

KARL MARX AND FREDERICK ENGELS

THE IRISH DIMENSION

By

ELLEN HAZELKORN

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF KENT
CANTERBURY

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ABSTRACT

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels wrote upwards of fifty books and articles, and many letters concerning economic and political developments in Ireland after the Great Famine of 1845-49. For the most part, these writings have been ignored, in preference for attention to their more famous economic and philosophical works. In contrast, this study seeks to set the record straight; examining in detail their appraisal of the relationship between Irish nationalism and English socialism, the thesis finds that Marx and Engels' concern was primarily focused in the direction of the latter. Support for Irish self-determination was significant principally in adding to their re-evaluation of Chartism, the English labour movement, and the potential for socialist revolution generally. Moreover, they were not enthusiastic defenders of the Fenians, but quietly sheltered various misgivings concerning their actions, and limited political horizon and effectiveness, which came to light in their applause for Charles Stewart Parnell by mid-1870.

The thesis seeks to place Marx and Engels' support for Irish independence within a framework of capitalist development as sketched by Karl Marx in Capital. Therein, he discussed the effects of capitalist accumulation upon Ireland, pronouncing that the particular mode of production was responsible for the manner in which English industry reciprocated Irish agriculture. It is claimed in the thesis that Marx's development of the mechanism of capitalist accumulation is an invaluable analysis of that relationship.

Nevertheless, one cannot read through Marx and Engels' varied writings without being aware of the many inconsistencies and omissions that abound. Their general ignorance of industrial growth, particularly in Belfast, of great opposition to Home Rule, and of the conservative strength of the tenantry movement are among the most obvious of these. The thesis continually draws attention to these problems, citing data on political and economic developments of the time as evidence of the drawbacks to their analysis. This method purports to consider how well Marx and Engels understood the Irish question. On the other hand, some of their inaccuracies, especially Engels' almost emotional attention to communal, pre-English Ireland, compares favourably with contemporary opinion.

In conclusion, then, the thesis ends by glancing at how Marx and Engels' ideas compared with their contemporaries, suggesting that in many ways, they were trapped in their historical time.

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used throughout this thesis.

<u>CW</u>	Karl Marx/Frederick Engels, <u>Collected Works</u> (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1975-1979).
<u>Doc.</u>	Institute of Marxism-Leninism, <u>Documents of the First International, 1864-1872</u> (Moscow: Progress Publishers, n.d.).
G.C.	General Council of the International Working Mens Association.
IWMA	International Working Mens Association.
JSSISI	Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland
<u>MEI</u>	R. Dixon, ed., <u>Ireland and the Irish Question. A Collection of Writings by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels</u> , prepared by L. I. Golman and V. E. Kunina (New York: International Publishers, 1972).
<u>MEW</u>	Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, <u>Werke</u> (Berlin, Dietz Publishing House, 1973-74).
"Notes"	Karl Marx, "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland", November 26, 1867.
<u>NYDT</u>	New York Daily Tribune.
"Outline"	Karl Marx, "Outline of a Report on the Irish Question", December 16, 1867.
<u>S.C.</u>	Karl Marx/Frederick Engels, <u>Selected Correspondence</u> , ed. S. W. Ryazanskaya, trans. I. Lasker, 3rd revised ed. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975).

Bibliographic information for letters cited throughout the thesis, except for those few instances where the information is supplied, can be found in Appendix 1.

INTRODUCTION

One generally accepted picture of Marx and Engels' involvement with the Irish question is one that links their activity to support for the Fenians alone. A picture is drawn of two men dedicated politically and emotionally to the defence of the Irish struggle for national independence. For example, Franzisca Kugelmann, the wife of Hamberg friend, Ludwig Kugelmann, recalled in her memoirs that Marx and his family "had a great sympathy for the unfortunate oppressed Ireland," and took a great interest in listening to Irish music and song.⁽¹⁾ Marx's daughter, Jenny, described the exuberant atmosphere in the Marx home at the time of O'Donovan Rossa's parliamentary victory in 1869. In a letter to Ludwig Kugelmann, she wrote: "We are all of us downright Fenians. On the day we received the news of Donovan's election we all danced with joy. . ." ⁽²⁾ Marx even went so far as to declare in 1870

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1. Franzisca Kugelmann, "Small Traits of Marx's Great Character", 1928, in Marx and Engels Through the Eyes of Their Contemporaries (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972) p. 189. For example, see F. Engels, "Notes for the Preface to a Collection of Irish Songs", July 5, 1870, MEI: 270-1.
 2. Jenny Longuet to Ludwig Kugelmann, December 27, 1869. This refers to Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa's election as MP in 1869. As Rossa was in prison at the time, the British government refused to accept his election. Another election was held in which the Fenian Charles Kickham, released from prison a year earlier, was elected in Rossa's place.

that his daughter Eleanor was a Fenian head-centre.⁽¹⁾ There are suggestions that Engels' wife Lizzie Burns was a member of the Fenians. Paul Lafargue recorded that she was "in continual touch with the many Irishmen in Manchester and [was] . . . always well informed of their conspiracies. More than one Sinn Feiner [Fenian] found hospitality in Engels' house and it was thanks to his wife that the leader in the attempt to free the condemned Sinn Feiners on their way to the scaffold was able to evade the police" in the (now famous) Manchester Martyr episode of September 1867.⁽²⁾ Following the execution of Larkin, Allen and O'Brien for their participation in that incident, Engels' house was draped in black and green.⁽³⁾

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1. Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue, March 5, 1870. "Head-centre" was the term used to refer to the leader of the Fenians. Marx's reference here was most likely describing Eleanor's active participation in the Fenian amnesty campaign. See Yvonne Kapp, Eleanor Marx, vol. 1-Family Life, 1855-1883 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972).
 2. Paul Lafargue, "Reminiscences of Engels", 1905, in Through the Eyes of their Contemporaries, p. 41. See Paul Rose, The Manchester Martyrs. A Fenian Tragedy (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1970). The use of the term "Sinn Feiner" depicts the period in which Lafargue wrote his memoirs as it refers to a set of petit-bourgeois economic proposals for an independent Ireland. These proposals were given the name Sinn Fein, "ourselves alone," by their founder Arthur Griffith, who named a political party after them. See Eric Strauss, Irish Nationalism and British Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951) pp. 218-23. Regarding sheltering of Fenians by Lizzie Burns, see Gustav Mayer, Friedrich Engels. A Biography (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd, 1936) p. 191; also L. F. Ilyichov et al, Frederick Engels: A Biography (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974) p. 179. The authors state the following: "The two sisters were involved in the Irish national liberation movement and had warm feelings for the workers' struggle. Engels' party friends trusted them implicitly, and treated them as comrades-in-arms."
 3. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1867; Mayer, Engels p. 191.

It is, however, uncertain how accurate some of these accounts are. There is no doubt that Marx and Engels were attentive to the Irish question over the years spanning 1844 to Engels' death in 1895, and that they and their respective families actively supported the Fenians during the latter 1860s. Furthermore, it is obvious that Engels would have established a more emotional bond with the Irish cause because of his relationship with Mary and Lizzie Burns. Gustav Mayer, for one, draws upon this remarkable affair in the following portrait of Engels:

With his whole heart Engels loved the unhappy nation which had given him Mary and Lizzie. He was thinking of them when he described the Irish climate: 'The weather like the inhabitants is full of violent contrasts: the sky is like an Irish woman's face, rain and sunshine succeed each other suddenly and unexpectedly, and there is none of the humdrum greyness of England. (1)

Yet, despite the inspiring lyricism of these and similar words, it is, for example, questionable whether Eleanor Marx was an actual Fenian head-centre or it was merely a figurative turn-of-phrase employed by Marx. And, while there may be no reason to doubt Lafargue's comments about Lizzie Burns membership of the Fenians, there is no corroborating evidence available. Perhaps one can only agree with Ralph Fox that "Engels was far too good a revolutionary ever to have broken the rules of conspiracy by talking of such a matter. . ." (2)

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1. Mayer, Engels, pp. 195-6. See also Ralph Fox, Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Irish Revolution (London: Modern Books Ltd, 1932) p. 6.
 2. Fox, Marx, Engels and Lenin p. 22; see further W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner, "Frederick Engels in Manchester", Minutes and Proceedings of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society. vol. xcvi (1956-57) p.23.

By way of contrast to this generally accepted picture, this thesis seeks to exchange the bravado of that portrait for a deeper understanding of Marx and Engels' political position and its origins. There have been several attempts in the past to discuss and emphasise their theoretical assessment of Ireland. For example, Peter Piveronus, Jr., argues that "it can be said without exaggeration that the founders of Marxism regarded the Irish question of the utmost importance to the working class struggle."⁽¹⁾ Concurring with this assessment, although ensuring that they are not characterised only as theoreticians, Ralph Fox contends in his book that the "leaders of the world proletariat in the revolutionary struggle of the 19th century, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, . . . were not only deeply interested in Irish history and Ireland's fight against English oppression, but they gave very practical help to the Irish revolution."⁽²⁾ Their participation and aid to the Irish through, inter alia, the International Working Mens Association and the Amnesty campaign for imprisoned Fenians has been documented, although not always with much detail, in the works of W. O. Henderson, Peter Beresford-Ellis, L. I. Golman, Desmond Greaves, John Boyle, and

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1. Peter Piveronus, Jr. "Englas (sic) - Marx on Irish History", Eire 19 (August 3, 1977) vol. 1, p. 94. See also A. Wizniter (Turnau), "Marx und die irische Frage", Archiv, vol. 10 (1922) pp. 49-53; Bernadette O'Sullivan, "Marx-Ireland-and the first International", Retrospect, publication of the Irish History Students Association (1973-1974) pp. 28-40; Cormac Ó Gráda, "Marx and the Irish", The Irish Times (April 1, 1970); Nicholas Mansergh, The Irish Question, 1840-1921 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1965 3rd ed.) pp. 103-31; L. I. Golman, "The Irish Question in the First International and Marx and Engels' Struggle for the principles of proletarian internationalism", in From the History of the Struggle of Marx and Engels for a Proletarian Party (Moscow: State Publisher of Political Literature, 1955) pp. 484-578; Sean Cronin, Marx and the Irish Question (Dublin: Repsol Publications, 1977); Ian Cummins, Marx, Engels and National Movements (London: Croom Helm, 1960) pp. 104-20.
 2. Fox, Marx, Engels and Lenin, p. 5.

David McLellan.⁽¹⁾

Greaves is further anxious to ensure that Marx and Engels' activities and writings have a modern application. "The Irish question is back in British politics," he wrote in 1969. ". . . It is well to recall how a century ago the Irish question was a predominant issue in public affairs, and how the founders of socialism dealt with it."⁽²⁾ And, in a passage elsewhere, he states "that in their day Marx and Engels faced and solved problems which are essentially those that still lie before us today. . . Consequently. . . [their writing] provides numerous guidelines which, mutatis mutandis, have high relevance today."⁽³⁾

Despite the long awaited arrival of these brief expositions of Marx and Engels' Irish writings, they only touch upon the subject. Passing references are made to their awakening concern in Ireland because of Engels' contact with the Manchester Irish community in the early 1840s, and the

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1. W. O. Henderson, The Life of Friedrich Engels, 2 vols. (London: Frank Cass, 1976); Peter Beresford-Ellis, A History of the Irish Working Class (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1972); R. Dixon, ed. Ireland and the Irish Question. A Collection of Writings by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, prepared by L. I. Golman and V. E. Kunina (New York: International Publishers, 1972); Desmond Greaves, "Marx and Engels and the Irish Question", Quarterly Bulletin of the Marx Memorial Library, No. 52 (October-December 1969) pp. 5-9; J. W. Boyle, "Ireland and the First International", Journal of British Studies, vol. 11, No. 2 (May 1972) pp. 49-62; David McLellan, Karl Marx, His Life and Thought (London: MacMillan Press, 1973); see also Franz Mehring, Karl Marx, The Story of His Life (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1936). David Riazanov biography, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: An Introduction to their Lives and Work, trans. Joshua Kunitz (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1973) omits any mention of the Irish question.
 2. Greaves, "Marx and Engels", p. 5.
 3. Greaves, "Forward", MEI: 11. See also T. A. Jackson, "Marx and Engels on Ireland - IV", Labour Monthly, vol. 15 (1933) p. 54.

slackening power of Chartism in the 1850s. Greater attention is given towards their many writings on Ireland and the Irish question, but oftentimes with exaggerated enthusiasm. T. A. Jackson's introduction to excerpts from the correspondence illustrates this point: their many communications on the subject, he said, "constitute evidence. . .of the amazing thoroughness with which Marx and Engels acquainted themselves with every fact relevant to the political situation before them. . ."(1) For the most part, however, these accounts are primarily in exegesis form, serving to present rather than analyse the position taken on the various facets of the Irish question.

The only exception to these rather bland and equally repetitive accounts - to which Ian Cummins' Marx, Engels and National Movements is sadly only the latest example - is a recent doctoral thesis by Michael Naumann.⁽²⁾ Naumann's work on heroism in the Irish context contains only a short chapter on Marx, Engels and Ireland; nevertheless it attempts to raise certain questions regarding their understanding of events in Ireland. While the author does touch upon the obvious problem, most notably that of Ulster and Home Rule, his effort to redress the overly positive assessments of his predecessors leads him to a particularly harsh critique. Yet, the study is to be welcomed, as it goes some way

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1. Jackson, "Marx and Engels", p. 53 (emphasis added).
 2. Michael Naumann, Der Strukturwandel des Heroismus. Vom sakralen zum revolutionären Heldentum: Eine Fallstudie zur Irischen Revolutionsgeschichte (The structural change of heroism. From sacred to revolutionary heroism: a case study of Irish revolutionary history), Habilitationsschrift, University of Bochum, Ruhr, 1979. See also Mansergh, The Irish Question, pp. 103-31.

towards pushing readers to adopt a more questioning posture.

Indeed, surprisingly, little attention has been placed on Marx and Engels' politics. This omission has often been in preference to greater interest in their philosophical or economic views.

John Maguire's recent study, Marx's Theory of Politics, is an exception.⁽¹⁾ Yet, even in his brief but comprehensive discussion of Marx's position on Britain, he fails to direct any attention to that of Ireland, without which the former - specifically in the 1860s and after - does not make sense. Marx's scenario for Britain, to which Maguire enumerates many misconceptions held by Marx, was not operative in isolation but dependent upon an Irish catalyst. The failure of that stimulus derives as much from Marx and Engels' overly enthusiastic belief that national revolution in Ireland was nigh as it does from Maguire's perceptive reading that Marx's

prognostication overlooked the absence of certain social groups such as revolutionary artisans and peasants, and . . . the broad common interest between land and capital which he himself had perceived. Moreover, he underestimated the ability of mid-Victorian capitalism to 'ensure an existence to its slave within his slavery', and even to forge him some gilded chain in the process."⁽²⁾

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1. Further examples where Ireland is omitted from discussion are: Hal Draper, Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution, pt. 1 (London and New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), Richard N. Hunt, The Political Ideas of Marx and Engels, vol. 1 (London: MacMillan Press, Ltd., 1974), and John B. Sanderson, An Interpretation of the Political Ideas of Marx and Engels (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1969). In fairness, the first two books are only the first part and volume, respectively, of a much larger work which has not been completed.
 2. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978) p. 181.

Similarly, Ireland is omitted from either Avineri, Melloti, or Kiernan's studies of Marx on colonialism.⁽¹⁾ This absence is particularly interesting in that it reinforces the classicalist view that Ireland was not a colony but rather a region of England, and as such, consideration of the Irish question was equatable with any other politico-economic debate of the time. A. G. L. Shaw's edited collection Great Britain and the Colonies, 1815-1865 would support this interpretation.⁽²⁾ Ireland was an unsubdued part of England not of the Empire. To some extent, this came to be an opinion shared by Marx and Engels but with a different angle and understanding; nevertheless, this is surely not the explanation for its omission in these works.

I am, therefore, sympathetic with the following aim: ". . .I believe that an important contribution is to be made by looking thoroughly at how Marx operates in a specific area."⁽³⁾ Including Engels in these sentiments encapsulates the tenor and direction of this thesis, which endeavours to consider a set of political writings against their corresponding political and economic background rather than to evaluate them as a set of autonomous ideas. Yet, the thesis does not set out to prove Marx and Engels' theory of Irish development by first presenting its

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1. Shlomo Avineri, Karl Marx on Colonisation and Modernisation (Garden City, New Jersey: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1969); Umberto Melotti, Marx and the Third World, trans. Pat Ransford (London: MacMillan, 1977); V. G. Kiernan, Marxism and Imperialism (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, Ltd., 1974).
 2. Debates in Economic History series, ed. Peter Mathias (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1970).
 3. Maguire, Theory of Politics, p. 1.

general themes and then showing how Ireland's history followed that pattern. By that method, offered for example by Brian Davey in his study, The Economic Development of India,⁽¹⁾ the proof is validated internally from within the construction of the argument rather than seeking to examine the validity of the argument itself.

Yet, the thesis is not a piece of historical writing. Those who will seek a full or detailed outline of Irish history will be unhappy. Rather, where I deal with historical events or sketch how Marx and Engels perceived those events, it is presented in only a brief fashion without attention to much detail. Hence, the thesis is an exercise in political analysis, being a study of Marx and Engels' writing on Ireland, and is not a historical narrative of Irish history based upon those writings.

Briefly, then, Chapter One offers an indepth examination of what is frequently quoted as Marx and Engels' position on Irish nationalism of the 19th century. The chapter, however, moves quickly beyond a general survey of their interest in the Irish question to grasp a wide-ranging analysis of the relationship between Irish nationalism - personified by the Fenians of the 1860s - and socialism - or rather the First International. As current political debates seek to harmonise nationalism with socialism,⁽²⁾ this examination of Marx and Engels' perception of that marriage is particularly apt. Moreover, the chapter argues that support

1. (n.p.: Spokesman Books, 1975). Another book that similarly cites Marx and Engels account uncritically is Carl and Ann Barton Reeve, James Connolly and the United States. The Road to the 1916 Irish Rebellion (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, Inc., 1978) pp. 1-4.

2. For instance, see Austen Morgan and Bob Purdie, eds., Ireland, Divided Nation, Divided Class (London: Ink Links, 1980).

for Irish self-determination was based upon tactical and at times emotional considerations, rather than any total commitment to Irish nationalism.

Chapters Two and Three concentrate on Marx's economic analysis of post-famine Ireland. Calling attention to a hitherto ignored aspect of their Irish writings, the thesis emphasises that it was Marx's study of the capitalist mode of production, in preparation for Capital, that placed consideration of Ireland on the political agenda.⁽¹⁾ Additionally, that work led Marx and Engels to understand, in contrast to many of their contemporaries, the manner in which capitalist accumulation had created an almost indelible economic bond between England and Ireland; that relationship worked to the former's advantage but to the latter's disadvantage. Nevertheless, aside from the emotionalism of that bond, neither Marx nor Engels were ignorant of the progressive force of capitalism, which, in the post-famine era, sought to yank the land and its people out of the feudal and into the modern world.

Strangely, as Chapters Three illustrates, they perceived that that change would occur almost overnight. Despite previous lessons of history, they were blind to the uniqueness of agrarian circumstances. Likening the development of capitalism in agriculture to that of industry, they failed to adequately appreciate particular and singular aspects of the Irish experience. While their omission does not detract from an otherwise revealing economic argument, it serves to illustrate their

1. See Marx to Lassalle, December 21, 1857, and December 8, 1857, quoted in Raphael Samuel, "British Marxist Historians, 1880-1980: Part One", New Left Review, No. 120 (March-April 1980) p. 22.

general unfamiliarity with the subject.

Chapter Four deals exclusively with Engels' work on Ireland. Again, his proposed History of Ireland has received only scant attention from previous writers on the subject. While only two chapters of the work were completed, it nevertheless gives the present reader a superb indication of his approach and comprehension of the issue. Concentrating on pre-1900 Irish history, Engels emphasised the communal facet of celtic culture. The chapter shows that his method of examination is, on the one hand, politically emotive, while, on the other often historically inaccurate.

Finally, chapter five seeks a brief comparison of Marx and Engels' ideas on Irish nationalism and economic development with some of their contemporaries. By way of a general discussion the chapter shows that they were very much a product of their time; yet, Marx and Engels differed from colleagues in that they sought to analyse events within a historical materialist perspective. Rejecting equally the English classicalist and the Irish nationalist schools of thought, they placed themselves firmly in the internationalist camp, giving careful consideration to Irish developments when and if it seemed likely to affect socialist change elsewhere, especially in England.

As can be seen, I have tried in my research to move beyond a one-dimensional historicist and exegesist approach to one that seeks to evaluate Marx and Engels' understanding of a particular historical event. I have done this by continually counter-posing their ideas and appraisal of events with actual data on what was occurring economically and politically at the time. Indepth analysis of their writings shows that Marx and Engels displayed a remarkable knowledge as well as an ignorance of a subject of which they wrote a great deal, and which

served as the centre piece to their political ideas after 1860. The use of this technique could, I think, prove to be a most enlightening means of exploring further into the works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, as well as that of other political theorists.

CHAPTER ONE

THE POLITICS OF THE IRISH QUESTION

1. Introduction
2. Politics of the Irish Question
3. Fenianism and the First International
4. Political Considerations

CHAPTER ONE

THE POLITICS OF THE IRISH QUESTION

1. Introduction

Much has been written on Marx and Engels' appraisal of how the question of Irish self-determination fit into their overall scheme for European social revolution. This chapter seeks to examine that position in great depth. Section II will offer a chronological charting; it is only in this manner that the origins, nature and limitations of their position can be adequately understood and assessed. Section III examines the relationship between the First International and the Irish question with particular attention given to the impact that that link had upon the alteration in their view of Ireland in the early 1870s. Finally, section IV will offer some general comments on the significance and the problems of their position.

2. The Politics of the Irish Question

When Frederick Engels arrived in Manchester in 1842 to take up his apprenticeship with the cotton-thread firm of Ermen and Engels, Chartism was at the peak of its political career. Organisationally, it could proudly claim the support of thousands of working men and women behind its call for democratic reform as spelled out in its National Charter, first in 1838 and again in 1842. Following

its Birmingham Convention of 1843, the organisation split along class lines. The main body began to exhibit a marked change transcending its once singular concern for universal suffrage to attack Free Trade, and to embrace the Ten Hours Bill and other legislation benefitting the working class. The adoption of these social democratic - and in some instances, socialist - principles "was associated with a further shift in emphasis from local parochialism to international commitment and action."⁽¹⁾ Indicative of this trend, the Second National Petition of 1842 included along with its six-point programme, the demand that the (1801) Act of Union between England and Ireland be abolished.⁽²⁾ The significance of binding English democracy to the Irish question as a vehicle for social change in England was not lost upon the young Engels, then twenty-two years.

Upon his arrival in Manchester, Engels was befriended by Mary Burns, an operative in the family factory who was of Irish (Co.Monaghan) parentage.⁽³⁾ Tutored by her, he traversed the city

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1. Asa Briggs, "National Bearings", in Chartist Studies (London: MacMillan Press, 1959) p. 290; see also by Briggs in the same volume, "The Local Background of Chartism", pp. 1-28; Henry Weisser, British Working Class Movements and Europe, 1815-1848 (Manchester: University Press, 1975).
 2. The Northern Star, March 25, 1848, "proclaimed that 'as France has secured for herself her beloved Republic, so Ireland must have her Parliament restored, and England her idolized Charter.'" Quoted in Alfred Plummer, Bronterre - A Political Biography of Bronterre O'Brien, 1804-1864 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1971) p.190.
 3. Nothing further is known of Mary Burns. "The firm of Ermen and Engels employed around 800 workers in the specialist process of manufacturing sewing thread." David McLellan, Engels, Fontana Modern Masters, edited by Frank Kermode (London: Fontana, 1977) p. 20; see also Norman Levine, The Tragic Deception-Marx Contra Engels, introduction Lyman H. Legtere (Oxford: Clio Books, 1975).

acquiring an exceptional insight into the living and working conditions of its proletariat, most particularly that of the Irish emigrant. "The slums of all the big towns swarm with Irish. One may depend upon seeing mainly Celtic faces, if ever one penetrates into a district which is particularly noted for its filth and decay. "he wrote in 1844.⁽¹⁾ As a consequence of these travels, Engels was able to "'read' the city in a way that none of the rest of. . . [Manchester's] observers could.'⁽²⁾

His familiarity with the Irish community was heightened by his life-long relationship with Mary and her sister Lizzie; he lived with Mary until her death in 1864 and then with Lizzie in a cottage just outside Manchester. Through them Engels acquired - or perhaps adopted - a keen interest in the Irish question with which both sisters were involved.⁽³⁾ Many accounts place Lizzie

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1. Frederick Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England trans. and ed. W.O. Henderson and W.H. Chaloner (Stanford: University Press, 1958) p. 105 (henceforth Condition) ; see also McLellan, Engels, pp. 27-31; W.O. Henderson, Engels, vol. 1.
 2. John Lucas and Standish Meacham, "Engels, Manchester and the Working Class: A Discussion", Victorian Studies, vol. 18, No.4 (June 1975) p. 471. See also Steven Marcus, Engels, Manchester and the Working Class (New York: Vintage Books, 1974); Moses Baritz, "Engels, His 20 years in Manchester", Manchester Guardian, October 10, 1934; Moses Baritz, "Frederick Engels in Manchester", letter to the Manchester Guardian, March 14, 1933.
 3. Edmund Wilson, To the Finland Station (London: Fontana, revised ed. 1972) p. 137; Henderson and Chaloner, "Engels in Manchester", p. 16; Horace B. Davis, Nationalism and Socialism: Marxist and Labour Theories of Nationalism to 1917 (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1967) p. 65; Draper, Theory of Revolution, p. 155; Mayer, Engels, p. 43; McLellan, Engels, p. 21; Gareth Stedman Jones, "Engels and the Genesis of Marxism", New Left Review, No. 106 (November-December 1977) p. 104.

as a member of the Fenians during the 1860s; Engels declared in 1870 that "my wife is a revolutionary Irishwoman."⁽¹⁾ Thus, it was through her that Engels developed an association with the Irish secret society. Undoubtedly, his intimacy with the Burns sisters occasioned his emotional attachment and partisan interest in the Irish question, however, it is clear that emphasis cannot be placed on this affair alone. Ultimately, Engels and Marx's keen attention to the issue stemmed from its political importance and most especially from its likely impact on a forthcoming social revolution in England.

Acknowledgement of this essential political tie did not, however, rest exclusively with Engels or with Marx. More than ten years before Engels urged a unity of purpose and action between Irish peasant and English proletarian in 1848, Feargus O'Connor, the Co. Cork born Chartist, and other Chartist leaders had expressed a desire to align the operative and the peasant to achieve social and political reform. In a pamphlet entitled A Series of Letters from Feargus O'Connor. . . to Daniel O'Connell dated 1836, O'Connor hinted at the need to form a democratic alliance between the two islands. In words later echoed by Engels in numerous articles, he claimed that "Irish support would. . . [give] a valuable stimulus to the progress of English Radicalism."⁽²⁾ The theme was reiterated in 1839 when O'Connor again hit out at Daniel O'Connell, whose supreme nationalism - long the subject of attack by The Northern Star - checked the possibility of the kind

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1. Engels to Natalie Liebknecht, December 19, 1870.
 2. Donald Read and Eric Glasgow, Feargus O'Connor: Irishman and Chartist (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd, 1961) p. 49.

of alliance O'Connor dreamt. In a speech to a Manchester audience of Chartists he once again anticipated Engels:

"We want yet with us those brave Irishmen whose ancestors with our own were obliged to wade up to the knees in blood for the defence of their religion, for God, and for their country. We must have them; we must take them out of the lion's den, and allow Daniel [O'Connell] to remain in the lion's den alone." (1)

It is worth recording here, by way of comparison, Engels' own words on the matter. Speaking of O'Connor's plan to found an Irish Chartist Party linked with English Chartism, he wrote in 1848: "British democracy will advance much more quickly when its ranks are swelled by two million brave and ardent Irish, and poverty-stricken Ireland will at last have taken an important step towards her liberation." Unfortunately, Engels' words went unheeded or, more accurately, unheard; the article was published in the French paper, La Reformé.⁽²⁾ Chartism remained an English phenomenon chased from Ireland by O'Connell's accusations and the Church's protestations. Years later Engels' reference to the deliberate refusal of Irish newspapers to transmit news of the

1. Ibid. p. 73.

2. Frederick Engels, "Coercion Bill for Ireland and the Chartists", La Reformé, January 8, 1848, MEI: 49. Despite its publication in French, Engels would never have assumed that his words would inspire results in Ireland. On the impact of Chartism in Ireland, see Sean O'Faolain, King of the Beggars. A Life of Daniel O'Connell (Dublin: Allen Figgis Ltd, 1970) Riverun Series No.10; Rachel O'Higgins, "The Irish Influence in the Chartist Movement", Past and Present, vol. 20 (November 1961) pp. 83-96; Andrew Boyd, The Rise of the Irish Trade Unions, 1729-1970 (Tralee: Anvil Books, 1972) chapt.5.

First International characterised the situation of the 1840s:

"Ireland," he wrote to Marx, "is still the sacra insula whose aspirations must not be confounded with the profane class struggles of the rest of this sinful world."⁽¹⁾

Engels' contact with Chartism developed through his friendship with Ernest Jones and Julian Harney, both of whom were connected with O'Connor's Northern Star ; in 1847, Harney became the paper's editor, and Jones became Harney's assistant.⁽²⁾ One of Engels' purposes in agreeing to take-up the otherwise hated apprenticeship in England had been to acquire knowledge of the English socialist movement. At that time, he had yet to

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1. Engels to Marx, December 9, 1869; see also Marx to Engels, December 4, 1869; Frederick Engels, "Letters from London", Der Schweizerische Republikaner, No. 51, June 27, 1843, MEI: 35; "If the people were set free even for a moment, Daniel O'Connell and his moneyed aristocrats would soon find themselves in the wilderness, where O'Connell himself would like to drive the Tories. This is the reason for O'Connell's close association with the Catholic clergy; that is why he exhorts the Irish to be on their guard against the dangerous socialists; that is why he rejects the assistance offered by the Chartists, although for form's sake he speaks occasionally of democracy. . ."
 2. Engels met Harney in 1843 when the latter was a sub-editor of The Northern Star. See Peter Cadogan, "Harney and Engels", International Review of Social History, vol. 10 (1965) p. 67; see the entire article, which is selected correspondence, for an account of their friendship. The General Council (IWMA) received a letter from Harney at its meeting of May 24, 1870 disapproving of the action taken by the Council respecting Irish political prisoners. Harney "declared a disgust of Fenianism and contended that Ireland was an integral part of the British Empire." Doc.3:241. Despite Harney's political break with Engels, his comments were very perceptive; in January 1880, Harney wrote of his reaction to O'Connell: "When young I was an enthusiastic admirer of Emmet: but I soon saw through the humbug of the great Dan; and from that time have mistrusted all Irish patriots. The few who may have been sincere have preached a fanatical hatred of everything English and I am not good Christian enough to return love for hatred." Ibid., p. 89.

define the proletariat as the revolutionary class; neither did he place much emphasis on the trade unions or theoretically define the working class. Instead, he recognised a class of "propertyless" or "non-property-owners",⁽¹⁾ and sought the spirit of the revolution from among the most destitute of society. "Only that part of the English nation which is unknown on the Continent, only the workers, the parishes of England, the poor, are really respectable, for all their roughness and for all their moral degradation. It is from them that England's salvation will come. . ."⁽²⁾ Insofar as Chartism harnessed their energies, it was the fulcrum for social revolution, and Engels' attention.⁽³⁾

The Irish emigrant, whom he observed at first-hand, was amongst the most uneducated and poorest of England. He lived contained within a ghetto denoted as Irish Town or Little Ireland because of the predominance of its inhabitants.⁽⁴⁾ However, his spirit, a product of centuries of fighting against English rule, marked him, Engels felt, as a valuable asset to the English workers movement.

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1. Draper, Theory of Revolution, p. 155.
 2. Frederick Engels, "The Condition of England. Past and Present by Thomas Carlyle", Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher, January 1844., CW 3:445-6.
 3. See Robin Blackburn, "Marxism: Theory of Proletarian Revolution", New Left Review, No. 97 (May-June 1976) pp.9-10; Jones, "Engels", pp. 93-101; Frederick Engels, "The Condition of England", CW 3:467; Frederick Engels, " [On Poland] Speech at the International Meeting held in London on November 29, 1847 to mark the 17th anniversary of the Polish Uprising of 1830", CW 6:389-90.
 4. Engels, Condition, pp. 104-7; T.W. Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland : A Study in Historical Geography (Manchester: University Press, 1957) p. 46.

Speaking of the Irish peasant who had sought emigration rather than starvation in Ireland, he said:

...His half-wild upbringing and the wholly civilised surrounding in which he finds himself later, engender a rage which constantly smoulders within him, making him capable of anything. . . It is therefore, not surprising that whenever an opportunity presents itself he hits out blindly and furiously like any half-wild creature, that is consumed with a desire for revenge, a spirit of destruction, and the object against which this is turned is quite immaterial provided he can hit out and destroy." (1)

Overly romanticising "the life of the Irish proletariat" in an attempt to seek out the mainstay of the revolutionary movement, Engels attributed to the Irish peasant qualities that are more accurately identified with his own youthful enthusiasm than political analysis. Yet, he was convinced that the English workers movement would be greatly enhanced if it could successfully envelope that spirit.

. . .Give me two hundred thousand Irishmen and I could overthrow the entire British monarchy." (2)

Hal Draper warns that it would be misleading to make too much of these passages from Engels, although they do point to his early attentions to political issues, especially the Irish question. (3)

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1. Engels, "Letters from London", MEI: 34; cf. E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (New York: Vintage Books, 1963) pp. 432-44.
 2. Ibid., MEI: 33.
 3. Draper, Theory of Revolution, pp. 150-62.

Engels' speculation on the advantages that would be forthcoming from a mixture of the fiery nature of the Irish with "the stable, reasoning, persevering English" also draws criticism from Eric Strauss in his book, Irish Nationalism and British Democracy. This might, argues Strauss, have seemed a plausible explanation in 1844 for the significant role played by the Irish in working class politics, but future developments did not uphold this theory. "In fact, Chartism was not a start but a finish, and the peculiar and characteristic part played in it by the Irish element must be explained by social and not by racial factors. It was not a question of Irish nature in British politics but the result of sudden economic changes which produced memorable political effects."⁽¹⁾ While these warnings are appreciated, in many ways Engels' sentiments capture the sense of urgency that pervaded socialist thinking in those pre-1848 years; both Engels and Marx, in the years approaching the continental revolutions, believed the decline of capitalism was nigh. An injection of Irish energy was a possible if impractical aid. Despite the outlandishness of these proclamations, the article, "Letters from London", drafted in 1843, reflected the education Engels had received from Mary Burns, his early support for the Irish question, and his desire to seek and to establish a foothold for social revolution wherever he could.⁽²⁾

The publication of The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1845 ably brought together the various strands of the

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1. Strauss, Irish Nationalism, pp. 126-7; cf. O'Higgins, "Irish Influence"; Plummer, Bronterre"; Alfred Plummer, "The Place of Bronterre O'Brien in the Working Class Movement", English History Review (1929) pp. 61-80; Thompson, Making.
 2. Draper, Theory of Revolution, p. 155.

political question with which he had become acquainted between 1842 and 1844. The demand that the union between England and Ireland be repealed occupied the activities of Irish nationalists and British democrats, moderates and radicals alike, during the nineteenth century. Enlarging upon their assessment of the situation, Engels forcefully argued that the retention of the union enslaved the Irish peasant in a semi-feudal existence, while it checked the progression of a united working class movement in England. Forced to emigrate in order to avoid starvation, Irish emigrants swelled the ranks of the surplus army of labour in such key manufacturing cities as Manchester, Liverpool and London.⁽¹⁾ There they were an asset for capital. "The rapid extension of British industry," Engels noted, anticipating Capital wherein Marx cited Ireland as a principle agent of accumulation, "could not have taken place if there had not been available a reserve of labour among the poverty stricken people of Ireland. The Irish had nothing to lose at home and much to gain in England."⁽²⁾ As long as these emigrants, whose peasant background and precarious circumstance denied them a working class consciousness, accepted low wages and sub-standard conditions, the working class would remain nationally divided. Consequently, he argued, repeal of the Union would benefit both the Irish tenant-farmer and the English operative; the

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1. Engels, Condition, pp. 104-7; Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland, pp. 45-6.
 2. Ibid., p. 104.

attainment of a democratic England as espoused by Chartism would ensure repeal.

While Chartism remained a powerful force and the continent appeared to be on the brink of revolution, Engels continued to urge the Irish to "fight strenuously and in close association with the Chartists in order to win the six points of the People's Charter."⁽¹⁾ Only the successful attainment of these democratic rights could hope, he said, to aid the Irish. The foundation of an Irish Chartist Party under the leadership of Feargus O'Connor would quickly unite the "democratic leadership of the three kingdoms" and provide the needed vehicle for social and political reform. "We will leave it to our readers to judge the importance of this future alliance between the peoples of the two islands."⁽²⁾

Repeal of the Union, Engels contended, lay at the heart of any progression towards socialism both in England and in Ireland. But, he warned, the Irish should not fool themselves into thinking that repeal would bring automatic prosperity. Independence would only uncover the real cause of the Irish condition, "the continual subdivision of holdings."

"From all the foregoing, it is clear that the uneducated Irish must see in the English their worst enemies, and their first hope of improvement in the conquest of independence. But quite clear it is, too, that Irish distress cannot be removed by any Act of Repeal. Such an Act would, however,

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1. Frederick Engels, "Feargus O'Connor and the Irish People," *Deutsche-Brüsseler-Zeitung*, No.3, January 9, 1848, MEI: 49.
 2. Engels, "Coercion Bill," MEI: 47.

at once lay bare the fact that the cause of Irish misery, which now seems to come from abroad, is really to be found at home. (1)

Ownership of the land also would not eliminate the problem; "even if they no longer had to pay rent most of them would still not be able to wring a living from their little farms. Any improvement in their situation would soon be lost again owing to the continuing and rapid increase in population."⁽²⁾ Despite his youth and general ignorance of the Irish economy - in 1844, Engels was 24 years old and would not yet have dealt in any depth with Irish history - Engels' interpretation of the Irish question is most impressive. Unlike many of his political contemporaries, he quickly rejected the claim that independence was a panacea for all Irish ills. He saw the designs of "narrow-minded nationalists" as window-dressing upon their own class interests.

Consequently, Engels had no time for "Old Dan" O'Connell. As leader of thousands of Irishmen, his single-minded concern for repeal had succeeded only in side-tracking his followers away from the graver social questions.⁽³⁾

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1. Engels, Condition, pp. 309-310.
 2. Ibid., p. 308.
 3. It is interesting to compare the attitude of many trade unions at the time; they also saw the end of the Union as opening up Pandora's box. On this point, see Feargus D'Arcy, "The Artisans of Dublin and Daniel O'Connell, 1830-1847: an unquiet liaison", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 17, No. 66 (1970-1971) pp. 221-43; Rachel O'Higgins, "Irish Trade Unions and Politics, 1830-50", The Historical Journal, vol. 4, No. 2 (1961) pp. 208-17; Patrick Holohan, "Daniel O'Connell and the Dublin Trades: A Collision, 1837-38", Saothar (Journal of the Irish Labour History Society) vol. 1, No. 1 (1975) pp. 1-17. See also Mayer, Engels, pp. 42-3.

If O'Connell really wanted to further the welfare of the people, if he were really concerned with the elimination of misery - and not with his miserable petty middle-class objectives which are at the bottom of all the shouting and the agitation for the Repeal - I should like to know what demand advanced by O'Connell representing the power that is at present at his disposal could be refused by Sir Robert Peel. . . .If O'Connell were really the man of the people, if he had sufficient courage and were not himself frightened of the people, i.e., if he were not a two-faced Whig but an upright, consistent democrat, the last English soldiers would have left Ireland long since and there would no longer be any idle Protestant pastor in purely Catholic areas or any Norman baron in an Irish castle. . . .(1)

O'Connell's bourgeois nationalism, Engels argued, underlay all his political rantings; his claim to be the "king of the beggars" was shown to be a sham when measured against his hatred of the Chartists whom he branded as "dangerous socialists."

In contrast, he had only admiration for Feargus O'Connor. "The part played in opposing the latest of the ignominious Irish Coercion Bills has given him the first claim to this status [--"the chief of the Irish Repealers and advocates of reform"--], and his continuous agitation for the Irish cause has shown Feargus O'Connor is just the man Ireland needs." Continuing his praise with oblique reference to O'Connell's egotistic pursuits, he wrote: "O'Connor is indeed seriously concerned about the well-being of the millions in Ireland, Repeal. . . is for him not an empty word, a pretext for obtaining posts for himself and his friends and for making profitable

1. Engels, "Letters from London", MEI: 35.

business transactions."⁽¹⁾

Engels' position was clear and simple. Ireland could not obtain justice, that is independence, until the English working class had seized power. To that end, and for the benefit of both - as the English working class required the aid of the Irish to win their democratic demands - the Irish should support the formation of an Irish Chartist party alligned to the English movement.⁽²⁾

It was this position that Engels most likely communicated to Marx at their second meeting in the summer of 1844. Engels had observedly matured since his first brief encounter with Marx in 1842.

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1. Engels, "Feargus O'Connor", MEI: 48; also Engels, "The Coercion Bill", MEI: 45-47. Cf. with the following articles and letters referring to the behind-the-scenes manoeuvres by the Irish Brigade, the Irish MPs in Parliament: Karl Marx, "A Weak, Aged Government/The Future of the Coalition Ministry", NYDT, No. 3677, January 28, 1853; Karl Marx, "Political Perspectives/Trade Prosperity/A Case of Death by Starvation", NYDT, No. 3681 February 2, 1853; Karl Marx, "Feargus O'Connor/Defeat of the Ministry/The Budget", NYDT, No. 3758, May 3, 1853; Marx, "Blue Books/Parliamentary Debates of February 6/Irish Brigade" NYDT, No. 4008, February 21, 1854, MEI: 72-3; Karl Marx, "Ireland's Revenge", Neue Oder-Zeitung, No. 127, March 16, 1855, MEI: 74-6; Karl Marx, "From Parliament [. . . The Irish Struggle]", Neue Oder-Zeitung, July 16, 1855, No. 325; Karl Marx to Engels, July 6, 1853. See also G. D. H. Cole, "Feargus O'Connor", Chartist Portraits (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1941) chapt. 11; Read and Glasgow, O'Connor. On the Repeal movement, see J. H. Treble, "The Irish Agitation", J. T. Ward, ed, Popular Movements, c. 1830-1850, Problems in Focus Series (London: MacMillan Press, 1970); Kevin B. Nowlan, The Politics of Repeal, Studies in Irish History Series, ed. T. W. Moody et al, vol. 3 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965).
 2. John Mitchel opportunistically sought to align the Young Irelanders, a breakaway nationalist movement from O'Connell's Repeal Association, which participated in an aborted rising in 1848, with the Chartists. See Glasgow and Read, O'Connor, pp. 128-30; J. H. Treble, "O'Connor, O'Connell, and the Attitudes of Irish Immigrants towards Chartism in the north of England, 1838-1848", in J. Butt and I. F. Clarke, eds, The Victorians and Social Protest (London: Archon Books, David and Charles Ltd, 1973) pp. 33-70.

At that time, Marx, editor of the Cologne-based Rheinische Zeitung, "received. . . [him] 'coldly', seeing in him an emissary of the Freien with whom he had just severed all contacts."⁽¹⁾ By 1844, Engels' experience and knowledge of capitalism from the envied vantage point of Ermen and Engels, as documented by him in numerous articles, clearly impressed Marx. Furthermore, Engels' acquaintance with the English socialists provided him with an insight that would possibly have complimented Marx's own experiences among French socialists.⁽²⁾ When he met Marx in Paris, he was returning to Barmen where he intended to compile from his many notes - a glimpse of which was evident from his incisive analysis of impending capitalist crisis entitled "Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy" - an account of capitalism in England. The Condition of the Working Class in England was published in 1845. By that time, the remarkable, life-long friendship between Marx and Engels had already been struck.

In July 1845, they undertook a six-week tour of England together in order to acquire material for their current projects; Engels contemplated a large-scale History of English Society while Marx pursued his Critique of Economics and Politics. While most of the time was spent reading relevant economic works in Manchester libraries, Engels took time to introduce Marx to prominent socialist

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1. McLellan, Karl Marx, pp. 130-31f.; Henderson and Chaloner, "Engels in Manchester", p. 15.
 2. The influence of French socialist circles upon Marx can be seen in Karl Marx, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (Paris Manuscripts), T. B. Bottomore, trans. and ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co, 1963) p. 176 (Third Ms. - "Needs, Production, and Division of Labour").

leaders, such as Julian Harney, then assistant editor of the renamed Northern Star and National Trades Journal.⁽¹⁾ One can only surmise that discussion encircled the prospects for Chartism in England; in that environment, the question of Ireland was possibly broached. It would, however, be misleading to suggest that it dominated their minds or their conversations. Certainly, aside from Engels' early attentions to the question, there is no indication that Marx was concerned, actively or otherwise, with Ireland or repeal at that time. Engels' influence on this matter would have been supreme, and most likely his position - as the man on the spot - was adopted by Marx.⁽²⁾

The defeat of the 1848 revolutions across Europe forced a re-evaluation of that political strategy. In the 1895 introduction to The Class Struggle in France, Engels admitted that Marx and himself had misconceived the economic and political climate of 1848. "History has proved us, and all those who thought like us wrong. It has made clear that the stage of economic development on the continent at that time was not, by a long way, ripe for the elimination of capitalist production. . ." Whatever about the error of judgement with regard to the continent, England was the heartland of capitalism;

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1. McLellan, Karl Marx, p. 141-42; Glasgow and Read, O'Connor, p. 65.
 2. Cf. McLellan, Karl Marx, p. 132, where, referring to Engels' knowledge of capitalism, he suggests that in the second meeting with Marx, the other "with his practical experience of capitalism, brought more to Marx than he received." The same is likely with the Irish question.

there Chartism had clearly failed to lead the workers to revolution - in Ireland, an insurrection led by the Young Irelanders in 1848 also ended in defeat.⁽¹⁾ In the 1850s, Marx and Engels awaited the "revival of militant Chartism," but after a further split in the organisation - causing strained relations with Julian Harney - this did not seem possible.⁽²⁾ In 1852, Engels wrote to Marx,

Judging by everything I see, the Chartists are in such a state of complete dissolution and collapse and at the same time experience such a shortage of capable people that they will either fall apart entirely and break up into cliques, hence must in fact become simply a tail of the financial [reformers], or some competent chap must reorganise them on an entirely new basis.⁽³⁾

In the period following the debacle of 1848, and the expiration of the Communist League in 1852, Marx and Engels turned from active politics to immerse themselves in study. Hibernating from the London political scene, overwhelmed by a myriad of emigre groups, Marx sought refuge behind his proposal for a six-volume work

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1. See Karl Marx, "The Speech on the Polish Question", February 22, 1848, MEI: 51; Frederick Engels, "Cologne is in Danger", Neue Rheinische Zeitung, No. 11, June 11, 1848, MEI: 52. See also Michael Doheny, The Felon's Track or the History of the Attempted Outbreak in Ireland, 1844-1848 (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd, 1951).
 2. See Cadogan, "Harney and Marx"; Henderson, Engels, pp. 460-1.
 3. Engels to Marx, March 18, 1852 SC: 65; See further Marx to Engels, November 24, 1857 SC: 92; Marx to Engels, January 14, 1858 SC: 93; Engels to Marx, October 7, 1858 SC: 102-3; Marx to Joseph Weydemeyer, February 1, 1859 SC: 105; Henderson, Engels, pp. 457-462.

on the capitalist mode of production.⁽¹⁾ In addition, he contributed many articles to journals and newspapers - some of which were penned by Engels although appeared under Marx's name due to the delicacy of his Manchester post.⁽²⁾ These journalistic activities forced Marx to consider events in Ireland insofar as they affected political developments elsewhere in Europe. This proviso is crucial; seen as complementing Chartism in the 1840s, there was no further consideration of the Irish question until the circumstances of the 1860s. Hence, despite, Engels' trip to Ireland with Mary Burns in 1856, and commentary by Marx in the New York Daily Tribune on post-famine developments, the Irish

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1. Marx to Engels, April 2, 1858 SC: 97. During the 1850s, Marx wrote several articles describing land clearances in Ireland, and linking them to clearances that had occurred in Scotland. Nominal support was given to the tenant rights movement of the period as any moves to strengthen the tenant's hold on his tenancy ate into the aristocracy's economic position. Its unlikely, as Norman Levine suggests, that Marx upheld the notion of a peasant revolution in Ireland because even then he was clearly aware of the limited nature of peasant political consciousness. Rather, it seems that Marx saw the tenant movement as a temporary measure aimed against large-scale land clearances. See Karl Marx, "Elections/Financial Clouds/The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery", NYDT, No. 3687, February 9, 1853; Karl Marx, "Parliamentary Debates/The Clergy and the Struggle for the Ten Hour Day", NYDT, No. 3716, March 15, 1853; Karl Marx, "Forced Emigration/Kossuth and Mazzini/The Refugee Question/Election Bribery in England/Mr. Cobden", NYDT, No. 3722, March 22, 1853; MEI: 54-58; Karl Marx, "Indian Question/Irish Tenant Right", NYDT, No. 3816, July 11, 1853, MEI: 58-65; Karl Marx, "The War Question/British Population and Trade Returns/Doings of Parliament", NYDT, No. 3854, August 24, 1853, MEI: 67-69; Karl Marx, "Attack at Sevastopol/The Clearing of the Landed Estates of Scotland", NYDT, No. 4095, June 2, 1854; Engels to Eduard Bernstein, June 26, 1882; Karl Marx, The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (New York: International Publishers, 1963) pp. 122-9. Cf. Levine, The Tragic Deception, p. 72.
 2. For a full list of all the articles written during this period, see Checklist, Appendix I.

question did not assume a life-of-its-own for either Marx or Engels in the 1850s. Indicative of this, the formation of the Fenians in 1858 went unrecorded in their correspondence. When they did turn to reconsider the Irish question through the medium of the First International, the terms of reference had altered.

