws of nature, praxis, objective knowledge, and pure deduction. Piaget's research begins to coincide with that of Warren Sturgis McCulloch, who finds in the functioning of neurons a logic similar to that of the propositions in the adolescents discovered by the first.

As Engels wanted, the most general laws of dialectics are the laws common to all the processes and totalities of existing relationships, laws that by their very nature demand to specify the specific forms in which they manifest themselves in each stage and which are to be perfected or exceeded, since they are relative.

#### 4. The reasons for a curious agreement

We already said that Sartre and Della Volpe show a total coincidence when it comes to attacking Engels. Apparently, this should not be so since, besides their philosophical conceptions, their political positions are opposite: Sartre is a typical and honest intellectual, who defends with all intransigence his point of view without fear of colliding with any power or apparatus and Della Volpe is a Western intellectual faithful to Stalinism. The secret of their coincidence is the common class root, and their differences stem from their different locations.

Sartre has reflected the French and, to a certain extent, European intelligentsia, desperate and hopeless, which had no independence for its creation since it was sandwiched between the post-war

disaster and a workers' movement controlled by an apparatus, the French Communist Party that depended on the USSR.

This situation explains his existentialist philosophy, which aims to make the individual with his options the fundamental category of the interpretation of the world. Upon discovering that this individual is not free but is subject to the laws of necessity, he converted to Marxism. From that moment, in his attempt at synthesis, he tried to make the individual praxis, within his new neo-Marxist conception, a privileged sector. This conception led him to raise a Chinese wall between the human and organic and inorganic nature. Any attempt to build bridges or find common laws between both natures is for Sartre, "metaphysical", "Hegelian".

Della Volpe represents the sector that joined to the Communist Party in the postwar period, confusing integration to the working class with compliance, idealisation of their apparatuses even if they were counterrevolutionary.<sup>10</sup> He had before him the communist parties and the government of the USSR, which followed an unprincipled policy, day by day, similar to that of Bernstein and the German revisionists of the beginning of the century who proclaimed movement is everything, the aims and principles are nothing. The school of Della Volpe has tried to give a theoretical foundation to that opportunistic and without principles practice. No "hypothetical-deductive" or "aprioristic" schemata like that of the most intransigent class struggle; long live the "well-determined abstraction" that starts from the "historical moment" with no baggage or previous principle.



Jean Piaget

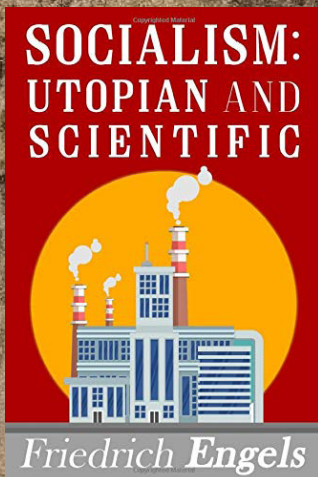
For Della Volpe, the most intransigent class struggle is a "Hegelian-Engelsian" "a priori". Just as for him knowledge does not start from any previous schema and starts directly with perception, so, the correct policy will not arise from combining the fair schema of the most intransigent class struggle with the given situation, but only from the latter. Thus, we would say with Della Volpe: Poland needs at this "determinate moment" as a consequence of a "contradiction" and "determinate abstraction" to sell its coal and, taking advantage of the Asturian miners' strike against Franco, it sells it to Spain ("determinate solution" of a "determinate contradiction", typical of moral Galileism, which does not take into account the "a priori" of "Hegelian-Engelsian memory" as the international class struggle and proletarian solidarity).

