DONALD DREW EGBERT
STOW PERSONS

Socialism and American Life, Volume I

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EDITORS: DONALD DREW EGBERT
AND STOW PERSONS

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To the Memory of

David Frederick Bowers

PREFACE TO VOLUME 1

THIS book was conceived in connection with two year-long student conferences conducted at Princeton University by the Program in American Civilization as part of its regular undergraduate teaching. Like all the work of the Program, the book is an attempt to cast light on important aspects of American civilization considered, not in isolation, but with reference to the other cultures which have influenced, and been influenced by, that of the United States. And it attempts to do so by cutting across the boundaries of the various fields of knowledge separated by modern specialization. This it does, not by denying the necessity for such specialized knowledge in the modern world, but by bringing together and as far as possible coordinating the knowledge and opinions of qualified experts in many different fields. A generous subvention from the Rockefeller Foundation made it possible to secure the collaboration of an unusually distinguished group of specialists who served as lecturers in the student conferences at Princeton and, on the basis of those lectures, prepared the essays in the present volume. The members of the group were carefully selected so as to combine a wide range of subject matter with representation of as many different major currents of American political and social opinion as possible. In the end the group proved to be about equally divided between those who have actually participated in socialist movements of one sort or another, and nonsocialists interested in socialism simply as a subject for study.

In addition to the essays written by these specialists, the book contains, in Volume 2, detailed critical bibliographies enlarged from those prepared under the direction of members of the staff of the Program in American Civilization for the guidance of the students enrolled in its conferences. It can be said with considerable assurance that, whatever the limitations of these bibliographies, no others of comparable range have ever before been published on this subject. Although they have been prepared with the cooperation and advice of the specialists participating in the symposium, all responsibility for opinions implicitly or explicitly expressed therein rests, not on them, but on the editors and on those other members of the staff of the Program in American Civilization who have directly shared the task of preparing the bibliographies. More detailed acknowledgments in connection with the bibliographies will be found in the preface to Volume 2.

The editors are well aware that this book can—and undoubtedly will—be criticized from several points of view. It will no doubt be criticized by conservatives on the grounds that, because several of the participants are convinced socialists of one variety or another, the book "teaches

socialism." To this the editors would simply reply that socialism, whether one approves of it or not, is, after all, one of the most powerful influences in the world today; and no American can hope to consider himself educated who does not seek to understand the premises and history, the possible contributions and limitations, of the chief varieties of socialism, in comparison and contrast with the American democratic tradition.

Marxist critics will no doubt attack the book from exactly the opposite point of view, that is, on the grounds that its editors and many of the contributors are not Marxists or, indeed, socialists at all. For Marxists hold that Marxian doctrine cannot be understood by anyone seeking to investigate it "objectively," but only by those who participate to the full in Marxist action appropriate to the capitalist crisis and the revolutionary opportunities of the proletariat. To these Marxist critics the editors would reply that various shades of Marxist opinion are represented among the authors of several of the essays.

And finally, the book will be criticized—with some justice—because, like all symposia representing several shades of opinion, it necessarily lacks a single unified point of view, and because the different chapters, being by different hands, necessarily vary in the adequacy of their presentation. In answer to this the editors can only say that the subject of the relation of socialism to the various aspects of American life and thought is much too complex to be treated adequately by any one man or from any single standpoint. And while it is true that the contributors diverge widely in the *value* which they attribute to the various influences of socialism on American life, nevertheless there are also surprisingly large areas of agreement, not only as to matters of sheer historical fact but as to the *degree* to which socialism has directly or indirectly affected American life.

The two volumes are dedicated by the editors to the memory of their friend and colleague, David Bowers, who at least as much as anyone was responsible for the conception of this book as well as of the two conferences on which it is based. Had he lived he would have been one of the editors of the publication. Before his untimely death in June 1945 not only had he conducted half of the first conference and delivered the lecture on which his essay herein is based, but he prepared the original draft of large sections of the critical bibliographies. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that whatever merit this book may have is to be attributed in major part to his broad scholarship, to his great ability and intelligence.

DONALD DREW EGBERT AND STOW PERSONS, *Editors*

Princeton, New Jersey
August 1, 1951

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INTRODUCTION

Terminology and Types of Socialism

BY DONALD DREW EGBERT

AND STOW PERSONS

THE problem of investigating the role which socialism has played in the United States is, of course, greatly complicated by the fact that there are so many different types of socialism, most of which are referred to in one way or another in the essays or bibliographies that follow. Because these different types are not systematically brought together in any other part of this book, the introduction will be chiefly devoted to a brief analysis of the major varieties of socialism, an analysis which can also serve in part as an introduction to socialist terminology.

In this book, unless otherwise noted, the word socialism is taken to include communism in accordance with the usage prevailing today.[1] However, a brief statement concerning the origins and development of these two terms is necessary, for their relation to one another has varied somewhat at different periods of time.[2] It should first be noted that "socialist" and "socialism," "communist" and "communism," are all words of relatively recent coinage, even though most of the points of view for which they stand go far back in human history. None of them, in their modern sense, can be found before the 1820's, and they all originated in either England or France. The earliest known use of the word "socialist" in its present meaning, to denote tendencies opposed to individualism, occurred in 1827 in the *Co-operative Magazine*, published in London by followers of the socialist Robert Owen; while "socialism" seems to have originated in France where it first appeared in print in 1831. "Communist" and "communism," however, were not coined until 1840, or shortly before, being first used by members of the secret and militant revolutionary societies which flourished in Paris under Louis-Philippe.[3]

After the Owenites coined the word socialist, they used it for a few years as their own distinctive label, but in the 1840's they lost their

[1] Oscar Jászi, "Socialism," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, xiv (1934), p. 188, states that socialism is the inclusive term.

[2] For the history of socialist terminology see especially the definitive article by Arthur E. Bestor, Jr., "The Evolution of the Socialist Vocabulary," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (June 1948), pp. 259-302; also Carl Grünberg, "Der Ursprung der Worte 'Sozialismus' und 'Sozialist,'" *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, ii (Leipzig, 1912), pp. 372-79, and Oscar Jászi, *op.cit.*, pp. 188-201. Additional bibliography is cited by Bestor, p. 277, note 95.

[3] According to Max Beer, "Communism," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, iv, p. 81, the term communism did not appear in print before 1840, but was coined in the secret revolutionary societies of Paris between 1834 and 1839. Bestor, *op.cit.*, p. 279, states that the new term "was born" in the year 1840. According to the *New English Dictionary*, under "Communism," an Englishman named [John] Goodwyn Barmby claimed in 1848 to have invented the word in 1840 at Paris while "in the company of some disciples of Babeoeuf [*sic*], then called Equalitarians." Bestor (p. 280) says that Barmby went to Paris in June 1840 armed with a letter from Robert Owen, and arrived there just as the new French terms were being introduced; however, Bestor credits Barmby with naturalizing the words communism and communist, among others, in English.

monopoly of the term, which was now applied to the followers of Charles Fourier and to other socialist and reformist groups of a peaceful nature. Consequently, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels felt it necessary to use the word communist, rather than socialist, in their *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, so as to distinguish their militant working-class movement from nonmilitant middle-class efforts at social reform including Owenism and Fourierism.[4] All these middle-class movements the *Manifesto* attacked as "utopian," that is to say, as being so ideal, so divorced from contemporary life, as to be impossible of achievement.

Thus the word communism, from its associations with the secret societies of Paris and with the *Communist Manifesto*, for a time connoted revolutionary action leading to the violent overthrow of all noncommunist forms of social organization, a usage then restricted, however, to the continent of Europe. And socialism, by contrast with communism, connoted nonviolent, constitutional, and hence gradual, reform.

After the failure of the Revolutions of 1848, the revolutionary form of socialism to which the name communism had become attached was now largely discredited. Gradually the name lost the militantly revolutionary implications which it had acquired on the Continent. At about the same time the word socialism was losing its narrowly sectarian connotations, partly as a result of the failure of the Owenite movement, to which it had formerly been restricted. As socialism thus became a more inclusive term, it tended to assimilate and replace the word communism, so that by the mid-1860's it was widely accepted as the comprehensive name for the whole movement. Whereas now the term communism was limited either to those systems which insisted that property be held in common, or to small cooperative communities which were seeking reform but which might or might not insist on completely collective ownership.

For many years thereafter the meaning of these words was to remain stable, until—shortly after World War I—the terms communist and communism were deliberately reestablished in Russia with all the militant and revolutionary connotations which Marx and Engels had given to them back in 1848. It was in March 1918 that the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks) decided to change its name to the Communist Party, in accordance with a proposal made by Lenin nearly a year earlier mainly on the grounds that the majority of the official Social Democratic parties had betrayed socialism by supporting World War I. From that time to this the name communism has customarily been applied to the revolutionary, as distinguished from the evolutionary, form of socialism.

In Russia too, Lenin, followed by Stalin, began to use the word social-

[4] Cf. Harry W. Laidler, p. 57, note 3, herein.

ism in a somewhat special sense[5] as the name for what Karl Marx had called the first phase of communist society.[6] By this Marx meant the period after the revolution of the proletariat had resulted in public ownership of the means of production but before the proletarian state had, in Engels' phrase, withered away, a period in which each person was to receive from society according to the quantity and quality of his work. Whereas Marx's second stage of communism, which alone is what Lenin and Stalin have meant by communism, was to be a classless and stateless society in which each person would receive according to his needs.

Thus today there is considerable confusion in the use of the words socialism and communism because of their respective multiple meanings. As indicated above, socialism is used in at least three ways: as a general term which includes communism, as a special Leninist-Stalinist term to indicate Marx's first stage of communism, and sometimes as referring to evolutionary socialism alone. And communism, too, has three very different meanings: revolutionary (as opposed to evolutionary) socialism; socialism based on the holding of all property in common; and thirdly, socialism which seeks to bring about reform by means of small experimental communities.[7] All of these meanings occur in this book, as in most other general books on the subject.

Not only do the most important terms in the whole socialist vocabulary have several different meanings, but several widely accepted terms have sharply prejudicial connotations. To this day the Marxian terms "utopian socialism" (for pre-Marxian and non-Marxian socialism)[8] and "scientific socialism" (for Marxism) are generally used even by those non-Marxians who believe that Marxism is far from being scientific and even actually utopian. Because these Marxian terms have long been so widely accepted by Marxians and non-Marxians alike, they will be found throughout much of this book, but will be used descriptively and, as far as possible, without the Marxian prejudicial connotations. Only after most careful consideration did the editors reluctantly decide to retain this traditional, if highly confusing, terminology in the present volume, and then only because they

[5] For this use of the word socialism see V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1932), p. 78. The original Russian edition was published in 1918.

[6] See Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (New York: International Publishers, 1938), p. 10. The original German edition was published by Engels only in 1891, after Marx's death, but Marx wrote the *Critique* in 1875.

[7] Bestor, *op.cit.*, p. 301.

[8] The derogatory use of "utopian" as applied to social movements, a usage which has become so completely associated with Marxism ever since it appeared in the *Communist Manifesto*, did not, however, actually originate with Marx and Engels. Bestor, *op.cit.*, p. 287, points out that before 1848 reformers had frequently applied the term utopian to rival schemes of which they disapproved. Fourier, for example, thus used the word a number of times, always in a disparaging sense.

found it impossible to arrive at a new and more exact terminology completely acceptable to all their numerous collaborators.[9]

Despite the many confusions in the traditional terminology, despite the various changes in the meaning of the word socialism itself, it can at least be said that all forms of socialism have shared the belief that only through some form of collective organization, some form of collective action, can the individual come nearest to fulfilling his potentialities. Nearly all forms of socialism have maintained that this can be accomplished only through the elimination of unearned increment, and most of them have insisted upon the collective ownership of at least some of the means of production.

However, while all the various kinds of socialism do agree that the goal is the highest development of man, they disagree sharply as to what constitutes man's highest development. They disagree also as to what type of social organization can offer mankind the highest opportunities for individual development either during the period when the goal of the good life is being sought or after that goal has been reached. Moreover, they disagree as to the location of the goal in history—differ, that is, in their attitudes toward change; for while the great majority of socialists look forward to an ideal society in the future, some (perhaps wrongly called socialists) place the goal in the present, while still others look back to some event in the past as having made a communal way of life imperative. And lastly, the different varieties emphasize different institutions as basic for achieving and developing the good life.

In sum, socialisms differ fundamentally over such questions as (I) the nature of the goal, and (II) the nature of the organization of mankind best suited either for achieving the ideal society or for maintaining it when *it is once achieved. They differ also as to* (III) *the location of the goal in* history, and (IV) the nature of the human institutions considered most fundamental to historical development. While these different points of view, these different classifications, crisscross one another and overlap at many points, and while a more or less parallel development can be traced in them all, no one of them alone is adequate to identify and define the various types of socialism. But as all of them are implied at one place or another in the chapters and critical bibliographies that follow, it may be helpful to describe each one briefly here, even though in so doing it will be impossible to avoid a certain amount of repetition.

I. Socialisms Classified According to the Nature of Their Goal

As noted above, all forms of socialism and related movements agree that the goal is the highest development of the individual, while disagreeing as to the exact nature and location of this goal.

[9] For a revised terminology, at times used herein, see Bestor, *op.cit.*, pp. 301-2.

(1) Some varieties of socialism—notably the religious varieties, such as the Shakers, the Oneida Community, etc.—insist that the highest development of man is a spiritual one, reached only in the Christian millennial order and achieved only through God's grace; although a suitable socialist way of life here and now is usually considered to be requisite to the realization of the millennium. Some of these groups, including the Shakers and the Oneida Community among many others, have believed that the socialist way of life involves a considerable degree of withdrawal from ordinary society; while the later Christian socialists consider socialism to mean participation in the social problems of all humanity as part of the Christian life.

(2) The great majority of socialists, however, including all strict Marxists, reject the supernatural and hold the secular belief that the highest human development can and will be reached in history conceived as a unitary process, and that it can be accomplished through some specific kind of collectivistic organization.

(3) Although in many respects anarchism has much in common with socialism, in other ways it differs profoundly, especially in the ways in which it seeks its goal. Practically all anarchists agree with the secular socialists that human nature can reach its highest development in *this* world; and socialists and anarchists alike believe in an ultimate order of society which is without classes or coercion. However, anarchists are more individualistic than socialists insofar as they attach greater importance to *voluntary* social action as a means for achieving the highest development of human nature. It is this emphasis on voluntary social action which has particularly characterized well-known anarchist projects and theories such as the mutual banks of Proudhon or Kropotkin's doctrine of mutual aid.

The most profound difference between the various types of socialism, on the one hand, and of anarchism, on the other, lies in the fact that they disagree as to when the ultimate classless and stateless society should be instituted. While socialists consider that it can be achieved only after some period of transition, anarchists believe that it must be brought about more *immediately*. Nevertheless, anarchists themselves disagree as to the *degree* of immediacy. A few, the more completely individualistic anarchists, would institute the classless society at once. But most anarchists—including Mikhail Bakunin, Marx's influential opponent in the struggle for control of the First International—have been more closely linked to socialism in its Marxian form because they subscribe to what is known as communist anarchism. For like the Marxian communists, the communist anarchists ordinarily insist that a violent revolution must take place before the classless and stateless society can be achieved. Unlike the Marxians, however, they maintain that the classless and stateless society

should come about directly after the revolution; whereas Marx stated that the revolution would be followed by a period of transition in which the state would still exist but would be under the control of the proletarian class. This period Marx only occasionally referred to as the "dictatorship of the proletariat," a term heavily emphasized by his Leninist-Stalinist interpreters.

II. Socialisms Classified According to Their Type of Organization

A survey of this book reveals five chief types of organization which have been made use of by socialism and related social movements. These five types can be called respectively: (1) the community type; (2) the party type; (3) state socialism; (4) the cooperative type (including aspects of industrial unionism); and (5) anarchism, which, as suggested above, usually has certain socialistic connotations.

(1) The community type of socialist organization is best identified in relation to one or the other of two main subvarieties. One of these can be called the exclusive community because it is intended to serve the purposes of a limited group only and is not at the beginning supposed to be applied to society as a whole. While there have been literally hundreds of examples of this exclusive form of socialism in America—most of them founded in the seventeenth, eighteenth, or early nineteenth centuries—the illustrative material in this book is drawn mainly from the following communities: Ephrata, Amana, the settlements of the Rappites and the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and some aspects of Mormonism. It will be noted that all these examples have had a religious purpose, and this has also been true of most of the other exclusive communities in this country.

