

Dialectical Materialism

**The Theoretical Foundation
of Marxism-Leninism**

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MARXISM AS THE THEORY AND TACTICS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT

Lenin defined Marxism as the revolutionary theory and tactics of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.

The task of the proletariat is “to take a conscious part in the historical process of the transformation of society that is going on under our eyes.”¹

Because of the position it occupies in production and society the proletariat must act as the leader and organiser of all the oppressed and exploited in the struggle for communism. In 1846 Marx wrote:

We do not regard communism as a *state of affairs* that has to be brought about; nor as an ideal to which reality must conform. By communism we mean an *actual* movement that will sweep away the present state of affairs. The conditions for that movement arise out of already existing premises.*

By these postulates Marx meant: the growth of the working class (both in numbers and in class consciousness), large-scale industry and socialised production developed by capitalism.

The development of the productive forces of social labour is the historical task and privilege of capital. It is precisely in this way that it unconsciously creates the material requirements of a higher mode of production.²

But private property in the means of production—which is the very foundation of capitalism—hampers and fetters the further development of the productive forces. The proletariat alone can break those fetters; after it has established its dictatorship the proletariat must smash the machinery of the bourgeois state; it must defend its own state power in civil war and crush the opposition of the bourgeoisie; it must take over large-scale industry and transform the means of production into social property, in order to reshape production on socialist lines, and, on the ruins of capitalism and using the material left over from capitalism, give the widest possible development to socialist production with all possible speed. The proletariat assumes the leadership of the non-proletarian sections of society that are oppressed and exploited by capitalism. Under the guidance of the industrial proletariat, and with the help of its dictatorship, a complete transformation of production takes place and the small producers are turned into members of a socialist society. The proletariat thereby creates a new material basis for human relationships. By means of the class struggle, and with the help of its dictatorship, it abolishes classes and achieves a classless society. Such is the historical mission of the proletariat throughout the whole world.³

Revolutionary theory, *i.e.*, scientific deductions and generalisations based on the experience of revolution and of the working class movement in all countries, is of vital importance to the revolutionary struggle of the working class at the present time. “Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement,” Lenin said. The foundations of this theory were laid down by Marx and Engels and further developed by Lenin. During the course of several decades the proletariat has had the opportunity to test this theory by their own experience in the class

* All quotations are taken from English editions unless otherwise indicated in the reference notes at the back of this book.—*Ed.*

struggle. This theory has played, and continues to play, a tremendous part in the struggle of the working class. For instance, in Russia, we could neither have seized, nor retained power, nor could we have correctly tackled the problems of building up socialism, were it not for the firm hand and consistent leadership of the Communist Party, based on the revolutionary theory of Marxism, and were it not for the fact that the working class realised that this leadership was the right one. If the working class is guided in its struggles by the theory of Marxism and Leninism, it will defeat the bourgeoisie all over the world.

Marxism provides no ready-made recipes, that can be applied uniformly in any and every circumstance without further reflection. The Marxian theory “is not a dogma, but a guide to action.” It gives the general line as to how the fight of the working class should be conducted. Having studied all the social phenomena of the time, having himself led the working-class movement, Marx made certain deductions, indicated the general trend of development and pointed out what must be the inevitable course of future events. He showed that the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into a communist society was inevitable, that the proletariat would take the leading part in this transformation, that a transition period from capitalism to communism was unavoidable and that the form of state during that transition period would be the dictatorship of the proletariat. But Marx, of course, could not forecast, and never attempted to forecast, the detailed events of the progress of the world revolution. Marx thought that in order to decide what should be done at a given historical moment, in a given country and under given conditions, one must carefully study (with the help of the method of scientific communism) all the specific features of the given situation (which is constantly changing) and the situation existing not only within the given country itself, but in all the other countries of the world. Marxism considers that only by such a study can the

...thinking representatives of the given class [acquire] the necessary knowledge, the necessary experience—and, apart from all knowledge and experience—the necessary political instinct for the quick and correct solution of intricate political problems.⁴

Marxism draws its ideas from the actual struggle of the masses. The Marxian theory is worked out in close conjunction with the mass revolutionary movement. It is not based on ideas “invented or discovered by this or that would-be universal reformer” but represents “...merely... in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes.”⁵

The theory of Marxism helps the proletariat to understand “the conditions and nature of its own actions.”⁶

The duty of the proletarian theoretician is not to create socialist plans out of his own head; his duty is to discover the conditions for emancipation from exploitation that are created in the very process of social and economic development; he must find in the very progress of events the path that leads to the solution of the problems of the exploited masses; he must help the latter in their fight for communism and guide them in the struggle, so that society based on exploitation may be destroyed as rapidly as possible and with the least sacrifice on the part of the proletariat and the toiling classes in general. As we have said, owing to the position it occupies in production and society, the proletariat can, and must, take upon itself the duty of organising a communist society. The theory of Marxism should help the proletariat in the task of exterminating all forms of exploitation as rapidly and as easily as possible. General postulates are not enough, precise solutions of the daily problems of the political struggle and the building up of socialism are required. That implies a scientific leadership and foresight based on the study of the actual state of affairs, using for this purpose the Marxist-Leninist theory. As Comrade

Stalin said:

Theory... alone, can give to the movement confidence, guidance, strength and understanding of the inner relations between events; it alone can help practice to clarify the process and direction of class movements in the present and near future.⁷

In the article “Our Immediate Task,” written in 1899, Lenin pointed out that the duty of a revolutionary party

does not consist merely in serving the working class movement; its duty is to *link up socialism with the working class movement...* to introduce definite socialist ideals into the spontaneous movement, to link it up with socialist convictions consistent with the level of modern science, and connect it with the systematic political struggle for democracy [this was written six years before the Revolution of 1905, *V.A.*], as a means for the realisation of socialism—in a word, to fuse this spontaneous movement with the activities of the *revolutionary party*, into a single indivisible whole. The history of socialism and democracy in Western Europe, the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, and the experience of our working class movement—such is the *material* that must be studied and mastered in order to work out the correct forms of organisation and the correct tactics of our party.⁸

In the same article Lenin says that ready-made formulas must not be automatically applied to new and specific conditions:

The material must be analysed... independently, for we shall not find ready-made samples.⁹

Lenin points out that “the conditions of the Russian working-class movement are entirely different from those of the Western European movement.”

Nor could the earlier revolutionary parties in Russia be taken as examples in every respect. While recognising “the necessity of learning revolutionary and conspirative technique from the old Russian leaders,” Lenin pointed out, that “by no means relieves us of the duty of examining them critically and of working out our own form of organisation.”¹⁰

That is how Lenin, scrupulously observing the Marxian method, defines the scope of theory, and indicates the necessity of independently studying every fresh experience and of making use of all that was valuable in past development.

We have already stated that, according to Marx, the proletarian theoretician must give expression to the revolutionary aims of the mass movement; he must guide that movement, yet at the same time learn from it and avail himself of the experience of the whole international revolution. This was the spirit in which Lenin wrote and acted. He valued very highly theoreticians who kept in close touch with the masses.

In 1918 he wrote:

... a revolutionary Marxist is distinguished from the ordinary philistine by his ability and willingness to preach to the still ignorant masses the necessity of the approaching revolution, to prove that it is inevitable, to explain its advantage to the people, and to prepare the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses for it.¹¹

In this passage Lenin emphasised the importance of the ability to maintain contact with the unenlightened masses, the ability to draw them into the movement and to lead them into revolutionary positions, so that “the masses by their own experience may convince themselves of

the correctness of the Party line.” That is one of the fundamental principles of Leninism. It is embodied in the Programme of the Communist International and is one of the characteristic and distinguishing features of the activities of both Marx and Engels.

For the whole task of the Communists—said Lenin—is to be able to *convince* the backward, to work among them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by means of fantastic, childishly “Left” slogans.¹²

In 1914 the liberal newspaper *Rech*, discussing the fight the Bolsheviks were waging against the Liquidators,* bewailed the “carrying of the dissension into the ranks of the workers.” Lenin in an article entitled “The Methods Used by the Bourgeois Intellectuals in the Fight Against the Workers,” wrote:

We *welcome* the “carrying of dissension into the ranks of the workers,” for it is the workers, and the workers alone, who will distinguish dissensions from differences, from disagreements on principle, who will understand the significance of these disagreements and form their own opinion and decide not “with whom” to go, but where to go, *i.e.*, decide on a definite, clear, well-considered and tested line of action.

This line of action can be worked out and the political enlightenment of the masses of the workers can be accomplished only in the course of “a consistent and stubborn fight to a finish, of proletarian influences and strivings directed against the bourgeoisie.”¹³

Moreover, it must never be forgotten that the masses learn by their own experience, from events, and not only from books. In his preface to the 1890 German edition of *The Communist Manifesto*, Engels wrote:

For Marx, the sole guarantee of the ultimate triumph of the theories contained in the *Manifesto* was the intellectual development of the working class that would result from joint action and discussion. The events and fluctuations of fortune in the struggle against capitalism, their victories, and still more their defeats, would reveal to the combatants the ineffectiveness of the panaceas they had hitherto believed in, and would make their minds more receptive for the thorough understanding of the real conditions of working class emancipation.

Thus, it is out of the actual mass struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and the conscious leadership of the struggle on the part of the vanguard of the proletariat—the Communist Party—that scientific communism arises, differing fundamentally from utopian and petty-bourgeois reformist socialism. Scientific communism is not based on good intentions, but on the class struggle of the proletariat and the recognition of the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The theoretical statement of the principles of scientific communism is Marxism and Leninism, the latter being an elaboration of Marxism in the light of new conditions. This theory embraces general questions of philosophy and method as well as their concrete application. It is essential to the proletariat in its struggles: it imparts consciousness, self-assurance, and decision to the movement. Those who are able to wield it are saved from aberrations and uncertainties; it enables us to determine the correct path to follow and renders the achievement and the consolidation of victory easier and surer.

* Reformist Socialists—Mensheviks—who proposed liquidation of the underground party organisation and instead favoured legal activities exclusively.—*Ed.*

II

THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LENINISM

Because of the intimate relation that exists between theory and reality, the great changes that have occurred since the death of Marx and Engels had to find their reflections in theory.

The theoretical basis that Lenin took over from Marx, namely, dialectical materialism, was further developed by him independently.

Lenin lived and acted in new and different conditions and a number of questions had to be considered afresh. Using the method of Marx, he solved the difficult problem of how the fight for revolutionary Marxism must be conducted in the new and complex conditions created by the era of imperialism and the beginnings of the world proletarian revolution. Since the death of Marx none of the important theoreticians and leaders of the Second International has been able to cope with this problem. Lenin was able to solve it because he maintained the closest contact with the mass movement of the proletariat and had mastered the Marxist theory as no one else had. Lenin, himself, was the truest expression of the world-wide and historical mission of the proletariat. Having himself led the struggle in the course of three revolutions, he was able to advance and develop the Marxist theory in all its component parts. We are therefore quite justified in describing Leninism as Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and the proletarian revolution.

The epoch of Lenin differed from the epoch of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels lived and developed their theory at a time when the proletariat was just beginning to come out definitely as an independent force, as a result of which the bourgeoisie became more and more inclined to come to terms with the forces of reaction. In his book, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, written in 1852, Marx stated that the nineteenth century saw the beginning of the proletarian revolution. He based his statement on the theoretical conclusions he had arrived at as a result of the Revolution of 1848. In a speech delivered in the spring of 1852 on the occasion of the anniversary of the *People's Paper** he said:

The so-called revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents, small fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. But they revealed an abyss. Beneath the apparently solid surface they betrayed oceans of liquid matter only needing expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock. Noisily and confusedly they proclaimed the emancipation of the proletariat, *i.e.*, the secret of the nineteenth century and of the revolution of that century.

And in concluding his speech he said:

...the English working men are the firstborn sons of modern industry. Certainly, then, they will not be the last to aid the social revolution produced by that industry—a revolution which means the emancipation of their class all over the world, which is as universal as capital—rule and wage slavery.¹⁴

Marx proclaimed the inevitability of the proletarian revolution, but it had not yet fully begun during the lifetime of Marx and Engels.

Marx foresaw that the course of events was bound to lead to the monopoly of big capital. But it was only after the death of Marx and Engels that the extension of the rule of monopoly

* A Chartist paper.—*Ed.*

capitalism throughout the whole world really took place, leading in its turn to the rule of finance capital and to imperialism. In the 'sixties England was the centre of the development and rule of big capital (and of the plundering of the colonies). But by the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth capitalism had developed in a number of other countries (particularly in Germany and the United States) much more powerfully than in England. All the colonies had already been seized. And so, at the end of the nineteenth century, a desperate struggle broke out among the big predatory imperialist powers, not for the division of the world, but for its redivision. There began the epoch of imperialism—the fusion of usurious banking capital with industrial capital to form finance capital. What Lenin called “decaying, moribund capitalism” set in. For the peculiarities of this condition and for the main features of the economics of imperialism—the latest and last stage of the development of capitalism—consult Lenin’s great work *Imperialism*, and his article, “Imperialism and the Split in the Socialist Movement.”¹⁵

Prior even to the imperialist war, but particularly on its outbreak, a revolutionary situation was created in the countries where capitalism was most highly developed as a result of the extreme aggravation of the contradictions of capitalism, the high cost of living, increased oppression and general deterioration of the condition of the working class. The revolution began to spread even before the war. In the East, the revolution followed on the heels of the 1905 Revolution in Russia; in 1906 it broke out in Persia, in 1908 in Turkey and in 1911 in China. In the European countries the approach of revolution was heralded by big strikes in England (the general strike on the railways in 1911, the miners’ strike in 1912), the struggles of the workers in Germany (the demonstrations in favour of universal suffrage in Prussia in 1910), and working class demonstrations in Russia (the protest strikes against the Lena shootings in 1912, the strikes in Baku and other cities in the summer of 1914, the demonstrations in St. Petersburg, accompanied by armed clashes and the erection of barricades, etc.).

The proletarian revolution loomed in all capitalist countries. The fundamental conditions for the transition to socialism had ripened; a proletarian revolution had become an objective necessity. The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie had to be replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat, since of all the classes in modern society the proletariat alone was capable of leading the toilers out of the *impasse* to which the bourgeoisie had brought it.

Of all the workers’ parties of the world, however, the Russian Bolsheviks alone, headed by Lenin, proved to be actually prepared to assume the leadership of the proletarian revolution.

In the West European countries, in the long period of reaction that followed the suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, the workers’ parties had grown accustomed to pursue only legal forms of the class struggle. Opportunism was rife: a good deal of “opportunist garbage,” as Lenin called it, had accumulated.

One of the chief reasons for the strength of opportunism was the fact that in all imperialist countries the capitalist class bribed the upper stratum of the working class (the numerically small labour aristocracy) out of the super-profits obtained from the plunder of the colonies and semi-colonies. Thus, there was a section, a numerically small section, it is true, of the working class, that sided with the bourgeoisie and served as the vehicle of its influence to the proletariat.

But the situation completely changed with the outbreak of the imperialist war. Then in the Western countries, in the “free” constitutional monarchies and republics, armed revolt and the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war became an urgent necessity, for there was no way of escaping from exploitation except by bitter struggle.

Of all the European parties, the Russian Bolshevik Party, alone, had made serious preparation

for this struggle, owing to the fact that in Russia a revolutionary situation had been developing since the middle of the nineteenth century. The Russian revolutionary movement was the most powerful in Europe.