These "Marxists" are the intellectual justifiers, in a very educated country, of a well-determined practice, that of the Italian Communist Party and mainly of the USSR. In Russia, for Zdanov and Stalin it was enough an order to liquidate a controversy; in Italy, you cannot act like that. That is the reason for the Dellavolpian erudition; and of the agreement with Sartre, in his ill-founded attack on Engels. •

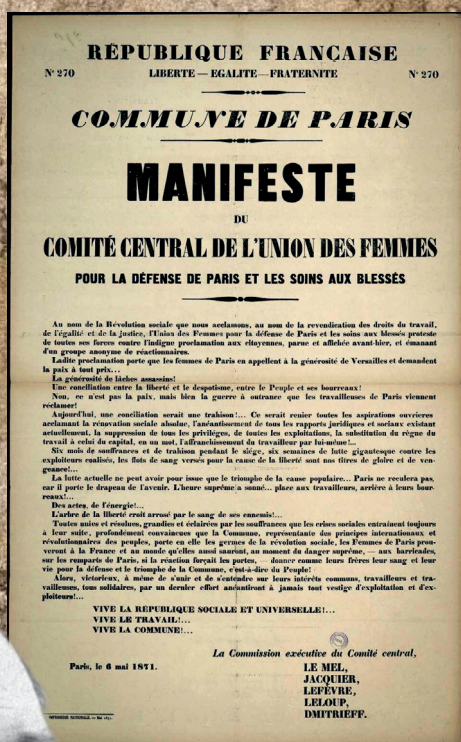
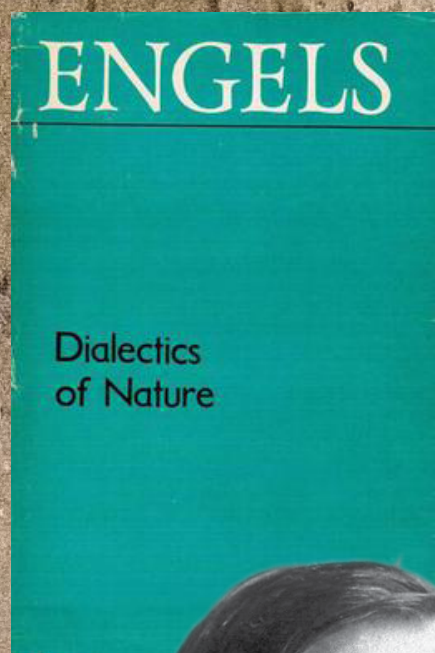
9 The fact that some non-Euclidean geometries have had application in reality long after they have been discovered is, for the metaphysical currents, a proof of the existence of God or the idea before the emergence of the world.

10 Within these, there is the Hegelian current with exponents such as Henri Lefebvre and Roger Garaudy. Hegel served to explain and justify the "negative" side, Stalinism.

