

The German Ideology

**Critique of Modern German Philosophy
According to Its Representatives Feuerbach, B.
Bauer and Stirner, and of German Socialism
According to Its Various Prophets**[\[7\]](#)

Written: Fall 1845 to mid-1846;

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Volume I

**Critique of Modern German Philosophy
According to Its Representatives**

Feuerbach, B. Bauer and Stirner^[8]

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Karl Marx
The German Ideology

Preface

Hitherto men have constantly made up for themselves false conceptions about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be. They have arranged their relationships according to their ideas of God, of normal man, etc. The phantoms of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations. Let us liberate them from the chimeras, the ideas, dogmas, imaginary beings under the yoke of which they are pining away. Let us revolt against the rule of thoughts. Let us teach men, says one, to exchange these imaginations for thoughts which correspond to the essence of man; says the second, to take up a critical attitude to them; says the third, to knock them out of their heads; and -- existing reality will collapse.

These innocent and childlike fancies are the kernel of the modern Young-Hegelian philosophy, which not only is received by the German public with horror and awe, but is announced by our philosophic heroes with the solemn consciousness of its cataclysmic dangerousness and criminal ruthlessness. The first volume of the present publication has the aim of uncloaking these sheep, who take themselves and are taken for wolves; of showing how their bleating merely imitates in a philosophic form the conceptions of the German middle class; how the

boasting of these philosophic commentators only mirrors the wretchedness of the real conditions in Germany. It is its aim to debunk and discredit the philosophic struggle with the shadows of reality, which appeals to the dreamy and muddled German nation.

Once upon a time a valiant fellow had the idea that men were drowned in water only because they were possessed with the idea of gravity. If they were to knock this notion out of their heads, say by stating it to be a superstition, a religious concept, they would be sublimely proof against any danger from water. His whole life long he fought against the illusion of gravity, of whose harmful results all statistic brought him new and manifold evidence. This valiant fellow was the type of the new revolutionary philosophers in Germany.

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The Leipzig Council [\[37\]](#) I

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In the third volume of the *Wigand'sche Vierteljahrsschrift* for 1845 the battle of the Huns, prophetically portrayed by Kaulbach, [\[38\]](#) actually takes place. The spirits of the slain, whose fury is not appeased even in death, raise a hue and cry, which sounds like the thunder of battles and war-cries, the clatter of swords, shields and iron waggons. But it is not a battle over earthly things. The holy war is being waged not over protective tariffs, the constitution, potato blight, [\[38\]](#) banking affairs and railways, but in the name of the most sacred interests of the spirit, in the name of “substance”, “self-consciousness”, “criticism;”, the “unique” and the “true man”. We are attending a council of church fathers. As these church fathers are the last specimens of their kind, and as here, it is to be hoped, the cause of the Most High, alias the Absolute, is being pleaded for the last time, it is worth while taking a verbatim report of the proceedings.

Here, first of all, is *Saint Bruno*, who is easily recognised by his *stick* (“become sensuousness, become a *stick*”, *Wigand*, p. 130).’ His head is crowned with a halo of “pure criticism” and, full of contempt for the world, he wraps himself in his “self-consciousness”. He has ‘, *smashed* religion in its entirety and the state in its manifestations” (p. 138), by violating the concept of “substance” in the name of the most high self-consciousness. The ruins of the church and “debris” of the state lie at his feet, while his glance “strikes clown” the “masses into the dust. He is like God, he has neither father nor mother, he is “his own creation, his own product” (p. 136). In short, he is the “Napoleon” of the spirit, in spirit he is “Napoleon”. His spiritual exercises consist in constantly “examining himself, and in this self-examination he finds the impulse to self-determination” (p. 136); as a result of such wearisome self-recording he has obviously become emaciated. Besides “examining” himself — from time to time he “examines” also, as we shall see, the *Westphälische Dampfboot*.

Opposite him stands *Saint Max*, whose services to the Kingdom of God consist in asserting that he has established and proved — on approximately 600 printed pages [*Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*] — his identity, that he is not just anyone, not some “Tom, Dick or Harry”, but precisely Saint Max and no other. About his halo and other marks of distinction only one thing can be said: that they are “his object and thereby his property”, that they are “unique” and “incomparable” and that they are “inexpressible” (p. 148).c He is simultaneously the “phrase” and the “owner of the phrase”, simultaneously Sancho Panza and Don Quixote. His ascetic exercises consist of sour thoughts about

thoughtlessness, of considerations throughout many pages about inconsiderateness and of the sanctification of unholiness. Incidentally, there is no need for us to elaborate on his virtues, for concerning all the qualities ascribed to him — even if there were more of them than the names of God among the Muslims — he is in the habit of saying: I am all this and something more, I am the all of this nothing and the nothing of this all. He is favourably distinguished from his gloomy rival in possessing a certain solemn “*light-heartedness*” and from time to time he interrupts his serious ponderings with a “*critical hurrah*”.

These two grand masters of the Holy Inquisition summon the heretic Feuerbach, who has to defend himself against the grave charge of gnosticism. The heretic Feuerbach, “thunders” Saint Bruno, is in possession of *hyle*, substance, and refuses to hand it over lest my infinite self-consciousness be reflected in it. Self-consciousness has to wander like a ghost until it has taken back into itself all things which arise from it and flow into it. It has already swallowed the whole world, except for this *hyle*, substance, which the gnostic Feuerbach keeps under lock and key and refuses to hand over.

Saint Max accuses the gnostic of doubting the dogma revealed by the mouth of Saint Max himself, the dogma that “every goose, every dog, every horse” is “the perfect, or, if one prefers the superlative degree, the most perfect, man”. (*Wigand*, p. 187: “The aforesaid does not lack a tittle of what makes man a man. Indeed, the *same* applies also to every goose, every dog, every, horse.”)

Besides the hearing of these important indictments, sentence is also

pronounced in the case brought by the two saints against Moses Hess and in the case brought by Saint Bruno against the authors of *Die Heilige Familie*. But as these accused have been busying themselves with “worldly affairs” and, therefore, have failed to appear before the Santa Casa, [\[40\]](#) they are sentenced in their absence to eternal banishment from the realm of the spirit for the term of their natural life. Finally, the two grand masters are again starting some strange intrigues among themselves and against each other.

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II Saint Bruno

1. “Campaign” Against Feuerbach

Before turning to the solemn discussion which Bauer’s selfconsciousness has with itself and the world, we should reveal one secret. Saint Bruno uttered the battle-cry and kindled the war only because he had to “safeguard” himself and his stale, soured criticism against the ungrateful forgetfulness of the public, only because he had to show that, in the changed conditions of 1845, criticism always remained itself and unchanged. He wrote the second volume of the “good cause and his own cause” [Bruno Bauer’s article “Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs” is here ironically called the second volume of Bauer’s book *Die gute.Sache der Freiheit und meine eigene*

Angelegenheit — The Good Cause of Freedom and My Own Cause]: he stands his ground, he fights *pro aris et focis*. [literally: for altars and hearths, used in the sense of: for house and home — that is, pleading his own cause] In the true theological manner, however, he conceals this aim of his by an appearance of wishing to “characterise” Feuerbach. Poor Bruno was quite forgotten, as was best proved by the polemic between Feuerbach and Stirner, [Feuerbach, “Ueber das ‘Wesen des Christenthums’ in Beziehung auf den ‘Einzigsten und sein Eigenthum’”] which no notice at all was taken of him. For just this reason he seized on this polemic in order to be able to proclaim himself, as the antithesis of the antagonists, their higher unity, the Holy Spirit.

Saint Bruno opens his “campaign” with a burst of artillery fire against Feuerbach, that is to say, with a revised and enlarged reprint of an article which had already appeared in the *Norddeutsche Blätter*. [Bruno Bauer’s article “Ludwig Feuerbach”] Feuerbach is made into a knight of “*substance*” in order that Bauer’s *self-consciousness*” shall stand out in stronger relief. In this trans-substantiation of Feuerbach, which is supposed to be proved by all the writings of the latter, our holy man jumps at once from Feuerbach’s writings on Leibniz and Bayle [The reference is to the following works of Feuerbach: *Geschichte der neuern Philosophie. Darstellung, Entwicklung und Kritik der Leibnitzischen Philosophie* and *Pierre Bayle*] to the *Wesen des Christenthums*, leaving out the article against the “positive philosophers”, [41] in the *Hallische Jahrbücher*. [Ludwig Feuerbach, “Zur Kritik der ‘positiven Philosophie’”] This “oversight” is “in place”. For there Feuerbach revealed the whole wisdom of “selfconsciousness” as against the

positive representatives of “substance”, at a time when Saint Bruno was still indulging in speculation on the immaculate conception.

It is hardly necessary to mention that Saint Bruno still continues to prance about on his old-Hegelian war horse. Listen to the first passage in his latest revelations from the Kingdom of God:

“Hegel combined into one Spinoza’s substance and Fichte’s ego; the unity of both, the combination of these opposing spheres, etc., constitutes the peculiar interest but, at the same time, the weakness of Hegel’s philosophy. [...] This contradiction in which Hegel’s system was entangled had to be resolved and destroyed. But he could only do this by making it impossible for all time to put the question: what is the relation of *self-consciousness* to the *absolute spirit*.... This was possible in two ways. Either self-consciousness had to be burned again in the flames of substance, i.e., the pure substantiality relation had to be firmly established and maintained, or it had to be shown that personality is the creator of its own attributes and essence, that it belongs to the *concept* of personality *in general* to posit itself” (the “concept” or the personality“?) “as limited, and again to abolish this limitation which it posits by its universal *essence*, for precisely this essence is *only the result of its inner self-distinction* of its activity” (Wigand, pp. 86, 87, 88).

[Bruno Bauer, “Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs”]

In *Die Heilige Familie* (p. 220) Hegelian philosophy was represented as a union of Spinoza and Fichte and at the same time the contradiction involved in this was emphasised. The specific peculiarity of Saint Bruno is that, unlike the authors of *Die Heilige Familie*, he does not regard the question of the relation of selfconsciousness to substance as “a point of controversy within Hegelian speculation”, but as a world-

historic, even an absolute question. This is the sole form in which he is capable of expressing the conflicts of the present day. He really believes that the triumph of selfconsciousness over substance has a most essential influence not only on European equilibrium but also on the whole future development of the Oregon problem. As to the extent to which the abolition of the Corn Laws in England depends on it, very little has so far transpired.^[42]

The abstract and nebulous expression into which a real collision is distorted by Hegel is held by this “critical” mind to be the real collision itself. Bruno accepts the *speculative* contradiction and upholds one part of it against the other. A philosophical *phrase* about a real question is for him the real question itself. Consequently, on the one hand, instead of real people and their real consciousness of their social relations, which apparently confront them as something independent, he has the mere abstract expression: *self-consciousness*, just as, instead of real production, he has the *activity of this self-consciousness, which has become independent*. On the other hand, instead of real nature and the actually existing social relations, he has the philosophical summing-up of all the philosophical categories or names of these relations in the expression: *substance*; for Bruno, along with all philosophers and ideologists, erroneously regards thoughts and ideas — the independent intellectual expression of the existing world — as the basis of this existing world. It is obvious that with these two abstractions, which have become senseless and empty, he can perform all kinds of tricks without knowing anything at all about real people and their relations. (See, in addition, what is said about substance in connection with

Feuerbach and concerning “humane liberalism” and the “holy” in connection with Saint Max.) Hence, he does not forsake the speculative basis in order to solve the contradictions of speculation; he manoeuvres while remaining on that basis, and he himself still stands so much on the specifically Hegelian basis that the relation of “self-consciousness” to the “absolute spirit” still gives him no peace. In short, we are confronted with the *philosophy of self-consciousness* that was announced in the *der Synoptiker*, carried out in *Das entdenckte Christenthum* and which, unfortunately, was long ago anticipated in Hegel’s *Phänomenologie*. This new philosophy of Bauer’s was completely disposed of in *Die Heilige Familie* on page 220 et seq. and on pages 304-07. Here, however, Saint Bruno even contrives to caricature himself by smuggling in “personality”, in order to be able, with *Stirner*, to portray the single individual as “his own product”, and *Stirner* as *Bruno’s product*. This step forward deserves a brief notice.

