

Communism

#13 November 2020

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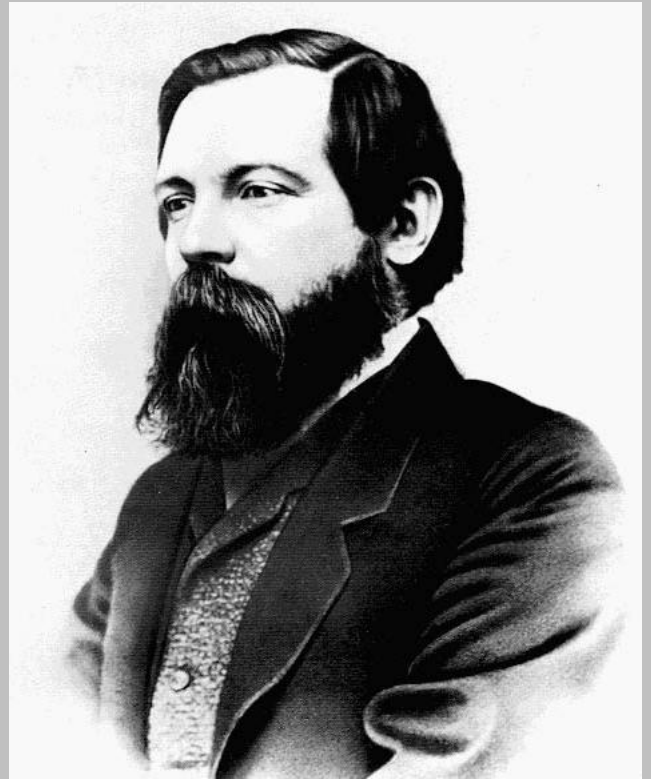
**200th birth
anniversary of
Friedrich Engels**



editorial

This issue of **Communism** celebrates in a strong manner the 200th birth anniversary of Friedrich Engels, who was the great comrade of Karl Marx, the tireless militant of the workers' movement, the powerful contributor to the founding of the Second International.

Of course, particular emphasis is placed on Friedrich Engels's contributions to dialectical materialism. This is indeed the very core of communist ideology, the core of its scientific nature.



Honour to Friedrich Engels on his 200th Birthday!
Let's hail this master of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

To learn from Friedrich Engels is essential for anyone who wants to keep up with the times, something naturally obvious for who wants to make a revolution. This issue, in addition to presenting documents on this topic, provides an introduction to the teachings of Friedrich Engels concerning dialectical materialism, by explaining his remarks on matter, the nature of the movement of matter, the dialectical materialist vision of the world..

We call to follow
the websites :
vivelemaoisme.org
materialisme-dialectique.com

Introduction to Friedrich Engels's Dialectical Materialism

A same thing is never really the same

A hand is a hand and our hand does not change. However, our hand is not that of the neighbor, and vice versa.... And it still remains a hand.

And if our hand doesn't change... it does change: it grows, it gets damaged, it ages, just like us.



Friedrich Engels says:

Every organized being is every moment the same and not the same; every moment, it assimilates matter supplied from without, and gets rid of other matter; every moment, some cells of its body die and others build themselves anew; in a longer or shorter time, the matter of its body is completely renewed, and is replaced by other molecules of matter, so that every organized being is always itself, and yet something other than itself.

The hand has been the same without remaining so

The hand has remained the same for living things for generations and generations - and yet it has evolved over Time, through generations. Our cousins who did not have the same course must unfortunately suffer of that because of our fault.



Friedrich Engels thus notes this evolution:

When after thousands of years of struggle the differentiation of hand from foot, and erect gait, were finally established, man became distinct from the monkey and the basis was laid for the development of articulate speech and the mighty development of the brain that has since made the gulf between man and monkey an unbridgeable one.

The specialisation of the hand - this implies the tool, and the tool implies specific human activity, the transforming reaction of man on nature, production.

Never being the same, a thing is defined by its movement

A thing being both itself and not itself, it only lets itself be grasped by its movement, which allows it to be grasped in what it is itself and in what it is not. It is through its transformation that we can see what the thing is, how it exists, in what frame, with what nature. A thing only obtains genuine recognition by grasping its own nature, which is to be in motion.

Friedrich Engels says:

Dialectics of natural science[201]: Subject-matter – matter in motion. The different forms and varieties of matter itself can likewise only be known through motion, only in this are the properties of bodies exhibited; of a body that does not move there is nothing to be said. Hence the nature of bodies in motion results from the forms of motion.

Everything is in motion, all the time

There is no beginning and no end, because nothing is static. Nothing remains the same, nothing can have been created, "put" in a place by a "creator". A settled thing would remain as it is, it would not know movement, it would always be the same, it would be eternal.

In fact, everything changes all the time, as shown by the history of rocks, the history of living things, the history of continents, the history of stars.

Friedrich Engels remembers us that:

Modern natural science has had to take over from philosophy the principle of the indestructibility of motion; it cannot any longer exist without this principle.



To be a scientist is to study movement

What we call science is the study of movement in its specificities, seeking to obtain the necessary perspective to be able to grasp past, present and future transformations.

Friedrich Engels emphasizes that:

Geology is its history. On the surface, mechanical changes (denudation, frost), chemical changes (weathering); internally, mechanical changes (pressure), heat (volcanic), chemical (water, acids, binding substances); on a large scale – upheavals, earthquakes, etc. The slate of today is fundamentally different from the ooze from which it is formed, the chalk from the loose microscopic shells that compose it, even more so limestone, which indeed according to some is of purely organic origin, and sandstone from the loose sea sand, which again is derived from disintegrated granite, etc., not to speak of coal.

Movement defines things and things define movement



How do we talk about things? We speak of things according to their movement, the relationship with them, the relationship between them.

When we talk about mud and rain, we immediately think of their properties, the same when we talk about a cake. We rely on how the thing is made up, where it lives, how it acts.

Coffee or tea is similarly defined by its nature in motion, from its growth as a plant to its consumption.

Friedrich Engels explains:

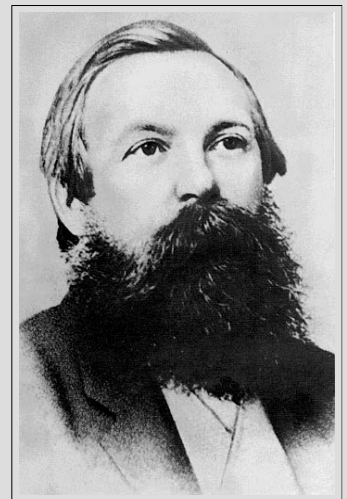
Motion in the most general sense, conceived as the mode of existence, the inherent attribute of matter, comprehends all changes and processes occurring in the universe, from mere change of place right up to thinking.

“Motion is the mode of existence of matter.

Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be.

Motion in cosmic space, mechanical motion of smaller masses on the various celestial bodies, the vibration of molecules as heat or as electrical or magnetic currents, chemical disintegration and combination, organic life – at each given moment each individual atom of matter in the world is in one or other of these forms of motion, or in several forms at once.