In Russia all the contradictions of the modern period of imperialism were prevalent: the oppression of enslaved nationalities by a dominant nation, the military-feudal oppression of tsarism, which was the most brutal form of political oppression then existing. The landowning nobility still survived in Russia and there were many survivals of serfdom in economic life (particularly that of the peasants), habits and customs and in political institutions. At the same time capitalism was developing rapidly: large-scale industry grew apace and became concentrated in a few centres; this was accompanied by the growth of the working class. Bank capital, syndicates and trusts, those highest forms of imperialist finance capital, developed also, particularly after 1905. The proletarian class war against the bourgeoisie spread and this was accompanied by the growth of the peasants' war against the landowning nobility. In other words, we had a combination of two class wars, which Marx viewed as unusually favourable for proletarian victory.

Marx and Engels had pointed out in their time the approach of the revolution in Russia, the extremely rapid development of capitalism in that vast country, and the unbearable yoke of tsarism.

They had understood: 1, the complexity of the social structure in Russia, *viz.*, the existence of the most primitive together with the most modern forms ("every stage of social development is represented from the primitive commune to modern large-scale industry and high finance," as Engels wrote to V. I. Zasulich in 1885); 2, they took into account the existence of a revolutionary situation; they saw that the revolution required only a jolt to bring vast masses of people into action; 3, they foresaw that the revolutionary explosion would be of tremendous power and that it would inevitably assume a most violent and bitter character ("Russia is heading towards a most violent revolution," Marx wrote to Engels in 1870); 4, they foresaw that in this *last* of the great European countries to pass through the capitalist industrial revolution, the conflict would assume unprecedented dimensions. "This time the crash will beat anything known before; all the factors are there: intensity, universal extension, entanglement of all possessing and ruling social elements," so Engels wrote to Marx on April 14, 1856; 5, they realised the tremendous significance of the Russian revolution for the world revolution. That the latter would be a socialist revolution Marx and Engels never doubted.¹⁶

Of enormous importance for the Russian revolution and for the development of the Leninist theory was the fact that quite an extensive experience in revolution and working class organisation had already been accumulated, and that the theory of Marx and Engels had been worked out in detail and adopted and tested by the revolutionary proletarian party and by the masses. The Bolshevik Party grew and gained strength in the course of a long struggle and the experience of a number of revolutions. It accumulated the experience of the international working-class movement and of West European revolutions and conveyed this experience to the masses.

In his "*Left-Wing' Communism*," Lenin wrote:

Russia achieved Marxism, as the only correct revolutionary theory, virtually through *suffering*, by a half century of unprecedented torments and sacrifice, of unprecedented revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, painstaking search and study, testing in practice, disappointments, checking, and comparison with European experience.

Lenin also emphasised the value and significance of the direct experience gained by the

Bolshevik Party in the long struggle against the autocracy, the liberal bourgeoisie, petty-bourgeois wavering and uncertain revolutionaries (such as the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Anarchists, and so forth), and against the various tendencies and deviations within its own ranks. These deviations and bourgeois influences were overcome in the struggle waged against the various forms of opportunism that successively manifested themselves: Economism,^{*} Menshevism, the Liquidationist movement, social-patriotism and the tendencies that disguised themselves by “Left” phraseology, such as “*Otzovism*,” “*Vperyodism*,”[†] “Left Communism,” etc., as well as against conciliationism, a disguised and therefore particularly dangerous form of opportunism.

Lenin subjected the Russian revolution and the development of Bolshevism to a detailed analysis in a number of his writings, *e.g.*, “The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats,” “Speech on the Revolution of 1905,” “The Stages, the Trend and Prospects of the Revolution,” “Farewell Letter to the Swiss Workers,” “Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution,” “Our Revolution,” especially “Left-Wing” Communism.

We have dealt particularly with the Russian revolution, because it was in Russia that the Bolshevik Party developed. But it would be a mistake to assume that Bolshevism (in other words, Leninism) is based only on the experiences of Russia and that it is a purely Russian phenomenon. Leninism was drawn from international experience and its significance is international. Only by a proletarian revolution can the revolutionary proletariat and the oppressed masses who are struggling against imperialism throughout the world, achieve their emancipation. Leninism is the theory of the proletariat, it sums up and explains this experience, it teaches the working class how to conduct its fight and how to secure victory, seize power, consolidate its gains and lead the toilers in their struggle against exploitation. It also teaches us how socialism is to be built.

In his pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin says that the popularity of Bolshevism throughout the world is due to the profound sympathy the masses have for genuinely revolutionary tactics, because the revolution has begun to mature all over the world. He enumerates the achievements of Bolshevism and declares that Bolshevik tactics were based on a correct appreciation of the revolutionary situation that had arisen all over Europe.

Bolshevism exposed and routed the old, putrid international of social-traitors. It laid down the ideological and tactical foundations of the Third International, which took into account the gains achieved in the epoch of peace as well as the experience of the epoch of revolution which had commenced. The example of the Soviet state showed that the workers and poor peasants are capable of taking political power, of defending it against attacks of the world bourgeoisie, and of building socialism.

With Russia as an example, the masses throughout the world were in a position to convince themselves that Bolshevism had indicated “the true path of salvation from the horrors of the war and of imperialism and that Bolshevism *could serve as an example in tactics to all*” (Lenin).

The long training and hardening that the Bolshevik Party had obtained in the struggle guaranteed it an important place in the international struggle against opportunism and for the creation of the Third, Communist, International. While crystallising the rich experience of the Russian revolution, Bolshevism at the same time reflected the experience of the international working-class movement (particularly the European) which had entered the era of the socialist

^{*} A tendency in Russian Social-Democracy which advocated “pure and simple” trade unionism.—*Ed.*

[†] *Otzovism*—from, the Russian, meaning a tendency favoring the *recall* of the Socialist deputies from the Duma; *Vperyodism*—a tendency represented by Socialists grouped around the newspaper *Vperyod* (Forward).—*Ed.*

revolution.

Before the war, during the war, and after the war, Lenin in his writings constantly bore in mind the experience of the whole international struggle. Under his leadership, a bitter struggle was waged against opportunism wherever it was found. It was in this spirit, the spirit of revolutionary Marxism, that the Communist Parties in every European country were trained. Lenin wrote letters to workers in various countries on questions of the international revolution, pointing out that the urgent and essential task in the present period of history was to fight for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat all over the world. It was under Lenin's leadership that the Communist International was created and the fundamental principles of its programme, organisation and tactics laid down.

Leninism, therefore, is Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution. In this epoch, the proletarian movement reaches new, higher, levels. The proletariat has grown numerically; it has become better organised and more class conscious; its historical activity has increased; it has learned to employ new methods in the struggle, for it has now conquered power and established its dictatorship in a vast country. In his activities and in his writings, Lenin expressed and analysed the new phenomena of the new epoch. Leading the struggle of the proletariat in these new conditions, Lenin advanced and developed Marxist theory and introduced fresh elements into all its phases. Hence Leninism is a new stage in the development of Marxism.

III

MATERIALIST DIALECTICS AS THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF MARXISM-LENINISM

The essence of Marxism is materialist dialectics. Lenin called materialist dialectics “the living soul of Marxism,” “its fundamental theoretical root.” The importance of mastering the dialectical method will therefore be obvious. It is needed in the study of nature and of society, in the theoretical struggle, in the practical leadership of the proletariat and its constructive work.

The articles collected in Volume XI of the *Selected Works** provide a general exposition of materialist dialectics and its application to the study of nature and of the history of human society and of human thought. We must learn how to apply this method by studying the works of Marx and Engels and the masterly application of materialist dialectics by Lenin. All his life Lenin was a diligent student of the works of Marx and Engels; he read them over and over again, and turned to them particularly at every turn of history and at every new stage of the revolution, when new problems arose for solution. Lenin took his revolutionary materialist dialectics from Marx and Engels, he repeatedly advocated the necessity of studying their works for this purpose. But to say that Lenin mastered the Marxist method is not enough; he developed it and raised it to a still higher level.

What do we mean by dialectics? By dialectics Hegel meant the progress of ideas (thought) by means of contradiction, the process of its development toward a supreme and absolute spirit. Hegel emphasised that such progress, such development is self-motion. He considered that every phenomenon had its own motion, its own process of development, and that this self-motion is the result of an inherent impulse to development. In ancient Greece, dialectics was the name given to the art of disputation. It was considered that in the course of an argument, rich in fertile ideas, the opinions of the disputing parties underwent a change and that something new and of a higher nature resulted. By analogy, all motion by means of contradiction came to be called dialectics. This was the sense in which Hegel used the term. He believed that motion was universally produced in this way, *i.e.*, by a conflict of contradictions, the negation of the old and the creation of the new. That is how development takes place.

But the dialectics of Hegel are idealistic. It is the movement of thought that lies at the root of his whole philosophy. Marx, on the contrary, employed dialectics materialistically. He created dialectic materialism. *Materialist dialectics* is the general movement and development caused by the conflict of contradictions that takes place throughout the universe both in nature and in society, and which is reflected in human thought. *Dialectic materialism* is the philosophy and method of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, an instrument for the study and transformation of everything that exists. Dialectic materialism is not confined merely to theoretical study: it involves practical revolutionary action.

Dialectic thought strives to achieve a complete and all-embracing conception of phenomena. Every expressed opinion is more or less one-sided.

Lenin, after conversing with an individual who had attended the “*Vperyod*” school at Capri conducted by A. Bogdanov, who politically was a follower of the “Otzovist” faction, wrote a letter to Maxim Gorky dated November 29, 1909, in which he stated that his (Lenin’s) previous conception of the Capri school had been one-sided. He wrote:

* To be published in English Translation—*Ed.*

By gad, the philosopher Hegel was right—life does progress by contradictions; and living contradictions are much richer, more varied and pithier than the mind of man originally conceived. I thought that the school was *merely* the centre of a new faction. It turns out not to be so: not in the sense that the school was not the centre of a new faction (it was, and is so to-day), but in the sense that this is not the whole truth. Subjectively, certain individuals made the school such a centre; objectively, it was such a centre, and, moreover, the school drew from real working-class surroundings genuine and advanced workers. And so it turned out that at Capri, beside the contradictions between the old and new factions, a contradiction developed between a section of the Social-Democratic intellectuals and the Russian workers, who are bound, *whatever happens*, to bring the Social-Democracy out on the true path, and will do so in spite of all the intrigues, “brawls and incidents,” etc., etc., that go on abroad.

From this example we see that there are several sides to every object and to every phenomenon. When considering certain phases, we must not forget those that are temporarily overshadowed and forced into the background, but which may assume prime importance in the further development of the conflict of contradictions. One must be able to view the development of a given phenomenon in its perspective, to see the interrelation of all its component parts, and at the same time distinguish the “main link” of each given concrete situation and historical moment. The complexity of the phenomena of reality, their contradictory nature and their constant flux and change are reflected in our judgment of them, which also cannot help but be contradictory and in a constant state of flux. That, however, does not exclude, but, on the contrary, imposes the necessity for finding clear and definite answers to the problems that arise at any given moment. Dialectic materialism teaches us to distinguish the contradictions of reality, to understand their significance and to study their development (objective dialectics). Correspondingly, the progress of concepts (subjective dialectics), by properly reflecting reality, must conform to what is proceeding in the external (objective) world and must not allow itself to be severed from its base. Consciousness must strive to adapt itself to the (dialectical) progress of the reflected object.

The importance of the works of Hegel lies in the fact that he was the first to create a philosophy that attempted (and to a certain extent successfully) to study the general laws of dialectics. The great merit of Hegel consists in the fact that he made dialectics the basis of his philosophy. As Marx said, Hegel was the “first to give a complete and conscious picture of the general forms of motion” [*i.e.*, of dialectics.—*V. A.*]. It would, however, be a mistake to believe that one can simply take and use the Hegelian dialectics without first radically re-shaping it.

Marx himself declared that his method not only differed fundamentally from that of Hegel “but is its direct opposite.” Marx said, that to Hegel

the process of thinking, which under the name of “the idea” he even transformed into an independent subject, is the *demiurge* of the world, and the real world is only the extreme phenomenal form of “the idea.” With me the idea is nothing else than the material reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought.

The Hegelian dialectics, accordingly, requires thorough overhauling. It must be “turned right side up again” in order to reveal “the rational kernel within the mystical shell.”

Engels also dwelt on the same theme and treated it in a similar spirit. To the question, wherein lies the error of Hegel, he replies: in the fact that the laws of dialectics “are not drawn from nature and history, but imposed on the latter as laws of thought.” Hence the nonsensical

concept that “the world must conform to a logical system, which is itself only the product of definite stages of development of human thought.”

Engels declares that “this relationship must be reversed,” whereupon everything will appear normal and plain.

The dialectical laws, which in the idealistic philosophy are extremely mysterious, will then immediately become simple and clear.

On another occasion Engels stated that the mysticism of Hegel consisted in the fact that the category [*i.e.*, concept—*V.A.*] was to him something antecedent, while the dialectics of the real universe was its mere reflection. Actually the opposite is true: the dialectics of the mind is only the reflection of the real world both of nature and of history.¹⁷ (*The Dialectics of Nature.*)

Lenin, like Marx, completely remoulded Hegel, reversed his theses, put them right side up and interpreted them materialistically.

Hegel’s logic, he wrote, cannot be applied in its present form: it cannot be *taken for granted*. We must *select* from it its logical (gnosiological) shades and purge it of *mystical ideas*; that is still a big task.

A valuable guide to the study of Hegel are his synopses: *The Science of Logic* and *The History of Philosophy*.

Throughout the universe, development proceeds not as the result of any external cause (God), not because of any “purpose” inherent in events, but because of the inherent contradictions that are contained in all things and in all phenomena. “Contradiction is the root of all motion and of all life,” Hegel wrote. “It is only because a thing contains a contradiction within itself, that it moves and acquires impulse and activity. That is the process of all motion and all development.”*

Lenin in his article *On Dialectics* points out that contradictions exist universally: repulsion and attraction, positive and negative electricity, the division into parts, and the union of the parts to form a whole, etc. In all the phenomena and processes of nature and society there are contradictory, opposite, mutually exclusive, and at the same time associated, tendencies. Dialectics, *i.e.*, the contradictions, union and conflict of opposites, prevails in the material world and is reflected in consciousness.

The general laws of dialectics are universal: they are to be found in the movement and development of the immeasurably vast luminous nebulae from which in the spaces of the universe the stellar systems are formed (these spaces are measured by light years, *i.e.*, the distance through which light travels in one year, moving at a speed of 300,000 kilometres per second), in the internal structure of molecules and atoms and in the movement of electrons and protons; the latter are also opposite and mutually connected and undergo transformation, change and development, in other words, they also reveal the laws of dialectics in their existence and in their movements.

The development of the animal kingdom also proceeds by contradictions and the conflict of opposites (the struggle for existence, procreation by sex, etc.).

* Such a conception was essentially inimical to belief in God. The shrewd priests who controlled religious education in Russia very soon realised (in the 'sixties) that the theories of Hegel contained certain very dangerous elements. Accordingly the study of Hegel was prohibited in theological seminaries and academies in spite of the fact that the Hegelian philosophy is an idealistic philosophy and preserves God under the guise of the absolute idea.

In human society the driving force of development is the class struggle. In the conditions of contemporary society, the struggle of the revolutionary class, the proletariat, causes the transition from one form of society to another—the transition from capitalism to communism. (We shall deal with this in somewhat greater detail below.)

It is this dialectical movement of the material universe that forms the subject matter of materialist dialectics.

Lenin said that “contradiction” is the salt of dialectics; its “kernel” is unity and the conflict of opposites.