In May 1856, Engels made his first trip to Ireland accompanied by Mary Burns. This trip was succeeded by another in 1869 with Eleanor Marx and Lizzie Burns, and a third in 1891 with Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling to attend the 2nd annual conference of the Gasworkers and General Labourers Union in Dublin. There is no indication that Marx ever considered the journey. Primarily, these trips served as fact-finding missions, although, as Engels travelled first with Mary and then with Lizzie, a certain amount of family visiting may have been included. It would be mere guess-work to consider the 1869 journey as involving any contact with the Fenians of which it has been claimed Lizzie was a member; certainly, by 1869, Engels was becoming increasingly disturbed by their tactics.⁽¹⁾ That trip was most likely undertaken with the view to writing a social history of Ireland, the plan of which had been drafted in March of that year.

In general, very little is known about these tours. Engels' own records are incredibly scanty; there is one (surviving) letter referring to each of his first two trips, and a footnote to the 1891 (fourth) edition of The Origin of the Family, Private Property and

1. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1867; Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867; Engels to Marx, December 17, 1867.

the State, regarding the third.⁽¹⁾ It is possible that accounts were transmitted verbally to Marx, and indeed there must have been some such communication; but as there is no evidence to suggest further correspondence on the matter, it can only be presumed that the letters contain the most impressive or immediate reactions.

It is thus learned that the itinerary was confined to the south and west of the country, concentrating on the counties of Limerick, Galway, Mayo and Kerry. He went to Dublin each time, but appears to have reached Cork only in 1869. Most significantly, the itineraries concentrated on areas of the country traditionally associated with Irish economic life, that is on the small tenant holdings of the western seaboard rather than on the larger capitalist farms of the east. Secondly, all three trips appear to have by-passed Belfast, the seat of the Irish industrial revolution. While it might be expected that the conditions of the small landholdings would have attracted Engels' attention as that was the generally assumed picture of Ireland, it is curious that the industrial hub did not draw similar interest. It would seem that these journies reinforced a very traditional view of the Irish economy.

1858 saw the formation in Ireland of the Fenians or the Irish

1. Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856; Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869; Greaves, "Marx and Engels", p. 8. Regarding Engels' 1869 trip, see Henderson, Engels, p. 687; Kapp, Eleanor, vol. 1, p. 116. None of these sources can supply any detail about the trips except that they occurred. For a discussion of the footnote in the 1891 ed. of The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, see chapter 4.

Republican Brotherhood, under James Stephens.⁽¹⁾ The Fenians, a populist and nationalist movement, sought to overthrow the English government in Dublin by declaring an Irish republic. Its ability to mobilise wide-ranging support against foreign appropriation of the land suggested to Marx and Engels that there was the potential for a Fenian-led revolution in Ireland. Acknowledgement of this possibility coincided with Marx and Engels' growing disillusionment with the English working class, who in the 1850s and 1860s lapsed into a state of political complacency, eager to enjoy the fruits of industrialisation. They found the results of the 1868 English general election equally depressing. The working class, despite the opportunities afforded by the Second Reform Act, had willingly surrendered themselves to the influence of the "bourgeois liberals."⁽²⁾

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1. John Devoy, Recollections of an Irish Rebel, intro. by Sean O'Luining (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969); Norman McCord, "The Fenians and Public Opinion in Great Britain", Irish University Review (Dublin) vol. 14 (1967) pp. 227-40; Brendan MacGiolla Choille, "Fenianism, Rice and Ribbonmen in County Monaghan, 1864-1867", Clogher Record, vol. 6, No. 2 (1967) pp. 221-52; Leon O'Broin, Revolutionary Underground: The Story of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, 1858-1924 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1976); John O'Leary, Recollections of Fenians and Fenianism, 2 vols. (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1968); Sean O'Luining, "A Contribution to a study of Fenianism in Briefne", Briefne, vol. 3, No. 10 (1967) pp. 155-74; Sean O'Luining, "The Phoenix Society in Kerry, 1858-9", Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society Journal, No. 2 (1969) pp. 5-26; Charles T. Rice, "Fenianism in Monaghan: Memoir of James Blayney Rice", Clogher Record, vol. 1, No. 4 (1956) pp. 29-84; Desmond Ryan, The Fenian Chief. A Biography of James Stephens (Dublin and Sydney: Gill and Son, 1967); Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, Michael Davitt - Revolutionary Agitator and Labour Leader (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1967); T. W. Moody, ed., The Fenian Movement, Thomas Davis Lecture Series (Cork: Mercier Press, 2nd ed, 1978); Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, Irish Rebels in English Prisons: A Record of Prison Life (New York: P. J. Kennedy and Sons, 1882).
 2. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 6, 1868.

They had, Engels noted years later, further contented themselves with a "narrow circle of strikes for low wages and shorter hours, not however, as an expedient or means of propoganda and organisation but as the ultimate goal."⁽¹⁾

With the formation of the First International in 1864, Marx emerged from his self-imposed exile to partake in the historic occurrence and to become a member of its General Council. He explained the reasons for his actions to Engels: "I knew that this time real 'powers' were involved both on the London and Paris sides and therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule to decline any such invitation. . ."⁽²⁾ He had become familiar enough with British political life during his fifteen years residence to realise that a Chartist-led social revolution was no longer conceivable. He agreed with Engels' assessment of October 1858 when the latter reported: ". . .one is really driven to believe that the English proletarian movement in its traditional Chartist form must perish completely before it can develop in a new, viable form. And yet one cannot foresee what this new form will look like."⁽³⁾ He was, therefore, encouraged by the proceedings in St.Martins Hall in September 1864, desiring to see the International Working Mens Association take on the leadership role for social change both in England and on the continent.⁽⁴⁾

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1. Engels to Eduard Bernstein (draft), June 17, 1879, SC: 300.
 2. Marx to Engels, November 4, 1864, SC: 137.
 3. Engels to Marx, October 7, 1858, SC: 102 .
 4. See Riazanov, Marx and Engels, p. 201.

Although having ignored or been unaware (the latter is probably the most likely) of the Fenians' formation in 1858, both Marx and Engels were conscious of their actions by 1866. On January 2nd of that year, the General Council of the International read an appeal from Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa, wife of the imprisoned Fenian, Jeremiah. The appeal requested funds to support the families of imprisoned Fenians, and to raise the alarm on the treatment of these Fenian prisoners.⁽¹⁾ Twelve months later, a further connection between the Fenians and the International was verified by Marx when he wrote Engels noting the "ambivalent" membership of the Fenian head-centre, James Stephens, into the New York section of the IWMA.⁽²⁾ It is doubtful that Marx knew that Stephens had been deposed as Fenian chief by the American Fenians two days earlier; that action was endorsed shortly thereafter by the Irish members, thus, severing the connection and "what little importance it might have possessed."⁽³⁾ At that time, neither the Fenians nor the Irish question had been debated either in the Marx/Engels correspondence or in the General Council.⁽⁴⁾

There was no noticeable change in Marx and Engels' attitude towards the Irish question from the position adopted earlier by Engels. Independence for Ireland was crucial, but its attainment

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1. GC, January 2, 1866, Doc. 1:151.
 2. Marx to Engels, December 17, 1866.
 3. Boyle, "Ireland", p. 46.
 4. References had, as has been illustrated, been made in the General Council to the question of Fenian prisoners, but the first scheduled debate on the issue was not held until November 1867. See section iii below.

continued to be linked to the English workers movement. Marx's letter of November 30, 1867, still stressed the demands that the English workers should make on behalf of Ireland.

In my opinion they [the English workers] must make the repeal of the Union (in short, the affair of 1783, but in a more democratic form and adopted to the conditions of the present time) an article of their pronunziamento. This is the only legal and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be embodied in the programme of an English party. Experience must show later whether the merely personal union can continue to subsist between the two countries. I think it can if it takes place in time. (1)

The only significant alteration recognisable here was on the question of small independent nations. In the 1840s, Marx had cautiously resisted any suggestions or moves towards the creation of small nations, especially where the newly formed nation was economically backward. He would have regarded repeal as permitting a federal solution rather than absolute independence, possibly "because of the small size and economic backwardness of Ireland and the great advantage of its association with the greatest industrial economy of the time."⁽²⁾ This position was clear not only with regard to Ireland but also for Poland. Speaking to the question, he had said in a speech in 1847 that "No small country so backward economically as Poland can free itself by its own efforts. Its freedom depends on the emancipation

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1. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.
 2. Solomon Bloom, The World of Nations: A Study of the National Implications on the work of Karl Marx (New York: AMS Press, Inc, 1967) p. 38. See also chapter 5.

of the civilised countries. . . .That land is England, and therefore the emancipation of the Poles will be achieved not in their own country, but in England."⁽¹⁾ By 1867, still considering the English working class as creating the ground for socialism in Ireland, he had come to accept that separation would need to predate federalism. Under that regime, the newly-independent Ireland should, he advised, erect tariff barriers in order to stimulate her industry.⁽²⁾

1867 brought the Fenians to greater prominence. In March of that year their attempted "rising" ended in failure; in September, there was the dramatic rescue of Fenian prisoners while under escort by Manchester police. Simultaneously, a campaign was begun to publicise the treatment of Fenians in English prisons. A call was issued for amnesty to be granted. Finally, in December, Clerkenwell Prison, London, was the target of a Fenian bomb attack because it housed members of the organisation. Although strongly critical of these tactics, Marx and Engels came to believe that a Fenian-led revolution in Ireland could produce a catapultic effect on England.⁽³⁾

By the late 1860s, Marx came to seriously consider "an indirect approach to the overthrow of bourgeois society along three lines. . . : colonial revolution, Russia and the United States."⁽⁴⁾

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1. Karl Marx, "[On Poland]", Speech at the International Meeting held in London on November 29, 1847 to mark the 17th anniversary of the Polish Uprising of 1830", CW 6:389; Bloom, World of Nations, p.108.
 2. Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867; Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867. Cf. Lawrence McCaffrey, "Irish Federalism in the 1870s: A Study in Conservative Nationalism", Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, new series, vol. 52, pt. 6 (1962).
 3. See Henderson, Engels, pp. 461-2.
 4. E. J. Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital, 1848-75 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975) p. 201.

What was involved was a thorough re-evaluation of his and Engels' political strategy. England, as the "metropolis of capital", was the heart of any social revolution. Yet, "aside from Ireland, there was neither a national problem nor a peasant problem to confuse the class line-up."⁽¹⁾ By adopting Engels' earlier youthful acknowledgement of Irish revolutionary zeal to the 1860s, the Irish question - which "between 1865 and 1869 grew steadily in prominence as a subject of political debate"⁽²⁾ - could provide the missing stimulant. Marx explained: "For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime [that is, the English aristocracy] by English working class ascendancy. . . Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite."⁽³⁾ Engels, dismayed by recent actions of English workers concurred. Gustav Mayer, his biographer, feels that "Since the extension of the suffrage [by the Second Reform Act, 1867] did not move the English workers to independent action, the Irish question gained a new significance for him; and Marx's hypothesis seemed more and more attractive. . ."⁽⁴⁾

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1. George Lichtheim, Marxism, An Historical and Critical Study (New York: Praeger Publishers, 2nd ed. 1965) p. 101.
 2. William Dunning, "Irish Land Legislation Since 1845", Political Science Quarterly, vol. 7, No. 1-3 (1892) p. 71.
 3. Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869.
 4. Mayer, Engels, p. 192; see Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 6, 1868.

The paradigm in which Marx and Engels worked was as follows:⁽¹⁾

As long as Ireland remained a safe-haven and breeding ground for the English aristocracy, the latter would continue to be able to influence and direct British politics. While it fattened upon Irish land it prolonged its unnatural and ahistoric life, and hence clouded the ultimate class struggle, that of bourgeoisie and proletariat. Marx explained to Mayer and Vogt:

Ireland is the bulwark of the English landed aristocracy. The exploitation of that country is not only one of the main sources of their material wealth; it is their greatest moral strength. They, in fact, represent the domination of England over Ireland. Ireland is therefore the cardinal means by which the English aristocracy maintain their domination in England itself." (2)

Similarly he wrote to Kugelmann: "The prime condition of emancipation here - the overthrow of the English oligarchy - remains impossible because its position here cannot be stormed so long as it maintains its strongly entrenched out-posts in Ireland."⁽³⁾

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1. Levine, Tragic Deception, p. 66. Levine makes the following observation regarding the importance of the Irish question: "The paradigm with which Marx interpreted events in Ireland was the same paradigm he used to interpret events in Germany, Russia, Austria, Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. As the English landed aristocracy fattened upon the land of Ireland, the German and Russian aristocracy fattened upon Polish land, the Austrian on Slavic land, and the Ottoman also on Slavic land. As in Ireland, nationalism in Poland and the Balkans was an antiaristocratic, anti-imperial weapon. The weakening of conservative forces, be they landed aristocrats or industrial capitalists, was, according to Marx, a progressive as well as a revolutionary advance."
 2. Marx to Sigfrid Mayer and August Vogt, April 9, 1870.
 3. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, November 29, 1869; see also Marx to Kugelmann, October 11, 1867; Piveronus, "Engles and Marx" p. 100. Cf. Engels, "The Position of England, The British Constitution", September 28, 1844, Vorwärts!, No. 78.

Since the Great Famine of 1846-1849 a policy of replacing Irishmen with sheep and cattle had led to mass emigration from the country.⁽¹⁾ While land clearances were necessary for consolidation of the holdings and, hence, preceded capitalist production, they were discriminately and maliciously implemented without due consideration given to the Irish population. Thrown off the land, they emigrated to England where they performed unskilled labour. Their willingness to work for and under minimum conditions - a point Engels had stressed in The Condition of the Working Class in England - showed no hint of a working class consciousness; instead, their attitude directly benefited the bourgeoisie who prospered from the massive increase in the reserve army of labour. The English working class was effectively divided into two national camps.⁽²⁾

On the one hand, Ireland had been transformed from a colonial (territorial) acquisition into a food-producing region of England. On the other, its status had not changed. Ireland continued to be an essential component of accumulation; under merchant capital, it had been a haven for rewarding soldiers and newly-created nobles with territory and a good income from rent. As primitive accumulation gave way to capitalist accumulation, Ireland shipped out not only money but also labour and foodstuffs, thereby aiding industrial expansion. As

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1. Karl Marx, "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland", November 26, 1867, MEI: 120-5; Karl Marx, "Outline of a Report on the Irish Question to the Communist Educational Association of German Workers in London", December 16, 1867, MEI: 126-39.
 2. Marx to Mayer and Vogt, April 9, 1870; Karl Marx, "Confidential Communication", issued by the General Council, IWMA, January 1, 1870, MEI: 160-63. Cf. Engels, Condition, p. 107.

a region of England, it performed its role well. England had become "the 'workshop of the world'; all other countries were to become for England what Ireland already was - markets for her manufactured goods, supplying her in return with raw materials and food."⁽¹⁾

The integration of the two economies - one agricultural and the other industrial - was a natural development given geological and economic factors; the transference between the two sectors of any economy was basic to capitalism. The rub came in that as long as this situation continued, the flood of Irish into the ranks of the English proletariat would stymie the drive towards socialism. In Ireland, the aristocracy had proven itself to be adaptable. While various post-famine measures, such as the Encumbered Estates Courts, had eradicated the laziest and most reactionary of the aristocracy, the majority continued to own the land, now renting to capitalist farmers rather than rack-rented peasants.⁽²⁾

The answer to this phenomenon was to be found only in repeal of the union; if, as was witnessed, it could not be achieved by "English working class ascendancy," then a Fenian victory was a probable alternative. Fighting for national independence had the dual advantage of attacking the English aristocracy at its source. This was its Achilles Heel. ". . .the abolition of the landed aristocracy. . . will be infinitely easier. . .in Ireland [because] it is not merely a simple economic question but at the same time a national question, since the landlords there are not, like those in England, the traditional dignitaries and representatives of the nation, but its morally hated

1. Frederick Engels, "Preface to the English edition of The Condition of the Working Class in England", 1892, Condition, p.366.

2. For a fuller discussion of this point, see chapter 2.

oppressors."⁽¹⁾

Independent Ireland would then be able to effect an agrarian revolution which "with the best intentions of the world the English cannot accomplish. . .for them. . . [and to introduce] protective tariffs against England."⁽²⁾ Referring to Engels' early pronouncements on the inefficiency of Irish landholdings and the method of production, Marx agreed that land restructure remained a task for the Irish themselves. The removal of the English landowner would immediately reveal the necessity of that process; it would, furthermore, remove any lingering doubt that the real cause of the Irish problem came from across the Irish sea.⁽³⁾ Finally, the implementation of tariffs would help counter the devastation incurred to Irish manufacturing since the Act of Union, thus, providing stimulation to spark an industrial revolution.⁽⁴⁾

More importantly, the attainment of repeal - used synonymously with independence - would have a cataclysmic effect upon capitalist expansion in England. Deprived of a vital source of labour and capital, as well as a market for its manufactures, English capitalism would flounder. On the other hand, the English working class, no longer divided would unite to "expropriate the expropriators." This was perhaps an

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1. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, November 29, 1867; see also Marx to Kugelmann, October 11, 1867.
 2. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.
 3. Engels, Condition, p. 307-10; see also Piveronus, "Engles and Marx", p. 100.
 4. See Marx, "Outline of a Report", MEI: 130-3. Rose, Manchester Martyrs, implies that Marx felt Engels, "who was in touch with leading Fenians", could directly influence their political objectives. (p. 77.)

overly mechanistic as well as optimistic vision of the political and economic ramifications of repeal but not unreasonable given Marx and Engels' reading of the situation.

In essence, Marx argued that, in line with the requirements of industrial capitalism, Ireland, since 1846, was being transformed from the domicile of the rent-collecting English aristocracy into the essential supplier of the bourgeoisie. The Irish experience showed that colonies under capitalism were vital for accumulation; in addition, as he explained in volume three of Capital, this relationship helped to counteract the tendency for the rate of profit to fall.⁽¹⁾ Hence, maintenance of the England-Ireland link was essential for capitalist expansion in the former. To break that link, as the Chartists and the Fenians advocated, would severely cripple "the metropolis of capital " and bring closer a European social revolution. "To accelerate the social revolution in Europe, you must push on the catastrophe of official England. To do so you must attack her in Ireland. That's her weakest point."⁽²⁾

The significance of the Irish question, Engels announced to Kautsky, was precisely its international impact. The Irish were, because of this salient feature, duty-bound to pursue their nationalist goal first; to do so was ultimately in the interest of international socialism.⁽³⁾

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1. Karl Marx, Capital, edited by Frederick Engels, trans. by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, vol. 3, chapter 14 (New York: International Publishers, 1967).
 2. Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue, March 5, 1870.
 3. Engels to Karl Kautsky, February 7, 1882.

It was, thus , "in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland."⁽¹⁾ Until it does this, "the English people will remain tied to the leading strings of the ruling classes, because it will have to join with them in a common front against Ireland. Everyone of its movements in England itself is crippled by the strife with the Irish, who forms a very important section of the working class in England."⁽²⁾ Above-all, the Irish question was a "specific English question."⁽³⁾

The role and leadership of the International Working Mens Association was absolutely crucial. The deep animosity existing between

1. Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869; See also Marx to Meyer and Vogt, April 9, 1870.
2. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, November 29, 1869. In 1888, asked about the attitude of the "English workers towards the Irish movement," Engels replied that "The masses are for the Irish. The organisation, and the labour aristocracy in general follow Gladstone and the liberal bourgeoisie and do not go further than these." This remark predated the resignation of the Curriers Society from the IWMA over the latter's support for the Irish struggle, in particular the Council's resolution of November 1869 in which it called upon the Home Secretary to release Fenian prisoners. The letter from the Curriers, received at the GC meeting of May 31, 1870, said that "the Society felt bound to sever its connection, not having any faith in working men's societies that meddled with politics." Doc. 3:248. A letter of protest preceded this action: see GC minutes, December 14, 1869, Doc. 3:195; Marx to Engels, December 17, 1869. A well-informed history of the International, "presumably by Eccarius," cites three trade unions which left the organisation over the Fenian issue: the Amalgamated Cordwainers, the Birmingham Home Painters, and the Curriers. See the Times, October 27, 1871. However, Henry Collins in "The English Branches of the First International", in Asa Briggs and John Saville, eds., Essays in Labour History, vol. 1 (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1960) p. 250, states that of the above three unions, the first two resigned because of the International's position on the Commune (being mostly Marx's Civil War in France), and only the Curriers resigned over support of the Fenians.
3. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 124; see also George Eccarius, "Record of a Speech on the Irish Question delivered by Karl Marx to the German Workers' Educational Association in London on December 16, 1867", MEI: 142.

Irish and English workers "was rooted in differences of language and religion, and in the competition which Irish workers created in the labour market." This antagonism was "skillfully exploited" Marx argued in a speech to the London conference of the International, "by the government and the upper classes who are convinced that no bonds are capable of uniting the English workers with the Irish. It is true that no union would be possible in the sphere of politics, but this is not the case in the economic sphere. . ." Both national groups were workers, and as such, reflecting back to the famous line from The Communist Manifesto, must unite and "advance simultaneously towards the same goal." The formation of Irish sections of the International, in England and in Ireland, was necessitated by this fact.⁽¹⁾

The Irish question as spelled out above received the attention of Marx and Engels as well as the General Council of the First International between 1867 and 1869. Its debates coincided with a heightening awareness of the Irish question by all political sections; Gladstone was sufficiently moved by the increasing urgency of the situation in Ireland to comment in 1868, "My mission is to pacify Ireland." However, by the time the Paris Commune moved to centre stage, the immediacy of the Irish question, occasioned by the Fenians, had dissipated.

In the aftermath of the removal of the International to New York in 1873, Marx resumed work on his economic studies, preparing a second edition of the first volume of Capital, and filling notebooks with material

1. Karl Marx, "Position of the International Working Mens Association in Germany and England", from the speech of September 22, 1871, at the London Conference, MEI: 301. See next section for the debate on the British Federal Council. The Manifesto, 1848, concludes: "Working Men of all Countries, Unite!"

that would later become volumes two and three.⁽¹⁾ Engels published Anti-Dühring in 1878, and The Dialectics of Nature two years later.

Politically, Marx and Engels shifted their attention to Germany which alone held out the promise of a proletarian party. In 1875, Marx issued the famed Critique of the Gotha Programme criticising certain tendencies adopted by the emerging German Social Democratic Party. In general, during the 1870s and 1880s, Marx and Engels focused on and aided the formation of socialist parties on the continent of Europe and in America. The Irish question barely surfaced in their correspondence except for the years just prior to Marx's death.

By then, continually dismayed by the narrowing trade-unionist interests of the English working class,⁽²⁾ and what Engels described as the increasingly "Bakuninist" actions of the Fenians⁽³⁾ they came

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1. McLellan, Karl Marx, p. 419.
 2. Engels to Eduard Bernstein, June 17, 1879 SC: 300-1; Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, November 10, 1894.
 3. Engels to Eduard Bernstein, June 26, 1882; Frederick Engels, "The Irish Struggle", July 13, 1882, Der Socialdemokrat. On May 6, 1882, Thomas Henry Burke, former Under-Secretary for Ireland, and Lord Cavendish, the newly-appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, were assassinated as they strolled through the Phoenix Park in Dublin. The Invincibles, a secret society which included former Fenians, were responsible. The action provoked Engels to respond in the following manner to Bernstein in his letter of June 26: "Therefore all that is left to Ireland is the constitutional way of gradually conquering one position after the other; and here the mysterious background of a Fenian armed conspiracy can remain a very effective element. But these Fenians are themselves increasingly being pushed into a sort of Bakuninism: The assassination of Burke and Cavendish could only serve the purpose making a compromise between the Land League and Gladstone impossible. . . . Thus the 'heroic deed' in the Phoenix Park appears if not as pure stupidity, then at least as pure Bakuninist, bragging, purposeless, 'propaganda par le fait'. If it has not the same consequences as the similar silly actions of Hodel and Nobiling, it is only because Ireland lies not quite in Prussia. It should therefore be left to the Bakuninists and Mostians to attach equal importance to this childishness and to the assassination of Alexander II, and to threaten with an 'Irish Revolution' which never comes". (In 1878, Max Hodling and Karl Nobiling attempted to assassinate Kaiser Wilhelm I; an act which led to the institution of the

to consider that the parliamentary campaign for Home Rule could yield tremendous pressure on the British class structure.⁽¹⁾ Returning to their basic premise of the importance of the Irish question for England, they argued that Parnell and his party - the bourgeois nationalists - could perform a revolutionary role.⁽²⁾ By playing the government at its own game, through the ballot-box, Parnell could find himself "wield [ing] dictatorial powers in Great Britain and Ireland."⁽³⁾ The 1885 elections illustrated how successful this tactic could be. Engels explained to Becker:

The elections here have temporarily made the Irish masters of England and Scotland, for not one of the two parties can rule without them. . . Thus the Irish problem will at last be settled, if not immediately then in the near future, and then the way will have been cleared [in Ireland] , too. (4)

Prussian Anti-Socialist Laws. On March 13, 1881, Tsar Alexander II was assassinated by members of the People's Will, a secret society in Russia; Lenin's brother, Alexander Ulyanov, was killed for his part in the assassination.)

1. Frederick Engels, "The English Elections", March 4, 1874, Der Volksstaat, No. 26, MEI: 311. "When the Fenian (Irish-republican) Rebellion of 1867 had been quelled and the military leaders of the Fenians had either gradually been caught or driven to emigrate to America, the remnants of the Fenian conspiracy soon lost all importance. Violent insurrection had no prospect of success for many years, at least until such time as England would again be involved in serious difficulties abroad. Hence a legal movement remained the only possibility, and such a movement was undertaken under the banner of the Home Rulers, who wanted the Irish to be 'masters in their own home.'"
2. See Hal Draper, "Marx and the Dictatorship of the Proletarian", Études de Marxologie (Cahiers de l'Institut de Science Economique Appliquée), series S, No. 6, pp. 26-7.
3. Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht, December 1, 1885.
4. Engels to Johann Philipp Becker, December 5, 1885.

The question was still outstanding five years later, but Engels was not deterred in his thinking. Care exerted in voting, he contended, could, as Parnell had proven, pressurise the government. "Parnell's decision of 1886 that the Irish in England should all vote against the Liberals, for the Tories, that is, for the first time since 1800 stop being a herd voting for the Liberals, transformed Gladstone and the Liberal chiefs into Home Rulers in a matter of six weeks."⁽¹⁾

The benefits of such parliamentary agitations were not one-sided; in addition to bringing about Home Rule, which approximated Marx's preference for a federal solution, it could incur permanent damage on the alignment of political parties in England. The present array of parties, being the Tories and the Whigs/Liberals simply clouded the class divisions. Under the name of the Liberal party were such non-relations as Whigs and trade-unionists. It was, therefore, imperative that this confusion be eliminated. By exerting continual pressure on Gladstone and Parliament for Home Rule, to which the government retaliated by introducing Coercion Acts, Engels felt that the present unholy alliance within the Liberals could be severely shaken. Disintegration would then follow. He anticipated that scenario in correspondence with Bernstein:

In the meantime, the Irish have forced Gladstone to introduce continental regulations in Parliament and thereby to undermine the whole British parliamentary system. They have also forced Gladstone to disavow all his phrases and to become more Tory than even the worst Tories. The coercion bills have been passed, and the Land Bill will either be rejected or castrated

1. Engels to August Bebel, January 23, 1890; Cf. attitude to Kier Hardie, Engels to August Bebel, January 24, 1893.

by the House of Lords, and then the fun will start, that is the concealed disintegration of the parties will become public."(1)

The result, he hoped, would be the formation of a landowners' party from the rubble of the Tories and moderate Whigs which would face a new bourgeois radical party. A distinct proletarian party would, given the obvious class-bias of these parties, then emerge to agitate for and represent the interests of the working class. It would stand clearly opposed to the other two parties. In this manner, the class contradictions would become obvious and visible.(2)

After the death of Marx in 1883, the Irish question continued to hold, for Engels, the key to accelerating the social revolution in England. The specific circumstances had altered, but the fundamental dialectic remained. Any factors that hindered the development of a strong, united and class-conscious working class in England had to be eliminated. Failure to arrive at a solution to the Irish question - that is some form of separation from England - ensured, he wrote to Sorge, that it would remain an "obstacle" in the path of socialism.(3)

The activities of Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling during the 1880s might have encouraged Engels in his hope for the establishment of a proletarian party in England. W. O. Henderson writes that "a campaign in the East End of London, mounted by Aveling and Eleanor Marx in the spring of 1887 - in which the demands for a worker's party were linked

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1. Engels to Eduard Bernstein, March 12, 1881; Engels, "The English Elections," MEI: 311-312.
 2. See Engels to Eduard Bernstein, April 14, 1881.
 3. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, December 7, 1889.

with the demands for Irish home rule - suggested Engels' dream might come true."⁽¹⁾ Although they did not succeed in creating such a party, the Avelings did become involved in the trade union movement; Eleanor became undisclosed leader of the National Gasworkers and General Labourers Union, with a branch in Dublin by 1891. Engels noted that the growing strength of the gas workers gave to them the "credit for giving the impetus to the labour movement in Ireland," to whom, in the final days, Parnell owed his political survival.⁽²⁾ It was most probably in the light of this development that he travelled with the Avelings to Dublin in May 1891 to attend the Union's second annual Conference.⁽³⁾

1. Henderson, Engels, p. 691
2. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, February 11, 1891.
3. On the Gasworkers, see Dermot Keogh, "The New Unionism and Ireland", Capuchin Annual (1975) pp. 64-70. The conference of the Gasworkers and General Workers Union was held in Dublin from the 18th to the 21st of May, 1891. The opening of the conference was preceded by a labour meeting in Phoenix Park, at which both Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling spoke; their comments were recorded in The Freeman's Journal of May 18, 1891. Eleanor Marx who was a member of the Union's executive, prefaced her remarks with references to her attendance at a demonstration in Hyde Park, when she was a little girl, in defense of Fenian prisoners. She went on to claim that Jenny's articles in La Marseillaise were responsible for the setting up of the Parliamentary inquiry which resulted in the Fenian's release. Finally, she urged that the ultimate question was that of socialism; it didn't matter who governed, she argued, rather workers in Ireland and England must unite. Edward Aveling, who stated that he had originally come from Ireland, also urged Irish workers to become Internationalists as well as nationalists. See further reports in The Freeman's Journal of May 19, 20, 21, 1891. Police reports also note Dr. Aveling's attendance; see Crime Branch Special Report, 5513/s, minutes of 22/7/92, and 26/7/92, and Chief Secretary's Office Registered Papers (CSORP)/1891/14248, in the Public Record Office of Ireland. Aveling also attended a labour meeting in March 1890, which was reported in The Freeman's Journal of March 31, 1891; see also the Freeman's Journal, April 8, 1890. I am grateful to Brendan McDonnell for bringing the above information to my attention.

In the year before Engels' death in 1895, the Irish Trade Union Congress was founded at a meeting in Dublin.⁽¹⁾ Although Irish trade unions had played a significant role throughout the century - particularly notable was its hostile reaction to Daniel O'Connell,⁽²⁾ and its participation in the International⁽³⁾ - they were absent from either Marx or Engels' commentaries. Only with the involvement of Eleanor Marx with the Gasworkers was there any mention of an Irish labour movement; Engels' lone remark in 1892 that the workers would prove too powerful a force to be ignored in the campaign for Home Rule is at best an omen.⁽⁴⁾ His omission is indicative of his and Marx's general ignorance of the industrial aspect of the Irish economy.

It would be premature to suggest that by the time of his death, Engels was shifting his position; that would have been likely had he continued to live and take cognisance of changing Irish conditions. For the most part, the Irish question for him as well as for Marx remained agrarian-based. In an interview in 1888, he replied that socialism was not immediately over the horizon; at the moment, Irish tenants desired only to own land. After that, he predicted, mortgage and debt would eventually eliminate the petit bourgeoisie⁽⁵⁾. Home Rule

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1. Charles McCarthy, Trade Unions in Ireland, 1894-1960 (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1977); Boyd, Irish Trade Unions; Arthur Mitchell, Labour in Irish Politics, 1890-1930 (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1974); W. P. Ryan, The Irish Labour Movement (Dublin: Talbot Press Ltd, [1919]).
 2. O'Faolain, King; D'Arcy, "Artisans of Dublin"; R. O'Higgins, "Irish Trade Unions"; Patrick Holohan, "Daniel O'Connell"; Boyd, Irish Trade Unions pp. 41-47.
 3. See the next section.
 4. Engels to August Bebel, July 7, 1892.
 5. "Interview with Engels", September 20, 1888, New Yorker Volkszeitung, MEI: 343. An editorial appearing in the Pall Mall Gazette,

appeared to be the main goal; it would encourage capitalist growth within Ireland with the resulting political and economic phenomena.

3. Fenianism and the First International

The issue of Ireland was first discussed by the International's General Council at its meeting of January 2, 1866. Peter Fox, a journalist, read an appeal by Mrs. Mary O'Donovan Rossa and Mrs. Clark Luby to the women of Ireland which had been printed in the Cork Daily Herald. The letter requested "funds for the families of the state prisoners now or lately in Ireland [as well as noting] . . . evidence from the Dublin Irishman that collections were being made for this purpose in the manufacturing towns of the north of England." In response, Fox urged the Council to forward the appeal to the Workman's Advocate. The motion, seconded by John Weston, was passed

September 20, 1869, following the Basle congress of the IWMA, remarked on the significance of the land question debate: "In a perceptive anticipation of Gladstonian policy, the article noted that the Irish were potentially revolutionary, but that 'supposing some settlement of the land question can be arrived at. . .there will be a counter-acting influence at work which may convert Ireland into the firmest bulwark conceivable against the spread of revolutionary propoganda." The Gazette based its statement on the Basle Conf. of 1869 which overwhelmingly passed a resolution favouring land nationalisation; land "should be cultivated on a large scale by machinery and the application of science for the benefit of the whole community." Quoted in Henry Collins and Chimen Abramsky, Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement: Years of the First International (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd, 1965) p. 164. See also "Resolutions of the Third Congress of the IWMA", Brussels, September 1869, section entitled "Property in Land, Mines, Railroads, etc". Doc. 3:295-296; Karl Marx at the GC meeting of July 6, 1869, Doc. 3:120-121.

unanimously.⁽¹⁾ Two weeks later, Marx noted that Fox had received a letter from Mary O'Donovan Rossa "thanking him for his articles on Fenianism in the Workman's Advocate and the reprint in the same paper of the ladies appeal for the support of the convicted Fenians."⁽²⁾

The following month, Fox again introduced the question of Fenian prisoners at the General Council meeting. Noting a recent letter by the M. P., John Pope-Hennessey, in the Pall Mall Gazette, Fox proposed a resolution be sent to the Secretary of State, Sir George Grey, requesting "him to mitigate the treatment now inflicted on the Irish state prisoners in Pentonville prison."⁽³⁾ The request was refused.

Despite these two events,⁽⁴⁾ the Irish question did not gain a meaningful hearing in the General Council until November 1867, nearly two years later. Nevertheless, this should not imply that the International was unaware of the issue. Edward Beesley referred in his remarks at the founding conference of the International in 1864 to British policy in Ireland.⁽⁵⁾ Likewise, Karl Marx in the Inaugural

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1. GC Meeting, January 2, 1866, Doc. 1:151; For information regarding the Ladies Committee, see Devoy, Recollections, p. 113.
 2. Doc. 1:159; also Marx to Engels, February 13, 1866.
 3. Doc. 1:166-67; also Doc. 1:327f.
 4. Two other instances deserve slight mention: On May 8, 1866, the attention of the GC was drawn to a proposed excursion to Ireland of 300 persons taking place in July or August of that year; on July 17, 1866, Fox commented on the condition of Irish prisoners and read a letter from Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa. Doc. 1:190-191 and 211-212, respectively.
 5. Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement p. 35; see also Royden Harrison, "Edward Beesley and Karl Marx", International Review of Social History, vol. 4 (1959) pp. 22-58, 208-238; Boyle, "Ireland", p. 45.

Address to the International noted several times how capitalist development in England affected Ireland,⁽¹⁾ a theme to which he returned again and again. Renewed interest in Ireland and more specifically the Fenians arose from the excitement generated in the Autumn of 1867 around the Manchester trial of three Fenians accused of involvement in an escape attempt, and the imprisonment of others, including Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, who, as one of the Fenian's most "energetic organisers", had been sentenced to penal servitude for life in 1865.

The Fenians or the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), founded in 1858 by James Stephens, was a populist secret society desiring to attain national independence for Ireland by overthrowing the English.⁽²⁾ Given the existent political void among the English working class in the 1860s, Marx appreciatively regarded Fenianism as a "socialist, lower-class [non-Catholic] movement" with no representation in Parliament, but with the strength and capability to operate simultaneously in America, England and Ireland.⁽³⁾ That its attention was directed towards the eradication of the English landlord - and hence foreign "appropriation of the soil" - contributed to Fenianism's attraction for Marx and Engels. In this regard alone, Fenianism displayed

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1. Doc. 1:277, 279.
 2. Stephens' organising tour around Ireland took place the same year as Engels' first trip to Ireland, 1856.
 3. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 124; also Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.

"socialistic tendencies."⁽¹⁾ Otherwise, taking its place alongside peasant-agrarian resistance and liberal-bourgeois constitutionalism,⁽²⁾ Fenians were petit-bourgeois nationalists capable of donning a revolutionary role under the immediate circumstances of the 1860s. Finally, and most significantly, the Fenians were a movement rooted "only in the mass of the people, the lower orders. That is what characterises it. In all earlier Irish movements the people followed the aristocracy or middle class men [- O'Connell's Repeal movement would have been a case in point] - and always the Catholic Churchmen."⁽³⁾

For this reason Marx attempted to steer the International and the English working class to support Fenianism. It was on his instigation that Edmond Beales, president of the Reform League, came under heavy attack by the General Council for criticising the Fenians.⁽⁴⁾ Especially vehement in their remarks were George Odger, Benjamin Lucraft

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1. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867; but cf. Marx, "Notes", MEI:124. Otherwise, Fenianism "was simply nationalistic; it had no specific social programme for the Irish republic of its dreams." T. W. Moody, "The Fenian Movement in Irish History", in Moody, ed. The Fenian Movement, p.107. Indeed, Ryan in The Irish Labour Movement says that "Fenianism. . .turned several of the studier Irish elements from immediate social issues. . ." (p.131).
 2. Engels to Eduard Bernstein, June 26, 1882.
 3. Marx, "Outline", MEI: 126; see also Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869; Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869; Engels to Marx, December 9, 1869; Marx to Engels, December 4, 1869; Marx to Engels, November 12, 1869; Marx to Jenny Longuet, December 7, 1881; Engels to Eduard Bernstein, June 26, 1882.
 4. Royden Harrison, "The Reform League", Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics, 1861-81, Studies in Political History series, ed. Michael Hurst (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965).

and John Weston, who sat on both the General Council and the Council of the League. "You will see what a scandal 'ours' have created in the Reform League. I have tried hard to provoke this demonstration by English workers on behalf of Fenianism," Marx wrote of the League's meeting on October 23, 1867.⁽¹⁾ In reply Beales stated that while he had no objection to violence, "in the particular case of Ireland, he thought other methods should be tried first."⁽²⁾ Despite Beales' unwelcome intervention, Marx was able to report that "the London proletariat declare every day more openly for the Fenians, and hence - an unheard-of and splendid thing here - for first, a violent and, secondly, an anti-English movement. . ."⁽³⁾

Glad of the opportunity to debate the Fenian issue in an atmosphere devoid of emotionalism, Marx was likely enthusiastic with Hermann Jung's proposal at the General Council meeting of November 12 that such a discussion take place the following Tuesday. The debate scheduled for November 19 was opened by Jung, who, in reference to Beales' position, stated: "I am no abettor of physical force movement, but the Irish have no other means to make an impression. . . I may not agree with the particular way in which the Irish manifest their resistance, but they deserve to be free." Lucraft countered stating that the "question was not whether the Irish were justified in using physical force, but whether they could do any good by it.

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1. Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867; see also Marx to Engels, November 7, 1867.
 2. Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement p. 132. See The Beehive, No. 315, October 26, 1867, and No. 316, November 2, 1867.
 3. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, November 8 and 20, 1867; see further Marx to Engels, November 7, 1867. A mass meeting of 20,000 was held at Clerkenwell Green, London, across from the prison on the issue of amnesty. The meeting was addressed by John Weston, James Finlen, and Charles Bradlaugh. See The Beehive, November 23, 1867; Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement p. 134.

He thought they could not." Then, Eugene Dupont followed by adding that the aims of the Fenians were commensurate with those of the International; in that case, the General Council "would be wanting in its duty if it remained indifferent to the Irish cause. . . .The English working men who blame the Fenians commit more than a fault, for the cause of both peoples is the same; they have the same enemy to defeat - the territorial aristocracy and the capitalists." The meeting concluded after Lucraft proposed that the standing committee and the chairman of the meeting, that being Weston, draw up a "memorial to the Home Secretary concerning the Fenian prisoners under sentence of death at Manchester and to present it to a special meeting of the council."⁽¹⁾

Marx was present at the special meeting of November 20th as he had been the previous day, although on this occasion he clearly took a more prominent role. The resulting document, "Memorial of the General Council of the Irish Working Mens Association to Right Honourable Gathorne-Hardy, Secretary of State," was drafted by Marx. Signed on behalf of "working men's associations in all parts of Europe," the Memorial drew attention to the profound effects the execution of the Fenians would have upon England's standing among nations. Even if the government had not made a deal with one of the accused, Murphy, - granting him a free pardon in exchange for his testimony - by which act the verdict was "tainted", the British government would have to choose whether it would respond with bloodshed or humanity. "The

1. Doc. 2:174-9.

commutation of the sentence for which we pray will be an act not only of justice, but of political wisdom."⁽¹⁾

On November 23, 1867, Larkin, O'Brien and Allen were executed. Engels' account of the significance of the incident bears repeating at length for he managed to isolate, for Marx's attention, the emotional fountainhead of Fenianism as well as other nationalist movements.⁽²⁾ Writing on November 24, he said

So yesterday morning the Tories, by the hand of Colcroft accomplished the final act of separation between England and Ireland. The only thing that the Fenians still lacked was martyrs. They have been provided with these by Derby and G.Hardy. Only the execution of the three has made the liberation of Kelly and Deasy the heroic deed which it will now be sung to every Irish babe in the cradle in Ireland, England and America. The Irish women will do that just as well as the Polish women.

To my knowledge, the only time that anybody has been executed for a similar matter in a civilised country was the case of John Brown at Harpers Ferry. The Fenians could not have wished for a better precedent. The Southerners had at least the decency to treat J. Brown as a rebel, whereas here everything is being done to transform a political attempt into a common cause.⁽³⁾

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1. Doc. 2:179-80. See also Engels' report to Marx on the trial, November 5, 1867 where he made reference to the perjured testimony of the prosecution witnesses.
 2. Cf. Patrick Galvin, Irish Songs of Resistance (London and New York: Oak Publications, 1962) and C. Desmond Greaves, The Easter Rising in Song and Ballad (London: Kahn and Averill, 1980).
 3. Engels to Marx, November 24, 1867.

When the General Council debate resumed on November 26, Marx was strikingly silent, as he had been on the 19th. He had planned, on this second occasion, to present a well-developed talk on the Irish question, which sought to place support for the Fenians within an economic context, but the executions altered the climate.⁽¹⁾ Feeling that a much stronger, and emotionally-laden contribution given by an Englishman would be more appropriate, Marx relinquished his speaking time to Peter Fox, who through correspondence he had persuaded to attend.⁽²⁾ "Fox's speech," Marx wrote to Engels, "was good, for one thing because it was delivered by an Englishman and for another because it concerned only the political and international aspects. For that very reason however he merely skimmed along the surface of things."⁽³⁾

Marx's silence on the occasion of the Irish question debates deserves further attention. His own explanation to Engels, while two-pronged, only hints at the real basis for his voyeur-esque pose. The main excuse shows that Marx felt the Fenian executions, three days earlier, required a specific response, for which he was unprepared. "Actually, owing to the executions that had taken place. . . in Manchester, our subject, Fenianism, was liable to inflame the passions to such a heat that I (but not the abstract Fox) would have been forced to hurl revolutionary thunderbolts instead of soberly analysing the state of affairs and the movement as I had intended." Secondly,

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1. See chapter 2; reference here to Karl Marx, "Notes for an Undelivered Speech".
 2. Marx had written to Fox persuading him of the value of his contribution to the debate. Fox replied on November 23rd stating, "I see the importance of attending on the Irish question and making a speech. I will attend, as you say, as a simple member of the Association." (Doc: 2:375).
 3. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.

he suggested, perhaps only sarcastically, that the absence of the Irish reporters induced him to silence, as the lack of press coverage would have limited the effectiveness and impact of his address to the Council; he clearly wanted to reach an Irish audience with what he saw was a more serious examination of the question than heretofore. This historical accident was, he reported, a lucky break.⁽¹⁾

The real reason for Marx's ambivalence towards participation in the debates was his political reservation about the Fenians. Quite frankly, he admitted to Engels, "I don't like to get involved with people like Roberts, Stephens, and the rest." To be identified too closely or too openly with the Fenians might taint him as a "demagogue," and thus damage sales and publicity of the first volume of Capital, which had been published recently.⁽²⁾ Thus, the absence of the Irish reporters and the recent executions were convenient escape clauses.⁽³⁾

But, Marx and Engels' qualms about the Fenians went much deeper than the above comments would suggest. Engels' own thoughts on the matter were succinctly phrased in a letter to Marx: "As regards the Fenians you are quite right. The beastliness of the English must not make us forget that the leaders of this sect are mostly asses and partly exploiters and we cannot in any way make ourselves responsible for the stupidities which occur in every conspiracy."⁽⁴⁾ The attempted bombing of the Clerkenwell prison in December 1867 was a case in point. Charged with the notion that "after all something must happen, after

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1. Ibid.; see also Doc. 2:180-1.
 2. Marx to Engels, November 28, 1867.
 3. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.
 4. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1867.

all something must be done," several Fenians sought to free imprisoned members from the prisons. Criticising these adventurist stunts, Marx argued that such actions would have the adverse effect. While the International had engaged itself with mobilising the English working class behind the just demands of the Fenians, the latter, by their actions, proceeded only in driving "the London masses. . .into the arms of the government party. One cannot expect the London proletariat to allow themselves to be blown up in honour of the Fenian emissaries."⁽¹⁾

Highly critical of traditional Fenian tactics, Marx and Engels enthusiastically greeted O'Donovan Rossa's election to Parliament in 1869. "Three cheers for O'Donovan Rossa," Marx wrote to Engels upon hearing the results.⁽²⁾ Engels' remarks three days later noted what was distinctly progressive in this development. "The election in Tipperary is an event. It forces the Fenians out of empty conspiracy and the fabrication of small coups into a path of action which, even if legal in appearance, is still far more revolutionary than what they have been doing since the failure of the revolution [- the 1867 rising]." The fundamental importance of this political activity could be detected, he suggested, in the government's response. "The terror which this new

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1. Marx to Engels, December 14, 1867. See also Engels to Marx, December 19, 1867. Cf. Marx's attack on the Willich-Schapper position in the Communist League: Mehring, Marx, p. 206; Engels to Bernstein, June 26, 1882.
 2. Marx to Engels, November 26, 1869. Moses Baritz offers the following explanation of Engels' change of mind, although it misreads the situation entirely: "Engels' sympathy for the Irish became active, and he gave some support to the Fenians in 1867, until Marx made him realise the foolishness of such conduct. Engels admitted it and, after the execution of the Manchester Martyrs, abandoned his previous attitude." From "Engels, His 20 Years in Manchester".

turn has produced among the philistines, and which is now being screened throughout the whole Liberal press, is the best proof that this time the nail has been hit on the head."⁽¹⁾ In contrast, the crudely militant operations, while creating a momentary impact, "cannot do anything but scare John Bull. Though he grows noticeably weaker on the outskirts of his Empire, he can still easily suppress any Irish rebellion so close to home. . ."⁽²⁾

A weak link existed between the IRB and the International since the inception of the latter; after all, it was the activities of the Fenians that drew the Council's attention to Ireland long before branches were established there.⁽³⁾ Yet, the entry of Fenian head centre James Stephens into the International, had drawn a sardonic comment from Marx in 1866 and again in 1867.⁽⁴⁾ Why ?

