



A Scholarly MEGA Enterprise

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When the Institutes for Marxism-Leninism in Moscow and Berlin (GDR) began discussing and planning the new Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe (MEGA) in the 1960s, it was decided that the volumes should include a complete edition of all manuscripts and other writings left behind by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. This had already been the case in the first version of the MEGA, which was started following a decision taken by the Communist International in 1924. The editor of this first edition, David B. Rjazanov, developed the editorial design of the MEGA as a 'historisch-kritisch' edition. Until 1931, when he was discharged, only a few volumes of the MEGA and the yearbook Marx-Engels-Archiv had been published. Especially the yearbook published hitherto unknown texts both in a Russian and a German edition (of the latter only two volumes were published). Already before World War I, Rjazanov had published several volumes of Marx's and Engels' works, so he knew and was known to the German Social-Democrats who were the holders of the archives of Marx and Engels. His intention was to publish all - printed or unprinted - texts by Marx and Engels, and for this reason he photocopied what had been left to the German SPD in 1895, when Engels died. Furthermore, he instigated a thorough search for unknown material, e.g. letters. In this he succeeded extremely well, today about a third of the papers left by Marx and Engels is in Moscow, some of which have disappeared from the original holdings.

After the failed revolution in 1848-49 Engels fled first to Switzerland and from there to London via a ship. On this trip he wrote a diary with drawings of the Spanish and Portugese coast (MEGA, I, 10, pp. 8-9)

Rjazanov had criticized Stalin politically, although he was not himself a member of one of the various factions in the party, and so he was discharged as director of the institute in 1931 and banned to Saratov where he was executed in 1938. Work on the first MEGA continued under the directorship of V. Adoratskij, and in all 13 volumes out of the planned 40 were published. What is important is the editorial principle which Rjazanov developed: to publish everything in full, in the language of the original including relevant comments and notes on the historical situation in which the texts were written in the first place. In the second half of the 1930s, work on the MEGA was discontinued. After the Nazis were brought to power in Germany, several of the contributors were forced to emigrate, the German market which, at the time, was crucial disappeared, and the support provided by the regime in the Soviet Union was restricted. In 1939-1941 the last two volumes, the Grundrisse, were published according the principle of the MEGA but not as a part of it.

The new or second MEGA

What was a new feature for the second edition was that not only the letters from Marx and Engels would be published, but also those sent to them, as well as some supplementary material which could provide new insights into the political and personal life of Marx and Engels. The editors sought to establish co-operation with other scholars (including western scholars) who were active in this field, and so published two test volumes in which they exemplified their intentions and invited a discussion of these principles. This invitation was as open as it could be in the years immediately following the end of the Cold War and this openness became more pronounced as the volumes were published. At the time, no other institution was able to raise the money to finance this very costly enterprise.

Almost parallel with this edition, an English-language 'works edition' Karl Marx/Frederick Engels: *Collected Works* (MECW) was begun. 2001 saw the publication of volumes 48 and 49 in the series. These volumes contain Engels' letters to his friends and comrades-in-arms for the period 1887-92. According to the publishers, volume 50 will be published in 2003, and thus the first almost complete publication of Marx's and Engels' works will be available in English. Corresponding 'work editions' are available in Russian, German, Czech, Bulgarian, Italian (not fully completed yet), and French. Unfortunately these various language-editions are not up-to-date. The texts newly discovered in connections with the research for the MEGA have not been included in the work-editions. That would require supplementary volume(s) of, for example, the MECW; the updated volumes of the German Marx-Engels-Werke (MEW) incorporate the new texts as the volumes are published.