First of all, let the reader compare this caricature with the original, the explanation given of self-consciousness in *Das entdeckte Christenthum*, page 113, and then let him compare this explanation with its prototype, with Hegel’s *Phänomenologie*, pages 575, 583 and so on. (Both these passages are reproduced in *Die Heilige Familie*, pages 221, 223, 224.)

But now let us turn to the caricature! “Personality in general”!

“Concept”! “Universal essence”! “To posit itself as limited and again to abolish the limitation”! “Inner self-distinction”! What tremendous “results”! “Personality ‘it general’ is either nonsense “in general” or the abstract concept of personality. Therefore, it is part of the “concept” of the concept of personality to “posit itself as limited”. This limitation,

which belongs to the “concept” of its concept, personality directly afterwards posits “by its universal essence”. And after it has again abolished this limitation, it turns out that “precisely this essence” is “the *result* of its inner self-distinction”. The entire grandiose result of this intricate tautology amounts, therefore, to Hegel’s familiar trick of the self-distinction of man in thought, a self-distinction which the unfortunate Bruno stubbornly proclaims to be the sole activity of “personality in general”. A fairly long time ago it was pointed out to Saint Bruno that there is nothing to be got from a “personality” whose activity is restricted to these, by now trivial, logical leaps. At the same time the passage quoted contains the naive admission that the essence of Bauer’s “personality” is the concept of a concept, the abstraction of an abstraction.

Bruno’s criticism of Feuerbach, insofar as it is new, is restricted to hypocritically representing Stirner’s reproaches against Feuerbach *and Bauer* as Bauer’s reproaches against Feuerbach. Thus, for example, the assertions that the “essence of man is essence in general and something holy”, that “man is the God of man”, that the human species is “the Absolute”, that Feuerbach splits man “into an essential and an inessential ego” (although Bruno always declares that the abstract is the essential and, in his antithesis of criticism and the mass, conceives this split as far more monstrous than Feuerbach does), that a struggle must be waged against the “predicates of God”, etc. On the question of selfish and selfless love, Bruno, polemising with Feuerbach, copies Stirner almost word for word for three pages (pp. 133-35) just as he very clumsily copies Stirner’s phrases: “every man is his own creation”,

“truth is a ghost”, and so on. In addition, in Bruno the “creation” is transformed into a “product”. We shall return to this exploitation of Stirner by Saint Bruno.

Thus, the first thing that we discovered in Saint Bruno was his continual dependence on Hegel. We shall not, of course, dwell further on the remarks he has copied from Hegel, but shall only put together a few more passages which show how firmly he believes in the power of the philosophers and how he shares their illusion that a modified consciousness, a new turn given to the interpretation of existing relations, could overturn the whole hitherto existing world. imbued with this faith, Saint Bruno also has one of his pupils certify — in issue IV of Wigand’s quarterly, p. 327 — that his phrases on personality given above, which were proclaimed by him in issue III, were “world-shattering ideas”. ["Ueber das Recht des Freigesprochenen..."]

Saint Bruno says (*Wigand*, p. 95) [Bruno Bauer, “Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs”]

“Philosophy has never been anything but theology reduced to its most general form and given its most rational expression.”

This passage, aimed against Feuerbach, is copied almost word for word from Feuerbach’s *Philosophie der Zukunft* (p. 2):

“Speculative philosophy is true, consistent, *rational* theology.”

Bruno continues:

“Philosophy, in alliance with religion, has always striven for the

absolute dependence of the individual and has *actually achieved this* by demanding and causing the absorption of the individual life in universal life, of the accident in substance, of man in the absolute spirit.”

As if Bruno’s “philosophy”, “in alliance with” Hegel’s, and his still continuing forbidden association with theology, did not “demand”, if not “cause”, the “absorption of man” in the idea of one of his “accidents”, that of self-consciousness, as “substance"! Moreover, one sees from this whole passage with what joy the church father with his “pulpit eloquence” continues to proclaim his “world-shattering” faith in the mysterious power of the holy theologians and philosophers. Of course, in the interests of the “good cause of freedom and his own cause”. [ironical allusion to Bauer’s book *Die gute Sache der Freiheit und meine eigene Angelegenheit*]

On page 105 our god-fearing man has the insolence to reproach Feuerbach:

“Feuerbach *made* of the individual, of the depersonalised man of Christianity, not a man, not a true” (!) “real” (!!) “personal” (!!!) “man” (these predicates owe their origin to *Die Heilige Familie* and Stirner), “but an emasculated man, a slave” —

and thereby utters, *inter alia*, the nonsense that he, Saint Bruno, can *make* people by means of the *mind*.

Further on in the same passage he says:

“According to Feuerbach the individual has to subordinate himself

to the species, serve it. The species of which Feuerbach speaks is Hegel's Absolute, and it, too, exists nowhere."

Here, as in all the other passages, Saint Bruno does not deprive himself of the glory of making the actual relations of individuals dependent on the philosophical interpretation of these relations. He has not the slightest inkling of the correlation which exists between the concepts of Hegel's "absolute spirit" and Feuerbach's "species" on the one hand and the existing world on the other.

On page 104 the holy father is mightily shocked by the heresy with which Feuerbach transforms the holy trinity of reason, love and will into something that "is *in* individuals and *over* individuals", as though, in our day, every inclination, every impulse, every need did not assert itself as a force "in the individual and *over* the individual", whenever circumstances hinder their satisfaction. If the holy father Bruno experiences hunger, for example, without the means of appeasing it, then even his stomach will become a force "*in* him and *over* him". Feuerbach's mistake is not that he stated this fact but that in idealistic fashion he endowed it with independence instead of regarding it as the product of a definite and surmountable stage of historical development.

Page 111: "Feuerbach is a slave and his servile nature does not allow him to fulfil the *work* of a *man*, to recognise the essence of religion" (what a fine "work of a man"!)..... He does not perceive the essence of religion because he does not know the *bridge* over which he can make his way to the *source* of religion."

Saint Bruno still seriously believes that religion has its own "essence".

As for the “bridge”, “*over which*” one makes one’s way to the “*source of religion*”, this asses’ bridge [a pun in the original: *Eselsbrücke* — asses’ bridge — an expedient used by dull or lazy people to understand a difficult problem] must certainly be an *aqueduct*. At the same time Saint Bruno establishes himself as a curiously modernised Charon who has been retired owing to the building of the bridge, becoming a *toll-keeper* who demands a *halfpenny* from every person crossing the bridge to the spectral realm of religion.

On page 120 the saint remarks:

“How could Feuerbach exist if there were no *truth* and truth were only a *spectre*” (Stirner, help!) “of which hitherto man has been afraid?”

The “man” who fears the “spectre” of “truth” is no other than the worthy Bruno himself. Ten pages earlier, on p. 110, he had already let out the following world-shattering cry of terror at the sight of the “spectre” of truth:

“Truth which is never of itself encountered as a ready-made object and which develops *itself* and reaches unity only in the unfolding of personality.”

Thus, we have here not only truth, this spectre, transformed into a person which develops itself and reaches unity, but in addition this trick is accomplished in a third personality outside it, after the manner of the tapeworm. Concerning the holy man’s former love affair with truth, when he was still young and the lusts of the flesh still strong in him — see *Die Heilige Familie*, p. 115 et seq.’

How purified of all fleshly lusts and earthly desires our holy man now appears is shown by his vehement polemic against Feuerbach's *sensuousness*. Bruno by no means attacks the highly restricted way in which Feuerbach recognises *sensuousness*. He regards Feuerbach's unsuccessful attempt, since it is an attempt to escape ideology, as — a sin. Of course! Sensuousness is lust of the eye, lust of the flesh and arrogance [cf. 1 John 2:16] — horror and abomination [cf. Ezekiel 11:18] in the eyes of the Lord! Do you not know that to be fleshly minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace; for to be fleshly, minded is hostility to criticism, and everything of the flesh is of this world. And do you not know that it is written: the works of the flesh are manifest, they are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, obscenity, idolatry, witchcraft, enmity, strife, envy, anger, quarrelsomeness, discord, sinful gangs, hatred, murder, drunkenness, gluttony and the like. [cf. Galatians 5:19-21] I prophesy to you, as I prophesied before, that those who do such works will not inherit the kingdom of criticism; but woe to them for in their thirst for delights they are following the path of Cain and are falling into the error of Balaam, and will perish in a rebellion, like that of Korah. These lewd ones feast shamelessly on your alms, and fatten themselves. They are clouds without water driven by the wind; bare, barren trees, twice dead and uprooted; wild ocean waves frothing their own shame; errant stars condemned to the gloom of darkness for ever. [cf. Jude 11-13] For we have read that in the last days there will be terrible times, people will appear who think much of themselves, lewd vilifiers who love voluptuousness [cf. 2 Timothy 3:1-4] more than criticism, makers of

sinful gangs, in short, slaves of the flesh. Such people are shunned by Saint Bruno, who is spiritually minded and loathes the stained covering of the flesh [cf. Jude 23] and for this reason he condemns Feuerbach, whom he regards as the Korah of the gang, to remain outside together with the dogs, the magicians, the debauched and the assassins. [cf. Revelation 22:15] “Sensuousness” — ugh! Not only does it throw the saintly church father into the most violent convulsions, but it even makes him sing, and on page 121 he chants the “song of the end and the end of the song”. Sensuousness — do you know, unfortunate one, what sensuousness is? Sensuousness is — a “stick” (p. 130). Seized with convulsions, Saint Bruno even wrestles on one occasion with one of his own theses, just as Jacob of blessed memory wrestled with God, with the one difference that God twisted Jacob’s thigh, while our saintly epileptic twists all the limbs and ties of his own thesis, and so, by a number of striking examples, makes clear the identity of subject and object:

“Feuerbach may say what he likes ... all the same he *destroys*” (!)
 “*man...* for he transforms the *word* man into a mere *phrase* ... for he *does not wholly make*” and *create*” (!) “*man, but* raises the whole of mankind to the Absolute, for *in addition* he declares *not* mankind, *but rather* the senses to be the organ of the Absolute, and stamps the sensuous — the object of the senses, of perception, of sensation — as the Absolute, the indubitable and the immediately certain. Whereby Feuerbach — such is Saint Bruno’s opinion — “can undoubtedly shake layers of the air, but he cannot *smash the phenomena of human essence*, because his *innermost*” (!) “*essence and his vitalising spirit [...]* already destroys the *external*” (!)
 “sound and makes it empty and jarring” (p. 121).

Saint Bruno himself gives us mysterious but decisive disclosures about the causes of his nonsensical attitude:

“As though my ego does not also possess just this particular *sex, unique, compared with all others*, and these particular, unique sex organs,” (Besides his “unique sex organs”, this noble-minded man also possesses a special “unique sex”!)