As indicated above, the question of Fenian prisoners was first highlighted by the Ladies Committee early in 1866. Thereafter, the Council took a leading position in the amnesty campaign, issuing several documents on the matter.⁽⁵⁾ Separately, Marx and Engels became intimately involved in the

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1. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1869.
 2. Engels to Eduard Bernstein, June 26, 1882.
 3. Boyle, "Ireland", p. 45; See also T. A. Jackson, "Marx and Engels on Ireland", Labour Monthly (October 1932) vol. 14, p. 644.
 4. Marx to Engels, December 17, 1866; see also Doc. 2:72, the minutes for the GC of December 12, 1866; also Paul O'Higgins, "Fenian Leaders and Marx and Engels", Irish Workers' Voice (October 1953); Ryan, Fenian Chief, chapter 21; Beresford-Ellis, History, p. 131.
 5. In addition to the document written by Fox in 1866 (which read "that Sir George Grey be asked to receive a deputation from this Council to request him to mitigate the treatment now inflicted on the Irish state prisoners in Pentonville prison"), Marx drafted the following:

campaign; Marx admitted he had been "consulted from all corners about the Fenian affairs,"⁽¹⁾ and Engels contributed financially, in addition to providing

- a. "Memorial of the General Council of the International Working Mens Association to the Right Honourable Gathorne-Hardy, Secretary of State, November 24, 1867", Doc. 2:312-3.
- b. "Resolution of the General Council on the Suppression by the British Government of the Irish Ammesty Struggle", November 16, 1869, Doc. 3:183.
- c. "Police Terrorism in Ireland", April 9, 1872, Doc. 5:149-50.
The question of Ireland was also referred to in numerous other documents and reports of the GC also drafted by Marx:
 - a. "Inaugural Address of the International Working Mens Association", November 1, 1864, Doc. 1:277-85.
 - b. "Fourth Annual Report of the General Council of the IWMA" (Brussels Congress), September 9, 1868, Doc. 2:324-29.
 - c. "Confidential Communication: The General Council to the Federal Council of Romance Switzerland", January 1, 1870, Doc. 3:354-63.
 - d. "Position of the IWMA in Germany and England" (London Conference Report of the GC), September 22, 1871, MEI:301.
 - e. "Report of the GC to the Fifth Annual Congress", September-October 1872, Doc. 5:453-63.

It is furthermore interesting to note that several of the documents issued by the GC to the English workers were simultaneously addressed to Ireland. For example:

- a. A resolution drawn up by Hales, Lafargue and Copeland in July 1868 was addressed "To the Trade Unionists of Great Britain and Ireland", Doc. 2:319-23.
- b. The "Address of the Land and Labour League to the Working Men of Great Britain and Ireland", was drawn up by Georg Eccarius in November 1869, undoubtedly under Marx's influence, Doc. 3:345-51.

1. Marx to Engels, November 27, 1867.

a convenient refuge for Fenians.⁽¹⁾ Even Marx's family became involved; Eleanor was so active in the amnesty campaign as to be dubbed a "head-centre" by Marx,⁽²⁾ while Jenny, under the pseud. J. Williams, penned several articles for the French paper, La Marseillaise, about Fenian prisoners.⁽³⁾ Although concerned with the treatment of all Fenians, most attention was showered upon O'Donovan Rossa.⁽⁴⁾

Nevertheless, many Fenians were anxious to create as much distance between themselves and the International⁽⁵⁾ - on the grounds

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1. See Fox, Marx, Engels and Lenin, p. 22.
 2. Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue, March 5, 1870.
 3. The articles by Jenny Marx to La Marseillaise (March 1, 9, 19, 21 & 29, and April 12, 17 & 24, 1870) on the Irish question can be found in MEI: 379-403. On this matter, see Marx to Engels, March 5, 1870; Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue, March 5, 1870; Marx to Engels, March 10, 1870; Marx to Engels, March 19, 1870; Engels to Marx, March 21, 1870; also Marx to Engels, February 21, 1870, Jenny Marx (wife) to Engels, August 18, 1870; Jenny Marx to Ludwig and Gertrud Kugelmann, May 8, 1870; F. Kugelmann, "Small Traits of Marx's Great Character", p. 189; Cormac Ó Gráda, "Note on a Forgotten Letter by Jenny Marx", Science and Society (Winter 1969) vol. 33, pp. 459-64; Cadogan, "Harney and Engels", p. 87.
 4. For example, see Marx's letter to Engels, July 5, 1870, wherein he requested a copy of Rossa's photograph for Ludwig Kugelmann. See also Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig Kugelmann, October 30, 1869, MEW 32:700; Frederick Engels, "Letters from London", La Plebe, No. 117, November 17, 1872, MEI: 306-8; Beresford-Ellis, History pp. 140-41. It is likely that Marx met J. P. McDonnell, the future Irish Corresponding Secretary for the GC, during the former's involvement with the Amnesty Committee.
 5. See for example E. R. Norman, The Catholic Church and Ireland in the Age of Rebellion, 1859-1873 (London: Longmans and Green & Co. Ltd., 1965) p. 134.

that the latter were atheistic communists - as the International, or more precisely Marx and Engels, were between themselves and the Fenians - on the basis of the latter's terrorist-style campaigns.⁽¹⁾

Regarding this delicate relationship, John Devoy in Recollections of an Irish Rebel said of James Stephens:

Dr. [Cardinal] Cullen based his assumption of an alliance with the Carbonari on the fact that James Stephens while a refugee in Paris had fought at the barricades in the Red resistance to Louis Napoleon's Coup d'État in 1851, and claimed that he was an enrolled member of the Communist Party [Communist League]. Even if he were, he never tried to convert Fenians to Communism, and his chief lieutenants, O'Leary, Luby and Kickham were most conservative men. (2)

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1. As an example, see Marx's contribution to the General Council meeting of June 6, 1871, Doc. 4:206-207. Cf. Karl Marx, "Fourth Annual Report of the GC"; discussion within the GC on the issue of the "Belgian massacres", May 11, 1869. Doc.3:98-9.
 2. Devoy, Recollections, p.118. The most that can be said of Stephens is that he was a democrat. Of his involvement in the revolution of 1851, he wrote: "Since '48, since the day I became a Soldier of Liberty I should proudly, nay joyfully, have given up all, even to my life, for my country. Still my motives and feelings would not be at all intensely national. For I would fight, for an abstract principle of right, for defense of any country and were England a Republic, battling for human freedom, on the one hand and Ireland leagued with despots and struggling for despotism on the other, I would unhesitatingly take up arms against my native land." Quoted in Michael O'Riordan, Connolly Column (Dublin: New Books, 1979) p. 54. Yet, cf. Stephens comments in 1856: "I am no socialist, still less am I a communist, but my faith is that every child born in a free state should have a place on his native soil whereon to gain an independent livelihood." Ryan, The Fenian Chief, pp. 63-64. Similarly, "O'Mahony, who was in Paris with Stephens, was prone to describe himself as an 'ultra-democrat'. . ." Michael Gallagher, "Socialism and the Nationalist Tradition in Ireland, 1798-1918", Eire-Ireland, vol. 12, No. 2 (1977) p. 76. See Desmond Ryan, "John O'Mahony", in Moody, ed., The Fenian Movement, esp. pp. 64-5.

Marx and/or Engels might have come into contact, either directly or via a shared acquaintance, with Stephens through the League, a relationship which quite possibly fuelled Marx's remarks in 1866. Stephens' brief flirtation with the International may have been occasioned by his desire to establish links with any society likely to aid the Irish cause; certainly, it was this belief that had led to his contact with Parisian revolutionary circles fifteen years earlier.⁽¹⁾ It seems that Stephens initially misunderstood the politics of the International, seeing it as an international conspiratorial society, more along Bakuninist than Marxist lines; recognition of the fallacy of that view led him to an almost immediate easing of the link. Aside from the clouds that overhang his admission, by 1872 Stephens, as well as Luby, had adopted an openly hostile attitude towards the International. Reacting to the Paris Commune, Luby publically repudiated any attendance or sympathy with it.⁽²⁾

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1. See Desmond Ryan, "James Stephens and Thomas Clark Luby", in Moody, ed., The Fenian Movement, p. 58; Beresford-Ellis, History, p. 131; Rose, Manchester Martyrs, p. 79-80; Conor Cruise O'Brien, States of Ireland (London: Panther Books, 1974) p. 57. Regarding the relationship between Stephens and General Gustav Cluseret, later military leader of the Communards, see above, plus "International Society", Dublin Review (1871) pp. 459-60.
 2. See Luby to The Irish Citizen, April 6, 1872. In a letter dated March 30, 1872, Luby wrote: "'Save me from my friends' is an old sarcasm and not wholly an unjust one. Some of my friends in Philadelphia, it appears, have recently been affirming in a very positive sort of way, that they saw a statement in some paper or papers, to the effect that I took part in the late funeral procession of 'The International Society' in New York. Now, to this I have only to say, 1st, that I don't believe any paper stated anything of the kind, and 2nd, that if any paper did it simply stated what is false, as I neither took part in the International procession, nor even witnessed it. Furthermore, I beg to say that I haven't the smallest sympathy with 'the International Society', a fact of which I thought all my friends were quite aware. It is curious, by the way, how prone my friends are, while forgetting all the good we have done, not merely to remember all evil we have done, but to imagine the evil we haven't done."

While the break with Stephens was most likely not regretted, Marx and Engels were undoubtedly shocked by the treatment the International received from O'Donovan Rossa. In the nationalist newspaper, The Irishman, Rossa, in response to the death of the Parisian archbishop, condemned the Commune.

The telegraph wires flashed news to us this week that the [French] Republicans were mediating a burning up of the principal cities of England, and there was the way to strike terror into her, and with that news came also a gentle hint that this was an opportune time to decry a Republican Association in America called the International Workingmen's Association. The English wires say that this American Branch is affiliated with the "Reds" who have been made so terrible by their antagonists, while these same antagonists have shown themselves more brutal, barbarous and inhuman when they had the power. I had a certain sympathy with those "Reds," for I believed them to be misrepresented to a great extent. . . . Then Flourens and Rochefort had given me and my companions a helping hand when we were in prison - had defended us and believed the true stories we told of our imprisonment when our own friends disbelieved them and pronounced them false, and I believe only for that same exposure of our treatment we would be in prison today. . . . I thought the "Reds" might be similarly misrepresented, but they gave a handle to their enemies, and I would condemn their acts as well as I would the acts of those who knocked them on the head like rats when they had them conquered.(1)

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1. Rossa's "American Letter", which appeared in The Irishman of June 24, 1871, is quoted in William O'Brien and Desmond Ryan, eds., Devoy's Post-Bag, vol. 1, intro. by P. S. O'Hegarty (Dublin: C. J. Fallon, Ltd., 1948) pp. 19-20. The slightly ambivalent attitude taken by Rossa is shared by John Mitchel, a leader in the 1848 Young Irelander rising and in 1871 editor of the New York based The Irish Citizen. Throughout the period of the Paris Commune, Mitchel sought to deny any connection between the Communards and "communism", "Socialism" or the International. For example, the April 8, 1871 edition of the paper carried the following statement: ". . . Enemies of France and many ignorant persons confound the Paris Commune with

Jenny, Marx's daughter, who had written numerous articles in Rossa's defense, was particularly vexed by Rossa's notice.

The letter they found on me was the one I had written to O'Donovan Rossa. It was in answer to his smearing condemnation of the Commune movement in the Irishman. I expressed amazement that he of all people believed the fabricated disgraceful scandals against the communists which were printed in the worthy police organ Le Figaro and Paris Journal. I demanded his compassion (he is at the moment a power in New York) and the compassion of his fellow countrymen for the heroic front fighters of a new society - because the Irish couldn't be less interested than any other in the continuation of the present order of things. . . (1)

O'Donovan's stance remain unchanged; one month later, Marx found it necessary to set the record straight for Sorge. "As to O'Donovan Rossa, I wonder that you quote him still as an authority after what you have written me about him. If any man was obliged, personally, to the International, and the French communards, it was he, and you have seen what thanks we have received at his hands."(2)

Socialism or Communism. The Commune is the old local organization all over the land, and has existed for seven hundred years and more. The real meaning of the effort of the Parisians may be only to establish a genuine Republic, which would be both a security to France and a menace to monarchical Europe. . . ." It is nonetheless clear that he did not support any aims of the International. See for further examples, J. Mitchel, The Irish Citizen, June 3, 1871, and The Irishman, May 13 and 20, 1871.

1. Jenny Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, October, 3, 1871.
2. Marx to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, November 29, 1871. The awkwardness of Sorge's position may be revealed when it is understood that Sorge and B. Hubert represented the International in welcoming the recently-released Fenian prisoners to America in January 1871. In a statement they said they brought to the men "cordial greeting of the International Workingmen's Association. . .we offer you our warmest sympathies. . . and extend to you the hand of brotherhood and companionship. . .we congratulate you on obtaining your freedom, due, not to the magnanimity of British Lords, but to the fears of the British workingmen, and we hope that the day is not far distant when the labourers on both sides of the Channel

The underlying tension between Fenians and the International came to a head with the Paris Commune of 1871. That this should provoke such heated exchange between the two sides is not surprising; the Fenians, as most Irish nationalists, were not anti-religious or anti-clerical in the continental sense of the word. They deplored priestly involvement in political affairs, but not Catholicism itself. Above all, they were not atheists. In this light, E. R. Norman's comments are most interesting; he suggests that "although impossible to prove, it is most likely that many of the earliest Fenian recruits were Irishmen from the Papal Brigade of 1860, returning home disillusioned with the service of the Pope but willing to recapture their crusading zeal in the service of the 'virtually established' Irish republic."⁽¹⁾

Marx clearly did not and could not appreciate the prestige that the Catholic Church enjoyed in post-famine Ireland, making it an absolutely integral part of Irish political culture.⁽²⁾

will strike hands of friendship together, for, that day will see the fate of our common enemy sealed, and the fetters stricken from the limbs not only of the Irish, but of the Workingmen of all countries." Quoted in O'Brien and Ryan, Devoy's Post-Bag, p. 21. Regarding the support given to Rossa, while in prison, by future communards, see the activities of Gustav Flourens in O'Donovan Rossa, Irish Rebels, pp. 438-40. Jenny Marx, again under the pseud. J. Williams, wrote to the Irishman, reprinted in The Irish Citizen of May 20, 1871, noting Flourens support for Ireland. See on this matter, Cormac Ó Gráda, "Note on a Forgotten Letter".

1. Norman, The Catholic Church, p. 89; see also pp. 51, 86-134.
2. But cf. Frederick Engels, The Peasant War in Germany (New York: International Publishers, new ed. 1966) pp. 40-1, 52; Marx to Jenny Longuet, December 12, 1881; Engels to Marx, December 9, 1869. On the importance of the Catholic Church, see Emmet Larkin, "The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850-75", American History Society Journal, pp. 625-51; Emmet Larkin, The Roman Catholic Church and the Creation of the Modern Irish State, 1878-1886 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1975); Norman, The Catholic Church; John A. Murphy, "The Support of the Catholic Clergy in Ireland, 1750-1850", Historical Studies,

Both he and Engels tended to dismiss Catholicism too quickly as a superficial "opium of the people" that was, for the most part, adopted in response to Protestantism. They implied that the religious divide was the result of manipulative practices institutionalised by England, stretching as far back as Elizabeth in the 16th century.⁽¹⁾ Its disappearance would come about through an altered British policy.⁽²⁾ Marx not only belittled the depth of the religious divide, but also saw religion as completely separate from politics. In this regard, he termed the Fenians a "non-Catholic" movement. Hence, he simply ignored the very definite Catholic and religious aspect of the Irish character.⁽³⁾

vol. 5 (London: Boves and Boves, 1965) pp. 103-21; for the modern period, see J. H. Whyte, Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-1970 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1971).

1. See Engels, "Position of England - The British Constitution"; Frederick Engels, "Varia on the History of Irish Confiscations", MEI: 259-60; Marx, "Outline", MEI: 128-30; Georg Eccarius, "Record of a Speech", MEI: 140-141, Cf. Maureen Wall, "The Penal Laws, 1691-1760. Church and State from the treaty of Limerick to the Accession of George III", Irish Historical Series, No. 1 (Dundalk: Dublin Historical Association, 1961); Maureen Wall, "The Rise of a Catholic Middle-Class in 18th Century Ireland", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 11, No. 42 (1958) pp. 91-115.
2. See Kiernan, Marxism and Imperialism, p. 221. Kiernan suggests that "Marx was apt to underrate the force of religious divisions."
3. Cf. Marx to Engels, November 12, 1869. See Basil Chubb, The Government and Politics of Ireland (Oxford: University Press, 1970) pp. 53-56. For example, see Devoy's account of his trip to Rouen, France, and its Cathedrals with Charles Kickham, in Recollections, pp. 314-6.

The clash between the International and Catholicism - and hence Irish nationalism - was no more obvious than in the events that led to the General Council resolution, "Police Terrorism in Ireland," in April 1872. This declaration was issued in response to the disruption of several meetings of the International in Cork and Dublin, although the former was the more vicious.⁽¹⁾ It claimed that the British government through the police attempted to "nip in the bud the establishment of the International in Ireland" because the spread of the International threatened to put an end to the "national antagonism between English and Irish working men, in England. . ."⁽²⁾ Written by Marx, and signed on behalf of the General Council, the declaration condemned the citing of police outside the meeting places of the International. Individuals were also harassed and intimidated. What the resolution did not mention, possibly for tactical considerations,⁽³⁾ was the Church's role in encouraging attacks upon the International, leading to its eventual withdrawal from the

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1. Regarding the Dublin branch, see The Cork Examiner, April 1 and 9, 1872; The Freeman's Journal, March 30, 1872 and April 15 and 25, 1872. The last mention of the IWMA in Dublin is a reference to the GC's document. "Police Terrorism in Ireland", in The Freeman's Journal, April 25, 1872.
 2. "Declaration by the General Council of the IWMA: Police Terrorism in Ireland", MEI: 104.
 3. See for example, Engels at the GC of April 9, 1872. At the meeting, Engels said of the declaration that it "was against police interference. The subject was nothing to do with class hatred - it was simply the question of the Government using its force to interfere with meetings perfectly legal." At the meeting of May 14, 1872, a letter was read from a Dublin correspondent expressing "a hope that the journals of the Association would avoid any articles expressing atheistical opinions, or condemnation of Catholicism, as anything of the kind would do great damage in Ireland. . ." J. P. McDonnell endorsed that view. Doc.5:151 and 194, respectively.

country.

The particular events in Cork are worth recording insofar as they illustrate the antagonism that developed between nationalists and internationalists, and the Church and the International Working Mens Association; on another level, internationalists were desperate to point out that their membership was not tantamount to atheism. The General Council's relatively mild response to a hysterical and quite vicious campaign against the International would be surprising if not for its date; by the time the International managed to establish itself in Ireland, it was on its death bed. John W. Boyle suggests "It is difficult to imagine that Marx expected much from the Irish branches, formed after the Commune's collapse and the publication of The Civil War in France, or, indeed, that he was greatly concerned at such a time with the effects of those events in Ireland."⁽¹⁾ One further point should be noted; it is likely that having witnessed Fenian charges against the Commune and the International, Marx realised that the social revolution in Ireland would have to be postponed. His main attention came to be directed towards Parnell, and in this way he implicitly anticipated Engels' famous remarks of 1888.⁽²⁾ In accepting that parliamentary Home Rule achieved by bourgeois nationalists was the immediate issue, he and Engels severed the link between nationalism and social change. The latter would be the contest between the bourgeoisie and proletariat within an independent Ireland.

1. Boyle, "Ireland", p. 61.

2. "Interview with Engels", MEI: 343.

Very briefly the events are as follows: ⁽¹⁾ The Freeman's Journal ⁽²⁾ of January 8, 1872 reported that the International Working Mens Association "was making good way in Ireland. Many of the most intelligent and influential working men were successfully engaged in establishing branches in Dublin and other centres throughout the country." By March, the Cork branch was sufficiently notable that Joseph P. McDonnell, the General Council's corresponding secretary for Ireland and Marx's close ally, ⁽³⁾ remarked that its "presence had raised great opposition [in the city of Cork]. On the previous Sunday, the brother of the Member [of Parliament, John Francis Murphy] for Cork had denounced the Association from the altar [- referring to

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1. For a full account, see Boyle, "Ireland", pp. 49-62; also Collins and Abramsky, pp. 244-6.
 2. The Freeman's Journal was owned by Sir John Gray, M.P. for Kilkenny.
 3. For biographical details see: Boyle, "Ireland"; Cormac Ó Gráda", Fenianism and Socialism; The Career of Joseph Patrick McDonnell", Saothar (the Journal of the Irish Labour History Society) vol. 1, No. 1 (May 1975) pp. 31-41; McDonnell Correspondence with Marx and Engels, Ms. D/3246-3248 and L/3600-3676 in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam; J. P. McDonnell Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin; Marx at the GC, July 4, 1871, Doc. 4:226-27; Marx to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, November 29, 1871; Engels to the Firm Miller and Richard (draft), September 9, 1871; Engels to Sorge, November 16, 1872; Bernadette O'Sullivan, "Marx - Ireland - and the First International", Retrospect, Publication of the Irish History Students Association (1973-4) pp. 28-40. Sean Cronin notes wrongly that McDonnell was the founder and first president of the Dublin Trades Council in Young Connolly (Dublin: Repsol Publications, 1978) p. 68. By the time the Dublin Trades Council was established in 1886 (its president was a man named J. P. Nannetti), McDonnell was in America, having left England in 1872.

Canon Maguire]." (1) The incident that provoked the harangue from the pulpit was a meeting, earlier that day, between the coachmakers of Cork and five members of the International. The latter offered aid and support to the coachmakers who were "endeavouring to establish the nine-hour-system;" in turn, most of the coachmakers present at the meeting joined the International. (2) Later that day, the union served strike notice upon the employers. (3)

Opposition to the International was quickly organised. Following upon the heels of Canon Maguire's address on Saturday, March 16th, a notice appeared in Tuesday's Cork Examiner, whose publisher was the Canon's brother, the Cork M.P. It read:

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1. G.C., March 19, 1872, Doc. 5:131. In 1864, J. F. Maguire was Mayor of Cork City. In The Freeman's Journal for January 23, 1865, the following comment appeared evaluating Maguire's chances of success in the forthcoming parliamentary election. "His claims are undoubtedly greater than those of any other aspirant to that honour; and I think I am safe in saying that they are thoroughly recognised by the electors of Cork. They cannot forget that he has been the means of freeing them from the English gas company, which had become an odious monopoly, and of establishing (in the face of powerful opposition) a local gas company which is now yielding a handsome percentage of its shareholders while giving cheap gas to consumers. He is now actively engaged in promoting a flax company from which many benefits cannot fail to result, not only to Cork but to the South of Ireland."
 2. Freeman's Journal, March 18, 1872. Canon Maguire, in an evening service on Saturday, March 16, 1872, "referred to the visit of the delegates, denounced the International as antagonistic to religion and order, and called on the working men to repudiate its advances and crush its machinations". With the enrollment of the coachmakers, the number of members in the Cork branch of the IWMA reached 300. John de Morgan, a teacher of elecution, was secretary. See also The Freeman's Journal, March 19, 1872; the Cork strike of coachmakers was part of a general strike wave throughout Europe between 1866 to 1872, hitting Britain in 1871-1873. Hobsbawm, Age of Capital p. 112.
 3. The Cork Examiner, March 18, 1872. The coachmakers in Clonmel, a town north of Cork in Co. Tipperary, struck for a 9-hour day on April 8, The Freeman's Journal, April 9, 1872.

"We are authorised to state that a meeting of the working classes of Cork will be held in a few days to repudiate the principles of the International, and to denounce its introduction into this city."⁽¹⁾

An indication of its authorship is found in an article in The Freeman's Journal of that day: "leading nationalists," it said, concerned about the presence of the International were "convening a public meeting of the working classes to denounce the association." The same article made it clear that any such meeting would be fully supported by the Catholic Church.⁽²⁾

The tone for the meeting, scheduled for Sunday, March 24th, was set by Wednesday's Freeman's Journal. "If anyone had a few weeks since stated that the infamous International Society - its hands red with the blood of priests, and its coffers filled with the produce of the sack of Churches - would make a serious attempt to establish itself in Catholic Ireland, he would be laughed at as a lunatic. . ." ⁽³⁾ The author's intention, as that of the Church, was to identify the International

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1. The Cork Examiner, March 19, 1872. The paper also carried the following letter from an IWMA supporter on the claim that the IWMA was atheistic: ". . .The International is a band of working men living in all countries of the world, joined together to protect themselves and to bring about that time when wealth producers will hold the wealth they create. Opening its arms to workmen all over the world it cannot turn and ask them their religion; Turk, Hindoo, Catholic, Protestant, Atheist - all are welcome as members if they pledge themselves to act truthfully, justly, and righteously with their fellow men. The very first resolution passed by the Cork branch was to the effect that the International did not in any way interfere with religion." Similarly see a notice in The Irish Citizen of March 23, 1872, and a letter from "An Irishman" in defence of the International in The Irish Citizen, April 6, 1872.
 2. The Freeman's Journal, March 19, 1872.
 3. The Freeman's Journal, March 20, 1872.

directly and unobtrusively with the Commune, and the murder of the Archbishop of Paris, and thereby, in the name of Catholicism, call upon the workers to refrain from pursuing their claim.

The meeting to denounce the International was held in the Atheneum in Cork on March 24th.⁽¹⁾ Approximately three-thousand people gathered to hear the International attacked; however, shortly before the meeting began, John de Morgan, secretary of the Cork branch of the IWMA, arrived with about one hundred men. "Almost from the moment of their entrance, disorder prevailed, and the scene which followed the taking of chairs, and which continued for more than an hour, was one of the most outrageous and violent that has for many years been witnessed in Cork."⁽²⁾ The meeting collapsed into sheer pandemonium; chairs were flung across the hall, as were various other objects. After several attempts to continue the meeting, the chairman, Edward Murphy, was forced to bring it to a close. The Internationalists, insofar as they succeeded in disrupting the gathering, were the victors. The Cork Examiner, keen to ensure that that interpretation was not widely accepted, concluded its coverage of the event in the following manner: "Though the International party's organisation to upset the meeting was successful, there can be no doubt whatever but that the great mass of the people who occupied the hall during these disgraceful proceedings were with the object of the meeting."⁽³⁾

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1. J. P. McDonnell issued a statement regarding the forthcoming anti-IWMA meeting, see The Cork Examiner, March 23, 1872.
 2. The Cork Examiner, March 25, 1872.
 3. The Cork Examiner, March 25, 1872; The Freeman's Journal, March 25, 1872; Boyle, "Ireland", pp. 53-6; J. P. McDonnell, GC meeting, April 2, 1872, Doc.5: 140-1.

However, the victory was short lived. Immediately, Canon Maguire continued his attack on the International. He appealed to the people of Cork to avert the influence of the International "by earnest prayer and by every exertion they could make." (1) He was joined by Father Lavelle, who, in an open letter "to the young men of Ireland," called upon them, in the name of patriotism and catholicism, to avoid the International. "I now feel called upon to use any and all influence which I may possess through your confidence in my sincerity, in my undying devotion to my country and to you, to warn you against this trap laid for that dear country's destruction, the ruin of its honour, and the shipwreck of its faith."(2)

Most prominent in its criticism of the Internationalists were those described by the Irish newspapers as "nationalists," hence pitting patriotism against communists who showed no concern for Ireland. While the term is sufficiently vague - it was likely invoked for its emotive and propagandistic value as well as its political meaning - the group did include Fenians. (3) Certain members of the Fenian leadership had

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1. The Cork Examiner, March 26, 1872.
 2. The Freeman's Journal, March 29, 1872; reprinted The Irish Citizen, April 20, 1872.
 3. Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement p. 246. "Though de Morgan denied he supported the Commune, he was thrown out of the hall of an overwhelmingly working class meeting. Many of his most strenuous assailants had served prison sentences in the Fenian cause." The Irish Citizen of May 4, 1872 carried the following remarks from a letter signed "Bignian": . . .The last country that will adopt communist or socialism is Ireland. It is remarkable that among the most prompt and vehement to denounce the principles of the International, on the occasion of their attempt to establish the society in Ireland, have been some of the leaders in the late Fenian conspiracy - a further proof, though none was needed, of the purely patriotic and national character of that movement, so far as regarded the mass of its adherents." This should not, however, imply that all Fenians were against the IWMA as McDonnell's presence would indicate.

been most vociferous in their denunciation of the Paris Commune, and thereby the IWMA. One correspondent to The Cork Examiner called upon "Irish Nationalists" to ensure that the "accursed Internationals will never again dare to pollute the soil of Ireland with their unhallowed steps."⁽¹⁾

So powerful was the influence of the Church,⁽²⁾ that John de Morgan, having been run out of Cork,⁽³⁾ felt compelled to write to Canon Maguire explaining his position. As the Canon did not reply, Morgan sought the letter's publication in the International Herald

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1. Letter of James F. X. O'Brien, The Cork Examiner, March 27, 1872 and The Irish Citizen, April 20, 1872; see also the leader, The Cork Examiner, March 22, 1872; "Communist Revival," The Freeman's Journal, January 20, 1872.
 2. See Cork Examiner, April 5, 1872.
 3. See Collins, "English Branches", p. 254; Boyle, "Ireland"; Engels to Theodor Cuno, April 22-23, 1872; Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, November 16, 1872; John de Morgan correspondence with Marx and Engels, Ms. D/3469-3472, K/1315, L/5055-5069 in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. Once in England, de Morgan attempted to earn his living by lecturing. A list of those subjects on which a lecture could be heard is found in John de Morgan, Programme of Lectures, Popular, Entertaining, Historical, Biographical, Religious, Political and Social (Southend, Essex: J. Francis & Sons, [1879]). He also engaged in writing and publishing: De Morgan's Monthly, subtitled "An Organ of Personal Opinion on Politics, Religion, and Social Ethics," was available in 1876-1877. He wrote a pamphlet "India: and How we Obtained It", in 1876, as well as writing the introduction for Dion Boucicault, Ireland's Story (New York: Metropolitan Publishing Co. [1881]); an account of his life is given in the following sympathetic pamphlet, whose author is noted as "a free and independent elector of Leicester," Who is John de Morgan? A few words of explanation. (with portrait) (London: George Howe, [1877]).

of April 27, 1872.

. . .I confess I have been staggered at the epithets and strong language used by you and several gentlemen in Cork. One side must be mistaken. I would never join any society, opposed directly or indirectly to religion (or even to any sect not holding Christian principles). I believe, with all my heart, in God, and therefore, cannot be called atheistic. . . .I will. . .pledge myself to withdraw from the association if it can be proved clearly to be opposed to a belief in God, or to have for its objects 'the shooting of bishops and priests, etc". . .

Proof was not forthcoming, nor would any neutral panel, such as that proposed by de Morgan, be able to locate that position within the principles of the IWMA. Perhaps it was only a tactical move and a clever one at that; nevertheless, the pressure was sufficient to warrant de Morgan's offer.

The General Council's document on "Police Repression in Ireland" issued the month following the Cork incident serviced the anti-internationalist forces.⁽¹⁾ Yet, by then, the International was rather weak.⁽²⁾ Attempts to establish a branch in Limerick were continually delayed; again, the papers claimed that nationalists, joined by local clergy, stopped the formation of any branch there.⁽³⁾ The Dublin branch, in operation since

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1. The Freeman's Journal, April 25, 1872.
 2. See G. M. Stekloff, History of the First International (London: Martin Lawrence, Ltd, 1928) p. 23.
 3. The Freeman's Journal, April 1, 1872. See The Irish Citizen, May 11, 1872, on the "arrival" of the International in Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary.

February, also encountered sizeable opposition.⁽¹⁾ By mid-May, the Cork Examiner proudly announced its triumph: the International had "resolved to abandon for the present the Irish organisation awaiting more favourable auspices for re-establishment. The foreign agents who came to promote the movement have left Ireland."⁽²⁾

These events brought to a head the tension between Irish nationalists and internationalists that had been in evidence thirty years earlier. Then, Engels, under the influence of the Chartists and Feargus O'Connor, encountered Daniel O'Connell's endeavours to exclude Chartism from Ireland. As in 1872, O'Connell had also relied upon the powers of Irish Catholicism.⁽³⁾

This friction did not, however, militate against either Marx and Engels' or the International's interest in the Irish question. Indeed, strenuous efforts were undertaken by the International to establish separate Irish branches whose aim was to bridge Irish nationalism with socialism. The 'manifesto' of the Irish sections was clear on this point:

The national antagonism between English and Irish working men in England has hitherto been one of the main impediments in the way of every attempted movement for the emancipation of the working class, and therefore one of the main stays of class domination in England as well as in Ireland. The

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1. The Cork Examiner, April 1 and 9, 1872; The Freeman's Journal, March 30, 1872 and April 15, 1872.
 2. The Cork Examiner, May 11, 1872.
 3. See Engels, "Letters from London", MEI: 35.

spread of the International in Ireland and the formation of Irish branches in England threatened to put an end to this state of things. (1)

With this end in mind, Marx urged the appointment of Joseph Patrick McDonnell as Irish corresponding secretary in October 1871. This appointment followed the growth of Irish sections (notably No.7) in New York, which had received into membership Fenians arriving from England. (2) McDonnell's report to the Council on April 2, 1872, referred to the expansion of the IWMA among the Irish in England. Branches had been formed, he said, in Bradford, Chelsea, Cootehill, Middlesborough, Marylebone, and Soho; efforts were being made to form sections in Bristol, Bolton, Belfast and Wellington. (3) A conference of the Irish sections was held on April 21, 1872, under McDonnell's leadership in order "to discuss the building of an organisation in

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1. "Police Terrorism in Ireland", MEI: 104; Beresford-Ellis, History, p. 149.
 2. See Beresford-Ellis, History p. 134 regarding John Devoy. Interestingly, Devoy's book, Recollections, does not mention his membership in the IWMA. The tie between Devoy and the IWMA is illustrated by a letter from Sorge to Devoy, June 23, 1871, informing the latter of a meeting of the IWMA Central Committee. See William O'Brien and Desmond Ryan, eds., Devoy's Post-Bag, vol.1, intro. by P. S. O'Hegarty (Dublin: C. J. Fallon, Ltd, 1948) p. 42; also see pp. 20. Further Stekloff, First International p. 276; GC meetings, March 7, 1871, March 14, 1871, April 25, 1871 - Doc. 4:146-7, 150, 180, respectively.
 3. GC meeting of April 2, 1872, Doc. 5:140; see Collins, "English Branches", p. 252; Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement p. 241; Eastern Post, February 10, 1872 and January 6, 1872; J. P. McDonnell papers.

the various districts of London and the inauguration of a 'propaganda fund' to carry on the work in Ireland."⁽¹⁾ This project received the full endorsement of Marx and Engels who argued in its defense against John Hales.

The debate on the right of the Irish to form separate national branches in England was countered by Hales at the General Council meeting of May 14, 1872. Hales contended that the existence of distinctly "Irish nationalist branches in England is opposed to the General Rules and principles of the Association." More importantly, he argued that these Irish sections were merely a "convenient cloak" under which Fenians "prosecute their special designs;" the majority of the Irish joined the International under false pretenses and "did not understand the principles of the Association."⁽²⁾

Undoubtedly Hales had a point; indeed, the most interesting aspect of his position was its similarity to the basic beliefs of Marx and Engels on the Irish question, and particularly their reservations about the Fenians. Hales concluded his contribution stating that "he should like to see Ireland ruling herself tomorrow for he was convinced that the Irish would then wake from their enchantment and find nationalism was no remedy for the ills of society." Clearly, this was a point that Engels had made as early as 1844 in The Condition of the Working Class in England. Why then did Engels attack the motion ?

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1. Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement, p. 248; Eastern Post, April 27, 1872.
 2. General Council, May 14, 1872, Doc. 5:199.

The position taken up by Engels on this occasion illustrates the delicacy of the political climate. Neither Marx nor he had any illusions about the limited role and impact of the Fenians as an organisation engaged in military-style campaigns. They did, however, see the Fenians as more than nationalists, and in this understanding they quickly diverged from Hales. At this time, they hoped that a Fenian victory could encourage social change in Ireland as well as in England. It was not until the obvious abatement of the Fenians and their replacement by Parnell in the 1880s that they seem to have sensed that the attainment of national independence was very separate from socialism.

Hales clearly did not recognise the "socialist tendencies" of the Fenians nor did he comprehend the political value that Irish sections could have in bringing Irish nationalists to understand that their problems went beyond independence. Suggesting that acceptance of Hales' motion was tantamount to working class collusion with the government, Engels said:

The Irish sections in England were our base of operations with regard to the Irish working men in Ireland; they were more advanced, being placed in more favourable circumstances, and the movement in Ireland could be propagated and organised only through their instrumentality. . . . if the motion was adopted by the Council, the Council would inform the Irish working men in so many words, that, after the dominion of the English aristocracy over Ireland, after the dominion of the English middle class over Ireland, they must now look forth to the advent of the dominion of the English working class over Ireland. (1)

1. Ibid., Doc. 5:300.

Coming at the end of the International's life, the debate on the rights of Irish sections ties together all the various strands of Marx and Engels' position on the Irish question. The IWMA could act as a powerful leverage on the docile English working class. "The English have all the material prerequisites necessary for the social revolution. What they lack is the spirit of generalisation and revolutionary fervour. Only the General Council can provide them with this, can thus accelerate the truly revolutionary movement here, and in consequence, everywhere."⁽¹⁾ But the Council could do nothing as long as the Irish question remained the prime political issue, dividing the working class into two hostile camps, uniting the English worker with the government against Ireland.

A two-pronged campaign was necessary. First, the IWMA would encourage social revolution in Ireland; ". . . Ireland is the bulwark of English landlordism. If it fell in Ireland it would fall in England."⁽²⁾ Insofar as the Fenians were capable of this feat, they would be supported. Second, the IWMA would encourage the establishment of the International in Ireland and England with the aim of transcending the national divisions among workers. United on a class basis, English and Irish proletarians - many of the latter would most likely be Fenians - would "act together in harmony for their common emancipation, a result attained by no previous movement. . ."⁽³⁾

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1. Marx, "Confidential Communication", MEI: 160-1.
 2. Ibid., MEI: 161.
 3. Engels at the General Council, May 14, 1872, Doc. 5:299.

The formation of distinctly Irish sections in England would not, as Hales argued, foster national animosity, but would recognise the Irish as a "distinct nationality" whose presence in England was the result of economic union.

As this was the dominating view of the General Council - Hales' motion lost with only himself voting in its favour - Marx and Engels' influence is beyond doubt. Obviously, the fact that Marx wrote most of the International's documents ensured this was the case;⁽¹⁾ however, the General Council was treated only once - in November 1869 - to a contribution by Marx on the Irish question. Then, as in 1867, the debate was sparked off by the amnesty campaign and the condition of Fenian prisoners. In 1869, Marx again sought to avoid the stickiness of that issue. Rather than an Address to the British government on prisoners as proposed by Hales,⁽²⁾ Marx suggested that the discussion centre around the attitude of the British government and the working class towards the Irish question.⁽³⁾

The vigorous campaign initiated by the General Council in support of Fenian prisoners died away by 1870.⁽⁴⁾ Aside from the

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1. The only exception regarding documents on Ireland was the memorial in 1866 to Sir George Grey which was drafted by Fox.
 2. See General Council minutes, October 26, 1869, Doc. 3:173.
 3. See General Council minutes, November 9, 1869, Doc. 3:176-7; see also Marx to Engels, November 12, 1869; Marx to Engels, November 18, 1869; Engels to Marx, November 19, 1869; Marx to Engels, November 26, 1869; Engels to Marx, November 29, 1869; Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, November 29, 1869; Marx to Engels, December 4, 1869.
 4. Engels to Natalie Liebknecht, December 19, 1870. ". . .you can imagine what joy reigned yesterday in the house, when the news came that the condemned Fenians were amnestied - although in a shameless-Prussian manner."

events in Ireland in 1872, the Irish question received very little attention thereafter; the mounting crisis in France and the Bakuninist attack on the IWMA consumed the Council's consideration. There is no evidence to show that either the IWMA or Marx and Engels exerted any significant influence on events in Ireland at that time. While there is a connection between Fenianism and the International, it does not appear that the former was unduly swayed by the latter; indeed, it could be suggested that there was a negative effect.

J. W. Boyle states that although the IWMA organisationally was a failure in Ireland, socialist bodies, such as the Socialist League, which appeared in the late 1880s, could count "among their members former Internationalists."⁽¹⁾ Yet, no mention of any such political formations was made by Engels. The Irish question climbed to a height of great importance during the period of the International; when the International was driven from Ireland and from Europe (albeit for different reasons), their perspective altered. The conditions which had brought the issue to prominence while still in view - the English working class continued to be politically passive - it required a different solution. Disillusioned, Marx and Engels turned their attention elsewhere.

1. Boyle, "Ireland", p. 62. The Dublin branch of the Socialist League issued an invitation to Edward Aveling in 1886; see The Freeman's Journal, January 15, 1886; Beresford-Ellis, History, chapt. 8; Collins and Abramsky, British Labour Movement p. 161, claim that the only lasting effect of the Irish movement was to bring to a "head the already developing split between the International and the Beehive." For example, see Engels to Marx, November 1, 1869.

4. Political Considerations

Impressive as Marx and Engels' writings on Ireland are, rising to upwards of fifty articles and books, several IWMA documents, and many letters, one should not over generalise their concern with the Irish question. The above discussion should make it clear that, although Marx and Engels refer to Ireland throughout their lives - indeed, concern with the English working class would necessitate treatment of Ireland as a profound question - serious attention is directed towards the issue only during periods of political stagnation elsewhere in Europe.⁽¹⁾ The main periods of their writings (concentrated only in 1867 to 1870, otherwise scattered throughout the 1840s, 1850s, 1870s and 1880s)⁽²⁾ circumvent the events of the Communist League (1848-1852), the Crimean War, the International Working Mens Association, the Paris Commune, the German Social Democratic Party (the SPD), and the writing and editing of the three volumes of Capital and numerous other articles and pamphlets. Thus, the Irish question assumed a tangential relation to their main political quest, that of prompting social revolution in the most capitalised country in the world, England.

Secondly, neither Marx or Engels achieved a full-scale analysis of Irish history or of the conditions in the country, nor was that Marx's intention.⁽³⁾ As the next chapter will show, Marx

1. See Jackson "Marx and Engels", (1932), p. 643.

2. See Checklist, Appendix 1.

3. Cf. Jackson, "Marx and Engels (1933) p. 53 who claims that Marx and Engels tackled the Irish question with "amazing thoroughness."

devoted a section of chapter 25 in volume one Capital to consideration of post-famine Ireland, but it served as an "illustration" of the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation. On the other hand, Engels did begin a History of Ireland but it was never completed. The absence of a serious study meant that they relied heavily upon contemporary sources and impressions for their understanding of economic and political developments. Their orientation was both physically and intellectually rooted in England; rather than providing a superb vantage point from which to oversee developments in Ireland,⁽¹⁾ it contributed to their ignorance and misunderstanding of many peculiarly Irish phenomena. Consequently, they appear to sway between two conflicting viewpoints - the traditional English view that saw Ireland as a poverty-stricken agricultural adjunct of England, and nationalist opinion that sought to interpret Irish reality as England's making. While they produced what is probably the most enlightening and serious assessment of Irish underdevelopment, their writings are riddled with these contrasting beliefs.

Subsequently, their understanding of Ulster unionism is profoundly inaccurate and simplistic. Repeating what can only be described as nationalist rhetoric, they dismissed the idea that there may be material grounds for the religious divisions that had arisen in Ireland. In brief, Marx and Engels assumed that unionism was a Tory-manipulated manifestation among Irish protestants against native Irish catholics. In the only article on the subject, written on December 24, 1858, and entitled "The Excitement in Ireland", Marx dealt superficially with the issue of protestant secret societies as the bastard child of

1. See Cronin, Marx and the Irish Question, p. 1.

English policy. He referred to the growth of these secret societies as a response to English generated sectarianism, whose contrived existence was used as a tool of repression against the native population. The Catholic Ribbonmen, he claimed, existed only as a reaction to Protestant orangemen.

When at the end of the eighteenth century, the Protestant Peep-o-Day boys combined to wage war against the Catholics in the north of Ireland, the opposing Society of the Defenders sprang up. When, in 1791, the Peep-o-Day boys merged into Orangeism, the Defenders transformed themselves into Ribbonmen. When, at last, in our own days, the British Government disavowed Orangeism, the Ribbon Society, having lost its condition of life dissolved itself voluntarily. (1)

Not only was his understanding of the origins of Ulster unionism faulty, but he and Engels likewise brushed aside the complexity of the solution. Marx suggested that as the Protestant Church owned a great amount of property, the overthrow of landlordism would also affect the religious question. In a letter to Kugelmann, he stated:

The whole thing (that is the overthrow of landlordism) will moreover have the useful result that, once the Irish Church is dead [by passage of the Disestablishment Bill], the Protestant Irish tenants in the

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1. MEI: 89-90. Cf. Peter Gibbon, Origins of Ulster Unionism, The Formation of Popular Protestant Politics and Ideology in Nineteenth Century Ireland (Manchester: University Press, 1975); Peter Gibbon, "The Origins of the Orange Order and the United Irishman: A Study in the Sociology of Revolution and Counter-revolution", Economy and Society, vol. 1, No. 2

province of Ulster will join the Catholic tenants and their movement in the three other provinces of Ireland, whereas up to the present landlordism has been able to exploit this religious antagonism. (1)

There is no indication that either Marx or Engels sought to comprehend the how and why of unionism; their ignorance of northern Ireland industry equally suggests that they dismissed its relevance as did most Irish nationalists of the day. This is particularly surprising given Engels' enthusiasm for Parnell's pursuit of Home Rule; Engels lived to see two Home Rule Bills defeated by unionist opposition. The only hint that he had begun to appreciate that unionism was not a mere facade was in a letter to Wilhelm Liebknecht in 1888. Discussing the Irish flag, Engels said that "In Fenian days, 1865-67, many were green and orange to show Orangemen of the North that they would not be destroyed, but accepted as brothers. However, no question of that any more."⁽²⁾

(1972) pp. 134-163; Belinda Probert, Beyond Orange and Green (Dublin: The Academy Press, 1978); James Donnelly, Jr., "The Whiteboy Movement, 1761-5", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 21, No. 81 (March 1978) pp. 20-54.

1. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 6, 1868. See Jenny Marx (daughter) to Kugelmann, December 27, 1869. Jenny wrote: "it must be admitted that as the Tories say, Gladstone's measures of Church disestablishment has already borne fruit. Religious fanaticism is dying a natural death, the hostility of Catholics and Protestants is at an end. . ." Cf. Paul Bew, "Problems of Ulster Unionism", Economy and Society, vol. 6, No. 1, pp.89-109; J. W. Boyle, "Review of Ireland and the Irish Question", Labour History, vol. 14 (Winter 1973) No. 1, p. 137.
2. Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht, February 29, 1888. See above, section iii for discussion on Catholicism.

Too much cannot, however, be made of this comment; it stands alone and is one of only three references to unionism throughout all their correspondence or published material. Undoubtedly, Marx and Engels were dependent upon available literature and opinion, and this is just one area where contemporary assessments of events were too often over shadowed by emotionalism.⁽¹⁾

A third point should be mentioned as it explains the parameters of their interest in Ireland. As spelled out several times in this chapter, Marx and Engels' regard for the possibilities of a Fenian-led revolution was determined by the latter's likely impact upon the docile and reticent English working class. Ireland held the key to social revolution in England. Aside from Engels' intent to write a history of Ireland - and even this owed its origin more to a fuller understanding of the Irish impediment than to Ireland herself - their perspective remained that of the internationalist role of the Irish national independence movement. This view always coloured their terms of reference, and goes some way to explain their disjointed interest. When Fenianism proved to be a political handicap, they suffered no emotional delay in breaking links with the IRB and turning to Parnell.

More importantly, their support for Parnell represented a subtle departure in their thinking. While understated over the years, they did seem to consider that the Fenians could provoke a fundamental social upheaval by expelling the English aristocracy and forcing the restructuring of Irish land holdings. The newly independent country - which would certainly follow either directly or indirectly advances

1. For a fuller discussion of these influences, see chapter 5.

made by the English proletariat - would experience an industrial revolution. The capitalist mode of production would become dominant leading inevitably to the Irish proletariat's triumph.

Implicit in this scenario was, at least initially, the belief that Fenianism was the most serious challenger to English capitalism because it was both nationalist and socialistic - the latter in that it sought to expropriate the aristocracy. They did not express any further details about land ownership in Ireland, but it is sufficiently evident from Marx's speeches to the First International, that they considered land nationalisation as the only possible and prosperous answer.⁽¹⁾ Open rejection by Irish tenants of Davitt's brief flirtation with nationalisation in favour of ownership in the 1880s suggested to Engels that the small tenant would not disappear without a struggle. Given the obviously paltry Irish working class - obvious in that neither Marx or Engels considered its existence - he accepted that the immediate future would see the creation of a transitional farming petit-bourgeoisie from among the small tenants.⁽²⁾ The transference of land into communal holdings

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1. See Frederick Engels, "American Food and the Land Question", July 2, 1881, The Labour Standard, No. 9, MEI: 316-7; Karl Marx, "The Nationalization of the Land", International Herald, June 15, 1872.
 2. Cf. Henry Mayer, "Marx, Engels and the Politics of the Peasantry", Études de Marxologie (Cahiers de l'Institut de Science Economique Appliquée) No. 3, Series (June 1960) pp. 144-146. It is doubtful that the Irish working class would have been either large enough or strong enough to affect any significant change themselves. After all, agriculture made up upwards of 80% of the economy; Ireland was an agricultural country with weak manufacturing.

would be delayed as Irish tenants insisted in their determination to avoid the economic probabilities of mortgages, indebtedness, and competition.⁽¹⁾

While the Fenians never espoused any communalist notions of landownership - Marx spoke of them having only "socialistic tendencies" - a clean break between social change and nationalism came with their demise. Resurrected by the labour movement, most notably by James Connolly at the turn of the century, in the period under consideration, nationalist aspirations quickly became dominant.⁽²⁾ Even those desiring only to assuage their material hunger gladly offered up the vision of celtic Ireland as their guiding light. Engels was most likely aware of this departure - the reception given the IWMA in Cork illustrated that Irish nationalism was not heavenly bound to socialism - although he took very little active interest in Irish affairs by the time of its germination. Support for Parnell and the land acts was given in acknowledgement that they might solve the nationalist aspect of the Irish question. Home Rule would leave the Irish to sort out their own more serious and more fundamental problems;⁽³⁾ on the other hand, it would bring to a close the continued weight of the Irish question upon English politics, and, as Marx had earlier envisaged, aid the advancement of the English working class. Hence, in all respects, promotion of social development in England remained the core of Marx and Engels' attention.

Finally, how valid was Marx and Engels' assumptions about the impact of the solution of the Irish question upon England, most

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1. "Interview with Engels", MEI: 343.
 2. See Strauss, Irish Nationalism, p. 280.
 3. Marx to Jenny Longuet, April 29, 1881.

particularly its working class ? Although Home Rule did not come about as quickly as Engels envisaged,⁽¹⁾ debate on the subject did have tremendous repercussions on class politics in England. The Liberals under Gladstone faced internal disintegration, and their demise as a potent political force was well established by the turn of the century. Engels' support for Parnell and bourgeois nationalism was based on the notion that Parnell and Co. would find themselves holding the balance of power within the House of Commons; holding power, they could bargain for Home Rule. By 1910, debate over Home Rule had finally cast the Irish into a parliamentary force. George Dangerfield's incisive commentary on this development is worth recording as it concurs with Engels' earlier prognosis:

Small wonder, of looking over these dispiriting figures, Liberals began to wonder whether they had not fallen into their own pit. If their party was to stay in power, it could only do so with Irish help. Betrayed Parnell's dream had come true at last. The Act of Union between England and Ireland, so disreputable in its origins, so lamentable in its history, had at last revealed its great constitutional weakness. It had bestowed the control of Parliament upon a handful of men to whom England was an enemy, and whose support could only be won at the stiff price of Irish Home Rule. By these elections of January 1910, the Act of Union killed itself. Killing itself, it killed the Liberal party; thereafter Mr. Asquith and his colleagues were never to be separated from their Irish allies, for whom in their hearts they had no use at all.⁽²⁾

The rise of the Labour Party, which sought to establish itself as the party of the working class did theoretically serve to aid the

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1. Engels to Johann Philipp Becker, December 5, 1885; Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge, December 7, 1889.
 2. George Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (New York: Capricorn Books, 1961) p. 280.

realignment of class forces.

Apart from these similarities - which bear out the essence of Marx and Engels' original thesis - Home Rule, restricted only to the south, did not bring with it the end to social and economic divisions in Ireland. The expulsion of the English aristocracy from Ireland was not a result of forced expropriation incurred under independence, but of the tremendous shift in landownership, which, ironically, was aided by various land acts introduced by the English Parliament. Nor did the removal of the aristocracy's economic presence in Ireland lead automatically to the denial of its political power; the threatened action by the Liberals in 1910-1911 served only to curtail their authority not destroy it. Sensing the mood, the Lords chose themselves to redraw their terms of reference; clearly a wise and historic decision.⁽¹⁾

The newly created Irish Free State unconsciously adapted Marx's advice and imposed tariff barriers on most items by the 1930s. Perhaps had they been introduced fifty years earlier the situation may have been different, but that is speculation. Tariff protection did not bring the prophesized gold rush, instead Ireland entered into a thirty year period of under-industrialisation and unemployment relieved in part only by state intervention. In addition, the notion and then the actual imposition of tariffs did more to isolate and distance the south from the northern industrial counties, which as of 1922 remained part of England.⁽²⁾ Calling for tariffs, Marx adopted the demand of

1. Ibid., pp. 30-68.

2. John A. Murphy, Ireland in the Twentieth Century, The Gill History of Ireland, No. 11, edited by James Lydon and Margaret MacCurtain, (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1975);

Irish nationalists who erroneously blamed England and most particularly the Act of Union for Ireland's industrial collapse. While this assessment of Ireland's economic difficulties was in contrast to Marx's more serious analysis, the latter seemed content to repeat it. Unwittingly, his failure to fully grasp the distinctive aspect of Ireland's economy - northern industry was predominantly Protestant, while southern agriculture was Catholic - fueled the economic and religious divisions. Ironically, as Eric Strauss points out Marx's call for tariffs would inevitably alienate the British working class, and prevent them from supporting Irish independence.

The Irish demand for protection against British imports was eminently reasonable in itself and had the full support of convinced anti-capitalists like Karl Marx. But it is a matter of historical notoriety that it prevented an alliance between British and Irish Radicals during the years of O'Connell's Repeal movement; that it precipitated the break between the British business classes and the Liberal party at the time of the First Home Rule Bill and entrapped Parnell into his damning alliance with the Tories; that it formed an insurmountable obstacle to a compromise between Protestant Ulster and the South, where it figured prominently in the Sinn Fein programme, and that finally it turned the scales in the Treaty negotiations, although in this case opinion may be legitimately divided on the merits of the issue.(1)

L. M. Cullen, An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660 (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd, 1972); F. S. L. Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine (London: Fontana, 1973); E. Rumpf and A. C. Hepburn, Nationalism and Socialism in Twentieth Century Ireland (Liverpool: University Press, 1977)

1. Strauss, Irish Nationalism, p. 280.

Indeed, the economic trade war of the 1930s between England and the Free State jeopardised the links that had developed between north and south, threatening Belfast's distributive trade with unemployment.

But ultimately, one can fault Marx and Engels only for what they should have known but didn't. And despite the omissions and inaccuracies in their understanding, they were remarkably insightful.⁽¹⁾

1. Chapter 5 discusses Marx and Engels' views in relation to contemporary opinion. Throughout the remaining chapters, the inaccuracies and omissions of their work are cited.

CHAPTER TWO

CAPITAL AND THE IRISH ECONOMY

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation
4. Capital and the Irish Economy
5. Economic Considerations

CHAPTER TWO

CAPITAL AND THE IRISH ECONOMY

1. Introduction

The economy of post-famine Ireland holds the key to Marx and Engels' understanding of the Irish question. Indeed, it is because of the "deeper study" given by Marx to the capitalist mode of production in the first volume of Capital that the issue of Irish independence became crucial for the development of a sound and viable workers movement in England. As such Capital reveals the essence of the economic and political link between the two islands. This chapter endeavours a wide ranging discussion of that often ignored section in the first volume of Capital entitled "Ireland". Part II briefly sets out the background to its composition; part III examines the general law of capitalist accumulation with particular reference to Marx's use of Ireland as an illustration of that law; part IV concentrates, in almost narrative fashion, on how Marx perceived economic development in Ireland, especially in the post-famine period; while part V offers some general comments on the economic form Marx was observing.

2. Background

Any examination of the writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels on nineteenth century Ireland must consider the section Marx wrote on Ireland in the chapter entitled "The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation"

in volume one of Capital.⁽¹⁾ This section outlined the economic conditions of the post-famine period, and in so doing, laid the groundwork for an (undelivered) speech to the General Council of the First International, November 26, 1867, and a lecture to a group of German workers, December 16, 1867 - both on the subject of Ireland.⁽²⁾ Written in 1867, the chapter and subsequent articles resulted from research conducted on and in the years 1860-1865, for which Marx based most of his arguments in volume one. While the substantial quantity of notes collected during the 1850s went to form the basis of the three volumes of Capital, the specific chapter on Ireland appears to have been written just prior to publication in 1867.



Evidence of this can be gleaned from a letter Marx wrote to Sigfrid Meyer on April 30, 1867, wherein Marx mentioned that volume one, then in preparation, would also examine the condition of the English and Irish "agricultural and industrial proletariat during the last twenty years." By September, the draft, posted to Engels in Manchester, warranted the following comment from Engels: ". . . the insertion on Ireland has been composed in the most awful haste and the material too little worked over. On the first reading it is often positively unintelligible". He closed by stating that he would send detailed remarks shortly, thus suggesting that the chapter would be subjected to revision; the extent of which, if at all, is unknown.⁽³⁾

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1. Marx, Capital, 1:697-712.
 2. MEI: 126-142.
 3. See Engels to Marx, September 1, 1867.

While there might be doubt that Engels' remarks refer to the section on Ireland in chapter 25 - his references in the same letter to the "résumé on the expropriation of the expropriators" would seem to point to the final paragraphs of chapter 32⁽¹⁾ - the above mentioned discussion on Ireland is the only one of note. It is, therefore, highly likely that the criticisms were directed towards the now-famous section.

The research and preparation for the chapter derived from Marx's study of the capitalist mode of production, precisely capitalist accumulation, and was not written in or as a response to political events in Ireland. Hence, to suggest as Ralph Fox does, that the volume one section was written to provide an "economic basis to Fenianism" only partially equates with the facts.⁽²⁾ Certainly, Marx was more than aware of the growing interest and anxiety by members of the English working class about the treatment of imprisoned Fenians. In June 1867 he had ordered and received copies of the Report of Commissions on the "Treatment of the Treason-Felony Convicts in the English Convict Prisons" prepared by Alexander Knox and George Pollack. Yet, ironically perhaps, the Fenian "rising" of March of that year had passed off without comment. Further, although the final drafting of the Irish chapter was coincident with that event, there was no direct relationship between the two incidents, even as cause and effect.

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1. Marx Capital, vol.1, chap. 32, p. 763. ". . .The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capital integument. Thus integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."
 2. Fox, Marx, Engels and Lenin pp. 9-10.

The attention of the General Council of the International to the political question of the Fenians was instigated by a campaign raised on behalf of Fenian prisoners.⁽¹⁾ That incident, which led to the accidental death of a policeman, and to the subsequent execution of three Fenians, signalled, Engels wrote, "the final act of separation between England and Ireland."⁽²⁾ Comparing the political consequence of the execution with that of John Brown at Harpers Ferry, Engels continued:

to my knowledge, the only time that anybody has been executed for a similar matter in a civilised country was the case of John Brown at Harpers Ferry. The Fenians could not have wished for a better precedent. The Southerners had at least the decency to treat J. Brown as a rebel, whereas here everything is being done to transform a political attempt into a common crime.⁽³⁾

Marx's response, along with that of the General Council, was to partake in a debate within the council chambers on the Fenian Question.

In considering a paper for the Council debate on Fenianism, he prepared a wide-ranging, but economically-based analysis of Irish conditions, which examined Fenianism as the obvious political reaction to the economic situation - and it is here that Ralph Fox's comments are particularly enlightening. The execution of the Fenians three days before the

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1. See Doc. 2:170-9 (November 12, 15, 1867); Cf. Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867; Beehive, No. 315, October 26, 1867, and No. 316, November 2, 1867.
 2. Cf. Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867. "I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come federation."
 3. Engels to Marx, November 24, 1867. See also Marx's comments in

scheduled debate (November 26, 1867) had induced Marx to hand over his speaking time to Peter Fox, an English member of the General Council interested in the Irish Question. Marx had withdrawn from discussion when he feared that emotionalism - his own and that of the day - would cloud the real issues.⁽¹⁾ His prepared notes remained unpublished although he incorporated the material into a lecture he gave a month later to the German Workers Educational Association in London.

The notes reveal the basis of a well developed speech on Ireland, beginning with a few words on contemporary events, followed by an examination of post-famine conditions. Utilising statistical material familiar to the section in Capital, Marx asserted that the process of land consolidation, although "far from having reached the English point,"⁽²⁾ was transforming Ireland into an agricultural district of England. Fenianism was a natural response to these conditions, and combined under its wing elements of socialist, nationalist and republican - that is via America - ideas. The remedy, he suggested, was to include the call for repeal in the articles of the English democratic movement - a policy Engels had urged at the height of Chartism.⁽³⁾ While they supported the repeal campaign, both Marx and Engels voiced a strong preference for a federal solution, rather than total separation.⁽⁴⁾ In

his introduction to his undelivered speech to the General Council, November 26, 1867, MEI: 120.

1. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.
2. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 123.
3. Engels, "Coercion Bill", MEI: 45-7; Engels, "Feargus O'Connor and the Irish People", MEI: 48-50.
4. See, for example, Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867.

this light, it is unlikely, as Desmond Greaves suggests, that Marx desired to speak in order to dispell confusion over the status of Ireland as a "distinct country and not as a federal part of Britain."⁽¹⁾ Instead it seems more likely that he intended to address the General Council in order to replace emotionalism with a coherent economic analysis. His vacation of "the floor" would support this understanding.

On December 16, 1867, Marx was invited to address a meeting of the German Workers Educational Association, at whose meeting he had previously given many lectures, including a series in 1848 on wages, published later as Wage Labour and Capital.⁽²⁾ Using the outline of his undelivered speech, his intent, as he mentioned at the outset, was to deal with two major questions:

- 1) "what is distinctive of Fenianism?",
in other words, what it is and from where it had grown⁽³⁾
and
- 2) "that the regime England since 1846, though less barbarian in form, is in effect destructive, leaving no alternative but Ireland's voluntary emancipation by England or life-and-death struggle."⁽⁴⁾

The political bite of his speech came in the second half, after he had given a brief survey of English rule in Ireland since the twelfth

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1. Greaves, "Marx and Engels", p. 6.
 2. McLellan, Karl Marx, pp. 177-8.
 3. Cf. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 120.
 4. Marx, "Outline", MEI: 126.

century. Marx then concentrated on Ireland's failure to industrialise, calling attention to the disappearance of the subsequent prostrated state of Irish manufactures since the Union in 1801. His position on this point can appear slightly ambiguous. He alternated between placing blame squarely on England's shoulders - "Every time Ireland was about to develop industrially, she was crushed and reconverted into a purely agricultural land" - and implying a much deeper and truer analysis of uneven capitalist growth. In the case of the latter, his assessment of the downward spiral of Irish manufactures was seen as "inevitable" once England and Ireland traded freely.⁽¹⁾ Further, his account of the transference of Irish capital and labour to England is best understood - and clearly this was his interpretation - as a natural relation between agricultural and industrial sectors.⁽²⁾

The lecture concluded with an assessment of the post-famine period. Expanding upon ideas he had expressed earlier in November, Marx stated that the past twenty years had witnessed an unforeseen alteration in British Policy towards Ireland. Although the occurrence of a structural

1. Ibid. MEI: 131-2.

2. See E. L. Jones, ed., "Introduction", Agriculture and Economic Growth in England, 1650-1815 (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1967) especially pp. 35-6; A. H. John, "Agricultural Productivity and Economic Growth in England, 1700-1760 (with a postscript)", in E. J. Jones, ed., Agriculture and Economic Growth in England, 1650-1815 (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1967) pp. 172-93; Doreen Warriner, Economics of Peasant Farming (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1964); John W. Mellor, "Toward a Theory of Agricultural Development", in Hermann M. Southwark and Bruce F. Johnston, eds., Agricultural Development and Economic Growth (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967) pp. 21-61; G. D. Agrawal and P. C. Bansil, Economic Theory as Applied to Agriculture (Delhi and Bombay: Vikas Publications, 1971); Bruce F. Johnston and John W. Mellor, "The Role of Agriculture in Economic Development", in Karl H. Fox and D. Gale Johnson, eds., Readings in the Economics of Agriculture (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970) pp. 359-85;

transformation of Irish agriculture "was but a natural result of the barren fields," the effect had been to replace Irishmen with livestock. It was this last feature that particularly signalled the injurious nature of British policy - being both "conscious and deliberate" - and which, as he had raised in the introductory remarks, had led to the birth of the Fenians.

Review notes, recorded by Johann Georg Eccarius, a member of the German Workers Educational Association and the International General Council, drew out the finer points of Marx's analysis. Marx was concerned that the Irish question, as it was termed, was not seen as an isolated question of nationalism or nationality. Rather, as Marx had noted in his previous paper, the issue of repeal concerned equally the English working class, in whom he hoped to inspire political responsibility when he said "the domination of Ireland at present amounts to collecting rent for the English aristocracy." Once, however, the issue of domination was settled, the deeper question of landownership remained to the Irish themselves.⁽¹⁾ This very tight

Bruce F. Johnston, "Agriculture and Structural Transformation in Developing Countries: A Survey of Research", Journal of Economic Literature, vol. 8, No. 2 (June 1970) pp. 369-404; E. L. Jones and S. J. Woolf, eds., "Introduction: The Historical Role of Agrarian Change in Economic Development", Agrarian Change and Economic Development - The Historical Problems (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1969) pp. 1-21; V.I. Lenin, The Development of Capitalism in Russia, Collected Works, vol. 3 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964); Jarius Banaji, "Kautsky's Agrarian Question", Economy and Society, vol. 5, No. 1 (February 1976) pp. 1-49.

1. Eccarius, "Record of a Speech", MEI: 142. See also Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.

distinction between what was and was not, of the Irish condition, accountable to English rule reveals the crux of the political argument and is thus crucially important.

Both Marx and Engels, although to a greater extent the former, distinguished between industrial and agricultural handicaps. To the former, English manufacturing, more advanced and efficient, enjoyed an unfavourable advantage. With regard to agriculture, Marx claimed that English policy, unknowingly after 1848, crudely and injudiciously sought to supplant Irish endeavours in its own interests. Yet, having said that, Marx, and Engels in The Condition of the Working Class in England,⁽¹⁾ clearly stated that the final restructuring of Irish land remained the task of the Irish themselves. And it was in that restructuring that Ireland's future lay. Finally, the crisis of Irish agriculture, certainly aggravated and exaggerated by England, stemmed from indigenous Irish conditions.⁽²⁾

The content of both Marx's undelivered speech to the General Council and his lecture a month later incorporated the material contained in the volume one chapter of Capital. This similarity is not surprising given the timing of the speech and the lecture, but it is noteworthy that Marx did not deal again with the Irish question in such detail, either in published or unpublished form. Aside from his correspondence and contributions to the General Council, the material intended for his volume one study served as the basis for his subsequent

1. Engels, Condition, p. 310.

2. Marx to Jenny Longuet, April 29, 1881.

notes. Engels' work on Irish history in the years 1869-1870 might have filled in some gaps, updating or extending the initial analysis, but his studies, for the most part, concerned the pre-nineteenth century. Later correspondence centred around contemporary events and involved no additional analytic work on the economic question.

The three writings surveyed above were all drafted in 1867 and furnish with some exceptions⁽¹⁾ Marx and Engels' picture of post-famine Ireland. The remainder of this chapter will present an insight into that analysis. Chapter three will discuss Marx's view of Irish economic development against a theoretical background.

3. The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation

The significance of the chapter twenty-five study, (part f) of the first volume of Capital is contained in the nature of the economic argument. The section on Ireland continues Marx's examination of the general mechanics of the law of capitalist accumulation. The driving force behind Marx's model of the capitalist mode of production is provided by competition for accumulation of capital - the "expand or die" requirement fundamental to survival and the search for profit.⁽²⁾

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1. Other important documents are: Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867; Marx to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt, April 9, 1870; Marx, "Indian Question/Irish Tenant Right", MEI: 59-65; Marx, "Ireland's Revenge", MEI: 74-6.
 2. Michael Barret Brown, The Economics of Imperialism (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1974) p. 52; Alexander Erlich, "Notes on Marxian Model of Accumulation", American Economic Review, vol. 57 (May 1967) pp. 599-600.

The following excerpt outlines the gist of his argument.

The continued re-transformation of surplus value into capital now appears in the shape of the increasing magnitude of the capital that enters into the process of production. . . . Accumulation increases the concentration of that wealth [capital] in the hands of individual capitalists, and thereby widens the basis of production on a large scale. . . . in other words, the progressive transformation of isolated processes of production, carried on by customary methods, into processes of production socially combined and scientifically arranged. . . .

Capitalist accumulation constantly produces, and produces in direct ratio to its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant population of labourers. . . . This is a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production. . . . It forms a disposable industrial reserve army. . . (1)

The absolute law of capitalist accumulation poses the following equation: capitalist accumulation stands in a corresponding ratio to the reserve labour population and to the increasing misery of the working class.

Marx argued that only in agriculture does the progression of capitalism demand an absolute fall in the agricultural population. In contrast, labour in industry falls relative to the total capital employed. (2) Although he does not expand upon this distinction, Marx asserted that industrial capital reproduces the capital-relation on an ever-expanding scale, a development limited in agriculture because of natural limits to the amount of land available; industrial enterprises

1. Marx, Capital, 1:624, 625, 627, 632.

2. Marx, Capital, 1:642; see also Marx, Capital, 3:637.

need less acreage for a corresponding capital output.⁽¹⁾ As Cormac Ó Gráda notes, this implied explanation may be sufficient.⁽²⁾

Expanding upon these differences, Marx added that in non-agricultural industries - he noted manufactures as a general category here - capital accumulation is met by a greater attraction of labourers. While the demand for labour is not identical with an increase in total industrial capital, agriculture is continuously "setting free" its surplus, which in turn seeks employment as part of the proletarianised industrial labour force. The progression of accumulation rests upon the availability of employable labour; yet, the need for an increase in the numbers unemployed or only half-employed is independent of the absolute growth of the population. The nub of the relation turns upon the continual transformation of a part of the population into the labouring population. This increase is effected by the rather simple process of "setting free" the latent surplus population that exists in the agricultural areas. The word "latent" is the key. Marx said that the precondition for this internal migration assumes that non-capitalist agriculture supports, or indeed fails to support, a relatively large and surplus population. Given the availability of employment in industry, this surplus, until now latent, will gladly flow to the new employment areas.

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1. Ruth Louisa Cohen, The Economics of Agriculture, (London and Cambridge: University Press, 1949) pp. 23-30; Agrawal and Bansil, Economic Theory, p. 17; Warriner, Peasant Farming, p. 2-4.
 2. Cormac Ó Gráda, "Karl Marx and Post-Famine Ireland", Dublin, n.d. (typewritten) p. 9.

Capitalist accumulation, argued Marx, centres on the pre-condition for concentration and centralisation of land ownership, for which the enclosures in England provide a good example, and of changes in the means of production - the introduction of labour-saving machinery - without which the "childhood of capitalist production" would have been "impossible." If the availability of a surplus labour power was not sufficient, these natural limits on capitalist expansion would have to be forcibly removed as witnessed in the English case aforementioned, and implied in the Irish case examined later in that chapter. England furnished, Marx concluded, a classic example of capitalist accumulation.

The description of accumulation assumes, naturally enough, an expanding economy both agriculturally and industrially. The mechanism of the capitalist mode of production, Marx continued, supposes the continual re-investment of a portion of the surplus-value accrued from production. The rate of accumulation depends upon the share of that surplus-value, that is added each year to the original capital. Only capital is an independent factor; all others, such as "the level of industrial employment and the unemployed rate, movements in wages and prices, and the pace of technological change are dependent on it."⁽¹⁾ This depends upon the "complete separation of the labourer from all property." This process, which is continually reproduced in the relation between agriculture and industry, warrants an examination of the relation between Ireland and England.

The section on Ireland follows directly upon the needs of Marx's account of the law of capitalist accumulation. Grouped under the heading "illustrations of the law. . ." is included the British

1. Brown, Imperialism, p. 53.

agricultural proletariat, the badly-paid strata of the British industrial class, the nomad population, the best-paid strata of the British working class, and Ireland. The intent was to document accumulation by focusing attention on the centralisation and concentration of capital, and on the living and labouring conditions of the agricultural and industrial proletariat. Addressing himself in the concluding section of the chapter to Ireland, he remarked on the necessity of this inclusion: ". . .we must travel for a moment to Ireland" before finalising the study. Then, proceeding in the same vein as shown by the sections on elements of the British working class, Marx began with an account of the direct ratio between accumulation and the reserve army of labour. Indeed he set out in this section to give further meat to his examination of the law of capitalist accumulation, and to offer the operation of the law as an explanation for the economic undevelopment of Ireland.

Ireland was viewed as a British colony undergoing the process of total integration with England, marked historically by the Union between England and Ireland in 1801, but more so economically by the famine in 1846. In a letter to Engels dated November 30, 1867, Marx called attention to this change when he wrote: "What the English do not yet know is that since 1846 the economic content and therefore also the political aim of English domination in Ireland have entered into an entirely new phase." Hence, the discussion of Ireland was included with that of other sections of the English working class because Ireland was seen by Marx as an economic and geographical unit of England. This changed relationship justifies the seemingly ambiguous position that Ireland holds in both Marx and Engels' writings. For example, Engels had written to Marx upon return from

from Ireland in May 1856 that "Ireland may be regarded as England's first colony." It is interesting that Engels did not seem to note any shift in British policy from what he described as the "old way." Taken as a historical fact, Engels' comment is undoubtedly true; taken as an assessment of the mid-nineteenth century, this view might seem to jar with Marx's vision several years later, when in volume one Capital, he described Ireland as an "agricultural district of England."⁽¹⁾ The key, however, is revealed in the distinction that Marx gave to the change from what can be called colonies under mercantile capitalism, and colonies under industrial capitalism. The confusion portrayed in Marx and Engels' writings on Ireland as a colony or as part of England is manifested by the dual-usage of the term colony to explain two different economic relations. Hence, Engels referred to Ireland as a colony, and Marx termed it an agricultural district of England in much the same manner as one would include East Anglia or the Midlands.

To clarify this distinction, a brief résumé of the change in British colonial policy and colonial theory would be helpful. The main features of the mercantilist period, roughly from the 16th century until the latter 18th century is the relation between economically advanced countries with undeveloped countries. The major trading nations of Spain, Holland, France and England built up, during these centuries,

1. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 123. Cf. R. D. C. Black, "The Irish Experience in Relation to the Theory and Policy of Economic Development", in A. J. Youngson, ed., Economic Development in the Long Run (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972) pp. 206-7.

empires which involved measures :

- 1) to secure and protect the safety of their merchant trading companies, e.g. the British East India Company's endeavours in India received backup military and political support from London,
- 2) to exclude by force, if necessary, competition and
- 3) to regulate trade between the mother country and the colony to the benefit of the former.⁽¹⁾

Ireland in this context was, as Engels put it, England's first colony. The policy was primarily that of domination and conquest. Attempts at colonisation, in the sense of the establishment of settler colonies - represented best by the plantation schemes in Ulster - were not very successful, especially when compared with similar moves into North America. Mercantilism was thus characterised by an active colonial policy (territorial expansion and acquisition) and foreign trade which increased the supply of capital to the mother country. This is not to suggest that mercantilist policies alone succeeded in developing capitalism, because clearly there was the need for a new class of industrial capitalists, but rather to point out that capitalism did not emerge in Europe without the aid of foreign treasure.⁽²⁾

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1. Paul Sweezy, Theory of Capitalist Development (London: Monthly Review Press, 1942) p. 297.
 2. Brown, Imperialism, pp 84-5; Samir Amin, Unequal Development, trans, Brian Pearce (Hassocks, Sussex: the Harvester Press, 1976) pp. 156-7; John Bowle, The Imperial Achievement, The Rise and Transformation of the British Empire (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1974) pp. 107-18.

The nineteenth century, when the initial effects of the industrial revolution were strong enough to be felt, witnessed a change in colonial policy and thinking. In 1793 Jeremy Bentham had published his Emancipate your Colonies, a voice echoed by James Mill in 1821 and 1823, and by J. R. McCulloch in 1825. The question asked was whether the return from these colonies warranted their continued possession: McCulloch challenged anyone to "point out a single benefit of any sort whatever derived from the possession of Canada."⁽¹⁾ Marx, years later and with different intent, agreed when he showed that the burden of the Indian administration was borne, in actual fact, not by colonial wealth, but by the English taxpayer.⁽²⁾ While these remarks effected no decolonisation moves, they seem to have coincided with a new theoretical justification for the retention of colonies - one that more adequately matched and indeed aided the expansion of industrial capitalism.

The growth of British industry after the turn into the nineteenth century placed new demands upon British policy-making. Restrictions placed on trade and manufacturing under mercantilism proved to be a severe restraint upon the mobility of capital, material and labour required by capitalism. While almost every aspect of mercantilism,

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1. A. B. L. Shaw, ed., "Introduction", Great Britain and the Colonies, 1851-1865, Debates on Economic History, Series, General Editor, Peter Mathias (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1970) pp. 2-3.
 2. Avineri, "Introduction", in Karl Marx, p. 19. Cf. the financial burden of Irish colonisation at the beginning of the 14th century; see James Lydon, Ireland in the Later Middle Ages, Gill History of Ireland, vol. 6, edited by James Lydon and Margaret MacCurtain (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1973) pp.86-8.

from regulations on trade, e.g. the corn laws, and on land ownership⁽¹⁾ came under attack by free traders, the era of free trade did not, notes Gallagher and Robinson, meet with a cry to free the colonies. Instead, what occurred was an alteration in British colonial policy to one that, as Wakefield and the Colonial Office advocated, identified colonial expansion with industrial development in England. The change in the colonial system after the Napoleonic Wars was characterised by a general strategy which sought "to convert these areas into complimentary satellite economies, which would provide raw materials and food for Great Britain, and also provide widening markets for its manufacturers."⁽²⁾

It was to this altered face of colonialism that Marx addressed himself in his writings of Ireland. Indeed, Marx's recognition of this change in British (economic) foreign policy, as illustrated by the Irish case, is tremendously incisive, and he seems to have appreciated the distinction between colonies under capitalism from those under mercantilism much quicker than Engels. Certainly it was on Marx's understanding that Hobson, Lenin and others built their theory of imperialism, which saw the maintenance and expansion of colonial acquisitions as a fail-safe for the contradictions within

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1. Marx, "The Indian Question", MEI: 63-5.
 2. John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade", in Shaw, Great Britain, pp. 153 and 147. See also George Lichtheim, Imperialism (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1971) pp. 38-9; Lilian Charlotte A. Knowles, The Industrial and Commercial Revolution in Great Britain During the 19th Century (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1933) p. 357.

capitalism.⁽¹⁾

The essence of Marx's view of colonies under the capitalist mode is that they function as part of the contradictions of capitalism. Colonial expansion was named by Marx as one of the counteracting tendencies to the tendency for the rate of profit to fall. The colony provides a source of cheap labouring population, raw materials, and markets. It also - and this is the nub of imperialism which sees the export of capital overseas as its distinguishing feature - served as a profitable receptacle for the investment of surplus capital. On this point Marx said that capital so invested "may yield higher rates of profit for the simple reason that the rate of profit is higher there due to backward development, and likewise the exploitation of labour because of the use of slaves, coolies, etc."⁽²⁾

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1. This should not suggest full agreement between Hobson and Lenin on the question of imperialism, although Lenin did use Hobson's earlier study as a base. Hobson felt imperialism, was an unnecessary development of capitalism which could be held in control by social reform, primarily a redistribution of wealth. Imperialism he said, was a function of under-consumption within the capitalist country, and of the consequent need to absorb the surplus and maintain profits. Lenin said that imperialism arose from within the capitalist mode of production and the need to expand its level of production, and that the answer existed in socialism. Lenin focused attention on the laws of capitalism itself rather than on problems of the market. Unlike Hobson who identified imperialism with territorial possessions alone, Lenin claimed that the export of capital was its most significant feature, and that this was shown through capital investments in European countries. Both, however, recognised that the "new imperialism" of the 19th century was qualitatively different from that of the 16th and 17th centuries, and both, in line with Marx, sought an economic understanding of its development. See also Michael Bleaney, Underconsumption Theories, A History and Critical Analysis (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1976) pp.102-19, 145-85; Alan Hodgart, The Economics of European Imperialism, Foundations of Modern History Series, edited by V. G. Kieran (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1977) pp. 13-43; P. J. Cain, "J. A. Hobson, Cobdenism and the Radical Theory of Economic Imperialism, 1898-1914", Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. 31, No. 4 (November 1978) pp. 565-84; V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism, CW: 22.
 2. Marx, Capital 3:238. Cf. Rosa Luxemburg, Accumulation of Capital: "Chapter 25 of Capital volume one is devoted to describing the

In either case, the exploitation of colonies allowed capitalist accumulation to proceed, although Marx noted that eventually the rate of profit begins to fall again. It is on this understanding that Marx examined Ireland.

In the lecture presented to the German workers in December 1867, Marx argued that the prostration of Irish manufactures, and the deliberate depopulation of and consolidation of the agricultural lands, secured for England additional capital. Without industry, Irish middlemen sent their accumulated fortunes to England to be invested. The investment of Irish capital plus the emigration of labour provided England with both "cheap labour and cheap capital" with which to build up "the great works of Britain." And in volume one Capital, he stated ". . .Ireland is at present only an agricultural district of England marked off by a wide channel from the country to which it yields corn, wood, cattle, industrial and military recruits."⁽¹⁾ Thus, Marx appears to be documenting the inevitable relationship between agriculture and industry without explicitly saying so. Having said that, it should be

origin of the English proletariat, or the capitalist agricultural tenant class and of industrial capital, with the particular emphasis on looting of colonial countries by European capital." Quoted in Roman Rosdolsky, The Making of Marx's Capital, trans. Pete Burgess (London: Pluto Press, 1977) p. 279.

1. Marx, Capital, 1:702-3; Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856. Unlike Marx who stated that the colonial relationship turned Ireland into a "sheep-walk" for England, thus expressing a negative quality, Hans Staehle states that this "division of functions" served to develop Ireland's dry cattle production. See "Statistical Notes on the Economic History of Irish Agriculture, 1847-1913", JSSISI, vol. 18 (1950-1) pp. 444-71. See also J. F. Burke, Outlines of the Industrial History of Ireland ([Dublin]: Browne & Nolan Ltd., [1920]) pp. 134-5.

pointed out that Marx considered Ireland primarily in its connection with England, and not as an independent country. To an extent the question of independence is a non sequitur; rather, it is the question of the internal structure or lack of such an infa-structure in the Irish economy as it then existed that needs to be considered as well. Without such an examination, one can easily fall prey to a conspiratorial thesis and conclude that England destroyed Ireland, without exploring the actual potentials of Irish economic growth; without, to go further, raising the question of uneven development.

Fundamental to the law of accumulation was what Marx termed the law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode, which, as every other mode of production, has its own "special laws of population." Marx argued that as capitalism advanced, it produced at the same time a growing surplus population, whose condition deteriorated in proportion as capital accumulated. The argument can be summarised as follows:

The labouring population therefore produces, along with the accumulation of capital produced by it, the means by which itself is made relatively superfluous, is turned into a relative surplus-population; and it does this to an always increasing extent. . . .This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation. . . .

. . .all methods for the production of surplus-value are at the same time methods of accumulation; and every extension of accumulation becomes again a means for the development of those methods. It follows therefore that in proportion as capital accumulates, the lot of the labourer, be his payment high or low, must grow worse. The law. . .establishes an accumulation of misery, corresponding with accumulation of capital.(1)

The industrial reserve army increases in correspondence with the advance of capital accumulation. England's technical means for saving labour

1. Marx, Capital, 1:631, 644, 645.

are colossal and is further demonstrative of the mechanism that joins capital and population. As capital expands so does its requirements for labour but not in an identical ratio. Rather, the modernisation of the means of production and concentration of those same tools and machines decreases the number of labourers required relative to capital's advance. Thus, expanding capital increases demands for labour, but dialectically, through the adoption of technical means, reduces its overall labour requirements. Hence, as capital expands, so does the reserve army of labour, augmented by the continual "setting free" of labour from the agricultural sector. The competition exerted by these growing numbers of unemployed or half-employed forces those that are employed to submit to longer hours, greater productivity, and lower wages. The general movement of wages is, therefore, shown by Marx to be regulated by this relation between the reserve and active armies of labour.

Ireland played an active role in this scheme. Undergoing a process of forced depopulation, which Marx likened to that which had occurred in the Scottish Highlands in previous centuries, Ireland was transformed into an agricultural pasture land providing England with plenty of beef to assuage the palatial desires brought on by increased incomes, in the second half of the 19th century.⁽¹⁾

1. Marx, "Elections/Financial Clouds", MEI: 53; Marx, "Report", MEI: 133; A. H. John, "The Course of Agricultural Change, 1660-1760", in L. S. Pressnell, ed., Studies in the Industrial Revolution (London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1960) p. 155; A. H. John, "Anglo-Irish Trade, 1750-1850", Paper delivered to the Economic and Social History Society Conference, Cork, Ireland, September 1977; Brown, Imperialism, p. 76.

As the agricultural population was "set free" it turned to England for industrial employment. Its numbers raised dramatically the surplus labour force, and subsequently put pressure on those wages received by industrial workers - a factor that heightened national animosity as the English claimed that Irish emigrants would accept low wages and bad conditions. In this excerpt from The Condition of the Working Class in England, Engels accurately and dispassionately described this tension in 1844, pointing to the role of the reserve army in promoting accumulation by its numbers and then through its numbers fostering competition among workers. This, in part, allowed British manufacturing to produce more at less and thus successfully compete against other contenders.

The rapid expansion of British industry could not have taken place if there had not been available a reserve army of labour among the poverty-stricken people of Ireland. . . .These Irish workers pay only fourpence passage-money to get to England and they are often packed like cattle on the deck of the steamboat. They are found everywhere. The worst accommodation is good enough for them; they take no trouble with regard to their clothes which hang in tatters; they go barefoot. They live solely on potatoes and any money left over from the purchase of potatoes goes on drink. Such folk do not need high wages. . . .

It is with such people that the English workers have to compete. They are competitors whose standard of living is the lowest conceivable in a civilised country and consequently they are able to work for lower wages than anyone else. In the circumstances Carlyle is right when he observes that in all occupations where English and Irish workers compete it is inevitable that the wages earned by the English should be continually forced down to even lower wages. . . .(1)

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1. Engels, Condition, pp. 104-5, 107; E. J. Hobsbawm, Age of Revolution, 1789-1848 (New York: Mentor Books, New American Library Inc., 1962) pp. 69-70; Frederick Engels, "Commerical Crisis in

Marx made similar comments almost thirty years later when he noted the existence in "every industrial and commercial centre" in England of a working class divided into hostile national camps. The English bourgeoisie emerged the victor in its bid to set the English and Irish proletarians against each other and, thus, mask the power of capitalism.⁽¹⁾

Further light is shed on the law of capitalist accumulation by Marx's documentation of the immiseration of the working class.⁽²⁾ In

England/The Chartist Movement/Ireland", La Réforme, October 26, 1847, MEI: 44.

1. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 9, 1870. See also Mrs. Gaskell, North and South, intro. Esther Alice Chadwick (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., Everyman's Library, 1914) pp. 138, 167, 220, 310.
2. Rosdolsky, Capital, pp. 302ff., argues that Marx did not hold a theory of increasing immiseration, and that to suggest Marx believed in such a theory would necessitate placing Marx in the camp of supporters of the iron law of wages, which clearly he was not. Further, Rosdolsky argues that the theory of immiseration is incompatible with "the determination of labour-power, his polemic against the 'iron law of wages,'" and his thesis on the connection between growing intensity and productivity of labour and increases in real wages." (pp. 306-7) Instead Marx, Rosdolsky continues, said that while the "lazarus layers of the working class" might be sinking, the working class as a whole, or at least sections of it [cf. Eric Hobsbawm's "labour aristocracy," Labouring Men, Studies in the History of Labour (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964)] were "rising in the social scale." Engels in 1881 wrote (see MEW: 35:19-20) that it was to the merit of the trade unions that they were able to "keep up and raise the standard of life." Hence, concludes Rosdolsky, the theory of immiseration must be consigned to the realm of "scientific misunderstanding." (p. 306). Cf. Royden Harrison, Before the Socialists, Studies in Labour and Politics: 1861-1881. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965) pp. 22ff; Ronald L. Meek, "Marx's 'Doctrine of increasing Misery'", Science and Society, vol. 26. (1961) pp. 422-41.

contrast to his contemporaries, many of whom were eager to point out any possible signs of improvement,⁽¹⁾ Marx stressed the deteriorating condition of the labourer, Irish as well as English, in relation to increasing capital and profits. In contrast to the emphasis placed in earlier chapters of Capital on the working day, in chapter twenty-five, Marx concentrated upon the workers' living environment with particular preference for the worst paid of the agricultural and industrial proletariat. Remarking on this new direction, Marx noted that consideration of the labourers' "condition outside the workshop must also be looked at" in order to gain a full grasp of the law of accumulation.⁽²⁾ In the section on Ireland, in similar fashion to Engels' exposure of Manchester, Marx examined the condition of the labourer in Ireland, and the rise of pauperism, crime and mental illness in relation to the advance of capital. These deteriorated conditions summed up the absolute law of capitalist accumulation.

It, therefore, becomes evident that Marx attempted to cite the case of Ireland as an illustration of the law of capitalist accumulation. Whether Ireland is an adequate example or indeed whether it accurately reflects the law is not debatable at this point. That Ireland sufficed aided not only Marx's analysis in Capital, but gave additional support to contemporary political demands, especially that of repeal. It was, after all, in the transition from a colonial to a regional status that the exploitation of Ireland came to the forefront. A further point should be made here: Marx sought to emphasise a "regional" connection as a fundamental cause of Irish backwardness.

1. Ó Gráda, "Karl Marx", p. 2.

2. Capital, 1:653. See also Meek, "Immiseration".

In summary, the reader emerges with an account of the law of capitalist accumulation as responsible for economic under-development - an explanation that, however politically tangible, may not be totally correct.

Despite rising interest in the Irish question and the burgeoning impotence of the English working class, Marx was not offering a theory of colonialisaton as such but of accumulation - what he had to say about colonialism in volume one (Wakefield's theory of systematic colonialisaton) and volume three (counteracting tendencies of the falling rate of profit) touch upon the Irish case only slightly. There is, however, the question of whether there is a theory of colonialism (under the capitalist mode of production) that exists separately from the process of accumulation. To an extent this is a tautology, in that both, Marx would argue, are inherent in capitalism although emphasis upon colonialism would imply that external forces rather than internal structural factors were responsible for underdevelopment. However, in the example of nineteenth century Ireland, focus on the law of accumulation grants greater attention to the tendency towards specialisation in production, which is a direct outcome of competition; this is especially the case where natural factors, such as climate, soil, mineral resources, etc., come down in favour of one country rather than another. Samir Amin states in his study of Unequal Development that ". . .the immediate advantage derived from specialisation will determine the direction of development as between the two countries in such a way that the one that agrees to specialise in the less dynamic branches of production will lose by

doing so, in the long run."⁽¹⁾ While one must ask whether the answer to Irish problems of development are deeper than that offered by the theory of accumulation, one must bear in mind that, as Marx presented it, the law of capitalist accumulation goes furthest to penetrate the morass of Irish economic historiography left by both classicalist and nationalist opinion alike.

This point deserves underlining. By placing consideration of Ireland in the chapter dealing with accumulation, Marx has made his greatest contribution to an understanding of the Irish economy. Beating a clear, independent path between classicalist and nationalist historians, he has offered a penetrating analysis of the interdependence of the two islands that has unfortunately gone unobserved. On the one hand, classicalists and modern-day bourgeois historians want to argue that there is a clear delineation between England's intention as regard Ireland, and its effect. In other words, England did not set out to denude Ireland, it just occurred as a result of English capitalism's internal demands. On the other hand, nationalist historians argue that England, in an almost vindictive manner, sought to undermine the Irish economy and culture because it was a threat to the former's livelihood.⁽²⁾ Where Marx differs is that he stated, that in a single

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1. Amin, Unequal Development, p. 136. See here Staehle, "Statistical Notes on the Economic History of Irish Agriculture, 1847-1913," JSSISI, vol. 18 (1950-51) p. 457.
 2. See for example, L. M. Cullen, An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660 (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1972), Joseph Lee, The Modernisation of Irish Society, 1848-1918, vol. 10, Gill History of Ireland series, James Lydon and Margaret MacCurtain, eds. (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1973) pp. 21-35; and George O'Brien, The Economic History of Ireland - From the Union to the Famine (n.p.: Longmans Green & Co., 1921; reprint ed., Clifton, N. J.: Augustus M. Kelley, 1972). I am grateful to Paul Sweeney for bringing this point to my attention.

economy, which Ireland and England were, certain actions were, so-to-speak, capitalistically over-determined; nevertheless, the effect was dramatic and disastrous as far as Ireland was concerned. To some extent, one may argue that Marx's position is a compromise. The key, however, is that it is the law of capitalist accumulation that makes his position so revealing and incisive for one's understanding of nineteenth century Ireland. As asked above, does this then eliminate generally accepted notions of colonialism? No, it does not; rather it seeks to place consideration of colonialism in a context removed entirely from the zone of conspiratorial politics.⁽¹⁾ The pattern for the Anglo-Irish link was, as Engels wrote in his History, a direct result of the existence of and/or lack of certain natural factors, which under historical conditions were either enhanced or degraded.