The 'Gesamtausgabe' (MEGA) has been published from 1975 onwards, containing all the writings and manuscripts left behind by Marx and Engels, but this edition is a long

way from being completed as only some 50 volumes out of the 114 volumes planned have been published so far. What is the difference between a 'works edition' and a 'Gesamtausgabe'? A 'works edition' publishes, in any given language, the known writings, manuscripts, and letters by Marx and Engels in the author's last version. By contrast, the 'Gesamtausgabe' contains, in the original languages, *all* the material left behind by the two men, including the author's handwritten corrections; there are no 'silent corrections' of spelling or other errors. Each document is accompanied by a text history which indicates where the original manuscript is located, and the context in which it arose. 'In the original language' means that the text are published not only in German, but in all the other languages used by Marx and Engels, which means that 60 percent are in German, 30 percent in English, 5 percent in French and the remaining 5 percent in various other languages including translated texts which were authorized by them. The explanatory notes and the indexes - names, subjects, periodicals and literature mentioned in the letters or texts, archives and literature used by the editors - are much more extensive. This very important material is exclusively in German. It is a scholarly edition at a very high level - what is known in German as a 'historisch-kritisch' edition. 'Historisch-kritisch' entails a very exact processing of the manuscripts, a very precise description of their genesis, and full annotation. The form chosen, together with the principle of publishing every part of the material, means that this edition will consist of 114 very comprehensive volumes - the most recent ones takes up 1695 and 1440 pages respectively - and that it will not be completed for another 10 to 20 years, if at all. It goes without saying that the problem of procuring funding is partly due to the political tenor of the texts. For this reason, the IMES has founded an emergency fund to which persons, institutions, organizations, etc., can contribute in order to finance the salaries of, especially the Russian, members of the MEGA-teams.

A new beginning after 1990

The original plan was to publish 100 volumes to be completed over 25 years. But the job grew along the way - at one point 180 volumes were planned. After the breakdown of the GDR and the Soviet Union, a new publisher had to be found, viz., the Internationale Marx-Engels Stiftung (IMES, the Marx-Engels Foundation), located in Amsterdam, at the International Institute of Social History (IISG). As a first step, the IMES appointed a commission to evaluate the project, the volumes published so far, and the guidelines to be observed. The commission recognized the high scholarly level achieved in the approximately 42 volumes published, and resolved that publication was to be continued. The number of volumes was reduced to 114 without abandoning the principle that all the material left behind by Marx and Engels would be published. The reduction was achieved by avoiding duplication of material, and by omitting any introductory assessments which, before 1990, had attempted to adjust texts to the Marxist-

Leninist ideology. This was in keeping with the declared objective of depoliticizing the edition while making it more scholarly.

The early 1990s saw the publication of a number of volumes that were so near completion that they could only be published in accordance with the old guidelines (however without the introductions); after that, there was an interruption in publication which lasted for several years. Not until 1998 was a new volume published, and the years since then have seen the publication of another five volumes. In 2002, at least two volumes will appear and two or three are scheduled to be published during 2003. Thus, publication goes on at a slow pace, but it does go on.

The edition is subdivided into four sections. The first contains all works, articles, and dissertations; the second, *Capital* and preparatory studies; the third, correspondence; and the fourth, excerpts from books written by other authors, notes, and other types of material. The finished edition will provide a fantastic extension of the material available, as so many of the manuscripts have never been published before. This goes especially for the second section with the voluminous studies Marx carried out for *Capital*; these are considered of great interest by, among others, economic historians. About half of the 10,000 letters to Marx and Engels have not been published as yet. Most of the excerpts, etc., in the fourth section have not been published, so all in all there are some surprises ahead, and the discussion of what Marx 'really meant' can reach new heights. Commentaries and registers sometimes take up more space than the texts themselves; the reason for this is that, at the time, it was decided that this considerable workload would be necessary if the users, who are spread all over the world, were to be able to understand the texts. The genesis of individual texts is accounted for, their connection with contemporary historical events, and their publication history. This means information about the original place of publication, and about which languages it had been translated into prior to Engels' death in 1895. In this way it is possible to provide an impression of which texts became part of the common basis for the international movement. Furthermore, very extensive commentaries are given concerning the circumstances to which the texts refer, circumstances that the user cannot be expected to know about. For this reason, very accurate personal information is provided; information about the newspapers and periodicals listed and quoted, as well as registers covering both the literature used and quoted by Marx and Engels and the research literature used by the editor of the volume. The commentaries and explanations provided mean that in particular the volumes of the first and third section of the MEGA, i.e., the political texts and the correspondence constitute very central contributions to the understanding of the development of the labour movement between the 1840s and up till 1895. In future, it will not be possible to write about the history of the labour movement without taking these volumes into consideration. Expanding the information in the registers of names and periodicals would be a good idea. Many of the individuals mentioned cannot be looked up anywhere, not even the Internet is any good when it comes to obtaining information and data of workers who are otherwise