All rest, all equilibrium, is only relative, only has meaning in relation to one or other definite form of motion (...). Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself.”



Movement is quality and quantity and defines things

Hunger expresses the need for energy, energy that is lacking in our movement. Hunger is a quality that expresses the need for quantity. This quantity then allows a quality: activity.

The relationship between this quantity and this quality, the type of activity, the way in which this activity occurs as well as this relationship between quantity and quality... defines things.

Things only exist because there is movement: it is movement that decides their physical and chemical properties, and vice versa. To exist is to be in motion in a certain qualitative and quantitative way.



Friedrich Engels sums up that by telling us that:

In nature, in a manner exactly fixed for each individual case, qualitative changes can only occur by the quantitative addition or subtraction of matter or motion (so-called energy).

All qualitative differences in nature rest on differences of chemical composition or on different quantities or forms of motion (energy) or, as is almost always the case, on both.

Physical chemistry is a study of movement



The movement itself is not static: it cannot be, because it is carried by the matter itself in motion.

The movement is therefore transformed, according to the properties of the material carrying it.

Amino acids build muscle, charcoal produces steam for mechanical movement, gasoline provides combustion to run an engine, plants photosynthesize from light energy, and more.

There is a back and forth game, of interactions between everything that exists and of changes in the nature of movement.

Friedrich Engels notes the conversion, the transformation of movement:

Mechanical motion of masses passes into heat, into electricity, into magnetism; heat and electricity pass into chemical decomposition; chemical combination in turn develops heat and electricity and, by means of the latter, magnetism; and finally, heat and electricity produce once more mechanical movement of masses. Moreover, these changes take place in such a way that a given quantity of motion of one form always has corresponding to it an exactly fixed quantity of another form.

No quality without quantity and vice versa

We know the question about what is heavier: a hundred kilos of lead or a hundred kilos of feathers (not to mention the moral weight to be carried from what happened to the birds).

It shows that quality and quantity are linked: the quality of lead means that it does not take as much as feathers to weigh a hundred kilograms.

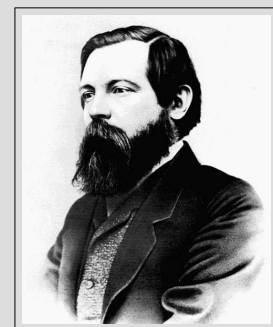
To study things is to look at how they are in movement and how this movement depends on a very particular relationship between quality and quantity.



Friedrich Engels tells us so:

Chemistry can be termed the science of the qualitative changes of bodies as a result of changed quantitative composition.

“Light and darkness are certainly the most conspicuous and definite opposites in nature; they have always served as a rhetorical phrase for religion and philosophy from the time of the fourth Gospel to the lumières of the eighteenth century.”



The discovery of quality and quantity is the basis of the transformation of the reality of humanity



In order to evolve, humanity has generalized its perception and understanding of quality and quantity.

This is how it was able to take advantage of its environment to make it life easier and to be able to develop thanks to an improved material framework.

Humans forming a certain quantity have noticed the quality existing in certain phenomena, such as fire.

Mankind then used qualities to modify the environment taken as quantity.

Friedrich Engels emphasizes that:

The practical discovery of the conversion of mechanical motion into heat is so very ancient that it can be taken as dating from the beginning of human history. Whatever discoveries, in the way of tools and domestication of animals, may have preceded it, the making of fire by friction was the first instance of men pressing a non-living force of nature into their service. Popular superstitions to-day still show how greatly the almost immeasurable import of this gigantic advance impressed itself on the mind of mankind.

Does the Universe have a beginning?

To not believe in God means it doesn't.

If we say yes, then we indeed need a starter, a "creator". This starter, this creator, is what we call "God": we can put what we want behind this concept, as long as it justifies the "creation", the start.

Dialectical materialism rejects such a "creation" and considers that there is only production: nothing comes from nothing. The universe is eternal, it has no beginning, nothing has a beginning, everything comes from something, always and everywhere.

There is no "big bang" starting the universe, nor a loss of so-called initial energy resulting in the collapse of the universe. There is no first human being, there is the uninterrupted transformation of matter, passing through the human being as a form of organization.

Friedrich Engels denounced the Big Bang,
concept appeared in its time already:

The mutation of natural forces, in particular heat into mechanical force, etc., has given rise in Germany to an extremely tasteless theory (...), namely that the Universe keeps cooling, that the temperatures inside the Universe tend to balance each other more and more, and so there finally comes a moment when all life becomes impossible, when the whole world is only longer made up of frozen planets revolving around one another.

One has only to wait for the priests to take hold of this theory as the last word of materialism. One cannot imagine anything more stupid.

Since according to this theory there is always necessarily more heat transformed into other forms of energy than it is possible for other forms of energy to convert into heat, it naturally follows that the original state of great heat from which everything cools is absolutely inexplicable, and even that it is a contradiction and therefore presupposes the existence of a God.



“In nature nothing takes place in isolation. Everything affects and is affected by every other thing, and it is mostly because this manifold motion and interaction is forgotten that our natural scientists are prevented from gaining a clear insight into the simplest things.”

“The ideas of lines, planes, angles, polygons, cubes, spheres, etc., are all taken from reality, and it requires a pretty good portion of naive ideology to believe the mathematicians that the first line came into existence through the movement of a point in space, the first plane through the movement of a line, the first solid through the movement of a plane, and so on.”

Even language rebels against such a conception. A mathematical figure of three dimensions is called a solid body, *corpus solidum*, hence, in Latin, even a tangible object; it therefore has a name derived from sturdy reality and by no means from the free imagination of the mind.”

“We can only know under the conditions of our time and within the limits of these.”

“The theoretical thought of each epoch, therefore also that of our own, is a historical product which takes a very different form in different times and therefore a very different content. The science of thought is therefore, like any other science, a historical science, the science of the historical development of human thought.”

“The fact that our subjective thought and the objective world are subject to the same laws, and hence, too, that in the final analysis they cannot contradict each other in their results, but must coincide, governs absolutely our whole theoretical thought. It is the unconscious and unconditional premise for theoretical thought.”

“At every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature – but that we, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly.”

“Dialectics has proved from the results of our experience of nature so far that all polar opposites in general are determined by the mutual action of the two opposite poles on one another, that the separation and opposition of these poles exists only within their unity and inter-connection, and, conversely, that their inter-connection exists only in their separation and their unity only in their opposition.”

This once established, there can be no question of a final cancelling out of repulsion and attraction, or of a final partition between the one form of motion in one half of matter and the other form in the other half, consequently there can be no question of mutual penetration or of absolute separation of the two poles.”

Declaration on the 200th birth anniversary of Friedrich Engels

– MLM Center from Belgium, CPF(mlm)

We want to salute here the figure of Friedrich Engels, on the 200th anniversary of his birth on November 28, 1820! We do this all the more willingly as Friedrich Engels was completely selfless and very humble. He understood that Karl Marx had succeeded in forging a scientific worldview, and for this reason he put himself entirely at his service.

Friedrich Engels is therefore a figure in the shadow of our teacher, the great Karl Marx, but an exemplary figure. He deserves to be highlighted, especially as due to uneven development he has been given an important role.