This unique sex is explained on page 121 in the sense that:

“sensuousness, like a vampire, sucks all the marrow and blood from the *life* of man; it is the insurmountable barrier against which man has to deal himself a mortal blow”.

But even the saintliest man is not pure! They are all sinners and lack the glory that they should have before “self-consciousness”. Saint Bruno, who in his lonely cell at midnight struggles with “substance”, has his attention drawn by the frivolous writings of the heretic Feuerbach to women and female beauty. Suddenly his sight becomes less keen; his pure self-consciousness is besmirched, and a reprehensible, sensuous fantasy plays about the frightened critic with lascivious images. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. [cf. Matthew 26:41] Bruno stumbles, he falls, he forgets that he is the power that “with its strength binds, frees and dominates the world”, [cf. *ibid.* 16:19] he forgets that these products of his imagination are “spirit of his spirit”, he loses all “self-control” and, intoxicated, stammers a dithyramb to female beauty, to its “tenderness, softness, womanliness”, to the “full and rounded limbs” and the “*surging, undulating, seething, rushing and hissing, wave-like structure* of the body” of woman. Innocence, however,

always reveals itself — even where it sins. Who does not know that a “surging, undulating, wave-like structure of the body” is Something that no eye has ever seen, or ear heard? Therefore — hush, sweet soul, the spirit will soon prevail over the rebellious flesh and set an insurmountable “barrier” to the overflowing, seething lusts, “against which” they will soon deal themselves a “mortal blow”.

“Feuerbach” — the saint finally arrives at this through a critical understanding of *Die Heilige Familie* — “is a materialist tempered with and corrupted by humanism, i.e., a materialist who is unable to endure the earth and its being” (Saint Bruno knows the being of the earth as distinct from the earth itself, and knows how one should behave in order to “*endure the being* of the earth”!) “but wants to spiritualism himself and rise into heaven; and at the same time he is a humanist who cannot think and build a spiritual world, but one who is impregnated with materialism”, and so on (p. 123).

Just as for Saint Bruno humanism, according to this, consists in thinking” and in “building a spiritual world”, so materialism consists in the following:

“The materialist recognises only the existing, actual being, *matter*” (as though man with all his attributes, including thought, were not an “*existing, actual being*”), “and recognises it as actively extending and realising *itself* in multiplicity, *nature*” (p. 123).

First, *matter* is an existing, actual being, but only in itself, concealed; only when it “actively extends and realises itself in multiplicity” (an “existing, *actual being*” “realises itself”!!), only then does it become *nature*. First there exists the *concept* of matter, an abstraction, an idea, and this latter realises itself in actual nature. Word for word the

Hegelian theory of the pre-existence of the creative categories. From this point of view it is understandable that Saint Bruno mistakes the philosophical phrases of the materialists concerning matter for the actual kernel and content of their world outlook.

2. Saint Bruno's Views on the Struggle Between Feuerbach and Stirner

Having thus admonished Feuerbach with a few weighty words, Saint Bruno takes a look at the struggle between Feuerbach and the unique. The first evidence of his interest in this struggle is a methodical, triple smile.

“The critic pursues his path irresistibly, confident of victory, and victorious. He is slandered — he *smiles*. He is called a heretic — he smiles. The old world starts a crusade against him — he *smiles*.”

Saint Bruno — this is thus established — pursues his path but he does not pursue it like other people, he follows a critical course, he accomplishes this important action with a *smile*.

“He does smile his face into more lines than are in the new map, with the augmentation of the Indies. I know my lady will strike him: if she do, he'll smile and take it for a great art, [Shakespeare, Twelfth Night, Act III, Scene 2. Marx and Engels quote these lines from the German translation by August Wilhelm von Schlegel. But they have substituted the word Kunst (art) for the word Gunst (favour)] — like Shakespeare's Malvolio.

Saint Bruno himself does not lift a finger to refute his two opponents, he knows a better way of ridding himself of them, he leaves them —

divide et impera — to their own quarrel. He confronts Stirner with Feuerbach's man (p. 124), and Feuerbach with Stirner's unique (p. 126 et seq.); he knows that they are as incensed against each other as the two Kilkenny cats in Ireland, which so completely devoured each other that finally only their tails remained. [43] And Saint Bruno passes sentence on these tails, declaring that they are "*substance*" and, consequently, condemned to eternal damnation.

In confronting Feuerbach with Stirner he repeats what Hegel said of Spinoza and Fichte, where, as we know, the punctiform ego is represented as one, and moreover the most stable, aspect of substance. However much Bruno formerly raged against egoism, which he even considered the *odor specificus* of the masses, on page 129 he accepts egoism from Stirner — only this should be "not that of Max Stirner", but, of course, that of Bruno Bauer. He brands Stirner's egoism as having the moral defect "that his ego for the support of its egoism requires hypocrisy, deception, external violence". For the rest, he believes (see p. 124) in the critical miracles of Saint Max and sees in the latter's struggle (p. 126) "a real effort to radically destroy substance". Instead of dealing with Stirner's criticism of Bauer's "pure criticism", he asserts on p. 124 that Stirner's criticism could affect him just as little as any other, "because *he himself is the critic*".

Finally Saint Bruno refutes both of them, Saint Max and Feuerbach, applying almost literally to Feuerbach and Stirner the antithesis drawn by Stirner between the critic Bruno Bauer and the dogmatist.

Wigand, p. 138: “Feuerbach puts himself in opposition to, and *thereby*” (!) “*stands in opposition to*, the unique. He is a *communist* and wants to be one. The unique is an *egoist* and has to be one; he is the *holy one*, the other the *profane one*, he is the *good one*, the other the *evil one*, he is God, the other is man. Both are *dogmatists*.”

The point is, therefore, that he accuses both of *dogmatism*.

Der Einzige und sein Eigentum, p. 194: “The critic is afraid of becoming dogmatic or of putting forward dogmas. Obviously, he would then become the opposite of a critic, a dogmatist; he who as a critic was *good*, would now become evil, or from being *unselfish*” (a Communist) “would become an *egoist*, etc. Not a single dogma! — that is his dogma.”

3. Saint Bruno Versus the Authors of *Die Heilige Familie*

Saint Bruno, who has disposed of Feuerbach and Stirner in the manner indicated and who has “cut the unique off from all progress”, now turns against the apparent “consequences of Feuerbach”, the German Communists and, especially, the authors of *Die Heilige Familie*. The expression “real humanism”, which he found in the preface to this polemic treatise, provides the main basis of his hypothesis. He will recall a passage from the Bible:

“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal” (in our case it was just the opposite), “even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it” (1 Corinthians, 3: 1-2).

The first impression that *Die Heilige Familie* made on the worthy

church father was one of profound distress and serious, respectable sorrow. The one good side of the book is that it

“showed what Feuerbach *had* to become, and the position his philosophy *can* adopt, if it *desires* to fight against criticism” (p. 138),

that, consequently, it combined in an easy-going way “desiring” with “what can be” and “what must be”, but this good side does not outweigh its many distressing sides. Feuerbach’s philosophy, which strangely enough is presupposed here,

“*dare not* and *cannot* understand the critic, *dare not* and *cannot* know and perceive criticism in its development, *dare not* and *cannot* know that, in relation to all that is transcendental, criticism is a constant struggle and victory, a continual destruction and creation, the *sole*” (!) “creative and productive principle. It *dare not* and *cannot* know how the critic has worked, and still works, to posit and to make” (!) “the transcendental forces, which up to now have suppressed mankind and not allowed it to breathe and live, into what they *really are*, the spirit of the spirit, the innermost of the innermost, a native thing” (!) “out of and in the native soil, products and creations of self-consciousness. It *dare not* and *cannot* know that the critic and only the critic has smashed religion in its entirety, and the state in its various manifestations, etc.” (pp. 138,139).

Is this not an exact copy of the ancient Jehovah, who runs after his errant people who found greater delight in the cheerful pagan gods, and cries out:

“Hear me, Israel, and close not your ear, Judah! Am I not the Lord

your God, who led you out of the land of Egypt into the land flowing with milk and honey, and behold, from your earliest youth you have done evil in my sight and angered me with the work of my hands and turned your back unto me and not your face towards me, though I invariably tutored you; and you have brought abominations into my house to defile it, and built the high places of Baal in the valley of the son of Himmon, which I did not command, and it never entered my head that you should do such abominations; and I have sent to you my servant Jeremiah, to whom I did address my word, beginning with the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah, son of Amon, unto this day — and for twenty-three years now he has been zealously preaching to you, but ye have not harkened. Therefore says the Lord God: Who has ever heard the like of the virgin of Israel doing such an abomination. For rain water does not disappear so quickly as my people forgets me. O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!” [cf. Jeremiah 2:6, 32:22, 30, 33-35, 25:3, 19:3, 18:13, 14, 22:29]

Thus, in a lengthy speech on “to dare” and “to be able”, Saint Bruno asserts that his communist opponents have misunderstood him. The way in which he describes criticism in this recent speech, the way in which he transforms the former forces that suppressed ‘the life of mankind’ into “transcendental forces”, and these transcendental forces into the “spirit of the spirit”, and the way in which he presents “criticism” as the sole branch of production proves that the apparent misconception is nothing but a disagreeable conception. We proved that Bauer’s criticism is beneath all criticism, owing to which we have inevitably become dogmatists. He even in all seriousness reproaches us for our insolent disbelief in his ancient phrases. The whole mythology of independent concepts, with Zeus the Thunderer — self-consciousness — at the head, is paraded here once again to the “jingling

of hackneyed phrases of a whole janissary band of current categories”. (*Literatur-Zeitung*, cf. *Die Heilige Familie*, p. 234). First of all, of course, the myth of the creation of the world, i.e., of the hard “*labour*” of the critic, which is “the sole creative and productive principle, a constant struggle and victory, a continual destruction and creation”, “working” and “having worked”. Indeed, the reverend father even reproaches *Die Heilige Familie* for understanding “criticism” in the same way as he understands it himself in the present rejoinder. After taking back “substance” “into the land of its birth, self-consciousness, the criticising and” (since *Die Heilige Familie* also) “the criticised man, and *discarding* it” (self-consciousness here seems to take the place of an ideological lumber-room), he continues:

“It” (the alleged philosophy of Feuerbach) “dare not know that criticism and the critics, as long as they have existed” (!) “have guided and made history, that even their opponents and all the movements and agitations of the present time are their creation, that it is they alone who hold *power in their hands, because strength is in their consciousness*, and because they derive power *from themselves*, from their deeds, from criticism, from’ their opponents, from their creations; that only by the act of criticism is man freed. and thereby men also, and man is *created*” (!) “and thereby mankind as well”.