completely unknown. Research efforts in this field should be intensified, and more space should be reserved for information about individuals. In general, the development of the press is not sufficiently well described for the information found here and there all over the research literature to be completely trustworthy: in the registers additional information about the political importance and circulation figures of the newspapers would, for example, be useful. In these respects, the editorial board ought to revise its decisions, so that users would be given better support in their own research activities.

One of the registers in the letter volumes is a list of non-located letters written by Marx and Engels. The correspondence makes clear that the letters have been written, but apparently not been preserved by the recipient - this is, for example, true for August Bebel who, despite his awareness of the importance of historical sources, did not consider his own correspondence to be such a source. This is also true for Edouard Anseele, who in 1890-91 pursued a not uninteresting correspondence with Engels, of which we only know his contributions because Engels kept the letters he received from Anseele. According to what is known, Engels' letters to Anseele had been lost already in 1934, but who knows, they might yet be found. Or has this correspondence left traces in newspapers and protocols? As the registers now stand, they can be used to trace missing letters. Probably, some of the missing letters can be found.

Political journalism

More than half of the volumes planned for section 1, i.e. 17 volumes, have been published; these are, in the main, well known texts; however, through an intensive research effort, several new texts have been located, and others have been clarified. This is apparent in the two volumes under review (vol. I-14 and I-31).

The first ones consist of articles written in 1855 for the newspapers *Neue Oder-Zeitung* (NOZ) and the *New York (Daily) Tribune* (NYT). In addition to the approximately 200 articles, there is one somewhat lengthier article by Engels in *Putnam's Monthly*, 'The Armies of Europe'. The volume contains everything published in the year 1855, including 33 newly found articles. In this volume, and in keeping with the MEGA-principles of publication, approximately half of the texts are in English. The articles for which authorship remains uncertain or for which the NYT editors seem to have intervened notably are printed in an appendix.

Marx's and Engels' collaboration with the *New York Tribune* and its editor, Charles Anderson Dana, extended from 1851 to 1862 and led to jobs for other periodicals and to extensive contributions on their part to the *New American Cyclopaedia*. These were very important jobs for the two - for Marx in particular as he had no other income beyond what he and Engels earned for their writings. It appears that Engels at that time had no other way of assisting Marx financially than by writing several articles in Marx's name.

In fact, collaboration with the NYT was begun by a lengthy series of articles *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany* (1851-52), published in Marx's name, but actually written by Engels. This fiction was kept up throughout the period of their collaboration with the NYT, and it is only after the publication of the Marx-Engels correspondence that it has become clear which writings are attributable to Marx and which to Engels. Their cooperation was to become even more far-reaching, as it has become clear that for the year 1855 the reports and analyses that Marx wrote to the NOZ were very often pure summaries and translations of Engels' articles in the NYT. Obviously, it was only possible for the two authors to work so closely together because of their fundamental congruity of thought - a circumstance which should indeed provide food for thought to those who have posited an inconsistency between Marx and Engels. The following period of 11 years is not without interest for the subsequent evolution of their theoretical works: it is obvious that Marx has recycled material from that period in those manuscripts that are now being published in the second section of MEGA. The material is also extremely relevant for the development of the political aspects of Marxism. For a long time, Marx worked exclusively as a journalist and editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*, and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, and he contributed to a number of others, such as the labour newspaper *The People's Paper*, *Das Volk*, and also the democratic paper, the *Neue Oder-Zeitung*. This means that a considerable proportion of the two authors' production consists of newspaper articles, like, for example, *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, which was intended for the weekly magazine *Die Revolution*, published in New York.

