

tion, to turn it, by the recognition of its historic significance, into more clearly defined and more consistent channels.

Earlier French and English writers had conceived of history as a series of class struggles taking place under everchanging forms and conditions. But Marx first investigated the economic causes that are responsible for the rise and decline of the classes themselves, and the economic motives that determined their inner struggles. He drew them out into the light of scientific research, stripped of the ancient wrappings and trappings of religion, righteousness, ethics and morals in which they had been presented to the human race often more or less consciously by the combatants themselves.

In his works the various classes that have held the scepter in the history of human kind, were for the first time justly tried and justly adjudged. They were recognized as the necessary products of social evolution, of a process of development moreover that made their overthrow a necessary condition of the progress of human kind. He showed the inexorable law of social developments that creates within each new class that comes into power the class that will one day hurl it from its throne.

This brings us to the second historical contribution of Marx, the perception that the great human struggle of the classes is ultimately of an economic nature, that its object is the surplus product of human labor that the producing classes must pay to their masters. The form of this surplus product changes under varying forms of production. In a capitalist state of society, the obvious form of surplus production disappears, i. e., the form in which it presents itself in a system of serfdom or chattel slavery. It became necessary, therefore, to disclose this hidden surplus product paid by the proletariat to the dominant class in capitalist production. The specifically economic works of Marx, which find their concentrated expression in his gigantic, uncompleted "Capital," are devoted to the investigation of this problem.

According to Marx, this surplus product is the surplus value of capitalist production that is produced by the wage worker for the employer over and above the price of his own labor power.

In other words, the wage paid by the capitalist to his worker, whatever form it may take, whether as time or piece wage, is not a return for accomplished labor, but rather the price for which the capitalist buys the labor power that the worker temporarily places at his disposal. The employer utilizes this labor power for the production of a surplus value over and above the price paid therefore. Without this surplus value a capitalist system of production is inconceivable; the accumulation of surplus value is the law of life of capitalist society. The fight for surplus value, as it is expressed on the one side by the competitive struggle between capitalists against one another, on the other as a struggle for wages and hours of labor between capital and labor, is the driving force that leads first to higher methods of production, and thereby, ultimately, to increasing concentration of capitalist undertakings, to the accumulation of capital in the hands of individuals until this concentration has reached a point when it becomes incompatible with the further development of human production. At this stage the working class will be forced to enforce the expropriation of capitalistic monopolists—or fall into a state of extreme degradation and servitude.

But the disappearance of the last class dependent upon the exploitation of surplus value will put an end to production for surplus value, and in its place will come communistic production upon a socialized basis.

This phase of the Marxian theory, particularly the conclusions he has drawn from his theory of surplus value, has met with active skepticism, not only from the so-called "Katheder Sozialisten" (College Professors) the school of Schmoller, Wagner and Sombart, but particularly on the part of the school of "Revisionists" that first received a systematic program of sorts under the leadership of Edward Bernstein. But even Marx's socialist critics—who by the way have become more and more silent, cannot deny, what even Werner Sombart must concede: that capitalist production is production for surplus value, that surplus value is the dominant force in capitalist society.

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If the great revolutions in Finland and Russia, and the pro-