Thus, criticism *and* the critics are first of all two wholly different subjects, existing and operating apart from each other. The critic is a subject different from criticism, and criticism is a subject different from the critic. This personified criticism, criticism as a subject, is precisely that “critical criticism” against which *Die Heilige Familie* was

directed. “Criticism and the critics, as long as they have existed, have guided and made history.” It is clear that they could not do so “as long as they” did not “exist”, and it is equally clear that “as long as they have existed” they “made history” in their own fashion. Finally, Saint Bruno goes so far as to “dare and be able” to give us one of the most profound explanations about the state-shattering power of criticism, namely, that “criticism and the critics hold *power in their hands*, because” (a fine “because”!) “*strength is in their consciousness*”, and, secondly, that these great manufacturers of history “hold power in their hands”, because they “derive power from themselves and from criticism” (i.e., again from themselves) — whereby it is still, unfortunately, not proven that it is possible to “derive” anything at all from there, from “themselves”, from “criticism”. On the basis of criticism’s own words, one should at least believe that it must be difficult to “derive” from there anything more than the category of “substance” “discarded” there. Finally, criticism also “derives” “from criticism” “power” for a highly monstrous oracular dictum. For it reveals to us a secret that was hidden [cf. Colossians 1 :26] from our fathers and unknown to our grandfathers, the secret that “only by the act of criticism is man created, and thereby mankind as well” — whereas, up to now, criticism was erroneously regarded as an act of people who existed prior to it owing to quite different acts. Hence it seems that Saint Bruno himself came “into the world, from the world, and to the world” through “criticism”, i.e., by *generatio aequioca* [spontaneous generation]. All this is, perhaps, merely another interpretation of the following passage from the Book of Genesis: And Adam *knew*, i.e., criticised, Eve his wife: and she conceived, [cf. Genesis 4: 1] etc.

Thus we see here the whole familiar critical criticism, which was already sufficiently characterised in *Die Heilige Familie*, confronting us again with all its trickery as though nothing had happened. There is no need to be surprised at this, for the saint himself complains, on page 140, that *Die Heilige Familie* “cuts criticism off from all progress”. With the greatest indignation Saint Bruno reproaches the authors of *Die Heilige Familie* because, by means of a chemical process, they evaporated Bauer’s criticism from its “fluid” state into a *crystalline*” state.

It follows that “institutions of mendicancy”, the “baptismal certificate of adulthood”, the “regions of pathos and thunder-like aspects”, the “Mussulman conceptual affliction” (*Die Heilige Familie*, pp. 2, 3, 4 according to the critical *Literatur-Zeitung*) — all this is nonsense only if it is understood in the “crystalline” manner. And the twenty-eight historical howlers of which criticism was proved guilty in its excursion on “Englische Tagesfragen” [article by Julius Faucher] — are they not errors when looked at from the “fluid” point of view? Does criticism insist that, from the fluid point of view, it prophesied *a priori* the Nauwerck conflict [44] — long after this had taken place before its eyes — and did not construct it *post festum*? Does it still insist that the word *marichal* could mean “*farrier*” from the “crystalline” point of view, but from the “fluid” point of view at any rate must mean marshal”? Or that although in the “crystalline” conception “*un fait physique*” may mean “a physical fact”, the true “fluid” translation should be “a fact of physics”? Or that “*la malveillance de nos bourgeois juste-milieux*” [the

ill will of our middle-of-the-road bourgeois] in the “fluid” state still means “the care-freeness of our good burghers”? Does it insist that, from the “fluid” point of view, “a child that does not, in its turn, become a father or mother is *essentially a daughter*”? That someone can have the task “of representing, as it were, the last tear of grief shed by the past”? That the various concierges, lions, grisettes, marquises, scoundrels and wooden doors in Paris in their “fluid” form are nothing but phases of the mystery “in whose concept in general it belongs to posit itself as limited and again to abolish this limitation which is posted by its universal essence, for precisely this essence is only the result of its inner self-distinction, its activity” [Bruno Bauer, “Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs”]? That critical criticism in the “fluid” sense “pursues its path irresistibly, victorious and confident of victory”, when in dealing with a question it first asserts that it has revealed its “true and general significance” and then admits that it “had neither the will nor the right to go beyond criticism”, and finally admits that “it had still to take one step but that step was impossible because — it was impossible” (*Die Heilige Familie*, p. 184)? That from the “fluid” point of view “the future is still the work” of criticism, although “fate may *decide* as it will” [B. Bauer, “Neueste Schriften Über die Judenfrage”]? That from the fluid point of view criticism achieved nothing superhuman when it “came into contradiction with its *true elements* — a *contradiction* which had already found its *solution* in *these same elements* [B. Bauer, “Was ist jetzt der Gegenstand der Kritik?”]?

The authors of *Die Heilige Familie* have indeed committed the frivolity

of conceiving these and hundreds of other statements as statements expressing firm, “crystalline” *nonsense* — but the synoptic gospels should be read in a “fluid” way, i.e., according to the sense of their authors. and on no account in a “crystalline” way, e., according to their actual nonsense, in order to arrive at true faith and to admire the harmony of the critical household.

“Engels and Marx, therefore, know only the criticism of the *Literatur-Zeitung*” [Bruno Bauer, “Charakteristik Ludwig Feuerbachs”]

— a deliberate lie, proving how “fluidly” our saint has read a book in which his latest works are depicted merely as the culmination of all the “work he has done”. But the church father lacked the calm to read in a crystalline way, for he fears his opponents as rivals who contest his canonisation and “want to deprive him of his sanctity, in order to make *themselves* sanctified”.

Let us, incidentally, note the fact that, according to Saint Bruno’s present statement, his *Literatur-Zeitung* by no means aimed at founding “social society” or at “representing, as it were, the last tear of grief” shed by German ideology, nor did it aim at putting mind in the sharpest opposition to the mass and developing critical criticism in all its purity, but only — at “depicting the liberalism and radicalism of 1842 and their echoes in their half-heartedness and phrase-mongering”, hence at combating the “echoes” of what has long disappeared. *Tant de bruit pour une omelette!* [Much ado about an omelette! An exclamation which Jacques Vallé, Sieur des Barreaux, is supposed to have made

when a thunderstorm occurred while he was eating an omelette on a fast-day] Incidentally, it is just here that the conception of history peculiar to German theory is again shown in its “purest” light. The year 1842 is held to be the period of the greatest brilliance of German liberalism, because at that time philosophy took part in politics. Liberalism vanishes for the critic with the cessation of the *Deutsche Jahrbücher* and the *Rheinische Zeitung*, the organs of liberal and radical theory. After that, apparently, there remain only the “echoes” — whereas in actual fact only now, when the German bourgeoisie feels a real need for political power, a need produced by economic relations, and is striving to satisfy has liberalism in Germany an actual existence and thereby 1 the chance of some success.

Saint Bruno’s profound distress over *Die Heilige Familie* did not allow him to criticise this work “out of himself, through himself and with himself”. To be able to master his pain he had first to obtain the work in a “fluid” form. He found this fluid form in a confused review, teeming with misunderstandings, in the *Westphälische Dampfboot*, May issue, pp. 206-14 All his quotations are taken from passages quoted in the *Westphälische Dampfboot* and he quotes nothing that is not quoted there.

The language of the saintly critic is likewise determined by the language of the Westphalian critic. In the first place, all the statements from the Foreword which are quoted by the Westphalian (*Dampfboot*, p. 206) are transferred to the *Wigand’sche Vierteljahrsschrift* (pp. 140, 141). This transference forms the chief part of Bauer’s criticism,

according to the old principle already recommended by Hegel:

“To trust common sense and, moreover, in order to keep up with the times and advance with philosophy, to read *reviews* of philosophical works, perhaps even their *prefaces* and introductory paragraphs; for the latter give the general principles on which everything turns, while the former give, along with the historical information, also an appraisal which, because it is an appraisal, even goes beyond that which is appraised This beaten track can be followed in one’s dressing-gown; but the elevated feeling of the eternal, the sacred, the infinite, pursues its path in the vestments of a high priest, a path” which, as we have seen, Saint Bruno also knows how to “pursue” while “striking down” (Hegel, *Phänomenologie*, p. 54).

The *Westphalian* critic, after giving a few quotations from the preface, continues:

“Thus the preface itself leads to the *battlefield* of the book”, etc. (p. 206).

The *saintly* critic, having transferred these quotations into the *Wigand’sche Vierteljahrsschrift*, makes a more subtle distinction and says:

“Such is the *terrain* and the *enemy* which Engels and Marx have created for *battle*.”

From the discussion of the critical proposition: “the worker creates nothing”, the *Westphalian* critic gives only the summarising *conclusion*.

The *saintly* critic actually believes that this is all that was said about the

proposition, copies out the Westphalian quotation on page 141 and rejoices at the discovery that only “assertions” have been put forward in opposition to criticism.

Of the examination of the critical outpourings about love, the *Westphalian* critic on page 209 first writes out the *corpus delicti* in part and then a few disconnected sentences from the refutation, which he desires to use as an authority for his nebulous, sickly-sweet sentimentality.

On pages 141-42 the *saintly* critic copies him out word for word, sentence by sentence, in the same order as his predecessor quotes.

The *Westphalian* critic exclaims over the corpse of Herr Julius Faucher: “Such is the fate of the beautiful on earth!”. [Schiller. *Wallenstein’s Tod*, Act IV, Scene 12]

The *saintly* critic cannot finish his “hard work” without appropriating this exclamation to use irrelevantly on page 142.

The *Westphalian* critic on page 212 gives a would-be summary of the arguments which are aimed against Saint Bruno himself in *Die Heilige Familie*.

The *saintly* critic cheerfully and literally copies out all this stuff together with all the Westphalian exclamations. He has not the slightest idea that *nowhere* in the whole of this polemic discourse does anyone reproach hint for “transforming the problem of political emancipation into that of human emancipation”, for “wanting to kill the Jews”, for

“transforming the Jews into theologians”, for “transforming Hegel into Herr Hinrichs”, etc. Credulously, the saintly critic repeats the *Westphalian* critic’s allegation that in *Die Heilige Familie Marx* volunteers to provide some sort of little scholastic treatise “in reply to Bauer’s *silly self-apotheosis*”. Yet the words “silly self-apotheosis”, which Saint Bruno gives as a *quotation*, are nowhere to be found in the whole of *Die Heilige Familie*, but they do occur with the Westphalian critic. Nor is the little treatise offered as a reply to the “self-apology” of criticism on pages 150-63 of *Die Heilige Familie*, but only in the following section on page 165, in connection with the world-historic question: “Why did Herr Bauer *have to* engage in politics?”

Finally on page 143 Saint Bruno presents *Marx* as an “*amusing comedian*”, here again following his Westphalian model, who resolved the “world-historic drama of critical criticism”, on page 213, into a “*most amusing comedy*”.

Thus one sees how the opponents of critical criticism “dare and can” “*know how the critic has worked, and still works!*”

4. Obituary For “M. Hess”

“What Engels and Marx could *not yet* do, M. Hess has accomplished.”

Such is the great, divine transition which — owing to the relative “can” and “cannot” be done of the evangelists — has taken so firm a hold of the holy man’s fingers that it has to find a place, relevantly or irrelevantly, in every article of the church father.

“What Engels and Marx could not yet do, M. Hess has accomplished.” But what is this “what” that “Engels and Marx could not yet do”? Nothing more nor less, indeed, than — to criticise Stirner. And why was it that Engels and Marx “could *not yet*” criticise Stirner? For the sufficient reason that — Stirner’s book *had not yet appeared* when they wrote *Die Heilige Familie*.

This speculative trick — of joining together everything and bringing the most diverse things into an apparent causal relation — has truly taken possession not only of the head of our saint but also of his fingers. With him it has become devoid of any contents and degenerates into a burlesque manner of uttering tautologies with an important mien. For example, already in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (1, 5) we read:

“The difference between my work and the pages which, for example, a Philippson covers with writing” (that is, the *empty* pages on which, “for example, a Philippson” writes) “must, *therefore, be so constituted as in fact it is*”!!! [Bauer, “Neueste Schriften über die Judenfrage”]

“M. Hess”, for whose writings Engels and Marx take absolutely no responsibility, seems such a strange phenomenon to the saintly critic that he is only capable of copying long excerpts from *Die letzten Philosophen* and passing the judgment that “on some points this criticism has not understood Feuerbach *or also*” (O theology!) “the vessel wishes to rebel against the potter”. Cf. Epistle to the Romans, 9: 20-21. Having once more performed the “hard work” of quoting, our saintly critic finally arrives at the conclusion that Hess copies from

Hegel, since he uses the two words “united” and “development”. Saint Bruno, of course, had in a round-about way to try to turn against Feuerbach the proof given in *Die Heilige Familie* of his own complete dependence on Hegel.