Internationalization of world history

Essential elements of Marxism were only developed through journalistic work. For example, it was only in connection with editing an article describing how 'poor people' stole waste firewood, that it became clear to Marx what material necessity actually meant for the vast majority of the population. It is easy to discern that in 1855 his journalism was very much concerned with the economic implications of the political and military events taking place at the time. However, reading these articles will also reveal other lines of thought. For both Marx and Engels it was important to set out the facts on which their analyses were based. It is well known that Marx and Engels to some degree suffered from Russophobia - in part because the Czarist Empire was, in fact, the great counter-revolutionary power of the time, a regime which, in the name of 'the Holy Alliance', strove to maintain the existing social order. To secure this aim, Russia was willing to deploy her troops against terrorists and rogue states. In this respect Russia was in agreement with the France of Napoleon III, and there was a long-lasting close cooperation between the two powers. Internationalization of events began to play a prominent role in Marx's and Engels' journalism.

However, in 1855 there was no Franco-Russian cooperation; on the contrary, at that time, the Crimean War pitted France, Great Britain, and some other allies against Russia. In the present MEGA volume, the economic and political implications are subjected to a detailed discussion, and Engels also carries out a military analysis of important battles (e.g., Sevastopol), examining the strengths and compositions of the respective armies. These analyses make for fascinating reading as they evolve over the year. Reading them in sequence provides the reader with a good understanding of events, more so than the contemporary reader would have been able to deduce. In this volume, Marx's multi-faceted discussion of British parliamentarism can be read in the context of his assessment of the party system, of the role of parliamentary opposition, and of the impact of the press on public opinion. Criticism of the Bonapartist system (as distinct from the Bonapartist coup described in *The 18th Brumaire*), and in particular of the role played by Napoleon III himself, is further developed. The volume also contains a series of articles by Engels on Pan-Slavism (from the NOZ), supplemented by a draft intended either for these articles or for a more exhaustive dissertation which he planned to write on the phenomenon of Pan-Slavism. The assessments propounded in these articles are correlated with those raised in the revolution of 1848-49. Subsequently, Engels has been criticized - most extensively by Roman Rosdolsky - for his evaluation of peoples like the Czechs, Slovenians, Croats, etc., as being 'nonhistoric,' i.e., being doomed to national disappearance into the surrounding larger nations - in this case the Hungarians and the Germans - because in their (embryonic) struggle for national independence they joined forces with reactionary powers in the revolution of 1848-49 and turned against the democratic movement among Hungarians and Germans. At a later time, Engels revised his position as the emergence of an industrial working class and a labour movement within these nations made them part of the general progressive trend. Already in 1896 in the preface to the German edition of *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*, Kautsky (who still thought Marx was the author of the articles) explains this theoretical position. The fact that Engels' perception of the Nation is very far removed from nationalism will be seen from a comparison with the nationalism of Napoleon III.

The present volume, together with volumes 10 to 13 of this section, volumes 3-7 of the third section and volumes 7-9 of the fourth section (covering 1849-1851), makes it possible to assess Marx's and Engels' development from the end of the 1848 revolutions until the mid-1850s. Until now it was not possible to follow developments with the same degree of precision. Volumes 13 and 14 of the MECW, published in 1980, cover the same period as this MEGA volume; some texts, however, appear only in the MEGA volume, as they were not discovered until the mid-1980s.

Engels without Marx

The second new MEGA volume includes writings, articles, and drafts written by Friedrich Engels from October 1886 to February 1891. Marx had died in 1883, and this volume is the middle one of the, in all, three volumes that will include Engels texts from 1883 to 1895. However, Engels' editions of *Capital* volumes 2 and 3 will be published in section II of the MEGA. The two other volumes have not been published yet, but preparatory work does exist. A bringing up to date of the volumes in accordance with the guidelines of 1993 is still outstanding. Among the volumes of letters for the years 1886-91, two volumes are in hand, viz., for the years 1888-1890. They are expected to be published three to four years from now; the others have yet to be begun. The volume falls into two parts covering a total of 1,440 pages, of which 850 pages are in the second part-volume. This volume contains the explanatory notes and historical information including the general introduction to both part-volumes. Furthermore, it contains registers of names, periodicals, newspapers, literature, all of which provides a lot of relevant information. During the four and a half years covered by the volume, Engels had written or drafted 67 documents. One such document is an incomplete manuscript which was only published by Eduard Bernstein after Engels' death. The manuscript is concerned with the 'Meaning of Violence in History'. It includes a survey of German history from approx. 1848 to 1888, a draft with which Engels was not satisfied, and which he never completed. Furthermore, there is *The Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire* from April 1890. In addition we find ten introductions and new reprints and translations for example of *The Communist Manifesto* (the last edition published by Engels), a number of articles in newspapers and periodicals as well as some minor manuscripts. In an addendum we find reprints of pamphlets to which Engels has contributed as well as five of his own translations. So here we have a number of texts of which he was not the author, but to which he has contributed one way or another by way of editing, commenting, translating or the like. The commentary very carefully explains what Engels' particular contribution was. Several of these texts are published here for the first time as texts to which Engels' contribution has been identified.

