

# Marx

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Winter, 2011 / Philosophy 151

## **Hegel's Followers**

- A number of early followers of Hegel are known as the “young Hegelians.”
- The leaders of the group included Bruno Bauer and David Strauss.
- In their youth, Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels were associates.
- The young Hegelians were “leftist” radical opponents of despotic governments upheld by religious institutions.
- A counter-movement was that of the conservative “right” Hegelians.
- The right Hegelians held the power in the universities and kept the left Hegelians out.
- They considered Hegel's work to be the culmination of philosophy and existing institutions to be the culmination of society.

## **The German Critique of Religion**

- In Hegel's system, the figure of Jesus represents the unity of the universal and the particular in a single individual.
- Rationalist scholars claimed that Jesus was only an inspirational figure.
- Schleiermacher held that the role of Jesus was to introduce a “God-consciousness” to humanity.
- Strauss maintained that the unity of God and man is to be found not in the single individual Jesus, but in the life of the human species.
- In *The Essence of Christianity* (1841), the young Feuerbach argued that God is the projection of human powers onto a fictitious objective being.

### **Feuerbach's Critique of Religion**

- Human beings are in essence conscious beings.
- A being can be conscious only if its way of being (its "species") is an object of its thought.
- The notions that humans have of themselves are identical to their notions of God.
- Initially, this fact is hidden, and the self-notion of humanity is sought in another being.
- This accounts for the anthropomorphic attributes assigned to God, as well as for the parade of spiritual beings such as devils, goblins, witches, ghosts, and angels.
- The exaltation of God implies a degradation of human beings.
- Religious progress is made when humans reclaim for themselves the properties they had projected onto God.

### **Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach"**

- In 1888, Engels appended to one of his works a series of eleven theses on Feuerbach written by Marx in 1845.
- Feuerbach called the piece "the brilliant germ of a new world view."
- Marx credited Feuerbach for recognizing that religious belief has a secular origin.
- But Feuerbach did not recognize that the separation of the religious from the secular is based on "contradiction" in the secular basis.
- The contradiction in secular society reveals the need for revolutionary action to resolve it, which would do away with any need for religion.
- "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is, to *change* it" (Thesis 11).

### **Marx's "Economic and Political Manuscripts"**

- In 1844, Marx wrote three unpublished papers that are now known as the "Economic and Political Manuscripts."
- These manuscripts, along with others written during the same period, are now known as the writings of the "young Marx" and are said to express Marx's "humanism."
- The first two manuscripts are entitled "Alienated Labor," and "Private Property and Communism."

- The third of the manuscripts was a “Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy in General.”
- This manuscript contains two elements:
  - An exposition and criticism of Hegel’s dialectical method, particularly as used in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the *Logic*.
  - The relation of the dialectical method to the modern philosophy, primarily that of Feuerbach, that is critical of Hegel.

### **The Fate of Hegel’s Dialectic**

- The early critics of Hegel were not critical of the dialectical method and remained entrapped in it.
  - Some of their expressions “not only verbally agree with the Hegelian perspective but reproduce it literally.”
- Later, Feuerbach “destroyed the inner principle of the old dialectic and philosophy.”
- But the early critics, though proclaiming their superiority over Hegel, still did not come to grips with Hegel’s dialectic, or with Feuerbach’s.
- Feuerbach achieved three great things.
  - Proved that philosophy has served religion and as such must be condemned for alienating man from himself.
  - Made interpersonal relations the basis of philosophy, rendering it materialistic and scientific.
  - Opposed the Hegelian “negation of the negation” in favor of working out from the certainty of the senses.

### **Feuerbach’s Critique of Hegel’s Dialectic**

- Feuerbach explained Hegel’s dialectic, and hence cleared the way for positive philosophy.
- Hegel’s dialectic contains three moves.
  - Hegel begins with the universal, infinite, abstract (in popular terms, traditional religion).
  - He then transcends this alienated other and posits the particular, finite, perceptible.
  - But the posited particular, finite, perceptible is itself transcended, and the universal, infinite, abstract is re-established (in popular terms, religion is re-established).