Dialectics emphasises not only contradiction and opposites, but also unity. Lenin thus explains the formula “unity of opposites”:

We are unable to imagine, express, measure or depict motion without interrupting that which is continuous, without simplifying, approximating, separating and petrifying that which is alive. The depiction of the movement of thought is always an approximation, an act of petrification—and not merely of thought, but also of sensation, and not merely of motion, but of all conceptions. Therein lies the essence of dialectics. And it is this essence that is expressed in the formula, the unity, the identity of opposites.

The Greek eclectic philosopher Zeno (fifth century B.C.), known as the father of the dialectical method, was the first to give clear expression to the idea of the contradictoriness of motion. Certain of his arguments have come down to us and these show that thought is bound to arrive at an *impasse* if dialectical methods are not employed and if the unity of opposites is not understood. Here is one of his arguments. An arrow in the course of its flight is bound to be at some definite point of its path and occupy some definite place. If that be so, then at each given moment it is at a definite point in a state of rest, that is, motionless; hence, it is not moving at all. We therefore see that motion cannot be expressed without resorting to contradictory statements. The arrow is in a given place, yet at the same time is not in that place. It is only by expressing both these contradictory affirmations coincidentally that we can depict motion. If we were to rest on only half of a phrase, either motion would disappear, or the object itself. And that is true of any judgment, for a judgment expresses only one or a few sides of an object, whereas the object has innumerable sides and innumerable contacts with the surrounding world. Hence, a contrary judgment may be made regarding any thing or phenomenon and yet to a certain extent it will be correct. Explosive substances employed in war cause tremendous destruction. But employed in industry they serve the cause of culture. Because of the antagonism of classes all things and phenomena assume opposite significance for each of the combatant sides: for the proletariat, the Soviet state means victory; for the capitalists it means defeat and the end of their rule, and so forth.

The formula “unity of opposites” is particularly important because it expresses the principal distinguishing feature of dialectic motion, the most fundamental property of all phenomena.

In order to avoid misunderstanding it should be stated here, that the application of the dialectical method does not mean arbitrarily combining all and every contradictory assertion. The unity of opposites must not be taken to mean the simple repetition of arbitrarily chosen postulates and opposite assertions; it is the combination and conflict of opposites as they exist in reality and the discovery of the contradictions in reality that are the driving forces and bases of motion.

In order that the specific features of dialectical thinking may be better understood it will be useful to compare and contrast it with other, non-dialectical methods and forms of thinking. This will help to bring out more clearly the fundamental features of materialist dialectics and to give a

more precise idea of its laws, particularly its basic law: motion is the result of contradiction, the unity and conflict of opposites.

Opposed to dialectics are metaphysics, eclectics, sophistry, and the puerile “evolutionary” conception of development. Materialist dialectics does not tolerate the use of stereotyped and ready-made schemes. It demands the profound study of concrete circumstances, the precise formulation of the real process of development; it also demands revolutionary action.

Dialectical thinking is the opposite of metaphysics, which regards things and phenomena, not in their unity and interrelationship, but each separate from the other, *outside* of the grand, *general* relationship, and consequently, not in motion, but in a state of rest, frozen, unchanging and lifeless. Metaphysical thinking is incapable of depicting the real inter-relations and development of phenomena.

How, for instance, is one to regard capitalist, bourgeois democracy? To approach this phenomenon with a ready-made answer would be metaphysics. It would be untrue to say that capitalism is an evil at all times and under all conditions. Compared with the serf system, capitalism was beneficial: to a certain extent it freed the toilers and placed them in more favourable conditions for their development and their struggle for emancipation. The serf system, on the other hand, was beneficial compared with slavery. As long as the serf system exists, as long as it predominates, the movement towards capitalism is a progressive movement. But when the serf system is abolished, the workers are left facing one main enemy—capitalism. In relation to the past, capitalism is beneficial; in relation to the future, in relation to the more perfect system, *i.e.*, socialism, capitalism is an evil that must be destroyed.

For the proletariat, bourgeois democracy is, of course, preferable to a tsarist autocracy. The proletariat cannot but strive to overthrow autocracy. But even a democratic republic is one of the forms of the class rule of the exploiters, *viz.*, the bourgeois dictatorship, which must be replaced by a Soviet state—by proletarian democracy.

Slavery is abominable. But slavery was necessary at a given phase of the historical development of humanity, in the remote past, at a given level of development of productive forces. At that time it represented a necessary stage of development, a definite advance. At a particular stage of development of productive forces, enemies, instead of being killed, were turned into slaves and their labour power was thus preserved and put to use.

If we are asked, what interest has the past to us, we reply that development throughout the world takes place unevenly. In one place (the U.S.S.R.) bourgeois democracy is a thing of the past; in other places (outside the U.S.S.R.) it is a thing of the present. Moreover, feudal relations, and even slave relations (at least survivals of them) continue to exist in Asia and Africa and even in Europe and America. At the present time all these are dominated by the fundamental contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between wage slavery and the struggle against wage slavery, between the system of capitalist states and the U.S.S.R. Yet at the same time, old forms of oppression continue to exist. Only by its own efforts, without the aid of God (who we do know does not exist) can mankind escape from its bestial existence, its semi-barbaric conditions of life, and from the grip of poverty, oppression and ignorance. In this struggle for emancipation the proletariat takes the lead. Its fight is against the fundamental and dominating relations of wage slavery; but parallel with this form of exploitation there remain the survivals of preceding forms of oppression, against which the proletariat must also wage a bitter war.

Dialectic materialism is the theory that guides the proletariat in its struggles. The proletariat wages war on the bourgeoisie and in time will overthrow it; it will abolish the rule of the bourgeoisie and destroy the relations of exploitation; but at the same time it must take over and

still further develop the cultural achievements that were amassed under the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeois, the capitalist, is our enemy. But having defeated the enemy and broken his resistance, we must take advantage of his knowledge and experience. We must make use of the cultural and scientific developments achieved under the bourgeoisie and compel the bourgeois specialists to work for the cause of communism.

In the process of development all things give way to others, all things are negated. But the characteristic feature of dialectical negation is that it does not merely throw to one side, it abolishes by first overcoming. Socialism cannot be brought about without mastering and remoulding all that which was accumulated in the preceding stage of historical development and all that which was taken over from the past and developed by the bourgeoisie. Such a dialectic negation of the bourgeoisie can be accomplished only by the proletariat, the class most closely associated with modern large-scale industry, which is the most valuable product of bourgeois development.

We thus see that nothing is immutable; everything changes, everything passes from one state to another. For this reason metaphysical thought, which regards things in isolation and treats them as immutable, cannot correctly reflect the ceaseless process of motion and the inter-relationship of all phenomena.

As we have stated, development arises out of inherent contradictions. For instance, the capitalist system is a unity of opposites: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The dialectics of this contradiction was brilliantly set forth by Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*¹⁸ and in *Capital*. The bourgeoisie and the proletariat are opposites; but at the same time they comprise a definite unity: they are the classes of a single social and economic formation—capitalism—in a state of irreconcilable contradiction. This contradiction will be logically solved dialectically by the internal struggle, the proletarian revolution. The logic arises out of the mass struggle. In the process of revolution, the proletariat becomes transformed, it becomes trained for the performance of its historic mission. In 1846 Marx wrote:

The revolution is essential not merely because the dominant class cannot be overthrown by any other means, but also because only in the course of the revolution can the class which overthrows cleanse itself of the mire of the old society and become fit to create a new society.

This is one of the fundamental ideas of Marxism. Marx returned to it time and again. Thus, in 1850 in his speech to the Communist League, Marx said, addressing himself to the workers:

You must pass through fifteen, twenty, perhaps fifty years of civil war and national conflict, not merely in order to change the system, but also to change yourselves and to render yourselves fit for political rule.

And again in 1871, in his pamphlet, *The Civil War in France*, repeating the same thought, Marx said:

They [the working class] know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending, by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men.¹⁹

Here we discern the same unity of opposites, the mutual conflict of these opposites and the inevitable solution of the conflicts by a transition to a new form of society. Without the long and

severe training obtained in its struggles the proletariat cannot fit itself to perform its historical mission.

It is the task of materialist dialectics to study the conflict of opposites proceeding in the world around us and to reveal it in its true form. It must seek the dialectic foundations of the contradictions and not select symptoms and phases of phenomena casually and eclectically (that is, arbitrarily and independently of their essential inter-relationship). It must seek to discover the driving forces of development. At the same time it must actively participate in the struggle on the side of the revolutionary class and lead the mass struggle of the proletariat.

My ideals for the upbuilding of new Russia will not be chimerical only if they express the interests of an actually existing class that is compelled by conditions to act in a definite direction. In adopting the viewpoint of the objectivity of the class struggle I do not thereby justify reality; on the contrary, I point to the profound (if at a first glance invisible) sources and forces that exist within that reality and make for its transformation.²⁰

Eclecticism employs methods repugnant to dialectic materialism. Dialectics is opposed to the habit of the eclectics of arbitrarily selecting isolated phases, and their inability to grasp an object or a phenomenon as a whole, in its totality, and in its systematic and inevitable interrelationships and development as they exist in reality. Instead of taking the phenomenon as a whole in all its complexity, but at the same time in its unity and totality, they one-sidedly exaggerate isolated features, component parts and phases. Materialist dialectics demands that the important factor should be singled out, but that at the same time attention should be devoted to those phases that are brought to the forefront by circumstances. It also demands that the phenomenon as a whole should not be lost sight of. Ideas must represent the interrelation of the various phases of phenomena as they exist in reality and emphasise the fundamental contradictions (the “main link,” as Lenin expressed it, *i.e.*, that which is essential to the practical leadership of the class struggle of the proletariat). As one of many examples of the manner in which Lenin attacked eclecticism, one may mention his criticism of Comrade Bukharin in the discussion on the trade union question.²¹ As an example of his ability to single out the “main link,” and of the value of this ability to the proletarian revolution, we may refer to the change to the New Economic Policy effected by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union under Lenin’s leadership and to Lenin’s explanation and analysis of the circumstances that attended this measure.²²

In contradistinction to the eclectic conception, dialectics teaches the doctrine of *The Concreteness of Truth*. In his Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy* Marx explained that the concrete is concrete by virtue of the fact that it combines within itself a multiformity of definitions, because it is “unity in multiformity.” The concrete is the whole of nature, the whole of reality, surrounding us: it embraces, combines and coalesces all contradictions. Our knowledge moves towards an ever more complete and more profound reflection of this complete (concrete) reality.

While realising the limitation and provisional nature of abstract postulates, dialectical thought employs abstractions within certain limits. An abstraction singles out a certain phase, concentrates on it and studies it. In his *Foreword* to the first volume of *Capital*, Marx declares that in the study of social, and particularly economic forms, neither microscope nor chemical reagents are of any use. “The forces of abstraction must replace both.” And in Volume I, Chapter 1 of *Capital*, in which he analyses the principal phenomena of bourgeois exchange society (commodity, value and money) Marx gives us an example of how to use abstractions and of the limits which they are invaluable to scientific research.²³ (*Cf.* Lenin’s article, “Karl Marx,” and

his Preface to Marx's *Letters to Kugelmann*.)

Of course, when Marx undertook to present a general picture of the laws of capitalist society he did not confine himself to this alone. When investigating reality in all its complexity we must endeavour to create a picture that most faithfully reflects that reality and to discover the concrete truths that reflect the real situation in all its totality and in the unity of its contradictions and opposites.

In the notes Lenin made on his reading of Hegel, he declares that "concreteness... is the spirit and essence of dialectics." And in his popular exposition of the nature of dialectics,²⁴ he states that one of the fundamentals of dialectical logic is that "there is no abstract truth, truth is concrete." This means that one must not be content with general arguments: it means that reality demands clear and precise replies to the concrete problems that arise in the course of historical development and the struggle of the working class, and it means further, that if one wants to express an opinion with a full knowledge of the subject, one's mind must be able to reflect all the relationships and the full complexity of the concrete conditions of the given phenomena and to express the general laws of development of those phenomena.

In contrast to the *dialectic* conception of development, which reveals the full complexity of a process, we have the puerile and superficial conception of "peaceful" development, "*evolution*" without contradictions and without leaps, upheavals and revolution. This conception is impotent in the face of the actual process of development. As a matter of fact a genuine conception of evolution, answering actual reality, must embrace not only gradual changes, but also sudden changes, "leaps," breaks in continuity. Without such leaps no phenomenon can be explained, for it would be necessary to assume that nothing new can arise, that everything already exists in an imperceptibly minute form liable to subsequent growth. As a matter of fact, however, we continually meet with breaks in continuity and with the appearance of new qualities that formerly did not exist. Changes of form always take place in reality by means of revolution, leaps. In the process of development old forms are negated and new forms take their place which in their turn are negated.

The act of birth is an act of revolution. Yet the period during which the child is carried in the womb of the mother is one of slow and gradual change. Social development proceeds by the struggle of classes and by revolution. Dialectics gives a true and profound theory of development; it represents it as pursuing a complex, not a direct path, and as comprising, not merely the accumulation of slow and gradual changes, but also periods of cataclysm, sudden change, leaps, revolutions, reverse movements (as though taking a run for a sudden leap forward), ebb and flow, and so forth; evolution as represented by the bourgeois ideologists is a simple, *smooth* and tranquil process. The dialectic is difficult and complex, "cunning" as Hegel expressed it; it is very hard to understand and master. But what would you have, when the world of reality and the process of its development are themselves complex, and not the simple processes the good, respectable citizen would have them be.

The dying of the old and the birth of the new is a complicated and difficult process. In all development it is the process as a whole that is important, and not merely the result.

It is sheer self-deception to believe that fruits may be gathered without long and arduous labour. Those who fear revolution, who shrink from the methods of struggle that reality imposes, are, in practice, supporters of the exploiters and traitors to the cause of emancipating the working class from wage slavery.

In 1918 Lenin explained the meaning and importance of the class struggle that was taking place at that time as follows:

When the bourgeoisie, and the government officials, clerks, doctors, engineers, etc., who are accustomed to serve it, resort to extreme measures of resistance, the intellectuals are horrified. They tremble in fear and whine pitifully about the necessity of a return to “compromise.” We, on the contrary, like all true friends of the oppressed classes, only rejoice at the extreme resistance offered by the exploiters; for we expect the proletariat to grow to manhood and to mature for power not by persuasion and pleading, not in the school of dulcet preaching and edifying declamations, but in the school of life, the school of struggle. The proletariat must *learn* how to become the ruling class and how to gain complete victory over the bourgeoisie, for it cannot obtain this knowledge ready-made. It must learn by struggle. And it is only serious, bitter and desperate struggle that teaches anything. The more extreme the resistance of the exploiters is the more energetically, firmly, mercilessly and successfully will they be suppressed by the exploited. The more varied the efforts and pains the exploiters take to defend the old, the sooner will the proletariat learn to drive its class enemies out of their last hiding places, tear out the roots of their domination and remove the very soil on which wage slavery, mass poverty, and the profits and the insolence of the moneybags could (and, indeed, had to) spring up.

With the growing resistance of the bourgeoisie and its hangers-on, the strength of the proletariat and of the peasantry which ally themselves with it also grows. The exploited gain in strength and manhood, they grow and learn to throw off the “old Adam” of wage slavery in proportion as the resistance of their enemies, the exploiters, increases. Victory is bound to be on the side of the exploited, for on their side is life itself, the strength of numbers, the strength of the masses, the strength of the inexhaustible springs of self-sacrifice and of the idealistic and honest reserves of energy and talent of the so-called “common” people, the workers and peasants, awakened and eager to build up a new order. Victory is on their side.²⁵

These lines describing the dialectics of the class struggle, although written in 1918, still preserve their force. As long as classes and class society exist, the class struggle of the proletariat is essential for the development of society and for its progress to a higher form of organisation, *viz.*, communism. Those who fail to understand this, who refuse to understand the necessity for treading the difficult path to communism, who are terrified at the difficulties and anxious to escape them by endeavouring to create peace between the exploited and the exploiters, in practice are enemies of communism; for they are hindering the cause of the exploited masses and diverting them from the only path of escape from an exploiting, slave society.