The second kind of community type of socialism can be described as the experimental or pilot community intended for the purpose of working out basic problems of socialism, not just for a restricted group, but with the hope of becoming the prototype and model for universal communal organization. Usually, although not always, the goals sought by these communities have been secular rather than supernatural. In the United States the most important examples of this kind of socialism—sometimes referred to in this book as liberal communitarianism—have been the communities established during the early and middle nineteenth century in accord with the ideas of Robert Owen, of Charles Fourier, or of Étienne Cabet.

(2) The second chief type of socialist organization is the party type. All the important examples of this have been based in large part on the doctrines of Karl Marx, so that none of the major examples is earlier than the middle of the nineteenth century. As the name implies they are all concerned with the socialist reorganization of society by political means

at the culmination of the "class struggle." However, the party type of organization can be either authoritarian or democratic in its point of view.

The democratic party type looks forward to achieving socialism by peaceful and gradual means rather than by sudden revolution, and in the United States can be said to represent an attempt to reconcile the American democratic tradition with Marxism. The best example of this type in the United States is the Socialist Party, which customarily has considered itself as being patriotically American as well as international in its interests.

The authoritarian variety is sometimes called by its adherents "democratic centralism." It is democratic insofar as free discussion of a given socialist problem is encouraged up to a certain point, but then discussion is declared closed, the decision is handed down from above by a small central group and is supposed to be accepted by the rank and file without question or comment. This kind of party organization, developed on a revolutionary Marxist basis by Lenin in Russia, has been best exemplified in the United States by the Communist Party. Because of its close relations with the Communist Party in Russia as well as with communists in other countries, the Communist Party in the United States has customarily prided itself on having a point of view which is ultimately international. Actually, however, the Communist Party becomes nationalistic at such times as the immediate situation seems to indicate that a temporary nationalism can best promote the ultimate world-wide triumph of communism under the leadership of Soviet Russia.

(3) State socialism can be said to represent the desire to avoid the class struggle presupposed by the party types. Here the state seeks to represent more completely the inclusive ideals of the whole existing community, ideals in terms of which a program of socialization may be gradually extended to ever wider areas of the national economy. Since state socialism minimizes the class struggle as an issue, its program can seek to appeal to the interests of various social groups, instead of being restricted to those of the proletariat alone. The British Fabian tradition as reflected in the Labour government after World War II represents this form of socialism.

It is obvious that in many countries the trend of legislation toward public control or ownership in certain economic areas might be interpreted as a tendency toward state socialism. However, such legislation is often termed state capitalism when—as in Bismarck's Germany—the intention is clearly to preserve capitalism in its most essential aspects. In such cases it is felt that the operations of capitalism itself will be reinforced through public regulation or even a limited degree of public ownership. In this

volume no effort has been made to follow out the implications of this particular tendency for recent American public policy.

(4) The fourth or cooperative type of socialist organization has many different manifestations. Unlike party socialism or state socialism, these cooperative varieties tend to be suspicious of the state, so that their form of organization is basically economic rather than political. Thus they are customarily organized as cooperatives consisting of *either* producers *or* consumers independent of the state. However, these cooperative groups are considered to be socialistic only if they condemn the existing political and social order as a whole, and advocate a new social order to be accomplished by remolding human nature, human institutions, or both. This is the aim, for example, of syndicalism, of guild socialism, and of some other varieties of industrial unionism, all of which are based on organizations of producers.

In its syndicalist, or revolutionary form, this kind of producers' socialism favors direct industrial expression of the class struggle through direct revolutionary action by labor, with particular emphasis on the general strike. The best known American example of this point of view has been the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World), popularly known as the "Wobblies." Largely a native development within the American labor movement, the I.W.W. has nevertheless been influenced by French syndicalism (so named from the French trade unions, or *syndicats*), and by aspects of anarchism and of Marxism. The English form of socialism known as guild socialism, which has had little influence in this country, was likewise partly inspired by syndicalism, but its doctrine was evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

In the United States, consumers' cooperatives have generally been interested in changing only the system of distribution, and insofar as they have not sought to alter the general social order they have not been socialistic. Nevertheless, certain founders and promoters of the cooperative movement have, as individuals, hoped for more radical changes of an anarchist, syndicalist, or socialist character.

(5) As previously noted, anarchists tend to fall into two categories: the extremely individualistic anarchists on the one hand, and the more numerous communist anarchists on the other. Those of the individualistic type (for example, Thoreau) are necessarily opposed to organization, and, as extreme individualists, can hardly be considered socialists. The others who (like Mikhail Bakunin and like Kropotkin) believe in communist anarchism, combine the philosophy of anarchism with the revolutionary program of Marxian communism. That is to say, like Marxian communists, they recognize the existence of a class struggle between property owners and workers, but, unlike the Marxians, they fear the state and other "coercive" political organizations as much as capitalism. Unlike the Marx-

ians, therefore, they discard political action and oppose the party type of organization encouraged by Marxism. At the same time, their belief in the class struggle and the consequent necessity for a revolt of the masses often leads communist anarchists to seek to organize the masses into industrial unions for direct economic action—leads them, in short, toward syndicalism and a syndicalist type of organization.

III. Socialisms Classified According to Their Attitude toward Progress and Change, i.e., According to the Location of Their Goal in History

In Chapter 7 herein, David Bowers has discussed in some detail how socialisms differ in their points of view toward history. However, in anticipation of his essay we may briefly note that some varieties locate their goal not within secular history but at its culmination in a divine event—the millennium. This is especially true of the religious utopian communities, nearly all of which have believed that the perfection of man—human salvation—can only be achieved after some future divine event, some divine catastrophe or revolution, and then only through God's grace. Most of them, therefore, have looked forward particularly to the second coming of Christ; although the Shakers and the Perfectionists of Oneida have been exceptional in believing that the second coming had already occurred.

Unlike the religious socialists, all other forms of socialism locate their goal of the perfection of man *within* human history; but, as already suggested, they differ as to where in human history it is to be placed. On the basis of this difference, three chief points of view can be distinguished as follows: (1) A few of these socialists who reject the supernatural consider that the goal, the ideal, has already been achieved in a specific idealized period of the past; (2) Some others, who are sometimes (perhaps wrongly) called socialists, believe that the goal lies in the present and therefore seek to maintain the status quo; (3) The great majority of the secular socialists, however, believe that it lies in the future, but are unable to agree as to just how history operates to reach the goal. Of these, some insist—along with the religious socialist communities—that history operates through catastrophe and revolution. Some maintain that it operates through evolution, while others uphold the theory of cyclical repetition. Still others believe in a combination of evolution, revolution, and repetition: indeed, Karl Marx's doctrine of the dialectic is, in a sense, such a combination. For according to the dialectic any given tendency, or "thesis," eventually gives rise to its antithesis, and after a violent struggle—the revolution—a synthesis takes place. This in turn gives rise to its own

antithesis, so that the whole cycle of evolution and revolution repeats itself in a new form again and again.[10]

It was largely on the basis of these three main points of view toward the location of the goal in history—in the past, the present, or the future—that Marx and his friend, Friedrich Engels, classified the chief social movements of their day in the famous *Communist Manifesto* of 1848. Because this basis of their classification has not always been generally recognized, and because it is not specifically dealt with elsewhere in this book, it is briefly summarized here.

(1) The kinds of socialism which look backward to their goal are called in the *Manifesto* "reactionary socialism," and are attacked for nostalgically seeking to revive aspects of earlier societies that are more or less collectivistic. Marx and Engels, on the contrary, subscribed to a belief in progress away from the past although within the framework of "laws" of historical development. According to these Marxian laws of history, human society can and should progress toward a climax in a classless society made possible by the triumph and temporary dictatorship of the proletariat. For this reason Marxians necessarily insist that any attempt to return to earlier societies is reactionary because it would result in postponing the proletarian revolution and the classless society. Among the examples Marx cites of such reactionary socialism is really what later became known as Christian socialism.[11] In the words of the *Manifesto*, "the parson has ever gone hand in hand with the landlord," so that to Marx and Engels even Christian socialism is simply a form of what they called "feudal socialism," meaning thereby a reactionary survival from the Middle Ages masquerading as socialism. One of the other examples of reactionary socialism cited in the *Manifesto* is the petty bourgeois attempt to revive the collectivism of the medieval guilds. This aspect of reactionary socialism was to become particularly important with William Morris, who during much of his life was regarded as a Marxist and whose ideas were destined to have a strong influence on such later forms of socialism as Fabianism and guild socialism.

(2) Those secular social movements which hold that the good life has just been attained and therefore lies in the present, Marx and Engels called "conservative or bourgeois socialism." They considered this to include all attempts of the middle class to buttress capitalism and maintain the existing state of affairs by adopting enough measures of social reform to keep the working class quiet. Under this heading Marx would put not only what is now called state capitalism, but even the state socialism of his German rival, Lassalle.

[10] For a more complete definition of the dialectic, by Harry W. Laidler, see p. 57, note 4, in this volume; also Volume 2, PART III, Topic 5.

[11] The first issue of the *Christian Socialist*, from which Christian socialism takes its name, came out in 1850 at London.

(3) The only kinds of socialism for which Marx had any respect were those that look forward to their goal, that believe in the idea of progress. Of these, however, he distinguished two types, one of which the *Communist Manifesto* somewhat scornfully called "critical-utopian socialism and communism." The other is his own brand of socialism, usually known either as communism (the name given to it in the *Manifesto*), or as scientific socialism (so called for reasons to be indicated later), or simply as Marxism.

By critical-utopian socialism Marx meant only the secular varieties of utopian socialism, because to him the religious utopian communities were not really socialistic since they did not seek to remold society as a whole in order to achieve a better life for the individual in *this* world. Even the secular utopians—whose beliefs, like those of Marx himself, partly sprang from the rational-romantic ideals of the Enlightenment—were considered by Marx mistaken in maintaining not only that man is completely free to remold history, but that the ideal society can be put into practice on a small scale at once and can be spread by education and without violence. For Marx held that man is very largely determined by the Marxian laws of history, of social development, laws which ultimately have an economic basis. In accordance with those laws and in the light of the situation then existing on the Continent, Marx was convinced that the eventual ideal (or classless) society could ordinarily be achieved only following a violent revolution. Thus in Marx's view the secular utopians were being highly unrealistic in ignoring both the laws of history and the existing social situation, and it was for this reason that he applied to them the name of utopians, by which they have since been known. Nevertheless, in the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels did praise the utopians for maintaining that class antagonisms exist and that capitalism is decomposing. And no less an authority than Lenin has pointed out that utopian socialism, particularly French utopian socialism, was one of the chief currents of contemporary thought contributing to the formulation of Marxism.[12]

For Marxians, then, Marxism is the only completely realistic philosophy of socialism, a philosophy based on Marx's own materialistic interpretation of history, and involving not only a whole economic and political theory but a thoroughgoing program for social revolution. To this philosophy Marx and his followers have given the name of "scientific" socialism because they believe that Marx discovered laws of economic and social

[12] Lenin, in *The Teachings of Karl Marx* (first published, abbreviated, in the Granat Russian Encyclopedia in 1914; complete English edition, Martin Lawrence Ltd., 1931), said that the three chief influences on Marx's thought were: (1) German classical philosophy, especially that of Hegel, who was the source of Marx's doctrine of the dialectic; (2) English classical economics, on the basis of which Marx conceived his labor theory of value (for which see Paul Sweezy, pp. 457ff. herein); and (3) French [utopian] socialism.

change of such validity that general predictions as to the forthcoming development of the fundamental economic conditions of society can be made on the basis of them, and made with the precision of natural science. Because Marxians believe that man is free to act only within the framework of these laws, freedom consists in understanding how the Marxian laws of history and the laws of nature operate, and in acting accordingly. However, since Marx's own time there have been disagreements as to his views concerning the exact degree to which man is determined by the laws of history, for Marx expressed himself differently under different circumstances. This is the source of the controversy as to whether the classless society is to occur inevitably regardless of human actions, or whether (as Marxians today usually maintain) the efforts of all good Marxians are necessary to ensure the coming of the classless society as well as to speed up its development. A certain lack of consistency among the contributors to the present volume indicates that this point has not yet been fully settled.

However, the question of the inevitability of socialism is only one of the issues which have divided socialists since Marx's day and which have caused the varieties of socialism to multiply greatly. Another chief point at issue has been the nature of the Marxist revolution—whether it must be violent (as Marx and Engels maintained in the *Communist Manifesto* and most of their other writings), or whether it can be gradual, achieved by legal parliamentary means (as Marx and Engels later admitted was then possible in a few countries with strong democratic traditions). Still other major disputes have occurred among Marxists over such problems as to when the state can be expected to wither away, or as to the relation of labor unions to socialism, or the relation of international socialism to Russian communism. To this day the question as to which faction represents the true Marxist doctrine continues, of course, to stir up violent controversies in many parts of the world.

All these disputes, among others, have had pronounced repercussions in American socialism, and one or more of them has been responsible for the splitting off of elements of the Socialist Labor Party to help form the Socialist Party, of elements of the Socialist Party to form the Communist Party, and of parts of the Communist Party to form the Trotskyist groups, as well as for other splits referred to in this book. In many cases these splits have in part resulted from the differing importance attributed to various human institutions considered most fundamental for bringing about socialism, and this brings us to our last classification.

IV. Socialisms Classified According to the Particular Institutions Favored as Fundamental to Achieving and Sustaining the Good Life

When the goal of the good life is a supernatural one and thus lies outside of history, it is, of course, the *religious* institutions and the religious aspects of life that are considered primary. For this reason, although the various religious utopian communities have regarded their communal forms of social organization as important, they have nonetheless considered them entirely secondary to salvation and therefore to religious beliefs and practices.

When the socialist goal is considered to lie in this world, sharp differences of opinion exist among the different varieties of socialism as to just which aspects of life in this world, and therefore which human institutions, are most fundamental. And while some of them believe that the reform of existing but corrupt institutions will be sufficient, others maintain that only through completely new social inventions can a new social order be achieved.

(1) To some forms of socialism it is the *educational* institutions, and the ethical-rational qualities which they stand for, which are most fundamental for achieving man's aspirations. Thus the secular utopians, such as Robert Owen and Cabet, were convinced that man is by nature both good and rational and can therefore be educated to overcome the evils of a corrupting environment and to bring society and himself to full perfection. For that matter, even most of the kinds of socialism which do not believe that education is primary have nevertheless given an important place to education as a factor in bringing about or enhancing the good life. It is for this reason that propaganda has been considered so necessary by most brands of socialism and that the arts have usually been valued by socialists chiefly for social usefulness in education and propaganda.

(2)However, in at least one important case—that of the great English socialist, author, artist, and craftsman, William Morris—*art* itself, and the social institutions which encourage the widespread practice of art, have been considered most fundamental. To Morris and to his many followers art is the expression of that joy in work which they have felt is basic for the good life and which they have believed would become universal under socialism. Meanwhile, because they attributed so many of the evils of contemporary society to industrialization and the consequent mechanization of the individual, they have sought to revive the medieval guilds as the institutions best suited to fostering the arts and handicrafts. The guild socialists took over this concept but sought to combine it with industrial trade-unionism in an effort to make it more suited to the needs of an industrialized society.

(3) A much larger number of socialists have held that *political* institutions are the most important of all, although they have differed among themselves as to whether control over these political institutions should be gained by legal and evolutionary means or by extralegal and revolutionary means. The German socialist Dühring, for example, emphasized politics as having decisive influence on economics and as being the determining factor also in other aspects of life.

(4) The point of view of Marx and Engels was in sharp contrast to that of Dühring, whom they attacked because they insisted that *economic* changes are ultimately responsible for all other change, including political change. It was for this reason that Engels wrote his celebrated polemic against Dühring popularly known as *Anti-Dühring*. However, the socialists who, like Marx and Engels, agree that the economic aspects of life are the basic ones, disagree as to whether production or consumption is more important. Furthermore, of those who stress the basic role of production some insist that the industrial aspects of production are the primary ones, while others emphasize the agrarian aspects, maintaining that land monopoly is the sole cause of the exploitation of human beings. Marx, of course, tended to emphasize industrial production by giving a primary role to the industrial proletariat (even though he did make an occasional bow toward the peasantry in the *Communist Manifesto* and elsewhere), and this long remained the orthodox Marxian view. Because of Russian conditions, Lenin assigned a much greater importance to the peasants, although he did not consider them socialists, while Stalin, following in Lenin's footsteps, made use of the Five Year Plan to mechanize and industrialize agricultural production. In so doing, Stalinists maintain, he made it possible to fuse the interests of the industrial working class and the peasant class so that their area of common interests becomes ever larger as they march forward together, but under the leadership of the industrial workers, toward the classless society.