- Hegel thought that only the negation of the negation is the positive.
- But Feuerbach saw the negation of the negation to be a mere contradiction.
  - The last step is the re-affirmation of the first step, which itself is in opposition to the second step.
- As a result, the last step is not proved, because the second step has not been truly overcome.

### **The Price of Absolute Knowledge**

- Marx notes that Hegel's system begins with logic and ends with absolute knowledge.
- Absolute knowledge is the knowledge of a super-human, abstract mind knowing itself.
- This knowledge is that of the philosopher, and it concerns only the mind itself, excluding nature and actual human beings.
- Nature is something external to abstractly thinking mind.
- When mind finds itself in absolute knowledge, what it finds is a merely logical existence, rather than the existence of actual human beings living in the natural world.
- This can be seen in the *Phenomenology*, where consciousness is opposed only to an abstractly conceived other, and not real alienation.

### **The Correct Use of Dialectic**

- Although Hegel's use of the dialectic was defective, the dialectical method itself is necessary for the understanding of human existence.
  - “All the elements of criticism are implicit in [the *Phenomenology*], already *prepared* and *elaborated* in a manner far surpassing the Hegelian standpoint.”
- Even though oppositions such as that of master and servant are conceived abstractly by Hegel, they are real relations through which humans are alienated from one another.
- Hegel prepared the ground for understanding human nature.
  - The self-development of man is a process.
  - In the processes, man loses himself as a *species-being* in his alienation from his fellow man.
  - Man overcomes this alienation through collective *work*, which uses man's *species-powers*.

### **Absolute Knowledge**

- The *Phenomenology* describes the ways in which consciousness appears.
- Since it presents abstract forms of consciousness, it presents only the way in which actual alienation appears.
- It culminates in “absolute knowledge,” in which self-consciousness overcomes its alienation and recognizes its “other” as itself.
- The alien “other” is itself merely a way in which self-consciousness thinks an other, and as such it is a mere thought-entity.
- Thus, in describing absolute knowledge, Hegel can claim to have incorporated all the thought-entities of the previous philosophers into his absolute self-knower.
- But his results apply only to the mental labor of the philosopher, and not to the labor of those whose object is the extra-mental world.

### **Things and Thinghood**

- Self-consciousness is said to “externalize” itself insofar as it thinks of something as other than itself.
- The externalized “other” can be called a “thing.”
- But from the standpoint of phenomenology, there is only “thinghood,” or the thing as an object of consciousness.
- Thinghood is “a mere artifice *established* by self consciousness,” which can easily overcome its “otherness.”
- The obvious description of what is “other” to self-consciousness (which Marx identifies with man) is “*real, natural objects.*”
- A human being interacts with objects because the human being *is* a natural object just like the objects it works upon.

### **Naturalism**

- Marx adopts the standpoint of naturalism, which he distinguishes from idealism and materialism.
  - Not idealistic because views thought as a product of nature, rather than nature as a product of thought.
  - Not materialistic, because natural objects are objects for one another, rather than being independent entities.
- Man as a natural being interacts with other natural beings in two ways.

- As an active being with vital powers that are capable of transforming other natural objects.
- As a passive being that suffers the activity of other natural objects.
- Man is a special kind of natural object who takes himself as an object, and hence is a species-being.
- The natural history of the species-being *man* consists of the transformations he undergoes in developing himself as species-being.

### **Hegel's Transformations**

- Hegel recognizes transformation, such as the following ascending series of social forms.
  - Private right.
  - Morality.
  - The family.
  - Civil society.
  - The state.
  - World history.
- But these are only ideal, and not real, transformations.
  - The thought of private right become the thought of morality.
- The thought-entities are confused with the real thing.
- So it is wrongly believed that actual transformations have been achieved.
- And it is believed by those who conform to these thought-entities that their way of living has been justified.

### **Real Transformations**

- A positive feature of Hegel's dialectic is his (abstract) recognition of transcendence of alienation and the consequent creation of new ways of thinking and acting.
- Marx recognized two kinds of transcendence as being actual developments.
  - Religion is transcended by atheism, giving rise to theoretical humanism.
  - Private property is transcended by communism, giving rise to practical humanism.
- The negative moments, atheism and communism, are quite real.
- The new ways of thinking and acting are not simply returns to the original ways, which are really abolished.
- Theoretical and practical humanism are consistent with atheism and communism, but not with religion and private property.