Karl Marx indeed rushed into his historical materialist studies, including the famous Capital. For this reason, he put aside studies relating to the development of the natural sciences and it was Friedrich Engels who took care of it, of course being supervised. It is in this context that Friedrich Engels wrote on the dialectic of nature.

We therefore assert that the figures of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are inseparable.

This is a point that we cannot stress enough on this bicentenary of the birth of Friedrich Engels. When Friedrich Engels writes on the dialectic of nature, he does so in conjunction with Karl Marx, in the service of Karl Marx. Rereading a simply "historical materialist" Karl Marx is a fiction, a betrayal of the Karl Marx-Friedrich Engels tandem.

Such rereading is moreover commonplace precisely because it serves the bourgeoisie. Bourgeois literature is swarming with claims that Friedrich Engels changed Karl Marx's approach,

making it a dogma. Friedrich Engels would be at the origin of a "totalitarian" reading by affirming the universality of the dialectic.

The goal is to break Marxism from within by pitting Karl Marx against Friedrich Engels and vice versa. The classics of Marxism - Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong - have always emphasized that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels form a perfectly coherent whole.

To honor Friedrich Engels is therefore to underline that he is inseparable from Karl Marx and at the same time to affirm the dialectic of nature as communist vision of the world. Not to do so is to have the same position as the social democracy of the end of the 19th century and we can see that such a position is common, if not systematic throughout the world in movements claiming to be Marxist. This is very meaningful to us, it shows the strength of bourgeois ideology.

Friedrich Engels played a very important role in his contributions to Karl Marx and to Marxism, by generalizing the details on dialectical materialism, in particular with his numerous papers on the "dialectic of nature", which social democratic archivists had then put aside.

Friedrich Engels was himself an actor in the founding of the Second International (1889-1914), which brought together the political organizations of the workers' movement. The dialectic of nature, however, was seen as a secondary issue at best, while many parties however challenged Marxism, such as the Belgian Workers Party and the Socialist Party, French Section of the Workers' International.

Fortunately, these writings on the dialectic of nature were published in the USSR in the 1920s. This underscores the very important role of Lenin and Stalin's USSR in putting things in their rightful place. To not value this step is to practice revisionism, is denying the substance of Marxism!

And that is the very sens of the question. Those who have succeeded in transforming the world have done so precisely by relying on the dialectic of nature. Lenin particularly insisted on

the need to have dialectical materialism as a worldview; his writing entitled Materialism and Empirio-criticism is a manifesto in this sense. This was the basis of the ideology of the Bolshevik Party.

Stalin systematized this vision of the world in a very educational way and he made sure that at all levels, dialectical materialism was the basis of scientific research in all fields in the USSR. Khrushchev's revisionism consisted of the negation of dialectical materialism, at all levels.

People's China, with Mao Zedong, has kept the flag of dialectical materialism standing, especially since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which brought great advances in its understanding.

It was the same for the Communist Party of Peru led by Gonzalo, whose basic principles are set out in the 1988 Program, the first principle bearing precisely and naturally on dialectical materialism:

"Contradiction, the only fundamental law of the incessant transformation of eternal matter;

The masses make history and "it's right to revolt";

Class struggle, dictatorship of the proletariat and proletarian internationalism;

The need for the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Communist Party to firmly implement independence, own decisions and self-sufficiency;

Fight imperialism, revisionism and reaction indelibly and relentlessly;

Conquer and defend power with the People's War;

The militarization of the Party and the concentric construction of the three instruments of the revolution;

The two-line struggle as a driving force for party development;

The constant ideological transformation and always put politics at the helm;

To serve the people and the world proletarian revolution; and

Absolute disinterest and a fair and correct style of work."

This is all correct. Dialectical materialism is the worldview of the communists: to refute its foundations is to challenge communism, to deny that matter goes to communism as the Communist Party of Peru has always emphasized.

We think it's appropriate here to give the example of a quite typical refutation in its anti-communism, and for this reason naturally mentioning Friedrich Engels. The ultra-left group "Maoist Communist Party" [in France] denounced the CPF (mlm) in 2012 in these terms:

"The "c" p "mlm" claims to hold the truth in all areas, to be the party of science.

It advances the thesis of the inescapable march of the Universe towards communism and other delusional statements of the same ilk.

It often confuses the assumptions and the established laws which are moreover relating to the knowledge acquired, supplemented, modified or made obsolete by new discoveries.

It sees itself as the new Engels and the theorist of a "new" "Dialectic of Nature". It is true that the "c" p "mlm" is more megalomaniac than modest.

It should stick to the popularization of scientific theses or indicates the best popularizations but a little modesty and prudence in matters of science or cultural judgment."

Here we have critiques that Marxism and Friedrich Engels were already familiar with: dialectical materialism would be a mystic, scientific questions should not be approached from a communist point of view, the Party should not have an opinion in all areas. we have to stick to a cautious relativism, etc.

It is precisely these empirio-criticist, empiricist-critical refutations, simply based on immediate experience and a kind of subjectivist criticism, that Lenin denounced!

It was precisely these conceptions that were crushed in the USSR with Stalin, dialectical materialism being seen as the only way to analyze reality. It is precisely these conceptions that were fought during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution!

To be communist means transforming reality and who transforms reality understands that the movement is dialectical all the time and everywhere.

It was because they were real revolutionaries that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were able to carry the Communist ideology. Whoever truly recognizes the dignity of the real grasps the universal in the particular and understands the dialectical nature of eternal matter.

For the revisionists, dialectical materialism is a phantasmagoria, an intellectual adventure, something to be fought against, because in the background the bourgeoisie is at work and for it the recognition of the universality of the dialectic is at the same time incomprehensible and criminal.

The dialectic, like the armed struggle, represents for the bourgeoisie its negation.

This is why there is gigantic pressure against everything that comes with it, everything that carries it.

Honoring Friedrich Engels in his bicentennial has therefore a revolutionary significance, because it is honoring the one who played a notable role in the establishment of the communist ideological apparatus, who helped to establish dialectical materialism.

To honor Friedrich Engels is to consider him as a classic, alongside his brother in arms Karl Marx, and Lenin and Stalin, Mao Zedong.