Another serious violation of dialectics is the refusal to reckon with actual and inevitable causes, and the intellectual evasion of stages that must be passed through in reality. Those who thus evade and anticipate tend to become isolated from the masses in practical politics and cease to lead the revolutionary struggle of the masses, thereby playing into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Dialectics demands that the successive stages of transition should be clearly defined.

Innumerable instances may be cited of Lenin’s ability to define transitions. Here we will only mention the transition (transformation) of the imperialist war into civil war, a transition of world historical importance, which Lenin not only studied in all its details, but in which he directly took part. The basis of this transition is the development of the proletarian revolution, which, by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat, brings about the transition from capitalism to communism. He calculated the course of this development in all its complexity. In 1916 he wrote that the impending socialist revolution would be

an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all the various oppressed and discontented elements. Sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will inevitably participate in it—without such participation *mass* struggle is *impossible*, without it *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary phantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capitalism*, and the class conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat expressing this objective truth for a heterogeneous and discordant, motley and outwardly uncohesive mass struggle, will be able to unify and direct it, to gain power, to seize the banks, to expropriate the trusts, which are hated by all (though for different reasons) and introduce other dictatorial measures which will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, but which will by no means immediately be “purged” of petty bourgeois slag.²⁶

The scientific forecast contained in this passage was subsequently fully corroborated. Lenin’s works written in the period 1917-23 deal with a number of questions connected with the leadership of the class struggle of the proletariat in the transition period from the capitalist exploiting system to a classless, communist society. In a series of articles he analysed the various stages of the revolution, and the various phases of the transition period itself. He picks out the fundamental features of current phenomena and shows whence and whither the transition is proceeding. This is necessary in order that every effort be made to extend and deepen the proletarian revolution and to secure the triumph of its cause.²⁷ Only thanks to its theoretical grasp of the meaning of revolutionary struggle was the leadership of the Party of Lenin able to secure the victory of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the subsequent development of socialist construction.

As has been stated, the ability to distinguish the logical sequence of the stages of transition is not only of theoretical importance; it is also of great practical importance in the leadership of the struggle of the proletariat and in determining its strategy and tactics.²⁸

Lenin possessed the faculty of discerning the conflict of contradictions and of opposites as they took place in actual reality. We have already said that dialectic materialism demands the expression and formulation of the actual process of development.

Genuine (objective) *dialectics* is distinguished from *sophistry*, which does not study the actual process of development in its totality, but indulges in an arbitrary play of ideas (*i.e.*, subjective dialectics, applied arbitrarily and severed from the dialectic movement of the external world).

Many examples of sophistry can be found in the war waged by the opportunists against revolutionary Marxism and particularly in the utterances of Kautsky and Plekhanov after they had become traitors to revolutionary Marxism. An examination of the sophisms of the opportunists is given by Lenin in his “Collapse of the Second International,” where he states that:

The dialectic method demands a many-sided investigation of a given social phenomenon in its development; it demands that we proceed from the exterior, from the apparent, to the fundamental moving forces, to the development of productive forces and to the class struggle.²⁹

The sophist, however, picks out a postulate which is only correct under certain conditions, instead of undertaking an all-sided investigation, and ignores the most important point, *viz.*, that the conditions under which the given postulate is correct soon cease to exist, that the whole environment changes and that, as a result, everything else radically changes. For instance, Marx

and Engels spoke of the legitimacy of the wars for national emancipation that took place in Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century, e.g., in Prussia in 1813. Kautsky takes these words of Marx and Engels and applies them in a different epoch, namely, to the wars of the twentieth century, which are essentially imperialistic and predatory.

It is the method of all the sophists of all times to quote examples obviously relating to basically dissimilar cases.³⁰

The whole article, “Collapse of the Second International,” is a brilliant example of materialist dialectics. The article gives a detailed and precise explanation of the nature of the sophistry of the opportunists. In Lenin’s works we find innumerable examples of how to apply materialist dialectics and how to combat the false, truth-distorting views of the opportunists. We find it in his polemical writings against the Populists—“Who are the Friends of the People and How They Fight against Social-Democracy”; against Struve—“The Economic Content of Populism and the Criticism of it in Mr. Struve’s Book”; against the Economists—*What Is To Be Done?* against the Mensheviks, the Liquidationists, the “Otzovists” and against Trotsky—“Two Tactics,” “Notes of a Publicist,” “Debatable Questions,” “Violation of Unity under Pretence of Unity.” We also find it in his philosophical polemic against the Machists—*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. The true dialectical method of overcoming the opposition argument is the only correct method, namely, not to brush it aside (that is not difficult), but to make a detailed analysis, a conscientious investigation of the question in all its detail, based on a profound study of the object of dispute as a whole (at the same time not sacrificing the general grasp of the whole subject to details). The result is a profound and all-round conception; things become revealed in the relationships in which they stand to each other in reality. We thus arrive at a concrete truth approximating to a complete and exhaustive comprehension of the subject as a unity of opposites.

We cannot understand capitalism unless we grasp the unity of opposites made up of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and unless we realise the inevitability of the transition from capitalism to communism by means of the class struggle of the proletariat. We cannot understand the unity of the opposites: ether and matter, negative and positive electricity, attraction and repulsion.³¹ A struggle of opposites, a perpetual succession of forms, transitions from state to state, from form to form—such is the dialectics of the world that surrounds us.

In our description of dialectics so far we have dwelt only on its basic law, viz., on the unity of opposites. We did this because this law is the most important of all and the one that has been least dealt with in popular literature. This law, as well as the other laws, “the transformation of quantity into quality” and the “negation of negations” is brilliantly explained in Engels’ *Anti-Dühring*.³²

In the next chapter we shall have to deal with the dialectical law of the “transformation of quantity into quality.”

IV

THE FIGHT FOR DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

We have seen that dialectic materialism demands the study of phenomena in their totality (concretely) just as they occur in reality. It also demands of those who desire to be guided by the Marxist theory in the study of the driving forces of development that they take a conscious part in the process of development on the side of the revolutionary class, organising it and directing its forces. Such a philosophy is acceptable only to a revolutionary class.

The only real revolutionary class in present-day society is the proletariat, the class that “has nothing to lose but its chains.” Contemporary dialectic materialism is the theoretical reflection of the proletarian revolution of the present day.

Only by organisation and struggle can the proletariat defend its interests, achieve its aims and throw off the yoke of exploitation. And it must conduct an organised and irreconcilable struggle for its revolutionary philosophy also. The theoretical struggle is an important and inseparable part of the class struggle of the proletariat.³³ We have referred above to the tremendous importance of revolutionary theory. The importance of the fight for dialectic materialism must be particularly emphasised.

Two main forces are in constantly increasing conflict in the class struggle of the present day, *viz.*, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Correspondingly, we have the conflict of two systems of state organisation, *viz.*, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, on the one hand, which protects the system of wage slavery and is based on the brutal suppression of the proletarian revolution (at the present time, chiefly by fascist methods) and on the other hand, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which overthrows the bourgeoisie and suppresses the exploiters and the task of which is to raise the level of the toiling masses, to develop socialist production and create a classless society. In modern philosophy we correspondingly find two main tendencies, *viz.*, dialectic materialism, the philosophy of the revolutionary proletariat, and philosophical tendencies hostile to revolutionary Marxism, which are anti-materialist and anti-dialectical and which in various forms defend reactionary views, clericalism and so forth, their ultimate aim being to keep the proletariat under the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie.

Philosophy in general is closely connected with politics. In one of his letters to C. Schmidt (October 27, 1890), Engels wrote that “political, legal and moral reflexes... exercise the greatest direct influence upon philosophy,” *i.e.*, philosophy is inseparably bound up with politics. The predominance of any particular line in a philosophy has an overwhelming effect on the conduct of those who have come under the influence of that philosophy. That, for instance, explains why the bourgeoisie so zealously support religion and the belief in God, using them in furtherance of their political aims, and why, as the capitalist system more and more approaches its decline, they increasingly support reactionary idealism and clericalism in philosophy. The defence of any particular philosophic view is intimately connected with the class struggle, for philosophy is essentially party philosophy.* The direct interests of the bourgeoisie compel it “to perpetuate theoretical confusion” and to strive to keep the proletariat under its intellectual influence. It is in the interests of the proletariat to resist all attempts to distort materialist dialectics, which is its own theoretical weapon.

* Philosophy is not—“impartial,” or “non-political”; every school of philosophy represents a certain set of political views, the views of a political party. On the subject of parties in philosophy, see Lenin’s *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (International Publishers), p. 290.

Lenin himself, during the whole course of his active life, fought bourgeois philosophy and idealism in all their forms and manifestations. He also fought that crude, non-dialectic and mechanical materialism which is absolutely impotent and helpless in face of idealism. In the 'nineties, Lenin fought professorial objectivism, as represented by Struve, the subjectivism of the Populist,³⁴ and neo-Kantism, as advocated by the revisionists headed by Bernstein in Germany and by Struve in Russia (neo-Kantism today is the official philosophy of the German Social-Democrats, or social-fascists). In the beginning of this century Lenin fought the idealist philosophy of Mach and Avenarius and their followers, who in Russia were headed by A. Bogdanov. The philosophical views of Bogdanov were at one time fairly popular in our Party (just as were the views of E. Dühring among the German Social-Democrats in the 'seventies) and it became urgently necessary to fight them.

Lenin persistently fought the philosophy of Bogdanov and from 1906 to 1908 he subjected Bogdanov's idealism and eclecticism to merciless criticism. In his letters to Bogdanov (unfortunately they were not published at the time and have not been found since, and so they have remained unstudied) and in his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which appeared in 1909, Lenin explains and criticises the essence of Bogdanov's philosophy. In 1914 Lenin wrote:

The sum total of the literary activities of A. Bogdanov may be reduced to an attempt to inoculate the mind of the proletariat with camouflaged idealistic conceptions of the bourgeois philosophers.... For many years A. Bogdanov has been an opponent of the philosophy of Marxism and a supporter of bourgeois idealistic views hostile to the materialism of Marx and Engels.

Lenin attached great importance to philosophic questions and carefully studied the literature on philosophy, and on a number of occasions he subjected the reactionary views of the bourgeois philosophers and their various henchmen to devastating criticism.³⁵

During the whole course of his active life Lenin studied materialist dialectics, applied it, fought for it and explained the necessity of studying and applying this theoretical weapon of Marxism. See, for example, his pamphlet "Once More on the Trade Unions," "The Present Situation and the Errors of Comrades Trotsky and Bukharin," which appeared in 1921, and his article "The Importance of Militant Materialism," dated March 12, 1922.

In the years 1913 to 1916 Lenin collected material apparently with the intention of writing a special work on materialist dialectics. Preoccupation with more urgent matters and the approach of the revolution prevented him from writing this book, but the material he collected is very rich and voluminous. Extracts and notes have been preserved in philosophical notebooks that are of extreme theoretical value.³⁶

Such, in general, was the fight that Lenin conducted on behalf of dialectic materialism.

Apart from the main enemy of dialectic materialism—its opponents at the present day are represented by the revisionist tendencies in philosophy, against which an irreconcilable war must be waged. Anti-Marxian and anti-Leninist tendencies are to be found in the mechanistic revision of Marxism (Comrade Bukharin, for example, has been guilty of mechanistic errors), which is the chief danger, and in Menshevik idealism (Comrade Deborin and his group).

The mechanistic outlook is hostile to dialectics; it repudiates it, considers it as scholastic, metaphysical, etc. The mechanists regard themselves as materialists; but, in fact, because of their inability to think dialectically, they are impotent in the face of idealism and are themselves forced to abandon the materialist position. As an example, one may cite the inability of the mechanists to deal with the question of quantity and quality. This is one of the questions on

which the limitations and shortcomings and the metaphysical nature of the mechanistic philosophy are particularly revealed. We shall therefore dwell on this question in a little more detail.

According to the mechanist conception, the explanation of all phenomena must be sought in the mechanical motion of qualitatively identical and unchanging units (atoms, electrons). All qualitative differences between things are due to the difference in the composition of these units and to the difference in their simple mechanical motion (transplacement in space). Hence, quality does not exist in actual reality but depends entirely on our subjective perceptions. Objectively there exists only the mechanical motion of atoms and their quantitative relations. In the note he made during his study of natural science Engels referred to the tendency to reduce everything to mechanical motion and to regard that as the sole aim of science, and said that “It ignored the specific nature of other forms of motion.” While considering it erroneous to explain everything in mechanical motion alone, Engels nevertheless did not deny that mechanical motion is universal and is associated, in one way or another, with every phenomenon.

Every higher form of movement is always essentially associated with real mechanical (external or molecular) motion, just as higher forms of motion simultaneously cause other forms of motion: chemical reaction is impossible without changes in temperature and electricity; organic life is impossible without mechanical, molecular, chemical, thermal, electrical and other changes. But the presence of these supplementary forms does not in any given case exhaust the essential nature of the main form. Some day we shall undoubtedly “reduce” thought experimentally to molecular and chemical motion in the brain; but will this exhaust the essential nature of thinking?³⁷

Thus, Engels declares that although there can be no thought unaccompanied by mechanical and chemical processes within the brain, these alone do not explain the specific nature of thinking. Thinking must be regarded as a whole; its internal, subjective side must be considered together with all the qualities and conditions that determine and produce it, *i.e.*, in its concrete reality, and not merely from the point of view of mechanical motion. This example clearly illustrates the attitude of dialectic materialism to every specific “quality,” particularly to so popular a phenomenon as our processes of thinking. It explains the difference between the conceptions of dialectic materialism and of mechanistic conceptions.

The materialist dialectician declares that mind cannot be separated from matter; our mind (“spirit”) is a property of specifically organised matter, *viz.*, the brain of man, who is a member of a specific historically developed society. This qualitatively specific phenomenon actually exists in objective reality. We ourselves are the best proof of this, for we are thinking beings, performing intellectual labour. We do actually think, it does not merely seem to us that we do. Even imagination is, in a manner of speaking, thought. The external world is reflected in the mind of man. Thought is not the object itself reflected in the mind; it is but the reflection of the object. The theory that the external world is “reflected” in the mind is fundamental to the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism. The movement of atoms takes place both in a cobblestone and in a man’s head and both the cobblestone and the head reflect the action of the external world; but it is perfectly obvious that the movement and the reflection are qualitatively different in each case. In the next chapter we shall deal in greater detail with the question of our knowledge.

Mechanical materialism denies the reality of a specific quality of thinking; it regards it merely as mechanical motion of atoms (electrons) and considers matter and mind as being equal, identical. This materialism, which denies the reality of higher forms of motion and reduces

everything to gross and simple mechanical motion, to transplacement, proves to be absolutely helpless before idealism. For idealism also asserts that thought and the objective world are identical.³⁸ Mechanical materialism, therefore, paves the way for idealism of the most subjective kind. It leads to the inevitable conclusion that the only reality is one's own sensations, for however much theoretical thinking may be denied, this reality cannot be denied. Moreover, mechanical materialism cannot resist the idealistic belief in a creator, in some force external to the world, for the reason that mechanical materialism cannot explain what it is that sets in motion the gigantic mechanism that the world appears to him to be. The world machine of mechanical materialism requires some external impulse, the universal clock requires somebody to wind it up. There is no way out of this dilemma except to acknowledge the existence of God.