### **Hegel's Inversion**

- The end-product of Hegel's dialectic is absolute spirit.
  - Natural man is only a predicate or symbol of the concealed absolute spirit.
- The relation of man as predicate to absolute spirit as subject is an inversion of the actual relation.
- Pure forms of thought are predicates, and actual living humans are subjects.
- The relation between thought and nature is likewise inverted.
- In an utterly arbitrary way, Hegel's "absolute idea" is said to "decide" to let an other (nature) proceed from itself.
- This transition can be explained only by the *boredom* of thought having only itself as its content.
- But what is said to be known in this way is *abstract nature*, or nature as it is merely for thought, and "nature as nature" is nothing.

### ***The German Ideology***

- In 1846, Marx and Engels published *The German Ideology*.
  - Volume I was a critique of modern German philosophy in the person of the "Young Hegelians" Feuerbach, Bauer and Stirner.
  - Volume II criticized German socialist movements of the time.
- The point of departure of the "young heroes" was "the putrescence of the absolute spirit."
- This gave rise to various new philosophical possibilities, which were trumpeted for their dangerous and revolutionary character.
- However, far from being revolutionaries, these philosophers merely reflected the values of the German middle class.
- The wretched social conditions in Germany were in no way improved as the result of their writings.

### **Ideology**

- Ideology consists in systems of ideas that humans have produced from their consciousness alone.
  - Morality.
  - Religion.
  - Metaphysics.

- The starting point of ideology is in the *conception* of what a human being is.
- This conception is supposed to be independent of the material conditions of human beings.
- Those material conditions are then supposed to be explained through this conception.
- Ideology's view of the human inverts reality.
- Ideology's conception of man is itself a product of the material conditions of the human being.

### **Ideology and the Young Hegelians**

- The critics of Hegel did not escape his ideological standpoint.
- Each merely emphasized one side of Hegel's system at the expense of another side of it.
- Whereas Hegel claimed that when something is reduced to a logical category it is understood, the Young Hegelians criticized things by claiming them to be religious in nature.
- Thus, they held that the problems of mankind are due to the influence of religious ideas on human life.
- Since the ideas are the products of consciousness, changes in reality could be brought about by changes in consciousness.
- But all that results from the change in consciousness is the re-interpretation of reality.

### **Philosophy without Ideology**

- The correct starting-point of philosophy is the real activities of real human beings in real material conditions.
- There are two kinds of conditions.
  - Pre-existing natural conditions (physical organization of humans and their relation to nature).
  - Conditions produced by human activity.
- The ability to produce the means of their own subsistence is the basis of human development.
- This ability distinguishes us from animals.
- The manner in which people produce their means of subsistence determines their mode of life.
- Thus, the nature of individuals is dependent on the material conditions which determine the way in which they produce what they do.



### **Production and the Division of Labor**

- There are three factors whose development is brought about by the productive activity of human beings.
  - Development of productive forces.
  - Division of labor.
  - Social relations among people.
- The way these factors are developed determines the internal structure of a nation.
- Every new productive force brings about a new division of labor.
- So, the way in which labor is divided is the measure of the productive force of a nation, and hence of its structure.
- The division of labor are forms of ownership of the material, instruments and products of labor.

### **Early Types of Ownership**

- The initial phase of ownership is tribal, where the means of subsistence are hunting, gathering and agriculture
  - The division of labor is only a natural extension of the division of labor in a family.
- The second phase is ownership occurs when cities arise from the unification of tribes.
- There is communal ownership, but with private property beginning to exist.
- As private property becomes more widespread, communal ownership decays.
- There develop antagonisms between town and country, and within the town, between industry and commerce.
- There is also fully established the class relation between citizens and slaves.

### **A Case Study**

- The thesis here is that the forms of ownership determine the internal structure of a nation.
- It might be thought that the structure of nations is determined violently through conquest.
  - Rome was conquered by the barbarians.
- In fact, a nation becomes ripe for conquest as a consequence of the way its labor is divided.