Reasoning along this line has similarly challenged traditional views of Indian economic history, which saw British domination as an exercise in Indian underdevelopment, using the word in the sense of

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1. See also Nicos Mouzelis, "Capitalism and Dictatorship in Post-War Greece", New Left Review, No. 96 (March-April 1976) p. 74f, who similarly critiques analyses of political events which are seen purely as the machinations of CIA-inspired activities without cognisance of class alignments within the particular country. Speaking of the rise and fall of the Greek Junta, he says, "The usual explanation in terms of a CIA decision is unconvincing and superficial. . . Superficial, because such an easy explanation draws attention away from the underlying structural reasons within the army organisation which can throw light on this fundamental split and from the more general conditions in the army conducive to the mobilization of junior officers for a coup." See also Alan Swingewood, Marx and modern social theory (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1975) who argues that C. W. Mill's elite theory displays a tendency towards conspiracy, resting upon a secret hidden movement of the rich against the poor. Swingewood offers an interesting appraisal of conspiracy theories. (pp. 157-65).

André Gunder Frank.⁽¹⁾ An indication of the direction of this interpretation can be seen in the following excerpt from an article titled "Towards a Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History" by Morris D. Morris. Morris states:

The conventional doctrine starts with a notion of 'traditional India' a subsistence economy which was self-contained and static. Into this traditional socio-economic order the shattering influence of market forces represented by western commercial and industrial competition, reinforced by the power of the modern imperial state.

Arguing that nineteenth century India may have, in contrast to general opinion, been a period of capital growth supported by the policies of the British raj, Morris concludes that his research

throws serious doubt on the notion that British policy deliberately and effectively inhibited economic expansion in India. While British policy did not actively encourage new industrial expansion, the career of the cotton textile industry suggests that other factors were probably much more important in explaining the limited industrialization in nineteenth century India.(2)

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1. See André Gunder Frank "The Development of Underdevelopment", in Robert Rhodes, ed., Imperialism and Underdevelopment: A Reader (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1970) pp. 14-7, and André Gunder Frank, On Capitalist Development (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1975).
 2. My emphasis. Journal of Economic History, vol. 23 (1963) pp. 607, 614. Also, Barrington Moore, Jr. Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966) p. 321; W. J. Macpherson "Economic Development in India Under the British Crown, 1856-1947", in Youngson, Economic Development, pp. 129-30. Regarding Morris' interpretation of Indian economic history, Macpherson had this to

Is the law of capitalist accumulation alone adequate to explain Ireland's peculiar economic circumstances? I do not think so, a point which Marx and Engels would have accepted. All they said was that until the politico-economic arrangement between England and Ireland was ended capitalist accumulation would continually see the developmental paralysis of the latter. The removal of that link would not, as many Irish nationalists believed, bring automatic prosperity; instead, it would allow the structural defects of the economy, e.g. lack of adequate industrial raw materials, an infantile capitalist class, and a "semi-feudal" land system, to become visible. As with political strategy, they sought always to remove extraneous and divisive factors that clouded the ultimate struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Repeal of the Union would produce a similar effect.

One final point to consider about Marx's section on Ireland: the Irish example appears to have given Marx visual evidence of the introduction of capitalist production into agriculture. The official statistics which could have plotted the land centralisation in England were available for only ten counties, while they were to hand for Ireland.⁽¹⁾

say: "Since Independence, and increasingly since Morris and Stein reviewed the field in their notable bibliographic essay in 1961 ["The Economic History of India: A Bibliographic Essay", Journal of Economic History, vol. 21, No. 2, (June 1961)] a new, more sophisticated and analytical approach to Indian economic history is evident. . . [It shows] a new style and expertise and less emotional involvement with the pro-and anti-British argument than do some of their predecessors." For a brief outline of the two positions, see Macpherson, pp. 126ff. For a traditional argument on Britain's role in India, see Davey, Economic Development of India.

1. Marx Capital, 1:649.

As Marx considered Ireland an agricultural district of England, the use of Ireland as a concrete and theoretical specimen with which to survey capitalist development appears possible. This approach is borne out in several remarks made on economic transformation experienced in Ireland after the famine, particularly noting the similarities in the process with that of England. An example is found in an article written in 1855 for Neue Oder-Zeitung, titled "Ireland's Revenge", wherein Marx wrote

In the course of this revolution the Irish agricultural system is being replaced by the English system, the system of small tenures by big tenures, and the modern capitalist is taking the place of the old landowner.(1)

How well the Irish case matched or even compared favourably with England can only be hinted at here, but suffice it to say that because, in part, Marx sought a similarity he overlooked the particularities of Irish development. Perhaps had he delved deeper into an analysis of Ireland itself these incongruities may have become more apparent. It only remains to be said that although the analysis did not correctly coincide with actual happenings in the Irish economy, it should not be interpreted that the Irish experience failed to have an appreciable or crucial impact on Marx's writings.

1. MEI: 76.

4. Capital and the Irish Economy

The main body of Marx's comments on Ireland, contained in Capital and the subsequent papers of November and December 1867, centre around agriculture. This is not surprising as Ireland's economy was primarily agrarian. As a political economist he concentrated on the post-Union period, referring to political aspects of British rule insofar as they bore direct relevance to the economic situation. In his report to the German workers, for example, he briefly sketched the background to contemporary developments, heavily emphasising the effect English rule had on the economy in contrast to Engels' concern with what he saw as the destruction of Celtic communalism. Further evidence for this interpretation can be found in the above-mentioned debate on the Fenians in the General Council (November 1867). The tone of the volume one study, which laid the basis for these other two major documents considered here, is marked by the absence of any commentary on the political question, discussion of which is confined to the correspondence.

The December speech contains the most detailed outline of the major periods in Irish history as Marx saw it. Undoubtedly Engels intended to expand considerably upon it as witnessed by his comprehensive draft plan, although regrettably he was never able to complete it. Irish history was subdivided by Marx into the following periods:

1. Before the Reformation.
2. Protestant Epoch. 16th and 17th Centuries.
3. Restoration of the Stuarts.
4. Ireland Defrauded. 1692-1776.
5. Time of Transition. 1776-1801.
6. Destruction of Irish Industry.
Re-conversion into agricultural land. 1801-1846.
7. Clearing of the Estates of Ireland. 1846-1867.

Despite its inclusion, no serious time was devoted to the period prior to 1800 except as a means by which "to clarify the difference between the present and past, and secondly, to bring out a few points about the character of those who are now called Irish people."⁽¹⁾ Following this pattern, the remainder of this chapter will present a picture of Ireland's economy in the nineteenth century as told by Marx and Engels. For the most part this exegesis is drawn from the three works under discussion, although it will not be confined to them.

Marx designated the period 1776-1801 as a "time of transition." It was marked by the rise of an Anglo-Irish bourgeoisie, the golden-age of Irish manufacturing, and their joint conquest and submission to the interests of English capitalism. The English government, under pressure from recent precedents of democratisation brought by the American and French revolutions, made concessions to the Anglo-Irish. The Penal Code was slackened, and in 1783, an independent parliament was established in

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1. Marx, "Report", MEI: 127. Notebooks collected by Marx during 1869 and entitled "Hibernia", give a detailed picture of the period from 1779-1801, a period dealing with Grattan's Parliament, economic protectionism, and the United Irishmen. These notebooks are unpublished; they are available in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam; MS B/115.

Dublin. The Irish parliament on behalf of its class, the bourgeoisie, placed protective tariffs on its weak manufactures; that is, it was weak in relation to expanding English manufacturing which had surged forward with the initial days of the industrial revolution. Free trade between the two islands had been introduced in 1779, when England removed the hindrances against Irish goods which had been instituted in 1698. When "equal rights" were granted to the Irish Parliament it immediately imposed duties "with the intention of enabling some of her people to employ some of their surplus labour, etc."

The passage in Westminster of the Act of Union between England and Ireland in 1801 represented a dramatic turn-about from the policies pursued by the Anglo-Irish. As the Union came into effect, "the struggle between the Anglo-Irish and the English" expired, and "Irish manufacturers gradually disappeared" in the face of the elimination of tariffs. The independent parliament voted itself out of existence in order that it might be absorbed immediately by Westminster. Marx stressed the effect this had upon the woollen and textile industries by comparing the years before the Act of Union with those twenty and forty years later. He concluded that the decrease in the number of manufacturers and those employed revealed that "every time Ireland was about to develop industrially she was crushed and reconverted into a purely agricultural land."⁽¹⁾ The tariffs, which had furnished a guarded impetus for Irish manufacturing from 1789 to 1801, saw their natural counterpart when free trade was re-established.

The following figures, selected from those quoted by Marx in his December speech, give an indication of the rise and rapid fall

1. Marx, "Report", MEI: 132; Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856.

to which he referred:⁽¹⁾ The linen industry of Ulster, which survived,

DUBLIN:

Master Woolen manufacturers	1800. . .	91	1840. . .	12
Hands employed	"	4,918	"	602
Master woolcombers	"	30	1834	5
Hands employed	"	230	"	66

KILKENNY:

Blanket manufacturers	1800	56	1822. . .	42
Hands employed	"	3,000	"	925

BALBRIGGAN:

Calico-looms at work	1799. . .	2,500	1841. . .	226
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WICKLOW:

Handlooms at work	1800. . .	1,000	1841. . .	0
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CORK:

Braid Weavers	1800. . .	1,000	1834. . .	40
Worsted Weavers	"	2,000	"	90
Woolcombers	"	700	"	110
Cottonweavers	"	2,000	"	220

1. Ibid, MEI: 131-2. The existence of a strong similarity between the figures provided by Marx and those by Isaac Butt in Irish People and Irish Land (Dublin: John Falconer Printer, 1867) suggest that Marx used Butt's statistical evidence. We know that Marx read Butt's book, and that Engels referred to its usefulness in a

did not and could not compensate - either as an industrial spark or as a source of employment - for the slack. Marx stated that this decline was a "natural consequence" of the Union and the removal of protective tariffs. Implied was the explicit recognition that capitalism operates efficiently and effectively against small, almost still-borne, manufacturing in the interests of large-scale production (especially when competition involves two neighbours).

The integrationist policy of England marked this period as one of transition. Marx claimed that this new approach, sought to transform Ireland from a territorial possession into a national region. The Act of Union in 1801 ended the possibility of an independent industrial Ireland for the moment. Given this condition, Marx argued for the placement of tariffs as a primary political demand and economic necessity. The implementation of this would follow the successful attainment of repeal of the Union.⁽¹⁾

letter to Sigismund Borkheim in March 1872. Butt's letter to Lord Lifford, contained in the above book, was written April 20, 1867. While Marx appears to have copied Butt's figures, with the exception of the hands employed in the woolen manufactures in Dublin (Butt gives 4,038 and 682 respectively for 1800 and 1841), he did not accept Butt's analysis for the decline in Irish industry. Marx prefaced his remarks with an account of the Act of Union; Butt, in contrast, with a fixation upon the system of land tenures, examined the effect a dominant agricultural system made upon industrial growth. The difference between the two sets of figures is found in the additional statistics provided by Cork and Balbriggan. It is possible that Butt's figures were the standard ones, and that he did not use all the available data. It should also be noted that Marx's figures do not include or refer at all to Belfast manufactures. Compare further the attitude expressed by Marx in favour of protective tariffs for Ireland after independence, with the view stated in a "Speech on the Question of Free Trade", delivered to the Democratic Association of Brussels, January 9, 1848, CW 6: 450-65.

1. See Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867.

To an extent Marx and Engel's position on Ireland appears to be similar to their one on German tariffs. First in 1848, and reiterated in 1868, both Marx and Engels argued that protection could, under circumstances such as existed in Germany, be advantageous to the maturation of the bourgeoisie:

This is why we see that in those countries where the bourgeoisie has begun to make itself felt as a class, in Germany for example, it is making great efforts to have protective tariffs. These are its weapons against feudalism and against absolute government, a means of concentrating its forces and achieving free trade within the country. (1)

In a speech made to the International in 1868, Marx referred again to the singularity of the German case, remarking on the temporary benefits of tariffs.

Marx's comments in this regard place him in company with prevalent contemporary opinion among Irish nationalists, who, since the days of Grattan's Parliament, had argued for the placement of protective measures. (2) The enforcement of the Union gave birth to an economic

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1. Marx, "Free Trade", CW 6:465. However, note difference illustrated in chapter 5.
 2. See Isaac Butt, "Protection to Home Industry: Some Case of its Advantage Considered", (Dublin: n.p., 1840); John Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints of Ireland (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, 1888); John O'Connell, The Commercial Injustice. Extract from appendix of a report to the Repeal Association, (Dublin n.p., 1843); R. D. C. Black, "The Irish Experience", pp. 200-5; R. D. C. Black, "Economic Studies at Trinity College, Dublin", Hermathena, No. 71 (1948) pp. 54-5; Cullen, Economic History, pp. 107, 164.

nationalism combining desires for an independent national parliament with an unlimited confidence in Ireland's industrial future. The two concepts merged into one with the subsequent view that without independence there could be no industry. Industrial decay, hitting the southern textile manufactures hardest, coincided with the Act of Union historically, and thus became entangled as such in popular folklore. Marx followed in this tradition. Thus, while he condemned protectionism as an "artificial means of manufacturing manufactures" and as a "hinderance to industrial progress" he accepted and favoured the imposition of tariffs for an independent - yet federal - Ireland.

Without the advent of industry, the Irish population was forced to either remain as an agricultural labour force on English-owned estates in Ireland or to provide the manufactures in England with a continually replenished army of labour. In effect, for those who remained in Ireland, land became the irreducible "object of pursuit," giving a material vent to the political and economic questions of the latter decades of the century. As Marx saw it, "the people had now before them the choice between occupation of the land, at any rent, or starvation."⁽¹⁾ A system of rack-renting operated, whereby the absentee landlord or his agent was able to charge any rent, thereby effectively abstracting the formulation of rent from any basis in reality.

1. Marx, "Report", MEI: 132. Note that the "Ulster Custom", operative in some areas outside Ulster, did extend some protection to the tenants. Certainly it was these benefits that the tenant rights movement of the 1850s hoped to extend to all southern tenants. See Marx, "The Indian Question", MEI: 59-65; Marx, "The War Question/British Population and Trade Returns/Doings of Parliament", MEI: 67-9; Marx, "From Parliament", MEI: 77-8.

The English corn laws, passed in 1815, favoured artificially but temporarily, the Irish corn crop, granting it a monopoly of the English market. As a result, corn exports to England increased almost ten-fold in the period after the Act of Union. In addition to the export of grain, Ireland contributed its population, capital, and livestock to capitalist development in England.

Middlemen who accumulated vast fortunes from rack-rents would not invest in the improvement of the land, and could not, due to the lack of industry, invest in machinery. That they ignored investment in land, hence preventing a revolution in agricultural production, for the preference of English manufactures receives no comment from Marx although Engels in a letter to Marx in 1856 had drawn attention to this unique phenomenon. Contrasting their conspicuous consumption with the real state of their finances and that of the Irish economy, Engels remarked -

the landowners, who everywhere else have become bourgeoisified are here reduced to complete poverty. Their country rents are surrounded by enormous amazingly beautiful parks but all around is waste land, and where the money is to come from it is impossible to see. These fellows are droll enough to make your sides burst with laughing, of mixed blood mostly tall, strong, handsome chaps, they all wear enormous moustaches under colossal roman noses, give themselves the false military airs of retired colonels, travel around the country after all sorts of pleasures, and if one makes an enquiry, they haven't a penny, are laden with debts, and live in dread of the Encumbered Estates Court.(1)

1. Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856. See also Bertram Hutchinson, "On the Study of Non-Economic Factors in Irish Economic Development",

Preference for investment in English or Ruhr valley⁽¹⁾ industrial enterprises was indicative of the way in which the law of capitalist accumulation operated. Capital migrated to centres of greatest return; agriculture, especially as conducted in Ireland, was no more than the "staff-of-life."⁽²⁾

The persistence of non-investment contributed in turn to the maintenance of Ireland as an agricultural supplier. Marx claimed that it was the nature of accumulation which fostered manufacturing in England and agriculture in Ireland. That position implies that Ireland's

Economic and Social Review, vol. 1, (July 1970) pp. 509-29; Lee, Modernisation. Figures on Irish investment in Government and India stock from 1841 to 1887 illustrate that lack of capital was not a problem, nor was it so much a lack of investment opportunities. Rather, the scarcity of what Joseph Lee terms "risk capital" stemmed from Irish gravitation to safe areas of return. See T. W. Grimshaw, "A Statistical Survey of Ireland from 1840-1888", JSSISI, part 68 (December 1889) pp. 350-1. On landlord investment, see W. A. Maguire, The Downshire Estates in Ireland, 1801-45 (Oxford: University Press, 1972), and David Large, "Wealth of the Greater Irish Landlords, 1750-1850", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 15 (1966-7) pp. 21-46.

1. W. O. Henderson, "W. T. Mulvany: an Irish Pioneer in the Ruhr", Great Britain and Industrial Europe, 1750-1870 (Liverpool: University Press, 1954) pp. 179-93. Mulvany received the honour and burghership of Gelsenkirchen in 1864 for his successful use of and development of the resources of the area. See The Freeman's Journal, November 5, 1864. Marx refers again to the transfer of money out of Ireland in The Civil War in France (New York: International Publishers, 1968) p. 67: "No longer was Paris the rendezvous of British landlords, Irish absentees, American ex-slaveholders and shoddy men, Russian ex-serfowners, and Wallachian bayards."
2. Paul A. Baron, The Political Economy of Growth (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1957) p. 166. Marx's assessment of the flow of capital surveys the period just prior to and after the famine. Certainly, as far as contemporary research has shown, the Irish bourgeoisie as it existed hesitated to invest in industrial enterprises in Ireland except if a good return was guaranteed. William Dargan, railway and manufacturing contractor was an exception. See Joseph Lee, "The construction costs of Irish Railways, 1830-1853", Business History, vol. 9, No. 2 (July 1967) pp. 104-7. On the other

"regional" status prevented industrial development.⁽¹⁾ Marx argued that the attainment of some form of independence through repeal of the Act of Union would force an agricultural - and hence industrial - revolution. Aside from reliance upon the law of accumulation there is no strong evidence in his writings on Ireland to justify the assertion that independence would spark economic growth, especially since the capital, which Marx acknowledged was available for reinvestment in land, was sent abroad. Presumably Marx's argument rests on the assumption that with the attainment of independence, outside investment would be curbed. Further it revolves around the view that capitalist accumulation was primarily

hand, the new proprietors of land through the Encumbered Estates Courts were a mixture of progressive agriculturalists, and merchants/professionals some of whom continued to see land as a good investment independent of its productive capabilities. See further on this point Lee, Modernization; Lee, "Irish Agriculture; Review Article of R. D. Crotty, Irish Agricultural Production. Its Volume and Structure", Agricultural History Review, vol. 17 (1969) pp. 64-76; Joseph Lee, "The Provision on capital for early Irish Railways, 1830-1853", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 16, No. 61 (March 1968) pp. 33-63; Barbara Solow, The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903 Harvard Economic Studies, vol. 139 (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971); James S. Donnelly, Jr., The Land and the People of Nineteenth Century Cork, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd. 1975); L. M. Cullen, Anglo-Irish Trade, 1660-1800 (Manchester: University Press, 1968) pp. 91-2. Cf. Marx, Capital 1:586. See also Bruce F. Johnston and Peter Kilby, Agriculture and Structural Transformation - Economic Strategies in Late-Developing Countries (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1975) p. 316.

1. Marx's assumption about Ireland seem to differ from his view of colonial rule in non-European countries, foremost among them being India. Here he claimed that the British connection would lead the East to capitalism, which would not otherwise be the case because of the Asiatic mode of production. The article, "The Future Results of the British Role in India" is explicit on this point. Both the British aristocracy and bourgeoisie, until now content to plunder India, have recognised "that the transformation of India into a reproductive country has become of vital importance to them. To that end, the extension of railways was absolutely crucial. "England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive,

responsible for the growth pattern of nineteenth century Ireland. There is one further consideration - Engels' emphasis on repeal as the answer to Ireland's problems rested, to some degree, on his belief that as long as the English connection existed, the Irish would continue to blame the source of their difficulties on England. That situation, while exaggerating Ireland's agrarian status, was not the cause of Irish poverty; that was due to the land system. In his view, once independence was established, the Irish would have no-one else to blame and would be forced to re-examine their own condition.⁽¹⁾

Assuming, therefore, that industrial advance would proceed upon the heels of repeal, the reader is given no indication as to an industrial programme which would accomplish this, despite the energy this class displayed, during the period of Grattan's parliament, for independence and tariffs protection. Marx devoted surprisingly little attention to Ireland's manufacturing, except for statistics on textiles in and around Dublin. On the other hand, Belfast, which transferred her industrial attention after 1860 towards shipbuilding, engineering and shirt-making is not considered. The state of Irish industry is discussed only in terms of its disintegration after the Union - a fact that Engels felt was partly accountable to Ireland's natural disparity with England. Engels, returning from Dublin and Cork in 1856, noted that Ireland was remarkable for its lack of industry, yet it is

the other regenerating - the annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western Society in Asia." NYDT, August 8, 1853, in Avineri, Karl Marx pp. 134, 132-3

1. Engels, Condition, pp. 309-10.

likely that he was comparing it to Manchester and its environs. However paltry the manufacturing was in these cities, he must have been aware of some level of industrial activity in Belfast, especially as one involved in the cotton thread business. There seems to be no explanation for their ignorance of this issue except to suggest that as Ireland was predominantly agricultural, their emphasis followed suit. It is true that Ireland was not a strong manufacturing competitor and Marx and Engels' attention might best be measured in proportion to industry's actual share of the Irish economy.⁽¹⁾

In 1846, the repeal of the Corn Laws opened England to international competition, and brought the bourgeoisie to dominate over the economy. In England, it proved a "marvelous impulse" to agriculture, forcing the introduction of drainage on an extensive scale, new feeding techniques, artificial cultivation, and the employment of new machinery. In response to open competition, the repeal of the Corn Laws encouraged a capitalist-approach towards agricultural production, which in turn led to greater and more rapid concentration of farms.⁽²⁾ Surveying the repeal's effect on Irish agriculture, which previously had enjoyed undisputed access to English markets, Marx attributed to it a significant role in the dramatic shift from tillage to pasture after the 1840s.

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1. Belfast developed a linen-thread industry which could (should) have been of interest to Engels, who was engaged in cotton-thread manufacturing. Irregardless of that specific connection, Manchester carried on significant trade with Belfast, thus making it difficult to understand Engels', whatever about Marx's, omission.
 2. See Hobsbawm, Age of Revolution, pp. 68-9.

The English Corn Laws of 1815 secured Ireland the monopoly of the free importation of corn into Great Britain. They favoured artificially, therefore, the cultivation of corn. With the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846, this monopoly was suddenly removed. Apart from all other circumstances, this event alone was sufficient to give a great impulse to the turning of Irish arable into pasture land, to the concentration of farms, and to the eviction of small cultivators.(1)

The passage of the repeal act was, Marx claimed, a direct outcome of the potato famine. Sir Robert Peel, then Prime Minister, had been moving slowly to a position favouring repeal when the famine in Ireland provided an additional stimulant. Beyond the politics of Peel and the Tory party, however, repeal signalled the historic victory of free trade. Marx wrote that, "The English landed aristocracy was compelled to sacrifice one of its most profitable monopolies, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws ensured a wider and sounder basis for the reproduction and maintenance of the working millions".(2) In Ireland, repeal following on the heels of the famine, set the course for the reorganisation of Irish agriculture promoting, as in England, a modern-approach to land-ownership and agricultural production. The Great Famine of 1845-1849,(3)

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1. Marx, Capital, 1:712. Marx also attributed the growth of cotton in the American south to artificial causes. See his "Crisis in England", Die Presse, No. 305, November 6, 1861, MEI: 95-6.
 2. Ibid. See also Cecil Woodham-Smith, The Great Hunger Ireland 1845-9 (London: New English Library, 1962); Marx, "Report", MEI: 134; R. B. McDowell, Public Opinion and Government Policy in Ireland, 1801-1846, Studies in Irish History, vol. 5, edited by T. W. Moody, R. D. Edwards and D. B. Quinn (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1952) p. 228.
 3. The potato blight which led to the Great Famine in the years 1845-9 was caused by the fungus *Phytophthora infestans*.

even if its effects could have been curtailed, would have occurred regardless because the existing land structure prevented an adequate existence for its tenants and owners. In addition, the Encumbered Estates Courts contributed further to dragging Irish agriculture from the mire of aristocratic landownership into modern economics, by prompting the sale and consolidation of land. Marx hailed the development as "the progressive concentration of small tenancies." His verdict regarded these years as the termination of a worked-out old system.⁽¹⁾

The Encumbered Estates Courts, whereby large estates, "encumbered" with debt, could be sold by public sale, transferred land ownership to the arena of free trade, thereby including, another prerequisite of capitalism into Irish agricultures.⁽²⁾ Commenting on this event, Engels wrote years later that "as for free land, that - in the sense of [John] Bright, à la free trade - has already been introduced by the Encumbered Estates Court."⁽³⁾ During this period, which would

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1. Marx, "Indian Question", MEI: 62.
 2. Marx showed how "private property in land is a hinderance to the development of capitalism in agriculture because it gives land owners, as monopolists, the means of ensuring that part of the surplus value produced elsewhere is transferred to them in the form of absolute rent. . .The agricultural revolution that preceded the Industrial Revolution first in England and then on the continent of Europe, reflected this extension of commodity exchange to agricultural production, the substitution of money rent for rent in kind being merely the expression of the process. Competition spread to agricultural production, and the modernization it entailed required exclusion of the excessive quantity of peasant labour power, this being eliminated from production and proletarianized." From Amin, Unequal Development, pp. 63-4. See also Engels to N. Danielson, June 10, 1890.
 3. Engels to Marx, January 19, 1870.

forseeably stand as its debut into Irish agriculture, the foundation was laid and prepared for capitalism. In this light, 1846, not 1864 as Ralph Fox suggests, would have been decisive, for Marx, in marking the conversion of Ireland into England's largest pasture.⁽¹⁾

The consequent offshoot of these developments was the dramatic mass emigration of the Irish into English factories - a requirement in terms of modern agriculture in Ireland and manufacturing in England. Yet, Marx condemned the English Government for taking undue advantage of the famine to institute a new policy towards Ireland. In a letter to Engels in November 1867, he said that the passage of the Repeal and the Encumbered Estates Acts in the heat of the famine created in Ireland only a "caricature" of the English agricultural revolution. Both landlords and the English parliament had seized that time to initiate a "consistent and deliberate" plan of agricultural reconstruction. To this end, the Irish peasantry was to be driven forcibly from their homes. "Clearing the Estates of Ireland!" is now the only purpose of English rule in Ireland. The stupid English Government in London knows nothing of course of this immense change since 1846. But the Irish

1. Fox, Marx, Engels and Lenin. pp. 9-10. There is, in addition, no evidence to support the contention that Marx placed such great emphasis on 1864. Certainly he believed the years of his survey, 1860-1865, were important enough to justify their close attention, but this may be based more on their easy access and time-location vis-a-vis Marx's writing in 1867. There would be evidence, however, to show that the years 1860-1865 were unfortunate ones on which to base any study. James Donnelly has shown that Ireland experienced an agricultural crisis during 1859-1864 which would throw off any statistics for that period. That crisis would produce a more depressing picture than a general survey of the post-famine period would have done. See James S. Donnelly, Jr., "The Irish Agricultural Depression, of 1859-1864", Irish Economic and Social History, vol. 3 (1976) pp. 33-54.

know it."⁽¹⁾ The result was a conscious plan to replace the Irish with cattle, and transform Ireland into an agricultural region for industrial England. The population whose scanty existence had been previously disguised by their tenure of small holdings was dramatically unveiled in the famine aftermath. These tenants were now to become the industrial fodder of England. Engels alleged that the attitude shown to the Irish population was tantamount to their systematic "extermination."⁽²⁾

Corn prices fell as Irish grain competed with grain from Europe and America; meat, wool, and animal products, on the other hand, increased in value in the twenty years between 1847 and 1867 favouring pasture over tillage. This led further to the consolidation of small farms, and eviction, as pasture farming required extensive productive units. Marx reported on the extent of this change in a speech in December 1867.

Through the repeal of the Corn Laws Ireland lost her monopoly position in the English market, the old rent could no longer be paid. High prices for meat and the bankruptcy of the still remaining, small landowners further contributed to the eviction of the small peasants and the transformation of their land into sheep pastures.⁽³⁾

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1. Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867; Marx, "Ireland's Revenge", MEI: 74-6; Marx, "Report", MEI: 134.
 2. Frederick Engels, "History of Ireland", MEI: 190; Marx, "Indian Question", MEI: 62; Marx, "Excitement in Ireland", MEI: 87-91.
 3. Marx, "Report", MEI: 138.

Highlighting the particulars, Marx had written to Lassalle, offering the following account of the shift from tillage to pasture witnessed seven years after the famine:⁽¹⁾

	<u>ACRES</u>
Reduction in grain types	91,233
Reduction in green growth (potatoes, root vegetables)	710
Reduction in flax	23,607
Reduction in clover	13,025
	<hr/>
Total Reduction in Cultivated Land:	128,575

Commenting on these figures Marx explained that the reduction in land under cultivation became more striking "in that the demand for all agricultural products has grown in the last five years."

Further significance was given to this reduction when compared to the increase in livestock for the same period. In volume one Capital, Marx juxtaposed two sets of figures, that for tillage with pasture. He took the years 1860-1865 "during which over half-a-million emigrated and the absolute number of people sank by more than one third of a million," as representative of the famine aftermath and based his conclusions predominantly on that evidence. The statistics on livestock were:

Horses:	Absolute decrease of 72,358
Cattle:	Absolute decrease of 116,626
Sheep:	Absolute increase of 146,608
Pigs:	Absolute increase of 28,819

1. Marx to Ferdinand Lassalle, January 23, 1855.

The figures showed a decrease in cattle and horses but Marx explained that this reduction needed to be seen alongside the increase in sheep and pigs. For example, in the period 1856-65 a decrease in horses was compensated for by increase in sheep.⁽¹⁾ The general trend revealed a steady increase in livestock in relation to population - which had fallen by approximately three million between 1847 and 1867 - and land under tillage. Between 1860-65, acreage of cereal and green crops decreased, yet grass, clover and flax increased - denoting a marked tendency away from subsistence for man and in favour of that for cattle or industry, in the case of flax.⁽²⁾ Comparing the preference for pasture in Ireland with agricultural production in England, Marx commented that in England, green and cereal crops had increased concurrently with cattle breeding whereas in Ireland it had decreased.⁽³⁾ He implied here a direct correlation between the needs of an increasing population with agricultural output, a process exactly reversed in Ireland because of eviction.

These structural changes were also contingent upon the birth of the rural bourgeoisie. The victory of free trade over the landed aristocracy signalled in England as well as in Ireland the end to feudal restrictions. Marx described these new landowners as men "who wanted to run their farms on modern economic lines."⁽⁴⁾ They were English

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1. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 121; Marx, "Report", MEI: 138.
 2. Marx, Capital, 1:699
 3. Marx, Capital, 1:705.
 4. Marx, "Report", MEI: 135.

capitalists, insurance societies and former middlemen. Engels, however, put his finger on the more unique aspect of these new proprietors. Agreeing with Marx as to their class, he noted that the new owners were "mainly Irish Catholics" - a new phenomenon in Irish agriculture and representative of the emergence of a dynamic class structure. The rise in land sales after 1848 was not matched by an increase in the number of owners. Rather, there remained "only about 8,000 to 9,000 landowners in Ireland" effectively illustrating that land had only changed hands and had not led to a proliferation of owners.⁽¹⁾ That the purchasers were of some means, gave evidence to the view that these men saw the post-famine period as a way to augment their existing holdings. These events confirmed capital accumulation - consolidation of land, and concentration of ownership - and the emergence of a rural bourgeoisie. The analysis is explosive as it, together with an acknowledgement of the effects of corn law repeal and the encumbered estates courts, pronounced not only the death of the landed aristocracy but moreso witnessed the advent of capitalist relations into Irish agriculture. On this point Marx and Engels stand apart from their contemporaries, most of whom failed to grasp the arrival of this new class structure.⁽²⁾

In an article entitled "Forced Emigration", written March 28, 1853, Marx described the process of mass emigration initiated under pressure of the "wheels of improvement." Contrasting Greece and Rome

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1. Engels to Marx, April 15, 1870.
 2. See the discussion on the distributional shift in income which further emphasises this development. O Grada, "Karl Marx", p. 3.

with modern society, Marx said that in ancient society, the lack of sufficient means of production to employ or cater for an entire population had forced the surplus to emigrate. Today, the opposite was true. Under capitalism, Marx argued,

it was not the want of production power which creates a surplus population; it is the increase of productive power which demands a diminution of population and drives away the surplus by famine or emigration. It is not population that presses on productive power; it is productive power that presses on population.(1)

That situation was exaggerated in the case of Ireland because of the way in which the law of capitalist accumulation operated in an agrarian society. In agriculture, unlike industry requirements for labour power fell absolutely.

As soon as capitalist production takes possession of agriculture, and in proportion to the extent to which it does so, the demand for an agricultural labouring population falls absolutely while the accumulation of the capital employed in agriculture advances, without this repulsion being, as in non-agricultural industries, compensated by a greater attraction.(2)

In England, the classic example of capitalist growth, the surplus population was either gradually or forcibly (by, for example, the enclosures) "set-free" from the land. Freed, the population migrated

1. Marx, "Forced Emigration", MEI: 57.

2. Marx, Capital, 1:642.

to the manufacturing centres where it formed the proletariat. This migration was not mere happenstance but an absolute pre-condition of capitalist accumulation. While industrial expansion continued to increase its demands for labour power, agriculture, mostly because expansion was limited by the amount of available land, - a finite acreage as compared with infinite potential for industrial growth - reduced its overall labour-power needs absolutely. This established, Marx asserted, a natural and dialectical growth relation between the two sectors, assuming, of course, an expanding economy.

At this juncture let's recall Marx's definition of Ireland's position: he understood it as a colony, which in the aftermath of the Act of Union, had become integrated with England as an agricultural region. This has added significance against the phenomenon of the famine years. In Capital, volume one, Marx agreed that in Ireland, despite a declining population and weak internal trade, farmers continued to gather immense profits. This development appears surprising given a diminution of land under cultivation. How then did it occur? The reason, Marx explained, is easily understood:

On the one hand, with the throwing of small holdings into large ones, and the change of arable into pasture land, a larger part of the whole produce was transformed into surplus-produce. The surplus-produce increased, although the total produce, of which it formed a fraction, decreased. On the other hand, the money-value of this surplus-produce increased yet more rapidly than its mass in consequence of the rise in the English market-price of meat, wool, etc., during the last 20, and especially in the last 10 years.(1)

1. Marx, Capital 1:703.

In this excerpt Marx directed his attention to the law of capitalist accumulation as it applied to agriculture. Desmond Greaves' remark that Ireland represented a "special variant"⁽¹⁾ of the law is not only shown to be incorrect, but misses the nub of Marx's argument, and the significance of the placement of the Irish study in chapter 25 of the first volume.

Marx proposed that accumulation in agriculture has its own laws distinct from accumulation in industry.⁽²⁾ Unlike industrial production which depends upon a continually replenished army of labour - "England. . . would have bled to death with such a drain of population as Ireland has suffered."⁽³⁾ - agriculture reduces its labour requirements absolutely. The change from arable to pasture, in addition to consolidation of farm units - each would have individually produced a surplus-population - strongly contributed to the growth of a surplus labouring population. Together these processes maintained production of food supplies, which, with a reduced population, appeared as an increased surplus-produce. This suggests that, as Engels documented in The Condition of the Working Class in England, the land system (and here he meant over-subdivision of the soil) was responsible for Ireland's poverty condition. Irish agriculture, he pointed out, prior to the famine held 75,000 more agricultural labourers than England

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1. C. Desmond Greaves, "Foreward", MEI: 14.
 2. See Banaji, "Kautsky's Agrarian Question", and Lenin, Development of Capitalism, CW 3: 178.
 3. Marx, Capital, 1:702.

yet England had more than twice the cultivated acreage.⁽¹⁾ Marx's account in Capital suggests that agricultural production is not dependent upon numbers on the land, but under modern conditions, is capable of producing adequate food supplies with reduced numbers. Hence, Marx postulated that the shift from tillage to pasture was primarily responsible for the displacement of surplus population, although in volume one he made additional reference to technical advances - the introduction of labour-saving devices and machinery, for example - as supplementary contributors.⁽²⁾

A second factor, Marx said was also responsible for the exceedingly high profits accumulated in the years 1857-1867. The close and dependent relation between Irish agriculture and the British market (a relation mirrored in trade between Belfast manufactures and England) - although not discussed by either Marx and Engels - linked the two economies in a far deeper way than mere trading partners. To digress for a moment; Marx assumed in his examination of capitalist accumulation that a prerequisite was an expanding economy. On the other hand, he presented in volume one a picture of Ireland as a decaying economy with insufficient industry, market towns collapsing, and the petit-bourgeoisie in dissolution.⁽³⁾ This view would, if Ireland existed as a self-contained island, reveal incongruencies in the law of accumulation, giving evidence to Greaves' "special variant" that of accumulation in a declining economy. But, Ireland was not a

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1. Engels, Condition, pp. 306-7.
 2. Marx, Capital 1:708. See Warriner, Peasant Farming, pp.xxvi-xxviiiiff.
 3. Marx, Capital 1:705. Cf. B. Solow, The Land Question p. 12.

self-contained economy; rather both agriculturally and industrially, her economy depended upon England and vice versa. Hence, Marx presented a view of agricultural development as it affects and is affected by industrial growth.

Although Ireland industrially was declining - as Marx documented - expanding manufacturing in England served as the industrial sector for Ireland's agriculture. This situation created the necessary relation between agriculture and industry, whereby Marx said "Ireland is at present only an agricultural district of England, marked off by a wide channel from the country to which it yields corn, wool, cattle, industrial and military recruits."⁽¹⁾ Indeed, Ireland performed the role that every agricultural sector did for its industrial sector. The operation of the law of capitalist accumulation was accountable for the lack of capitalist development in Ireland as Marx saw it. As long as Ireland remained an agricultural district of England, her agrarian surplus - population and produce - and profit would revert to England, where, in both cases, they were assured a greater return. (Politically, Marx and Engels called for some form of independence, under a federal solution, in an attempt to break this relation and force industrial growth in Ireland.) Capitalist accumulation in agriculture was therefore occurring in an expanding economy.

Several points require further elaboration. First, the chapter on Ireland acquires added significance when viewed as an examination of capitalist accumulation in agriculture. Although, there can be no doubt that Marx's analysis goes far beyond that posed by classical and nationalist economists alike, he would have found favourable points among them. Agreeing with his English

1. Ibid., 1:702-3.

contemporaries that "Irish economic development in the nineteenth century was more analgous to a regional than a national development problem", Marx accorded with nationalist condemnation of the commercial clauses of the Act of Union.⁽¹⁾ He supported Isaac Butt's pronouncements in favour of protectionism. While classical economists remonstrated about the size of the agrarian population vis-a-vis the amount of land, à la Malthus, their solutions were based on laissez-faire assumptions of economic growth. Nationalists sought, on the other hand, relief in government measures advocating peasant proprietorship, and moves towards independence. These comparisons need serve only as an aside because Marx's study of capitalist accumulation provides the kernal for any serious research into post-famine Ireland - and on this point Marx seems to have stood alone.

His conclusion that Irish economic growth was integrally linked with English capitalism requires a fuller understanding of the capitalist mode of production, which was, after all, the intention of Capital. He claimed that industrial growth in Ireland was impossible as long as it remained linked with English capitalism. On the surface, Marx's solution resembles that of contemporary Irish nationalists. Although appearing to blame England, his thinking however did not encompass a conspiratorial link between England and Ireland whereby the former did nasty acts to the latter; certainly this was suggested by many nationalists who in turn adopted a general hatred of anything English.⁽²⁾ Marx, on the other hand, showed that the replacement of the colonial status for a regional one arose directly from new demands for economic

1. Black, "The Irish Experience", p. 198.

2. Strauss, Irish Nationalism p. 151.

development endemic to capitalism itself.⁽¹⁾ Engels was more specific on this point, and claimed that it was natural that Ireland, with inadequate natural resources, would remain for a long time an agricultural country for its richly-endowed neighbour. Obviously history is not mechanical, and English policy towards Ireland, including the Act of Union, accentuated these natural disparities.

Second, in volume one Marx saw in the twenty years after the famine the embryo of capitalist relations in Ireland. The following excerpt takes note of the process of accumulation:

The scattered means of production that serve the producers themselves as means of employment and of subsistence, without expanding their own value by the incorporation of the labour of others, are no more capital than a product consumed by its own producer is a commodity. If, with the mass of the population, that of the means of production employed in agriculture also diminished, the mass of the capital employed in agriculture increased, because a part of the means of production that was formerly scattered, was concentrated, and turned into capital.⁽²⁾

Here, Marx had noted that small plots of land, singularly farmed and barely supportive of an individual family, lay immobile alongside the market; that is to say, they were not part of or influenced by the market economy. As with money in a hoard, nothing is added to its original value, but rather it remains solely the object of consumption of the individual. The means of production, principally land in the Irish case, do not become "the material forms of productive capital or

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1. See above discussion on colonialism.
 2. Marx, Capital, 1:703, 707.

productive capital" until labour-power is applied and embodied in it. Only by the attachment of labour-power, through the organisation of labour-power and improvement in techniques, does the entire economic structure expand, and reveal its internal dynamism.⁽¹⁾ Under historically developed conditions, stagnant money becomes money-capital, and the means of production, productive-capital. In this paragraph Marx struck at what he saw was the heart of the poverty-creating conditions in Ireland - its land structure. Agreeing with him, Engels had remonstrated more than twenty years earlier that competition for land was the real culprit.

We have shown that this poverty is caused by the existing social circumstances - above all by competition, which in Ireland takes the form of continual subdivision of holdings. . .The truth is that poverty and distress are inevitable consequences of the existing state of society. When we look for other causes we are really examining factors in the situation which determine the way in which poverty strikes the Irish, but we are not dealing with the basic cause of poverty.⁽²⁾

Further, Marx had identified the advent of capitalist relations in Ireland, noting that the means of production, land, had been transformed from its previous stagnant state into productive capital.

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1. Ibid., 2:35, 3: 617.
 2. Engels, Condition, pp. 307-8. For an interpretation of Marx that suggests he was opposed to centralisation, see T. A. Jackson, Ireland Her Own. An Outline History of the Irish Struggle, edited by C. Desmond Greaves (New York: International Publishers, 1970) pp. 455-6.

Third, Marx contended that the removal of the surplus population from the land, which clearly was incapable of supporting such vast numbers in its present form of cultivation, would not have occurred except under the extraordinary conditions of the 1840s. That it did occur, and produce mass migration was conditional to any future development.⁽¹⁾ Yet, as the experience in England had proven, the dialectics of that process created enormous human misery, which both Marx and Engels were quick to point out. They vehemently criticised and chastised large-scale government-sponsored migration as proposed by prominent Malthusians.

Here, then, under our own eyes and on a large scale a process is reverted, than which nothing more excellent could be wished for by orthodox economy for the support of its dogma: that misery springs from absolute surplus-population, and that equilibrium is re-established by depopulation. This is a far more important experiment than was the plague in the middle of the 14th century so belauded by Malthusians.⁽²⁾

Marx, in volume one, whose chapter sought to look at the living conditions promulgated by accumulation, showed that in relation to profits, the standard of living dropped. Consideration of these facts, far from the emotional nationalism exhibited by some, attempted to draw attention to a situation that contemporary economists and politicians were hopeful to ignore, thereby perpetuating a more optimistic view of the post-famine decades. Marx and Engels' analysis, insofar as it pointed to the positive as well as the negative aspects of economic development - the essence of the Marxian dialectic - provides a richer study of the nineteenth century.

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1. Johnston and Mellor, "The Role of Agriculture", p. 382.
 2. Marx, Capital, 1:703-4 1:574-5; see Amin, Unequal Development, pp.170-1; Black, Economic Thought, pp. 241-2.

In almost an aside, Marx turned his attention very briefly to manufacturing and trade where a similar pattern existed. There, capital had increased but only gradually. In spite of Engels' earlier announcement that there was a "total absence of any industry" in Ireland, Marx showed that industrial profits had increased between 1860 and 1865.⁽¹⁾ The linen industry, the "one great industry of Ireland," continued to thrive, a development reflected in increased acreage of flax. In a passage corresponding in tone and emphasis to those on accumulation in agriculture, Marx referred to the initial steps of expansion occurring in the non-agricultural sector.

The total capital of Ireland outside agriculture, employed in industry and trade, accumulated during the last two decades slowly, and with great and constantly recurring fluctuations; so much the more rapidly did the concentration of its individual constituents develop. And, however, small its absolute increase, in proportion to the dwindling population it had increased largely.⁽²⁾

Trade experienced growth that was especially noticeable between 1856 and 1869. Comparing the level of trade in 1869 with that apparent on his earlier trip in 1856, Engels remarked that

The port of Dublin is unrecognisable. On Queenstown Quay I heard a lot of Italian, also Serbian, French and Danish or Norwegian. There are indeed a good many "Italians" in Cork as the comedy has it. The

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1. See Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856.
 2. Marx, Capital, 1:703.

country itself, however, seems downright depopulated, and one is immediately led to think that there are far too few people.(1)

Placing meat on the above theoretical bones, Marx examined in detail the shift in income distribution among classes as revealed in available Income-tax reports. For the year 1860-1865, farming profits showed a steady rise; industrial profits (a category inclusive of "so-called 'professionals'"), on the other hand, portrayed a greater tendency towards fluctuation arriving in 1865 with a figure £140,000 lower than 1860. The overall pattern, as Marx reported in the above paragraphs, illustrated the rise in profit, aggregate income tax levels increasing by over £1 million for the five years concerned. Evidence of concentration is gained from attention to the distribution of profits, with the exception of farmers, for the two years, 1864 and 1865. Explaining the significance of the figures, Marx noted the following -

. . .during 1864, of £4,368,610 of total profits, three surplus-value makers pocketed only £262,610; that in 1865, however, out of £4,669,979 total profits, the same three virtuosi of "abstinence" pocketed £274,448; in 1864, 26 surplus-value makers reached to £646,377; in 1865, 28 surplus-value makers reached to £736,448; in 1864, 121 surplus-value makers, £1,066,912; in 1865, 186 surplus-value makers, £1,320,996; in 1864, 1,131 surplus-value makers £2,150,818, nearly half of the total annual profit; in 1865, 1,194 surplus-value makers, £2,418,933, more than half of the total annual profit.(2)

Statistics for rent, which Marx considered "the lion's share of accumulated profits which an inconceivably small number of land

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1. Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869.
 2. Marx, Capital, 1:710

magnates in England, Scotland and Ireland swallow up of the yearly national rental,"⁽¹⁾ were unfortunately unavailable. General figures for the years between 1860 and 1865, however, showed that the profit from rent far outran farming and industrial profits combined. Engels provided an idea of how rents rose in a period otherwise considered one of crisis. Relating an example from Trench's Realities of Irish Life, Engels drew attention to the relation between "depopulation" policy and profit.

Learned from Trench's Realities of Irish Life why Ireland is so "overpopulated." That worthy gentleman proves by example that on the average the land is cultivated so well by the Irish peasants that an outlay of £10-15 per acres, which is completely recouped in 1-4 years, raises the rental value from 1 to 20 and from 4 to 25-30 shillings per acre. This profit is to be pocketed by the landlords.⁽²⁾

These figures strengthen the argument for a rising rate of profit in the aftermath of the famine.

Additional evidence was provided by the extent of land centralisation in 1851-1861, which destroyed principally farms under 15 acres, being approximately 120,000 in total. Farms between 15 and 30 acres increased by 61,000, and those of at least 30 acres or more increased by 109,000. The total increase in farm units came to 170,000. This increase meant "that amongst the decreased number of farms there is a larger portion of farms of large dimension." Even at that point, however, land would be "far from having reached the English point of consolidation, if all farms over 100 acres have disappeared."⁽³⁾

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1. Ibid.
 2. Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869.
 3. Marx, "Notes", MEI: 122-3. Cf. Cullen, Economic History, p.136.