These introductions, translations, etc., must be seen in connection with his endeavours to fortify the position of Marxism as the theory of the working class. Following Marx's death, he saw it as his principal duty to further develop the theory. During these years, he spent much of his time on preparing volume III of the *Capital* and on the history, theory, and strategy of the labour movement. Against the background of such work, it became possible for him to think about the tactics of the contemporary labour movement; thoughts that are also reflected in his correspondence.

| Sehnsucht.

Romanze.

„Was seufzt die Brust, was glüht der Blick,
Was brennen all' die Venen,
Als drückt' dich Nacht, als peitscht' Geschick,
Hinab in Sturm Dein Sehnen?“

„Zeig' mir das Aug', wie Glockenklang,
Gefaßt in Regenbogen,
Wo's strömt wie Gluth, wo perlt Gesang,
Wo Stern' herüberwogen!“

„Mir träumt' davon, mir träumt' so schwer,
Kannst nimmer wohl es deuten,
Mein Kopf ist hohl, mein Herz ist leer,
Will mir ein Grab bereiten!“ |

| „Was träumst du her, was träumst du hin,
Was zieht's nach fernen Landen?
Hier braust die Fluth, hier wogt Gewinn,
Hier glüht's in Liebesbanden.“

„Hier wogt es nicht, hier glüht es nicht,
Schon seh' ich's fernher blinken,
Mich brennt die Lust, mich blendet Licht,
Muß schier heruntersinken.“

Hoch blickt' er, bis das Aug' ersprüht,
Da zucken alle Glieder,
Die Sehnen schwelln, das Herz erglüht,
Entgeistert sinkt er nieder.

The IInd International

The period saw two principal sets of problems: the development of the international labour movement towards the establishment of the IInd International, and the growing risk of international war. The policies of the then great powers had each reached the boundaries of what they could achieve, and consequently new ways of expanding had to be found.

Engels analysed these problems and actively participated in the preparations for the inaugural conference of the IInd International. He did not consider it necessary actually to establish a formal organization. But he acceded to the wishes of the labour organizations, especially when it became clear to him that the non-Marxist forces in the labour movement had seized the initiative in this matter. He made use of his own contacts in the labour movement to foster a Marxist conference. In this connection, it is quite interesting to note that in Paris two concurrent and competing conferences were held - a Marxist and a reformist. The Marxist conference was to cast the longer shadow, although it certainly did not mean that the question of which theoretical line would prevail in the labour movement had been settled once and for all. Engels threw himself into an extensive campaign, and this is reflected by several contributions to this volume. Several of his interventions are here published for the first time in his name. At the time, for tactical reasons, they were published in, for instance, Eduard Bernstein's name or in the name of the French socialist Charles Bonnier. The purpose of these activities was to prevent the old conflicts between various lines of thought in the labour movement from flaring up and dominating international conferences. There are more documents than those mentioned here. And the editor has provided an extensive account of the echo they had.