- For the barbarians, war was a form of life, and with population expansion, there was a drive for more land.
- In Italy, land was concentrated in a few hands, and the plebeian class between the landowners and slaves was a mere proletarian rabble.
- These concentration of wealth and elimination of the middle class were to be repeated in modern industrialized nations.

### **The Feudal System**

- The barbarian invasions had thinned out the population and reduced the means of production, which in turn gave rise to new ways of life.
- In the countryside, there is a hierarchical class of nobility ruling communally over serfs.
- In the towns, there are small craftsmen with limited capital with apprentices working under them.
- There was no division of labor of any importance.
- It was necessary that the towns and land-holdings be united into feudal kingdoms.
- Due to the hierarchical organization of the nobility, the form of government was monarchy.
- This and the other two forms of organization are explained by considering the real activities of real people in real material conditions.

### **Further Division of Labor**

- The end of the feudal period is brought about by the rise of the town, with its new productive forces.
  - Industrial activity produces goods.
  - Commercial activity trades the goods.
- Although initially combined, the two kinds of forces become separated, so that a new, more complex, division of labor appears.
- This kind of division exists not only within nations, but between them.
- Some nations remain agricultural, some are “producing” nations, and others “trading” nations.

### **The Origin of Political and Social Structures**

- Definite political and social structures are the result of the ways in which production takes place.
- The investigation of the origins of political and social structures must take place empirically.
- It must be based on the real activities of human beings, and not their imagined activities.

### **The Production of Ideas**

- Ideas, conceptions and consciousness are initially woven into the fabric of material production.
- They exist as practical means toward the ends of producing needed goods.
- A people mentally produces its own:
  - Politics,
  - Law,
  - Morality,
  - Religion,
  - Philosophy.
- This productive consciousness is not autonomous but it the product of historical life-processes.
- Even ideology, which takes these mental products as autonomous, is the a production of historical forces.

### **The Inversion**

- German philosophy begins with the ideal, the heavenly, and descends to the real, the earthly.
- Marx begins with the real, the earthly, and ascends to the idea, the heavenly.
- German philosophy begins with what men say, imagine, conceive, narrate.
- It ends with men in the flesh.
- Marx begins with real, active men and shows how their ideology arises from them.
- The true beginning is the empirically verifiable, including the actions of the brain.
- Ideas are themselves phantoms of the brain.

### **False Independence**

- German philosophy studies the development of morality, religion, and metaphysics, as well as all other ideology.
- But these do not develop in themselves, as German philosophy would have it.
- There is only the development of men.
- Consciousness does not determine life.
  - Consciousness is taken to *be* the living individual.
- Life determines consciousness.
  - The living individual is taken to *have* consciousness.

### **Empiricism and Idealism**

- The realistic treatment of the human being begins with real premises.
- It starts with men in empirically perceptible process of development in definite conditions.
- It views history not as a collection of dead facts.
- Other approaches miss the living facts.
  - Empiricism attempts to extract abstract concepts from historical events so as to classify them.
  - Idealism operates with the imagined activity of imagined subjects.
- Real, positive science begins with real life, where speculation ends.
  - Men are represented in their practical activities.
  - The practical process of man's development is charted.

### **Real, Positive Science**

- Real knowledge supplants empty talk about consciousness.
- Philosophy is no longer an “independent branch of activity.”
- At best, the place of philosophy is taken by a summing up of abstractions from the real development of men.
- The only value of abstractions is to facilitate the arrangement of historical material.
- There is no schema for neatly trimming the epochs of history.
- The practice of this new science engenders its own problems.
- these problems are alleviated only by the real study of real men.

### **Alienated Labor**

- The first of the three “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844” is an unfinished paper entitled “Alienated Labor.”
- The thesis of the manuscript is that “private property” is the consequence of “externalized labor.”
- The starting-point of the investigation are the presuppositions of political economy (the study of the inter-relation of economic and political institutions).
- The primary fact is that society is divided into two classes:
  - Owners of property,
  - Workers without property.
- The misery of the workers is proportional to their productivity: the more productive, the more miserable.
- These facts must be explained, but political economy is not able to provide an explanation through its categories of greed and competition.