(5) While most varieties of socialism place heavy emphasis on one of the kinds of institutions—such as the religious, educational, artistic, political, or economic institutions mentioned above—they usually do not emphasize this alone but give considerable secondary importance to others as well. In some kinds of socialism, two or more of these types of institutions are given an equal importance. Such is the case with the kind of socialism known as jural or juridical socialism. This, as its name implies, recognizes the primary significance of legal rights because these can guarantee both political and economic rights and thus guarantee both *political* and *economic* institutions as being equally important. For this reason the chief exponent of juridical socialism, the Austrian socialist Anton Menger, opposed Marxism for maintaining that economic theory

alone is fundamental, and he insisted that socialism should be based on three legal rights—the right of workingmen to the whole produce of labor, the right to exist, and the right to work.

Marxism itself involves an insistence on the worth of many kinds of institutions. Even though the ultimate basis of Marxism is economic, nevertheless upon that economic basis Marx erected a superstructure in which, Marxists claim, all other valid aspects of human existence are taken into account. And this, many of them say, has been particularly true since Lenin made it especially clear that economic propaganda alone is inadequate and that a general world view must be implanted in the proletariat.

Thus to Marxists the economic changes in history are looked upon as paving the way for the proletariat to seize control of political institutions, with the aid of educational propaganda in which the arts can play a part. Only when this political control has been gained and a temporary proletarian state ("the dictatorship of the proletariat") set up, can fundamental jural reform be achieved, as for example in the Russian constitution of 1936. Such juridical reform, together with reforms in other aspects of life, can in turn, they say, help to further the fundamental economic changes which eventually will make possible a classless, stateless, and therefore nonpolitical society. In the Leninist-Stalinist view, these fundamental economic changes, necessary for bringing about the classless society, can be achieved only by means of joint action by the industrial proletariat and the peasantry, whose interests are becoming identical with the mechanization of agriculture. And, according to Marxian doctrine, once the classless society has at last been achieved, the individual will finally be free to develop himself to the full so that all the finer aspects of human life will flourish as never before.

It is probably significant that Marxism, which despite its ultimate economic foundations has dealt with a greater number of other important aspects of life than any other variety of socialism, receives more attention in this volume than other forms of socialism. Its wide scope has even enabled it to appeal to many who, like William Morris, have actually been in basic disagreement with Marx's fundamental economic materialism. It is this Marxian emphasis on the social worth of so many different kinds of human institutions that has given all forms of Marxism a collective strength especially lacking in the individualistic kind of anarchism, for such anarchism is completely anti-institutional in regarding all religious, educational, artistic, political, legal, economic, and other institutions as likely to hamper the full development of the individual.

Since no one of the above classifications of the various kinds of socialism is alone adequate to delimit and define the nature of all the different

varieties, the essays and critical bibliographies which follow will be found to cross and recross from one of them to another, to combine and recombine elements taken from them all. Largely because of this crossing and recrossing, some repetition will be found not only within this volume but also between Volumes 1 and 2. Part of the repetitiousness, however, has deliberately been cultivated by the editors so that individual essays may be clear to those readers who are not interested in the book as a whole but only in the subject matter of a single chapter or of a single section of the bibliographies.

The first three essays herein are devoted to the European backgrounds of American socialism, religious and secular, because practically all the chief types of socialism in the United States have either originated abroad or else have sprung from ideas developed abroad at an earlier date. The first essay, by E. Harris Harbison, deals with the early history of socialism by tracing its development in Europe from the early Middle Ages to Marx. Chapter 2, by Harry W. Laidler, treats the development of European socialism in its Marxian phases from 1848 to the present. In the third chapter, A. T. Mollegen discusses the religious basis of Western socialism, including Marxism, and ends with short analyses of the varieties of American socialism which have particularly felt the influence of the Christian tradition.

Thus Mr. Mollegen's essay serves as a transition to the three chapters that follow, for not only does each of these deal with one of the three most important types of socialism as found in the United States, but the first is specifically religious in nature. These three types of socialism are generally known even to most non-Marxians by the more or less Marxian names of religious utopian socialism, secular utopian socialism, and "scientific" or Marxian socialism. The chapter on religious utopian socialism, by Stow Persons, discusses the Shakers and the Oneida Community as the two most representative and peculiarly American examples of Christian utopian—or more exactly, communitarian—socialism. In the next essay, T. D. S. Bassett studies the various forms of secular utopian socialism in this country, with emphasis on Owenism, Fourierism, and Icarianism. The last chapter in this group, by Daniel Bell, deals with all the major varieties of Marxian socialism in the United States while stressing the history of the Socialist Party.

The remaining eight essays are on various specific aspects of American socialism, beginning with two chapters on the general subject of the theoretical foundations of socialism but with special reference to the United States. In the first of these, David Bowers has investigated one major segment of socialist philosophy fundamental to all forms of socialism, namely, the socialist philosophy of history. In so doing, he links to-

gether the doctrines of both religious and secular socialism in America and thus paves the way for the essay that follows, Sidney Hook's analysis of the philosophical foundations of Marxism.

The next two chapters are directly concerned with those specific aspects of life and of socialist theory which Marx himself considered to be the most fundamental: the economic and—second only to the economic—the political aspects. Paul Sweezy discusses Marxian economics and its relation to American thought and practice, while Will Herberg considers the manifestations of Marxian political theory in American life with special reference to the Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party, the I.W.W., and the Communist Party.

Then follow two chapters dealing respectively with the sociology and psychology of American socialism. The sociological implications of the socialist theory of society in relation to the organization and clientele of American socialist groups are investigated by Wilbert Moore. George W. Hartmann studies socialism as a movement, or group of movements, psychologically distinctive in espousing an all-embracing plan of organization for meeting all the basic needs of every person included within its scope.

The essays conclude with consideration of literature and art—those aspects of human life which William Morris regarded as the most fundamental of all, but which most socialists have valued more for their utilitarian and educational possibilities. The relations of American socialism to American literature are studied by Willard Thorp. In the closing chapter of the symposium Donald Egbert discusses the chief varieties of American socialist art in relation to European origins and influences, and with particular reference to the indirect effects of socialism on American life. Thus the concluding essay returns once more to the European background with which this volume began and serves to give a further reminder to the reader that the subject of socialism in American life cannot be adequately understood without reference to European prototypes and parallels.

It might be noted parenthetically that no chapter on socialism and the natural sciences has been included simply because science in the United States has been so little affected by socialism. However, occasional references to the implications of socialism for science will be found in this book, especially in the second volume.

Volume 2, which consists of selective and critical bibliographies in the form of a series of essays, is organized in sections related to the chapters of Volume 1. However, advantage is taken of the opportunity offered by the bibliographies to summarize in them various socialist issues not specifically treated in the first volume. In so doing, an effort has

been made to present the historiography of socialism more completely and thereby give greater scope and greater unity to the book as a whole. Because of the complexity and range of the problems considered in them, the bibliographies, also, have had to be prepared by several hands. Thus the entire publication has been a cooperative one—it could not have been produced without the generous help of authorities in many fields. It is the hope and belief of the editors that the wide range of opinion represented by the numerous contributors and advisers has allowed the book to achieve a kind of collective objectivity all too lacking in most writings on this highly controversial subject of socialism in American life.

CHAPTER 1

Socialism in European History to 1848

BY E. HARRIS HARBISON

E. Harris Harbison is Professor of History at Princeton University. His special field is the history of the Renaissance and Reformation.

For bibliography in Volume 2 relevant to Mr. Harbison's essay, see especially Part I, General Reading, *passim*, and Topics 1, 2, 5, 6, 7.

THE study of American socialism begins in Europe. Any understanding of socialistic thinking and practice in American life must rest upon knowledge of the part played by socialism in European history.

The connection between Europe and America in this respect is a dual one of continuity and parallel. Two human beings may act alike for two quite different reasons: first, because one influences the other; and second, because each, though isolated from the other, is confronted by roughly the same general situation. Americans have not only consciously imitated their ancestors and contemporaries in Europe, but they have often unconsciously retraced some of the steps taken by the older civilization of which they are a part. The forms assumed by socialistic thought in the United States are often to be explained as direct borrowings from western Europe. Less often but no less significantly they are to be looked upon as similar reactions to similar economic and social situations, situations which have generally arisen in Europe, particularly in Great Britain, before they have arisen in roughly similar form across the Atlantic. For almost a thousand years Europe has been a kind of laboratory of social change and experiment. Some of this experimentation has been deliberately imitated across the water, some deliberately rejected, some repeated without any consciousness that it had been performed before. *America is related to Europe, in other words, both by historical continuity* and by historical parallel.

Any view of socialism in European history, if it is to have value for the present study, must be three-dimensional. Rapid and cursory as such a view must be within the limits of an introductory chapter such as this, it should suggest depth and perspective.

It is not enough to trace the development of socialistic thought and practice from Plato to Marx, as many of the older accounts do, in a single dimension. It is characteristic of "socialism," as of other social theories in European history, that it cannot be understood apart from the historical fortunes of its dialectical opposite, in this case "individualism." The study of the history of individualism gives the study of socialism a second dimension. In any broad view of European history the development of a peculiar dialectical relationship between individualism and socialism was the fact of real historical significance, not the development of socialism alone. To one outside the western tradition, this developing tension between a precocious and self-conscious individualism and an answering and equally self-conscious socialism is the distinguishing mark of western European social history. The communistic thought of Hebrew prophets, Christian apostles, and Greek philosophers was an important European heritage, no doubt, but to understand modern socialism it sometimes seems more important to know the Medici and the Fugger than it is to know

Amos and Plato. Somewhat like the dimensions of length and breadth, individualism and socialism cannot be separated from each other in any balanced study of European social development.

Length and breadth are completed by depth. At any given point in European history the dialectical relationship between individualism and socialism was always relative to a particular existing pattern of economic relationships. To be a socialist (in a general sense of the word) meant one thing in the thirteenth century, another in the sixteenth, and still another in the nineteenth. Just *what* any reformer wished to transfer from individual to social ownership, *how*, and *why* are all questions which can only be answered by a painstaking historical inquiry into the contemporary economy. *Omnia sunt communia* is an ancient cry, but just what is comprehended in "all things," what is involved in rendering them "common," and why bother, are problems which are always relative to "the prevailing mode of production and exchange" in any century. Knowledge of the existing economy is absolutely essential to the understanding in depth of any socialistic theory or experiment.

Another preliminary question suggests itself: Where to begin? How much of European history is relevant to the subject of this volume? It has been argued by some that there is no real socialism before Marx—in which case the present chapter could be eliminated. Sombart assumes that modern socialism begins with the French Revolution and the accompanying technological revolution in Great Britain.[1] Mannheim goes back to the Protestant Reformation and the Anabaptists.[2] Bede Jarrett finds enough of importance to fill at least a slim volume on *Mediaeval Socialism*.[3] And there are always classical and Biblical scholars to insist that the subject properly begins with Plato's *Republic* and the second chapter of Acts—indeed, such is the general thesis of Chapter 3 in this book.

If one accepts the counsel of perfection already suggested, a three-dimensional study of socialism in European history must begin where "Europe" begins, i.e., somewhere about the age of Charlemagne. What came before—prophetic castigations of the unfeeling rich, Plato's communism for the classes, the Stoic natural law of human equality, primitive Christian communism—may safely be treated as part of the heritage with which Europe began. What came after, however, is all directly relevant to an examination of the interplay of individualism and socialism in the developing European society. The medieval guild, for instance, seen through a haze of nostalgic sentiment, inspired later American as well as British socialists; and it is not altogether fanciful to compare medieval and

[1] Werner Sombart, *Socialism and the Social Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1898), chap. 1.

[2] *Ideology and Utopia* (New York, 1940), especially pp. 190-91.

[3] London, n.d. (ca. 1913).

American societies as "frontier societies" and to note the parallelisms in their socialistic experiments. The whole millennium of European history from Charlemagne to Marx has relevance for the present subject.

To grant this proposition, however, is to pose a further problem: the almost insoluble problem of selection. The bibliography of this book gives some indication of what an extensive literature has grown up on the subject of European socialism. But it scarcely suggests the still larger literature devoted to the development of capitalism and to European economic history in general. Fortunately the purpose of the present volume supplies a certain criterion of selection. This purpose is to launch a critical inquiry, to survey the ground for further scholarly cultivation, to ask the questions which may lead to new work rather than merely to summarize work already done. In the present case what will be suggested is a point of view rather than a set of conclusions, a way of considering the thin thread of socialistic thought and practice in European history to 1848 rather than a connected tracing of this thread.

This point of view may be briefly adumbrated as follows. The development of socialism in European history may be compared with the typical development of the family sense in the ordinary human being—if one admits from the start that the comparison is playful rather than realistic. The child is born into a natural group, the family, in which there is a vague distinction of "mine" and "thine" within a surrounding "ours." His personal possessions are important to him, but the really important things—food, shelter, implements of work—are actually common possessions. It is impossible to describe this arrangement as either "individualistic" or "socialistic." The child did not choose his situation and he does not reflect deeply upon it unless there is some unusual reason. Adolescence brings a change, a concentration of the self, a self-conscious separation from the family group. The passionate individualism of youth is proverbial. It spreads far beyond the sense of physical possession to intellectual independence and spiritual revolt against authority. The adolescent's desire for a room of his own is one symptom of a more general desire to mark off the boundaries between himself and all other individuals. The third stage, of return to the family through marriage, is something far different from the first entrance into the family group. It is deliberate and self-conscious, even if the emotional drives involved are as complex and contradictory as loneliness and love. The common and mutual responsibilities are far more vivid to the partners in marriage than they could be to the child, and the communal aspects of married life take on new meaning against the background of adolescent individualism and isolation. To parents the family is a "socialistic" institution in a way it can never be to children.

The comparison of this parable of the individual with the communal

economy of the Middle Ages, the economic individualism of the early modern period, and the increasing collectivism of the past century is perhaps too neat. But medieval social theory has at least something of the child's naïveté about it. There is often a quality in early modern individualism which tempts historians to describe it as adolescent. And Marxian socialism has something of that sophisticated sense of the significance of each stage of past experience for the present which we have assumed that the individual has upon reentering the family through marriage. The point is that the particular character of modern collectivism, whether socialistic or otherwise, cannot be understood as a mere return to an earlier communalism nor as a mere reaction to an extreme individualism, but only as something of both.

I. *Socialism in Medieval Economy*

It is difficult to describe medieval economy in words sharpened by use in a later and far different age. "Individualism and socialism as ordinarily understood," A. D. Lindsay remarks, "emphasize one or other of the two aspects which in Christian teaching are inseparable."[4] And so during the Christian Middle Ages, as Tawney points out, "contrasts which later were to be presented as irreconcilable antitheses" appear as "differences within a larger unity."[5] We need to dull the sharpness of nineteenth-century words, to muddy their clearness, before we can approximate the ambiguity of medieval terms and of medieval economic practices. For this reason it is better to use clumsy technical terms with Latin roots such as *paternalism* and *communalism* to describe the economic life of the Middle Ages. Paternalism suggests a society patterned after the family in which privilege is the meed of protection; it suggests also the power for good or evil of strong-willed individuals in such a society. Communalism suggests a society which thinks and acts in terms of communities, which is held together by community mindedness; it suggests the anonymity of the individual and the constant enveloping pressure upon him of the group. Iron wills working within the silken bands of custom, tradition, and public opinion—this is a better popularization of the significant features of medieval society than the older picture of stagnation and uniformity.

In this society making a living was always a means to an end, never an end in itself, so far as conscious reflection about the matter was concerned. The end of society was salvation, not satisfaction of material wants. The weight of the Christian tradition bore heavily upon any

[4] A. D. Lindsay, *s.v.* "Individualism," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VII. On terminology, see A. E. Bestor, Jr., "The Evolution of the Socialist Vocabulary," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, IX (June 1948), pp. 259-302.

[5] R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York, 1926), p. 20.

attempt to justify profit, though it favored the dignity of labor as a means of grace.