“See, that is how Bauer had to end! He fought as best he could against all the Hegelian categories”, with the exception of selfconsciousness — particularly in the glorious struggle of the *Literatur-Zeitung* against Herr Hinrichs. How he fought and conquered them we have already seen. For good measure, let us quote *Wigand*, page 110, where he asserts that

the “true” (1) “*solution*” (2) “*of contradictions*” (3) “in nature and history” (4), the “*true unity*” (5) “of separate relations” (6), the “genuine” (7) “basis” (8) “and abyss” (9) “of religion, the truly *infinite*” (10), “irresistible, self-creative” (11) “personality” (12) “has not yet been found”.

These three lines contain not two doubtful Hegelian categories, as in the case of Hess, but a round dozen of “true, infinite, irresistible” Hegelian categories which reveal themselves as such by ‘,the true unity of separate relations’ — “see, that is how Bauer had to end"! And if the holy man thinks that in Hess he has discovered a Christian believer, not because Hess “hopes” — as Bruno says — but because he does not hope and because he talks of the “resurrection”, then our great church father enables us, on the basis of this same page 1 10, to demonstrate his very pronounced *Judaism*. He declares there

“that the *true, living man in the flesh has not yet been born*”!!! (a

new elucidation about the determination of the “unique sex”) “and the mongrel produced” (*Bruno Bauer?!?*) “is not yet able to master all *dogmatic formulas*”, etc.

That is to say, the *Messiah* is not yet born, the *son of man* has first to come into the world and this world, being the world of the Old Testament, is still under the rod of the *law*, of “dogmatic formulas”.

Just as Saint Bruno, as shown above, made use of “Engels and Marx” for a transition to Hess, so now the latter serves him to bring Feuerbach finally into causal connection with his excursions on Stirner, *Die heilige Familie* and *Die letzten Philosophen*.

“See, that is how Feuerbach had to end!” “Philosophy had to end piously”, etc. (*Wigand*, p. 145.)

The true causal connection, however, is that this exclamation is an imitation of a passage from Hess’ *Die letzten Philosophen* aimed against Bauer, among others (Preface, p. 4):

“Thus, [...] and in no other way had the last offspring of the Christian ascetics to take farewell of the world.”

Saint Bruno ends his speech for the prosecution against Feuerbach and his alleged accomplices with the reproach to Feuerbach that all he can do is to “trumpet”, to “blow blasts on a trumpet”, whereas Monsieur B. Bauer or Madame la critique, the “mongrel produced”, to say nothing of the continual “destruction”, “*drives forth in his triumphal chariot and gathers new triumphs*” (p. 125), “hurls down from the throne” (p. 119), “slays” (p. 111), “strikes down like thunder” (p. 115), “destroys once

and for all” (p. 120), “shatters” (p. 121), allows nature merely to “vegetate” (p. 120), builds “stricter” (!) “prisons” (p. 104) and, finally, with “crushing” pulpit eloquence expatiates, on p. 105, in a brisk, pious, cheerful and free [“Brisk, pious, cheerful and free” (“frisch, fromm, fröhlich und frei”) — the initial words of a students’ saying, which were turned by Ludwig Jahn into the motto of the sport movement he initiated] fashion on the “stably-strongly-firmly-existing”, hurling “rock-like matter and rocks” at Feuerbach’s head (p. 110) and, in conclusion, by a side thrust vanquishes Saint Max as well, by adding “the most abstract abstractness” and “the hardest hardness” (on p. 124) to “critical criticism”, “social society” and “rock-like matter and rocks”.

All this Saint Bruno accomplished “through himself, in himself and with himself”, because he is “He himself”; indeed, he is “himself always the greatest and can always be the greatest” (*is* and *can be*!) “through himself, in himself and with himself” (p. 136). That’s that.

Saint Bruno would undoubtedly be dangerous to the female sex, for he is an “irresistible personality”, if “in the same measure on the other hand” he did not fear “sensuousness as the barrier against which man has to deal himself a mortal *blow*”. Therefore, “through himself, in himself and with himself” he will hardly pluck any flowers but rather allow them to wither in infinite longing and hysterical yearning for the “irresistible personality”, who “possesses this unique sex and these unique, particular sex organs”.

[The following passage is crossed out in the manuscript:]

5. Saint Bruno in His “Triumphal Chariot”

Before leaving our church father “victorious and confident of victory”, let us for a moment mingle with the gaping crowd that comes up running just as eagerly when he “drives forth in his triumphal chariot and gathers new triumphs” as when General Tom Thumb with his four ponies provides a diversion. It is not surprising that we hear the humming of street-songs, for to be welcomed with street-songs “belongs after all to the concept” of triumph “in general”.

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Marx & Engels — German Ideology

German Ideology

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Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

A Critique of the German Ideology

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The German ideology was never published in Marx or Engels lifetime. When the manuscript was discovered, tattered and worn down, the full book was published by the Institute of Marxism in the USSR. Since its publication, the first chapter received enormous popularity as an excellent overview of the materialist conception of history, while at the same time, the second and third chapter received unanimous notoriety for being drastically less helpful to all but the most dedicated scholars of Marxism.

While Chapters 2 & 3 are easy to neglect, there are portions of material where Marx and Engels were explaining their theory instead of critiquing others. The only criteria used for selecting material for this collection was simply that information where Marx and Engels explained their own theories.

If you would like to read their critique of Saint Max and Saint Bruno then read the full book; about a quarter of Chapters 2 & 3 are dedicated solely to a critique. Nearly the entire remainder of the book is a repetition of Saint Max and Saint Bruno's writings, very meticulously and thoroughly reproduced.

Paragraphs have been introduced to the selected passages for easier reading, and section headers have been inserted. Information abstracted by [Brian Basgen](#), 2000.

Idealism

" *Hierarchy is the domination of thought* , the domination of the spirit.... Hierarchy is the *supreme domination of spirit* ."

In the foregoing presentation Jacques le bonhomme conceives history merely as the product of abstract thoughts — or, rather, of his notions of abstract thoughts — as governed by these notions, which, in the final analysis, are all resolved into the "holy". This domination of the "holy", of thought, of the Hegelian [absolute idea](#) over the incurable world he further betrays as a historical relation existing at the present time, as the domination of the holy ones, the ideologies, over the vulgar world — as a *hierarchy*. In this hierarchy, what previously appeared *consecutively* exists *side-by-side*, so that one of the two co-existing forms of development rules over the other...

The outcome, of course, is bound to be that the domination which the "world of thoughts" exercises from the outset in history is at the end of the latter also presented as the real, actually existing domination of the thinkers — and, as we shall see, in the final analysis, as the domination of the speculative philosophers — over the world of things, so that Saint Max has only to fight against thoughts and ideas of the ideologies

and to overcome them, in order to make himself "possessor of the world of things in the world of thoughts".

p. 186 [MECW p. 172]

As for the actual hierarchy of the Middle Ages, we shall merely note here that it did not exist for the people, for the great mass of human beings. For the great mass only feudalism existed, and hierarchy only existed insofar as it was itself either feudal or anti-feudal (within the framework of feudalism). Feudalism itself had entirely empirical relations as its basis. Hierarchy and struggle against feudalism (the struggle of the ideologies of a class against the class itself) are only the ideological expression of feudalism and of the struggles developing within feudalism itself — which include also the struggles of the feudally organized nations among themselves. Hierarchy is the ideal form of feudalism; feudalism is a political form of the medieval relations of production and intercourse. Consequently, the struggle of feudalism against hierarchy can only be explained by elucidating these practical material relations. This elucidation of itself puts an end to the previous conception of history which took the illusions of the Middle Ages on trust, in particular those illusions which the Emperor and the Pope brought to bear in their struggle against each other.

p. 190 [MECW p. 176]

We now come to present-day hierarchy, to the domination of the idea in ordinary life.... Since the middle class demand love for *their* kingdom, their regime, they want, according to Jacques le bonhomme, to "establish the kingdom of love on earth". (p. 98) Since they demand

respect for their domination and for the conditions in which it is exercised, and therefore want to usurp domination over respect, they demand, according to this worthy man [Jacques le bonhomme], the domination of *respect* as such, their attitude towards respect is the same as towards the holy spirit dwelling within them. (p. 95) Jacques le bonhomme, with his faith that can move mountains, takes as the actual, earthly basis of the bourgeois world the distorted form in which the sanctimonious and hypocritical ideology of the bourgeoisie voices their particular interests as universal interests. Why this ideological delusion assumes precisely this form for our Saint, we shall see in connection with "political liberalism".

p. 193-4 [MECW p. 176]

On Religion

In religion people make their empirical world into an entity that is only conceived, imagined, that confronts them as something foreign. This again is by no means to be explained from other concepts, from "self-consciousness" and similar nonsense, but from the entire hitherto existing mode of production and intercourse, which is just as independent of the pure concept as the invention of the self-acting mule and the use of railways are independent of Hegelian philosophy. If he wants to speak of an "essence" of religion, i.e., of a material basis of this inessentiality, then he should look for it neither in the "essence of man", nor in the predicate of God, but in the material world which each stage of religious development finds in existence.

The only reason why Christianity wanted to free us from the domination of the flesh and "desires as a driving force" was because it regarded our flesh, our desires as something foreign to us; it wanted to free us from determination by nature only because it regarded our own nature as not belonging to us.

For if I myself am not nature, if my natural desires, my whole natural character, do not belong to myself — and this is the doctrine of Christianity — then all determination by nature — whether due to my own natural character or to what is known as external nature — seems to me a determination by something foreign, a fetter, compulsion used against me, *heteronomy as opposed to autonomy of the spirit* .

Incidentally, Christianity has indeed never succeeded in freeing us from the domination of desires.

Consciousness throughout history

[In ancient times] the ideas and thoughts of people were, of course, ideas and thoughts about themselves and their relationships, their consciousness of *themselves* and of people *in general* — for it was the consciousness not merely of a single individual but of the individual in his interconnection with the whole of society and about the whole of the

society in which they live.

The conditions, independent of them, in which they produce their life, the necessary forms of intercourse connected herewith, and the personal and social relations thereby given, had to take the form — insofar as they were expressed in thoughts — of ideal conditions and necessary relations, i.e., they had to be expressed in consciousness as determinations arising from the concept of man *as such* , from human essence, from the nature of man, from man *as such* . What people were, what their relations were, appeared in consciousness as ideas of man *as such* , of his modes of existence or of his immediate conceptual determinations.

So, after the ideologists had assumed that ideas and thoughts had dominated history up to now, that the history of these ideas and thoughts constitutes all history up to now, after they had imagined that real conditions had conformed to man *as such* and his ideal conditions, i.e., to conceptual determinations, after they had made the history of people's consciousness of themselves the basis of their actual history, after all this, nothing was easier than to call the history of consciousness, of ideas, of the holy, of established concepts — the history of "man" and to put it in the place of real history.

p. 198 [MECW p. 183]

An idealist conception of Humans

Sancho raises the important question:

"But how to curb the inhuman being who dwells in each individual? How can one manage not to set free the inhuman being along with the human being?... At the side of the human being there's always the inhuman being, that egoist, the individual. State, society, mankind cannot master this devil."