### **The Fruit of Labor**

- Labor produces commodities, but it also produces itself as a commodity.
- In the production of commodities, the greater the volume of production, the cheaper the product becomes.
- Analogously, the greater the productivity of the worker, the lesser the value of the worker becomes.
- There are three relations in which the worker stands to the product.
  - Realization: labor produces a product.
  - Objectification: the efforts of the worker are embodied in an object.
  - Appropriation: the object is converted from its natural state and placed into human service.
- These relations will be the basis of the explanations of labor given in the manuscript.

### **The Alienation of Labor**

- Political economy shows that the apparently positive outcome of labor in fact diminishes the worker.
- The more products are realized, the more the worker is driven toward starvation.
- The production of objects leads to the loss of objects, and even work itself, by the worker.

- The appropriation of objects does not benefit the worker, but on the contrary makes the worker a slave to the object, and ultimately to the capital that pays for his labor.
- In this way, the labor of the worker produces an object that is alien and external to the worker.
- The labor of the worker is thus “alienated.”

### **The Externalization of the Worker**

- The product of the labor of the worker is related to him as an alien object.
- The more the worker labors, the greater the power of the alien object.
- As a consequence, the inner world of the worker becomes proportionally impoverished.
- This is the same phenomenon as in the case of religion, as was pointed out by Feuerbach (who is not cited here).
  - “The more man attributes to God, the less he retains in himself.”
- The life of the worker has become externalized in his product.
- The object itself exists externally to him as a hostile, alien, independent power.

### **Labor and Nature**

- Nature, the sensuous material world, supplies objects for labor and also provides the means of the physical subsistence of the worker.
- By appropriating the external world through his labor, the worker deprives himself of the external world.
  - The raw materials of nature are used up in being converted to objects.
  - The depleted nature is less capable of supporting physical subsistence.
- The worker becomes slave to the objects on which he labors.
  - The object is necessary in order for the worker to have labor at all.
  - By providing labor to the worker, the object provides to the worker his means of subsistence.
- As nature becomes depleted, the condition of the worker becomes worse.

### **The Source of the Worker's Plight**

- Political economy reveals the inverse relation between the richness of the products of labor and the poverty of the life of the worker.
  - For example, the more objects that are produced by the worker, the less the worker has to consume.
- But by taking the point of view of the wealthy, political economy does not recognize the basis of these inversions in the relation between the worker and the objects of production.
- It overlooks the fact that the relation of the worker to the objects of labor is not the only factor in alienation or externalization.
- There is also externalization in the process of production.
- The externalization in the object is a by-product of the externalization in the process of production.

### **How the Worker's Labor is Externalized**

- One cause of the alien, external character of the labor of the worker is that the work is not part of his nature.
  - The worker would rather be at home tending to his own concerns.
- Thus, the labor of the worker is coerced, forced labor.
  - It does not satisfy the needs of the worker, but only the needs of others.
  - If it is not necessary for the worker's subsistence, it is avoided like the plague.
- In forced labor, the person acts for the benefit of another person, just as when one is possessed by religious feeling.
- The worker feels that he is acting freely only when attending to animal functions such as eating, drinking, and procreating, or at most, tending to his home and wardrobe.
- As opposed to the alienation of the object, the alienation of working is self-alienation.

### **The Reversal of Man's Species-Being**

- In part, the life of an individual is the life of the species.
- The whole of nature is the inorganic body of man, the arena of his free activity.
  - It is the direct means whereby life is possible.

– It is the “matter, object, and instrument of his life activity.”

- The conscious life-activity of man is the species-being of man.
- In making over nature, man finds himself in it.
- But in alienated labor, the relation is reversed, and life-activity becomes only a means for man’s existence.
- In this way, man is alienated from his own nature as species-being.
- The alienation of man from his species-being is “realized and expressed” by the alienation of one person from another.