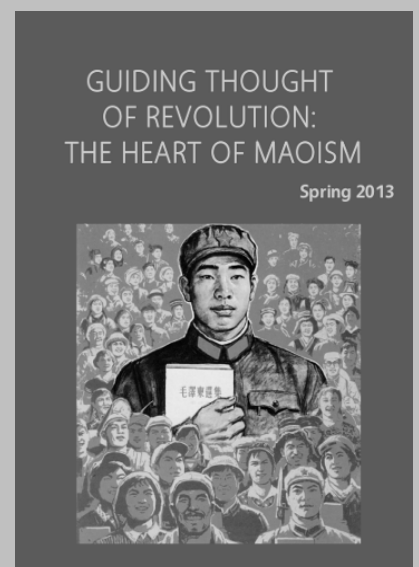
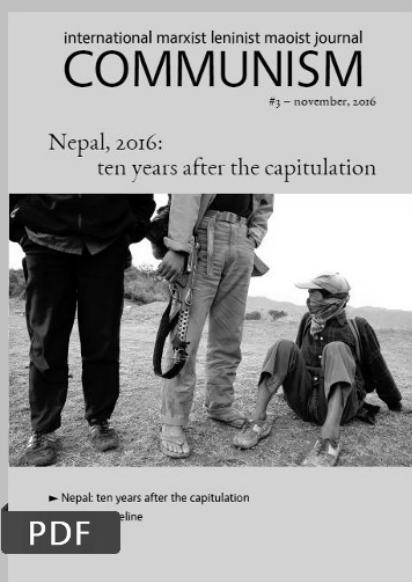
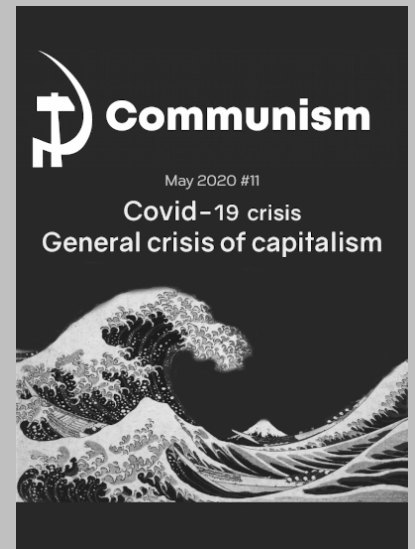
To honor Friedrich Engels is to display, defend and apply dialectical materialism!

Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Center, Belgium

Communist Party of France (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)

November 2020

Communism



since 2016
in the spirit of Proletarian Internationalism

Lenin : Friedrich Engels

Written in autumn 1895, published for the first time 1896

***What a torch of reason ceased to burn,
What a heart has ceased to beat!***

On August 5 (new style), 1895, Frederick Engels died in London. After his friend Karl Marx (who died in 1883), Engels was the finest scholar and teacher of the modern proletariat in the whole civilised world.

From the time that fate brought Karl Marx and Frederick Engels together, the two friends devoted their life's work to a common cause.

And so to understand what Frederick Engels has done for the proletariat, one must have a clear idea of the significance of Marx's teaching and work for the development of the contemporary working-class movement.

Marx and Engels were the first to show that the working class and its demands are a necessary outcome of the present economic system, which together with the bourgeoisie inevitably creates and organises the proletariat.

They showed that it is not the well-meaning efforts of noble-minded individuals, but the class struggle of the organised proletariat that will deliver humanity from the evils which now oppress it.

In their scientific works, Marx and Engels were the first to explain that socialism is not the invention of dreamers, but the final aim and necessary result of the development of the productive forces in modern society.

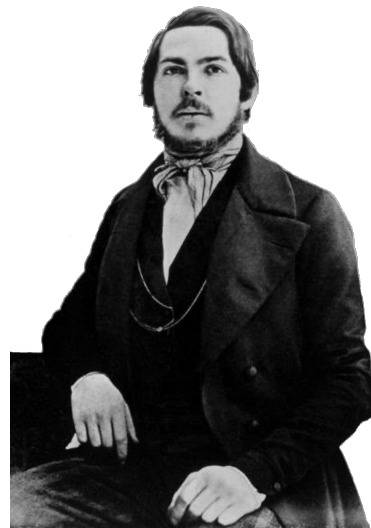
All recorded history hitherto has been a history of class struggle, of the succession of the rule and victory of certain social classes over others.

And this will continue until the foundations of class struggle and of class domination – private property and anarchic social production – disappear.

The interests of the proletariat demand the destruction of these foundations, and therefore the conscious class struggle of the organised workers must be directed against them. And every class struggle is a political struggle.

These views of Marx and Engels have now been adopted by all proletarians who are fighting for their emancipation. But when in the forties the two friends took part in the socialist literature and the social movements of their time, they were absolutely novel.

There were then many people, talented and without talent, honest and dishonest, who, absorbed in the struggle for political freedom, in the struggle against the despotism of kings, police and priests, failed to observe the



antagonism between the interests of the bourgeoisie and those of the proletariat.

These people would not entertain the idea of the workers acting as an independent social force.

On the other hand, there were many dreamers, some of them geniuses, who thought that it was only necessary to convince the rulers and the governing classes of the injustice of the contemporary social order, and it would then be easy to establish peace and general well-being on earth.

They dreamt of a socialism without struggle. Lastly, nearly all the socialists of that time and the friends of the working class generally regarded the proletariat only as an ulcer, and observed with horror how it grew with the growth of industry.

They all, therefore, sought for a means to stop the development of industry and of the proletariat, to stop the “wheel of history.”

Marx and Engels did not share the general fear of the development of the proletariat; on the contrary, they placed all their hopes on its continued growth.

The more proletarians there are, the greater is their strength as a revolutionary class, and the



nearer and more possible does socialism become.

The services rendered by Marx and Engels to the working class may be expressed in a few words thus: they taught the working class to know itself and be conscious of itself, and they substituted science for dreams.

That is why the name and life of Engels should be known to every worker. That is why in this collection of articles, the aim of which, as of all our publications, is to awaken class-consciousness in the Russian workers, we must give a sketch of the life and work of Frederick Engels, one of the two great teachers of the modern proletariat.

Engels was born in 1820 in Barmen, in the Rhine Province of the kingdom of Prussia. His father was a manufacturer. In 1838 Engels, without having completed his high-school studies, was forced by family circumstances to enter a commercial house in Bremen as a clerk.

Commercial affairs did not prevent Engels from pursuing his scientific and political education. He had come to hate autocracy and the tyranny of bureaucrats while still at high school. The study of philosophy led him further.

At that time Hegel's teaching dominated German philosophy, and Engels became his follower.

Although Hegel himself was an admirer of the autocratic Prussian state, in whose service he was as a professor at Berlin University, Hegel's teachings were revolutionary.

Hegel's faith in human reason and its rights, and the fundamental thesis of Hegelian philosophy that the universe is undergoing a constant process of change and development, led some of the disciples of the Berlin philosopher – those who refused to accept the existing situation – to the idea that the struggle against this situation, the struggle against existing wrong and prevalent

evil, is also rooted in the universal law of eternal development.

If all things develop, if institutions of one kind give place to others, why should the autocracy of the Prussian king or of the Russian tsar, the enrichment of an insignificant minority at the expense of the vast majority, or the domination of the bourgeoisie over the people, continue for ever?

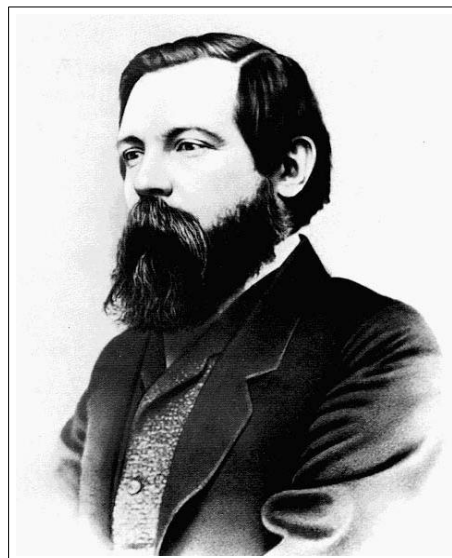
Hegel's philosophy spoke of the development of the mind and of ideas; it was idealistic. From the development of the mind it deduced the development of nature, of man, and of human, social relations.