Most medieval economic activity was communal or corporate rather than individualistic. The units of production were the agricultural manor and the urban guild. Within these units there were rights which look to us like private property rights: the peasant possessed his house, his garden, and his strips of arable land just as the artisan possessed the tools of his trade. But other rights were distinctly communal, "rights of participating in a common life," such as the peasant's rights in the common land of the manor and the artisan's rights to an equal share of the available raw materials and an equal opportunity in the carefully protected local market. Peasant and artisan were thus capitalist and laborer at the same time, and yet neither in the modern sense. The driving force of production was generally the immediate pressure of need rather than the remote attraction of profit, and the units of production were strictly regulated both from within and from without in accordance with this general motivation. There was no scope for unlimited profit-seeking in the custom of the manor, the regulations of the guild, or the contractual obligations of peasant and townsman to an overlord. Medieval minds were certainly not preoccupied about using wealth to create more wealth: "So much wine and salt came to our monastery from its estates," wrote a thirteenth-century chronicler, "that it was simply necessary to sell the surplus."[6]

Distribution was determined by custom, and custom was in turn based upon an uneasy compromise between communal need and individual greed, not upon the workings of a free market. Economic relationships were grounded upon status in the vast majority of cases until a money economy began to spread after the eleventh century. Ancient forms of community organization, spiritual functions, or military need determined status, and status generally determined economic occupation. High as the spiritual aims of medieval society were, the end of economic activity was in practice mainly to support the clergy and nobility; but it was always recognized that the producers had to be able to keep body and soul together in order to do their job. All this was expressed legally in a tangled web of custom and contract which remains today in the documents as a kind of monument to an age in which purely economic factors were never the primary basis of man's relation to man.

If it were possible to visualize the "ownership" of any given square mile of arable land in the eleventh century, some of this highly abstract analysis might take on concrete meaning. One would find no "owner" in the modern sense but rather a human chain of holders of rights, from serf through lord of the manor to overlord and king, each with certain rights in the

[6] Caesar of Heisterbach, quoted by F. L. Nussbaum in *A History of the Economic Institutions of Modern Europe* (New York, 1933), p. 32.

land or a part of it, each bound to the others in the chain by duties theoretically owed on account of rights held. It is generally true that there was almost no landowning in the Middle Ages, only land holding. "Lordship"—a right to a higher standard of living through the claim to a portion of the labor or services of other human beings—generally replaced "ownership" in the modern sense. Thus "property" was a vaguer and more ambiguous term than it is today, including rather abstract rights as well as land and movables.

The most important consequence of this situation was that there could never be any such thing as absolute unconditional ownership of private property. All ownership was "mere conditional use." The rights to land, i.e., to productive capital, were invariably confused and overlapping and they invariably implied obligations. "Theoretically," writes Jarrett, "the means of production remained in the hands of the community. The Feudal System was perhaps the nearest approach to a consistent system of communism that has ever been practised on a large scale."[7] This startling statement by one of the ablest students of the problem probably goes too far. It dramatizes the strong community sense of the Middle Ages, but it ignores the equally significant medieval emphasis upon the sanctity of private right.[8] Within the community mindedness of medieval property relationships there was a sharp sense of "mine" and "thine" which attached as clearly to contractual rights and obligations as to real and movable property. In fact, the deeper one gets into the subject, the more cautious one becomes about generalization, and the more impressed with the depth of meaning in Tawney's phrase about "differences within a larger unity." In practice there was a constant tendency of strong-willed feudal lords to turn land holding into landowning, but until the thirteenth century the bonds of legal and moral restraint held firm. Until feudalism itself was undermined, its implicit theory of property retained some relation to actual practice: common ownership and individual holding and use.[9]

The Schoolmen introduced an element of confusion by adopting Aristotle's apparently contradictory formula: private ownership, common use. Since both formulas express the point of importance, that private possession always implies public obligations, the contradiction is more apparent than real.[10] But the Schoolmen, led by Thomas Aquinas, mark a subtle transition here. Aquinas understood the rising middle class and the new world of trade. It does not seem fanciful to suppose that he wanted a

[7] Bede Jarrett, *Social Theories of the Middle Ages* (London, 1926), p. 132. See also his *Mediaeval Socialism* (New York, 1914), p. 15.

[8] See e.g., C. H. McIlwain, *The Growth of Political Thought in the West* (New York, 1932), pp. 370, 394.

[9] On this and what follows, see Jarrett, *Social Theories*, chap. 5.

[10] Jarrett, *Social Theories*, p. 144, notices this contradiction but does nothing to explain it.

theory of property which would fit trade as well as land holding. He knew that a man cannot buy and sell objects which he does not "own" in some real sense. Aristotle's theory could serve better here than the comparatively confused feudal practice, and it was not hard to reconcile with Christian ethics if one translated "common use" into Christian charity and the social obligations of wealth in general.

Since Aquinas' treatment of property was the starting point for nearly all important social thinkers of the early modern period, it is worth noting that most of his intellectual energy was expended upon the famous common-sense argument for private property as an experienced necessity, not upon an argument for communism as the ideal. Apparently the first had to be argued, the second could be assumed. If men were all good, communism would apply since it is the ideal pattern. Communism is certainly not evil, it is simply too lofty to be realized by fallen human beings, unless it be by apostles or monks. Monastic communism then is a reminder of lost innocence, a standing proof that although private property is a practical necessity if men as they are since the Fall are to live together with a reasonable amount of harmony, it is not an absolute necessity, not a rule of divine or even of natural law. It is at this point that Aquinas made creative use of Aristotle in elaborating the social utility of recognizing the right to private property by positive human law. He left no loophole here for the Waldensians, the Spiritual Franciscans, and other heretics of his day who argued like the sects of a later time that the ideal could and should be realized by human beings, that the church should return to apostolic poverty. But he was sensitive enough to the dangers implicit in the expanding commercialism of his day to insist strongly upon the common use of what was privately owned. The corollary of private property was almsgiving, and although the amount of the contribution might be limited by "inconvenience" to the giver, the "need" of the sufferer came first.

Medieval society was never so articulate about itself as it was in Aquinas just at the moment in the thirteenth century when the new economic forces which were to undermine medieval institutions were making themselves clearly felt. The Middle Ages in general had a way of keeping ideals untarnished and available for use in the fullness of time even when practice seemed impossibly far removed from them. For instance, when kings were pitiful weaklings and law a set of rules without sanction, the ideas of monarchy and constitutionalism survived for future development. In somewhat the same way but with contrary results, the Middle Ages held high an ideal communism while making practical common-sense concessions to an incipient economic individualism. It was Aquinas, a propertyless Dominican friar, who elaborated the classic medieval argument for private property. The church never entirely forgot the second

chapter of Acts even while chastising those of its children who wanted to return here and now to pentecostal communism.

From this point of view, the study of medieval society as a whole—its manors and guilds, its feudal contracts and monastic communities, its feudal and scholastic theory—is more important for the later history of socialism than any myopic examination of medieval communistic sects or radical revolts like the Peasant Rebellion of 1381. It was from this common soil of the Middle Ages that both modern individualism and modern socialism were to spring. Before the close of the Middle Ages there were departures both ways from what might be called the medieval compromise on property as expressed by Aquinas, but these were not so significant as the character of the compromise itself. During the later Middle Ages the contrasts between wealth and poverty were far more vivid and brutal than they are today, the tone of life more violent, and the tendency to fly to emotional extremes more pronounced.[11] It is not hard to imagine the proud display and callous indifference to suffering on the part of the rulers of society which lay behind the English peasants' well-known cry of 1381: "Things cannot go well in England, nor ever will, until all goods are held in common and there are neither serfs nor gentlemen and all of us are one."[12] The irresponsibility of landlords was theoretically even more "radical" in the Middle Ages than the vaguely-defined communism of peasant rebels. The point of real importance is that by the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were significant stirrings of discontent in the economically progressive parts of Europe—northern Italy, the Rhine valley, the Netherlands. These heralded the birth of a competitive and dynamic economy which would soon undermine the foundations of medieval society and its ideals. In a sense both the heretics and Thomas Aquinas himself were symptoms of the new stresses and strains. The history of modern socialism begins not with peasant agitators like John Ball or Jack Cade, but with the birth of this new individualistic economy.

II. Socialism and Early Modern Economy

The truly "radical" movement of the later medieval and early modern period was the growth of economic individualism, not the appearance of a few communistic books, sects, and communities. Against the background of nineteenth-century individualism, "radical" is today almost synonymous with "socialist" or "communist." Against the background of medieval communalism, "radical" (if the word had been used) would have called up most readily the picture of "landlord," "monopolist," or "usurer" in the sixteenth century. Thomas More's *Utopia* was not so radical

[11] The classic account is Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London, 1924), especially chap. 1.

[12] *Œuvres de Froissart*, Kervyn de Lettenhove, ed. (Brussels, 1869), IX, p. 388.

a book in its own day as Machiavelli's *Prince*. Both men had qualms about publishing, but it was the *Prince* which remained in manuscript while the *Utopia* was published and eagerly read all over Europe. It is essential to the understanding of utopian socialism to remember that when it first appeared in European history as a fairly consistent theory, it was very largely a reactionary protest against a new, "progressive," and poorly understood economic movement, an appeal to turn the clock backward. It is this nostalgic quality, this restoration mentality, which most clearly distinguishes so much socialistic thought before Marx.

The development of economic individualism was part of a broader movement in European society which textbooks are prone to call "the emancipation of the individual." Now almost a century since Burckhardt wrote his classic study of the Renaissance, in a day impressed by the dangers of emancipated individualism, some writers are apt to look at the other side of the picture and call the movement "the disintegration of medieval society." It might be more precise to describe what happened on almost every level of European society between the mid-fifteenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries as "the definition of boundaries": the emergence, fixation, and sharpening of boundaries between individuals, between classes, between nationalities, between properties and authorities. The simplest example is the emergence of geographical boundaries between political authorities, frontiers which could not possibly be drawn on a map of medieval Europe. Machiavelli's *Prince* dramatized the geographical definition as well as the moral isolation of the modern state as Donatello dramatized the autonomy of the free-standing individual in sculpture. Descartes spoke for the whole age when he argued in a famous paragraph of the *Discourse on Method* that the creations of individual genius are always more perfect than the works of many hands. The definition of authority followed the same lines. The chief aim of European monarchs during the early modern period was to reduce all the complexities of feudal relationships to the simple relationship of sovereign to subject and to absolve the royal power so far as possible from all legal and institutional restraints. Thus Bodin could define the nature of sovereignty because he could see its outlines in contemporary political practice as no medieval thinker could have seen them. The central theological problem of the Protestant Reformation—grace versus free will—was from one point of view a problem of defining boundaries left undefined and fluid in medieval theology. The fixing of frontiers previously undrawn was one of the most striking preoccupations of early modern Europe.

One of the most important aspects of this process was the sharper definition of "mine" and "thine." Beside the free-standing individual of Renaissance portraiture and the sovereign state of Renaissance political

theory there appeared the absolute owner. Ownership gradually became more definable, more individual. At the same time it became more irresponsible and unconditional. In western Europe the slow growth of a money economy enabled the peasant from the thirteenth century onwards to buy his freedom from the conditions on which he held land, and in the process he lost his land. The lord in selling his right to certain services assumed absolute ownership of the land and soon forgot that land holding had ever been conditional.[13] The revival of Roman law accelerated the process by cutting through the tangle of medieval custom and demanding sharper definitions of both property and authority. By the seventeenth century there was little question in western Europe, as there would have been four or five centuries earlier, about who "owned" a particular bit of land. The landlord's title, like the stockholder's rights in a joint stock company, was capable of more precise legal definition than a vassal's fief or a master's rights in his guild. Both were now significantly more individual and more irresponsible.

It is not surprising, therefore, that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the theoretical argument for private property was refined, elaborated, and grounded in a thoroughly individualistic doctrine of natural law. This was mainly the work of English writers—Hobbes, Locke, and Adam Smith—with important assistance from the French *philosophes.* By the end of the eighteenth century the three major arguments for private property—that it is a natural (or moral) right, that it is a civic (or legal) right, and that it is justified by its social utility—had all found forceful expression, both singly and in varying combinations. On the subject of property the French *Declaration of the Rights of Man* began where Thomas Aquinas could never have begun: "The right to property being inviolable and sacred. . . ."[14]

This strengthening of the practical and theoretical supports of individual ownership of property, however, was a gradual process. In general, early modern economy was an unstable phase of the transition from a feudal to a capitalistic economy. The older units of production did not disappear all at once. The manor survived in many parts of Europe and reappeared in the New World as the *encomienda.* The guilds were generally nationalized and so preserved for further subordinate usefulness. But economic activity was becoming progressively more individualistic as well as more consciously directed toward profit making: it could now properly be called "individual enterprise" in place of the earlier communal satisfaction of need. The "radicalism" of the later Middle Ages was winning out. The regulated companies and even the joint stock

[13] Jarrett, *Social Theories*, pp. 141-43. Cf. McIlwain, *op.cit.*, pp. 198-99.

[14] Article XVII. See W. B. Guthrie, *Socialism before the French Revolution* (New York, 1907), chap. 8.

companies preserved some of the corporate character of medieval commercial activity, but the important figures in western European economy were coming to be the improving landlord and the individual entrepreneur, acting alone or in "partnership," their attention fixed upon expanding production and increasing profit. In theory the state replaced the church and the local community as the regulator of distribution, using the devices of subsidy and prohibition, monopoly and privilege. Paternalism and communalism had grown to "mercantilism" or "étatism." But there was growing control of distribution by the unregulated market—another way of saying that distribution was steadily becoming more unplanned, more automatic and impersonal, though still regulated by the state with its own military strength in mind. In theory the end of economic activity was still outside itself—in the state now, whether dynastic or national. But in the practice of mercantilism in the seventeenth century, particularly in the Dutch Provinces and in England, it was sometimes difficult to say whether government was controlling business enterprise or vice versa. It was just at this point in the development of European economy, when the movement toward economic individualism was gathering momentum in England and yet was still restrained by political and patriotic, if not by ethical and religious, considerations, that the North American colonies were founded. Had they taken root a century or two earlier, the basic economic presuppositions of North American society would have been quite different.

The socialistic theories and experiments of the early modern period were dialectically related to the growing economic individualism which we have sketched. The complexity of this relationship is particularly evident in Sir Thomas More's famous work, published in 1516. The real significance of the *Utopia* becomes apparent when one remembers the complete lack of any such approach to social problems in the Middle Ages, and then notes the continuity of socialist criticism from More through Winstanley, Morelly, and Mably to Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen. Every major feature of pre-Marxian socialism is present in this, its first classic expression: the optimistic faith in human nature, the overweening emphasis upon environment and proper education, the nostalgia for lost innocence and integrity, and the exaggerated uniformitarianism which is the measure of every utopian's revulsion from rugged individualism. But something else is there in the *Utopia* which was not always to be found in its successors: a shrewd, informed, and firsthand analysis of the contemporary economy, of the actual workings of the raw new economic individualism, done by a lawyer who was equally at home in problems of government, business, and agriculture. His analysis was set down upon paper just at the moment when the corrosive effect of capitalistic practices upon medieval economic customs and ideals was first clearly felt and be-

fore there was any question whatever in the minds of ordinary folk that both justice and precedent were on the side of the critics of the new practices.[15]

Early modern socialism, as we have already pointed out, was essentially a conservative critique of a new and strange individualism felt to be excessive. But like the new economy itself, More's criticism was ambiguous. It seems to be a truism, particularly of English history, that in turning back to restore the good old days men often unwittingly moved forward. Ostensibly the only practical remedy suggested in the first book of *Utopia* is to turn the clock back: to "re-edify" the buildings and towns ruined by the expansion of sheep farming, to "suffer not these rich men to buy up all, to engross and forestall and with their monopoly to keep the market alone as please them"; in other words, to restore the best in medieval economic regulation.[16] Ostensibly the chief sources of theoretical remedy are Plato's *Republic* and Christian monasticism. But it is very significant that the kingdom of Utopia as presented to the reader exists *now*, beyond the equator. It is removed from existing European society not in time but in place. Here are human beings who escaped the Fall, so to speak, and so are untrammelled by Christian history. True, theirs is a perfectly static society, which has bored every reader possessed of an ounce of restlessness or initiative, but as a standard by which to test European society and possibly to galvanize it into reform, Utopia has a potential dynamism which the Garden of Eden had long lacked. It is just as revolutionary as it is reactionary.