The threat of war

In several of his contributions, Engels touched upon the problems relating to the war threat. In his opinion a war might quickly develop into a world conflagration with vast armies and thus create a situation which might well, at the end of the day, foster a revolution, but would at the same time lead to unheard of sacrifices and might also destroy the labour movement. Time and time again Engels examined the development of the movement, and in 1889/90 he concluded that the movement was developing in a direction which he considered to be positive. This was not wishful thinking; in the UK 'new trade-unionism' (i.e., the unionization of unskilled workers) was having its breakthrough in a large-scale industrial conflict in the autumn of 1889. Eleanor Marx made a major effort, and that Engels was proud of his dead comrade's youngest daughter emerges very clearly from his correspondence. Her efforts, among other things, had the effect of socialist forces gaining considerable support in Great Britain, a sup-

port which, however, was to evaporate again as a result of personal complications in the circle surrounding Engels. But also in France, the Marxist line connected with Jules Guesde gained its breakthrough, in Germany the Social-Democratic party grew to be the biggest political party in terms of votes in 1890 with a little under 20 per cent of the votes cast. Also in the United States of America it seemed as if the workers were finally on the move. Not just in New York and Chicago, but in many other places throughout the country the organization Knights of Labor had gained massive support. However, Engels obviously overestimated the importance of these results: the fact that many workers voted for a Social-Democratic party or joined trade unions was not a direct reflection of their revolutionary stance.

The volume contains many other interesting contributions: e.g., a letter sent to an Austrian socialist published as an article in a number of newspapers. It sheds new light over Engels' perception of the 'non-historic' peoples and the role of political anti-Semitism. In an unfinished manuscript on German history 1848-1888, Engels touches upon German unification into one single state. Marx and Engels had not wanted to see the unification take place as a from-the-top-down venture, as was in fact the chain of events in 1871. But they considered the German unification as an important historical step and a fact of life, as the 39 German mini-states did not have much chance of developing economically, and thus, politically. As the revolutionary solution had disappeared with the defeat of the revolution in 1849, they accepted what had happened and worked on the basis of this new position. This two-part volume thus sheds new and co-ordinated light over Engels' understanding not only of theoretical problems, but especially over his ability to apply his theoretical cognition to concrete and topical problems. This in and of itself puts paid to any doubts existing concerning his Marxist stance or dialectical ability.

Ongoing research

In connection with the publication of MEGA, extensive research takes place: in the course of the 1980s, the University of Leipzig in the former GDR made extensive efforts to find possible articles in the three editions of the NYT (daily, semi-weekly, and weekly); these investigations were in part based on the correspondence between Marx and Engels. It is a serious difficulty that in 1855 Dana published Marx's articles anonymously and as leading articles without any byline or other form of identification; that often he would split up one article into several, and so on. Examination has led to the identification of 20 articles attributable to Engels and another 10 that could be by Marx or Engels.

To make these partial results quickly accessible, and to disseminate the theoretical significance of the research, several publications are available. These include: an annual *Marx-Engels-Jahrbuch*, published jointly by the two institutes in Moscow and Ber-

lin 1978-1990; a Russian bulletin was published in Moscow; and three semi-internal newsletters that were published in Leipzig, Halle, and Berlin in the GDR – all of these have ceased publication. Since 1991 a yearbook, *Beiträge zur Marx-Engels-Forschung Neue Folge*, is published by the Argument publishing house in Berlin/Hamburg without direct ties to the MEGA [www.marxforschung.de]. The articles published in the *Beiträge* are mostly in German, but some are in English. The same applies to the periodical published by IMES, *MEGA-Studien*, which is, in principle, written in French, English, and German, but with a preponderance of German-language articles. It is a significant factor in this publication Odyssey that in order to promote scholarly internationalization and to pre-empt any country from monopolizing this work, groups of volunteer researchers in several countries, e.g., Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and the USA, are deeply involved in the project.

- *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe*, I Abt. Band 14. Herausgegeben von Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung Amsterdam; H. J. BOCHINSKI, M. HUNDT, et al. (eds.), *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels: Werke, Artikel, Entwürfe Januar bis Dezember 1855*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2001, XV, 1695 p.

- *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe*, I Abt. Band 31. Herausgegeben von Internationale Marx-Engels-Stiftung Amsterdam; R. MERKEL-MELIS (ed.), *Friedrich Engels: Werke, Artikel, Entwürfe Oktober 1886 bis Februar 1891*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2002, 1440 p.