And so, true dialectics acknowledges the reality (actual existence) of qualities as specific forms, as the sum of the properties and peculiarities of things. Within the limits of a definite quality, quantitative changes may occur without affecting that quality, without changing it; but only within definite limits. When quantitative changes go beyond a definite limit they result in a leap and a change in quality; there occurs what Hegel termed the transformation of quantity into quality and which we meet with in the surrounding world of nature and society at every step. Within the limits of from 0° to 100° C. under ordinary terrestrial conditions (atmospheric pressure, etc.) water remains a liquid, preserves this quality. One hundred degrees is the boiling point; water becomes transformed from a liquid into a gas. Zero is freezing point, water becomes transformed into ice, *i.e.*, into a solid. Thus arise new qualities, formerly non-existent.

With the appearance of a new quality, new quantitative relations come into effect, so that we may also speak of the transformation of quality into quantity. The high quality of class consciousness, discipline, organisation and firmness of principle of the Communist Party, which at first represented the numerically small, but actually most advanced section of the proletariat, subsequently resulted in the Bolshevik Party's being able to assume the leadership of the movement of millions and to obtain a following of tens of millions. Thus, in the course of time, quality was transformed into quantity.

Another example, which strikingly illustrates the transformation of quantity into quality and the rise of new quantitative relations on the basis of the new quality, is the process that is now taking place in the Soviet Union of the mass transition of the middle individual peasant to collectivisation. A new social stratum is being created, new qualities are arising. The middle peasant was the ally of the Soviet state, but the collective farm peasant is now becoming the bulwark of the Soviet state. We would here mention the fact referred to by Comrade Stalin in one of his speeches, *viz.*, that the pooling of the farm implements of the individual peasants results in a far greater productivity of labour in the collective farms than the same quantity of implements and forces represent in the individual farms. Collectivisation creates a new quality of social relationships, expressing itself in an enhanced productivity of labour and in better results of labour, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Examples of the transformation of quantity into quality, and *vice versa*, may be cited without end. They demonstrate the correctness of dialectic materialism, which teaches that these two aspects of phenomena are closely associated, become transformed one into the other, but that both are real. The confusion of the mechanists arises from the fact that they deny the objective existence of qualities, that they regard quantitative factors as the only reality and do not see the peculiarities or, as it is scientifically called, the specific nature of phenomena. The inability to use the dialectic method also leads the mechanists to rely on the conclusions of a single science (mechanics) and to ignore the experience of the other sciences, with the result that they regard

the conclusions of that science as the sole and ultimate truth.

As far back as 1908, Lenin advanced important and fundamental arguments against mechanical materialism. “The recognition of unchanging elements, of the unchanging essence of things is not materialism, but metaphysics, *i.e.*, anti-dialectic materialism,” he declares in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, and goes on to state that dialectic materialism insists on the approximate and relative character of all scientific theories regarding the structure of matter and its properties, on the absence of absolute boundaries in nature, on the transformation of moving matter from one state into another, seemingly incompatible state, and so forth. In conclusion, Lenin declares himself to be in complete agreement with Engels’ statement to the effect that from the point of view of dialectic materialism, only one thing is immutable, *viz.*, the recognition of a world existing outside of us and reflected in our minds.

From the point of view of Engels, only one thing is immutable, *viz.*, the reflection in the human mind (when there is a human mind) of the external world that exists and develops independently of that mind. For Marx and Engels there is no “immutability,” no other “essence,” no other “absolute substance” in the sense that this concept has been depicted by futile professorial philosophy. The “essence” of things or “substance” are also relative: they represent only the deepening of the human knowledge of objects. Yesterday the deepening of human knowledge took in the atom, today electrons and the ether, but dialectic materialism insists on the temporary, relative and approximate character of all knowledge of nature obtained by the advancing science of man. The electron is as *inexhaustible* as the atom, nature is infinite, but it infinitely *exists*. And it is this single, categorical and only absolute recognition of the *existence* of nature outside of human consciousness and sensation that distinguishes dialectic materialism from relative agnosticism and idealism.

In addition to the recognition of this “relativity and approximateness” of the picture of the world created on the basis of our knowledge, which becomes ever deeper, but which is never completed and never exhausts the multiform content of the objective world, dialectic materialism differs from metaphysical, mechanical materialism in its ability to handle flexible concepts and to rest content with results achieved.

It should here be pointed out that mechanistic materialism is essentially the methodology of the Right deviationists. Theoretically, it expresses and justifies the class interests of the last of the capitalist classes remaining in the Soviet Union and therefore represents the chief danger on the theoretical front.

Such anti-dialectical, counter-revolutionary theories, as, for instance, the conception of opposites as being only an external, and not internal, property of phenomena, are, in the conditions prevailing in the Soviet Union, theoretical expressions of the interests of the bourgeoisie. They provide a theoretical justification for the denial of class contradictions and the class war (of the proletariat) and support the advocacy of class peace (between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat). One such theory is the mechanistic theory of equilibrium, of the correlation between a system and its environment. This provides a theoretical basis for the theory that the kulak enterprises will grow into socialism through the medium of the cooperative societies. According to the arguments of the Right theoreticians, the “kulak system” should merge with the socialist “environment” and they claim that there are “scientific” grounds for this. Obviously this is a very useful theory for a class that is being completely liquidated. It justifies and corroborates the policy of the Rights, who consider that the kulak should not be disturbed.

Hence, the mechanistic philosophy is essentially bourgeois and anti-proletarian. Its general

traits are that it underestimates the value of theory, it fails to understand dialectics and is hostile to it. This theoretical nihilism and failure to understand the necessity for the study of dialectic materialism in practice lead to the surrender of the materialist position to idealism and to a general submission to the ideology of the bourgeoisie. Mechanistic materialism is impotent in the face of idealism; it connives at and assists idealism.

There is yet another danger, namely, of falling, in company with the idealists (Hegel), under the influence of abstractions, of losing contact with concrete reality, of confining oneself to dialectic conceptions without connecting those conceptions with the development of the objective world, of not distinguishing categories from the material relationships of the objective world—in a word, the danger of straying onto the path of idealism and of forgetting the requirements of materialism. This danger is threatened by the Menshevistic idealism of the Deborin group, who conceal idealistic and anti-Marxian views under the guise of Marxian phraseology and the pretence of fighting for dialectic materialism.

While the mechanist theory has no profound social roots in our midst, Menshevistic idealism is nevertheless a real and serious danger. Clothed in the garb of orthodox Marxism, it acts as a channel of bourgeois influences to the proletariat.

Some of the distinguishing features characteristic of certain representatives of this tendency, and which in fact are common to the whole school of Menshevistic idealism are: the severance of theory from practice; the denial of the party nature of philosophy; professorial, contemplative “objectivism”; failure to appreciate Lenin as a materialist and dialectician; failure to appreciate Lenin’s contribution to the development of dialectic materialism; the disguise of non-Marxian and idealistic views by Marxian phraseology; priggish “scholarliness” which is totally unjustified because this ostensible “scholarliness” is not backed by any practical work or by a positive study of the subject.

The idealistic revision of Marxism effected by the Menshevistic idealists is clearly illustrated by the fact that this tendency makes the materialist dialectics of Marx identical with the dialectics of Hegel. Hence, their revisionism is essentially of a Hegelian character.

The founders of scientific socialism always emphasised the importance of studying the method of dialectic materialism. They even pointed out how this should be done, namely, by studying the history of philosophy, and in particular, Hegel. In one of his Forewords to *Anti-Dühring* (1878) Engels wrote:

Theoretical thinking is an inborn property only in the form of capability. It must be developed and perfected, and for this no other method has so far been found except the study of the history of philosophy.

By studying the history of philosophy we learn the experience of scientific thinking accumulated over a period of more than two thousand years. In his letters to Conrad Schmidt, Engels recommended that in studying the history of philosophy, particular attention should be paid to Hegel. Hegel is extremely difficult to study. Those who undertake to study him require assistance and this assistance is given by Marx, Engels and Lenin (particularly valuable are the latter’s philosophical notebooks to which we referred above).

Menshevistic idealism distorts the views of Marx, Engels and Lenin and regards the logic of Hegel as identical with the logic of Marx. As we have seen, Hegel and Marx approach the question of the relation of mind to existence from fundamentally different points of view.

In his article, “Hegel and Dialectical Materialism,” Deborin declares that:

Hegelian logic should serve as the starting point for the development or structure of

materialist dialectics.

And he concludes by saying:

At any rate, the need for a theory of materialist dialectics has long been felt. Hegelian logic cannot fully satisfy this need, but it should serve as the starting point for materialist dialectics.

This school not only regards Hegel's logic as the starting point, but also considers that its structure requires no radical alteration. Marx put Hegel's logic "right side up," *i.e.*, he reconstructed it and endowed it with new principles. Deborin, on the contrary, asserts that "in general, the Hegelian structure must be considered as correct even from the materialist point of view."

The idealist view of dialectics is further revealed in the conception and application of the laws of dialectics. Take for instance the fundamental law of the unity of opposites. Engels and Lenin consider that this law expresses the very essence, the "kernel" of dialectics. Lenin says:

Unity (coincidence, identity, interaction) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory and relative. The conflict of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute.³⁹

And according to Lenin this dialectical law signifies:

The recognition (discovery) of contradictory, *mutually* exclusive and opposite tendencies in *all* manifestations and processes of nature (*including* spirit and society).⁴⁰

Thus, according to Lenin (and Lenin expresses the point of view of dialectic materialism), the conflict of opposites is absolute and inherent in all phenomena of the external world.

Deborin treats the question entirely differently. In his article, "Marx and Engels" (which, by the way, is thoroughly idealist), he completely adopts the Hegelian idealist scheme: he asserts that at first there are *only* differences, which then pass into contradictions, and the latter pass into opposites. Hence, Deborin admits the possibility of opposites and the conflict of opposites not existing at certain stages. For him, accordingly, contradiction is not the starting point. He thus falls a victim to the very mechanists, against whom he has written so much, who also repudiate the existence of opposites that are inherent in absolutely every form of motion of matter.

As we have repeatedly pointed out, one of the fundamental and distinguishing features of the dialectic materialism of Marx is the prominence it gives to the necessity for practical revolutionary activity. Marx criticised the contemplative character of the materialists that preceded him. Deborin, on the other hand, in his Foreword to the *Works of Hegel*, does not say a word about this feature of dialectic materialism, but, on the contrary, emphasises its passive and contemplative character.

The task of the dialectic... method is not to introduce anything of its own into an object, but to observe the process of its development. In this sense the dialectic method is indeed the only real scientific and objective method. The dialectic method merely reproduces the process of development of an object.

During the whole course of this long article the author says not a single word about the most important component part of materialist dialectics, *viz.*, practical revolutionary work. That is not a mere accident.

One of the most obvious features of Menshevik idealism, which reveals its anti-proletarian character, is the severance of theory from practice. In a speech delivered in 1920 to the Third

All-Russian Congress of the Russian Young Communist League, Lenin declared:

Without work and without struggle, book knowledge of Communism derived from communist pamphlets and books is worth exactly nothing at all, since it but perpetuates the old severance of theory from practice, which was the most objectionable feature of the old bourgeois society.

The separation of theory from practice is characteristic of Menshevik idealism. The representatives of this school occupied themselves with philosophy completely isolated from the tasks of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and from the international working class movement. They separated philosophy from politics, instead of placing it at the service of the proletarian party. It is no mere accident that practically all the writers of this school were unwilling to participate in the fight against Trotskyism and to expose the methodological errors of the factionalists who were opposing the general line of the Party. By divorcing philosophy from proletarian Marxism and Leninist politics, Menshevistic idealism in practice places its service at the disposal of bourgeois politics.

The whole standpoint of Menshevistic idealism was bound to lead to the separation of theory from practice. This was clearly revealed in all the activities of the representatives of this school. The bulk of their literature consists of “writing about other people’s writing.”*

Not a single problem of historical materialism is treated by the Menshevistic idealists from the standpoint of the new experiences of the revolutionary period. They have ignored Lenin’s instructions as to how dialectics should be studied. In his article, “The Significance of Militant Materialism,” Lenin states that dialectics must be studied from the materialist point of view, *i.e.*, one must study the dialectics that “Marx applied practically in his *Capital*” and in his historical and political works, and, also, that dialectics must be studied on the basis of the examples of dialectics “in the sphere of economic and political relations which modern history, particularly the present imperialist war and the revolution, provide in great abundance.” The representatives of Menshevik idealism were incapable of making such a study. The whole line they adopted prevented them from doing so; prevented them from understanding Lenin as a philosopher and from appreciating and fulfilling his instructions. They were hampered by their idealistic, abstract and formal point of view and their class position as petty-bourgeois radicals.

In a number of writings, notes and utterances, Lenin declared that abstractness, the severance of theory from reality, the use of schemes and formalism, were contrary to materialist dialectics. For instance in the notes he wrote on the margins of his copy of Bukharin’s *Economics of the Transition Period*, opposite the passage in which Bukharin says that in the pre-war period “the so-called ‘national state’ was already a *pure* (Lenin’s italics) fiction,” Lenin wrote:

Not a *pure fiction*, but an impure form. The violation of “dialectical materialism” consists in the logical (not material) *leap* over *several* concrete stages.⁴¹

* This expression was used by Engels in one of his letters written in the 'eighties in which he gave characterisations of the writers who contributed to the *Neue Zeit*. The majority of these writers were opportunists. These “people,” Engels wrote, “who refuse to study questions of principle and who create a literature on literature and litterateurs (nine-tenths of present-day German writing is writing about other people’s writing), will, of course, produce a far greater number of printed pages in a year than those who seriously study a certain thing and who desire to write about other books only, firstly, if they have themselves mastered these books and, secondly, if the books contain anything worth writing about.” This description most aptly fits the representatives of present-day opportunist and Menshevistic idealism and the petty-bourgeois radicals of the Trotskyist type who masquerade in the garb of orthodox Marxism.

Opposite the passage in which Bukharin speaks of “dialectic negation,” but fails to give a concrete explanation of the nature of negation and to support the formula by facts, Lenin makes the note:

the author abuses *the phrase* “dialectic negation”: it must not be used without *first* demonstrating it by facts, it must be used *cautiously*.⁴²

In his notebook of excerpts, *Marxism on the State*, Lenin copied out the following critical remark directed by Engels against the opportunists. Engels stated that the opportunists

give prominence to generalised and abstract political questions, thereby concealing the immediate concrete problems, which automatically arise at the first outbreak of events, and at the first political crisis. The only thing that can result from this is that at the critical moment the Party will suddenly find itself impotent and that uncertainty and lack of unity will reign within the Party on important questions, owing to the fact that these questions *were never discussed*.

Against this passage Lenin makes the marginal note:

Prominence to the abstract, the concrete obscured!! Excellent! That is the main point!⁴³

Many similar notes could be cited.

Lenin, therefore, condemns the application of ready-made schemes, the inability, or lack of desire, to formulate theoretically the actual situation, with all its contradictions and complexity, and the inability to think concretely. Lenin untiringly exposed and condemned every departure from this fundamental demand of dialectic materialism.

It is not possible here to give a complete analysis of the whole system of false views and misguided utterances of the Menshevistic idealists. Much space would be required for a historical, not dogmatic, approach to the study of the theory of knowledge. In studying the problems of knowledge, the whole of human experience must be taken into account; it must be made sure that the theory of knowledge shall be a really materialistic one; that there shall be no rupture with the cognised object and finally, that the materialist path shall be selected, *viz.*, from things to concepts, and not from concepts to things. The fact that dialectics is made identical with the theory of knowledge is a guarantee against the creation of some special sphere isolated from concrete reality, a system of abstractions and eternal categories *a la* Hegel.