In More's day the medieval assumption that communism was God's original pattern was dimmed but by no means blacked out. When More speaks in his own person in the dialogue he never questions the ultimate *rightness* of communism. Raphael is made to argue that "where possessions be private . . . it is hard and almost impossible that there the weal public may *justly* be governed and *prosperously* flourish." More's reply does not question the justice, but it does doubt the prosperity: "Me thinketh that men shall never there live *wealthily* where all things be common," because of the lack of incentive to labor. Again in the last paragraph of the book the author questions the "good *reason*" of the Utopians' way of life, but not its ultimate goodness.[17] More, in other words, expends more intellectual energy than Aquinas in arguing the theoretical validity of

[15] The most discerning recent treatment of the *Utopia*—J. H. Hexter, *The Biography of an Idea: a Study of Sir Thomas More's Utopia* (Princeton University Press)—had not appeared in print when this was written. Hexter writes, "The Utopian Discourse is the production of a Christian humanist uniquely endowed with a statesman's eye and mind, a broad worldly experience, and a conscience of unusual sensitivity, who saw Sin and especially the Sin of Pride as the Cancer of the Commonwealth."

[16] *Utopia* (Everyman ed.), p. 26.

[17] *Utopia*, pp. 43, 45, 114. Italics added.

communism, but the two agree implicitly that private property is certainly not of divine or natural law. More foresaw many of the dangers of unregulated individualism, and the playful emphasis upon uniformity in Utopia—from clothes to equal apportionment of children among families—was the measure of his fears. But he did not believe that freedom of thought need go overboard with the suppression of economic individualism, and he was not driven to the hysterical lengths of a Proudhon on the subject of private property because he was still a good Thomist. There was impressive continuity in the utopian tradition in these matters from More to Robert Owen, a continuity which is both amazing and amusing. The measure of Owen's distrust of individualism in any form was to be found in the regular architecture of his parallelograms, their standardized schools, and their children scampering about uniformly clad in "a dress somewhat resembling the Roman and Highland garb."[18] The *Utopia*, like most of its successors down to *A New View of Society*, by Robert Owen, was essentially good medieval doctrine on the ownership of property applied to and shaped by contemporary problems.

In spite of such continuity, however, there were significant changes in socialist thought as the early modern period ran its course: changes of scale, of objective, and of motivation. These may be measured not only by products of the literary imagination like the *Utopia* but also by the actual socialistic experiments of the period. Each of the great revolutions which ushered in the modern world—the Protestant Reformation, the Puritan Rebellion, and the French Revolution—produced a small but significant "left-wing" movement at the moment when the lowest classes, which had joined the middle classes in the early stages of each upheaval, began to feel disillusioned about the course taken by the revolution. Although there was not the continuity between these communistic movements that there was in the literary tradition, they were the abortive beginnings of modern socialism as a movement rather than as a theory. From the Anabaptists through Winstanley's "Diggers" to Babeuf's "Equals," there was a certain uncoordinated development which was the result of progressive changes in European economy and society as a whole rather than of any conscious building upon past experience within a socialist "movement."

The change of scale to be noted is the slow expansion of the size of communistic communities, both in practice and theory. In general this expansion lagged somewhat behind the actual expansion of viable political units from feudal principalities to national states, and far behind the rapidly growing economic interdependence of Europe.

The medieval monastic community was the model for heretical com-

[18] Robert Owen, "Report to the County of Lanark," *A New View of Society and Other Writings* (Everyman, 1927), p. 278.

munist groups in the early modern period. These groups rejected the monastic objective of separation from the world in order the better to serve God, but carried monastic practices out into the world. Between the Fraticelli of the thirteenth century, the Brethren of the Common Life of the fifteenth, and the Moravian Anabaptist communities of the sixteenth, there was a difference of degree rather than of kind. Each successive group tended to think of itself more and more as a "holy community," a light set upon a hill, a seed planted in the soil—a conviction which seemed to become more firmly held as the bonds which had drawn medieval society together progressively dissolved. There would be no need for force or even for persuasion (here the Taborites of the fifteenth century and the Münster Anabaptists of 1534 were untypical because of very special military circumstances); the gospel of holding goods in common would spread by example, the light would find reflection, the seed would reproduce itself. At most, federation of such communities was thought to be the only artificial device necessary to aid the providential process. True, there was an amazingly wide subterranean organization of left-wing groups in central Europe before and even shortly after the Peasants' Rebellion of 1525, but the communistic element within these groups soon settled into the typical "holy community" pattern.[19]

More's *Utopia* is the first evidence of significant expansion of scale. Plato's communism like St. Benedict's was for the few, whereas the Utopians' was *for all those belonging to a "national" group.* If one asks what holds Utopian society together as More presents it, the answer is not religion (there are different sects in Utopia) and certainly not enlightened economic self-interest. The social bond is what we would call patriotism: pride in common history and achievement, a sense of distinctness from other people, willingness to sacrifice everything for a way of life which is thought both unique and good. The preconditions of a workable communism in Utopia are a large degree of national isolation and exclusiveness; problems of surpluses, both of goods and population, are solved by a sort of benevolent imperialism. Utopia is described as a loose federation of cities, but actually every political, social, or economic matter of any real importance is handled on a national scale. In this respect More's book belongs to the age of national states rather than to the age of medieval localism. A century later the uses of patriotism as a social cement are even more clearly appreciated in Campanella's *City of the Sun.* The inhabitants are pictured as being consumed by love for their native land and at one point the author remarks, "When we have taken away self love, there remains only love for the state."[20]

[19] Karl Kautsky, *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation* (London, 1897), is still a good introduction to the subject.

[20] Campanella, in Henry Morley, *Ideal Commonwealths* (7th ed., London, 1896), pp. 225-26.

By the seventeenth century English national self-consciousness was more highly developed than in More's day and it was natural for even the left-wing movements of the Puritan Rebellion to betray the influence of the national idea. Gerrard Winstanley began his "true levelling" on a hill in Surrey with a handful of followers, but he ultimately turned to Cromwell in 1651 and elaborated his *True Law of Freedom* on a national scale. The Diggers had first acted perforce as a "holy community" and trusted that their example would spread. But after their crushing defeat by the gentry and the law courts, it was impossible to think of going ahead with anything but a national program. Winstanley believed in the initiative and independence of the small community. He shared More's admiration for the London Companies, and some features of his scheme borrowed from guild organization. At the other end of the scale, his comparison of the nature of "monarchy" and of "commonwealth" had universal application. But his utopia in its final form was essentially national, coextensive with the Puritan revolutionary Commonwealth.[21]

Still another century and the national scale of left-wing activity became almost normal and inevitable. There is no trace of the holy community idea in Babeuf's conspiracy during the French Revolution. Organization was (or was intended to be) on a nation-wide scale; capture of the state was the immediate objective; and plans for the future revolved around a kind of permanent dictatorship of the proletariat in a new state. Laski remarks that the Babouvists "had practically no conception of socialism as an international force."[22] It might be added that they had no more conception of socialism as a local community affair. Their generation had forgotten that socialism was once a matter of saintly communities holding their lamps aloft in a naughty world. By the time of the French Revolution the scale of socialist activity had expanded from the community to the national state: the "light set upon a hill" had been replaced by public-service illumination.

As for the second kind of change—change of objective—there were some attempts in socialistic thought and experiment to keep pace with the slow contemporary shift from thinking primarily in terms of consumption and subsistence to thinking primarily in terms of production and profit, but these attempts were fitful and not always self-conscious. Throughout European history socialistic thought has concerned itself with distribution, but only modern socialism concerns itself seriously with problems of production.

[21] On Winstanley, see particularly G. H. Sabine's introduction to his edition of *The Works of Gerrard Winstanley* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1941).

[22] H. J. Laski, "The Socialist Tradition in the French Revolution," in F. J. C. Hearnshaw, ed., *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Revolutionary Era* (London, 1931), p. 228.

Monastic communism was a consumers' communism. Medieval monasteries, it is true, were often more efficient productive units than surrounding manors, but the production of a surplus above the subsistence requirement was irrelevant to the community's spiritual purpose and could be embarrassing in practice, as the previously quoted passage from a thirteenth-century chronicler suggests. Even among the Anabaptists, as Kautsky remarks, it was "a communism of the consumers, not of the producers"; "communal housekeeping, not . . . communal labor." But this communal housekeeping resulted directly in communal production on a large scale among the Hutterite Brethren in Moravia. They had come together for reasons which had nothing to do with increasing economic output, but they were soon outproducing surrounding "individual initiative" in the making of cloth, the brewing of beer, and the breeding of horses. Eventually production was developed on such a large scale that it was no longer an accessory to an originally Biblical communism, but rather the very basis of this communism.[23] The Moravian Anabaptists apparently confirmed what evidence there was from the history of monasticism that communism could outproduce individualistic compromises in certain circumstances.

This was not the normal way, however, that socialistic thought and practice achieved the transition to concern about production. Even when outproducing the surrounding economy, socialist groups never justified the superiority of their way of life by its productive capacity, so far as I am aware, until after the industrial revolution had accelerated the familiar boom and bust cycle of business activity. The transition must be sought in the slow shift of emphasis in socialist thought from "the right to subsistence" to "the right to labor."[24] The first book of More's *Utopia* gives a brilliant analysis, for its day, of some of the contemporary causes of unemployment, but in the second book the right to labor is forgotten and there is much typical concern with the duty to labor as a corollary of the right to subsistence. Production is traditional. The Utopians have not progressed in their technology nor shown any real desire to do so. Prosperity is the result of limiting wants rather than of expanding production. Bacon's *New Atlantis* is the first literary dramatization of the possibility of unlimited expansion of productive capacity through applied science, but it is almost totally unconcerned about the social problems involved. It is hard to say whether "the society of Salomon's House" as presented in the book is more a public than a private foundation, and the question is certainly not important to the author.

The importance in this respect of Winstanley's original act of cultivating the common land (April 1649) has usually been overlooked.

[23] Kautsky, *Communism in Central Europe*, pp. 12, 191-215.
[24] Cf. Guthrie, *Socialism before the French Revolution*, pp. 49-51.

However traditional he was in sketching his national utopia, this original act, in a year of hardship and unemployment for the poor in England, was perhaps the first symbolic assertion in modern terms of the right to work. Giving employment to the unemployed was closely linked in his thought with producing more food for hungry mouths by nationalizing and utilizing the commons and the confiscated lands. The voice which summoned him to his mission said, "*Work* together, eat bread together."[25] A Benedictine monk would have understood this voice, but the order of thought was now really reversed from that of monastic and early heretical communism: communal production was now the basis, not the by-product, of equal distribution. By the early nineteenth century, as we shall see, socialists were finally driven to base their case upon the inefficiency of capitalism as a system of production, upon the inability of the competitive system to provide steady work for all. Their primary objective by then was to socialize production, not to communize consumption.

The third change to be noted in the character of socialism during the early modern period was the change in motivation from the dominance of noneconomic motives (such as religion or patriotism) to the dominance of more purely economic considerations.

Men have been driven to cry *omnia sunt communia* for a great variety of reasons, but these reasons were never purely, or even predominantly, economic until the early nineteenth century. It is sometimes a temptation to assume that where the motives are religious or patriotic or noneconomic in general, it is not significant or "true" socialism one is dealing with.[26] But in view of the revival of both nationalism and Orthodoxy in Soviet Russia within the past two decades, this seems to be dangerous reasoning. It may be equally dangerous, however, to argue that "socialism is an economic system which will work only when non-economic motives—such as religion or family affection—are dominant."[27] The historical record suggests that the motives of socialists have been and still are as rich and varied as human motives in general, but that there was undeniably a fairly steady narrowing of motivation during the three centuries of the early modern era. The inspiration of early communistic experiments in European history was uniformly religious, or more specifically, Biblical. The inspiration of others was recognizably patriotic. By the mid-nineteenth century the inspiration of most socialist writings was overwhelmingly economic.

One indication of change in underlying motivation was the extent to

[25] Sabine, *Winstanley*, pp. 10-14. Italics added.

[26] Cf. H. W. Laidler, *Social-Economic Movements* (New York, 1944), p. 107: "Communism in these latter [religious] groups, however, was an incidental feature, and they had little social significance."

[27] F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *A Survey of Socialism* (London, 1928), p. 109.

which any early modern socialistic writer or group criticized contemporary Christianity *on purely social grounds.* Medieval reformers and heretics said harsh things about the wealth of the church, but there was never the slightest hint of Marx's argument that religion is opium for the people. Nor was there a trace of such an argument in the *Utopia.* The Anabaptists—"robustly material and highly spiritual" at the same time, in Mannheim's felicitous phrase[28]—did attack the social conservatism of orthodox Protestantism among other things, and this may mark the faint beginnings of such criticism. But the first clear suggestion comes in Winstanley's bitter critique of Puritanism, the "divining doctrine" which scares the common folk into looking heavenward while the clergy devour their substance here on earth. Sabine gives a subtle analysis of Winstanley's personal faith as mysticism with "a tone of secularism" about it—"secularism tinged with a religious motivation."[29] Obviously it is well not to be too dogmatic about what was religious and what secular in the motives of socialists during the early modern period. But by the time of the *philosophes* and the French Revolution, socialist criticism in France at least had emancipated itself from any religious motivation in the struggle with *l'infâme.* The motives of Morelly and Mably were broadly humanitarian and ethical, purely secular though not as yet exclusively economic.

A more definite indication of change was the measure of purely economic interpretation of society and history to be found in successive writers. The classes of medieval Europe were divided by privilege and status, those of modern Europe by the possession of wealth. To twentieth-century historians looking back over the record, the recognition of this change lagged far behind the fact. Only a few perspicacious individuals were privileged to see beneath the surface during social upheavals and to note the economic causes and class struggles. Thomas More saw more of the purely economic roots of political, social, and moral problems than anyone of his day. There is not much evidence among the left-wing sects of the sixteenth century of self-consciousness as a distinct economic class, but Winstanley's faith, borrowed from the earlier sects, that the poor and despised were to be the chosen instrument of social regeneration was "the form in which class-feeling became most definitely self-conscious in the seventeenth century," as Sabine remarks.[30] Harington saw clearly that the Puritan Rebellion represented a shift of the economic balance of power from one class to another, and Barnave saw the same thing happening in the French Revolution. But generally it was those on the individualistic side of the economic fence (like Harington) who led the way here.

[28] *Ideology and Utopia*, p. 192.
[29] Sabine, *Winstanley*, pp. 39, 48, 68-70.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Thus together with the continuity which the history of socialism exhibited during the three hundred years between the discovery of America and the French Revolution, there was significant ambiguity and instability in its nostalgic longing to restore a pattern of primitive purity, and an important change in scale, objective, and motivation. As the eighteenth century drew to its close, the slow pace of this change was sharply accelerated by the industrial revolution.

III. Socialism and the Industrial Revolution

What Sombart calls the period of "high" or fully developed capitalism began with the agricultural, communications, and industrial revolutions of the later eighteenth century. In the hundred years before 1848, the demands of a growing imperial market combined with a revolution in the basic technology of certain manufacturing industries to thrust Great Britain far ahead of the rest of Europe in productive capacity. The main economic and social results are too familiar to need anything but briefest mention here. The essential features were the application on a grand scale of capitalism to industry, the spectacular increase in productivity, the social dislocation and disorganization which followed, the practical emancipation of capitalistic enterprise from almost all remaining political controls (religious restraints had already dropped away), and the development of a theory to explain and justify this emancipation, the theory of "laissez faire."