While retaining Hegel's idea of the eternal process of development¹, Marx and Engels rejected the preconceived idealist view; turning to life, they saw that it is not the development of mind that explains the development of nature but that, on the contrary, the explanation of mind must be derived from nature, from matter....

Unlike Hegel and the other Hegelians, Marx and Engels were materialists. Regarding the world and humanity materialistically, they perceived that just as material causes underlie all natural phenomena, so the development of human society is conditioned by the development of material forces, the productive forces.

On the development of the productive forces depend the relations into which men enter with one another in the production of the things required for the satisfaction of human needs. And in these relations lies the explanation of all the phenomena of social life, human aspirations, ideas and laws.

¹Marx and Engels frequently pointed out that in their intellectual development they were much indebted to the great German philosophers, particularly to Hegel. "Without German philosophy," Engels says, "scientific socialism would never have come into being."



The development of the productive forces creates social relations based upon private property, but now we see that this same development of the productive forces deprives the majority of their property and concentrates it in the hands of an insignificant minority.

It abolishes property, the basis of the modern social order, it itself strives towards the very aim which the socialists have set themselves.

All the socialists have to do is to realise which social force, owing to its position in modern society, is interested in bringing socialism about, and to impart to this force the consciousness of its interests and of its historical task. This force is the proletariat.

Engels got to know the proletariat in England, in the centre of English industry, Manchester, where he settled in 1842, entering the service of a commercial firm of which his father was a shareholder.

Here Engels not only sat in the factory office but wandered about the slums in which the workers were cooped up, and saw their poverty and misery with his own eyes. But he did not confine himself to personal observations.

He read all that had been revealed before him about the condition of the British working class

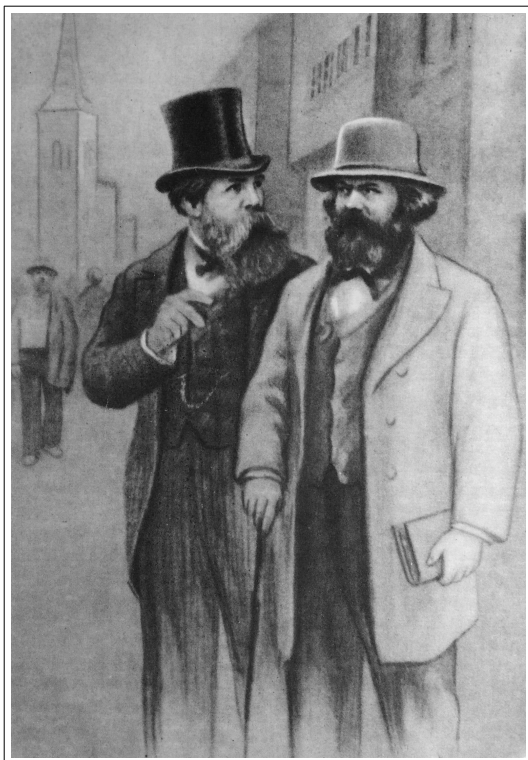
and carefully studied all the official documents he could lay his hands on. The fruit of these studies and observations was the book which appeared in 1845: *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

We have already mentioned what was the chief service rendered by Engels in writing *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Even before Engels, many people had described the sufferings of the proletariat and had pointed to the necessity of helping it.

Engels was the first to say that the proletariat is not only a suffering class; that it is, in fact, the disgraceful economic condition of the proletariat that drives it irresistibly forward and compels it to fight for its ultimate emancipation.

And the fighting proletariat will help itself. The political movement of the working class will inevitably lead the workers to realise that their only salvation lies in socialism.

On the other hand, socialism will become a force only when it becomes the aim of the political struggle of the working class.



Such are the main ideas of Engels' book on the condition of the working class in England, ideas which have now been adopted by all thinking and fighting proletarians, but which at that time were entirely new.

These ideas were set out in a book written in absorbing style and filled with most authentic and shocking pictures of the misery of the English proletariat.

The book was a terrible indictment of capitalism and the bourgeoisie and created a profound impression.

Engels' book began to be quoted everywhere as presenting the best picture of the condition of the modern proletariat.

And, in fact, neither before 1845 nor after has there appeared so striking and truthful a picture of the misery of the working class.

It was not until he came to England that Engels became a socialist. In Manchester he established contacts with people active in the English labour movement at the time and began to write for English socialist publications.

In 1844, while on his way back to Germany, he became acquainted in Paris with Marx, with whom he had already started to correspond.

In Paris, under the influence of the French socialists and French life, Marx had also become a socialist. Here the friends jointly wrote a book entitled *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Critique*.

This book, which appeared a year before *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, and the greater part of which was written by Marx, contains the foundations of revolutionary materialist socialism, the main ideas of which we have expounded above. “The holy family” is a facetious nickname for the Bauer brothers, the philosophers, and their followers.

These gentlemen preached a criticism which stood above all reality, above parties and politics, which rejected all practical activity, and which only “critically” contemplated the surrounding world and the events going on within it.

These gentlemen, the Bauers, looked down on the proletariat as an uncritical mass. Marx and Engels vigorously opposed this absurd and harmful tendency. In the name of a real, human person – the worker, trampled down by the ruling classes and the state – they demanded, not contemplation, but a struggle for a better order of society.

They, of course, regarded the proletariat as the force that is capable of waging this struggle and that is interested in it. Even before the appearance of *The Holy Family*, Engels had published in Marx’s and Ruge’s *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* his “Critical Essays on Political Economy,” in which he examined the principal phenomena of the contemporary economic order from a socialist standpoint, regarding them as necessary consequences of the rule of private property.

Contact with Engels was undoubtedly a factor in Marx’s decision to study political economy, the science in which his works have produced a veritable revolution.

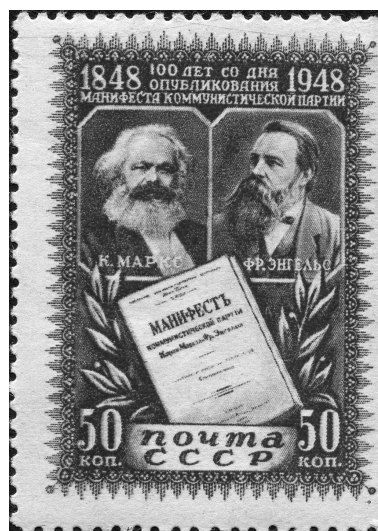
From 1845 to 1847 Engels lived in Brussels and Paris, combining scientific work with practical activities among the German workers in Brussels and Paris.

Here Marx and Engels established contact with the secret German Communist League, which commissioned them to expound the main principles of the socialism they had worked out.

Thus arose the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party* of Marx and Engels, published in 1848. This little booklet is worth whole volumes: to this day its spirit inspires and guides the entire organised and fighting proletariat of the civilised world.