Marx expected that another 260,000 would need to disappear. These would be farms over 15 but under 100 acres, which in the case of England, had proved too small for capitalist cultivation of sheep-breeding.

Land was centralised at the expense of small and medium sized (tenant) farmers, who had, in addition to working their land, sold their labour-power to neighbouring larger farmers. During the 1840s and succeeding decades, many lost control of their land, thrown off by a combination of causes which included the inability to pay the rent, starvation, and the sales of land.⁽¹⁾ Forming the backbone of a new class of wage-earners, they bore a relationship to their new employer based solely upon a wage, removing the final vestiges of their transitional status which had previously placed them nebulously between classes and modes of production.

In fact, formerly, the agricultural labourers were but the smallest of the small farmers, and formed for the most part a kind of rear-guard of the medium and large farms for which they found employment. Only since the catastrophe of 1846 have they begun to form a fraction of the class of purely wage-labourers, a special class, connected with its wage-masters only by monetary relations .

Under classic circumstances, such as that experienced in England, that class would have migrated to the cities, and there transformed itself into the urban proletariat. In Ireland, however, as with the agricultural revolution itself, the post-famine decades were only a caricature of similar events in England. Due to the severe lack of industry, save the linen manufactures whose labour requirements were well satisfied, the surplus-population fashioned itself into a nomadic tribe in search

1. Engels to Edward Bernstein, June 26, 1882.

of work.⁽¹⁾ Their numbers swelled the class of agricultural labourers, and forced the price of labour down. Without sufficient industry to absorb the surplus, the population was forced to emigrate or remain landless and poor on the fringes of towns, continually halling itself back to the country during harvest time; remaining unemployed during the remainder of the year.

The uniqueness of the situation was illustrated by the failure to balance the agricultural revolution with an industrial one. Instead, the supply of labour worked in the opposite direction. In

. . .England, an industrial country, the industrial reserve recruits itself from the country district, whilst in Ireland, an agricultural country, the agricultural reserve recruits itself from the towns, the cities of refuge of the expelled agricultural labourers. In the former, the supernumeraries of agriculture are transformed into factory operatives; in the latter, those forced into the towns, whilst at the same time they press on the wages in towns, remain agricultural labourers, and are constantly sent back to the country districts in search of work.

Given no security in the towns to which they have been forced, and dependent upon a volatile agricultural system, it was no wonder that "a sombre discontent rung through the ranks of this class, that they long[ed] for the return of the past, loathe[d] the present, . . .despair[ed] of the future," participated in rural uprisings and desired only to emigrate to America.⁽²⁾ The Fenians, Marx contended, whose demands were directed against further appropriation of the land, were a natural expression of that condition; likewise, the placement of land at the centre of the

1. Marx, Capital, 1:705.

2. Ibid. 1:708-9; also Marx to Engels, November 30, 1867. See Grimshaw, "Statistical Survey", pp. 330-1.

overall political question was incontestable.

Depopulation reacted harshly upon the home market, affecting the incomes of the "small shopkeepers, artisans, and tradespeople generally." Market towns were in ruin, despite high profits accruing from trade, and domestic industry had, by the mid-century, been replaced by modern means of production.⁽¹⁾ The absence of an industrial alternative meant that emigration was the only foreseeable answer, both for the Irish and the classical economists. The lack of a thorough discussion by either Marx or Engels of industry conforms with their picture of an agrarian economy with only directly-related manufacturing, **such as linen and flax.**

An indication of a conflict between farmers and agricultural labourers was recorded but without detail. These actions certainly pointed to the dissolution of any common bond across class lines on the basis of land - a position both Marx and Engels would have welcomed.⁽²⁾ Marx noted that in the Irish movement, presumably he meant the Fenians, the "agricultural labouring class has been gaining ground against the farming class at the last meetings. (It was similar in 1795-1800)."⁽³⁾ The latter reference is to a point Marx had made earlier in the same letter, wherein he wrote that one of the significant aspects of the 1779-1800 period was the growth of a class movement. His attention here to the growing tension between farmers and labourers would seem

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1. Ibid., 1:605, 705; also Marx to Engels, April 14, 1870. See also Engels to N. Danielson, June 18, 1892.
 2. See Marx to Engels, April 14, 1870; Frederick Engels, "The Peasant Question in France and Germany, November 15 and 22, 1894", Selected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1970) 3:457-76.
 3. Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869.

to place emphasis on the value of that development for class politics. The replacement of the landed aristocracy by a rural bourgeoisie, and the emergence of an agricultural proletariat with a class identity independent of the farmers were positive features of the post-famine period. Engels picked these points out when commenting in 1888 on the potential for social revolution in Ireland; in that interview, he dismissed the peasant proprietorship movement in favour of the maturation of a working class in a capitalist Ireland.

Finally, the volume one study laid stress upon the deteriorating conditions of the Irish especially in view of the profits accruing to other sections of society during those same years. In an 1859 article titled "Population, Crime and Pauperism," Marx turned his attention specifically to the growth in crime rates and in pauperism, stating that "there must be something rotten in the very core of a social system which increases its wealth without diminishing its misery, and increases in crime even more rapidly than in numbers." He included a table of crimes committed in Ireland during the years 1844-1858 which showed a strong correlation between economic crisis and crime. A similar relationship existed, he alleged, between the rise in the number of paupers, with no marked decrease during the entire period given. In an article five years earlier, he had noted the increase of admissions to lunatic asylums for the years 1851-1853. Commenting on this correspondence, Marx asked rhetorically:

How can we harmonise this fact with the public opinion
slang of England, according to which Irish nature,
instead of British misrule, is responsible for Irish
shortcomings: It is, again, no act on the part of
the British ruler, but simply the consequences of a

a famine, an exodus, and a general combination of circumstances favourable to the demand for Irish labour, that has worked this happy change in Irish nature.(1)

In connection with the economic, as distinct from the social, conditions of the Irish, Marx said that

the relative surplus-population is today as great as before 1846; that wages are just as low, that the oppression of the labourers has increased, that misery is forcing the country towards a new crisis. . . According to [the Reports of the Irish Poor Law Inspectors, 1870] the rate of wages in the country, still very low, has within the last 20 years risen 50-60 percent. . .and stands now, on the average, at 6s. to 9s. per week. But behind this apparent rise, is hidden an actual fall in wages, for it does not correspond at all to the rise in price of the necessary means of subsistence that has taken place in the meantime. . .The price of the necessary means of subsistence is therefore fully twice, and that of clothing exactly twice, as much as they were 20 years before.

The formation of a surplus army of unemployed and the deteriorating conditions of the proletariat were distinctive features of the law of capitalist accumulation. Marx continually referred to the relation between increasing wealth accumulated by the landlords, farmers and manufacturers and compared with working and living standards of the labourers. Marx's comment in this regard go a long way to refute general Malthusian doctrines that saw depopulation as effecting better living standards. Given a fall in the total population of approximately

1. Karl Marx, "Population, Crime and Pauperism", NYDT, No. 5741, September 16, 1859, MEI: 92-3.

3 million people, relative surplus-population was still as great between 1860 and 1865 as in 1846; wages remained low, living conditions had worsened, and the crisis had yet to subside.⁽¹⁾

5. Economic Considerations

As a means of summary, I want to identify some problems that immediately confront the reader in any comparison between these Irish writings and Irish reality. As documented above, Marx seemed confident to pronounce, based upon his study of trends in land ownership, that the pre-conditions for capitalism had arrived in Ireland. Did he then consider capitalist production was under-way in Ireland? There is an explicit distinction here that should not be lost. The availability of a mobile and free agricultural population, and land upon the free market is not sufficient grounds on which to declare capitalist production present. Consequently, a landowner cannot be described as a capitalist solely because he chooses to hire wage-labour. The characteristics of capitalist production are not merely the acquisition of surplus-value, but also accumulation and re-investment to generate more surplus-value and so on. This reflects changes in the organic composition of capital, the relation between constant and variable capital; in agriculture, this leads to a continued decline in the number of labourers employed in relation to capital. Competition between individual capitalists ensures greater accumulation; the *raison d'être* of capitalist production is witnessed in the ever-expanding scale of production. This holds for agriculture as well as for industry.

1. Marx, Capital, 1:703, 706; and 704-5. Cf. Donnelly, Land and People, pp. 219, 236, 244.

What of Marx's analysis? From what we have seen of his study of Irish agriculture, he appears to identify accumulation as the main cause behind the displacement of the agricultural population and for its degrading poverty. Moreover, accumulation lies behind the dominating agricultural status of the economy; industry, mostly in the form of textiles and breweries, have for the most part declined in the face of free trade under the Act of Union. Within the agricultural sector - with which he and Engels dealt - a revolution was occurring rapidly in the mode of production. Famine, eviction, the repeal of the corn laws, and emigration led to consolidation and the substitution of pasture for tillage agriculture. Higher rates of profits were gathered at the expense of a destitute agricultural population and emigration.

If we argue that capitalist accumulation assumes a degree of capitalist intensification, Marx's own evidence is insufficient to support this contention. Instead, his claim rests primarily upon the introduction of bourgeois property relations accompanied by the replacement of the displaced peasantry with extensive cattle and sheep farms. The use of machinery and labour-saving devices, which necessarily derive from capital investment, are undoubtedly implied by reference to capitalist accumulation, but are strangely absent in Marx's own account. He argued that changes in the organic composition of capital evolved quite naturally from eviction, consolidation and the shift away from tillage. This picture certainly accords more with actual events, and it is to Marx's credit that he was able to single out this tremendous shift in agricultural production. But, does this then question the validity of the capitalist accumulation argument as Marx presents it for the Irish case? Cormac Ó Gráda ⁽¹⁾ suggests that it does, but Marx does not seem to have any

1. Ó Gráda, "Karl Marx", p.4.

problem with its application because his own account does not seriously examine that aspect of accumulation. A single aside to the use of labour-saving devices or machinery comes in a sweeping comment about the occurrence of the agricultural revolution in Ireland.⁽¹⁾

In fact, it may be more useful to see Marx's analysis as accounting for the agricultural revolution in the period of primitive accumulation, when land expropriation figures, than as a picture of capitalist production. Certainly, the transformation of social and productive relations of production required for capitalist production need not hinge upon the introduction of labour-saving devices.⁽²⁾ As Marx documents in his brief examination of primitive accumulation, the important factors in this period are the release of land and labour from feudal constraint. The capitalist mode of production does not appear clearly defined in its "pure" state, but as part of a process of which the immediate events of the famine provided only the pre-conditions. This is not to suggest that prior to the famine feudal relations existed, but merely to argue that Marx felt the famine did represent what has arguably been termed a "watershed" in Irish history. Indeed, Marx distinguished between primitive accumulation and capitalist production when he noted that increased productivity was due for the most part from consolidation of agricultural units, thereby affecting

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1. Marx, Capital, 1:708.
 2. See Phyllis Deane, "Capital Formation in Britain before the Railway", in François Crouzet, ed. Capital Formation in the Industrial Revolution, Debates in Economic History series, general editor, Peter Mathias (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1972) esp. pp. 101-2; J. D. Chambers and G. E. Mingay, The Agricultural Revolution, 1750-1880 (London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1966) p. 3.

the organic composition of capital, rather than from capital investment or labour-saving devices.⁽¹⁾

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1. For an interesting discussion of some of these points for Indian agriculture, see Utsa Patnaik, "Capitalist Development in Agriculture: A Note", Economic and Political Weekly (Bombay), vol. 6, pt. 39 (1971) pp. 123-130. Regarding the watershed theory of Irish history, see Lee, "Irish Agriculture", pp. 64-76.

CHAPTER THREE

AGRARIAN CAPITALISM AND THE IRISH EXPERIENCE

1. A Fundamental Contradiction
2. Penetration of Capitalism into Agriculture
3. The Irish Experience
4. Lenin, Kautsky and Marx
5. Conclusion

CHAPTER THREE

AGRARIAN CAPITALISM AND THE IRISH EXPERIENCE

1. A Fundamental Contradiction

Remarking on the preface to *Capital*, volume one, Alexander Gershenkron, in *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, suggests that Marx's comments regarding the lead given by the industrially developed country to the less developed one reveals a picture that is only partially correct.⁽¹⁾ Warning against generalising too much from one experience, he states that fundamental differences exist between the economic growth patterns of backward as compared with advanced countries. Some indication of these deviations can be found, inter alia, in the speed of development, the productive organisational structure of industry, the intellectual climate, available natural resources, and the role played by the agents of economic growth, for example, by the state in Russia or the banks in France.⁽²⁾ Gershenkron cites these factors by way of a qualification for

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1. Alexander Gershenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (London: Frederick A. Praegar, 1962) The passage that Gershenkron refers to is the following from Marx's preface to the first German edition of *Capital*, 1867: "Intrinsically, it is not a question of the higher or lower degree of development of the social antagonisms that result from these laws themselves, of these tendencies working with iron necessity towards inevitable results. The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future." Marx, *Capital* 1:8-9.
 2. Gershenkron, *Economic Backwardness*, pp. 6-7, 44. See further regarding economic growth, Tom Kemp, *Industrialisation in Nineteenth Century Europe* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1969); David Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus* (Cambridge, University Press, 1969).

what he fears is Marx's sweeping generalisation of capitalist growth based upon the English experience; yet, Marx had long before him qualified the extent of the comparison himself. Side-stepping the actual debate here, but taking cognisance of it, it is hardly tenable for Gershenkron to assume that Marx or indeed Engels perceived economic development elsewhere as a carbon copy of the process witnessed in England.

Marx was fully aware of the dangers of that interpretation, and on several occasions, had sought to put the record straight. For example, in replying to an article in the Russian journal Otechestvenniye Zapitski entitled "Karl Marx Before the Tribunal of Mr. Zhukovsky" by N. K. Mikhailovsky,⁽¹⁾ Marx had strongly argued that his work Capital traced the general development pattern of the capitalist mode of production through the singular illustration of England. Any attempt he had warned, with an eye towards the Russian socialists, to make apriori that "historical sketch of the genesis of western capitalism in Western Europe into a historicophilosophic theory of the marche generale imposed by fate upon every people whatever the historic circumstances in which it finds itself" was an error.⁽²⁾ England merely served as an accessible example

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1. Marx's reply was never sent, but a copy of it was later sent to Vera Zasulich by Engels on March 6, 1884, SC: 348-9.
 2. Marx to the Editorial Board of the Otechestvenniye Zapitski, November 1877 SC:293, see further Marx to Vera Zasulich, March 8, 1881, SC:319-20, and Capital 1:716. Also refer here to Lenin in the Preface to the 2nd edition of the Development of Capitalism in Russia, July 1907 (CW 3:33) where he commented on the two possible lines of development facing Russia. "Of course, infinitely diverse combinations of elements of this or that type of capitalist evolution are possible and only hopeless pedants could set about solving the peculiar and complex problems arising merely by quoting this or that opinion of Marx about a different historical epoch."

because its progression was the most spectacular and far-reaching; it was the classic illustration.

Surveying developments in Ireland in the post-famine era, Marx did not abrogate from his own judicious warnings, although he did consistently seek parallels between agricultural developments in Ireland and England. His accounts of the advent of agrarian capitalism in post-1840 Ireland were underscored by attention to similar occurrences across the sea - most notably in the Scottish Highlands - a century previously. He even went so far as to indicate that changes in the former instance signified the replacement of the Irish agricultural system with the English. That recognition was met, however, without any sign of remorse or melancholia - as might be expressed by Fintan Lalor, John Mitchel, and others whose preoccupation with the conditions of the tenantry and rent clouded the more fundamental questions of land structure⁽¹⁾ - except insofar as Marx called attention to the enormous human misery that the agrarian revolution had left in its wake. Rather he had argued that change was inevitable given the prevailing land system. On the other hand, he attacked the manner in which the British government, overwhelmed by the righteousness of free trade, had transformed those changes into a mere caricature of the English experience.⁽²⁾ Hence, he argued that, based upon his examination of the events, Irish agricultural growth was proceeding along a path similar to the phenomenon experienced

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1. Fintan Lalor and John Mitchel were members of the Young Irelanders. For example see Strauss, Irish Nationalism; W. L. Burn, "Free Trade in Land: An Aspect of the Irish Question", Trans. of the Royal Historical Society, 4th series, vol. 31 (1949) pp. 61-74; Nathaniel Marlowe, ed. James Fintan Lalor Collected Writings (Dublin and London: Maunsel & Company, Ltd., 1918).
 2. Marx, "Outline Report", MEI: 134.

in England and detailed throughout Capital. Implicit in these remarks was the belief that capitalist expansion, initially into agriculture, would result in the inevitable contradiction between capital and labour, and hence a social revolution.

Thirty years after Marx first called attention to the introduction of capitalism in Irish agriculture, Frederick Engels in an interview in the New Yorker Volkszeitung implied that capitalist expansion had moderated considerably.⁽¹⁾ The process of land centralisation, hastened by the famine, the repeal of the Corn Laws and the Encumbered Estates Acts of 1849-1853, had slowed if not reversed. Assessing the potential for social revolution from the vantage point of 1888, he remarked that the Irish peasant desired only to own land.

How can we account for this discrepancy between Marx and Engels' analyses? Had Marx seriously misread or misinterpreted the events immediately subsequent to the Great Famine or had unforeseen developments arisen to significantly alter the situation thirty years later? Or, more fundamentally, was Marx guilty of ignoring his own advice, and in the words of Alexander Gershenkron, did he assume that "the history of advanced or established industrial countries. . . traces out the road of development for the more backward countries"?⁽²⁾ This chapter seeks

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1. MEI: 343. In the Interview, Engels said in answer to a question about the prospects for social revolution in Ireland: "A purely socialist movement cannot be expected in Ireland for a considerable time. People there want first of all to become peasants owning a plot of land, and after they have achieved that mortgages will appear on the scene and they will be ruined once more. But this should not prevent us from seeking to help them to get rid of their landlords, that is, to pass from semi-feudal conditions to capitalist conditions."
 2. Gershenkron, Economic Backwardness, p. 6.

to answer these questions through a comparison of Marx's projections for land centralisation and capitalist development with the actual development in post-famine Ireland. In making such comparisons, it is necessary to consider Marx's analysis of agrarian capitalism. Second, attention will be focused upon the appropriateness of his model of the singular path to capitalist agriculture for the Irish experience in an attempt to deduce the source of the above discrepancy as well as to ask fundamental questions about his understanding of agriculture.

2. The Penetration of Capitalism into Agriculture

The years of Marx's study, 1860-1865, marked the transition from pre-capitalist - Engels perhaps significantly cautious, referred in 1888 to conditions in Ireland as "semi-feudal"⁽¹⁾ - to capitalist production. Marx saw the immediate impulse of the famine of 1845-1849, followed by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, the Encumbered Estates Acts in 1849-1853, and ultimately the land acts of the post-1860s as instrumental in the transition. These factors accounted for:

- 1) the dramatic shift in population which removed an otherwise latent surplus-population from rural areas as a first step towards the formation of a rural and urban proletariat;
- 2) the transference of agriculture priorities from tillage to pasture further reducing the necessity and livelihood of tenant-farmers; and
- 3) the introduction of free trade in land through the Encumbered

1. "Interview with Engels", MEI: 343

Estates Courts and the other land acts which encouraged the concentration and centralisation of land under an emergent rural bourgeoisie.

In essence, Marx announced that the pre-conditions for capitalist production had arrived.

Although the level of land centralisation was still far from that experienced in England. Marx proposed that Ireland was following a path to capitalism similar to that in England. He outlined one path in which the landlord class separated the direct producers from the soil (forcibly if necessary by means of eviction and expropriation) and replaced them directly or in stages (metayage) with the capitalist farmer, who in turn hired wage-labour⁽¹⁾ The thread of development running throughout his account of the transition was clear; Marx foresaw the

doom of the small peasant, transition from patriarchal to rational exploitation of agriculture, conflicts of interest between landlords and capitalists, industrialisation of agriculture, [and] the final fusion of the two major exploiting classes. The all-round superiority of large-scale agriculture, its possibilities in getting great soil fertility and in economizing, etc. . . . [was] the basic economic reason for the extinction of the small peasant. (2)

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1. Marx, Capital 1:742-744; 3:802-813.
 2. Mayer, "Politics of the Peasantry", p. 112. See also Marx, Capital 3:807. On the question of superiority of large-scale agriculture over small-scale, see Banaji, "Kautsky's Agrarian Question", pp. 21-8; Lenin, "Capitalism in Agriculture", January-February 1900, CW 4:119-21.

He had stated the appropriateness of this path for Ireland as early as 1853 when, in an article entitled "Forced Emigration", he wrote that "the modern changes in the art of production have. . .broken down the antiquated system of society. . .they have expropriated the Irish cottier and tenant. . .they will expropriate, in due time, the landlord." He foresaw no alternative path nor suggested any hesitation in this one.

Aside from the briefest description in volumes one and three Capital which concerned primitive accumulation and rent, respectively, little attention was actually paid by Marx - in fact by Engels - to the question of agrarian capitalism. Indeed, in introducing the discussion on ground rent, Marx stated simply that we should "assume that agriculture is dominated by the capitalist mode of production."⁽¹⁾ Hence, while Marx was not concerned to trace the transition from feudalism to capitalism except insofar as it was necessitated by his study of the capitalist mode of production, it is nevertheless, possible to glean the following account of that transformation from his studies in Capital. Furthermore, although only a taste and not a full-scale analysis, one can gain a significant glimpse of Marx's thinking on the transition and thus legitimately seek to discuss its accuracy, appropriateness and meaning.

Capitalist production, Marx claimed, rests fundamentally upon the coming together of men - owners of labour power and owners of capital - who by their own free-will enter into a contract for the production of commodities. In order for this social relation to arise, the feudal peasant must be separated from the land and proletarianised, the land must be transformed from a "way-of-life" into a commodity to be exploited by

1. Marx, Capital, 3:614. See also Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction" in Karl Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations (New York: International Publishers, 1974) p. 49.

capital, and a class of capitalists must emerge.

The economic structure of capitalistic society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society. . . .But this transformation itself can only take place under certain circumstances that centre in this, viz. that two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact. . . .the capitalist system presupposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realise their labour. (1)

In essence, land and labour undergo a metamorphosis, and reappear under the capitalist mode of production in a different relationship to one another. This process, termed by Marx "so-called primitive accumulation," is the "starting point" of capitalist production, playing "in Political Economy about the same part as original sin in theology."⁽²⁾

The expropriation of the peasantry involves a fundamental change in the entire economy. The relatively self-sufficient feudal demense, wherein domestic industry and agriculture were economically and socially interdependent, is destroyed and replaced by a modern market economy based solely upon commodity exchange. Specialisation results in the complete separation of agriculture from domestic industry; goods from either sector are then exchanged only in the market place. Labour assumes a commodity form, being sold to the capitalist for a wage. This "process. . . takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence

1. Marx, Capital 1:715, 714.

2. Ibid. 1:713.

and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers."⁽¹⁾ Transformed into free sellers of the commodity labour power, the former direct producer is thrust upon society unprotected, where once he enjoyed the security and stability of feudal patronage. In effect, the social relations are revolutionised.⁽²⁾

The replacement of labour-rent or rent-in-kind (the latter only presupposed a higher level of civilisation but altered nothing "from the economic standpoint in the nature of ground-rent")⁽³⁾ to money-rent precipitated the emergence, Marx argued, of the new class structure. As the relation of the tenant to the landowner becomes grounded in a monetary contract, land equally assumes a financial aspect; the right to work the land is henceforth purchased or sold as any other commodity. Whereas land had previously been held by the landlord who exercised political and economic control over his tenants by means of a customary obligation, the introduction of the commodity form entirely alters that social relation. The landlord becomes solely an owner of the land holding with monopoly rights. Specialisation causes the landowner to be concerned for the most part with ownership, renting the productive use of the land to a farmer who in turn hires wage-labour to actually till the soil. In effect, it becomes irrelevant who actually rents the land. Consequently,

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1. Ibid. 1:714.
 2. The corollary is cited by Perry Anderson in Lineages of the Absolutist State (London: New Left Books, 1974): "As long as labour was not separated from the social conditions of its existence to become 'labour-power' - rural relations of production remained feudal." p. 17. See further Barry Hindess and Paul Q. Hirst, Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975) pp. 291-2; Marx, Capital 1:505-6.
 3. Marx, Capital 3:794.

land might be leased or sold to urban dwellers who, previously standing outside the "rural limits," now see an opportunity to invest in land as in any other resource. Hence, modern society witnesses, Marx explained, the formation of three classes: the wage-labourer, the capitalist, and the landowner.

When the capitalist tenant farmer steps in between the landlord and actual tiller of the soil, all relations which arose out of the old rural mode of production are torn asunder. The farmer becomes the actual commander of these agricultural labourers, and the actual exploiter of their surplus-labour, whereas the landlord maintains a direct relationship, and indeed simply a money and contractual relationship, solely with his capitalist tenant.(1)

The farmer actively engages in the extraction of surplus-value from his labour force while the landowner contributes nothing to that process. Instead, the latter lives upon the ground rent which the farmer pays for the privilege of producing surplus-value. Ground rent represents that portion of the surplus-value which accrues to the landowner in recognition of his monopoly control of land.(2)

The farmer emerges in the same manner as the manufacturer.(3) In the account given by Marx, the capitalist farmer arises in stages, replacing the feudal serf first as a peasant receiving seed, cattle and implements from the landlord while hiring some wage-labour, then as a "metayer," a

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1. Ibid. 3:799.
 2. For a fuller discussion of ground rent see Marx, Capital volume 3.
 3. Marx, Capital 1:750. Marx states that the arrival of the industrial capitalist is not as gradual as that of the agrarian capitalist.

a half-farmer, sharing the provision of implements and produce with the landlord, and finally, as a farmer-proper who engages in the production of surplus-value by hiring wage-labour exclusively and paying a rent to the landlord for the use of the land.⁽¹⁾ Expropriation of the common lands or farms of smaller farmers allowed initial primitive accumulation to occur.⁽²⁾ The key to Marx's account is that it assumes the development is a historical process, whereby a three-tiered class structure is created. The landlord retains control only over the land, and neither interferes nor concerns himself with production or the labour-force, which is entirely the jurisdiction of the farmer. Furthermore, instead of witnessing the absolute departure of the feudal landlord, Marx insisted that he merely undergoes a historical metamorphosis, continuing to play a role in the capitalist class structure although in a different social relation.

In agriculture as in manufacture, capitalist production is the process of reproduction; it produces not only commodities and surplus value, but continually reproduces the essential social relation of capitalist and wage-labourer, as well as the original capital. ". . . Simple reproduction is replaced by reproduction on an extended scale, by accumulation."⁽³⁾ Hence, in agriculture, capitalist production insists upon the continued expropriation and proletarianisation of the producer in order to maintain and augment a sufficiently large and accessible labour-force - "clearing of the estates" refers to the final process by which the mass of the population is removed from the land⁽⁴⁾ - and the

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1. Marx, Capital 1:742-3.
 2. See below for a clearer explanation of the relationship between large and small farms for capitalist expansion/accumulation.
 3. Marx, Capital 1:586.
 4. Marx, Capital 1:717-33.

centralisation of individual and scattered "pigmy properties" into larger units of production. The transformation of many small capitals or farms into fewer and bigger capitals, hence the triumph of large-scale production, is fundamental to the capitalist mode of production. Competition and credit, Marx claimed, aids the process of accumulation, pushing the smaller capitals into those areas where "modern industry has only sporadically or incompletely got hold of."⁽¹⁾ Production, whether in agriculture or in manufacturing, progresses to a more advanced level, always resulting in the ruin of the small man, who with less capital accumulated is misplaced to compete successfully with the larger capitalist.

Intrinsic to Marx's argument is the part played by the state through physical and/or legislative force in effecting this transition to capitalist production. Anticipating Engels' later study of Force Theory in Anti-Dühring,⁽²⁾ Marx focused attention in Capital upon the part played by the state in the expropriation of the peasantry and in the enforcement of the proletarian status upon the former peasant. In the case of Scotland, coercive measures were applied to clear the land of the agrarian population when natural conditions, for example, disaster, disease, or economic incentives, proved inadequate. Pointing to the practices engaged by the Duchess of Sutherland, Marx illustrated how British soldiers had been employed to drive the Scottish clansmen from their land, and then to replace the 15,000 Gaels with 131,000 sheep.⁽³⁾

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1. Ibid. 1:626.
 2. Frederick Engels, Anti-Dühring (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969) pp. 190-220.
 3. Capital 1:729; see also Marx, "Elections/Financial Clouds/The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery", MEI: 53; Marx, "Forced Emigration/Kossuth and Mazzini/The Refugee Question/Election Bribery in England/Mr. Cobden", MEI: 54-8; Marx, "Attack at Sevastopol/The Clearing of the Landed Estates of Scotland", NYDT, June, 2, 1854; Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867.

A similar process he claimed was underway in post-famine Ireland; there the legislative arm of England was being used to bring about a much more rapid attainment of the conditions required for capitalism than could be provided by the Great Famine alone. Government reaction to the famine effectively placed a choice of emigrate or starve before the majority of the tenantry; those choosing emigration were aided by various schemes. In a lengthy letter to Sigfrid Mayer and August Vogt in April 1870, Marx explained that expropriation of the land aided both the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. "Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of leaseholds, Ireland constantly sends her own surplus to the English labour market, and thus forces down and lowers the material moral position of the English working class."⁽¹⁾ Then, having successfully contributed to the expropriation of the agricultural population, the state turned to enforce upon that population a new role, that of the wage-labourer. As far back as the 15th century, the state had engaged in such operations using legislative measures to lengthen the working day, to prohibit vagabondage, to regulate wages, and to restrict combinations.⁽²⁾ The provision of financial aid to entice

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1. Karl Marx to Sigfrid Mayer and August Vogt, April 9, 1870.
 2. Marx, Capital 1:737; see further R. Stavenhagen, "Changing Functions of the Community in Underdeveloped Countries", in Henry Bernstein, ed., Underdevelopment and Development. The Third World Today (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973) Stavenhagen makes the following comment about state initiative in enforcing the proletarian status upon former peasants: "To get a peasant to work for a wage (be it in agriculture or in industry) is still one of the main headaches of capitalist enterprise in the underdeveloped world, and to achieve this his land is encroached upon or taken from him, his taxes are raised and new needs are stimulated which can only be satisfied with money. But once established, the process sustains itself: wage labour becomes an integral part of the peasant's life." p. 88.

emigration to the industrial centres of Manchester, Liverpool and so on served a similar function. Hence, Marx would appear to argue that while the Great Famine provided the immediate initiative for an agrarian revolution in Ireland, insofar as it was responsible for a dramatic upheaval in population, producing high levels of mortality and emigration leading to centralisation of the land, the adoption of capitalist social relations was contingent upon various interventions undertaken by the English government, then under the growing influence of the Manchester School.⁽¹⁾

Two points by way of addendum should be mentioned at this juncture. First, Marx did not see the state's influence bound by territorial determinants. The expansion and development of trade and commerce, and the discovery of vital resources - gold, silver, spice, land, etc. - called into existence the establishment of a colonial regime to protect the economic enterprises of merchant capital.⁽²⁾ In this respect, Britain's accession of Ireland was vital. Secondly, during the period of primitive accumulation, Marx understood that the state had also undergone a transformation which was crucial in terms of laying the foundation stone for capitalism.

The rise of the "absolutist" form of the state - the political response by the nobility to threats against its feudal domination - may have proven to be the crucial "political and legal apparatus" for effecting the transition to capitalism. The absolutist state sought to

1. See Black, Economic Thought; McDowell, Public Opinion and Government Policy, p. 13.

2. See Ramkrishna Mukherjee, The Rise and Fall of the East India Company (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1974).

centralise national authority under a single militanised state in an almost desperate last bid for power. Ironically, the aristocracy's manoeuvres for self-preservation, that of imposing a centralised government, a taxation system, a permanent bureaucracy, a codified law, and a centralised market, most likely contributed in the long term to its own demise. Perry Anderson argues in Lineages of the Absolutist State that even the wars in which various absolutist states participated were "possibly the most rational and rapid single mode of expansion of surplus extraction."⁽¹⁾ This comment is supported by Michael Barret Brown, who in discussion of colonialism, places emphasis upon war and territorial acquisition as a principal means of primitive accumulation.⁽²⁾ The absolutist state, thus, unwittingly provided the form from which capitalism could emerge.

Hindess and Hirst in Precapitalist Modes of Production take the argument slightly further to question whether the transition from feudalism to capitalism could have occurred without the active participation of the state, and more importantly, the state in its absolutist form.⁽³⁾ Marx's analysis concurs. Remarking on the period of primitive accumulation in Capital, Marx stated that Spain, Portugal, Holland, France and England all exhibited a similarity in the transition to the capitalist mode in that "they all employ the power of the State, the concentrated and organised force of society, to hasten, hot-house fashion, the process

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1. Anderson, Lineages, p. 31.
 2. Brown, The Economics of Imperialism p. 74.
 3. Hindess and Hirst, Precapitalist Modes, pp. 298-9.

of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition."⁽¹⁾

While it is obvious that England in the mid-nineteenth century could hardly be termed an absolutist state as discussed above, it seems clear that Marx, and indeed Engels, were of the opinion that actions taken by the English state at the time of the famine had a profound effect upon prompting the transition to capitalist social relations. Nevertheless, that view should be seen in perspective. Their pronouncement that certain legislative endeavours of England had progressive consequences did not alter their condemnation of British rule in Ireland, and their subsequent support for the repeal of the Act of Union.

". . . Irish history shows how disastrous it is for a nation to have subjected another nation."⁽²⁾ They equally denounced British handling of the famine, and the government's manipulation of poverty and crop-failures to enforce and ensure land clearances. For example, Marx argued that the Encumbered Estates Courts while proposing to help tenants purchase their holdings, served ultimately to hasten consolidation. Principally, the acts enabled middlemen, large farmers and speculators

1. Marx, Capital 1:751.

2. Engels to Marx, October 24, 1869. The letter continues as follows offering commentary on the repercussions created by such policy within the mother country. "All the abominations to the English have their origin in the Irish Pale. I have still to work through the Cromwellian period, but this much seems certain to me, that things would have taken another turn in England too, if it had not been necessary to rule in Ireland by military means and to create a new aristocracy there." See further on this theme, Engels to Marx, January 19, 1870; Karl Marx, "The British Government and the Slave Trade", NYDT, No. 5366, July 2, 1858, MEW 12:507-11; Karl Marx, "The Question of the Ionian Islands", NYDT, No. 5526, January 6, 1858, MEI: 86.

to increase their holdings by eradicating the smaller tenant.⁽¹⁾ Marx's analysis of land holdings showed that 12.1% of all Irish farms in 1864 were over 50 acres; these holdings held 55% of total farm acreage.⁽²⁾ In effect, Marx provided proof for what Engels later termed the illusion of peasant proprietorship. The Irish Poor Law brought about a similar conclusion. On the one hand it did maintain families above starvation level; yet, Marx alleged, that in the final analysis, it contributed to the eviction of the tenantry. As poor law rates were paid by the landlords for their respective tenants, the former sought to evade payment by evicting their tenants, and hiring instead wage labourers from another poor law union.

Engels described the Ireland of the 1850s as a mass of starving beggars, ransacking barns, fields, and workhouses for food. While the government sought refuge behind the gendarme. "I never thought that famine could have such a tangible reality," he wrote to Marx after returning from his first tour of Ireland in 1856. "Whole villages are devastated, and there among them lie the splendid parks of the landlords, who are almost the only people still living there, mostly lawyers. Famine, emigration and clearances together have accomplished this."⁽³⁾ Marx also equated British rule with clearances and emigration, and in seeking a means to illustrate the extent of human misery to a public generally unfamiliar with the events, he documented several cases in the New York Daily Tribune. Replying in one instance to a statement by the London Economist supporting expropriation as an "indispensable preliminary to every kind of improvement," Marx attacked the deep-seated callousness of that attitude. "Begin with pauperising the inhabitants of a country,

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1. See Marx to Engels, April 14, 1870; Engels to Marx, April 15, 1870.
 2. Marx, Capital 1:711.
 3. Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856; See also Black, Economic Thought, pp. 240-1.

and when there is no more profit to be ground out of them, when they have grown a burden to the revenue, drive them away, and sum up your Net Revenue ! Such is the doctrine laid down by Ricardo in his celebrated work, The Principles of Political Economy."⁽¹⁾ Landlords, he continued, desired only to depopulate the country, and reminiscent of the land clearances in the Scottish Highlands, to replace the Irish with more profitable sheep and cattle. Thus, grasping the nettle of the dialectic, Marx and Engels condemned on the one hand the callous destruction of human life, while welcoming the "progressive concentration of small tenancies in Green Erin."

In summary, Marx and Engels alleged that the bourgeois state did not seek to interfere "at the moment when the worked-out old system is terminating in the common ruin, both of the thrifty landlord and the needy tenant," that is against the interests of feudalism.⁽²⁾ Instead, it turned to the aid of the emergent bourgeoisie, rural and urban. This analysis of the Irish question shares similar ground with their views

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1. Marx cited Lord Dufferin as the epitome of this new doctrine. "The fact is that, as the Irish population diminishes, the Irish rent-rolls swell; that depopulation benefits the landlords, therefore also benefits the soil, and, therefore the people, that mere accessory of the soil. He declares, therefore, that Ireland is still over-populated, and the stream of emigration still flows too lazily." Capital 1:710. Dufferin was Lord Lieutenant of County Down, as well as a member of the important India Board, and a substantial landowner in Ireland. According to an editorial in The Freeman's Journal, April 25, 1865, the annual rental from his estates was mildly put at £15,000 compared with the possible £20,000 if he had allowed rack-renting. Opposing Ulster custom as injurious to both landlords and tenant, Dufferin elaborated his point in an address printed in its entirety in The Freeman's Journal of April 24, 1865.
 2. Marx, "Indian Question/Irish Tenant Right", MEI: 62.

expressed on British rule in India. In an article written in 1853 (at the same time as the abovementioned article on Ireland), Marx addressed himself to a careful delineation between the negative and positive aspects of British rule, placing his comments firmly within a historical perspective.

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about the revolution.(1)

With reference to events in Ireland, it seems clear that Marx and Engels felt that the state's involvement was essential for unleashing the pre-conditions of capitalist production, for which the ground had merely been laid by the Great Famine. The main brunt of their argument appears to rest in the final analysis on the question of speed. Here, Marx felt that the British state contributed substantially, through its political and legal apparatus, to depopulation, land sales, and consolidation in such a manner as to "shorten the transition" period.

3. The Irish Experience

Having outlined the path to agrarian capitalism envisaged by Marx and Engels, let's turn now to examine how that image compares with developments in post-famine Ireland. Anyone reasonably familiar with events

1. Karl Marx, "British Rule in India", NYDT June 25, 1853, in Avineri, Karl Marx, p. 88.

in 19th century Ireland will find obvious and inexplicable omissions in their writings. Strangely, both Marx and Engels were silent about the level of industrialisation in Belfast, which in contrast to the steady decay and decline in craft and small-scale industries in Dublin, remained a significant British centre for ship-building, engineering and textiles.⁽¹⁾ This deletion is particularly odd in light of Engels joint ownership of the Manchester cotton-thread firm of Ermen and Engels; Belfast enjoyed a sizeable trade in linen-thread with northern England. In addition, Marx and Engels ignored the increasing commercialisation of the south resulting from rising living standards following the famine, as well as the introduction of the railroad.⁽²⁾ A "shortage of coal and iron precluded imitation of the English pattern of industrialisation, but not industrialisation itself."⁽³⁾ Marx's figures for the decline experienced in textiles in the forty years after the Act of Union illustrates the emphasis he placed upon free-trade. While his figures reflect the trend substantiated by Engels' observations of 1856 which described "a total absence of any industry at all" in the south, there was no attempt to offer an

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1. See Patrick Lynch and John Vaizey, Guinness's Brewery in the Irish Economy, 1759-1876 (Cambridge, University Press, 1960) p. 165; W. E. Coe, The Engineering Industry of the North of Ireland (Newton Abbot:David & Charles, 1969); Frank Geary. "The Rise and Fall of the Belfast Cotton Industry: Some Problems," Paper delivered to the Irish Economic and Social History Society, Cork, 1977. Cf. James Connolly, see O'Brien, States of Ireland, p. 90.
 2. See Lee, "The construction costs of Irish Railways", pp. 95-109; Lee, "The Provision of Capital", pp.33-63.
 3. Lee, Modernisation pp. 12-3; cf. James Connolly, Labour in Irish History (Dublin: New Books, 1971) pp. 26-8.

explanation for this phenomenon beyond reliance upon the Union.⁽¹⁾

Indeed, except for a marked decline in textiles, tanning and distilling by the mid-nineteenth century,⁽²⁾ L. M. Cullen argues that industry on whole remained prosperous into the 1850s and 1860s.⁽³⁾ An industrial crisis in the 1870s spurred by British manufactures flooding the Irish market accelerated the uncompetitiveness of traditional small-scale

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1. Marx and Engels' position on the effect that the Act of Union had on Irish industry is somewhat ambiguous, although they did not appear to fall too deeply into the well-worn track of blaming the Union for all Ireland's ills. In Marx's Report on the Irish question to German workers in 1867 (MEI: 131) he concluded that the introduction of free trade would naturally result in the weakening and disappearance of certain Irish manufactures. On the question of the impact of the Union upon Irish manufacturing, see R. D. C. Black, "Theory and Policy in Anglo-Irish Trade Relations, 1775-1800", JSSISI, vol. 18 (1950-51) pp. 312-26; Cullen, Economic History pp. 98-9; Conrad Gill, The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry (Oxford: University Press, 1925) p. 281; O'Brien, The Economic History of Ireland pp. 299-303; For a similar discussion on the effect of British legislation in the 17th century, see H. F. Kearney, "Mercantilism and Ireland, 1620-1641", in D. Williams, ed., Historical Studies, vol. 1 (London: Bowes and Bowes, Ltd., 1958) pp. 59-68, and "Political Background to English Mercantilism, 1695-1700", Economic History Review, vol. 11 (April 1959) pp. 484-96. For a discussion of the guidelines of the revisionist school of Irish economic history, see L. M. Cullen, "Problems in the Interpretation and Revision of 18th Century Economic History", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, vol. 17 (1967) pp. 1-22; L. M. Cullen, "The Re-interpretation of Irish Economic History", Topic, No. 13 (Spring 1967) pp. 68-77; and L. M. Cullen, "The Value of Contemporary Printed Sources for Irish Economic History in the 18th Century", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 14, No. 54 (September 1964) pp. 142-55.
 2. J. F. Burke in Outlines of the Industrial History of Ireland ([Dublin]: Browne and Nolan, [1920]) suggests that the large export of cattle to England had serious repercussions for the leather industry, and the manufacture of glue and combs. English manufactures were provided with the raw materials which "could easily have been worked up at home." p. 211.
 3. See also A. C. Davies, "The First Irish Industrial Exhibition: Cork, 1852", Irish Economic and Social History, vol. 2 (1975) pp. 46-59.

manufacturing when compared with industrially produced goods.⁽¹⁾ This information further clashes with Marx's declaration in Capital that market towns and the petit-bourgeoisie were on the retreat as a result of emigration.⁽²⁾

Further, Marx's pronouncements about the prospects for an end to the religious divide in the community suggests a general ignorance of the situation. In proposing that Gladstone's Disestablishment Bill of 1867 would remove the "religious bulwark of English landlordism in

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1. For reaction by business see Cullen, Economic History; for reaction by trade unions to increasing competitiveness of English-made goods, see the minutes of the United Trades Association, 1860s, in The Freeman's Journal, and J. W. Boyle, unpublished ms. on the United Trades Association. See further D. L. Armstrong, "Social and Economic Conditions in the Belfast Linen Industry, 1850-1900", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 7, No. 28 (1950-51) p. 239; Burke, Outlines, pp. 198-9. Uncompetitiveness was not restricted to manufacturing but hit the provisions trade as well. J. Donnelly in The Land and People of Nineteenth Century Cork, discusses the situation with reference to Irish butter which found it increasingly difficult to compete with European butter because of its low standard. Also C. Ó Gráda, "The Beginnings of the Irish Creamery System, 1880-1914", Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. 20, No. 2 (May 1977) pp. 285-90.
 2. Perhaps after comparing the level of industry in Ireland with that of England, Marx and Engels chose to overlook it; but whatever of Dublin and southern Ireland's comparative weakness, it is surprising that Belfast was completely ignored. Indeed, in Engels' three trips to Ireland (1856, 1869, 1891) there is no indication that he considered going north; instead his journey took him to the traditionally peasant-oriented agricultural centres of the western seaboard. For a discussion of industrial development in Ireland see Cullen, Economic History; Cullen, ed., The Formation of the Irish Economy, Thomas Davis Lectures (Cork: Mercier, 1968); Lee, Modernisation. Cf. Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856; Marx, "Outline Report", MEI: 131-132; Marx, Capital 1:705. Marx was correct in his view insofar as those industries which depended exclusively on the home-market contracted; expanding firms were "as a rule export-oriented." Cullen, Economic History, p. 157.

Ireland" and result in the unity of Protestant and Catholic tenants against landlordism, Marx was merely repeating traditional and nationalist opinion that Protestant secret societies were artificially manipulated by England. This was also a view conveyed by Marx's daughter Jenny to Ludwig Kugelmann in 1869.⁽¹⁾

At another level, Marx's deductions about post-famine Ireland present a gloomy picture. In contrast to many of his contemporaries who were anxious to point out the benefits of the new English policy, Marx assessed the changes dialectically, careful to note the progressive developments, such as the concentration of "pigmey properties," as well as the disturbance these changes brought to human life.⁽²⁾ It is, however, unfortunate that Marx based most of his judgements upon figures for 1860-1865, a period now understood to have been one of severe agrarian crisis - perhaps greater in intensity than that of 1879 which led to the formation of the Land League.⁽³⁾ For the most part, the years following the famine were prosperous; while subsistence farming was largely destroyed, commercial farming responded favourably to changed to market conditions.⁽⁴⁾ This took the form of expanded cattle and sheep

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1. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 6, 1868; Marx, "The Excitement in Ireland", MEI: 87-91 Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht, February 29; 1888; Jenny Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, December 27, 1869. Cf. Gibbon, The Origins of Ulster Unionism; E. Rumpf and A. Hepburn, Nationalism and Socialism in Twentieth Century Ireland (Liverpool: University Press, 1978); Probert, Beyond Orange and Green.
 2. O'Grada, "Karl Marx", p. 3.
 3. See Donnelly, "The Agricultural Depression", pp. 33-54; Lee, "Irish Agriculture", pp. 70-1.
 4. Cullen, Economic History, chapter 6; Paul Bew, Land and the National Question in Ireland, 1858-82 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1978) pp. 25-33; Donnelly, Land and People, 130-1; Lee, "Irish Agriculture", p. 65; R. D. Crotty, Irish Agricultural Production (Cork: University Press, 1966) pp. 67-8; Chambers and Mingay, The Agricultural Revolution, p.110; Cf. Grimshaw, "A Statistical Survey", pp. 321-61.

herds in preference to tillage crops.⁽¹⁾ As increased incomes were associated more with this shift to livestock, it can be questioned whether the period Marx surveyed represented a true agrarian revolution. Despite brief remarks pointing to the increase in machinery and the "most rigorous economy of labour," that is an alteration in the organic composition of capital coincident with capitalist investment, he presented no evidence to support this contention.⁽²⁾ In addition, there is no indication that agricultural output increased, albeit prices and profits did.⁽³⁾ Indeed, Marx's own evidence is unable to sustain this argument as he concentrated solely upon the shift in production.