It is tempting to say that the industrial revolution marked the final triumph of that individualism which had been the "radicalism" of the later Middle Ages. Individuals and private groups, owning land and machines absolutely and acting with more purely economic ends in view than ever before, won a remarkable independence of action, uprooted and relocated masses of people in urban areas as a result of their economic initiative, and gradually managed to gain a large voice in the conduct of their governments. By the mid-nineteenth century these individuals and groups probably owed less legal and moral responsibility to the larger community of which they were a part (in their case the nation) than their predecessors had owed at any previous time in European history. Certainly the absolute and irresponsible character of private property rights had never been more sharply emphasized in law and popular belief. To those who drafted the great revolutionary declarations and constitutions on both sides of the water in the later eighteenth century, "property" was on the same plane as "life" and "liberty"—and to some later historians it has seemed that the greatest of these was property. When the young Engels spoke of the terrible misery of the working classes to a middle-class acquaintance in Manchester, the gentleman listened quietly and

replied, "And yet there is a great deal of money made here; good morning, sir."[31]

In spite of appearances, however, this was not the economic individualism of Thomas More's day. There was ambiguity at the very heart of "high" capitalism. The age which saw the triumph of individualism in law, politics, and culture was also the age which saw the development of a technology which was eventually to undermine and destroy this individualism. Before 1848 it was abundantly evident in Great Britain at least that industrial capitalism was a social power. Ownership of the machines, which were now more important than land as a means of production, carried with it the power to move men about, to regiment and organize them into factories, to determine their living conditions and cultural opportunities. Production in a Lancashire cotton mill was "social" in a sense not true of sixteenth-century communities of weavers. Nineteenth-century textile workers were called "manufacturers," makers by hand, but actually it was the "factory," a complex organization of power, machines, and human tenders, which did the making. Apart from association with machines and with each other, the individual workers could not make a square inch of cloth. This was one of the more important reasons why the early nineteenth century was permeated and fascinated by the idea of "association."[32]

Fully developed capitalism, then, was the quintessence of individualism from one point of view while from another it was a powerful socializing agency. This meant that it could be attacked from two opposite directions: from that of a utopian socialism horrified by its heartless individualism, and from that of an earlier small-scale economic individualism frightened by its crushing of the small independent farmer and artisan. The century before 1848 was a century of confusion as well as of creation in the history of socialistic thought. The reason was that men continued to live in the shadow of earlier interpretations of the conflict between economic individualism and socialism for some time after a revolutionary technology had rendered these interpretations obsolescent. In the early years of the nineteenth century nostalgic individualists and utopian socialists attacked capitalism and each other with about the same gusto. The more hardheaded and realistic attack on capitalism actually came from the individualists, and before they gave up the struggle they had taught the socialists the doctrine of class struggle and the economic interpretation of history. It is one of the curious but understandable anomalies of the period that

[31] Quoted by Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station* (New York, 1940), p. 139. On the triumph of individualism in early nineteenth-century Britain, see particularly the classic treatment of A. V. Dicey, *Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion in England* (2nd ed., London, 1914).

[32] See J. L. Puech, *La Tradition socialiste en France et la Société des Nations* (Paris, 1921), pp. 203ff.

socialists were educated to the socializing tendencies of fully developed capitalism mainly through the writings of individualistic critics of the new order.

Several features of the new age of iron and steam were of particular importance for the development of socialism. The first was the sheer speed of technological and social change. Belief in unchanging principles of social order, in natural law and natural rights, would be increasingly difficult in this new world of mechanical invention, quickly shifting population, and rapid urbanization. Socialism would soon have to come to terms with the fact of social change, now accelerating at an unprecedented rate. A second feature was the international character of highly developed capitalism. The industrial revolution began in Great Britain, but Britain's far-flung trade was its necessary basis; the interests of her industrialists, who were importing cotton from America and selling manufactures in Asia, had the immediate effect of making the nation more internationally minded than ever before. Socialist thought would soon have to come to grips with international as well as national problems. Thirdly, the spectacular increase in productive capacity which resulted from harnessing the expansive power of steam helped to turn the spotlight of social criticism from problems of sharing a fixed stock of wealth to problems of maintaining an accelerating production of new wealth. And finally, the increasing awareness of the purely economic factor in human existence was suggesting the belief among some that man *does* live by bread alone—or at least that his struggle for bread is more important than any past age had conceived it to be. The birth of "political economy" was an important event. As the classical theorists developed their subject, there emerged a belief in an autonomous realm of economic law which was capable of theoretical isolation and treatment as a self-contained system. Soon socialists would be compelled to turn political economists themselves and buttress their theories increasingly with purely economic argument.

From the failure of Babeuf's conspiracy in Paris during May 1796 to the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in London in February 1848, the theater of significant socialist thought and action was Great Britain. Here the utopian tradition came to its finest flowering in Robert Owen. Here the classical political economists deftly analyzed the new economy and, thanks to workingmen's institutes and the slow spread of popular education, helped set even the lowest orders of society to thinking about rents, profits, and wages, use value and exchange value, production and distribution. Here the critics of the new order first took up the intellectual weapons forged by the defenders of capitalism and turned them upon their makers. And here it was that the German authors of "scientific socialism" found the illustrative social material if not the actual inspiration for their major theories. Above all, it was in England that the first

fairly long-lived proletarian movement took place—for this was the real significance of Chartism. Since the brilliant work of Max Beer a generation ago in revealing both the richness and "recklessness" of British social thinking during the early nineteenth century, it is no disparagement of French and German thinkers to say that for a time the British were as far ahead in their intellectual adjustment to the new age as they were in their technology and business management. Beer remarks that most of the later Continental controversies about Marx's *Capital* were "in their essence fought out in the years between 1820 and 1830 in England round Ricardo."[33] He might have gone even further and said that most of the major problems and premises of modern socialism were at least adumbrated in England during the two decades which followed the end of the wars with Napoleon. Before the collapse of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union in 1834 almost every major type of present day socialism except Marxism had appeared in England: Christian socialism, Tory socialism, socialism by gradualist political action, cooperative socialism, and syndicalism. In addition, almost every major type of modern socialist strategy, from getting the vote to staging a general strike, had either been tried or suggested.

The transition from "utopian" to "scientific" socialism did not take place overnight with the publication of the *Communist Manifesto.* It began with the appearance in 1805 of Charles Hall's *Effects of Civilisation.* "The situation of the rich and poor," wrote this obscure physician, "like the algebraic terms plus and minus, are in direct opposition to, and destructive of each other." "Civilisation" means that wealth is power, and this means exploitation of the poor by the rich, class struggle, international war. Hall's remedy was utopian: return to the land. But his diagnosis was grimly realistic.[34] Forty years later Marx and Engels felt they had purged their analysis of all nonscientific elements, but they left one notoriously utopian belief embedded in their system: the doctrine of the classless society. The transition, then, was gradual—and it is not complete today. It can be described as the culmination of changes which we have already singled out for notice in early modern socialism: the slow turn from a desire to restore society to conform with a divine or natural norm to a theory of historical evolution; the expansion of geographical scale; the increasing attention to the problem of production; and the growing emphasis upon economic argument and economic motivation.

The great utopians of the early nineteenth century were so thoroughly imbued with the doctrine of natural law that they had almost no feeling for historical development. This is particularly true of Owen, who had no more confidence that the mere passage of time would be favorable to his

[33] Max Beer, *A History of British Socialism* (London, 1920), I, pp. v, 188.
[34] Beer, *op.cit.*, pp. 126-32.

schemes than had Sir Thomas More. Neither his early followers nor the Chartists developed any real historical insight. The feudal critics of the new order were an exception, particularly the Comte de Saint-Simon. He had absorbed the great idea of the eighteenth century that time is on man's side, that civilization is a process rather than a condition. "The golden age of humanity is not behind us," he wrote, "it is to come, and will be found in the perfection of the social order." Here the apocalyptic hopes of heretical communists were transformed into historical expectations. But it is difficult to see precisely how the idea of progress influenced Saint-Simon's social theory. He periodized history as the eighteenth century had generally done in stages of knowledge, not in stages of technique and resulting social organization as Marx was to do, and so there was really no significant relationship between his historical perspective and his social analysis. The English conservative critics—Coleridge, Southey, and Carlyle—were no more successful in finding an organic relationship between their sense of historical evolution and their socialist idealism. They sensed the inevitability of change but regretted it.

The first trace of a true fusion between anticapitalist theory and the idea of historical evolution appeared in Thomas Hodgskin's *Natural and Artificial Right of Property Contrasted* (1832), but the sketch he gave of historical development was confused and fragmentary.[35] John Francis Bray's *Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy* (1838-1839) was somewhat clearer, even though the background was Owenite socialism rather than anticapitalist individualism: "The present crisis is no more than a natural movement attending *the course of things*—it is but one move of *that mighty ocean of events*, the billows of which have rolled on from eternity, and will progress in unchecked power for ever."[36] The sense here shown for the significant event, for the crucial evidence of "the course of things," appeared briefly among some Chartist writings during the crisis of 1834, even Owen himself being somewhat affected by it. Perhaps some day this feeling for event may be shown to be essentially a secularized version of an earlier Puritan faith in "dispensations," but for the moment all we can say is that it appeared in England before it became of such profound significance for Marx and Engels.[37]

The scale of socialistic thinking during the early nineteenth century was still predominantly local or national, but there were strong hints that socialistic theory would soon expand to fit the scale upon which the

[35] On Hodgskin, see Élie Halévy, *Thomas Hodgskin* (Paris, 1903), particularly pp. 132-35 and 191-209; and the briefer account in Beer, *op.cit.*, pp. 259-70. While the writing of this chapter was in progress, my colleague Professor Jacob Viner graciously allowed me to plunder not only his knowledge and critical acumen, but also his books, particularly on the subject of Hodgskin.

[36] Quoted by Beer, *op.cit.*, p. 243. Italics added.

[37] See e.g., Edmund Wilson, *op.cit.*, p. 139.

capitalistic economy was operating. The idea of what Edmund Wilson calls "small seminal new worlds inside the old" received a new lease on life during the early years of the century. German pietism, issuing in communities like that of the Moravian Brethren at Herrnhut in the mid-eighteenth century, had helped to revive the holy community tradition. Owen's "parallelograms," his followers' "trade manufactories," and Fourier's "phalansteries" carried this tradition into the world of industrial capitalism with very few adjustments to its new surroundings beyond complete secularization of the idea. Fourier hoped that the principle of "association" would build local communities, then federate them in larger groups which would pyramid up to a world confederation with its capitol at Constantinople. But the stimulus to his thinking was eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism, not the logic of fully developed capitalism. He and Owen (like Thomas More) were much more concerned with eradicating competitive individualism from human nature than in socializing capital as it actually existed in their day. It seems safe to say, however, that the national scale was still the more normal scale of socialistic thought and action, as it had been with Babeuf. Socialists, like their enemies the political economists, were becoming increasingly internationally minded, but behind their hopes for "peace through work, work in peace" nearly always lurked a warm belief in the civilizing "mission" of their own nation. Both French and British socialists believed in the faith of liberal nationalism, that nations could act as larger "seminal worlds within the old." Until 1848 there were only a few hints of fusion between the philosophical universalism of the eighteenth century and the logic of nineteenth-century economic facts. Bray was one of the few who saw that the "course of things" was not confined to national channels: "The present is not a merely local movement, it is not confined to country, colour, or creed—the universe is the sphere in which it acts."[38]

In the matter of the concern of socialists with problems of production, the early nineteenth century was the decisive turning point. Not that socialists ceased to be interested in distribution. In fact, the publication of Colquhoun's *Wealth, Power, and Resources of the British Empire* in 1814 and of Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* in 1817 was the signal for an outburst of both socialist and individualist criticism of the way the new wealth was being distributed. John Locke and Adam Smith had both insisted that labor was the source of value. Neither could have guessed that men with empty stomachs and literal minds would come along and interpret this to mean exclusively wage labor, not the labor of farmer, artisan, merchant, and industrialist. But this was what happened to the classic doctrine in the hands of anti-

[38] Beer, *op.cit.*, p. 243. On the general subject, see the essay of Puech cited in note 32, particularly pp. 75-76, 79-80, 203-9; and Beer, pp. 235, 313, 344.

capitalist critics after 1815, and the result was a series of rather humorless attempts to determine mathematically just how little of the full fruits of his toil the laboring man actually received. Colquhoun's figures suggested that he received about one-sixth of what he produced; John Gray thought it one-fifth; William Thompson was willing to make it about one-half; but Thomas Hodgskin agreed with William Hall that it was closer to one-eighth.[39] In any case the wage-earner was not getting what should be coming to him, and socialists in general were just as worried about it as they had been in Thomas More's day—and now for more "scientific," i.e., statistical reasons.

They were often more worried, however, by something More could hardly have understood, the problem which came to be called that of overproduction. The business cycle is traceable back to the sixteenth century, but few would dispute the importance which Beer attaches to the depression which began in Great Britain in 1816 as the first social crisis quite unmistakably caused "not by scarcity, but by overproduction." Adam Smith had argued for private property because it was a more productive system than any other. But was it? Owen and his followers saw that the competitive system was subject to recurrent spasms of unproductive idleness because of overproduction in terms of profitable demand. If profit is the only motive for production, they maintained, then new wealth will constantly be channeled into the pockets of the few, the purchasing power of the many will collapse, and production will temporarily cease. The problem, as Owen put it, was "to let prosperity loose on the country" by seeing to it that "consumption may be made to keep pace with production."[40] John Gray's solution—"that production, instead of being the effect of demand, ought to be the cause of it"—was expressed more clearly by William Thompson, another Owenite, who argued that only a system which assured the laborer of the whole fruit of his toil could continue to produce without interruptions and setbacks. One of the chief concerns of Owen's followers, therefore, was the unproductiveness of capitalism and the unemployment which resulted. The same concern was evident in the subtitle of Hodgskin's first important work: "The Unproductiveness of Capital. . . ."[41] The ground had shifted, in part at least, from arguments about distribution based on divine or natural justice to arguments about production based on utility and efficiency. Fair distribution was now a means to the end of increased production and full employment.

[39] See Beer, *op.cit.*, pp. 248, 213, 221, 264, 129.

[40] Robert Owen, "Report to the County of Lanark," *op.cit.*, pp. 248, 253.

[41] Beer, *op.cit.*, pp. 212, 223; Thomas Hodgskin, *Labour Defended against the Claims of Capital, or the Unproductiveness of Capital Proved with Reference to the Present Combinations amongst Journeymen* [1825], G. D. H. Cole, ed. (London, 1922).

The history of the birth and growth of "economic man" has not yet been written, although Peter Drucker has written of his demise.[42] It may be, as some economists are now telling us, that he never existed at all, that the political economists of the early nineteenth century were simply investigating a new field of human behavior and never meant to suggest that the economic aspect was the whole of human life. Be that as it may, there are certain broad facts of British social and intellectual history during this period which may be cited as evidences of his existence and which are important for the history of socialism: the emancipation of commerce and industry from all religious restraints and from almost all political controls; the growing agreement among the middle classes that it was the purpose of government to foster prosperity, not of business to strengthen the state; the growing conviction of the wage-earning classes that whether they asked for the vote or took direct action, economic reform was more important than political; the belief of political economists in certain "iron laws" which were autonomous and unaffected by man-made statutes; and finally the belief of a few that the key to understanding the historical development of mankind was not divine providence, not political or military genius, but technological change, economic interest, and the struggle for existence between economic classes.

The priority in isolating the economic factor in human existence and working out an economic interpretation of history belongs to the individualists rather than to the socialists. It is of course true that Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen all saw quite clearly the predominant importance of the purely economic factor. But they seem to have sensed the danger to their cooperative ideal in any appeal to purely economic motives. At any rate, they never extinguished the flames of their religious or secular idealism in the waters of economic determinism. Actually it was those who expected less of human nature—the individualists—who developed the general theory that the way men make a living, the way they produce and distribute goods, shapes the social and political arrangements of any given historical epoch and colors its beliefs. Perhaps Harington and Barnave were the first to sketch this approach to history, as we have suggested. But it was Charles Hall (1805) and above all Thomas Hodgskin (1825), both relatively obscure in their day, who took seriously the underlying materialism in British thinking from Hobbes and Locke to Adam Smith and Ricardo, applied it to the brute facts of industrial capitalism as they saw them, and then sketched out the theory of class struggle as the key to history. Marx and Engels later found support for their own economic determinism in these individualistic predecessors, but the significant thing is that the economic interpretation was impressed

[42] *The End of Economic Man* (New York, 1939), particularly pp. xii, 50-58.

by the facts upon one after another sympathetic observer of the condition of the working class, as it was upon Friedrich Engels during his first visit to Manchester in 1843.[43] It was the individualists, both defenders and critics of capitalism, who developed the theory, but thanks to the authors of the *Communist Manifesto* it was the socialists who made use of it as social myth.

The publication of the *Communist Manifesto*[44] was a genuinely revolutionary event—not because it immediately touched off a social revolution (which it did not), not because it immediately changed men's minds (which it could not until it was widely read, later), nor because its major ideas were absolutely fresh and original (which they were not). It was a revolutionary document in somewhat the same sense as the *Declaration of Independence*: it summed up the accumulated knowledge and experience of generations and at the same time thrust its readers forward into the future with the confidence that the universe was on their side. It is the current fashion in historical writing to deny revolution in favor of evolution, to see continuity where contemporaries (like Marx himself) could see only revolutionary change. To follow this fashion in judging the *Manifesto* would be to deny what might be called the explosive possibilities of great summaries in the history of thought. In this sense, the broader the synthesis of all previous lines of thinking, the greater the revolutionary potentialities. Until social conditions were ripe and until Marx and Engels combined the major strands of socialistic thinking into one organic whole, socialism as action never amounted to much more than a series of abortive proletarian movements in the wake of middle-class revolutions, from the Reformation and the Puritan Rebellion to the French Revolution and the English Reform Movement of 1832. After the work of combination was done, hitherto unsuspected explosive possibilities were revealed in the European socialistic tradition.