In the form in which Sancho understands it, the question again becomes sheer nonsense. He imagines that people up to now have always formed a concept of man, and then won freedom for themselves to the extent that was necessary to realize this concept; that the measure of freedom that they achieved was determined each time by their idea of the ideal of man at the time; it was thus unavoidable that in each individual there remained a residue which did not correspond to this ideal and, hence, since it was "inhuman", was either not set free or only freed *malgre eux* .

In reality, of course, what happened was that people won freedom for themselves each time to the extent that was dictated and permitted not by their ideal of man, but by the existing productive forces. All emancipation carried through hitherto has been based, however, on unrestricted productive forces. The production which these productive forces could provide was insufficient for the whole of society and made development possible only if some persons satisfied their needs at the expense of others, and therefore some — the minority — obtained the monopoly of development, while others — the majority — owing to the constant struggle to satisfy their most essential needs, were for the time being (i.e., until the creation of new revolutionary productive forces)

excluded from any development.

Thus, society has hitherto always developed within the framework of a contradiction — in antiquity the contradiction between freemen and slaves, in the Middle Ages that between nobility and serfs, in modern times that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This explains, on the one hand, the abnormal, "inhuman" way in which the oppressed class satisfies its needs, and, on the other hand, the narrow limits within which intercourse, and with it the whole ruling class, develops. And this restricted character of development consists not only in the exclusion of one class from development, but also in the narrowmindedness of the excluding class, and the "inhuman" is to be found also within the ruling class.

This so-called "inhuman" is just as much a product of present-day relations as the "human" is; it is their native aspect, the rebellion — which is not based on any new revolutionary productive force — against the prevailing relations brought about by the existing productive forces, and against the way of satisfying needs that correspond to these relations. The positive expression "human" corresponds to the definite relations *predominate* at a certain stage of production in the way of satisfying needs determined by them, just as the negative expression "inhuman" corresponds to the attempt to negate these predominate relations in the way of satisfying needs prevailing under them without changing the existing mode of production, an attempt that this stage of production daily engenders afresh.

On Language & Idealism

One of the most difficult tasks confronting philosophers is to descend from the world of thought to the actual world. *Language* is the immediate actuality of thought. Just as philosophers have given thought an independent existence, so they were bound to make language into an independent realm. This is a secret of philosophical language, in which thoughts in the form of words have their own content. The problem of descending from the world of thoughts to the actual world is turned into the problem of descending from language to life.

We have shown [in Chapter 1] that thoughts and ideas acquire an independent existence in consequence of the personal circumstances and relations of individuals acquiring independent existence. We have shown that exclusive, systematic occupation with these thoughts on the part of ideologists and philosophers, and hence the systemization of these thoughts, is a consequence of division of labour, and that, in particular, German philosophy is a consequence of German petty-bourgeois conditions. The philosophers have only to dissolve their language into the ordinary language, from which it is abstracted, in order to recognize it as the distorted language of the actual world and to realize that neither thoughts nor language in themselves form a realm of their own, that they are only *manifestations* of actual life.

p. 472-3 MECW p. 446

We have seen that the whole problem of the transition from thought to

reality, hence from language to life, exists only in philosophical illusion, i.e., it is justified only for philosophical consciousness, which cannot possibly be clear about the nature and origin of its apparent separation from life. This great problem, insofar as it at all entered the minds of our ideologists, was bound, of course, to result of finely in one of these knights-errant setting out in search of a word which, as a *word* , formed the transition in question, which, as a word, ceases to be simply a word, and which, as a word, in a mysterious super linguistic manner, points from within the language to the actual object it denotes; which, in short, plays among words the same role as the Redeeming God-Man plays among people in Christian fantasy. The emptiest, shallowest brain among the philosophers had to "end" philosophy by proclaiming his lack of thought to be the end of philosophy and thus the triumphant entry into "corporal" life. His philosophizing mental vacuity was already in itself the end of philosophy just as his unspeakable language was the end of all language.

p. 475 [MECW p. 449]

Individuality

Critique: "humans create themselves out of nothing"

Far from it being true that "out of nothing" I make myself, for example, a "[public] speaker", the nothing which forms the basis here is a very manifold something, the real individual, his speech organs, a definite stage of physical development, an existing language and dialects, ears capable of hearing and a human environment from which it is possible to hear something, etc., etc. therefore, in the development of a property something is created by something out of something, and by no means comes, as in Hegel's Logic, from nothing, through nothing to nothing. [Th. I. Abt. 2 of Hegel]

p. 162 [MECW p. 150]

Individualism in a class perspective

When the narrow-minded bourgeois says to the Communists: by abolishing property, i.e., my existence as a capitalist, as a landed proprietor, as a factory owner, and your existence as workers, you abolished my individuality and your own; by making it impossible for me to exploit you, the workers, to rake in my profit, interest or rent, you make it impossible for me to exist as an individual.

When, therefore, the bourgeois tells the Communists: by abolishing my existence *as the bourgeois*, you abolish my existence *as an individual*; when thus he identifies himself as a bourgeois with himself as an individual, one must, at least, recognize his frankness and

shamelessness. For the bourgeois it is actually the case, he believes himself to be an individual only in so far as he is a bourgeois.

But when the theoreticians of the bourgeoisie come forward and give a general expression to this assertion, when they equate the bourgeois's property with individuality in theory as well and want to give a logical justification for this equation, then this nonsense begins to become solemn and holy.

p. 246 [MECW p. 229]

The relation of individual interests to class interests

[Sancho asks:] How is it that personal interests always develop, against the will of individuals, into class interests, into common interests which acquire independent existence in relation to the individual persons, and in their independence assume the form of *general* interests? How is it that as such they come into contradiction with the actual individuals and in this contradiction, by which they are defined as *general* interests, they can be conceived by consciousness as *ideal* and even as religious, holy interests? How is it that in this process of private interests acquiring independent existence as class interests the personal behavior of the individual is bound to be objectified [sich versachlichen], estranged [sich entfremden], and at the same time exists as a power independent of him and without him, created by intercourse, and is transformed into social relations, into a series of powers which determined and subordinate the individual, in which, therefore, appear

in the imagination as "holy" powers?

Had Sancho understood the fact that within the framework of definite *modes of production* , which, of course, are not dependent on the will, alien practical forces, which are independent not only of isolated individuals but even of all of them together, always come to stand above people — then he could be fairly indifferent as to whether this fact is preserved in the religious form or distorted in the fancy of the egoist, above whom everything is placed in imagination, in such a way that he places nothing above himself. Sancho would then have descended from the realm of speculation into the realm of reality, from what people fancy to what they actually are, from what they imagine to how they act and are bound to act in definite circumstances. What seems to him a product of *thought* , he would have understood to be a product of *life* . He would not then have arrived at the absurdity worthy of him — of explaining the division between personal and general interests by saying that people imagine this division *also* in a religious way and *seem* to themselves to be such and such, which is, however, only another word for "imagining".

Incidentally, even in the banal, petty-bourgeois German form in which Sancho perceives contradiction of personal and general interests, he should realize that individuals have always started out from themselves, and could not do otherwise, and that therefore the two aspects he noted are aspects of the personal development of individuals; both are equally engendered by the empirical conditions under which the individuals live, both are only expressions of *one and the same* personal

development of people and are therefore only in *seeming* contradiction to each other.

p. 262-3 [MECW p. 245]

The role of will in the desires of an individual

Whether a desire becomes fixed or not, i.e., whether it obtains exclusive [power over us] — which, however, does [not] exclude [further progress] — depends on whether material circumstances, "bad" mundane conditions permit the normal satisfaction of this desire and, on the other hand, the development of a totality of desires. This latter depends, in turn, on whether we live in circumstances that allow all-round activity and thereby the full development of all our potentialities. On the actual conditions, and the possibility of development they give each individual, depends also whether thoughts become fixed or not — just as, for example, the fixed ideas of the German philosophers, these "victims of society", *qui nous font pitie* [for whom we feel pity], are inseparable from the German conditions.

An avaricious person is not an owner, but a servant, and he can do nothing for his own sake without at the same time doing it for the sake of his master."

No one can do anything without at the same time doing it for the sake of one or other of his needs and for the sake of the organ of this need — for Stirner this means that this need and its organ are made into a master over him, just as earlier he made the *means* for satisfying a need into a

master over him. Stirner cannot eat without at the same time eating for the sake of his stomach. If the worldly conditions prevent him from satisfying his stomach, then his stomach becomes a master over him, the desire to eat becomes a fixed desire, and the thought of eating becomes a fixed idea — which at the same time gives him an example of the influence of world conditions and fixing his desires and ideas. Sancho's "revolt" against the fixation of desires and thoughts is thus reduced to an impotent moral injunction about self-control and provides new evidence that he merely gives an ideologically high sounding expression to the most trivial sentiments of the petty-bourgeois.

[The following two paragraphs are crossed out in the manuscript (brackets are used for words that were illegible)]:

Since they attack the material basis on which the hitherto inevitable fixedness of desires and ideas depended, the Communists are the only people through whose historical activity the liquefaction of the fixed desires and ideas is in fact brought about and ceases to be an impotent moral injunction, as it was up to now with all moralists "down to" Stirner. Communist organization has a twofold effect on the desires produced in the individual by present-day relations; some of these desires — namely desires which exist under all relations, and only change their form and direction under different social relations — are merely altered by the Communist social system, for they are given the opportunity to develop normally; but others — namely those originating solely in a particular society, under particular conditions of [production] and intercourse — are totally deprived of their conditions of existence.

Which [of the desires] will be merely changed and [which eliminated] in a Communist [society] can [only occur in a practical] way, by [changing the real], actual [conditions of production and intercourse.]

A desire is already by its mere existence something "fixed", and it can occur only to St. Max and his like not to allow his sex instinct, for instance, to become "fixed"; it is that already and will cease to be fixed only as a result of castration or impotence. Each need, which forms the basis of a "desire", is likewise something "fixed", and try as he may St. Max cannot abolish this "fixedness" and for example contrive to free himself from the necessity of eating within "fixed" periods of time. The Communists have no intention of abolishing the fixedness of their desires and needs, an intention which Stirner, immersed in his world of fancy, ascribes to them and all other men; they only strive to achieve an organization of production and intercourse which will make possible the normal satisfaction of all needs, i.e., a satisfaction which is limited only by the needs themselves.

p. 272-3 [MECW p 255]

Individuality in thought and desire

It depends not on *consciousness* , but on *being* ; not on thought, but on life; it depends on the individual's empirical development and manifestation of life, which in turn depends on the conditions existing in the world.

If the circumstances in which the individual lives allow him only the [one]-sided development of one quality at the expense of all the rest, [if] they give him the material and time to develop only that one quality, then this individual achieves only a one-sided, crippled development. No moral preaching avails here. And the manner in which this one, preeminently favored quality develops depends again, on the one hand, on the material available for its development and, on the other hand, on the degree and manner in which the other qualities are suppressed.

Precisely because thought, for example, is the thought of a particular, definite individual, it remains *his* definite thought, determined by his individuality in the conditions in which he lives. The thinking individual therefore has no need to resort to prolonged reflection about thought as such in order to declare that his thought is his own thought, his property; from the outset it is his own, peculiarly determined thought and it was precisely his peculiarity which [in the case of St.] Sancho [was found to be] the "opposite" of this, the peculiarity which is peculiar "*as such*".