There is no doubt, however, that both Marx and Engels quickly drew the significant conclusion about the famine, most notably its position as a crucial watershed in the Irish social formation.⁽⁴⁾ Their optimism

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1. Barbara Solow argues in The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903, p. 109, that land consolidation, which came about 1851, must be considered separately from the shift to pasture. That shift occurred because of price and labour shortages. L. M. Cullen presents similar evidence for shifts from tillage in the 18th Century, in his Anglo-Irish Trade, 1660-1800 p. 6; see further Black, Economic Thought, p. 240. Also see Staehle, "Statistical Notes on the Economic History of Irish Agriculture, 1847-1913," p. 457; Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland p. 71.
 2. Marx, Capital 1:708.
 3. Ibid., 1:703; C. Ó Gráda, "On Some aspects of Productivity Change in Irish Agriculture, 1845-1926", Paper prepared for Agricultural History Session, Section C., 7th International Economic History Congress, Edinburgh, 1978, p. 13, and "Investment Behavior of Irish Landlords, 1850-1875; Some Preliminary Findings", Agricultural History Review, part II, vol. 23 (1975) pp. 139-55.
 4. Lee, Modernisation, pp. 36-9; Cullen, Economic History, argues that while there is no doubt of its importance for Irish economic development, a "rise in emigration and a falling population would have been inevitable even if the Great Famine had not occurred," given the extensive sub-division of the land and the lack of industrial outlets. See also Crotty, Irish Agriculture (pp. 38-9). On p. 46, Crotty argues in contrast to Lee and Cullen that the famine did not mark a watershed in agricultural development.

for the new landowners was shared by many of their contemporaries including the government.⁽¹⁾ The Encumbered Estates Acts, introduced by Lord John Russell's Whig government in 1849, was viewed as a progressive vehicle leading to the expulsion of indebted landlords and the entry of enterprising capitalists. Yet, the expected rush from England did not occur; while some of the new owners did represent a new breed, only a relatively small proportion of land actually changed hands.⁽²⁾

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1. P. G. Lane in "Management of Estates by Financial Corporations in Ireland after the Famine", Studia Hibernica, vol. 14, p. 87 states: "The Encumbered Estates Court, as it existed from 1849-1858, was a bid by England to settle the Irish Land Question within the framework of landlordism by the introduction of commercial principles into estates management. As such a measure it preceded Gladstone's efforts at Settlement through dual ownership and proceeded the establishment of a tenant proprietary." For a discussion on the introduction of free trade as a means to solve the land question, see H. J. Perkin, "Land Reform and Class Conflict in Victorian Britain", in J. Butt and I. F. Clarke, eds. The Victorians and Social Protest (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, Ltd., 1973) pp. 177-217.
 2. Of the new owners on the Donegal estates, W. A. Maguire remarks: ". . . It had been hoped when the 1849 Act was passed that the establishment of free trade in land would attract British capital and British landlords to Ireland. This hope was almost completely disappointed. As Professor Beckett succinctly puts it: 'Between 1849 and 1857 over 3,000 estates were sold under the terms of the Act. But there was no influx either of landlords or of capital: of some 7,200 purchasers only about 300 came from England or Scotland, and they contributed less than £3,000,000 out of the £20,000,000 paid in purchase-money.'" From "Lord Donegall and the Sale of Belfast: A Case History from the Encumbered Estates Court", Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. 29 (November 1976) No. 4, p. 584. Marx stated that 1/6th of the land changed hands (Marx to Engels, April 14, 1870); Engels stated 1/5th (Engels to Marx, April 15, 1870); cf. Lee, Modernisation, presents a figure of 1/7th (p. 38) while Cullen Economic History, offers the larger figure of 1/4 (p. 138). See also Donnelly Land and People, p. 130; Lee, "Irish Agriculture"; Moritz J. Bonn, Modern Ireland and Her Agrarian Problem, trans. from the German by T. W. Rolleston (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co. Ltd., 1906) p. 60.

For the most part, these new owners - members of the existing Irish bourgeoisie who desired to own land as a symbol of status rather than as a source of capitalist investment - were content to copy their predecessors and live elsewhere.⁽¹⁾ Those landlords, such as Allan Pollock, and the London financial and insurance companies, who attempted to apply progressive and modern techniques to farming found their efforts stymied by a traditional and recalcitrant tenantry.⁽²⁾ Recognition of tenant-right

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1. Elizabeth Hooker, Readjustments of Agricultural Tenure in Ireland (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1938) after surveying residences of owners of Irish landed estates over 100 acres in 1870 showed that over half of the owners were to some degree absentee. (p.24) See the following data:

Residence of Owners of Irish Landed Estates (over 100 acres) 1870

1. Resident on or near property	41.2%
2. Resident usually in Ireland, occasionally on property	2.8%
3. Resident elsewhere in Ireland	32.9%
4. Resident usually out of Ireland, but occasionally on property	1.3%
5. Resident rarely or never in Ireland	10.6%
6. Public or charitable institution, or public company	1.2%
7. Not ascertained	10.0%

Absentee in the generally known sense, that is out of the country, is shown to be not as great as generally assumed, only 10.6%. See also E. D. Steele, "Tenant-right and Nationality in 19th Century Ireland", Proceedings of Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, vol. 15, pt. 4 (December 1973) p. 87. These statistics are very different, however, from those needed to support Marx's major contention that a blow struck at the English aristocracy in Ireland would lead to their political and economic assassination in England. An indication of the strength given to the English aristocracy by Irish holdings can be illustrated by evidence in John Bateman, The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland. A List of all owners of 3,000 acres and upwards, worth £3,000 a year, in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales (London: Harrison & Sons, 1879)

2. Lane, "Management", pp. 67-89; O. Robinson, "London Companies as Progressive Landlords in 19th Century Ireland", Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. 15 (August 1962) pp. 103-18; Solow, Land Question; P. G. Lane, "An Attempt at Commercial Farming in Ireland After the Famine", Studies, vol. 61 (Spring 1972) pp. 54-66; Cullen, Economic History, pp. 139-40; Maguire, Downshire Estates in Ireland.

proved insufficient to give adequate security to small tenures on short-leases. On the other hand, landlords were hesitant to grant longer leases or to attempt meaningful improvements for holdings under 15 acres. In summary, the perpetuance of small, sub-divided holdings farmed at subsistence level by a tenantry standing outside the market economy remained a serious stumbling block for capitalist growth - a point both Marx and Engels had recognised quite early on.⁽¹⁾

The Great Famine, changes in market conditions (following the repeal of the Corn Laws and increased demand for meat⁽²⁾), the introduction of free trade principles, and the virtual decimation of the agricultural proletariat helped effect the transition towards pasture agriculture, and the growing capitalisation of the agrarian sector. While changes in land-ownership were not earth-shattering - Marx had felt the number of owners remained at 8,000-9,000 - the real change in class structure came among the class of tenant-farmers.⁽³⁾ As a result of the 1840s, medium to large commercial farmers - those who rented upwards of 15 acres - were scarcely affected by the famine; indeed, it was these farmers who in the 1870s formed the backbone of the Land League (as they had done of

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1. For example, see Engels, Condition pp. 306-10.
 2. Bonn, Modern Ireland (p. 37) suggests that the repeal of the Corn Laws cannot be held responsible for the fall of the price of corn into the 1880s. ". . .It can be said with tolerable precision that no corn duties of fairly bearable dimensions would have been able to stay the great fall in the price of corn during the eighties. Up to that time it was not so much the fall in corn prices as the rise in meat prices which had caused the prevalence of cattle breeding in Ireland." See also G. Kitson Clark, "The Repeal of the Corn Laws and the Politics of the Forties", Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. 4, No. 1 (1951) pp. 1-13.
 3. Marx, to Engels, April 15, 1870.

the Tenant League in the 1850s) and emerged at the end of the century as the independent rural bourgeoisie, having affected the most dramatic revolution in landownership. In the period immediately subsequent to the famine, the larger farmers benefited at the expense of the small farmers whose holdings had been centralised. As Joseph Lee puts it, "the majority of the rural bourgeoisie had always been bourgeoisie who now flourished on the graves of the proletariat."⁽¹⁾

Whereas prior to the famine, labourers, the true agrarian proletariat, had numbered almost one-and-a-half million, by 1881 their numbers had declined by half to just over 800,000. The significance of this reduction is noted in the increase in wages, the fall in tillage in the early 1870s, the substitution of the scythe for the sickle, and the introduction of other farm machinery in the last quarter of the century.⁽²⁾ The impact of this remarkable phenomenon was, however, unfortunately lost on Marx, whose brief account in Capital seemed to assume the continued proletarianisation of the small farmer, adding to the existing reserve army of labour. Likening the classic transformation of England to post-famine Ireland, Marx noted that "since the catastrophe of 1846. . . [the small farmer has] begun to form a fraction of the class of purely wage-labourers, a special class connected with its wage-masters only by monetary relations."⁽³⁾ While eviction and emigration certainly had its toll among the small holders immediately after the famine, evidence suggests that eviction ceased to play a dominant role after the early 1850s.⁽⁴⁾ A recent study by Cormac Ó Gráda also argues,

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1. Lee, "Irish Agriculture", p. 65.
 2. Cullen, Economic History, pp. 135-7.
 3. Marx, Capital 1:706-7.
 4. Solow, Land Question, pp. 53-7; Bonn, Modern Ireland, p. 67.

that small holders were able to withstand the transformation into full-fledged agricultural proletarians by supplementing their subsistence holdings with seasonal wage-labour - in effect, as Kautsky argued in his major work, The Agrarian Question, seasonal migration was a means of "consolidating peasant property."⁽¹⁾ Migration from the poorer west to the large capitalist farms of the east enabled this class to hide its otherwise precarious position; when the Land League emerged in 1879, spurned as a large farmers' reaction to rent increases and advocating direct ownership, small holders translated the demands of peasant proprietorship into a messianic key to their economic solvency.⁽²⁾

While Engels recognised that the tenantry by the 1880s desired only to own land, he joined with Marx in assuming that its demise under the impact of mortgage repayments would follow swiftly. Unaware of the real kernel of the peasant proprietary movement, he implied a much quicker move towards the proletarianisation of small farmers, and hence social revolution, than actually occurred. There is, however, no doubt that the pattern of capitalist growth first noted by Marx and Engels has emerged in the long run. After all, the proportion of agricultural land held by small tenures has continued to diminish, revealing a classic pattern of capitalist centralisation of land and consolidation of ownership

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1. Ó Gráda, "Demographic Adjustment and Seasonal Migration in 19th Century Ireland", Paper prepared for the conference of French and Irish Economic Historians on "Rural Society", TCD, revised draft April 1978; Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 38; Bonn, Modern Ireland, pp. 53-4.
 2. The use of the term "peasant" proprietorship is actually misleading, as it suggests we are discussing a movement advocating ownership by subsistence, non-commercial holders. While there is no doubt that the Land League began in Co. Mayo by Michael Davitt among small holders, the real backbone and victors were the large capitalist farmers who desired ownership rather than rental. It is this movement which effectively signals the rise of an independent rural bourgeoisie. See Bew, Land and the National Question, p.87.

into larger units and a small number of hands; whereas farms of 1-30 acres were 65% of total holdings in 1917 and held 24% of agricultural land, by 1931 they were 57.9% and held only 22.5% of land. In 1960, the respective figures were 49.6% and 17.4%.⁽¹⁾ As a final point, it is extremely unlikely that mortgages, as Engels suggested, rather than competition (viability of farm units has increased from 15 acres in 1900, to 40 acres in 1960, to 80 acres in 1976) and the state (particularly since entry in 1973) into the EEC (with the crucial impact of the Farm Modernisation Scheme) were responsible for the demise.⁽²⁾

Marx had used figures for 1851 and 1861 to substantiate his claim that centralisation of holdings, allowing primitive accumulation, was occurring. Given the experience of the agricultural revolution in England, and the continuing rise in profits despite falling productivity and population, Marx argued that an additional 921,174 persons were destined to emigrate. Depopulation would bring about the centralisation of holdings under 100 acres.⁽³⁾

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1. F. S. L. Lyons, Ireland Since The Famine (London: Fontana, 1973) pp. 603, 627.
 2. Figures of An Foras Taluntais, quoted in Sinn Fein The Workers' Party, The Irish Industrial Revolution, Studies in Political Economy (Dublin: Repsol Publications, revised edition, 1978) p. 28. See also figures on agricultural holdings, Statistical Abstract (Dublin: Central Statistics Office, 1976). Cf. Engels' optimism regarding the demise of the small-holder through mortgage debt with the view expressed by Marx in both Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850 (New York: International Publishers, 1964) pp. 117-120, and The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (New York; International Publishers, 1963) pp. 123-129.
 3. Marx, Capital 1:711; see further Marx, "Report", MEI: 126-39, and "Notes", MEI: 120-5. Ó Gráda, "Investment Behaviour", argues on page 144 that in 1870, landownership in Ireland was more concentrated than in neighbouring England. Similarly, Bonn, Modern Ireland (p.60), states by 1876, about 50% of the country was held by 700 persons.

Marx based his own analysis upon the 1861 Census statistics.⁽¹⁾ He computed the following for land-holdings in Ireland:

Percentage of Farm Holdings by Acre for 1864

1-5 acres	5-15 acres	15-30 acres	30 plus acres
15%	32%	25%	28%
(82,037)	(176,368)	(136,578)	(158,135)

(Note: the total number of units is indicated in parenthesis)

Questions arise, however, over Marx's projections for continued centralisation of holdings. Contrary to his view, history has shown that centralisation did not proceed as thoroughly as he had envisaged, and that Ireland has maintained a significantly large share of small holders on the land. Barbara Solow argues that

the great change in the number of holdings was virtually completed. . . [between 1845 and 1853]. Between 1851 and 1861 [the period Marx declared as destroying 'principally' all farms under 15 acres] the decrease was negligible; between 1861 and 1871 only about -4 percent; between 1871 and 1881 about -3 percent."

Furthermore, Solow points out that while the actual number of holdings fell sharply between 1845 and 1853, from 1853 to 1861 they rose, and only after 1866 did they again begin to decline and then gradually.⁽²⁾

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1. Evidence of this can be found in Marx's manuscript notes held in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam; see Ms B/91A. Marx's calculations compare exactly with Barbara Solow's account of land distribution done for 1861; see Solow, Land Question, p. 93.
 2. Solow, Land Question, pp. 92-4.

The significance of these figures and their correspondence to the level of centralisation suggest a discrepancy between Marx's calculations on capitalist growth and Irish reality. Instead of centralisation proceeding at a similar pace throughout the remainder of the century, evidence points to a significant reduction in that speed. Certainly it is difficult to fault Marx entirely for being unaware of this change after 1851, as it seems likely that he based his deductions on a general comparison of agricultural statistics for the period as a whole rather than a meticulous account of years within that period. Yet, while he calculated total farm holdings to be 601,771 in 1864, a figure comparable with Solow's comments, the fact that he did not observe any fluctuation in the total number of holdings after 1853 would cast dispersions over his familiarity with the situation. Insofar as this would ignore an increase in total holdings, and hence the staying-power of the small-holder, where Marx's analysis would assume only centralisation, his assumptions of capitalist penetration into agriculture deserve more serious attention. That is to say, while many small holdings were welded into larger ones, they account for almost half of all land holdings in the 1890s.⁽¹⁾

These remarks should be borne in mind while examining the effect of the land agitation of the 1850s and afterwards, to which Marx addressed himself in numerous articles.⁽²⁾ While supporting these agitations, he and Engels seemed surprisingly unable to relate the effect of these demands

1. Bonn, Modern Ireland, pp. 47-9.

2. For Example, Marx, "Parliamentary Debates/The Clergy and the Struggle for the Ten Hour Day," NYDT, March 15, 1853; Marx, "War Question/British Population and Trade Returns/Doings of Parliament", MEI: 67-9.

to their general over-view of Irish economic growth, that is to the emergence and extension of capitalist relations of production. Why this contradiction? Despite giving varied attention to the land question in many of their writings, no clear definition of a peasant was offered; instead it appears that the term was used generically to refer to all agriculturalists, except landowners. In The Peasant Question in France and Germany, published in 1894, Engels drew attention to the small peasant, whom he described as "the owner or tenant - particularly the former - of a patch of land no bigger, as a rule, than he and his family can till and no smaller than can sustain his family."⁽¹⁾ The key elements here are the size of the holding and the subsistence level of existence. At various times in other writings, other sub-groups were noted, most especially the medium and large peasant, both of whom employed wage-labour, although the latter predominantly.⁽²⁾ As Mayer points out, this sub-classification can be misleading as it is based only upon Engels' works; "Marx did not stress the sub-classifications so much" relying at times only on a small/large dichotomy.⁽³⁾ The difficulty with

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1. Frederick Engels, The Peasant Question in France and Germany in Marx and Engels Selected Works (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1970) vol. 3, p. 459.
 2. See Engels to Marx, November 1, 1869; Frederick Engels, "Preface", The Peasant Wars in Germany, intro. by David Riazonov (New York: International Publishers, 1966); Frederick Engels, "Germany at the Outbreak of the Revolution", NYDT, October 25, 1851, Germany : Revolution and Counter-Revolution, with the collaboration of Karl Marx, ed. by Eleanor Marx (New York: International Publishers, 1969) pp. 15-6.
 3. Mayer, "Marx, Engels and the Politics of the Peasantry", p. 102. Cf. Lenin, The Development of Capitalism in Russia, CW: 3 and Lenin, "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx,'" CW: 5 p. 218.

the vagueness of the term peasant is, however, not with its varied usage by Marx or by Engels, but rather that it tends to confuse modes of production, precisely that of feudalism and capitalism. In other words, the term farmer, whether the owner or renter of the land, should be used to describe the "peasant" engaged in capitalist agriculture, that is producing surplus-value from wage-labour, and peasant to refer to the small holder locked in a subsistence level, pre-capitalist economy. Without such a clear demarcation, confusion sets in. It is unclear whether the large peasant is still a feudalistic class or should be classed as the rural bourgeoisie, and as such, the indication is that the peasantry - as an entirety - will become proletarianised and hence disappear under capitalism. Despite Engels efforts to attempt a more precise analysis of agrarian class structure, such terms and insight are generally ignored when addressing the Irish situation.

There, the tenantry, which was at times termed the peasantry, is treated almost as an entirety.⁽¹⁾ While treatment of land centralisation and eviction implies a distinction between large and small tenant-farmers, Marx's concern with the general "laws of motion" of capitalism precluded a deeper analysis of land structure, the forces particularly responsible for the post-famine readjustment, and other such factors. Although cognisant of the tenant movement, he tended to assume the laws of capitalism would swiftly engulf and hence proletarianise the smaller tenants. As Mayer notes in his study, Marx treated the small holder as a "doomed class." Unlike his analysis of the concentration and centralisation of industrial capital wherein he accounted for counteracting tendencies, Marx's rather sketchy attention

1. The effect of this misuse of the term peasant is to confuse the pre-famine landlord-tenant relationship with the post-famine period.

to agriculture, and agrarian class structure, did not see the path of development being possibly retarded by specifically agrarian tendencies, such as the resistance of proletarianisation by the small tenantry. It can, therefore, be argued that while Marx noted, as in the case of France, how peasants clung to subsistence plots which gave them only the "pretense of being a private proprietor", he never seriously doubted that the small peasantry would either be enlightened and turn to land nationalisation as the only rational alternative or suffer defeat.⁽¹⁾ In effect, what is strikingly absent from Marx's work is "any serious analysis of the roots and contents of 'property fanaticism based on nominal property.'"⁽²⁾ The idea of "nominal" or "phantom" ownership was ignored; in the Irish case it was precisely the strength of a historico-mythical sense of celtic ownership conveyed to small holders through nationalist interpretations of the 15th and 16th century land confiscations, which fueled the land agitations of the 1870s and

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1. K. Marx, Class Struggles, p. 119; see further K. Marx, "The Nationalisation of the Land", The International Herald. June, 15, 1872. Black, Economic Thought (pp. 24-5, 240-2) suggests that schemes for nationalisation as Marx and Engels proposed were completely alien to the Irish peasantry, who were generally imbued with the notion of dishonoured celtic landowners. There was, in fact, a general lack of interest "in any schemes of utopian radicalism." Economists in general, inclusive of Marx, tended to under-estimate the peasants desire to hold onto the land.
 2. Mayer, "Politics of the Peasantry", p. 149; cf. Lenin, The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907, CW: 13, p. 290 where he remarked on the behaviour of the small farmer to his land: "The small farmer, at all times and throughout the world, becomes so attached to his farm (if it really is his farm and not a piece of the landlord's estate let out in labour-service, as is frequently the case in Russia) that his 'fanatical' defense of private ownership is inevitable at a certain historical period and for a certain space of time."

later.⁽¹⁾ Let's turn to look very briefly at what effect the tenants' movement had upon class structure.

The Tenant League of the 1850s should more accurately be termed a farmers' movement, thereby delineating between farmers who rented land and hired wage-labour to work it, and the peasants who held rack-rented leases in pre-famine days. Shrouded behind demands against the "injustices of the land system," it was comprised primarily of large eastern grain farmers whose opportune interest in questions of tenant-right coincided with the economic crisis of the 1850s.⁽²⁾ The drive for peasant-proprietorship, seen by nationalists as the Irish answer to English landlord-dominated agriculture, quickly superseded the demands for tenant-right by the 1870s.⁽³⁾ The Land Acts, first introduced by Gladstone in 1870,

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1. Lee, Modernisation, pp. 95-7; Bew, Land and Nationalism, pp. 217-32. Politically, these comments should not override the importance that Marx felt the land question held for the Irish national question, and above-all the potential for social revolution in England.
 2. Bew, Land and Nationalism, pp. 34-8; Lee, Modernisation, pp. 39-41.
 3. See E. R. R. Green, "Agriculture," in R. D. Edwards and T. D. Williams, eds., The Great Famine (New York: University Press, 1957) for an account of various schemes for solving the land question, as well as Black, Economic Thought, and W. L. Burns, "Free Trade in Land: An Aspect of the Irish Question", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th series, vol. 31 (1949) pp. 61-74. Solow, Land Question (p. 129-30) makes the following comment on the peasant-proprietary movement, although her remarks on Davitt are rather unfair: "The proposition that 'the land of Ireland belongs to the people of Ireland' is a sentiment to which we may all subscribe. It is a nationalist political slogan. It is an entirely different proposition from maintaining that every small tenant in County Mayo should be encouraged as a matter of economic policy to remain on his substandard holding. It was the genius of Fintan Lalor to see that the two could usefully be confused for revolutionary ends, and the greater genius of Davitt not only to perceive but to implement the vision."

were to go half-way towards meeting this aim. Whatever about the various schemes for easing sales of land through generous loans and grants, the number of those able to purchase holdings was small - evidence of the need for recurrent pieces of legislation in this field (e.g. 1870, 1881, 1885, 1891, 1903).⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, the effect was electric, and regardless of ability, the general cry among tenants by the 1870s was for proprietorship. The land-hungry desires of the population emerged from the demands of land agitation and accompanying prosperity, a feature of the 1870s and after, and not from disease and emigration of the 1840s.⁽²⁾

The Land League, emerging in 1879 as the political response to the agrarian crisis of that year, took the idea of peasant proprietorship further along the road than any previous movement. Enshrining the idea of ownership, it succeeded in drawing support from both small farmers who had only marginally shared in the prosperity of the post-famine years, and large farmers (upwards of 15 acres of good land) who joined

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1. The increasing ease of purchase offered by the cumulative land acts illustrates that despite their desires for ownership, tenants were rational economic beings. Hence, while he should have been glad to purchase land under the Ashbourne Act, it was not until the more providential Wyndham Act of 1903 that the vast surge into ownership occurred.
 2. Lyons, Ireland; W. A. Dunning, "Irish Land Legislation Since 1845", Political Science Quarterly, vol. 7, No. 1-3 (1892) pp. 57-79, 500-21; S. J. Lynch, "Land Purchase in Ireland", JSSISI, part 93 (1912) pp. 1-16; H. Shearman, "State-aided Land Purchase Under the Disestablishment Act of 1869", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 4 (March 1944) pp. 58-80; E. D. Steele, Irish Land and British Politics (Cambridge: University Press, 1974); for a critical interpretation of the land acts, see Solow, Land Question. Cf. Solow with Ó Gráda, "Aspects of Productivity Change", pp. 12-3, and "Investment Behaviour", pp. 139-55.

in an attempt to preserve their gains.⁽¹⁾ The economic implications of the strategy were, however, ominous from a long-term perspective of economic growth. While instilling a sense of self-respect into a dejected and poverty-stricken small tenantry, the issue of peasant proprietorship dangled before them the idea of economic prosperity. There was, however, no rational basis to substantiate the belief that ownership would convert inadequate holdings into thriving economic concerns.⁽²⁾ Yet, the politics of the land question had always revolved around the emotive issue of tenure - who controlled the land and how much rent was paid - a question that politically-speaking had a magnetic nationalist appeal.⁽³⁾ The substantive question, that of the size of the holdings, as Engels had been clearly cognisant of as early as 1844, was tackled by only a few.⁽⁴⁾ Michael Davitt, Fenian turned Land Leaguer, found his ideas on land nationalisation ignored, and Engels was forced to admit that he remained only a "symptom."⁽⁵⁾

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1. Bew, Land and the National Question, p. 101f. Intervention by several dozen farmers' clubs in the Land League's affairs dates from the League conference at the end of April 1880.
 2. Lee, Modernisation, pp. 99-105.
 3. See Crotty, Irish Agriculture, pp. 62-3.
 4. Even the question of rent was in itself somewhat spurious, in that no matter whether it was lowered or even abolished, small holders would have been unable to survive. See Donnelly, Land and People, p. 199.
 5. Engels to Edward Bernstein, August 9, 1882. Traditional accounts of the Irish land question have pointed to landlordism as the source of the problem. For a clear refutation of that approach, and support for Engels' call to examine the size of the holdings, see O. Robinson, "London Companies", p. 103.

In conclusion, the famine witnessed the beginning of a fundamental structural change in the economy.⁽¹⁾ The eastern half of the country experienced the most marked change with a decisive shift to livestock and capitalist farming; the more densely populated west, with small units and poorer soil, sought to utilise its labour most efficiently in tillage production on family-run and oriented units. Population pressure was an important variable in whether farms could take advantage of the changed market conditions.⁽²⁾ The combination of dense population, small farms, and no possibility of a profitable tillage crop proved fatal. The west remained locked in a pre-capitalist world while the east partook of the opportunities that the famine had opened up.

4. Kautsky, Lenin and Marx

From the above discursive review of post-famine agricultural adjustment, it is apparent that Marx's assumptions of capitalist development in agriculture did not progress in Ireland as neatly as he described in Capital. While land holdings underwent considerable centralisation, it neither occurred with the swiftness nor evenness that would have been assumed. Obviously free trade did aid centralisation, but in the final analysis the transference of land from small to large holdings was prompted by population density and market conditions, and did not cause a great upheaval in the actual number of holdings. The dramatic decimation of the agricultural proletariat, leading to severe labour shortages, remained a significant contributor to the preservation of the otherwise

1. See Donnelly, Land and People, pp. 130-229.

2. See Staehle, "Statistical Notes", pp. 444-71.

"doomed" small-holder. And finally, the capitalist farmer was not very enterprising; his appearance after the famine was slow to mature, and when a rural bourgeoisie ultimately emerged at the end of the century, it did not prove to be as efficient nor keen an agriculturalist as its European counterpart.

In seeking to locate why Marx's prognosis for Irish agriculture veers from actual developments, it is necessary to examine more closely the metayage route he outlined in Capital. To facilitate that procedure, consideration of Lenin's study of the development of capitalism in Russia serves as a useful foil. Lenin's work is particularly apt because he sought to adopt Marx's analysis of the capitalist mode of production to the Russian experience; in so doing, he expanded upon what were only preliminary remarks on primitive accumulation, and hence offered a much more extensive analysis of agrarian capitalism. Furthermore, Lenin, in contrast to Marx, produced evidence to suggest that several routes to the capitalist mode of production could (simultaneously) exist. It is on the basis of this conclusion, which was undeniably grounded in his political debate with Narodnik theories,⁽¹⁾ that comparison with Marx

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1. For instance, see Lenin, Agrarian Programme, CW: 13. Kautsky's Agrarian Question was also written partially as a response to reformist critics of Marx who cited the increase in the number of small holders in Germany as a refutation of the general laws of capitalism. As an example of this argument, see David Mitran, Marx Against the Peasantry: A Study in Social Dogmatism (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd., 1951) and "Marx versus The Peasant", in T. E. Gregory and H. Dalton, eds., London Essays in Economics: In Honour of Edwin Cannan (London: Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1927) pp. 319-76. For a refutation of that argument see Lenin, "Capitalism in Agriculture", Zhizn, January-February 1900, CW: 4:109-69, especially pp. 131-32. For the background to Kautsky's work, see George D. Jackson, Jr., Comintern and Peasant in East Europe, 1919-1930 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966) p. 29.

proves most stimulating. If Marx's assessment of capitalist penetration into agriculture proves lacking, can Lenin's more attentive analysis offer some key to our understanding of the former's omissions?

In The Agrarian Programme of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, Lenin referred to two routes to capitalist production. His position argued that Russia in 1903 stood at the cross-roads of capitalist development; the choice of which path was to be taken towards that end-point depended upon a class analysis of the situation. The following excerpt outlining the two routes as he saw them deserves to be quoted in full:

But there may be two forms of that development. The survivals of serfdom may fall away either as a result of the abolition of the landlord latifundia, i.e. either by reform or by revolution. Bourgeois development may proceed by having big landlord economies at the head, which will gradually become more and more bourgeois and gradually substitute bourgeois for feudal methods of exploitation. It may also proceed by having small peasant economies at the head, which in a revolutionary way, will remove the "excrecence" of the feudal latifundia from the social organism and then freely develop without them along the path of capitalist economy.

Those two paths of objectively possible bourgeois development we would call the Prussia path and the American path, respectively. In the first case, feudal landlord economy slowly evolves into bourgeois, Junker landlord economy, which condemns the peasants to decades of the most harrowing expropriation and bondage, while at the same time a minority of Grossbauern ('big peasants') arises. In the second case there is no landlord economy, or else it is broken by revolution, which confiscates and splits up the feudal estates. In that case the peasant predominates, becomes the sole agent of agriculture, and evolves into a capitalist farmer. In the first case the main content of the evolution is the transformation of feudal bondage into servitude

and capitalist exploitation on the land of the feudal landlords - Junkers. In the second case the main background is transformation of the patrariachal peasant into a bourgeois farmer.(1)

We can dismiss consideration of the Prussian path for it yields no useful comparison with Ireland.⁽²⁾ The latter is, however, valuable. The second route, by which independent peasant production becomes predominant, requires the destruction of feudal landed property and its replacement by bourgeois property ownership through, for example, the universalisation of free trade. This leads inevitably through increased levels of accumulation and competition to the emergence of the capitalist farmer who hires wage-labour. Russia, Lenin argued, had only one path before her, that of capitalism; what form that development took, he continued, was dependent upon the class struggle. In the Russian case, the choice was between the landlords' programme for reform, and peasant agrarian revolution. The latter would lead to a rapid transformation of feudal social relations, while the former would necessitate a slower

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1. Lenin, Agrarian Programme, CW 13:239; see also Barry Hindess, "Lenin and the Agrarian Question in the First Russian Revolution", Theoretical Practice, No. 6 (May 1972) pp. 3-19.
 2. See Hindess and Hirst, Pre-Capitalist Modes, p. 259. The Prussian path is illustrated by the transformation of the feudal Junker economy "into capitalist production by the landlord acting as the capitalist, without the intermediary function of the tenant farmer. Furthermore, the Junker landlord retains control over the labourers which are different from and additional to those of wage-form (tied housing, allotments, etc.)" This path is different from the metayage route proposed by Marx, as the latter sees the imposition of the capitalist farmer between the landlord and the labourer.

transition. If the American route was unsuccessful, then Lenin argued that the other route would be pursued. "It is an incredibly slow and incredibly painful road for the broad masses of the peasantry and for the proletariat, but it is the only possible road for capitalist Russia if the peasant agrarian revolution is not victorious."⁽¹⁾

A look at Lenin's two-pronged analysis of transition urges a re-examination of Marx's analysis of the metayage transition as illustrated by the English experience, and noted in Capital. Indeed, as Hindess and Hirst suggest in their outline of the "variants" within the feudal mode of production, there may be three paths to agrarian capitalism, of which Marx's metayage system is only one.⁽²⁾ Lenin's Prussian and American routes offer two alternatives, each depending upon prominent social relations - the form of rent, the political and economic strength of the landlord class, the power of the state, and the existing class relations. If we take Marx's metayage route as an adequate description of transition fostered by the famine, free trade and changed market conditions, whereby the landlord acted as a progressive agent of the transition to the capitalist mode of production, Lenin's second route, that of peasant proprietorship, may be demonstrative of that emergent trend witnessed under the Land Acts, which saw the transformation of the tenantry into independent proprietors. Once land

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1. Lenin, Agrarian Programme, 13:289.
 2. Hindess and Hirst, Pre-Capitalist Modes, pp. 255-259. Cf. Maurice Dobb, "Transition from feudalism to capitalism", Capitalism, Development and Planning (New York: International Publishers, 1967) argues that Marx drew attention to "two roads" of transition. (pp. 12-4) Dobb's illustration, however, confuses industrial and agrarian capitalism. "According to the first. . . 'the producer becomes a merchant and a capitalist'. . . According to the second, it is the merchant who 'takes possession in a direct way of production'. . ." (p. 12).

became the means of production held in private ownership, the law of capitalist competition would come into full force. The inefficient and smaller farmers would be driven from the market as sellers of commodities of food stuffs, and became sellers of the commodity labour-power. It seems likely that it was this picture which Engels envisaged in his 1888 Interview.

Despite the antagonistic nature of these two routes - one demands the expropriation of the small tenantry, their re-orientation as an agricultural proletariat,⁽¹⁾ and the imposition of the capitalist farmer, while the other requires the removal of the landlord class and the emergence of an independent farming class, the rural bourgeoisie - these routes may co-exist within different regions of the same country at the same time. In this manner, metayage might accurately depict actions undertaken by the more progressive landlords immediately post-famine, while peasant proprietorship came to dominate by the latter part of the century. In contrast to the Russian situation, as explained by Lenin, peasant proprietorship has, in Ireland, been a slower form of transition; the reluctance of the small holder to give up his land in the face of obvious inefficiency has provided proof of that. Hence while large capitalist units now (1976) control over 3/4 of agricultural land and agricultural produce, small holders have remained amazingly steadfast.⁽²⁾

If this two-pronged analysis of capitalist development can be applied to Irish agriculture, then we can possibly reveal the source of inadequacy and frustration with Marx's overly optimistic version of

1. See for example, Lane, "Management of Estates", p. 75.

2. "Statistical Abstract", Table 60.

the transition. Certain factors help to account for his stance. The importance of timing deserves to be emphasized;⁽¹⁾ further, as Marx did not pretend to present an analysis of transition to capitalism but only of the capitalist mode of production, his own work was too superficial in this area to provide the needed evidence. His more obvious attempt to see agrarian development in Ireland as "mimicing" that of industrial England would not have provided the required tools for analysis either. Although he did account for differences in demand for labour - agriculture sees an absolute fall in labour while industry only a relative decrease - he did not go far enough to suggest dissimilarities in the laws of development. He seems instead to have assumed an affinity in speed and efficiency between agrarian and industrial capitalism which has been largely unsubstantiated in reality.⁽²⁾ In other words, he was unfamiliar with what Lenin and Kautsky later recognised were the specific laws of the penetration of capitalism into agriculture. Finally, as the Irish case illustrates, he did not adequately consider peasant proprietorship as an alternative route to capitalism. He failed to take significant account of the tenant movements, tending to view their

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1. As noted in the previous chapter, Marx based most of his comments on Irish agriculture on data (for Capital vol. 1) for the years 1860-1865. After his contributions of 1867, he did not seriously return to a study of Irish land, nor indeed of the land question in general, although it appears he had intended to do so. See for example, Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, June 27, 1870.
 2. This statement does not ignore the various counter-tendencies or as Lenin says the "extreme variety of transitional and mixed forms" which Marx notes slow or "obscure the victory of the factory system." Nevertheless, it is true to say that the process of capitalist penetration into agriculture is much more complicated than perceived by Marx. Regarding the retardation of capitalism, see comments by E. J. Hobsbawm quoted in Maurice Dobb, "Prelude to the Industrial Revolution", Capitalism, Development and Planning, pp. 24-5.

aims of only peripheral importance to economic developments; in a sense, he viewed the demands as characteristic of a pre-famine peasantry rather than the birth-cries of a rural bourgeoisie.

Karl Kautsky in his pioneering work entitled The Agrarian Question (1899) greatly expanded upon the preliminary remarks made by Marx in Capital. Tackling the question of the differences between agrarian and industrial capitalism, Kautsky asked why the development of agrarian capitalism proceeded at a different speed, and why its form could cohabit with pre-capitalist social relations of production. (1) In a nutshell, he warned that capitalism "does not develop in agriculture in the simple way we thought, . . . its development is probably more complicated in this sector of the economy than in industry." (2) Lenin echoed these sentiments when he wrote in The Development of Capitalism in Russia (1905):

It should be added that our literature frequently contains too stereotyped an understanding of the theoretical proposition that capitalism requires the free landless worker. This proposition is quite correct in indicating the major trend, but capitalism penetrates into agriculture particularly slowly and in extremely varied forms. (3)

The key to understanding Marx's analysis lies at the level of the specific; there is no doubt and certainly the Irish experience will bear it out,

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1. Editorial Note by J. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 1.
 2. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 29.
 3. Lenin, Development of Capitalism, CW 3:178; see further V.I. Lenin, "Review: K. Kautsky, Die Agrarfrage", CW 4: 96, and V.I. Lenin, "Capitalism in Agriculture", CW 4:111.

that the capitalist mode of production was the general trend. What is under examination here, however, is what route that trend took, and having established that, why Marx was unable to point it out.

Kautsky stated that the intention of his study was to consider the application of Marx's method to agriculture. "We should ask: is capital, and in what ways is capital, taking hold of agriculture, revolutionizing it, smashing the old forms of production and of poverty and establishing the new forms which must succeed."⁽¹⁾ After tracing the historical movement of capitalism into agriculture, he went on to observe that "the currents and tendencies which thwart the process of concentration in industry are active in agriculture as well. But in agriculture other tendencies operate. . ."⁽²⁾ He observed the following: First, unlike machinery or tools, land as a means of production is limited in quantity. Its amount cannot be increased; hence, centralisation of land has an absolute end point. Second, its quality may differ according to natural conditions. These factors are inherent and not transferable, although its lesser qualities can be overcome by fertilisers or machinery, or as with distance, by transportation. Third, agrarian capitalism demands the centralisation of land into larger units; the landowner or farmer cannot increase his wealth except through uniting smaller units.⁽³⁾ The process of centralisation is, therefore,

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1. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 3.
 2. Ibid., p. 30; See also Lenin, "Review of Kautsky", CW 4:96.
 3. The need for the properties, that are to be centralised, to be contiguous is also important. "In 1923 a senior Congested Districts Board official candidly admitted that 'fully one third of the holdings already sold are still uneconomic because land for enlargement was not available.'" Quoted in Ó Gráda, "Aspects of Irish Productivity", p. 18.

absolutely essential. This differs from industrial capitalism where, as Marx noted in Capital, accumulation was the "starting point".

Furthermore, availability or non-availability of labour acts as a crucial factor in promoting changes in the means of production as well as centralisation. In industry, where small firms (unless engaged in the production of luxury items) generally recede or fold in the face of large-scale competition, the lack of adequate labour reserves results in the adaptation of improved machinery.⁽¹⁾ In contrast, the lack of labour is "in most cases the basic cause for the retreat of large holdings before smaller ones."⁽²⁾ The process is, however, not one dimensional; as the "number of small cultivators proliferates on the periphery of big farms, the pool of available manpower expands, thus reinforcing the vitality and dominance of the large holding." Hence, Kautsky argues that there is a tendency for an alteration to occur between centralisation and fragmentation of agricultural units, whereby the small units provide the essential labour requirements for the capitalist farms. This tendency is partially conditional upon a shortage of agricultural labour, although large holdings, despite their technical superiority, can "never establish an exclusive domination in any country" under the capitalist mode of production.⁽³⁾ Further and more importantly

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1. The reverse holds true also; as James Connolly noted, the availability of cheap labour "deprived employers of the stimulus of rising costs to increase efficiency." Quoted in Lee, Modernisation, p. 11.
 2. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 34; Lenin, Development of Capitalism, CW 3:178.
 3. Lenin (CW 4:136) supports Kautsky stating: "Thus, within the limits of the capitalist mode of production it is impossible to count on small-scale production being entirely eliminated from agriculture, for the capitalists and agrarians themselves strive to revive it when the ruination of the peasantry has gone too far. Marx pointed to this rotation of concentration and parcellisation of the land in capitalist society as far back as 1850, in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung." The reference to Marx is to the following quotation from

the existence of the peasantry on the fringes of capitalist society is due not to his superiority over large-scale production but to his ability to reduce his living costs to the lowest denominator, relying upon his own and his family's labour power to work the land.

But, other factors may also contribute to the resilience of the small holder; domestic industry acts similarly as seasonal migration.⁽¹⁾ Likewise, as capitalist industry extends into the traditionally rural regions of the country, it provides a mechanism not only for its own provision of labour (technical superiority creates redundancy in one area of production which is re-employed in another), but, as a means of employment for the farmer and/or his children, it serves as a "means to safeguard their property against bankruptcy."⁽²⁾ In Ireland, remittances from emigrants, particularly from America, Australia, and England, provided a needed source of income.⁽³⁾ While labour shortages favour the expansion

a review of "Le Socialisme et L'impot, par Emile de Girardin, Paris, 1850", CW 10:335. Therein Marx states, "And finally, if in France the tide has already begun to turn from fragmentation to concentration, in Britain the large landed estates are making giant strides towards renewed disintegration, conclusively proving that agriculture necessarily proceeds in an incessant cycle of concentration and fragmentation of the land, as long as bourgeois conditions as a whole continue to exist." Unfortunately this statement did not help him to understand the Irish case any better.

1. See Cullen, Economic History, pp. 119-20, 130, 151; E. R. R. Green, The Lagan Valley, 1800-1850: A Local History of the Industrial Revolution, vol. 3, Studies in Irish History series, ed. T. W. Moody, R. D. Edwards and D. B. Quinn (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1949) pp. 123, 160; Gill, Rise of Irish Linen, pp. 45-6, 48; Maurice Dobb, Studies in the Development of Capitalism (New York: International Publishers, 1963) pp. 149-51.
2. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 38.
3. Sherman, "Land Purchase", p. 70.

of medium holdings and the proliferation of small ones, once the labour problem is solved, the tendencies which aid this development will cease to operate."⁽¹⁾

Once agriculture comes fully under the dominance of the capitalist mode of production, the burdens of the small farmer will multiply. The law of capitalist competition effecting the relationship of large to small holdings will begin to operate, intensifying the inefficiency and poverty of the latter. The small man will be forced to fully proletarianise himself and his family in order to survive.⁽²⁾ The significant contradiction of seasonal or part-time industrial employment then comes into force; the conditions of existence of the small holder are revolutionised under the influence of the town and capitalist social relations of production. International competition will only further aggravate the small holders predicament, as it forces even the less efficient or stingy larger farmer to give way.⁽³⁾

The ultimate force behind this transformation is not the awakened consciousness of the small farmer to his precarious position. If this were the case, he would have relented to economic pressures earlier, as Marx had anticipated. Instead, Kautsky concludes that the "motor force" behind this transformation is to be located in capitalist industry, which has "smashed the unity of industry and agriculture in the countryside, that converted the peasant into the pure agriculturalist, a commodity producer tied to an

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1. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 40.
 2. See for example, Hugh Brody, Inishkillane (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973).
 3. Engels, "American Food and the Land Question", Labour Standard, July 2, 1881, MEI: 317.

unknown market, that established the possibility of his proletarianisation."⁽¹⁾
It was industry that revolutionised the means of production and brought about a "qualitative" distinction between agricultural holdings that produced purely for household consumption and those that produced for the market. Whereas the early period of capitalist agriculture saw the cohabitation of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production, "now it is big capitalist industry that predominates and agriculture that tails behind, adapting its requirements."⁽²⁾

5. Conclusion

In concluding, several points require emphasis. First, it should be mentioned that Marx's examination of capitalist agriculture was a preliminary encounter. In having studied the extension of capitalism into manufacturing production, he assumed that the process entered agriculture in a similar fashion, especially with regard to speed and efficiency. However, as Kautsky determined, counteracting tendencies arise that not only slow that process but can appear to retard capitalist growth as well. The poverty and pre-capitalist environment of the small holder is insufficient basis for his demise; instead numerous instances account for the small farmer's essential contribution to capitalist agriculture. In addition, the notion of land - whether real, fictional or prophesized - is a powerful psychological factor in encouraging his retention of land against economic odds. The Irish experience provides a case in point.

Second, in response to a question posed at the beginning of the chapter, there is no substantial evidence to support Alexander Gershenkron's

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1. Banaji, "Kautsky", p. 46; Marx reached the same conclusions about the power of industrial capitalism in Capital, vol. 1.
 2. Ibid. p. 47.

remarks. While just criticism and questions can be made and raised regarding Marx's understanding of Irish post-famine developments, it is unfair to suggest that he sought to paint her development solely based upon the pattern of growth described in Capital. There is no doubt, as pointed out above, that he and Engels ignored or possibly dismissed crucial factors in Irish economic growth and concentrated principally upon those trends which most readily expressed a capitalistic tendency. In so doing, Marx noted that large scale units were becoming the dominant feature, and that the capitalist farmer was appearing alongside the landowner and the agricultural proletariat. Unfortunately, his examination of the general path of development made him unaware of the specifics of the Irish experience, most particularly its generally slow growth pattern, with small-scale agriculture a predominant feature well into the twentieth century.

In seeking an explanation of the cause of Marx and Engels' mis-assessment, attention has been drawn to their understanding of agrarian capitalism. Herein, it has been shown, lies the source of the problem. Attempting to assign a similarity between agrarian and industrial growth - which is not the same as Gershenkron's concern about advanced and less advanced countries although it might share common features - they ignored those factors which contributed to the peculiar post-famine experience. The particularities of agricultural development, as cited by Lenin and Kautsky, add valuably to Marx's study of the capitalist mode of production, as well as providing a key to a better understanding of the Irish phenomenon. Where Marx outlined only one path to capitalism, Lenin provided two alternatives. Further, Kautsky's understanding of the role played by the small peasant holder, that is the cohabitation of pre-capitalist and capitalist agriculture, suggests why the demise of the

small holder did not come about as quickly as Marx had envisaged. In other words, Lenin's suggestion that there may, in fact, be more than one path to capitalism fills in the gap left by Marx's perception of the single metayage route, which was unable to account for the drive for peasant proprietorship as it emerged in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Engels, in 1888, called attention, if only cryptically, to this route. Marx's depiction of the single route lies in his general unfamiliarity with agricultural development and agrarian class structure - areas that Kautsky sought to expand upon.

CHAPTER FOUR

FREDERICK ENGELS AND THE IRISH QUESTION

1. Writing Irish History
2. Irish Underdevelopment
3. Ireland Before the English

CHAPTER FOUR

FREDERICK ENGELS AND THE IRISH QUESTION

1. Writing Irish History

In 1869, having "acquired more time for scholarly pursuits,"⁽¹⁾ Frederick Engels began research into Irish history with the intention of writing a book on the Irish question "from our standpoint."⁽²⁾ The primary aim was to counter traditional accounts and opinions of conditions in Ireland by presenting a fully-researched study of Ireland, relying, for the most part, on scientific and historical documentation; the word "traditional" is used here in the sense that Engels sought to show that opinion which had been elevated to the status of general acceptance, had a definite class bias. "The bourgeoisie," he had written in his preparatory notes for the book,

turns everything into a commodity, hence also the writing of history. It is a part of its being, of its condition for existence, to falsify all goods, it falsified the writing of history. All the best-paid historiography is that which is best falsified for the purposes of the bourgeoisie.⁽³⁾

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1. Ilyichov, Engels, p. 234.
 2. Engels to Sigismund Borkheim, Beginning of March 1872.
 3. Frederick Engels, "Notes for the History of Ireland", MEI: 211.