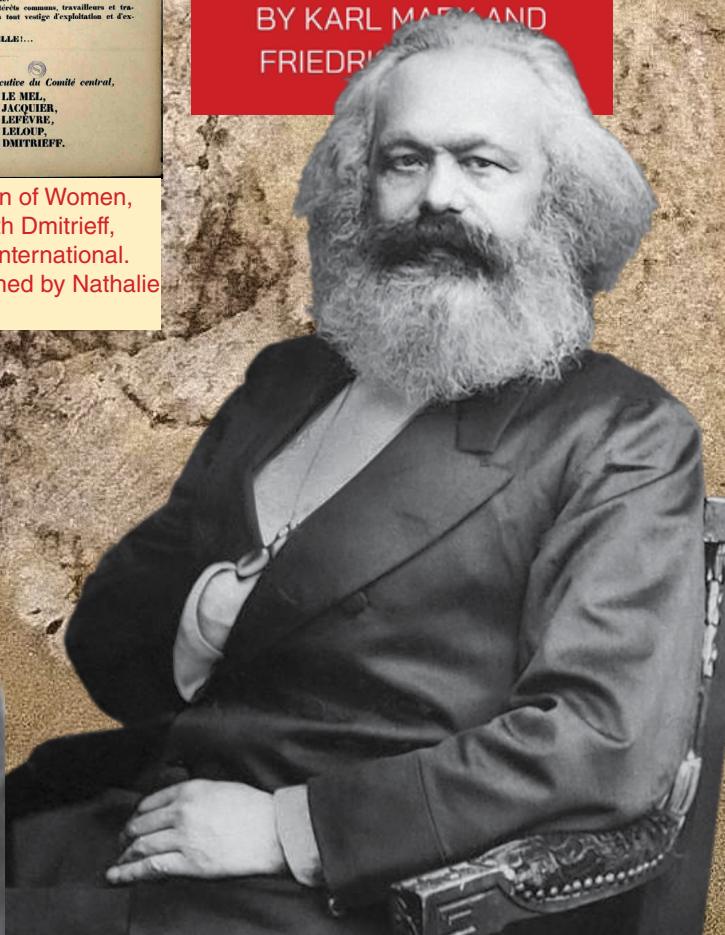
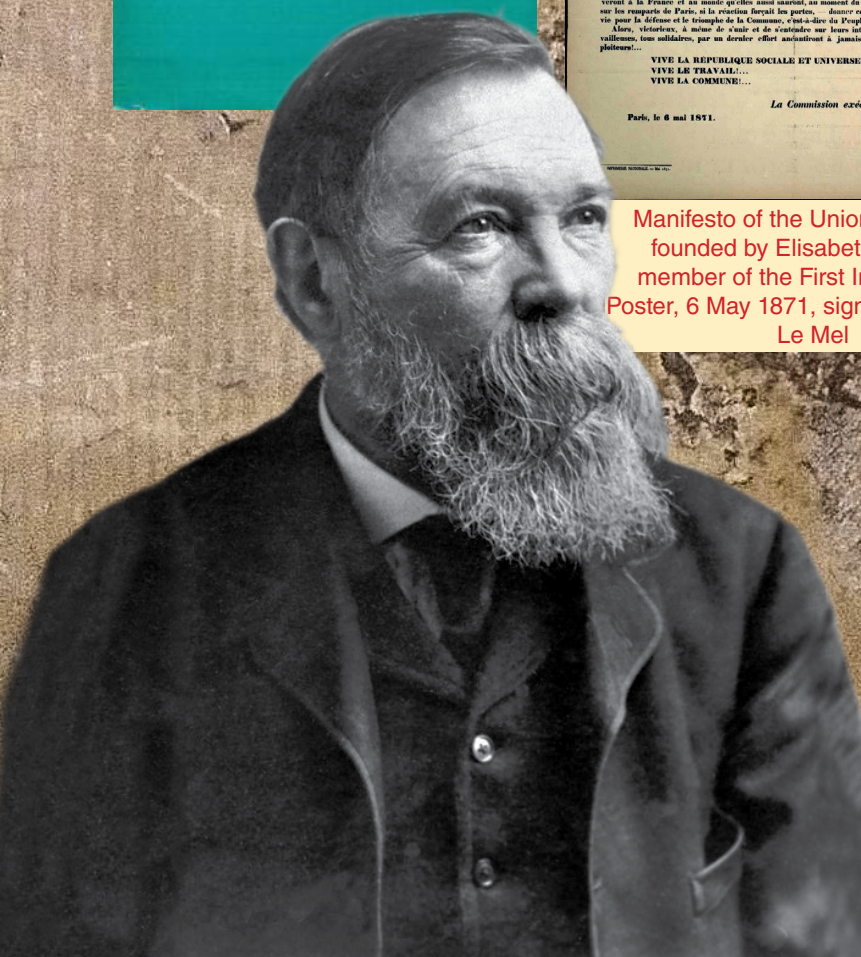




Friedrich Engels's membership card of the International Workers Association



Manifesto of the Union of Women, founded by Elisabeth Dmitrieff, member of the First International. Poster, 6 May 1871, signed by Nathalie Le Mel







· LABOUR'S · MAY · DAY ·  
DEDICATED · TO · THE · WORKERS · OF · THE · WORLD ·

**Solidarity of Labour. Labour's May Day. Dedicated to workers of the world.**  
Poster (engraved technique) created by Walter Crane, English artist born in Liverpool. He participated in the Arts and Crafts movement. The image represents workers from five continents (Africa, Asia, America, Australia and Europe) in unity under an angel representing freedom, brotherhood and equality. It was first published in **Commonweal**, official newspaper of the "Socialist League", 24 May 1890.