In the case of an individual, for example, whose life embraces a wide circle of varied activities and practical relations to the world, and who, therefore, lives a many-sided life, thought has the same character of universality as every other manifestation of his life. Consequently, it neither becomes fixed in the form of abstract thought nor does it need complicated tricks of reflection when the individual passes from thought to some other manifestation of life. From the outset it is always a factor in the total life of the individual, one which disappears and is

reproduced as *required* .

In the case of a parochial Berlin schoolmaster or author, however, whose activity is restricted to arduous work on the one hand and the pleasure of thought on the other, whose world extends from [the small confines of their city], whose relations to this world are reduced to a minimum by his pitiful position in life, when such an individual experiences the need to think, it is indeed inevitable that his thought becomes just as abstract as he himself and his life, and that thought confronts him, who is quite incapable of resistance, in the form of a fixed power, whose activity offers the individual the possibility of a momentary escape from his "bad world", of a momentary pleasure.

In the case of such an individual the few remaining desires, which arise not so much from intercourse with a world as from the constitution of the human body, expressed themselves only through *repercussion* , i.e., they assume their narrow development the same one-sided and crude character as does his thought, they appear only along intervals, stimulated by the excessive development of the predominant desire (fortified by immediate physical causes, e.g., [stomach] spasm) and are manifested turbulently and forcibly, with the most brutal suppression of the ordinary, [natural] desire [— this leads to further] domination over [thought.] As a matter of course, the schoolmaster's [thinking reflects on and speculates about] is empirical [fact in a school] masterly fashion.

p. 280-1 [MECW p. 262]

Needs being the vocation of all human beings

For St. Sancho vocation has a double form; firstly as a vocation which others choose for me — examples of which we have already had above in the case of newspapers that are full of politics and the prisons that our Saint mistook for houses of moral correction. Afterward vocation appears also as a vocation in which the individual himself believes.

If the ego is divorced from all its empirical conditions of life, it's activity, the conditions of its existence, if it is separated from the world that forms its basis and from its own body, then, of course, it has no other vocation and no other designation than that of representing the human being of the logical proposition and to assist St. Sancho in arriving at the equations given above.

In the real world, on the other hand, where individuals have needs, they thereby already have a *vocation* and *task* ; and at the outset it is still immaterial whether they make this their vocation in their imagination as well. It is clear, however, that because the individuals possess consciousness they form an idea of this vocation which their empirical existence has given them and, thus, furnish St. Sancho with the opportunity of seizing on the word vocation, that is, on the mental expression of their actual conditions of life, and of leading out of account these conditions of life themselves.

The proletarian, for example, who like every human being has the vocation of satisfying his needs and who is not in a position to satisfy even the needs that he has in common with all human beings, the

proletarian whom the necessity to work a 14 hour day debases to the level of the beast of burden, whom competition degrades to a mere thing, an article of trade, who from his position as a mere productive force, the sole position left to him, is squeezed out by other, more powerful productive forces — this proletarian is, if only for these reasons, confronted with the real task of revolutionizing his conditions. He can, of course, imagine this to be his "vocation", he can also, if he likes to engage in propaganda, express his "vocation" by saying that to do this or that is the human vocation of the proletarian, the more so since his position does not even allow him to satisfy the needs arising directly from his human nature. St. Sancho does not concern himself with the reality underlining this idea, with the practical name of this proletarian — he clings to the word "vocation" and declares it to be the holy, and the proletarian to be a servant of the holy — the easiest way of considering himself superior and "proceeding further".

Particularly in the relations that have existed hitherto, when one class always ruled, when the conditions of life of an individual always coincided with the conditions of life of a class, when, therefore, the practical task of each newly emerging class was bound to appear to each of its members as a *universal* task, and when each class could actually overthrow its predecessor only by liberating the individuals of *all* classes from certain chains which had hitherto fettered them — under these circumstances it was essential that the task of the individual members of a class striving for domination should be described as a universal human task.

Incidentally, when for example the bourgeois tells the proletarian that his, the proletarian's, human task is to work 14 hours a day, the proletarian is quite justified in replying in the same language that, on the contrary, his task is to overthrow the entire bourgeois system.

p. 305-7 [MECW p. 288]

"Vocation, designation, task, ideal" are either:

1. The idea of the revolutionary tasks laid down for an oppressed class by the material conditions; or
2. Mere idealistic paraphrases, or also the conscious expression of the individuals' modes of activity which owing to the division of labour have assumed independent existence as various professions; or
3. The conscious expression of the necessity which at every moment confronts individuals, classes and nations to assert their position through some quite definite activity; or
4. The conditions of existence of the ruling class (as determined by the preceding development of production), ideally expressed in law, morality, etc., to which [conditions] the ideologists of that class more or less consciously gave a sort of theoretical independence; they can be conceived by separate individuals of that class as vocation, etc., and are held up as a standard of life to the individuals of the oppressed class, partly as an intelligent or recognition of

domination, partly as the moral means for this domination. It is to be noted here, as in general with ideologists, that they inevitably put a thing upside-down and regard their ideology both as the creative force and as the aim of all social relations, whereas it is only an expression and symptom of these relations.

p. 444 [MECW p. 419]

The role of individual will in the foundation of the state

In actual history, those theoreticians who regarded *might* as the basis of right were in direct contradiction to those who looked on *will* as the basis of right... If power is taken as the basis of right, as Hobbes, etc., do, then right, law, etc., are merely the symptom, the expression of *other* relations upon which state power rests.

The material life of individuals, which by no means depends merely on their "will", their mode of production and form of intercourse, which mutually determined each other — this is the real basis of the state and remained so at all the stages at which division of labor and private property are still necessary, quite independently of the *will* of individuals. These actual relations are in no way created by the state power; on the contrary they are the power creating it.

The individuals who rule in these conditions — leaving aside the fact that their power must assume the form of the *state* — have to give their

will, which is determined by these definite conditions, a universal expression as the will of the state, as law, an expression whose content is always determined by the relations of this class, as the civil and criminal law demonstrates in the clearest possible way. Just as the weight of their bodies does not depend on their idealistic will or on their arbitrary decision, so also the fact that they enforce their own will in the form of law, and at the same time to make it independent of the personal arbitrariness of each individual among them, does not depend on their idealistic will.

Their personal rule must at the same time assume the form of average rule. Their personal power is based on conditions of life which as they develop are common to many individuals, and the continuance of which they, as ruling individuals, have to maintain against others and, at the same time, to maintain that they are holding good for everybody. The expression of this will, which is determined by their common interests, is the law.

It is precisely because individuals who are independent of one another assert themselves and their own will, and because on this basis their attitude to one another is bound to be egoistical, that self-denial is made necessary in law and right, self-denial in the exceptional case, in self-assertion of their interests in the average case (which, therefore, not *they*, but only the "egoist in agreement with himself" regards as self-denial). The same applies to the classes which are ruled, whose will plays just as small a part in determining the existence of law and the state.

For example, so long as the productive forces are still insufficiently developed to make competition superfluous, and therefore would give rise to competition over and over again, for so long the classes which are ruled would be wanting to be impossible if they had the "will" to abolish competition and with it the state and the law. Incidentally, too, it is only in the imagination of the ideologists that this "will" arises before relations have developed far enough to make the emergence of such a will possible. After relations have developed sufficiently to produce it, the ideologist is able to imagine this will as being purely arbitrary and therefore as conceivable at all times and under all circumstances.

Like right, so crime, i.e., the struggle of the isolated individual against the predominant relations, is not the result of pure arbitrariness. On the contrary, it depends on the same conditions as that domination. The same visionaries who see in right and law the domination of some independently existing general will see in crime the mere violation of right and along. Hence the state does not exist owing to the dominant will, but the state, which arises from the material mode of life of individuals, has also the form of a dominant will. If the latter loses its domination, it means that not only the will has changed but also the material existence and life of individuals, and only for that reason has their will changed. It is possible for rights and laws to be "inherited", but in that case they are no longer dominant, but nominal, of which striking examples are furnished by the history of ancient Roman law and English law.

We saw earlier how a theory and history of pure thought could arise among philosophers owing to the separation of ideas from the individuals and empirical relations which serve as the basis of these ideas. In the same way, here too one can separate right from its real basis, whereby one obtains a "dominant will" which in different eras undergoes various modifications and has its own, independent history in its creations, the laws. On this account, political and civil history becomes ideologically merged in a history of the domination of successive laws.... The most superficial examination of legislation, e.g., for laws and all countries, shows how far the rulers got when they imagined that they could achieve something by means of their "dominant will" alone, i.e., simply by exercising their will.

p. 348-50 [MECW p. 329]

Individuals and their relationships

Even that which constitutes the advantage of an individual as such over other individuals, is in our day at the same time a product of society and in its realization is bound to assert itself as privilege, as we have already shown Sancho in connection [with competition](#). Further, the individual as such, regarded by himself, is subordinated to division of labour, which makes him one-sided, cripples and determines him.

Individuals have always and in all circumstances "proceeded *from themselves*", but since they were not *unique* in the sense of not needing any connections with one another, and since their *needs*, consequently

their nature, and the method of satisfying their needs, connected them with one another (relations between the sexes, exchange, division of labour), they *had to* enter into relations with one another. Moreover, since they entered into intercourse with one another not as pure egos, but as individuals at a definite stage of development of their productive forces and requirements, and since this intercourse, in its turn, determined production and needs, it was, therefore, precisely the personal, individual behavior of individuals, their behavior to one another as individuals, that created the existing relations and daily reproduces them anew. They entered into intercourse with one another as what they were, they proceeded "from themselves", as they were, irrespective of their "outlook on life".

This "outlook on life" — even the warped one of the [idealist] philosophers — could, of course, only be determined by their actual life. Hence it certainly follows that the development of an individual is determined by the development of all the others with whom he is directly or indirectly associative, and that the different generations of individuals entering into relations with one another are connected with one another, that the physical existence of the latter generations is determined by that of their predecessors, and that these later generations inherit the productive forces and forms of intercourse accumulated by their predecessors, their own mutual relations being determined thereby. In short, it is clear that development takes place and that the history of the single individual cannot possibly be separated from the history of preceding or contemporary individuals, but is determined by this history.

The transformation of the individual relationship into its opposite, a purely material relationship, the distinction of individuality and fortuity by the individuals themselves is a historical process, as we have already shown ([Chapter 1, Part IV, § 6](#)), and at different stages of development it assumes different, ever sharper and more universal forms.

In the present epoch, the domination of material relations over individuals, and the suppression of individuality by fortuitous circumstances, has assumed its sharpest and most universal form, thereby setting existing individuals a very definite task. It has set them the task of replacing the domination of circumstances and a chance over individuals by the domination of individuals over chance and circumstances. It has not, as Sancho imagines, put forward the demand that "I should develop myself", which up to now every individual has done without Sancho's good advice; it has on the contrary called for liberation from a quite definite mode of development. This task, dictated by present-day relations, coincides with the task of organizing society in the Communist way.