The revolution of 1848, which broke out first in France and then spread to other West-European countries, brought Marx and Engels back to their native country.

Here, in Rhenish Prussia, they took charge of the democratic *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* published in Cologne. The two friends were the heart and soul of all revolutionary-democratic aspirations in Rhenish Prussia. They fought to the last ditch



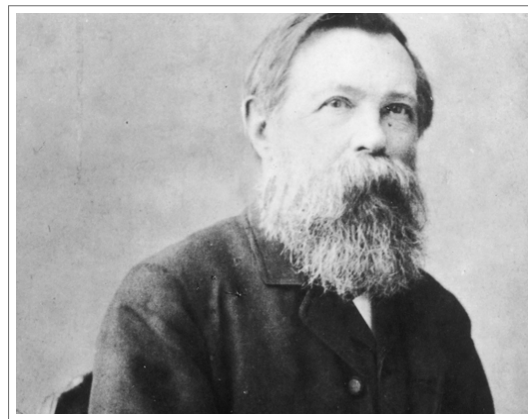
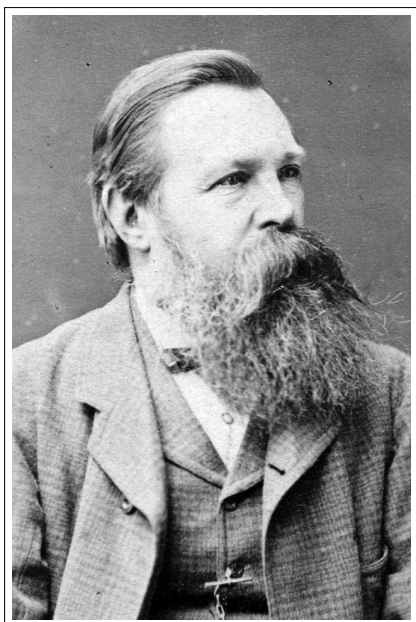
in defence of freedom and of the interests of the people against the forces of reaction.

The latter, as we know, gained the upper hand. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was suppressed. Marx, who during his exile had lost his Prussian citizenship, was deported; Engels took part in the armed popular uprising, fought for liberty in three battles, and after the defeat of the rebels fled, via Switzerland, to London.

Marx also settled in London. Engels soon became a clerk again, and then a shareholder, in the Manchester commercial firm in which he had worked in the forties.

Until 1870 he lived in Manchester, while Marx lived in London, but this did not prevent their maintaining a most lively interchange of ideas: they corresponded almost daily. In this correspondence the two friends exchanged views and discoveries and continued to collaborate in working out scientific socialism.

In 1870 Engels moved to London, and their joint intellectual life, of the most strenuous nature, continued until 1883, when Marx died. Its fruit was, on Marx's side, *Capital*, the greatest work on political economy of our age, and on Engels' side, a number of works both large and small.



Marx worked on the analysis of the complex phenomena of capitalist economy. Engels, in simply written works, often of a polemical character, dealt with more general scientific problems and with diverse phenomena of the past and present in the spirit of the materialist conception of history and Marx's economic theory.

Of Engels' works we shall mention: the polemical work against Dühring (analysing highly important problems in the domain of philosophy, natural science and the social sciences)², *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (translated into Russian, published in St. Petersburg, 3rd ea., 1895), Ludwig Feuerbach (Russian translation and notes by G. Plekhanov, Geneva, 1892), an article on the foreign policy of the Russian Government (translated into Russian in the *Geneva Social-Democrat*, Nos. 1 and 2), splendid articles on the housing question, and finally, two small but very valuable articles on Russia's economic development (Frederick Engels on Russia, translated into Russian by Zasulich, Geneva, 1894).

² This is a wonderfully rich and instructive book. Unfortunately, only a small portion of it, containing a historical outline of the development of socialism, has been translated into Russian (*The Development of Scientific Socialism*, 2nd ea., Geneva, 1892).

Marx died before he could put the final touches to his vast work on capital.

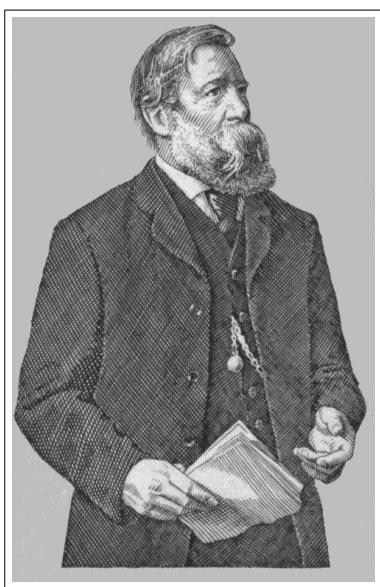
The draft, however, was already finished, and after the death of his friend, Engels undertook the onerous task of preparing and publishing the second and the third volumes of *Capital*. He published Volume II in 1885 and Volume III in 1894 (his death prevented the preparation of Volume IV).

These two volumes entailed a vast amount of labour. Adler, the Austrian Social-Democrat, has rightly remarked that by publishing volumes II and III of *Capital* Engels erected a majestic monument to the genius who had been his friend, a monument on which, without intending it, he indelibly carved his own name.

Indeed these two volumes of *Capital* are the work of two men: Marx and Engels. Old legends contain various moving instances of friendship.

The European proletariat may say that its science was created by two scholars and fighters, whose relationship to each other surpasses the most moving stories of the ancients about human friendship.

Engels always – and, on the whole, quite justly – placed himself after Marx. “In Marx’s lifetime,” he wrote to an old friend, “I played second



fiddle.” His love for the living Marx, and his reverence for the memory of the dead Marx were boundless. This stern fighter and austere thinker possessed a deeply loving soul.

After the movement of 1848-49, Marx and Engels in exile did not confine themselves to scientific research.

In 1864 Marx founded the International Working Men’s Association, and led this society for a whole decade.

Engels also took an active part in its affairs. The work of the International Association, which, in accordance with Marx’s idea, united proletarians of all countries, was of tremendous significance in the development of the working-class movement.

But even with the closing down of the International Association in the seventies, the unifying role of Marx and Engels did not cease.

On the contrary, it may be said that their importance as the spiritual leaders of the working-class movement grew continuously, because the movement itself grew uninterruptedly.

After the death of Marx, Engels continued alone as the counsellor and leader of the European socialists.

His advice and directions were sought for equally by the German socialists, whose strength, despite government persecution, grew rapidly and steadily, and by representatives of backward countries, such as the Spaniards, Rumanians and Russians, who were obliged to ponder and weigh their first steps.

They all drew on the rich store of knowledge and experience of Engels in his old age.

Marx and Engels, who both knew Russian and read Russian books, took a lively interest in the country, followed the Russian revolutionary

movement with sympathy and maintained contact with Russian revolutionaries.

They both became socialists after being democrats, and the democratic feeling of hatred for political despotism was exceedingly strong in them.

This direct political feeling, combined with a profound theoretical understanding of the connection between political despotism and economic oppression, and also their rich experience of life, made Marx and Engels uncommonly responsive politically.