As an instance of the erroneousness of such methods, Marx, in a letter to Annenkov, cites the doctrinaires, who on the eve of the Great French Revolution endeavoured to preserve the throne, the Chamber of Deputies and the Upper Chamber as essential components of social life and as eternal categories. Marx says:

...In the eighteenth century, a number of mediocre minds were busy finding the true formula which would bring the social order, king, nobility, parliament, etc., into equilibrium, and they woke up one morning to find that there was in fact no longer any king, nobility or parliament. The true equilibrium in this antagonism was the overthrow of all the social conditions which served as a basis for these feudal existences and their antagonisms.

“Mediocre minds” do not link up their knowledge with constantly changing material and objective reality, or do so only in words.

The fact that dialectics, which demands concrete thinking and a grasp of objective reality as

one whole, is the theory of knowledge, serves as a guarantee that those who are guided by dialectics will not find themselves in the unpleasant and ludicrous position in which the doctrinaires found themselves.

Revolutionary Marxism, *i.e.*, dialectic materialism, teaches us to approach questions of knowledge dialectically, to study the transition from not knowing to knowing. Dialectics is a property of human knowledge, since our knowledge reflects the dialectic motion of the objective world (nature and society). Dialectic materialism does not regard the results of knowledge as final; at the same time, however, it does not doubt the vitality, fertility, integrity and objectivity of human knowledge, and of its ability to overcome all obstacles in the process of social development.

The development of human thought is based on the development of social productive labour. Lenin declared that “the continuation of the work of Hegel and Marx must consist in the *dialectic* study of the history of human thought, science, and technology.”⁴⁴

It is on this basis that we must study the unity of opposites, *viz.*, the theory and practice of the actual relations existing in the surrounding world and of the abstract conceptions that arise in the human brain as a reflection of these actual relations.

We must be guided by Leninism in the study of materialist dialectics and combat the mechanistic repudiation of dialectics and its mutilation at the hands of the idealistic and Menshevistic idealists. We must expose the errors of both these schools and correct them. Theory must be placed at the service of the proletarian revolution and adapted to the practical class struggle. Philosophy must be completely party philosophy.

In class society, and as long as classes exist, Marxism and Leninism can exist and develop only by combating all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois tendencies, influences and ideas.

THE DIALECTICS OF NATURE AND HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

As we have said, materialist dialectics is an invaluable instrument for the study of the surrounding world, nature and human society. Marx and Engels were keenly interested in every sphere of natural science. Engels did a great deal in this sphere. He set forth the conclusions drawn from his studies in Part I of *Anti-Dühring*. In addition, he wrote a large work on *The Dialectics of Nature*, which unfortunately he never succeeded in publishing (the manuscript however was preserved and has been published by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute). The conclusion Engels arrived at, *viz.*, that development in nature takes place in accordance with dialectical, and not metaphysical laws, is strikingly borne out by modern science. This has been pointed out by Lenin, who, after Engels, was the first of the Marxian theoreticians to study one of the most important branches of modern science, namely, physics.

Science has made considerable strides since Engels pursued his studies in the 'seventies. Lenin examined the new material from the standpoint of a materialist dialectician. He explained the crisis in modern physics from the Marxian standpoint and indicated the path that must be pursued by scientific research.

In his criticism of modern theory he attacks the clericalism (idealism) that refuses to seek a scientific explanation of phenomena and which evades recognition of what is actually proceeding in nature, thus leading to stagnation of thought and intellectual reaction.

As we have stated, in connection with the disputes that arose among Marxian writers after the 1905 Revolution, Lenin carefully worked out the dialectic materialist theory of knowledge. He showed that there were two lines of philosophy—idealism and materialism—on every one of the questions in dispute: matter and experience, sensation and knowledge, space and time, cause and effect, absolute and relative truth, etc. Idealism considers that a spiritual principle (*i.e.*, God) lies at the basis of everything and is identical, or akin to our mind (which latter the idealists sever from its actual contact with matter). Lenin analyses the philosophy of the Englishman, Bishop Berkeley, as typical of the idealist philosophy.⁴⁵ Materialism considers it wrong to place spirit at the base of all phenomena. It regards matter as the basis of everything and asserts that matter exists independently, and outside of our mind. The external material world reacts on our mind, is reflected in it and determines it. Matter is the primary, the fundamental; mind is secondary and derivative. Mind is inseparably associated with matter; it is a property of matter organised in a special way, *viz.*, our brain, and is a product of the latter's activity. Mind reflects the external world. There can be no mind or thought without brain. The idealists, on the other hand, sever thought from the brain and consider that spirit is the beginning of all things. The idealists turn the whole course of things upside down. In their opinion matter is derived from spirit. Materialism declares that there is no "spirit world," there is no "transcendental" world; the world is unitary, and its unity lies, as Engels says, in its materialness.

Through our sense organs we receive impressions of the material world existing outside of us (human society and nature). These sense perceptions provide the material for our knowledge. The world is reflected in our mind because we ourselves are part of that world. Such is the conception of knowledge proclaimed by dialectic materialism. A material object and our minds comprise the unity of opposites, with which we are familiar. We must not, as idealists like Berkeley do, confuse the external world with our consciousness of the external world and make them identical. External objects and our consciousness of them are opposites, not identical

things. But the opposite is not absolute: the external world and our consciousness are not isolated from each other. The unity we have here is unity in the sense that without a material world and without the brain of man, consciousness of the world cannot exist. It is unity also in the sense that our consciousness, in general, faithfully reflects the objective world. This is very well explained by Lenin in the sections on “Absolute and Relative Truth” and “The Criterion of Practice in the Theory of Knowledge” in Chap. II of his philosophical work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.⁴⁶

The essence of the explanation given by Engels and Lenin is that, while we must realise that at any given stage of its development our knowledge is relative, conditional and approximate, nevertheless, in every scientific theory, in spite of its shortcomings, we must discern the grain of objective truth, the fragment that correctly reflects the surrounding world. We must learn how to assimilate and develop this truth, although our knowledge is historical and transitory. In the works of Hegel there is much that is mystical, idealistic and clericalist, but they contain the fundamentals of the dialectical method. We must be able to select that which is true and the product of a brilliant mind from that which is untrue, fantastic and antiquated. That is what the great masters of materialist dialectics, Marx, Engels and Lenin, did.

Our knowledge contains an absolute (unconditional and unquestionable) truth, *viz.*, that it reflects the external world. The truth of our knowledge is tested and confirmed by practice.

Neither the old metaphysical materialists nor Hegel were able properly to apply the dialectical method to the process of development of our knowledge. This was done by Marx and Engels, and subsequently by Lenin. In one of his philosophic notebooks Lenin wrote:

The approach of the mind (of man) to a particular thing, the taking of a cast of it (in other words, an impression) is not a simple, direct act; a lifeless mirror reflection, but a complex, twofold and zig-zag act, which harbours the possibility that the phantasy may entirely fly away from reality; what is more, it harbours the possibility that the abstract conception, the idea, may be transformed (imperceptibly and unwittingly on the part of man) into phantasy (and in the long run, into God). For even the simplest generalisation and the most elementary general idea is a fragment of phantasy.⁴⁷

The creation of phantasies (*e.g.*, regarding the power of the dead, demons, god, disincarnate powers, etc.) is due to various complex causes, chief of which is the dependence of man on circumstances which enslave him, such as natural and social forces, and which appear to him to be external and alien. This also explains the various religions and faiths.⁴⁸

Properly applied to our knowledge, *i.e.*, if it is realised that the mind of man is determined by the development of the material world which proceeds independently of the mind, and of which thinking man is himself a part, materialist dialectics is the best weapon against clericalism, against stultification of thought and against the substitution of the living work of the mind by lifeless abstractions that end in intellectual stagnation.

The old theory of matter was that it consisted of indivisible and simple particles—atoms. Recent discoveries have shown that the atoms are not simple, but extremely complex. Atoms have been divided into still more minute particles, electrons.⁴⁹ Science has revealed that the laws of motion of these particles differ from the laws governing the incomparably slower motion of large masses of matter. Not being acquainted with dialectic materialism, scientists began to draw the conclusion that with the disappearance of the atom, matter also disappears, that our knowledge is impotent and that we are not destined to know the real world; in other words, they began to adopt the standpoint of idealism and agnosticism. (“We are not fated to know!”)⁵⁰

Lenin, however, showed that the new discoveries, while compelling us to reject the old

theories of science, deepen our knowledge of matter and confirm the correctness of dialectic materialism, which teaches us to regard scientific truths not as unshakable dogmas, but as approximately true reflections of objective processes; reflections that are bound to be corrected and perfected by every new development of science. The new discoveries do not shake the basic standpoint, *viz.*, that which we know as matter.

Chapter Five of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, entitled "The Latest Revolution in Natural Science and Philosophic Idealism," shows that the recent discoveries of physics serve as striking corroborations of dialectic materialism.

Thanks to his genius for mastering materialist dialectics, Lenin was able to contribute something also to the study of natural phenomena. He gave precise indications of the nature of the errors of the natural scientists—who are materialists rather by instinct—and showed wherein they deviated from materialism because of their lack of knowledge of dialectics.

Lenin criticised their theory dialectically, separating that which was true and correcting that which was untrue, and showed how research should be conducted. As an example we cite his analysis of the address of the English physicist, A. W. Rücker,⁵¹ who represented "the instinctive .materialist point of view" and whose errors were due to his ignorance of dialectic materialism. Or take his criticism of the works of Duhem and Stallo⁵² in which, for instance, he points out where Duhem comes close to dialectic materialism and wherein lies his weakness, and also shows how he descends to a reactionary philosophy because of his inability to raise himself from metaphysical materialism to dialectic materialism.

On the subject of the dialectics of nature, Engels in 1885 wrote in his Foreword to the second edition of *Anti-Dühring*, as follows:

It is possible to reach this standpoint because the accumulating facts of natural science compel us to do so.... Natural science has now advanced so far that it can no longer escape the dialectical synthesis. But it will make this process easier for itself if it does not lose sight of the fact that the results in which its experiences are summarised are ideas; but that the art of working with ideas is not inborn and also is not given with ordinary everyday consciousness, but requires real thought, and that this thought similarly has a long empirical history, not more and not less than empirical natural science. Only by learning to assimilate results of the development of philosophy during the past two and a half thousand years will it be able to rid itself on the one hand, of any isolated natural philosophy standing apart from it, outside it and above it and, on the other hand, also of its own limited method of thought, which was its inheritance from English empiricism.

We conceive nature as the sum total of all bodies (from the stars to the atoms, electrons and the ether), which are in a constant state of interaction and motion, constantly changing their forms and qualities and passing from one into the other. It is impossible to understand their movement and the transformation of one form into another (*e.g.*, inorganic matter into organic matter) without using the dialectic method.

Moreover, it is necessary to grasp the difference between the philosophic and the physical conception of matter. It is absolutely correct to recognise the existence of matter and the objective world, independently and outside of our mind. The external world reacts on our senses and is reflected in our mind. The recognition of the objective reality of the external world is an absolute truth, confirmed every minute by fact and by practice. This is the foundation of the materialist philosophy. The material world is essentially cognisable, since the "cognising apparatus," if we may so express ourselves, does not exist outside of the world, but is a part of

the world. This “cognising apparatus,” *i.e.*, thinking people and human society, is the fruit of a long development. The existence and development of humanity is the best proof of its strength and vitality, and also of the strength and vitality of the human mind.

Theories of physics, as well as other scientific theories, are but relative truths. They are ever approaching closer to an understanding of the objective world, for instance, of the physical structure of matter; their knowledge becomes progressively deeper; but they can never result in final and exhaustive knowledge, in ultimate truth. In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (p. 152) Lenin says:

The scientific doctrine of the structure of substance, the chemical composition of food, and the electron may become antiquated with time; but the truth that man is unable to subsist on thoughts and beget children by platonic love alone can never become antiquated!

VI

THE DIALECTICS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The development of society also proceeds by contradiction. Here, too, materialist dialectics is essential not only for the study of social phenomena, but also in order to lead the struggle of the proletariat and to guide historical activity. History is made by men. But hitherto there could be no conscious guidance of the development of history. Mankind can become the master of its development only after the complete triumph of communism. Engels in *Anti-Dühring* says:

The seizure of the means of production by society puts an end to commodity production, and therewith to the domination of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by conscious organisation on a planned basis. The struggle for individual existence comes to an end. And at this point, in a certain sense, man finally cuts himself off from the animal world, leaves the conditions of animal existence behind him and enters conditions which are really human. The conditions of existence forming man's environment, which up to now have dominated man, at this point pass under the dominion and control of man, who now for the first time becomes the real conscious master of nature, because and in so far as he has become master of his own social organisation. The laws of his own social activity, which have hitherto confronted him as external, dominating laws of nature, will then be consciously applied by man with complete understanding, and hence will be dominated by man.... It is only from this point that men, with full consciousness, will fashion their own history; it is only from this point that the social causes set in motion by men will have, predominantly, and in constantly increasing measure, the effects willed by men. It is humanity's leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom.

Of course, it must not be thought that this "leap" will take place in a single instant; for it represents a "change which marks a turning point in world history," a transition to a new type of society. Such leaps, as Marx, Engels and Lenin pointed out, may extend over ten or more years.⁵³ In the Soviet Union the "leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom" is being accomplished by the dictatorship of the proletariat led by the Party of Lenin and armed with revolutionary theory. The advantages of planning in economic life and the rapidity of development of socialist economy are already apparent.

In the sphere of social development, the law of the unity of opposites and of motion by contradiction manifests itself in the productive activities of society and in the class struggle. In modern society, large-scale production predominates and the fundamental contradiction is between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. As has been stated, Marx, Engels and Lenin attached the greatest significance to the struggle of the proletariat. They considered it their prime duty to lead the class struggle of the proletariat, and to subordinate everything to its interests.

Applying dialectic materialism to the study of society, Marx discovered that the basis of social development is the development of production. Material production is the foundation of social life because on it depends man's very existence. In order to exist men must eat, drink, clothe themselves, and provide themselves with dwellings; only then can they occupy themselves with politics, science, art and so forth (Engels). Labour is required to create the material things necessary for men's existence. The productive activities of human society consist in extracting things from nature, in working them up and in adapting them to the needs of man. Human labour, which is essential to man's existence, exercises decisive influence on the whole structure of

human society.

The application of dialectic materialism to the history of human society is very clearly illustrated in Marx's theory of the class struggle. Marx showed that development in class society arises out of the class struggle, which attains maximum intensity during the period of revolution. Revolution is the result of the contradictions created between the productive forces of human society and the productive relations within which they operate and develop.⁵⁴ Under capitalism the contradiction between the old productive relations and the productive forces that have outgrown and can no longer develop freely within these relations, manifests itself in the struggle of the revolutionary class, the proletariat, against the exploiting class, the bourgeoisie. Thus, the struggles of the revolutionary class advance the development of society. Marx called the class struggle "the battles of developing production." (Letter to Weydemeyer, March 5, 1852.)

Marx was not the first to discover the existence of classes and the class war, as he himself states in the letter to his friend Weydemeyer. But Marx was the first to give an exhaustive explanation of the basis of class divisions (namely, a definite stage of development of production). He was the first to give a complete explanation of the meaning and significance of the struggle of the modern proletariat and the part it plays. He pointed out how and under what conditions the abolition of classes and the transition to a classless society would be accomplished with the help of a proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx was the first to discover the general law of social development and thereby transformed socialism from utopian to scientific.