It was the *Communist Manifesto* which gave socialism a philosophy of history and brought the ideals of utopians into organic relationship with the idea of development in time. Gone by now was any trace of nostalgia for a primitive state of nature or grace in which all things were held in common. Gone was all suggestion of restoration or return to a past age, or of voyage to a distant land. To the authors the triumph of capitalism over feudalism had become a necessary stage in the historical evolution of the classless society. In fact they showed a cool admiration for the marvelous achievements of the European bourgeoisie which balanced their

[43] See the account of Edmund Wilson, *op.cit.*, pp. 134-39.

[44] The best discussion of the *Manifesto* produced in connection with the hundredth anniversary of its publication appeared, unsigned, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, Dec. 13, 1947. This, written by Edward Hallett Carr, was republished by him in his book, *Studies in Revolution* (London, 1950), chap. 2.

hatred of its brutality—an attitude of which neither Thomas More nor Thomas Hodgskin would have been capable. For the first time the whole social problem was treated in resolutely and consistently dynamic terms, and the face of socialistic thought was turned irrevocably from the past to the future.

The long and halting tendency to expansion of scale reached its culmination in the *Manifesto*. All brethren houses, communities of saints, "phalansteries," and "parallelograms," even all national utopias, had now become utterly irrelevant in a world so tightly bound together by bourgeois finance that economic isolation of even the tiniest local community or economic autarchy of even the largest nation-state was no longer possible. Apparently it was not enough that England's leading economic thinkers in the century before 1848 had been Scots and Irishmen and therefore presumably above a narrow English nationalism. Before socialism could be universalized, i.e., brought into vivifying touch with the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment and the broad fact of the economic interdependence of nations, two Germans had to be uprooted from their families and their native soil and thrust into a position from which they could see what was happening in Great Britain from a perspective which was supranational. Marx and Engels "were the first great social thinkers of their century to try to make themselves, by deliberate discipline, both classless and international."[45]

It hardly needs to be pointed out that, so far as the problem of objective is concerned, the socialization of production was the main concern of the *Manifesto*, not mere equalization of distribution. In early communistic communities production had been incidental to a proper solution of the problem of distribution. Distribution was now incidental to the inevitable historical solution of the problem of production—more precisely, the problem of who was to control the means of production. The utopian indictment of capitalism as unproductive was transformed into a description of how capitalism actually produced its own grave diggers.

Finally, in the matter of motivation, Marx and Engels were the first in the European socialist tradition to push the economic interpretation of human nature and history to its logical conclusion. The idea of "ideology," first sketched for popular consumption in the *Manifesto*, effectively disposed of all previous considerations of the problem of socialistic motivation as unrealistic. Whether Marx was the main contriver of the triumph of "economic man" as Drucker argues, or whether on the contrary he was "the first thinker to expose in all its hollowness the moral inadequacy of a commercial civilization" as Harold Laski insists,[46] it is undeniable that

[45] Edmund Wilson, *op.cit.*, p. 160.

[46] Cf. Drucker, *op.cit.*, p. 52, and H. J. Laski, *Karl Marx, an Essay* (League for Industrial Democracy, 1933), p. 47. Also, Jacques Barzun, *Darwin, Marx, Wagner* (Boston, 1941), pp. 144ff.

he tended to reduce the complexity of human motivation to economic drives. The question "why socialism?" which before 1848 had been asked and answered with every conceivable kind of human motive—religious, moral, and political—became mainly a question of economics after the publication of the *Manifesto.*

The importance for America of European socialistic thought and experiment before 1848, however, does not lie solely in its summation by Marx. If we have stressed Sir Thomas More, the father of "utopian" socialism, and Karl Marx, its grave digger, it has been as symbols of the birth and decline of a tradition which nevertheless reached back of 1516 and continued after 1848. Revolutionary summation always involves distortion, and there was loss as well as gain in the magnificent simplicities of the *Communist Manifesto.* Many earlier forms of European socialism were still valid, as American reformers saw the situation, long after 1848. Furthermore, the principles and even occasionally the practices of these earlier forms have had a way of acquiring new relevance almost overnight in our contemporary world whenever the rigidities of Marxian dogma have failed to fit changing economic facts. The need for industrial decentralization revives the relevance of earlier communal experiments in the history of socialism. Overemphasis on production drives many in the twentieth century back to distribution as the more central problem. Disillusionment about ever realizing the purely economic utopias of Marx or Manchester impels many to agree with Mussolini's hysterical cry that "economic man does not exist." An ebbing faith in progress and a swelling suspicion of historical relativism even induce some among our contemporaries to search as their predecessors did for norms which are true everywhere and at all times. New relevance of old ideas may appear in the most unexpected places. Perhaps the idea of a T.V.A. as an economic "measuring rod" is not altogether unrelated to the medieval belief that communities of monks were needed to hold aloft the ideal of communism in a world of fallen men. In spite of all the revolutionary changes which followed the industrial revolution and the writings of Marx, the modern world is still in touch with the earlier socialism which has been the subject of this chapter. In subtle and unnoticed ways, whether by continuity or by parallel, the historical connections are still intact.

CHAPTER 2

European Socialism Since 1848

BY HARRY W. LAIDLER

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For bibliography in Volume 2 relevant to Mr. Laidler's essay, see especially PART I, General Reading, and Topics 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

IN EARLY December 1847, a small group of workers from England, France, Germany, Belgium, Poland, and other countries met secretly in the dingy rooms of the London German Workers' Union in the British capital, on the occasion of the second Congress of the Communist League.

The outstanding figures at that congress were Karl Marx, brilliant young German intellectual of twenty-nine who a few years before had become a convinced socialist, and his closest friend, Friedrich Engels, German businessman, socialist, and military strategist. The meeting discussed the revolutionary ferment that was taking place in the Europe of those days. It likewise commissioned Marx and Engels to draft a manifesto, setting forth the principles and philosophy of the League and presenting a program of immediate and far-flung social change and a clarion call to action.

Early the next year, after impatient urgings by the officers of the Communist League, Marx and Engels fulfilled their commission, and in the first days of February, a few weeks before the French Revolution of 1848, the *Communist Manifesto* was issued. With the circulation of this historic document may be said to have been launched the modern socialist movement.

In the Europe of that day a century ago there were here and there only scattered handfuls of men and women working for a socialist society. Their numbers were temporarily augmented during the abortive political revolutions that shook the Continent in 1848, but, when the revolutionists were crushed and the reactionary regimes of the royal houses of Europe again became masters of the situation, the Communist League was dissolved: organized groups of socialists were hunted, arrested, and imprisoned, and whatever propaganda was undertaken had to be for the most part conducted underground. The working class during these days, as Engels later put it, "was reduced to a fight for political elbow-room, and to the position of extreme wing of the middle-class radicals. Whereever independent proletarian movements continued to show signs of life, they were ruthlessly hunted down."[1]

To many of the statesmen of that day, as well as to the disillusioned revolutionists, it looked as if the movement in behalf of a cooperative social order had been permanently crushed. But this movement had not died. After a decade of comparative inactivity, it began slowly to revive. In nation after nation it took root among the masses; and today, after a century of struggle, socialists and communists occupy the citadels of political power in many nations of the world. This fact is dramatically illustrated in every session of the United Nations. At the first U.N. General

[1] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Chicago, 1902?), Preface, p. 4.

Assembly meeting held in New York in the fall of 1946, for instance, the session was presided over by Henri-Paul Spaak, first president of the U.N. Assembly and socialist foreign minister, later premier, of Belgium. The meetings of the Assembly were kept in smooth running order by the United Nations' secretary-general, Trygve Lie, former minister of foreign affairs of the Labor government of Norway, a socialist government. The roll of outstanding delegates of the Assembly, moreover, included representatives of the Labour governments of the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand; of the communist controlled governments of the Soviet Republics and Yugoslavia; and of the coalition governments of Czechoslovakia, France, the Netherlands, Poland, India, Chile, in the cabinets of which socialists, communists, or both, were then prominently represented.

Prior to 1848 the dominant form of socialism among the comparatively small number of men and women who declared themselves adherents of the socialist school of thought had been that of utopian socialism. The utopians bitterly assailed the evils of private ownership of industry, buttressing their criticisms with the doctrines of equality, justice, and brotherhood as found in the teachings of the Old and New Testaments, of the Stoics, and of the latest humanists and rationalists. They urged various forms of community ownership of the means of production and distribution and dealt with the necessity of developing an environment under which the common man could realize his highest potentialities.

There was little conception in the writings of most of the utopians of the evolutionary and revolutionary forces at work in modern society. They failed to consider the historical mission of capitalism in increasing production and in developing the capacities of the working class to organize and assume increasing responsibilities in the life of the nation and the world. Many of them, moreover, visualized the change to a new social order coming about not as a result of economic, political, and psychological conflicts, but as a result of the discovery of the truth regarding the workings of "natural" or moral law, or else as a result of an appeal to the reason of mankind, to religious faith, or to the suggestive effects of successful experiments in communistic colonies.

Many utopians worked out in great detail a blueprint of the future society. Unfortunately the future patterns set forth by them differed considerably from each other. "And as each one's special kind of absolute truth" was "conditioned by his subjective understanding, his conditions of existence, the measure of his knowledge and his intellectual training, so the only solution possible in this conflict of absolute truths," as Friedrich Engels maintained, was that "they should grind each other down."[2]

[2] Friedrich Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific," *Karl Marx, Selected Works* (New York, n.d.), II, p. 155.

I. *The "Communist Manifesto"*

The *Communist Manifesto* thoroughly revolutionized socialist thought.[3] The character of the *Manifesto* was determined largely by the industrial revolution that had been going on since the middle of the previous century, with its economic dislocations, misery, and unrest; by the swift changes in status of the new working-class and capitalist groups; and by the writings of the utopians, the economists, and the philosophers of those days. Among philosophers, G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) with his dialectical logic influenced the thinking of Marx and Engels more than did any other.[4]

The *Manifesto* regards the history of civilization as a history of class struggles; among others, struggles between slaves and masters and between serfs and feudal lords. Under capitalism, the main conflict is one between the working class and the capitalist class. With the development of capitalism, Marx and Engels maintained, the industrial structure of capitalist countries concentrates increasingly into fewer and fewer hands, and an ever larger proportion of the smaller capitalists is hurled into the ranks of the nonowning working class. Thus the owning class, as the years advance, shrinks in numbers, while the few big capitalists become increasingly powerful.

On the other hand, the workers, with the development of capitalism, grow in numbers. Exploited by the owning class, they are able to purchase back with their wages only a part of the fruits of their labor. Be-

[3] A question has often been raised as to why the *Manifesto* was called "communist" rather than "socialist," since socialists have since that date regarded this important document as one of their classics. The explanation of Friedrich Engels is that in 1847 the word "socialist" was applied to those who were regarded either as adherents of various utopian schemes or as social reformers who urged mere palliatives which "professed to redress, without any danger to capital and profit, all sorts of social grievances." On the other hand, the term "communist" was then usually applied to those who "had proclaimed the necessity of a total social change." See Engels' Preface to the 1888 edition of *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (edition cited above), p. 7. For analysis of the *Communist Manifesto* and Marxian socialism see H. W. Laidler, *Social-Economic Movements* (New York, 1944), Pt. II.

[4] Hegel maintained that change took place through the struggle of antagonistic elements and the resolution of these contradictory elements into a synthesis. The *thing* or *being* against which the contradiction operated he called the positive or thesis. The antagonist element was the negative or antithesis. To Hegel the contradiction was "the source of all movements and life; only insofar as it contains a contradiction can anything have movement, power and effect." The continued operation of the negative, he maintained, led to the negative of negation or synthesis. Marx, a "Young Hegelian," was the first to apply the Hegelian dialectic to the social sciences. To him the positive or thesis was the system of private property; the negative or antithesis, the working class or proletariat. As a result of the conflict between the proletariat (the antithesis) and private property (the thesis), we may expect to see arise a new type of industrial society (the synthesis) under which the workers would organize a classless society, where the principal means of production and distribution were owned and operated by the community for the benefit not of one class, but of all society.

cause of this and other defects of the capitalist society, periodic depressions break out. The bourgeoisie overcomes each crisis by mass destruction of productive forces, by the conquests of new markets, and the more thorough exploitation of the old ones, that is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented. "The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself." Subjected to mass unemployment during these periodic depressions and to constant exploitation, the misery of the workers increases. Labor becomes more class conscious. It begins to organize to protect its interest first in local unions, and then in national and international unions and in labor parties.

In the political field, the workers seek increasingly to form a political party of their own. Such a party is continually upset as a result of competition between the workers themselves. "But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself."

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

"All previous historical movements," the *Manifesto* declares, "were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority. . . ."[5]

[5] This passage has figured prominently in the later controversy between socialists and Russian communists over the question of democracy versus dictatorship. In 1875, Marx described the political transition period from capitalism to socialism as a "dictatorship of the proletariat": see Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (New York, 1938), p. 18. Communists have quoted this passage as proof of the fact that Marx would approve their type of dictatorship if alive today. Socialists reply that Marx had in mind not a rule by a small minority—the inner circle of the communist party—but rule by the proletariat "as a movement of the immense majority," as the passage indicates. To strengthen their position, socialists also quote Marx as believing that "freedom consists in converting the state from an organ standing above society into one completely subordinated to it" (*Critique of the Gotha Programme*, cited above, p. 17). Opponents of dictatorship likewise refer to the statement of Engels in 1891 (in a monograph published in the *Neue Zeit*, xx) that "If anything is certain

The upshot of the class struggle in modern society, the *Manifesto* continues, is the conquest of the state apparatus by the proletariat. When that conquest is accomplished, "the proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class, and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible."

The *Manifesto* then enumerates some immediate measures which might seem insufficient in and of themselves but which promise to lead to more adequate measures of social change, such as the nationalization of credit, the imposition of heavy progressive income taxes, the abolition of property in land, and free education to all children in public schools.

In conclusion, the *Manifesto* declares that the communists refuse to conceal their aims. They insist that "their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution! The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!"

At the time when this *Manifesto* was issued, there was no powerful political movement of the workers in any country of the world. In most of Europe, the workers' right to suffrage was severely restricted, where not denied. In 1864, sixteen years after the issuance of the *Manifesto*, for instance, Gladstone asserted that still in Great Britain forty-nine fiftieths of the working class were excluded from the franchise.[6] Trade unions were weak and, in many places, illegal; the consumers' cooperative movement was still in its infancy; illiteracy among the working class was widespread and laws for the protection of labor were few and far between. Thus it was that many men and women who, like Marx and Engels, advocated a revolutionary change in the economic system, saw little or no chance for immediate change through peaceful and democratic channels. They believed that if the working class was to "emancipate itself" from the wage system in the immediate future, it must be through some violent upheaval and extralegal seizure of governmental machinery—a belief which (as will be seen) Marx and Engels later modified.

At the time that copies of the *Communist Manifesto* were distributed, largely in secret, by the revolutionaries of Europe, there were many, including Marx and Engels, who felt that the social revolution which

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it is that our party and the working class can triumph only under the form of the democratic republic." See Karl Kautsky, *Social Democracy versus Communism* (New York, 1946), p. 39.

[6] See J. H. Robinson and C. A. Beard, *Outlines of European History* (New York, 1912), Pt. II, p. 388. It was not until 1867 that the English workers were in possession of the franchise.

would sweep the working class into power was about to break out. Europe was seething with unrest. In France, the center of the revolutionary movement, the state under Prime Minister Guizot and King Louis Philippe had long been hopelessly corrupt. Political power was centered in the few. Taxes were high. The masses were desperately poor. Open signs of dissension were suppressed.

As a result of popular discontent, Guizot was forced to resign. No fundamental change, however, followed in the French economy, and bitter criticisms against the evils of the day continued. A huge protest meeting was staged before the Foreign Office in Paris on the night of February 23, 1848. Shots were fired and several people were killed. The next morning the entire city was in a state of insurrection. Louis Philippe abdicated, whereupon a republic was proclaimed. Other revolts broke out in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Bavaria, Saxony, Switzerland. Constitutional reforms were effected as a result of these conflicts, but soon reaction began to lift its head. In June, the Paris workers revolted against the new republican government which had begun to swing to the right. The rebels were defeated. Many were imprisoned; many transported without trial.