We have already shown above that the abolition of a state of affairs in which relations become independent of individuals, in which individuality is subservient to chance and the personal relations of individuals are subordinated to general class relations, etc. — that the abolition of this state of affairs is determined in the final analysis by the abolition of division of labour. We also shown that the abolition of division of labour is determined by the development of intercourse and productive forces to such a degree of universality that private property

and division of labour becomes fetters on them. We have further shown that private property can be abolished only on condition of an all-around development of individuals, precisely because the existing form of intercourse and the existing productive forces are all embracing and only individuals that are developing in an all-around fashion can appropriate them, i.e., can turn them into free manifestations of their lives. We have shown that at the present time individuals *must* abolish private property, because the productive forces and forms of intercourse have developed so far that, under the domination of private property, they have become destructive forces, and because the contradiction between the classes has reached its extreme limit. Finally, we have shown that the abolition of private property in the division of labour is itself the association of individuals on the basis created by modern productive forces and world's intercourse. [See Chapter One]

Within Communist society, the only society in which the genuine and free development of individuals ceases to be a mere phrase, this development is determined precisely by the connection of individuals, a connection which consists partly in the economic prerequisites and partly in the necessary solidarity of the free development of all, and finally, in the universal character of the activity of individuals on the basis of the existing productive forces. We are, therefore, here concerned with individuals at a definite historical stage of development and by no means merely with individuals chosen at random, even disregarding the indispensable Communist revolution, which itself is a general condition for their free development. The individuals' consciousness of their mutual relations will, of course, likewise be

completely changed, and, therefore, will no more be the "principal of love" or *devoument* than it will be egoism.

p. 463-5 [MECW p. 437]

Miscellaneous

The Family

[In the family] entirely empirical relations dominate. The attitude of the bourgeois to the institutions of his regime is like that of the Jew to the law; he evades them whenever it is possible to do so in each individual case, but he wants everyone else to observe them. If the entire bourgeoisie, in a mass and at one time, were to evade bourgeois institutions, it would cease to be bourgeois — a conduct which, of course, never occurs to the bourgeois and by no means depends on their willing or running [i.e., it is dictated by historical conditions]. The dissolute bourgeois evades marriage and secretly commits adultery; the merchant evades the institution of property by depriving others of property by speculation, bankruptcy, etc.; the young bourgeois makes himself independent of his family, if he can by in fact abolishing the

family as far as he is concerned.

But marriage, property, the family remain untouched in theory, because they are the practical basis on which the bourgeoisie has directed its domination, and because in their bourgeois form they are the conditions which make the bourgeois a bourgeois, just as the constantly evaded law makes the religious Jew a religious Jew. This attitude of the bourgeois to the conditions of his existence acquires one of its universal forms in bourgeois mentality. One cannot speak at all of the family " *as such* ". Historically the bourgeois gives the family the character of the bourgeois family, in which boredom and money are the binding link, in which also includes the bourgeois dissolution of the family, which does not prevent the family itself from always continuing to exist. It's dirty existence as its counterpart in the holy concept of it in official phraseology and universal hypocrisy.

Where the family is *actually* abolished, as with the proletariat, just the opposite of what "Stirner" thinks takes place. Then the concept of the family does not exist at all, but here and there family affection based on extremely real relations is certainly to be found.

In the 18th-century the concept of the [feudal] family was abolished by the philosophers, because the actual family was already in the process of dissolution at the highest pinnacles of civilization. The internal family bond, the separate components constituting the concept of the family were dissolved, for example, obedience, piety, fidelity in marriage, etc.; but the real body the family, the property relation, the exclusive attitude in relation to their families, forced cohabitation —

relations determined by the existence of children, the structure of modern towns, the formation of capital, etc. — all these were preserved, along with numerous violations, because the existence of the family is made necessary by its connection with the mode of production, which exists independently of the will of bourgeois society.

That it was impossible to do without it was demonstrated in the most striking way during the French Revolution, when for a moment the family was as good as legally abolished. The family continues to exist even in the 19th-century, only the process of its dissolution has become more general, not on account of the concept, but because of the higher development of industry and competition; the family still exists although its dissolution was long ago proclaimed by French and English Socialists and this has at last penetrated also to the German church fathers, by way of French novels. [\[A\]](#)

p. 194-5 [MECW p. 180]

[\[A\]](#) The sarcasm of Marx and Engels may not be retained in this shortened form; this statement is saracastic. Marx and Engels are explaining that ideas and novels alone cannot change the fact; only *real* changes in the relations of production, i.e. only through the establishment of communism, will the family *actually* be abolished.

Consciousness changing with the development of society

The more the normal form of intercourse of society, and with it the

conditions of the ruling class, develop their contradiction to the advanced productive forces, and the greater the consequent discord within the ruling class itself as well as between it and the class ruled by it, the more fictitious, of course, becomes the consciousness which originally corresponded to this form of intercourse (i.e., it ceases to be the consciousness corresponding to this form of intercourse), and the more do the old traditional ideas of these relations of intercourse, in which actual private interests, etc., etc., are expressed as universal interests, descend to the level of mere idealizing phrases, conscious illusion, deliberate hypocrisy. But the more their falsity is exposed by life, and the less meaning they have to consciousness itself, the more resolutely are they asserted, the more hypocritical, moral and holy becomes the language of this normal society.

p. 310 [MECW p. 293]

Freeing labor

The *modern* state, the rule of the bourgeoisie, is based on *freedom of labour* Freedom of Labour is free competition of the workers among themselves.... Labor *is free* in all civilized countries; it is not a matter of freeing labor but of abolishing it.

p. 220-221 [MECW p. 205]

Free activity for the Communists is the creative manifestation of life arising from the free development of all abilities of the whole person.

Communists on selfishness and selflessness

Communists do not oppose egoism to selflessness or selflessness to egoism, nor do they express this contradiction theoretically either in its sentimental or in its highflown ideological form; they rather demonstrate its material source, with which it disappears of itself. The Communists do not preach *morality* at all.

They do not put to people the moral demand: love one another, do not be egoists, etc.; on the contrary, they are very well aware that egoism, just as much selflessness, *is* in definite circumstances a necessary form of the self-assertion of individuals. Hence, the Communists by no means want to do away with the "private individual" for the sake of the "general", selfless man. That is a statement of the imagination.

Communist theoreticians, the only Communists who have time to devote to the study of history, are distinguished precisely by the fact that they alone have *discovered* that throughout history the "general interest" is created by individuals who are defined as "private persons". They know that this contradiction is only a *seeming* one because one side of it, what is called the "general interest", is constantly being produced by the other side, private interest, and in relation to the latter is by no means an independent force with an independent history — so that this contradiction is in practice constantly destroyed and reproduced. Hence it is not a question of the Hegelian "negative unity"

of two sides of the contradiction, but of the materially determined destruction of the preceding materially determined mode of life of individuals, with the disappearance of which this contradiction together with its unity also disappears.

p. 264-5 [MECW p. 247]

Alienation due to private property

Private property alienates the individuality not only of people but also of things. Land has nothing to do with rent of land, the machine has nothing to do with profit. For the landed proprietor, land has the significance only of rent of land; he leases his plots of land and receives rent; this is a feature which land can lose without losing a single one of its inherent features, without, for example, losing any part of its fertility; it is a feature the extent and even the existence of which depends on social relations which are created and destroyed without the assistance of individual landed proprietors. It is the same with machines. How little connection there is between money, the most general form of property, and personal peculiarity, how much they are directly opposed to each other was already known to Shakespeare better than to our theorizing petty-bourgeois:

Thus much of this will make black, white; foul, fair;
 Wrong, right; base, noble; old, young; coward, valiant.
 This yellow slave...
 Will make the hoar leprosy adored...

This it is
That makes the wappened widow wed again;
She, whom the spittle-house and ulcerous sores
Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
To th' April day again...

Thou visible god,
That solder'st close impossibilities,
And makest them kiss!

[William Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens* , Act IV, Scene III.]

In a word, rent of land, profit, etc., these forms of existence of private property, are *social relations* corresponding to a definite stage of production, and they are "individual" only so long as they have not become fetters on the existing productive forces.

p. 247-8 [MECW p. 231]

The relation of the bourgeois to the capitalist state

With the development and accumulation of bourgeois property, i.e., with the development of commerce and industry, individuals grew richer and richer while the state fell ever more deeply into debt.

It is therefore obvious that as soon as the bourgeoisie has accumulated money, the state has to beg from the bourgeoisie and in the end it is actually bought up by the latter. This takes place in the period in which the bourgeoisie is still confronted by another class, and consequently the state can retain some appearance of independence in relation to both

of them. Even after the state has been bought up [by special trusts, interest groups, lobbying, bribes, etc.], it still needs money and, therefore, continues to be dependent on the bourgeoisie; nevertheless, when the interests of the bourgeoisie demanded, the state can have had its disposal more funds than states which are less developed and, therefore, less burdened with debts.

p. 382 [MECW p. 361]

On Competition

Those relations brought about by competition: the abolition of local narrowness, the establishment of means of communication, highly developed division of Labour, world intercourse, the proletariat, machinery, the relation between supply and demand, etc. *

As for the proletarians, they — at any rate in the modern form — first arose out of competition; they have already repeatedly set up collected enterprises which, however, always perish because they were unable to compete with the "contending" private bankers, butchers, etc., and because for proletarians — owing to the frequent opposition of interests among them arising out of the division of labour — no other "agreement" is possible than a political one directed against the whole present system. Where the development of competition enables the proletarians to "come to an understanding", they reach an understanding not about public bakeries but about quite different matters [i.e. the overthrow of the bourgeois system for a proletarian one.].

Personal Competition

Incidentally, competition certainly began as a "competition of persons" possessing "personal means". The liberation of the feudal serfs, the first condition of competition, and the first accumulation of "things" were purely "personal" acts.

If one person, thanks to good food, careful education and physical exercise, has acquired well-developed bodily powers and skill, while another, owing to inadequate and unhealthy food and consequent poor digestion, and as the result of neglect in childhood and overexertion, has never been able to acquire the "things" necessary for developing his muscles — not to mention acquiring mastery over them — within the "personal power" of the first in relation to the second is a purely material one. It was not "through personal power" that he gained the "means that were lacking"; on the contrary, he owes his "personal power" to the material means already existing.

Incidentally, the transformation of personal means into material means and of material means into personal means is only an aspect of competition and quite inseparable from it. The demand that competition should be conducted not with material means but with personal means amounts to the moral postulate that competition and the relations on which it depends *should* have consequences other than those inevitably

arising from them.

p. 397-8 [MECW p. 374]

The monetary crisis

The power of money, the fact that the universal means of exchange becomes independent in relation both to society and to individuals, reveals most clearly that the relations of production and intercourse as a whole assume an independent existence....

The material power of money, which is strikingly revealed in monetary crisis and which, in the form of a prominent scarcity of money, oppresses the petty-bourgeois who is "inclined to make purchases", is likewise a highly unpleasant fact for that egoist [a reference to Sancho] in agreement with himself. He gets rid of the difficulty by reversing the ordinary idea of the petty-bourgeois, thus making it appear that the attitude of individuals to the power of money is something that depends solely on their personal willing or running. This fortunate turn of thought then gives him the chance of reading a moral lecture, buttressed by synonymy, etymology and vowel mutation, to the astounded petty-bourgeois already disheartening by lack of money, and thus debarring in advance all inconvenient questions about the causes of the pecuniary embarrassment.

The monetary crisis consist primarily in the fact that all "wealth" [vermogen] suddenly becomes depreciated in relation to the means of

exchange and loses its "power" [vermogen] over money. A crisis is in existence precisely when one can no longer pay with one's "wealth"[vermogen], but *must* pay with money. And this again does not happen because of a shortage of money, as is imagined by the petty-bourgeois who judges the crisis by his personal difficulties, but because the specific difference becomes fixed between money and as the *universal* commodity, the "marketable property and property in circulation", and all the other, *particular* commodities, which suddenly ceased to be marketable property.

p. 419-20 [MECW p. 396]

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