In an article written in 1899 Lenin stated that Marx's theory

transformed socialism from utopian to scientific; it laid firm foundations for the science and indicated the path of its further development and the elaboration of its parts. It has exposed the essential nature of modern capitalist economy by explaining how the hiring of workers and the purchase of labour power conceals the enslavement of millions of propertyless people by a handful of capitalists and owners of land, factories, mines, etc. It has shown how the whole development of modern capitalism tends to the squeezing out of small-scale production by large-scale production and creates conditions that render a socialist order of society both possible and essential. Beneath the layer of ingrained customs, political intrigues, astute laws and subtle doctrines it has taught us to discern the class war, the struggle between the various propertied classes and the propertyless masses and the proletariat that leads them. It has revealed the real task of a revolutionary socialist party, namely, not to invent plans for the reconstruction of society, not to plead with the capitalists and their hangers-on to improve the condition of the workers, not to plot conspiracies, but to organise the class struggle of the proletariat and to lead that struggle, the ultimate aim of which is to win political power for the proletariat and to organise socialist society.⁵⁵

It would be a serious error to imagine that social production and social development takes place, like natural phenomena (change of seasons, the breaking of the ice on the river, eclipse of the sun, etc.) independently of the conscious efforts of men. History is made of men, by their productive activities, by their mass actions and by their class struggles. Men themselves build up their material and spiritual culture, using the foundations inherited from preceding generations. Historical development pursues an extremely complex path. Conflict arises between the productive forces of men and productive relations that no longer correspond to these productive forces. Once society has broken up into classes, development proceeds by the conflicts of those classes expressed in various forms: ideologically (in the sphere of philosophy), scientifically,

politically, etc., as well as in purely physical forms—wars between classes and between nations. The inherent contradictions of social development are solved “by the practical and violent action of the masses.”⁵⁶

“Order” and oppression in class society are maintained by violence, by the organised state power of the exploiters. This “order” can be destroyed and replaced by a new kind of order only with the aid of the organised violence of the revolutionary class. In our times this must take the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, established by revolution with the aim of creating a classless communist society.⁵⁷

According to Marx and Lenin, revolutions are the most vital and decisive factors in the history of human society. “Revolutions are the locomotives of history,” Marx said. This aphorism was quoted by Lenin in his pamphlet, *Two Tactics of the Social-Democrats in the Democratic Revolution*, in which he also referred to revolution as “the festival of the oppressed and exploited.” He wrote:

At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order as during the time of revolution.⁵⁸

In another article he writes:

Marxism differs from all other socialist theories by its admirable combination of sober scientific analysis of objective conditions and the objective process of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, the revolutionary creative power and the revolutionary initiative of the masses, as well as, of course, of individuals, groups, organisations and parties that are able to establish contact with the masses.⁵⁹

This leads us to an extremely important phase of dialectic materialism, namely, its insistence on the importance of active revolutionary work. History is made by men. Historical science studies how this is done, what class forces participate in historical actions and how historical development is brought about. But mere study is not enough. We must not only study history, but make history; the “making” of history is much more important and much more interesting than studying it (although that, of course, is essential). Both Marx and Lenin considered that one of the defects of the old materialism was its inability “to understand the conditions and appreciate the significance of practical revolutionary activity,” without which materialism, in their opinion, was incomplete, one-sided and inanimate.

Revolutionary Marxism does not suffer from this defect. In all his activities Lenin (like Marx) was a prominent exponent of revolutionary materialist dialectics and a theoretician of the proletariat, who fully combined “sober, scientific analysis of the objective state of affairs” with “revolutionary initiative and energy.” He was a leader of the proletarian revolution, a strategist and tactician of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The reader will find a brilliant appreciation and description of the works of Marx and Engels and their activities from this point of view in the Preface to the Russian translation of Marx’s *Letters to Kugelmann*, and in the Introduction to the Russian translation of *The Letters of J. P. Becker, J. Dietzgen, F. Engels, K. Marx and Others to F. A. Sorge and Others*. This side of Lenin’s activities should be carefully studied. It is precisely this factor that makes Marxism a real revolutionary theory, for, as Lenin frequently emphasised, unless revolutionary theory is combined with revolutionary practice it is not Marxism, but opportunism.

The works of Lenin were inspired by revolutionary policy and were closely associated with the class struggle of the proletariat. The most complete summary of the basic principles of the

strategy and tactics of Leninism will be found in the pamphlet, *“Left-Wing” Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, while valuable indications will be found in *What Is To Be Done?, Two Tactics, State and Revolution*, and *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*.

To give a complete description of the great and complex work Lenin performed in leading the class struggle of the proletariat is a tremendous task that still remains to be done. Many phases of Lenin’s work as a leader and theoretician of the proletariat have still been barely studied (*e.g.*, his part in the leadership of the Civil War and his work in organising and directing the dictatorship of the proletariat; even his significance as the leader and theoretician of the Party has not yet been fully brought out and properly appreciated). This cannot be done in a single article, it would require a whole volume, or several volumes. In this article we can only deal with some of the most important postulates of the revolutionary tactics of Leninism and show how tremendously important the consistent and firm Leninist Party leadership, based upon a strictly scientific analysis of objective conditions, was for the success of the revolution.

It should first be noted that Leninism, while faithfully following the Marxian conception of the Party and of its role as the *vanguard of the working class*, developed this conception still further on the basis of the new experience gained in the revolutionary struggle.

In order to lead the class struggle of the proletariat, an organisation of its vanguard is necessary in the shape of a Communist Party, which “acts as a driving force,” which “comprehends the conditions, course and general results of the working-class movement,” which can champion those general interests of the movement as a whole at every stage of the struggle and which can estimate the movement “not only from the point of view of the past, but also from the point of view of the future.”⁶⁰

The Party must be trained and steeled in consistency of principles by prolonged participation in the struggle.

Apparently—Engels wrote to Bernstein in 1882—a workers’ party in any large country can develop only by internal conflict, which indeed is, in general, consistent with the dialectic laws of development. The German party became what it is in the struggle of the Eisenachers against the Lassalians, a struggle in which the fight itself was the most important factor. Infantile disorders cannot be cured by moral precepts; under present conditions these disorders have to be gone through once.

This, of course, does not mean that various shades of opinion are always to be permitted in the Party. The strength of the Party lies in its unity, a unity based upon consistency of programme and tactics. This unity is achieved by fighting every deviation from revolutionary Marxism: Right opportunism, which minimises the significance of the class struggle and strives to bring the proletariat under bourgeois influence and leadership (as instanced by Menshevism), and the virtual rejection of the class struggle which masquerades under Leftist slogans and phrases (instances of which were the “Left” Liquidators, the Otzovists, the Ultimatumists and the *Vperyod-ists* during the years of reaction 1908-10 and Trotskyism during the years 1924-26). Extremely important also is the fight against the conciliators, who act as a shield for opportunism: while verbally recognising the correctness of revolutionary Marxism, in practice the conciliators make no attempt to combat distortions of revolutionary Marxism. Conciliationism is therefore an extremely dangerous form of opportunism. Under present conditions the chief danger is Right opportunism.

Lenin always insisted on the necessity of waging a consistent and merciless fight against all forms of opportunism and he himself showed us how this fight should be conducted. He persistently fought against Right opportunism.⁶¹ Yet at the same time he conducted war on the

“Left” doctrinarism, which is particularly important for the purpose of winning the masses; for the masses are inexperienced, unorganised, have not yet sufficiently abandoned petty-bourgeois prejudices, and when driven to desperation and rage by the hopelessness of their position are, as a rule, greatly influenced by anarchist phrases, and “Left” demagoguery (which is the reverse side of Right opportunism, “a punishment for its sins,” as Lenin expressed it). A general review of the Party’s fight for Bolshevism on two fronts is given by Lenin in his pamphlet, “*Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*,” in which he writes:

While the first historical task (*viz.*, that of winning over the class conscious vanguard of the proletariat to the side of the Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not be accomplished without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social- chauvinism, the second task, which now becomes the immediate task, and which is to lead the *masses* to the new position that will assure the victory of the vanguard in the revolution, this immediate task cannot be accomplished without the liquidation of Left doctrinarism, without completely overcoming and getting rid of its mistakes.

What are the distinguishing features of the Marxist-Leninist tactics? As we have pointed out, Marxist-Leninist theory, policy and tactics are based on *contact with the masses*, on the ability to guide the struggle of the masses toward communism, and to increase the conscious purpose and organisation of the masses. The Communist Party lends consciousness, organisation and invincibility to the mass movement. It draws its ideas from the experience of the revolutionary mass struggle in all countries.

Lenin said that the fundamental law of all great revolutions was the experience gained by the masses. He frequently referred to the great importance that Marx attached to “the historical initiative of the masses.” What Marx and Engels criticised most in English and American socialism was exactly this isolation from the working-class movement.⁶² The victory of the revolution can be assured only if the initiative and energy of the masses is widely developed and if their instinctive struggle is given conscious leadership and organisation.

Success of revolutionary tactics can be assured if the profound sympathy of the masses is gained. This sympathy must be gained by prolonged and stubborn struggle, both before the proletariat gains power and after it has set up its dictatorship.

The proletarian revolution is impossible unless the vast majority of the toilers sympathise with and support their vanguard—the proletariat. This sympathy, however, is not given immediately and is not decided by vote, but must be *won* in the process of long, arduous and bitter class struggle. The class struggle of the proletariat to win the sympathy and support of the majority of the toilers does not end with the conquest of political power by the proletariat. The struggle *continues* after the conquest of power but in *other forms*. In the Russian revolution circumstances proved to be exceptionally favourable for the proletariat (its struggle for dictatorship), for the proletarian revolution took place at a time when the whole people was armed and when the whole of the peasantry was anxious for the overthrow of the power of the landlords and was outraged by the “Kautskyian” policy of the social-traitors, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

But even in Russia, where at the moment of the proletarian revolution circumstances proved to be exceptionally favourable, where remarkable unity between the whole proletariat, the whole army and the whole of the peasantry was immediately established, even in Russia the struggle of the proletariat for the sympathy and support of the majority

of the toilers took months and years after it had set up its dictatorship.⁶³

The long and persistent fight for the sympathy of the masses must be carried on systematically. The sympathy of the masses must be won by the tactical methods and by the aims and purposes for which the Communist Party is striving.

In its tactical leadership of the revolutionary struggle the proletariat must be guided by two basic postulates. *First*, Leninism does not prescribe any particular form of struggle to the proletarian movement, but strives to master all forms, for example: demonstrations, the parliamentary struggle, the revolutionary use of parliament when the situation dictates it, as well as higher forms of struggle, *viz.*, armed insurrection, civil war and the dictatorship of the proletariat. *Secondly*, Leninism adopts a historical approach to the question as to what particular form of struggle is to be selected at any moment, taking into account the concrete circumstance of the given situation. Maximum flexibility must be displayed in the selection of means.

In an article entitled “Guerilla Warfare,” written in September, 1906, Lenin wrote:

Marxism is distinguished from all primitive forms of socialism by the fact that it does not impose on the movement any one particular form of struggle. It admits the most varied forms of struggle. Moreover, it does not “invent” them, but only generalises, organises and lends conscious form to the methods of struggle practiced by the revolutionary classes and which arise spontaneously in the course of the movement itself. Uncompromisingly hostile to all abstract formulas and doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands that the most careful attention be paid to the mass struggle of the moment, which, as the movement develops, as the consciousness of the masses grows and the economic and political crisis becomes increasingly acute, creates ever new and varied methods of defence and attack. Marxism, therefore, absolutely does not reject any form of struggle. Marxism cannot confine itself to the forms of struggle that are practiced and are possible at the given moment, but recognises the *inevitable* appearance of new forms of struggle, that are still unknown to those who are taking part in the struggle at the given period and which arrive with the change in circumstances. If one may so express it, Marxism learns from the practice of the masses and does not in the least claim to teach the masses the “systematic” forms of struggle, invented in the study.⁶⁴

In “*Left-Wing Communism*,” also, Lenin pointed to the necessity of learning and mastering every form of struggle and of being able to apply every one of them with equal facility, so as to be prepared for the changes of circumstances that occur so rapidly and unexpectedly during a period of revolution.

History generally, and the history of revolutions in particular—writes Lenin—is always richer in content, more varied, more many-sided, more lively and “subtle” than some of the best parties and some of the most class conscious vanguards of the most advanced class imagine. This is understandable because the best vanguards express the class consciousness, the will, the passion, the phantasy of tens of thousands, while the revolution is made at the moment of its climax and the exertion of *all* human capabilities by the class consciousness, the will, the passion, and the phantasy of tens of millions who are urged on by the very acutest class struggle. From this follow two very important practical conclusions: first, that the revolutionary class in order to fulfil its task must be able to master *all* forms or sides of social activity without exception (and complete after the capture of political power, sometimes with great risk and amidst very great dangers, what they did not complete before the capture of power); second, that the revolutionary

class must be ready to pass from one form to another in the quickest and most unexpected manner.⁶⁵

The Communist Party must absolutely master every form of struggle: for the struggle of the proletariat and of the toiling masses will become a real class struggle and will lead to the goal of creating a communist society only when the organising and guiding influence of the vanguard that is consciously striving toward communism will be guaranteed.

In the article, "Guerilla Warfare," Lenin pointed out that all forms of struggle may become distorted if they are not applied in a certain relationship one to another under the leadership of the Communist Party.

It is said that guerilla warfare reduces the class conscious proletariat to the level of degraded drunkards and tramps. That is true. But this only proves that the Party of the proletariat can never regard partisan warfare as the only, or even the principal method of struggle, and that this method must be subordinated and properly co-ordinated with the main methods of struggle, that are ennobled by the enlightening and organising influence of socialism. Without this latter condition every method of struggle in bourgeois society, without exception, will bring the proletariat to the level of the various non-proletarian strata above or below it, and being left to the mercy of the spontaneous course of events, will become bedraggled, corrupted and prostituted. Strikes, when left to the mercy of the spontaneous course of events, become transformed into "alliances" between the workers and employers against the consumers. Parliament becomes a brothel in which a gang of bourgeois politicians carry on wholesale and retail trade in the "freedom of the people," "liberalism," "democracy," "republicanism," "anti-clericalism," "socialism" and in all kinds of popular merchandise. The newspapers become procurers, whom anybody can purchase, a means of debauching the masses and of pandering to the base instincts of the crowd, and so forth. No universal methods of struggle are known to Social-Democracy that would set up a Chinese wall between the proletariat and the social strata that are situated either a little above or below it. In different epochs, Social-Democracy applies different methods; but it applies them strictly in accordance with definite, ideological and organising conditions.⁶⁶

The selections of the methods of struggle must be determined by the concrete objective conditions. This leads us to the second basic principle we have referred to.

In this same article Lenin wrote:

Marxism insists that the question of the methods of struggle shall be investigated from an absolutely historical standpoint. Those who would treat this question apart from the concrete historical circumstances simply fail to understand the very elements of dialectic materialism. In the various periods of economic evolution and depending on the varying, political, national and cultural, social and other conditions, various methods of struggle assume prominence and become the chief methods of struggle, and accordingly the secondary and supplementary methods of struggle also change in their turn. To attempt to express a definite opinion, yes, or no, regarding any particular method of struggle, without subjecting the concrete circumstances of the given moment and the given stage of its development to careful analysis, simply means abandoning the standpoint of Marxism completely.