That is why the heroic struggle of the handful of Russian revolutionaries against the mighty tsarist government evoked a most sympathetic echo in the hearts of these tried revolutionaries.

On the other hand, the tendency, for the sake of illusory economic advantages, to turn away from the most immediate and important task of the Russian socialists, namely, the winning of political freedom, naturally appeared suspicious to them and was even regarded by them as a direct betrayal of the great cause of the social revolution.

“The emancipation of the workers must be the act of the working class itself” – Marx and Engels constantly taught.

But in order to fight for its economic emancipation, the proletariat must win itself certain political rights.

Moreover, Marx and Engels clearly saw that a political revolution in Russia would be of tremendous significance to the West-European working-class movement as well.

Autocratic Russia had always been a bulwark of European reaction in general.

The extraordinarily favourable international position enjoyed by Russia as a result of the war of 1870, which for a long time sowed discord between Germany and France, of course only enhanced the importance of autocratic Russia as a reactionary force.

Only a free Russia, a Russia that had no need either to oppress the Poles, Finns, Germans, Armenians or any other small nations, or constantly to set France and Germany at loggerheads, would enable modern Europe, rid of the burden of war, to breathe freely, would weaken all the reactionary elements in Europe and strengthen the European working class.

That was why Engels ardently desired the establishment of political freedom in Russia for the sake of the progress of the working-class movement in the West as well.

In him the Russian revolutionaries have lost their best friend.

Let us always honour the memory of Frederick Engels, a great fighter and teacher of the proletariat!



The MCP of Italy, « Marxist-Leninist » in its source, unproductive by nature

The "Maoist Communist Party of Italy" (MCPI) has repeatedly proclaimed in recent years, or rather the last two decades, that it will reconstitute an international center for Maoists; it always appears more as a mystification. The MCPI does not escape its own matrix and can only drag with itself to the abyss those who follow it. Born in revisionism, it propagates revisionism: it is inevitable.

The MCPI was born in 2000, as a transformation of the Rossoperaio Communist Organization (the red worker, rosso operaio). This organization was born in 1992 as an outcome of the Collettivo Comunista Agit / Prop (communist agitation and propaganda collective), one of the last remnants of the Italian Marxist-Leninist scene of the 1960s and 1970s, consequently formed at the end of the 1970's.

The root of the MCPI is indeed in the militants having joined the Union of Italians Communists – Serve the People (Unione dei comunisti italiani – Servire il popolo), founded in 1968.



And it is well known that in the 1960s, there were in the imperialist countries two traditions which were radically opposed while claiming Mao Zedong as reference. There are those who define themselves as Marxist-Leninists and adopt a style drawn from the years 1920-1930; there are those who consider that the situation in the now developed capitalist countries must be grasped ideologically and culturally.

In the United States, the Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM) will split into a RYM I giving the guerrilla of the Weatherpeople and a RYM II giving the Revolutionary Communist Party of the United States.

In Germany there was the Red Army Fraction on one side and the KPD / ML on the other. In France, there was the UJC (ml) and the Gauche Prolétarienne on one side, the PCMLF on the other.

In Belgium, with delay, this will give the Fighting Communist Cells (CCC) on one side and the Belgium's Labor Party on the other. And in Italy it is well known that there were the Red Brigades on one side and the Marxist-Leninists on the other, with two "Communist Parties (Marxist-Leninist)".

The MCPI claims to come from the Marxist-Leninists; it has existed, in one form or another, throughout Italian history since the late 1960s, rejecting all of the organizations that participated in the great shock spanning 1968 to the mid-1990s.

It even always has denounced the organizations leading the armed struggle, whether the Red Brigades for the construction of the Fighting Communist Party, the Union of Fighting Communists, Prima Linea, the COLP, multiple structures such as the Armed Nuclei for the Territorial Counter-powers, the Cell for the constitution of the Fighting Communist Party, etc.

This means that when the MCPI is founded, on May 1, 2000, it claims to assume the "people's war" by having refuted for several decades the clandestinity of the Communist Fighting Organizations in Italy. Such an inconsistency could do nothing good, unless you consider that the nature of an organization is decided in the "world of ideas".

This is why the MCPI was able to literally accompany the surrender of the People's War in Nepal to the end, claiming until the late 2000s that it was progressing, while its leaders liquidated it.

This is also the reason why the MCPI was able to claim to support the People's War in Peru throughout the 1990s, while subsequently completely abandoning any ideological reference put forward during this period. It is in his matrix to move back.



In the background, of course, there is also the question of the founding in 1984 of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), with the magazine *A world to win*, in defense of Mao Zedong.

The ancestor of the MCPI was able to support the RIM and take an important place in it in Europe from the beginning of the 2000s, because the RIM proposed a defense of Mao Zedong on a cosmopolitan basis, cut off from the reality of the class struggle.

We were at the level of formal recognition, exactly like the one of the "Marxist-Leninists" of the 1960s.

This is why consistent revolutionaries in Europe have always refuted the RIM, seeing it only as a pretext to refute the struggle. It should be noted here, moreover, that the RIM did not even support the TKP (ML) and the TKP / ML, which waged the people's war in Turkey, but the TKP / ML Maoist Parti Merkezi (Center of the Maoist Party), only existing in Germany!

This is quite representative of a formal and cosmopolitan reading, which derives from the "Marxist-Leninist" source of the 1960s.

This origin in the "Marxist-Leninists" of the 1960s is obviously not unique to the MCPI; we find it in the RCP of Canada, people claiming Maoism in Germany (like Jugendwiderstand or Dem Volke dienen), etc.

In fact, in practice, all these people do nothing very different from the pro-Albanians, the supporters of Enver Hoxha, who are historically the natural extension of the "Marxist-Leninists" of the 1960s, with their mechanical, formal, anti-cultural, anti-intellectual, vague and unionist approach.

There are demands, soliciting about controversial themes, calls to fight and unite ... without ever any substantive analysis, historical materialist study or understanding of dialectical materialism in science, culture, education, etc.

There is nothing but noise calling to join the "party" of the struggle really to the end.

In 2008, the MCPI said, for example, that "in France and in Italy a regime is emerging which is developing modern fascism and a police state".

Where is this thesis, moreover anti-Marxist, today?

It has disappeared, because the MCPI does like the pro-Albanians: it fills its ideological voids with positions, in order to pass the time and apparently occupy a space.



One can imagine that the MCPI is so not at all in a position to contribute decisively to the establishment of an international center for the Maoists.

It can only come up with an truncated version of Maoism, it can only dodge by agreeing with more or less everyone.

It will never offer debates on the big questions, never will it be able to offer useful summaries to Maoists around the world.

And what a pity for the Italian working class that it has to put up with this, a working class who knew how to carry so many essential things after 1968!



Dialectical materialism and the law of contradiction as the law of oppositional complementarity: the theory of two points

Dialectical materialism considers that each phenomenon forms a unity of opposites, the latter being in struggle, in opposition. It is the law of contradiction, the universal law of eternal and inexhaustible matter on the march towards communism.

The term contrary is in this context often equated with that of opposite. In his philosophical notes, Lenin says thus:

“Dialectics in the proper sense is the study of contradiction in the very essence of objects.”