### **The Alien Power**

- If the labor of the worker is an alien and forced activity, it is for the benefit of beings other than the worker himself.
- Perhaps in ancient societies labor was directed toward their gods, but gods alone are not those who enslave the workers.
- Work is not in the service of nature, since nature is transformed through work in a way which would seem to benefit the worker.
- The only remaining candidate for the beneficiary of labor is men other than the worker.
  - The torment of the worker results in the enjoyment of the alien master.
- The alienation of the worker’s activity then is due to the fact that it is performed in the service of someone else.

### **Private Property**

- In alienated labor, the object produced by the worker is not his own, but rather is owned by the lord of labor (the capitalist).
- The relation of the worker to labor produces the relation of the lord of labor to labor.
- The relation of the objects that are produced by the worker to the lord of labor is that of being *private property*.
- Although it appears to be the cause, private property is rather the consequence of externalized labor.
  - Analogously, God is not the creator of minds, but is instead the creation of minds.
- Private property is the product of externalized labor.
- But it is also the means by which labor is externalized, or the realization of the externalization of labor.



### **Wages and Private Property**

- Private property seems to be in conflict with labor, and Proudhon “decided” the conflict in favor of labor.
- But the conflict is really between *alienated* labor and private property.
- If higher wages were required, the result would not be the enhanced freedom and dignity of the worker, but only a higher slave-wage.
- Proudhon advocated equality of wages as the way to eliminate private property in favor of labor.
- But wages are a product of alienated labor, and no manipulation of wages eliminates the alienation, and so no manipulation of wages abolishes private property.
- The emancipation of workers from private property would be the emancipation of human servitude in general.

### **An Unfinished Project**

- The concept of private property has emerged from the analysis of the concept of alienated labor.
- The other concepts of political economy can be developed from the concepts of private property and alienated labor.
  - Barter.
  - Competition.
  - Capital.
  - Money.
- This development is not carried out in the manuscript, which ends abruptly in the course of giving a general description of the nature of private property.
- Another unfinished piece of business is to show the mechanism whereby the labor of man becomes externalized.

### **“Manifesto of the Communist Party”**

- The “Manifesto of the Communist Party” (also known as the “Communist Manifesto”) was written in 1848 as the outcome of an assembly of communists from various nationalities.
- Its goal is to debunk the claim that communism is “a spectre [that] is haunting Europe.”
- Many diverse forces have united in an alliance to stop the spread of communism.

- The label “communist” is used to discredit opposing parties.
- This establishes that communism is acknowledged as a power.
- It also calls for a response on the part of communists.

### **Social Stratification**

- Recent historical research has shown that societies in the era before written history were communistic in structure.
- Since that time, societies have become differentiated into social classes, which are naturally antagonistic to one another.
  - Patrician, knights, plebeians, slaves in ancient Rome.
  - Lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs in the Middle Ages.
- The result of the class-struggles has been either the transformation of society or the ruin of the warring classes.
- From the ruins of feudal society has sprung modern bourgeoisie society.
- The stratification of classes has been simplified into two layers:
  - Bourgeoisie (capitalists, owners of means of social production).
  - Proletariat (laborers who sell their labor in order to live).

### **The Emergence of the Bourgeoisie and Proletariat**

- The bourgeoisie has its origins in the early cities of the middle ages.
- With the discovery of new lands, commerce developed, and with it developed giant industries, owned by industrial millionaires.
- The increasing wealth of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by the collapsing of all working people into a single class—the proletariat.
- The source of these developments was transformations in modes of production and exchange of goods.
- The bourgeoisie have come to political power in the modern representative state.
  - “The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.”

### **The Revolutionary Role of the Bourgeoisie**

- The bourgeoisie has brought about more change in society than any other social class in history.
- It has replaced all previous social relations with a bond of cash-payment in the service of naked self-interest.
- It has replaced the various forms of freedom of individuals with the single freedom of trade.
- In order to achieve its unprecedented success, the bourgeoisie must continually revolutionize the modes of production.
- It must also expand its reach until it becomes global and overturns all local modes of production.
- Moreover, it replaces the “old wants” of every society with “new wants” which can be met only with imported goods.
- Even the intellectual sphere has become globalized, with the creation of a world literature.