Marxist-Leninist revolutionary tactics are based on an examination of the concrete

circumstances of the given situation. The purpose of this is to prevent us from becoming separated from the masses, to enable us to move forward together with the masses, to lead them and help them to rise to a higher level. We must not retreat in face of difficulties, but strive to overcome them by drawing new forces into the fight. We must encourage the activity of the masses, improve their organisation and stimulate their class consciousness. The attack must be conducted systematically and consistently, avoiding in our leadership “*logical* (that is, mental) *leaps over several concrete stages,*” as Lenin once expressed it, considering this to be a grievous sin against dialectic materialism.

Given such a leadership, the masses will rise to a higher level of political consciousness in the very course of events, learning from their own actions, mistakes, defeats and victories.

The essence of Marxist-Leninist tactics was brilliantly explained by Lenin in his article “Karl Marx,”* in which he wrote:

The fundamental task of proletarian tactics was defined by Marx in strict conformity with all the premises of his materialist-dialectical world outlook. Nothing but an objective calculation of the sum total of all the mutual relationships of all the classes of a given society without exception and consequently a calculation of the objective stage of development of this society as well as a calculation of the mutual relationship between it and other societies, can serve as the basis for the correct tactics of the class that forms the vanguard.⁶⁷

Valuable material on this subject will also be found in “*Left-Wing*” *Communism*. To be a materialist dialectician it is not enough to reiterate the principles of Marxism in general form. We must study the experience of the class struggle of the proletariat and learn to give expression to the concrete circumstances of that struggle, to emphasise the main tasks and advance proper slogans to lead the proletarian struggle and be able to find the main link that will enable us to hold the whole chain.

* Published in pamphlet form under the title, *Teachings of Karl Marx*, Little Lenin Library, No. 1.—Ed.

VII

HOW TO STUDY LENIN

A few words should be said in conclusion as to how to study the works of Lenin. It should be borne in mind that Lenin was a leader of the proletariat. A study of his literary works must be closely combined with a study of his activities and of the conditions in which he worked. Only in this way will the works of Lenin be properly understood and appreciated. This study, however, must be linked up with the present-day struggle of the proletariat.

The manner in which Lenin studied the works of Marx and Engels is an example of how the works of Lenin should be studied. From a number of his articles, particularly those articles dealing with Marxism and with the works and correspondence of Marx and Engels, we see how he was able to draw the lessons of materialist dialectics from his study of Marx and Engels.

Lenin drew particular attention to the following formula contained in one of the letters of Engels: "Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action." None of the Marxists who had studied the works of Marx and Engels had paid proper attention to this aphorism; but Lenin quite rightly pointed out that it gives a succinct and excellent description of the very essence of the Marxian theory.

Lenin pointed out that an outstanding feature of the method of Marx and Engels was the living contact they themselves maintained with the mass movement. In spite of their knowledge and tremendous erudition, they were free from the slightest tinge of pedantry or bookishness. As Engels said, the *moment* socialism was transformed from utopia to a science it became necessary to treat it as a science, namely, to study it. The valuable knowledge inherited from the past must be mastered. But that is not enough. We must be able to draw lessons from the experience of the current struggles of the masses and at the same time take an active part in it, lead it and lift it to higher levels. Marx and Engels possessed this capacity in a very high degree; and it was this that Lenin considered to be exceptionally valuable and worthy of imitation. In his Preface to the Russian translation of Marx's *Letters to Kugelmann*, Lenin says that:

Above everything else he [*i.e.*, Marx—*V.A.*] put the fact that the working class heroically, self-sacrificingly and taking the initiative itself *makes* world history.

Marx and Engels attached the greatest importance to the "historical initiative" of the masses and were not dismayed by the fact that the activity of the masses might be accompanied by errors. Indeed, whenever something new is being created and the old ruts abandoned errors are inevitable. The most vital revolutionary cause may be marred by mistakes, but the mass movement, the new experience gained, the creative spirit displayed and the new institutions initiated compensate for any mistakes that may be committed. In fact, there is no way the broad masses can be taught except by their own actions and by their own experiences.

Marx and Engels never dogmatically thrust upon the masses views which they held to be correct, but which the masses could understand as a result of their own experience and not merely as a result of verbal precepts and preaching. But this cautious attitude in respect of the education of the masses was accompanied by the most exacting demands in matters of theory. In his Introduction to the Russian translation of *The Letters of J. P. Becker, J. Dietzgen, F. Engels, K. Marx and Others to F. A. Sorge and Others*, Lenin speaks of the merciless, even "ferocious" war that Marx waged against opportunism.

Previously expressed postulates must not be treated in a stereotyped way as universal precepts applicable to all times and all conditions without taking into consideration the changes

that have taken place since those postulates were enunciated, and without a careful study of the new factors that have arisen and which the most penetrating minds formerly could not possibly foresee.

When studying the works of Marx and Lenin we must constantly bear in mind the circumstances in which they lived and acted, the conditions that gave rise to a particular slogan, or the persons against whom a particular polemic was directed: that is to say, their works must be studied with due appreciation of the concrete time and place in which they were written. The lessons drawn from the study must be applied to the present-day struggle of the proletariat, while the closest contact must be maintained with the movement and tasks of the class struggle of our time. Only in this way will the basic demand of Marxism-Leninism be observed, namely, that theory shall not be “a dogma, but a guide to action,” not a mere subject for academic study, but a science and a valuable weapon in the class struggle of the proletariat.

Lenin’s attitude towards science, the working-class movement and the mass struggle was exactly the same as that of Marx and Engels. Like Marx, Lenin prized in the revolutionary class its “ability to create the future.” He knew how to lead the mass struggle and to combat “ferociously” every distortion of revolutionary Marxism, in whatever sphere it might manifest itself and under whatever flag it might proclaim itself. Lenin was able to appreciate the peculiarities of concrete circumstances, to study the works of the founders of scientific communism and to apply them to the new conditions of the working class struggle.

In our own study of Lenin’s works, we must strive to adopt the methods he used. We must acquire the ability to fight for revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. For there have been many opportunist distortions of Lenin’s teachings since his death, and we shall encounter such distortions again in the future. We all know the efforts the Trotskyist opposition made to effect a revisionist distortion of Leninism, while similar attempts were made by the Right opposition and the semi-Trotskyist “Leftists” in the years 1928-29, and 1930.

An example of the way Lenin studied the works of Marx will be found in his article “Marx on the American ‘Black Redistribution’.”⁶⁸ In this article, after describing the circumstances in which Marx wrote his article in opposition to H. Kriege (whose views closely resembled those of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries at the beginning of this century) and comparing the farmer’s movement in America in the middle of the nineteenth century with the peasant movement in Russia at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Lenin shows how Marx combated the petty-bourgeois illusions of the peasantry, while appreciating the revolutionary democratic character of the peasant movement. Lenin used this example from Marx in order to strengthen his own hand in the fight against the Mensheviks, who entirely failed to understand the significance of the peasant movement and to realise that the peasantry was the principal ally of the working class in the struggle against tsarism.

Another example is Lenin’s work on the question of the state. Having studied everything that Marx and Engels ever wrote on the subject, Lenin was able to establish their real views, which had been completely mutilated by the opportunists. This alone was a tremendous service to the cause of revolutionary Marxism. But he did more than that. Basing himself on the theoretical views of Marx and Engels and applying their methods, Lenin used the experience provided by the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat in 1905 and 1917 to further develop the theory of Marx. He created the theory of the Soviet state, which arises with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Studying the works of Lenin on this subject,⁶⁹ we are able to follow step by step the manner in which Lenin used the Marxian method in order to solve one of the fundamental problems of the revolution—the organisation of the state power of the

revolutionary proletariat.

A perusal of the fundamental work written by Lenin on this question, *State and Revolution*, reveals how carefully he studied the works of Marx and Engels, how painstakingly he transcribed individual thoughts and even fleeting remarks the theoretical value of which, in spite of their brevity, is tremendous. In Lenin's popular lecture on "The State,"⁷⁰ which gives a general review of the question of the state and represents a valuable addition to the works above enumerated and an introduction to a more profound study of the question, we find several practical suggestions as to how the works of Marx and Engels should be studied.

These are only two examples of many that might be quoted. In the works of Lenin the three component parts of the Marxian theory: philosophy, political economy and socialism are dealt with. Lenin mastered the material in all three spheres, developing the theory of Marx and elaborating a number of important questions in the light of the facts provided, by the latest development of the proletarian revolution.

In the sphere of philosophy he threw light on the problem of materialist dialectics: he elaborated the theory of knowledge of dialectic materialism,⁷¹ studied and explained the crisis of contemporary natural science,⁷² and treated the problems of historical materialism in a new way.

In the sphere of economics attention should be drawn to his works on capitalism in Russia—"The Development of Capitalism in Russia, *Selected Works*, Vol. I; on imperialism—"Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism," *Selected Works*, Vol. V; on the agrarian question—"The Agrarian Programme of the Social-Democrats in the First Russian Revolution," *Selected Works*, Vol. XII; "The Agrarian Question at the End of the Nineteenth Century," *Selected Works*, Vol. I, and, finally, his work dealing with the economics of the transition period—"State and Revolution," "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," all in *Selected Works*, Vol. VII; "The Tax in Kind," *Selected Works*, Vol. IX, etc.

In the *Selected Works* much space is devoted to Lenin's writings on the *problems of socialism*. The policy and tactics of the class struggle of the proletariat, the Party, its programme and organisation, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviet state and the building up of socialism. Here, too, Lenin bases himself on the theories of Marx and Engels, while at the same time making a concrete study of the complex factors of the class struggle of his own day.

Lenin mastered the very essence of these problems, painstakingly collecting all that could be found in Marx and Engels on the subject he was examining. Our aim should be to make a similar study and a similar application of the works of Lenin. The writings of Lenin are a storehouse of knowledge, essential to the proletariat and invaluable in the leadership of its fight for communism.

By studying the works of Lenin we shall learn to realise the significance and importance of revolutionary theory, we shall see how theory must be associated with the actual class movement and the struggle of the millions who are exploited and oppressed by capitalism. We shall learn what is meant by the Communist Party's leading the proletarian revolution and under what conditions the revolution can triumph. And, following the example of Lenin, we must learn how to participate in the struggle ourselves.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which was formed under Lenin's guidance and trained in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism, is carrying on and developing the socialist construction begun under Lenin's leadership and along the lines he indicated. Tens of millions of proletarians and toilers are participating in this gigantic task. Learning from the experience of the struggles and constructive work of the masses of proletarians and collective farmers, who are

working for the establishment of communism, the Leninist Central Committee, headed by Comrade Stalin—best able to continue the cause of Lenin—and the whole of the Party, is developing the policy, the tactics and the theory of Marxism-Leninism.

For an understanding of Leninism it is important to study the present work of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the socialist construction now in progress under its guidance, as well as the international revolutionary movement and the fight of the Communist International, which was also founded under the direct leadership of Lenin. The full profundity of the theoretical works of Lenin becomes revealed only when they are associated with the struggle that is now proceeding. For they were written with the purpose of guiding the great struggle of the proletariat to victory.

An excellent guide for those undertaking a systematic study of Lenin's writings is Comrade Stalin's book, *Leninism*, and this should serve as the principal guide to those who desire to obtain a thorough knowledge of the problems that Lenin so brilliantly expounded and solved.

Comrade Stalin, the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is the most outstanding Leninist theoretician. It was under his leadership that, since the death of Lenin, the fight against Trotskyism, the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition and the Right Opportunists was conducted. Alike in practical politics and in theory (and the two are intimately associated), Comrade Stalin is brilliantly carrying out the Leninist line.

The works of Lenin are of the utmost importance to the class struggle of the proletariat. Leninism generalises the experiences of the world proletarian revolution and studies all forms of the class struggle in order to make the best use of them and in order to develop the science that is essential to the proletariat as the vanguard of the struggle for emancipation from all forms of oppression and exploitation. This science must be made accessible to the vast proletarian army, for it will help it to achieve increased unity of action and consciousness of purpose. The better organised the vast numbers of proletarians and toilers are, and the more energetically and purposefully they wage the struggle against the domination of capitalism, the sooner the yoke of age-long slavery will be shattered.

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5. *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* (International Publishers), p. 23.
6. Frederick Engels, *Herr Eugene Dühring's Revolution in Science [Anti-Dühring]* (International Publishers).
7. J. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, p. 27 (International Publishers).
8. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 496-497, Russian edition.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 497.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 497.
11. Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (International Publishers).
12. "Left-Wing" Communism.
13. *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, Russian edition.
14. "The Revolution of 1848 and the Proletariat," *Karl Marx, Man, Thinker and Revolutionist* (International Publishers), p. 74.
15. *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX (International Publishers).
16. Cf. Marx's letters to Engels, Nov. 13, 1859; Feb. 13, 1863; Sept. 27, 1877, etc.
17. F. Engels, *The Dialectics of Nature*.
18. Lenin, "Karl Marx," *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII.
19. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France* (International Publishers), p. 44.
20. Lenin, "The Political Line," *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, pp. 143-144, Russian edition.
21. Lenin, "Once More on the Trade Unions," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 109-145, Russian edition.
22. Cf. Lenin, "The Significance of Gold, Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 79-85, Russian edition; also various articles in the same volume.
23. Cf. Lenin's article "Karl Marx" and his Preface to Marx's *Letters to Kugelmann*.
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26. Lenin, "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up," *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX.
27. Cf. Lenin, "New Times and New Errors in a New Guise," and "The Significance of Gold, Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism."
28. See Lenin, "Letters on Tactics," *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, pp. 118-129.
29. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII (International Publishers), p. 283.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 285.
31. Cf. Lenin's note "On Dialectics," *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism (Collected Works)*, Vol. XIII, p. 321.
32. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Section 1, Chap. 12, "Dialectics: Quantity," and Chap. 13, "Dialectics: The Negation of the Negation." A very good explanation of the dialectical method is given by Engels in his brochure *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, compiled from three chapters of *Anti-Dühring*. The second chapter of this pamphlet deals with the nature of the dialectical

method.

33. Cf. Lenin, *What Is To Be Done?* (International Publishers).

34. Cf. Lenin, *The Economic Content of Populism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book*, Chapter 2, entitled "Criticism of the Sociology of the Populists."

35. Lenin, "The Importance of Militant Materialism," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 180-190, Russian edition.

36. These notebooks have now been published in Vols. IX and XII of the *Lenin Miscellany*, Russian edition.

37. Engels, *The Dialectics of Nature*.

38. Cf. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Introduction, in which is outlined the views of Berkeley, who reduces the whole world to our sensations.

39. *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XII, p. 324, Russian edition.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XI, p. 399, Russian edition.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 378.

43. *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XIV, pp. 227-229, Russian edition.

44. *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. IX, p. 139, Russian edition.

45. Cf. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, and Note 23 in Vol. XI of *Selected Works*.

46. *Collected Works*, Vol. XIII.

47. *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XII, p. 399; cf. also "On Dialectics," *Selected Works*, Vol. XI.

48. Cf. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. XI.

49. Cf. Chapter 5, Part 1, "The Crisis in Modern Physics," *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, p. 213.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 259-269.

51. *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, pp. 233 *et seq.*

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 265-269.

53. Cf. Lenin, "Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Power," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, p. 466; Russian edition.

54. Cf. Lenin, "Karl Marx," Section, "Materialist Conception of History and the Class Struggle."

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56. Marx, "Letter to Annenkov," 1846.

57. Lenin, "The State," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 362-377, Russian edition; see also *State and Revolution*.

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60. Cf. *The Communist Manifesto*.

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72. *Ibid.*, Chap. 5.