“Development is the “struggle” of opposites.”

The terms contrary and opposite are easily interchangeable and in practice it is easily passed from one term to another, with the idea that they would be equivalent.

In the French language, there is also a great ambiguity in the definition of the two terms; we tend to define something contrary as opposite, and something opposite as contrary, even if there are nuances, depending on the context.

The basis of these nuances is as follows.

To oppose is a term coming from Latin, it is to pose towards, in front, i.e. to pose in front, against. There is an idea of a face to face.

Contradiction is what comes counter-saying; the term also comes from Latin. There is an idea of cancellation.

Latin languages and Russian similarly follow this pattern; in German it is the same with for the term contradiction "widerspruch" ("wider" meaning on the contrary, "spruch" means to say); the term "gegensatz", opposition, means in the strict sense counter-sentence or anti-sentence. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels use the term "widerspruch", but in the sense of "gegensatz"; the distinction is not operative.

The language of mathematics makes a seemingly clear distinction, but it can be seen that it comes to the same thing.

The opposite of 1 is -1, -2 for 2, -3 for 3, etc. The opposite is posed against, we find the idea of face to face : facing 1 there is -1, facing 2 there is -2, etc.

The contradiction is called "multiplicative inverse" or "reciprocal". The reciprocal designates a number allowing to arrive at 1 if it is multiplied by it: 0.2 is the inverse of 5, because $5 \times 0.2 = 1$; 0.01 is the reverse of 100 because $0.01 \times 100 = 1$, etc.

This reciprocal counter-says it as number, because it prevents it from reaching 1, that is to say, it prevents him from forming a unit, from being itself.

The reciprocal cancels out the number, it destroys its identity, it contradicts it. Here we find the idea of counter-affirmation to an affirmation.

However, if we reason in terms of tension, conflict, it is difficult at first to see a difference between opposite and reciprocal, even in the mathematical language. We always have two aspects facing each other, one cannot exist without the other.

The terms opposite and reciprocal are thus closely related, even interchangeable, because they all have in common that they mean negation.

The existing nuances relate to the modalities of this negation, but their substance is common: their dialectical relationship, both linked (therefore positive) and negative.

These negative nuances are endlessly found in any language seeking to describe material processes. We will speak of a headwind – a "contrary wind" in French - to mean that the wind intervenes and opposes the initial movement, forming a cancellation.

The term opposite implies on its side the idea of resistance, of an obstacle: we will say that we faced an opposition. There is a strong idea of tension.

However, we can use either contrary or opposite. It is useful here to turn to the Chinese language.

The term for contradiction initially chosen in Chinese by Mao Zedong, Mao-dun, is made up of 矛, meaning lance, and 盾, meaning shield.

It is based on an old story, told by Han Fei Zi (280 - 233 BCE):

"A fellow, eager to sell his spear and shield, praised the excellence of it in these terms: "Its resistance is such that nothing can damage it. This shield is absolutely impenetrable."

Talking afterwards about the spear, he continued: "Its point is so sharp that there is nothing it cannot damage. It is omni-penetrating."

- How, objected the interlocutor, can your lance get into your shield?

The man did not know what to say. He had contradicted himself. Logically, an absolutely impenetrable shield and an all-perforating spear cannot go hand in hand. "

Here we have a contradiction, something goes against saying something else, there is cancellation, even if the idea of spear and shield also implies tension, therefore opposition.

There are other Chinese expressions to note, such as 一分为二, yifenweier, meaning one becomes two, everything has two sides, etc. ; 对立统一, duili tongyi, meaning the unity of opposites; 相反相承, xiangfan xiangcheng, meaning to oppose and promote each other; 两点论, liangdian lun, which can be translated as the theory of two points.

All of these expressions were used in People's Republic of China during the time of Mao Zedong, especially during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

They are useful to show that the term contradiction does not allow to define, in itself, in an adequate way the complementarity and the tension; conversely, the notion of the opposite does not allow us to grasp the unity of the two poles, which is much more apparent with the term contradiction.

Concretely, contradiction and opposite form two aspects of the same contradiction / opposition, the two terms meeting and repelling each other.

If we want to avoid such a back and forth, the expression "theory of two points" seems more abstract at first glance, but it allows to lay down the operative dialectical framework.

The expression was notably used in an article for the fifty years of the Communist Party of China, published simultaneously in the Renmin Ribao (the People's Daily), the Hongqi (the Red Flag, the theoretical review), the Jiefangjun Bao (the Daily of the People's Liberation Army).

This 1971 document traces the history of the Party, with the two lines struggles, between the red line and the black line at every stage, from the revolutionary war to the construction of socialism and the struggle against the forces of capitalist restoration, with thus the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched in 1966, while stressing that several would be needed.

The long conclusion is about learning well and mentions the importance of the theory of two points:

"We should follow the theory of two points, not the theory of one point.

While paying attention to the main tendency, we should take note of the other tendency which may be covered up.

We must take full notice and firmly grasp the principal aspect and at the same time solve one by one the problems arising from the non-principal aspect.

We should see the negative as well as the positive aspects of things.

We should see the problems that have already arisen and also anticipate problems which are not yet perceived but which may arise."

Hsueh Li clarified this in a 1972 article, The Theory of Two Points, where he explained from the start that:

"What is the theory of two points?

It is what we usually call materialist dialectics; it is the Marxist-Leninist theory of the fundamental law of the universe.

In this regard, Chairman Mao has given a comprehensive and penetrating explanation in his On Contradiction."

After recalling the fundamentals of dialectical materialism, he concludes as follows:

"Whether one can uphold the theory of two points and overcome the theory of one point is not simply a question of method but a question of world outlook.

The theory of two points belongs to the proletarian world outlook and the theory of one point belongs to the world outlook of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes.

Without exception, the thinking of the people living in class society is stamped with the brand of a class and is invariably influenced by the political orientation of the class they belong to.

Although some people are not from the exploiting classes, they are unavoidably affected by the idealism and metaphysics universally existing in class society.

Therefore, everyone in the revolutionary ranks should see to it that the idealist and metaphysical viewpoint is eliminated from his mind and that he should make constant efforts to remould his subjective world while changing the objective world. Only in this way can the theory of two points be upheld and the theory of one point overcome."

The expression "theory of two points" allows us not to focus on the idea of annulment that the term contradiction can imply abstractly - and it will be noted that the Chinese revisionists have gone through this by saying that it is precisely necessary to accept the existence of contradiction, accepting negative things, etc.

The expression "theory of two points" also avoids using the term opposition, which loses sight of unity and risks refuting even the unity of opposites, in a leftist fashion.

The expression "theory of two points" furthermore immediately underlines the existence of two aspects, which is important at a time when the bourgeoisie seeks to deny the dialectic, as evidenced by the nihilist refutation of the existence of man and woman.

It allows you to change the state of mind while transforming reality: have I followed the theory of two points correctly, have I seen the two aspects correctly, relying on the main trend to see which way to go?

The expression thus emphasizes practice: it is a good equivalent to the terms contradiction and opposition, which are themselves "two points".