As for the Communist League, the members of its central committee, located in Cologne, were arrested by the Prussian police and imprisoned. The League was dissolved, and the reactionary governments of Europe began to breathe more easily again. Within a few years, however, forces which by many had been called communist, by others, socialist, began again to mobilize.

II. Socialism from the First International to World War I

In the early sixties when the United States was engaged in its tragic Civil War, at least two events took place which indicated that the socialist movement had not been destroyed by the ruthless opposition of the powers that be, but had been gaining new converts and laying the foundation of a future powerful socialist movement.

The first of these events was the birth of the First International in London in 1864. The second was the birth of the social democracy in Germany. In 1862, advanced members of the French working class decided to utilize their visit to the International Exhibition in London to enter into closer relations with the British trade union movement and the London labor leaders. Here they met George Odger, Robert Applegarth, and others who, while fighting for the reform of the British suffrage, had organized demonstrations in favor of the Northern states of the United States, of the Poles then in arms against the Russians, and of the Italians struggling to be free. After an exchange of addresses in 1863, it was decided to hold a conference in London to form an International Association of Working Men. The conference was held September 25-28, 1864,

and representatives of all workingmen's societies residing in London were asked to attend a public meeting in St. Martin's Hall on September 28.

Among the noted leaders accepting the invitation was Karl Marx, who had been hard at work in London on *Das Kapital* and other socialist classics since his banishment from Paris to the British capital in 1849. Marx was called upon to deliver the inaugural address. In this he acknowledged the unprecedented growth in trade and commerce in Great Britain from the forties, when the *Communist Manifesto* was issued, until 1864; but he maintained that during these years the wealthy were growing richer while the misery of the poor was increasing. During this period, however, the common people had not been inactive. The Chartist movement had been busily at work in the legislative chambers and had, after a thirty-year fight, succeeded in getting the ten-hour day on the statute books. This was "not only a great practical success," but "the victory of a principle," for "it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class." It had also contributed "immense physical, moral, and intellectual benefits . . . to the factory operatives." Cooperative factories, moreover, Marx declared, had developed during the fifties and early sixties "by the unassisted efforts of a few bold 'hands.'" "By deed instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labour need not be monopolized as a means of dominion over, and of extortion against, the labouring man himself; and that, like slave labour, like serf labour, hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, ready mind, and a joyous heart." Nevertheless, continued Marx, "if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen," such cooperatives "will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. . . . Cooperative labour ought to be developed to national dimensions, and, consequently, to be fostered by national means. . . .

"To conquer political power has become the great duty of the working classes. . . . One element of success they possess—numbers; but numbers weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge."[7] The fight for a foreign policy based on the morals and justice which should govern the relations of private individuals is also a part of the struggle for the emancipation of the workers.

[7] L. E. Mins, ed., *Founding of the First International, a Documentary Record* (New York, 1937), pp. 35-37. See also Karl Marx, *Address and Provisional Rules of the Working Men's International Association* (London, 1934).

In conclusion Marx, whose address possessed a strong Chartist flavor, laid down the rules for the International. These rules included the following:

"That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rules;

"That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopolizer of the means of labour, that is the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence;

"That the economic emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;

"That the emancipation of labour is neither a local nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries."[8]

To arrange for an international organization of labor and to serve as a vital and guiding center of working activities was, Marx maintained, the task of the I.W.M.A. (International Working Men's Association). Marx advised the workers to organize independent labor parties, to demand social reform and factory legislation, to oppose all warlike diplomacy, and to carry on a vigorous class struggle until they had become the possessors of political power and had nationalized the means of production.

The I.W.M.A. held six congresses in London and on the Continent from 1865 to 1872. The British trade unionists, who, during the first few years, were left in control of the association, endeavored to use it as a means of extending the benefits of British trade unionism to the Continent. Their attention, however, was soon turned to home affairs, and following the second Reform Act of 1867, which enfranchised large numbers of the British people, the English trade unionists left the leadership increasingly to Marx and Engels. The affiliation of many of the continental organizations turned the International congresses into arenas for the bitter discussion of revolutionary tactics. Marx and his followers urged, for the most part, parliamentary action to bring about the transformation to a socialist society, while the French, Italian, Spanish, and Russian representatives advocated either revolutionary economic action or secret conspiracies with a view to insurrection.

While differing in tactics from Proudhon, Bakunin, and their followers, Marx for some years looked upon the results of the revolutionary agitations of those days with high hopes. "Things are moving," he wrote to Engels

[8] Mins, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

in 1867 with his usual optimism; "And in the next revolution, which is perhaps nearer than it appears, we (i.e., you and I) have this powerful engine in our hands."[9]

When the Paris Commune was proclaimed on March 18, 1871, following a revolt of Paris workers against the National Assembly, many members of the International felt that the social revolution in Europe was on the way. The Commune, however, was overthrown seven weeks after its formation, and with the field for practical action cut off, sectarian and revolutionary conspiracies within the International found a fertile field.

In 1872, a congress of the I.W.M.A. was held at The Hague. A battle royal took place at this congress between Marx and Mikhail Bakunin, a leader of the anarchists. Marx vigorously opposed the proposals of Bakunin for the organization of workers in secret conspiratorial groups. He also took occasion at this historic gathering to tell the assembled delegates that Engels and he did not deny that "there are countries like England and America, and, if I understood your arrangements better, I might even add Holland, where the worker may attain his object by peaceful means." "But," he added, "not in all countries is this the case."[10]

Marx urged that the International be saved from falling into the hands of the anarchists, and, in order to prevent this from taking place, he suggested the transfer of the Association to the United States. The majority followed his advice, and the headquarters were removed to New York, where, after a comparatively inactive existence, the First International died in 1878. Marx, in the meanwhile, went back to his task of finishing *Das Kapital.*

The German socialist movement had its beginnings in the revolutionary days of 1848. "Socialism," writes W. H. Dawson, "emerged from the convulsions and the ferment of these years as a fresh goal of popular aspirations. It was socialism which remained after the earthquake, the tempest, and the fire had passed away."[11]

The fifties saw the birth and later the restriction and suppression of many German workingmen's organizations. They likewise witnessed the growth of a moderate cooperative movement of Schulze-Delitzsch, which aimed to inculcate in the working class the doctrine of "self-help" as opposed to "state help." This movement organized cooperatives to aid merchants to obtain raw materials, and also developed loan associations.

[9] *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; Correspondence, 1846-1895; a Selection with Commentary and Notes* (New York, n.d.), p. 227. Italics omitted.

[10] See Karl Kautsky, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (tr. by H. J. Stenning; Manchester, Eng., [1919]), pp. 9-10.

[11] W. H. Dawson, *German Socialism and Ferdinand Lassalle* (London, 1891), p. 33. See also Laidler, *op.cit.*, pp. 226-27.

It appealed primarily to small tradesmen and members of the artisan class, and had little effect on the workers.

In the early sixties, a Workingmen's Association of the city of Leipzig appointed a committee to see what could be done to establish similar groups throughout Germany. A meeting was held in Berlin in October 1862. Those present represented diverse opinions regarding the course of action they should follow. Some favored the adoption of a nonpolitical platform. Others were for making their proposed association an appendage of the Progressist Party, formed in 1861 to represent a more liberal point of view than did the Conservatives and National-Liberals of that day.

In the midst of their confused discussion, Ferdinand Lassalle, brilliant orator, scholar, and lawyer, addressed the artisan association. The date of his address—April 12, 1862—has at times been referred to as "the birthday of the German social democracy."

Lassalle declared that the true function of the state was "to help in the development of the human race toward freedom." Such a state, however, could be attained only through the rule of the majority based on universal and equal suffrage. The workers, thanks to the growth of the factory system, were *potentially* the most powerful force in the state. The next necessary step was to make them *legally* the most powerful force by instituting a complete democracy. The next revolution would place the workingmen in power and would constitute a victory for all mankind.

This address made a deep impression on the delegates, while the authorities, accusing Lassalle of "exciting the non-possessing classes to hatred and contempt of the possessing classes," caused his arrest.

The following year, on March 31, 1863, Lassalle was invited by the Leipzig Workingmen's Association, followers of Schulze-Delitzsch, to appear before it. In his address he vigorously criticized the credit unions and cooperative societies proposed by Schulze-Delitzsch as mere palliatives. He enunciated the "iron law of wages"; urged that the workers organize and operate their own productive organizations, with the state advancing the capital; and, as a means of promoting such a program, declared that the working class must organize an independent political party in order to achieve political rights.

The majority of the committee of the workers' association adopted Lassalle's viewpoint; consequently, in late May 1863, Lassalle found himself at the head of the democratic movement and formed the Universal German Workingmen's Association. This Association was one of the forerunners of the Social Democratic Workingmen's Party, formed in 1869.

During the next few years a vigorous controversy was waged within the German social democracy between the Lassalleans (Lassalle himself had been killed in a duel in 1864) and the Marxists over state aided productive enterprises and other immediate demands, and over the character of labor party control. The Lassalleans favored a somewhat dictatorial form of

party organization; Bebel and Liebknecht, their leading opponents, urged a democratic form.

It was not until the Erfurt Congress in 1891 that the party adopted a platform thoroughly Marxian in conception. In the meanwhile, the party had been bitterly opposed by Bismarck, then Chancellor of Germany, who instigated legislation in the late seventies which placed a ban on all socialist meetings and socialist distribution of literature.[12]

From its inception in the sixties to World War I—even during the years of the antisocialist legislation (1878-1890)—the German Social Democratic Party was regarded as the leading socialist political movement in Europe. During these years it forced Germany to adopt much social legislation, was responsible for a large amount of municipalization of industry, and was a potent force in the trade union and cooperative movements, as well as in many of the cultural movements of Germany. By 1914, the German social democracy had registered a popular vote of four and a half million and had 110 representatives in the Reichstag.[13]

Other powerful Labor, Socialist, and Social Democratic parties had also developed, before World War I, despite tremendous obstacles. The French socialists, who began to mobilize their strength in the seventies of the last century under the leadership of Guesde, were by 1914 represented in the Chamber of Deputies by 103 members, while the British Labour Party, born in 1900, was represented in the House of Commons just before the outbreak of World War I by forty-two members. Other nations had influential Labor and Socialist parties with considerable parliamentary strength. This representation in European countries in 1914 was as follows:

Country	*Socialist Deputies*	*Country*	*Socialist Deputies*
Austria-Hungary	82	Holland	16
Belgium	39	Italy	80[14]
Denmark	32	Finland	90
Germany	110	Norway	23
France	103	Russia	14[15]
Great Britain	42	Sweden	73

[12] This ban was continued until 1890. Bismarck sought to stop the development of the German socialist movement both by the passage of social insurance and other social reform legislation and by suppression. However, by 1890 the votes of the social democracy were triple those of 1878, and Bismarck realized that the antisocialist legislation had failed.

[13] At first, as Paul Kampffmeyer brings out in *Changes in the Theory and Tactics of the Social Democracy* (Chicago, 1908), German social democrats looked upon the election of their representatives to the Reichstag as useful primarily for propaganda purposes. Later they became convinced that socialist members of legislatures should do all they could to put legislation favorable to the masses on the statute books.

[14] Seventy-two socialists were elected on the Socialist and Socialist Reformist party tickets. Others were independent socialists.

[15] There were also ten Labor members of the Duma.

In 1889, several of the socialist parties formed the Second International, which lost its effectiveness with the outbreak of war in 1914 and with the foundation, in 1919, of the Third International.

III. The General Socialist Viewpoint and the Theoretical Bases of Marxism

From the organization of the socialist parties in Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century to the outbreak of World War I, there were many schools of thought in the socialist movement and various differences of opinion within each school on socialist theory and practice. All branches of the modern socialist movement (which may be said to date from the issuance of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848) were, however, fundamentally agreed on several points.

Socialists of various schools were united in the belief that democratic institutions which were gradually being established in the field of political relationships should be extended to the economic sphere. They maintained that in the early days of capitalism it was possible for large numbers of workers with a small amount of capital to become the owners of the primitive and inexpensive tools with which they worked, and of the small stores and businesses prevalent in those days. As a result, the artisan was usually able, after some years of apprenticeship, to become the master in his own economic house and to enjoy a large degree of economic democracy. With the development, however, of the great corporations, trusts, and combines, ownership and management of industry tended to concentrate in fewer hands. Production in general ceased to be of an individual nature and became collective. Each worker in the factory was responsible for the production of only a small part of the manufactured article. The average worker had no share in the ownership of the factory in which he worked: he was a "hired hand" and was employed as long as he produced a profit for his employer. Economic democracy for him had disappeared.

It was impossible, socialists declared, to turn back the wheels of economic progress and return to small individualistic production in order to restore the individualistic type of democracy formerly enjoyed. Further, the product of industry in the days of hand power was infinitely less than in an age of machinery, steam, electricity, and mass production. Only under collective production could poverty be abolished. Thus, in an age when man had advanced from individual production to collective production, the only way to assure democracy in industry for the great mass of the population was to go forward from individual to collective ownership of the means of production and distribution. Thus mankind would be able to supplement economic democracy with political democracy, and,

by doing so, strengthen the forces of democracy in every aspect of the common life.

In the second place, socialists during those days were united in the belief that, to have maximum meaning to modern man, the great ethical ideals of justice, of equality, and of brotherhood had to be applied to the workaday economic life of the community.

They also believed that the conduct of human beings was greatly influenced by the conditions under which they and their fellows worked and that an improvement in economic and social environment would be accompanied, all else being equal, by the development of a finer type of human being.

Socialists were firmly convinced that society was not static but dynamic; that society had in the past evolved from one economic system to another; and that, as Marx had pointed out, the logical next step in economic evolution in the case of a developed capitalist system was an advance from private to social ownership of the principal industries of a country. There were serious evils, they maintained, in capitalistic society—evils of unjust inequality of wealth and income, of industrial and human waste, of concentration of power over the economic, political, and cultural life of the community, and of great and increasing insecurity, among others. These evils, socialists insisted, could not be abolished short of an advance to a cooperative social order.

Lastly, the European socialists of that period were likewise agreed that the transfer from private to social ownership would be brought about not as a result of the conscious efforts of the present owners of industry, but as a result of the combined economic, political, and educational activities of the plain people in countries whose economies were ripe for fundamental social change.

The three theoretical cornerstones of Marxian socialism, especially in the early days, have been the materialistic conception of history, the theory of surplus value, and the doctrine of the class struggle. Of these the materialistic conception of history (or the economic interpretation of history, as some have called it), and the class-struggle theory, formed the sociological basis of Marxism, while the theory of surplus value may be regarded as a part of the Marxian economic theory.

As part of their sociological critique, Marx and Engels contended that social changes are determined primarily by economic and material forces and the reaction of these forces on the conduct of men; and that these forces under the capitalist system bring into play a struggle between the owners of industry and the workers which can only result in the dominance of the workers, and, as has been brought out before, in the elimination of all classes and all class struggles.

Friedrich Engels in 1888 gave a classic explanation of the materialistic conception of history when he wrote:

". . . in every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization 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 forms a series of evolution in which, now-a-days, 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 for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class-distinction and class struggles."[16]

Marx and Engels never contended that the material forces were the only forces influencing social change, although they were the dominant ones. "According to the materialistic conception of history," wrote Engels in the latter part of his life, "the factor which is *in the last instance* [my italics] decisive in history is the production and reproduction of actual life. More than that neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. But when anyone distorts this so as to read that the economic factor is the sole element, he converts the statement into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase. The economic condition is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—the political forms of the class contests . . . the legal forms, and also all the reflexes of these actual contests in the brains of the participants, the political, legal, philosophical theories, the religious views . . . all these exert an influence on the historical struggles, and in many instances determine their form."[17]

Assuming the truth of the materialistic conception of history and the conception of class conflict, Marx and Engels maintained that their application to the economic and social forces brought into play by the capitalist system of production and distribution indicated the virtual inevitability of socialism as the next step in industrial development.

In the field of *economic* theory, Marx and Engels took over the theory of value that had, during the previous century and a half, been gradually evolved by numerous French and English economists. This theory in brief was that the value of a commodity, that is to say, the quantity of any other commodity for which it will exchange, depends on the relative

[16] Friedrich Engels, Preface to the 1888 edition, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (edition cited above), p. 8.

[17] E. R. A. Seligman, *Economic Interpretation of History* (New York, 1907), pp. 142-43; *Sozialistische Akademiker*, Oct. 15, 1895, p. 251.