### **Seeds of the Destruction of the Bourgeoisie**

- Through its destruction of feudal society, the bourgeoisie has unleashed the most powerful productive forces in history.
- Yet this very success contains within it the seeds of the destruction of the capitalist system.
- The problem is that the system is unable to control its productive output, resulting in massive over-production.
- Over-production gives rise to economic crises, which threaten the existence of the system itself.
- Attempts to cope with the crises, such as opening new markets, only create the conditions for larger crises down the road.
- “The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.”

### **The Proletariat**

- The means of the destruction of the capitalist system is one of its essential components: the proletariat.
- The increase in productive power is proportional to the development of laborers who are a commodity, and thus whose value fluctuates with the market.

- Their wages decrease and working conditions deteriorate as their productivity rises.
- As commodities, proletarians are interchangeable, so that differences in age and gender are no longer of any importance.
- Those in the middle class (small businessmen, peasants, etc.) are gradually forced into the proletariat.
  - Their small capital cannot compete with large capital.
  - Their specialized skills are not needed because their products can be mass-produced.

### **The Revolt of the Proletariat**

- The conditions of the proletariat are intolerable, which leads to various forms of revolt against the bourgeoisie.
- Initially, they consisted in the destruction of the physical components of industry.
- When the size and homogenization of the proletariat is sufficiently great, they band together to form trade-unions, concerned with such issues as wages.
- The improvement in communications allows large-scale centralization, which in turn leads to greater political power.
- The proletariat are aided by the bourgeoisie, who empower them to help in their own struggle against its enemies.
  - At first, the aristocracy.
  - Later, other bourgeoisie who stand in the way of industrial progress.
  - Always, the bourgeoisie of foreign countries.

### **The Proletariat and Other Social Classes**

- Some members of the bourgeoisie fall into the proletariat, victims of industrial progress.
- Others, particularly those who understand the social dynamics at work, voluntarily join the proletariat.
- Only the proletariat is the revolutionary class.
  - The middle class is reactionary, in that its fight to preserve itself is a fight to preserve a pre-industrial way of life.
  - The lower class that lives beyond the rule of law and society (*Lumpenproletariat*) may take part in a proletarian revolution, but are more likely to be co-opted into the service of the bourgeoisie.
- The proletariat lacks property and finds traditional institutions of law, morality, and religion as bourgeois prejudices that work in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

### **The Victory of the Proletariat**

- Because the proletariat has nothing to lose, it can overcome its situation only by the abolition of the bourgeoisie.
- It is in a position to do so because the proletariat comprises the vast majority of people.
- Any mass uprising of the proletariat would crush anything in its path.
- Because the proletariat necessarily becomes impoverished in proportion to the wealth of the bourgeoisie, the latter are unfit to rule.
- The inherent flaw of the capitalist system is that it overcomes the isolation of laborers and drives them into revolutionary association.
- The bourgeoisie digs its own grave, for it necessarily unleashes forces that will inevitably overthrow it.

### **The Program of the Communist Party**

- Although the program of the Communist Party must be adapted to local conditions, there are some items for action that should apply generally to advanced countries, including the following.
  - Abolition of private ownership of land.
  - A heavily progressive income tax.
  - Abolition of right of inheritance.
  - Centralization of credit in a monopolistic state bank.
  - State ownership of the means of communication and transport.
  - The expansion of state-owned industry and promotion of growth in agriculture.
  - Obliging everyone equally to work.
  - Merging agriculture and industry, and re-distributing the population more equally.
  - Free education and the abolition of child-labor.

### **How to Bring About the Revolution**

- Every local or national force that opposes the existing social and political order should be supported by the Communists.
- In so doing, they should bring to the consciousness of their allies that the fundamental problem is private property.
- The most important venue for revolution is Germany.

- Its proletariat is more developed than in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- The bourgeoisie itself is in the midst of a revolution against the remnants of the old feudal order.
- The bourgeois revolution will be followed by a proletarian revolution.
- The Communist Party freely admits that its “ends can be attained only by a violent overthrow of all existing social conditions.”
- The working people of the world should unite in revolution, because all they have to lose is their chains.