The Communist Manifesto, jointly scripted with Karl Marx twenty years earlier, had pronounced a similar verdict: "The bourgeoisie creates a world after its own image."⁽¹⁾ In contrast, Engels' technique sought to juxtapose contemporary opinion with historical fact, noting how the bourgeoisie had interpreted those facts to justify its own colonial policy. The History of Ireland would not aim to justify English policy but to show how it operated against Irish society. Secondly, the History of Ireland, as it was to be called, would, provide Marx and the International Working Mens Association with the essential historical data from which to analyse contemporary events in Ireland.⁽²⁾

Unfortunately, Engels' work was continually interrupted and never completed. Only the first two chapters of the promised History of Ireland - those concerning geological and agronomic conditions, and the socio-economic circumstances of ancient Ireland - were actually drafted; moreover, the manuscript of chapter two breaks off inconclusively. Notes on historical developments from the tenth to the seventeenth centuries, which would have provided the essential core for chapters three and four of the book, were compiled by Engels under the titles "Chronology of Irish History," and "Varia on the History of Irish Confiscations." This material provides the present reader with an indication of the extent of his research. Altogether, his notes derive from and cover almost two-hundred titles on such diverse subjects as Irish history, language, celtic law, agronomy, and geology, and fill over fifteen notebooks with excerpts and

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1. Frederick Engels and Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, CW 6:488.
 2. Ilyichov, Engels, p. 234; Mayer, Engels, p. 195.

(1)
commentary. They point, even without adequate space given in these notes to his own editorial comment, to a massive enterprise which sought an historical materialist approach to the Irish question. He endeavoured to reveal the "close interconnections of Irish and English history" and to expose what he considered were the chauvinistic interpretations of that historical relationship. (2)
The necessity of beginning the project from the vantage point of Ireland's "natural conditions" came, he wrote in that chapter, from the manner in which climatic and agricultural conditions had been so obviously misinterpreted. "It can be seen that to establish the facts on the Irish climate is to unravel a topical political question." (3) Hence, to understand the economic circumstances was to lay bare the base of political domination.

It is difficult to discern how much of the information gathered by Engels was actually used by Marx, although it is likely that the project was undertaken with that role in mind. Marx called attention to the importance of the work in a letter of March 5, 1870, when he wrote that Engels' researches would "unmask the English to the Continent." Several

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1. For the most part, these notes have remained unpublished; the few exceptions are contained in L. I. Golman's collection, Ireland and the Irish Question: A Collection of Writings by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, which is quoted as MEI throughout this thesis. For a full listing of all manuscript material, see Appendix I (Checklist) and Appendix 2 (Bibliographic Notes on English and Irish History.) This material was accumulated by Engels between 1869 and 1870. Although it is impossible to ascertain how many of these sources he actually read, some hint can be found in the excerpts mentioned in the Checklist as well as in his correspondence with Marx. The appropriate letters are also noted in the Checklist.
 2. Golman, "Introduction", MEI: 20
 3. Frederick Engels, History of Ireland, MEI: 185.

weeks later, Engels expressed similar sentiments. Castigating "narrow-minded [Irish] nationalists like [Richard] Piggot", editor of The Irishman, he claimed: "Piggot remains the same ambivalent fellow. They must have a republic in Ireland but the French must remain under Bonaparte. My book when it comes out will silence them. . ." ⁽¹⁾ Engels' work can be further linked with that of Marx through the debates of the General Council of the International. The second major debate undertaken by the Council on the Irish question occurred in the last months of 1869 (November 9, 16, 23 and 30, 1869) when Engels, having just returned from Ireland, had begun work on his History. While the content of Marx's contributions during those debates centred around attempts by the British government to suppress the Irish amnesty movement, this would not negate Engels' input. ⁽²⁾ Another tie is their correspondence between 1867 and 1870 (until Engels moved to London in September 1870) regarding the availability of material on Irish history and culture, and the relative value of these particular sources. And finally, it is likely that Engels' studies were influential in aiding Marx's review of Henry Sumner Maine's work on early social institutions which dealt in considerable detail with Ireland, ⁽³⁾ as well as Marx's formulation of the concept of rent in

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1. Engels to Marx, April 29, 1870; Marx to Engels, July 8, 1870.
 2. For a complete listing of these debates, see Appendix I. Regarding the account of the speeches made during the debate, see Doc. 3:177-94; Marx to Engels, November 12, 1869; Marx to Engels, November 18, 1869; Engels to Marx, November 19, 1869; Marx to Engels November 26, 1869; Engels to Marx, November 29, 1869; Marx to Engels, December 4, 1869; Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869.
 3. See Lawrence Krader, trans., ed., and intro., The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum & Comp. N. V., 1972 for the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam) pp. 34-9, 287-315.

volume three Capital.⁽¹⁾

Engels' methodical habits, illustrated by his extensive working knowledge of the relevant bibliographic material, moved Marx to comment that the History was consuming more time than was initially conceived,

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1. Marx, Capital, 3:748-72; Engels to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson, June 10, 1890. While consideration of the concept rent is tangential to the objectives of this thesis, it is worth referring very briefly to Marx's exemplary use of Irish landlord-tenant relations. In a lecture on the subject of Marx and Ireland, C. Desmond Greaves (Dublin, February 14, 1977) argued that the demands of the Irish tenant movement for the 3-Fs coincided with Marx's development of a theory of rent. In other words, adoption of the 3-Fs (Fair rent, fixity of tenure, and free sale) meant the conversion of a corrupted version of rent (almost a feudal rent) into capitalist rent. Elsewhere, Greaves stated that "It is clear from a letter of October 1868 that Marx was studying Ireland from the standpoint of his theory of rent. . ." ("Marx and Engels", p. 7) While it is questionable that the formulation of the concept of rent induced a study of Irish agricultural conditions, there is enough evidence to support the view that the agricultural environment of Ireland influenced his understanding of capitalist ground rent. In the letter to Engels of October 10, 1868, referred to above by Greaves, Marx argued that rent was not merely based upon "natural differences in land" (hence differential rent), but also included "interest on the capital invested in the land, not by the landlord but by the tenant." [Cf. William Carlton, The Black Prophet, Irish Novel series, ed. A. Norman Jeffares (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972)] In adopting this position, Marx differed from Ricardo, and his own earlier view, as pronounced in Karl Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, CW 6:200-1. The tenant movement, and the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, sought to grant compensation to tenants for improvements to the soil, which, as Marx noted in Capital 3:618-9, was heretofore pocketed by the landowner. This situation differed from that practiced in England, where improvements, such as drainage, fencing, and the erection of buildings, were generally carried out by the landlord. (Black, Economic Thought, p. 5) Nevertheless, Marx felt that what occurred in Ireland was, in most cases, not comparable to the collection of rent under capitalism, as it happened without "the tenant himself being an industrial capitalist, nor the type of his management being a capitalist one. . . .The tenant there is generally a small farmer. What he pays to the landlord in the form of rent frequently absorbs not merely a part of his profit, that is, his own surplus-labour (to which he is entitled as possessor of his own instruments of labour), but also a part of his normal wage, which he would otherwise receive for the same amount of labour." (Capital 3:625). Finally, consideration of the Irish agrarian question took second place to his study of Russian agriculture; Engels explained in the "Preface"

a feeling similarly expressed by Engels.⁽¹⁾ The detail of that work, and the mammoth time-scale Engels hoped to survey, in addition to the events developing on the continent of Europe, forced the History to be put aside. By March 1872, Engels admitted to Borkheim that "for the last two years I have been intending to write. . . [my book on Ireland], but the [Franco-Prussian] war, the Commune, and the International have brought everything to a standstill." Not surprisingly, both Marx and the International's concern with the Irish question faded in the face of these more immediate developments.

Concerned over the following twenty years to resume work on the book, it would appear that Engels was only able to incorporate some of the material in the chapter "Gens with Celts and Germans" in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (1884). Certainly, his notebooks containing extracts and commentary on Irish history do not continue after 1869/1870; nor is there any mention in his correspondence after his remark in 1872 to his pending History. For the most part, his references to Ireland in either correspondence or articles after 1870 should be seen as digressions or asides by which means he sought to illustrate, by way of Ireland, the effects of the capitalist mode of production on, for example, domestic industry, or the behaviour of the bourgeoisie.⁽²⁾ Likewise, Marx did not spend any considerable time on

to Capital, volume three (p. 7): "Owing to the variety of forms both of landownership and of exploitation of agricultural producers in Russia, this country was to play the same role in the part dealing with ground-rent that England played in Book I in connection with industrial wage-labour." See also Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, June 27, 1870.

1. Engels to Marx, January 25, 1870.
2. For example see, Engels, "The English Elections", MEI: 310-2; Frederick Engels, "Preface to the English edition" of The Condition of the Working Class in England, January 11, 1892, MEI:344-5; Engels to Eduard Bernstein, April 12, 1881; Engels to Karl Kautsky,

the Irish question after the 1869 debate in the General Council, although L. I. Golman has suggested that Marx's studies of the land question in the latter 1870s included Ireland.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, Engels continued to maintain a general interest in events in Ireland, travelling there for a third time in 1891 with Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling.⁽²⁾

Engels had formulated the draft of the proposed book by May 1869.⁽³⁾ His trip to Ireland in September of that year had been undertaken with the purpose of collecting data for the book; upon his return, he began to gather material from libraries and bookshops.⁽⁴⁾ The book, divided into four main chapters, defined the major periods of Irish history. The project was intended to cover all aspects of Irish history, paying specific attention to the role of England as the determining force behind Ireland's retarded development. Historically, it sought to survey events in Ireland from pre-Norman days to the post-famine period - here it would certainly take account of Marx's analysis in volume one Capital.⁽⁵⁾ In

February 7, 1882; Engels to Herman Schulter, March 30, 1892; Engels to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson, June 18, 1892; Engels to Charles Bonnier (draft), December 3, 1892.

1. Correspondence of L. I. Golman with E. Hazelkorn, August 1977; see vol. 45 of the Collected Marx/Engels Writings in Russian (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975) pp. 8-81.
2. Very little information is available about this trip; unlike the previous trips, no correspondence is to hand. See chapter 1.
3. Beresford-Ellis, History p. 142.
4. His bibliographic notes mention the Chatham Library, Manchester. Mayer, Engels, p. 193.
5. In the History of Ireland, Engels wrote: "We shall see later, moreover, how the English assisted nature by curbing almost every seed of Irish history as soon as it appeared." (MEI: 174) A close connection can be seen between these remarks and those by K. Marx in "Outline of a Report on the Irish Question", December 16, 1867, MEI: 131-2.

addition, the book was to be an analysis of colonialism, placing the Irish question in an international dimension.⁽¹⁾ It was in this capacity that the book would substantiate the International's position on the English working class and the Irish question as framed by Marx over the years 1867 to 1869. Jenny Marx described the History in a letter to Ludwig Kugelmann, December 27, 1869, as a "pendant to his Condition of the Working Class in England." His notes, however, reveal that its nature and intent was much more extensive. The plan as outlined in his notes was as follows:⁽²⁾

- I. Natural Conditions
- II. Ancient Ireland
- III. English Conquests
 - i. First Invasion
 - ii. Pale Irishry
 - iii. Subjugation and Expropriation. 152. . .-1691
- IV. English Rule
 - i. Penal Laws. 1691-1780
 - ii. Rebellion and Union 1780-1801
 - iii. Ireland in the United Kingdom
 - iv. The period of the small peasants 1801-1846
 - v. The period of extermination 1846-1870

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1. For a discussion of this see chapter 5.
 2. Engels, History, MEI: 210, and Engels, "Disposition on Ireland", Ms. H23, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. Cf. this outline with Marx's outline of the key periods in Irish history, Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869; and noted in chapter two above.

2. Irish Underdevelopment

Engels' analysis relied to a large degree on geological and agronomic evidence. The first chapter, appropriately entitled "Natural Conditions," measured the inherent qualities of the country when placed alongside its neighbour, England. He drew upon the detailed information supplied in Sir Robert Kane's⁽¹⁾ The Industrial Resources of Ireland, first published in 1844 under the auspices of the Royal Dublin Society.⁽²⁾ As Kane was the author of the first book to study Irish resources scientifically, it presents a rich foil against which to contrast Engels'

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1. Robert Kane (1809-1890) began his career in medicine and changed to chemistry in 1831 upon being offered the professorship of chemistry at Trinity College. In that same year, he was appointed to a professorship at the Apothecaries Hall, published Elements of Practical Pharmacy, and projected the Dublin Journal of Medicine and Chemical Science. In subsequent years, he was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Dublin Society (1834), as an Irish Relief Commissioner during the famine (1846), and first President of Queen's College, Cork (an appointment made in 1846 but not taken up until 1849 when the college formally opened). Kane's important survey of Irish industrial resources sought "to direct attention to the various sources of wealth in fuel, waterpower, mines, agriculture and manufacture which this country affords." He was also founder and first director of the Museum of Irish Industry, established on the strength of Kane's Industrial Resources of Ireland in 1844. See D. O Raghallaigh, Sir Robert Kane, Industry and Commerce. First President of Queen's College, Cork (Cork: University Press, 1942); T. S. Wheeler, "Sir Robert Kane, His Life and Work", in The Natural Resources of Ireland; A Series of Discussions delivered before the RDS, April 12, 13, 14, 1944 (Dublin: Royal Dublin Society, 1944); Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland; Professor G. Cole, "Memoirs of the Geological Survey of Ireland: Mineral Resources", (Dublin: Stationary Office, 1922); The Freeman's Journal, February 18, 1890.
 2. The Royal Dublin Society was founded under the influence of Dr. Samuel Madan (1686-1765) on June 25, 1731 by fourteen men "anxious to improve the condition of their country and to raise the status of the agricultural population." It was established as a society for improving Husbandry, Manufactures and Science. The Rules of the newly-formed society laid down (December 18, 1731) the duties of membership: "that every member of this society, at his admission, be desired to choose some particular subject either in natural history,

approach and his conclusions. Both men sought in their widely divergent projects to understand the cause of the Irish condition; both centred their study around the economic element of the circumstances, although Kane tackled the question from a very technical stance, while Engels brought to his work the tool of historical materialism.

Kane's book eschewed an optimistic evaluation of Ireland's technological possibilities; he felt that given proper development, scientific training, and the acquirement of necessary skills, available resources could provide an industrial base in the country, although not to the extent experienced by England. This stress on hard work and education was clearly amplified in the quotation from an eminent Belgian

or in husbandry, agriculture or gardening or some species of manufacture or some other branch of improvement, and make it his business, by reading what had been printed on that subject, by conversing with them who made it their profession, or by making his own experiments, to make himself master thereof, and to report, in writing, the best account they can get by experiment or enquiry relating thereunto." In addition to conducting and prompting research into improved techniques of agricultural production, the society offered premiums to either individuals or cities whose activities promoted industry and agriculture. Premiums were offered, inter alia, for hops, flax cider, and lace production; to Kilkenny town for clearing its streets of beggars by affording employment in street-cleaning; for brewing; for the best imported stallions; for breaking up the ground; for promotion and development of iron and steel instruments. Furthermore, the RDS was responsible for the creation of the Botanic Gardens (1733) and the Veterinary College (1800); also, in 1877, objets d'art, archaeological material and books collected by the RDS were given to the state to establish the National Gallery, National Museum, and National Library (1877-1878), respectively. See The Royal Dublin Society (Dublin, 1951 and 1965). Arthur Young, A Tour in Ireland, ed. with an intro. by Arthur Wollaston Hutton (Dublin, and London : n.p., 1892) vol. 2, pp. 131-3. For an indication of the extent of the research and lecture facilities provided by the RDS, see A Bibliography of the Publications of the RDS, 1731-1951 (Dublin: Royal Dublin Society, 1951 and 1953).

minister, M. Briavonne, which Kane placed on the title page: "Qu'est-ce-que fait la difference entre l'Angleterre riche et florissante et L'Irlande pauvre et imbecile? La savoir industriel?" Only vaguely tinged with a conciliatory response to more pessimistic opinions, Kane recognised the limitations of Ireland's potential growth marked by her "physical constitution." Nevertheless, he re-interpreted Ireland's proscribed low level of development as a built-in protection against "the evils of vast, unhealthy, manufacturing cities," characteristic of England.⁽¹⁾ Engels, having read Kane's book, adopted a more pessimistic stance. Observing the natural inequalities bequeathed to Ireland, he noted that the proximity between the two countries would impair Ireland's growth. With very little reference to the potential for growth based upon scientific utilisation of resources, Engels summed up the situation this way:

It is obvious that Ireland's misfortune is of ancient origins; it begins directly after the carboniferous strata were deposited. A country whose coal deposits were eroded, placed near a country rich in coal, is condemned by nature to remain for a long time the farming country for the larger country when the latter is industrialised. That sentence, pronounced millions of years ago, was carried out in this [the nineteenth] century.⁽²⁾

Kane, a progressive bourgeois, who became the first President of Queen's College, Cork, 1845, delivered his prophecies in a series of lectures organised by the country's most scientific and technologically-minded body, the Royal Dublin Society. Explaining the origin of his

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1. Robert J. Kane, The Industrial Resources of Ireland (Dublin: 1844; 2nd ed. 1845; photolithographic reprint, Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971) p. 426-7.
 2. Engels, History, MEI: 174.

writings, he noted in the preface to the 1844 edition that for

some time since. . .I entered into some details regarding the circumstances under which the sources of mechanical power exist in Ireland, and took occasion to correct the exaggerated ideas usually entertained of the disadvantages under which this country labours, in regard to mechanical industry. . . .Passing beyond the question of mere mechanical industry, I had occasion to examine the relations of the country to the prime materials of the chemicals and metallic manufacture, and finally to discuss some important statistical and moral problems affecting the industrial progress of Ireland.(1)

Eager to provide the tools needed for industrial expansion led by his class, Kane's published lectures "lent support to optimistic views of Irish manufacturing potential."⁽²⁾ In contrast to Kane's more "technological" approach, Engels sought to emphasize the historical roots of colonialism as the key to Irish underdevelopment. The main elements of that approach were introduced by Engels in the first chapter of the History of Ireland. There he claimed that:

- (1) the natural divergence in conditions between Ireland and England served to give root to uneven development of capitalism which was, in turn, enhanced by the transfer of capital from agricultural to industrialised regions;

1. Kane "Preface" to the 1844 ed., Industrial Resources p. ii.
2. Black, Economic Thought, p. 141.

- (2) England's political domination over Ireland exploited these natural differences, and hence retarded Ireland's growth; and
- (3) English accounts of Irish history and culture were decidedly distorted to conform to the former's requirements.

First, the chapter on "Natural Conditions" sought to substantiate Marx's analysis of post-famine Ireland as an agricultural region of England as pronounced in Capital, with reference to geological and historical data. Hence, Engels argued that "to understand the nature of the soil of present-day Ireland we have to return to the distant epoch when the so-called Carboniferous System was formed."⁽¹⁾ He based his commentary upon the geological work of J. Jukes Beete. Beete had claimed that denudation, which gave rise to the central plains of the country, "has removed all the coal-measures from off the district. . . and, moreover, has removed large portions of the upper part of the Carboniferous limestone. . ." Beete furthermore had asserted that the result was the removal of any worthwhile coal-reserves in the country, and that the existing low land was low because of the removal of the upper palaeozoic layers. The cause of denudation was located in the Ice Age when the island was submerged by the sea, and the limestone plains and mountain slopes were washed practically clean of carboniferous rock. The situation, with some exceptions, was repeated in the north of the country thereby placing the chances at "twenty to one against. . .

1. Engels, History, MEI: 174.

coal-measures being found. . ." (1)

In contrast, the great central plains of the country, due to its slate and limestone origins were extremely fertile. Here, Engels referred to Arthur Young's account of his Irish tour in the 1770s. Young had claimed that the quality of the soil placed Ireland in an uncomparable advantage over England. (2) While he found that the counties of Tipperary, Limerick, Roscommon, Longford, Cork and Meath were exceptional in their fertility - having a rich loamy soil deficient of either sand or chalk - Edward Wakefield's study in 1812 concluded that there was little "disparity in the nature of the soil" over the entire country. Only the rivers caused considerable concern; unable to carry all the rain-water away, extensive peat bogs had developed, leaving large areas of land uncultivable under the present system of agriculture. (3) Turning finally to look at climatic conditions, Engels summarised from Beaufort's Memoir of a Map of Ireland (1792), G. Boate's Ireland's Natural History (1652), Ruttly's An Essay towards a Natural History of the County of Dublin (1772), and W. Patterson's An Essay on the Climate of Ireland (1804): Ireland with a milder and damper climate than England was capable of providing equally good conditions for both grain (livestock) and corn (tillage) production. (4)

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1. J. Jukes Beete, Students Manual of Geology (Edinburgh: n.p., 1862) pp. 287 and 299 especially; but in general see also pp. 285-305, 510-7, 554-5, 620-3, 674-87. See further 1857 ed., pp. 445-53; MEI: 172-7.
 2. Arthur Young, A Tour in Ireland, 2 volumes (Dublin: n.p., 1780)
 3. E. G. Wakefield, An Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political, 2 volumes (London: Longmans, Hirst, Reese, Orme, and Brown, 1812).
 4. For a fuller list of this material, see Appendix 2.

In brief, Engels asserted in this first chapter that the evidence revealed that given entirely different natural endowments, it was inevitable that Ireland would remain for a long time an agricultural partner for its industrialised neighbour. As the two economies advanced, capitalism would ensure that surplus capital and labour was continually drained from the agricultural region and employed in the industrial sector. As capitalism expanded, it entered agriculture and transformed it into a capitalist enterprise yielding increased foodstuffs to support the growing industrial population. The speed with which that process was accomplished depended upon the transfer of manufactured goods from the industrialised sector to the rural areas, and upon efforts within the latter sector to commercialise its production.⁽¹⁾ The result was a full integration of the two sectors under the capitalist mode of production. That conclusion was not actually discussed by Engels in this first chapter, although there is no doubt that the result was anticipated. Engels' purpose here was to examine the scientific basis for the existing material conditions of the nineteenth century. His carefully argued chapter supported the view that uneven development arises from capital's ability to exploit natural inequalities in resource allocation; in so doing, Engels upheld his earlier contention found in, inter alia, The Condition of the Working Class in England, that capital and not England

1. See Stephen Hymer and Stephen Resnick, "Model of an Agrarian Economy with Non-Agricultural Activities", American Economic Review, volume 59, No. 4 (1969) pp. 493-506; Jack Dunman, Agriculture: Capitalist and Socialist. Studies in the Development of Agriculture and its Contribution to Economic Development as a Whole (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1975).

was responsible for Ireland's problems.⁽¹⁾

Secondly, following upon that formulation, Engels went on to accuse England of needlessly and harshly exaggerating these natural disparities to its own advantage. In addition, he claimed that English policy had clearly failed to integrate the two islands at the essential political level, thereafter affecting Irish as well as English economic and political development. The problem was posed in the opening paragraphs of the book:

If this assimilation had been successful, its whole course would have become a matter of history. It would be subject to its judgement but could never be reversed. But if after 700 years of fighting this assimilation has not succeeded; if instead each new wave of in-vaders flooding Ireland is assimilated by the Irish; if, even today, the Irish are as far from being English, or West Britons, as say, the Poles are from being West Russians after only 100 years of oppression; if the fighting is not yet over and there is no prospect that it can be ended in any other way than by the extermination of the oppressed race - then, all the geological pretexts in the world are not enough to prove that it is England's mission to conquer Ireland.⁽²⁾

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1. Engels, Condition, pp. 309-310. Engels' argument compares favourably with that offered by Leonce de Guilhaud Lavergne, The Rural Economy of England, Scotland and Ireland, trans. from the French with notes by a Scottish farmer (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1855) esp. p. 361: "Her [Ireland's] whole misfortune consists in this, that, being very near, she is the more feeble of the two, and also that she is not near enough nor weak enough to allow herself to be absorbed without resistance - the worst of all conditions for a people. . ."
 2. Engels, History, MEI: 172. Reference in the final sentence to England's mission to conquer Ireland echoes Gladstone's famous retort when called upon by the Queen to form a government in 1868: "My mission is to pacify Ireland." Cf. Engels' passage with Issac Butt in The Irish People and Irish Land, pp. 49-53.

Here, Engels seems to be arguing for a distinction between the political and economic dimensions of Anglo-Irish relations, suggesting that the absence of real (as opposed to the formal tie of the Union) political integration had reduced English rule to military might and territorial acquisition alone. "The English immigration [into Ireland] might well have had the effect of raising Ireland's low level of civilisation. In fact the English immigrants have been content to exploit the Irish in a brutal fashion."⁽¹⁾ Despite England's efforts to conquer and govern Ireland since the twelfth century - whereby "religion became the prime vehicle of imperialist expansion"⁽²⁾ - Ireland resisted. The establishment in 1801 of the Union between Ireland and England - likened to similar endeavours between England, Scotland and Wales leading to the formation of the United Kingdom - was the final straw, seeking to erect a political status upon centuries of land confiscations and plunder. In so doing, England desired to cement formally what it had so far failed to accomplish either by the Statutes of Kilkenny (1366) or "Poynings" Law (1495). Opposition to English rule had been so great that the indigenous population had over the centuries been continually augmented and strengthened by English settlers who recognised the benefits to be gained from an independent Ireland of which they were a part. This situation served, above-all, to dramatise the ridiculously tenuous nature

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1. Engels, Condition, p. 309.
 2. Lichtheim, Imperialism, p. 39; Frederick Engels, "Varia on the History of the Irish Confiscations", MEI: 259-60; cf. Marx, "Outline", MEI: 129. Engels' source, Fynes Moryson, who published diaries of his travels to Ireland in 1617, reached a similar conclusion in Part II of his book, Containing His Ten Years Travels through the twelve Dominions of Germany, Boherland, Switzerland, Netherland, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland and Ireland (London: n. p., 1617).

of the British position.⁽¹⁾

In addition to commenting upon what he felt was the abysmal failure of the empire in Ireland - a condition that "shows how disastrous it is for a nation to have subjected another nation. All the abominations to the English have their origin in the Irish Pale."⁽²⁾ - Engels sought to remark upon imperial rule in general. The failure to successfully assimilate the Irish into the Empire questioned the legitimacy of the empire itself. An English victory was now, he argued, contingent upon the complete elimination of the native population; history had clearly shown that proposition to be impossible.

The Irish question was, Engels continued, of contemporary importance precisely because assimilation had not prevailed. Had it been so, it seems likely that Engels would have responded critically towards an Irish initiative to revive or reassert the remnants of a defeated nation. Given that hypothetical situation, one might have expected Engels to issue a remark similar in meaning and tone to his blistering attack on the actions of slavish nations during the revolution of 1848.⁽³⁾

Continued resistance to political integration - the latter being a position that England had continually attempted to justify on geological, historical and cultural grounds - served to bring Ireland into international

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1. Edmund Curtis, A History of Ireland (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1936; 6th ed. 1950); James Lydon, Ireland in the later Middle Ages, The Gill History of Ireland series, No. 6, James Lydon and Margaret MacCurtain, ed., (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1973) pp. 52-6ff, 94-7, 144-5.
 2. Engels to Marx, October 24, 1869.
 3. For example see Engels, "Restoration of Order - Diet and Chamber," April 1852, in Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution, pp.85-6.

prominence, insofar as its own national struggle could have wider implications for an English social revolution. As England's desire to subject Ireland appeared as vibrant in the 19th century as it did in the 12th, the Irish had no alternative but to fight for national independence.

Initially, English policy had been directed towards territorial acquisition and plunder. The Plantation scheme, most successful in Ulster, was accompanied by a concerted campaign of land confiscation. Under Sir John Davies, Attorney General of Ireland in the 17th century, the final death knell was sounded, Engels claimed, to the traditional clan system. Land previously held communally, was administratively transferred to feudal control under a newly-created aristocracy, some of whom had previously been clan chiefs. In place of the former tribute, feudal rent was collected.⁽¹⁾ Mercantilist England endeavoured, furthermore, to prevent competition from Ireland's manufacturing and commercial spheres, and imposed restrictions on certain manufacturers, most notably wool.⁽²⁾ "How often," asked Engels, "have the Irish started out to achieve something, and every time they have been crushed, politically and industrially? By consistent oppression they have been artificially converted into an utterly impoverished nation."⁽³⁾ By means of these restrictions, the English sought politically to underpin Ireland's natural propensities for agricultural production. The full effect of this policy was not witnessed until the middle of the

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1. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1869.
 2. Engels, "Chronology of Ireland", MEI: 248.
 3. Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856.

nineteenth century when as Marx had documented in his 1867 studies,⁽¹⁾ Ireland was transformed into an agricultural region of industrial England. This result was almost a certainty given the economies and proximity of the two islands; yet, Engels claimed, regardless of either island's natural properties, English policy had deliberately frustrated and stunted nascent manufacturing in Ireland in order to block potential competition. In turn, it promoted Ireland's agricultural prospects. By the nineteenth century, the two economies were interminably interdependent.⁽²⁾

Examination of the pattern of English rule led Engels to conclude that development in England would have taken another turn "if it had not been necessary to rule in Ireland by military means and to create a new aristocracy there."⁽³⁾ Yet, the aristocracy was unable to protect itself from increasing Irish resistance. Its very existence, then, was artificially sustained by coercive measures. This meant that economically, the aristocracy's survival delayed capitalist penetration of Irish agriculture until after the Great Famine of 1846-1849 and the repeal of the corn laws forced its departure. Where the aristocracy endured, it became, Engels said, "a positive nuisance by its depopulating tendencies. To send the people across the ocean or into starvation, and to replace them by sheep or deer - that is all the merit that the

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1. See Marx, Capital, volume 1, chapter 25; Marx, "Notes", MEI: 120-5; Marx, "Outline", MEI: 126-39.
 2. Cf. Giovanni Arrighi, The Geometry of Imperialism, trans. Patrick Camiller (London: New Left Books, 1978), especially chapter 2.
 3. Engels to Marx, October 24, 1869.

Irish and Scottish landlords can lay claim to."⁽¹⁾ Its ahistoric position - ahistoric in the sense that the aristocracy had outlived its "historic" role - was similarly reflected through its political behaviour. "A perfect national nuisance," Engels declared in 1881; bolstered by its economic holdings in Ireland, the aristocracy clung tenaciously to its waning political power in Parliament.⁽²⁾ Insofar as the Irish national struggle, Engels wrote to Karl Kautsky in 1882, succeeded in its efforts to establish an independent Ireland aimed at the eradication of the foreign and hence aristocratic appropriators of the soil, the Irish had both the right and the "duty to be nationalistic before they became internationalistic."⁽³⁾ Independence would considerably weaken the aristocracy's political and economic strength, force an end to the bourgeoisie's interest in post-famine Ireland, and hence, accelerate a social revolution in England.

Thirdly, in the first chapter, Engels asserted that England set out to justify these actions by rewriting the facts, interpreting history to her own satisfaction. As all (historical) writing reflects the class perspective of its author, so the traditional and contemporary version of Irish history, as told by bourgeois historians, portrayed Ireland as a land best employed for agricultural production: Engels'

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1. Frederick Engels, "Social Classes - Necessary and Superfluous", The Labour Standard, No. 14. August 6, 1881.
 2. Cf. George Dangerfield's colourful account of the suicide of aristocratic power in the House of Lords is well worth reading; The Strange Death of Liberal England; Engels to Bernstein, March 12, 1881.
 3. Engels to Karl Kautsky, February 7, 1882.

intent was to produce a history "from our standpoint."⁽¹⁾

Citing reports made by agronomists Arthur Young, Edward Wakefield, J. Caird and Leonce de Lavergne, whose travelogues of the nineteenth century have been widely accepted as classics in the literature of Ireland, Engels summarised that their findings concluded only that Ireland was agriculturally favoured. On the other hand, the contention that Ireland was suited specifically to either tillage or pasture agriculture was unfounded: ultimately, it depended upon England's requirements. In turn, these needs were pronounced as fact by historians and similar so-called experts. Goldwin Smith's comments in Irish History and Irish Character illustrated this point. Writing to Marx on November 17, 1869, Engels noted that Smith argued "Ireland was intended by providence as a grazing land, the prophet Leonce de Lavergne foretold it, ergo pereat the Irish people. . ." ⁽²⁾

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1. See E. H. Carr, What is History ? (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, Ltd. 1961.) Engels also took issue with English accounts of the various land confiscations, see Engels to Jenny Longuet, February 24, 1881.
 2. John Rutty's An Essay Towards a Natural History of the County of Dublin (Dublin: n. p., 1772), which was used by Engels, gave a detailed comparison of climatic conditions in Dublin and London for each of the seasons; see pp. 469ff. Unlike Guilhaud de Lavergne, Rutty derived no final statement on which city was the best. His findings were in brief:

<u>Spring</u>	Proportion of cold and dry springs a little greater in Dublin than London
<u>Summer</u>	In London, the number of hot and dry summers were almost equal to those of the cold and wet; in Dublin, the number of wet, slightly exceeded those of hot and dry. Upon the whole, it did not appear to Rutty that London had a great deal to boast of above Dublin, with regards to the superior heat of its summers.
<u>Autumn</u>	Dublin autumns are slightly wetter than those in London.

As a further example, Engels quoted extensively in the History of Ireland from Edward Wakefield's record of his travels in Ireland, An Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political (London, 1812). Wakefield had claimed that the "soil of Ireland is so fertile, and the climate so favourable, that under a proper system of agriculture, it will produce not only a sufficiency of corn for its own use, but a superabundance which may be ready at all times to relieve England when she may stand in need of assistance." The meaning of Wakefield's deductions, Engels suggested, was revealed when historical events were considered. 1812 was the height of the Napoleonic Wars; at that time, England found it difficult to acquire sufficient corn, and Ireland proved a ready source. In sharp contrast, after the repeal of the corn laws in 1844, corn was in abundance, but meat was in short supply. The post-famine, post-repeal era signalled the need for a re-interpretation of Ireland's proclivity towards agriculture in order to substantiate and vindicate England's needs. Consequently, a policy which encouraged consolidation of land and pasture agriculture was introduced; Ireland's properties were then said to show a natural propensity for pasture and not tillage production. If, Engels alleged, one looked at the

matter impartially and without being misled by the cries of the interested parties, the Irish landowners and the English bourgeois, one finds that Ireland

Winter

Dublin winters are in far great proportion warmer and moister than in or near London.

Also on this point, see William Patterson, Observations on the Climate of Ireland and Researches (Concerning its Nature from very early periods to the present time, with thoughts on some branches of rural economy, particularly recommended in An Address to the inhabitants and friends of this country. To which are prefixed preliminary considerations) (Dublin: Gilbert & Hodges, 1804) p. 58.

like all other places, has some parts which because of soil and climate are more suited to cattle-rearing on the whole; but if England is compared with France, she too is more suited to cattle-rearing. Are we to conclude that the whole of England should be transformed into cattle pastures, and the whole agricultural population be sent into factory towns or to America - except for a few herdsmen - to make room for cattle which are to be exported to France in exchange for silk and wine? . . .

It can be seen that even the facts of nature become points of national controversy between England and Ireland. It can also be seen, how the public opinion of the ruling class in England - and it is only this that is generally known on the Continent - changes with the fashion and in its own interests.(1)

Throughout his discussion, Engels neglected to comment upon Ireland's industrial potential. Studying Kane's book, he seems to have gleaned from it only sufficient information to counter allegations regarding Irish agricultural production. Certainly this position deserves serious questioning; as one involved in industry, which enjoyed a profitable and brisk trade with Belfast,⁽²⁾ it would seem likely that Engels would have, and should have, devoted more space to industrial considerations. Furthermore, Kane's study was so widely acclaimed precisely because it did seek to examine Ireland's industrial potential, and to suggest that the country could utilise its resources more fully and with better results. Kane had emphasized the need to adopt scientific methods to productive techniques, and favourably appraised the possibilities of converting the island's rich reserves of peat into a powerful energy source in the absence of coal.

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1. Engels, History, MEI: 190-191.
 2. See Cullen, Anglo-Irish Trade.

Yet, Engels appears to have ignored these conclusions, and with Marx, concentrated solely on Ireland's agrarian economy. The result is a strangely lop-sided version of the Irish economy, giving credence to spurious accounts which sought to blame England, and specifically the Act of Union, for the absence of a strong manufacturing sector. This version could find support in Marx and Engels' lack of references to industry in Ireland; the exception to this statement is the description of industry's protracted state.⁽¹⁾ Despite this possible confusion, Marx and Engels - and Engels as early as 1844 in The Condition of the Working Class in England - firmly rejected a conspiratorial interpretation of Irish underdevelopment. Instead they saw the problem arising from within the Irish economy, as a natural response to its poor resource allocation when compared to England and its economic role within an emergent world capitalist system.⁽²⁾ Stemming from this view, they understood the possibility of an industrial take-off occurring only in an independent Ireland which had imposed protective tariffs. The suggestion for this prognosis came in Marx's letter to Engels on November 30, 1867 when he referred to "what the Irish need." "Once the Irish are independent, necessity will turn them into protectionists, as it did Canada, Australia, etc."

Engels' rather brief and incomplete excursion into Irish history should not, however, be ignored or belittled for its omissions. Certainly, as suggested above, his intention was markedly different from that of Kane, and it might have been ill-advised to have attempted a comparison

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1. See, for example, Engels to Marx, May 23, 1856; Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869; Marx, "Outline", MEI: 131-2.
 2. Engels, Condition, pp. 309-10.

of the two. In seeking to explore the cause of Irish under-development, and to cite its origin in the colonial relation, Engels' work provides a rich tool of historical analysis. As such, he argued against Kane's more conservative proposition that underdevelopment was an original and inherent condition of Irish backwardness and ignorance. While the History of Ireland, as far as it goes, concentrates primarily on countering contemporary opinion, it does sketch an enlightening picture of merchant capital's growing involvement with the Irish economy. Geoffrey Kay in his book, Development and Underdevelopment: A Marxist Analysis underlies Engels' work; Kay explains that mercantilism is "the agent of industrial capital in shaping underdevelopment."⁽¹⁾ Understanding Ireland's underdevelopment in this way was politically more explosive; as long as Ireland remained integrated with England and hence underdeveloped, capitalist development would be slow. Land would remain "the exclusive form of the social question." The class war of proletariat against the bourgeoisie was contingent upon an independent Ireland. The key, then, for both England and Ireland, was the abolition of the Union.

The origins of Irish underdevelopment, Engels claimed, stemmed from merchant capital's invasion of Ireland for both commercial and territorial gain. Conquest sought to undermine native social and political institutions, and to replace them with new structures from England. Resistance was met with a concerted attempt to eradicate the population, as was the case in the Americas and Australia; in Africa, the natives had been reduced to slaves and shipped out of the country. This was an ironic

1. Geoffrey Kay, Development and Underdevelopment: A Marxist Analysis (London: MacMillan Press, 1975) p. 119. See chapter 3 for a discussion on how Marx and Engels assessed the State as a crucial agent of change as well.

position to have developed as these adventurers and merchants proclaimed themselves to be civilisers. Engels remarked upon this arrangement, stating that England had failed to "civilise" Ireland, and instead found both herself and Ireland over-run by Cromwellian tactics. Concerned with extracting as large a profit as possible from Ireland without altering or advancing the means of production there, England imposed restrictions which severely curtailed the other's manufacturing potential. The aim of these measures was to reduce Ireland to a position of dependence.

By 1800, prostrated industry and an over-worked aristocratically-dominated land system were the visible signs of the Irish economy. Nevertheless, arising from a rather bloody beginning, mercantilism had proved progressive. It converted communal clan lands into large private estates, and provided the necessary impetus for industrialisation (although it was unable to turn profit into capital). In effect, merchant capital "stimulated commodity production and undermined the coherence of existing pre-capitalist forms."⁽¹⁾ It was both revolutionary and conservative. The industrial revolution, whose emergent bourgeoisie, found merchant capitalism's restrictions frustrating, eventually overcame the restraints in the battle for laissez-faire in the nineteenth century.

British policy towards Ireland reflected the changes in the mode of production; whereas, prior to 1800, legislation reinforced restrictions on manufacturing and the eradication of the clan lands,⁽²⁾ after the

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1. Ibid. p. 98 I have found Kay's book extremely useful in preparing this section.
 2. Maureen Wall is doubtful that the Penal Laws, introduced against the native Roman Catholic population, seriously curtailed their economic pursuits. See "The Rise of a Catholic Middle-Class in 18th Century Ireland", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 11 No.42(1958) pp. 91-115.

industrial revolution in England free trade was advocated. In Ireland, the introduction of the land acts and famine relief measures such as the Encumbered Estates Courts forced the demise of what remained of the landed aristocracy. Despite the new emphasis on cattle (compared with confiscations and manufacturing controls that characterised mercantilism), Ireland remained relatively underdeveloped. Here, then, was the crux of Engels' argument. Underdevelopment, he said concurring with Marx, was neither a case of original sin (as contemporaries such as Kane expressed) nor imposed by Machievellian design (as many Irish nationalists supposed). Although, outward appearance may lead one to accept the second explanation, it was without basis in reality. He made this point very strongly in The Condition of the Working Class in England:

The English are indeed responsible for the fact that poverty strikes the Irish a little sooner than it would otherwise do. But they cannot be held responsible for the poverty itself. . . .the truth is that poverty and distress are the inevitable consequences of the existing state of society. When we look for other causes we are really examining factors in the situation which determine the way in which poverty strikes the Irish. But we are not dealing with the basic cause of poverty. The actual manner in which poverty strikes the Irish may be explained by the history, traditions and national characteristics of the people. . . .

The Irish could under the circumstances be excused for thinking the cause of their plight originated from England; as such, they correctly saw independence as the panacea for all their dreams. They would, however, realise, Engels warned, once the Union had been repealed, that the cause of their poverty "must in fact be sought at home."⁽¹⁾

1. Engels, Condition, pp. 308-10. Also see Marx to Jenny Longuet, April 29, 1881.

Thus, as early as 1844, Engels had clearly and carefully deciphered the nexus of the Irish question, pinpointing that Irish underdevelopment was endemic to capitalism. Attacking any notion that independence would bring instant and total relief - as if the Irish problem was conditional to the presence of the English landlord - he pointed the finger at the "over-subdivision" of the soil which had reduced farms to uneconomic units. Poverty was an inevitable result of that "state of society." Independence would only make this point obvious but it could not solve the problem. That, both Marx and Engels, enunciated repeatedly, must be done by the Irish themselves. "The real intricacies of the Irish land problem - which indeed are not especially Irish - are so great that the only true way to solve it would be to give the Irish Home Rule and thus force them to solve it themselves. But John Bull is too stupid to understand this."⁽¹⁾

3. Ireland Before the English

In 1869, Marx commented that the land question was the "exclusive form of the social question in Ireland." Surveying the post-famine agrarian-dominated economy, his remarks were more than obvious. After-all Irish history had been punctuated by land confiscations, emigration and famine - all of which had led to the entanglement of the land and national questions.⁽²⁾ By the 17th century, Engels recorded in his notes, only

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1. Marx to Jenny Longuet, April 29, 1881; Cf. Marx to Engels, November 27, 1867; Marx, Class Struggles in France, pp. 117-9; Marx, The 18th Brumaire, pp. 123-31.
 2. Marx to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt, April 9, 1870; see also Johann Georg Eccarius, "Record of a Speech on the Irish Question", MEI: 142; Marx, "Outline", MEI: 132.

30% of the 7,708,238 statute acres in the country were held by Irishmen.⁽¹⁾
He explained the situation in the following manner to Marx's daughter
Jenny Longuet in 1881:

The whole agrarian history of Ireland is a series
of confiscations of Irish land to be handed over
to English settlers. These settlers, in a very
few generations, under the charm of Celtic society,
turned more Irish than the aborigines. Then a new
confiscation and new colonialisation took place,
and so in infinitum.⁽²⁾

In seeking to present the facts of these confiscations as well as to document their repercussions upon Irish society, Engels chose to contrast celtic society with life after the English invasions. By this method, he sought to generate the greatest possible emotional response, and in effect, to provide ample proof for his condemnation of British colonial policy.

There was evidence, he announced to Marx in 1869, that Ireland prior to 1600 was still living under the traditional clan system with land held in common by the clan or gens.⁽³⁾ This system of holding village fields "in so-called rundale" was superceded only in a few instances where the clan chief had converted land into his own private domain. While woodland and pasture were used in common, tillage land was "periodically divided amongst the members of the clain who paid a tribute to the chief."⁽⁴⁾ Following the death of the chief or the dissolution

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1. Engels, "Varia on the History of Irish Confiscations", MEI: 267.
 2. Engels to Jenny Longuet, February 24, 1881.
 3. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1869. Cf. Goldwin Smith, Irish History and Irish Character (Oxford and London: J. D. & Jas. Parker, 1861) pp. 16-25.
 4. Engels to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson, June 10, 1890. Cf. Krader, Ethnological Notebooks, pp. 290, 296-300.

of a household, the entire land was redistributed. Families holding small parcels of land at great or inconvenient distances from one another could exchange with another family; regardless of this facilitating agreement, parcellisation of land granted each family within the gens relatively similar opportunities for existence.⁽¹⁾

The invasions by England radically altered this situation Engels claimed. In the 17th century, James I issued a Royal Proclamation requiring that all clan property be surrendered to the Crown; new titles were subsequently granted for these lands while the original owners were transformed into a rent-paying tenantry. This conversion was ably manipulated under the guidance of Sir John Davies, Attorney-General for the Crown.⁽²⁾ Engels explained the historic implications in

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1. Engels, Anti-Dühring, MEI: 314; Frederick Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (New York: International Publishers, 1942) p. 121; Engels to Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, February 4, 1886.
 2. Davies' position was set out in his A Discovery of the True Causes Why Ireland was Never Entirely Subdued and Brought Under the Obedience of the Crown of England, Until the Beginning of his Majesty's Happy Reign (London: n.p. 1612, republished 1613, 1747, 1786). Davies concluded that failure to subdue Ireland had been caused by :
 - 1) faint prosecution of war, and
 - 2) loose civil government.A ". . .barbarious country must be broken by a war, before it will be capable of good government; and when it is fully subdued and conquered, if it be not well planted and governed after the conquest, it will often return to the former barbarism. . . .For, that I call a perfect conquest of a country, which doth reduce all the people thereof to the condition of subject: and those I call subjects, which are governed by the ordinary laws and magistrates of the sovereign." (pp. 4-5, see also pp. 59-60, 80-3, 107-8) In 1610, Davies wrote a letter to Robert Earl of Salisbury concerning the state of Ireland wherein he explained the process by which Irish land was placed under the Crown, pp. 281-2. Cf. Edmund Spenser, A View of the State of Ireland (1596) in James Ware, ed., Ancient Irish Histories (The Works of Spenser, Campion, Hanmer, and Marleburrough) vol. 1 (Dublin: Hibernia Press, 1809) pp. 195-8.

a letter to the Russian Danielson in 1890:

When in the beginning of the 17th century, the North of Ireland was subjected to direct English dominion, and the English lawyer Sir John Davies found there a rural community with common possession of the land, . . . Davies (transformed) declared that tribute [paid to the clan chief] at once (into) to be 'rent.' Thus the Scotch lairds - chiefs of clans - profited, since the insurrection of 1745, of this juridical confusion, of the tribute paid to them by the clansmen, with a 'rent' for the lands held by them, in order to transform the whole of the (common) clan-land, the common property of the clan, into their, the lairds, common property. . . (1)

By re-interpreting the social relations, the transformation from communalism to feudalism was manifested.

"Most of the clan chiefs came forward to receive incontestable titles at last," thereby wholeheartedly embracing the "landlord-tenant relationship" and bringing to an end the clan system.⁽²⁾ For those few who refused or hesitated, full-scale expropriation was swift but nevertheless effective. In this way, land ownership was transferred from the clan to Crown-appointed grantees, who, in turn, either occupied the land directly or stayed in England, appointing agents, "who were 'ignorant, negligent and corrupt'" to look after their affairs.⁽³⁾ This method of deliberately confusing tribute with rent - "for - said the lawyer, if they were not landlords, how could they receive rent for that land?" - was also used to confiscate land in India and Scotland.

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1. Engels to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson, June 10, 1890.
 2. Engels, "Varia", MEI: 261; See further, "Varia", MEI: 258-69, and "Chronology of Ireland", MEI: 213-58 for details of British encounters with Irish chiefs since the 12th century.
 3. Ibid.

Justification for these actions was based upon Davies' claim that as the land did not belong to individuals, it belonged either to the Lord or the Crown. In this case, the Crown had merely asserted its right, and shifted grantee status from the clan chief to the landlord, who in some cases was the former in new clothes; reallocation of landownership under these terms was logical and proper.⁽¹⁾

However, physical dissolution of the clan was not tantamount to total dissolution as the facts revealed. "The oldest Celtic laws which have been preserved show the gens still fully alive; in Ireland, after being forcibly broken up by the English, it still lives today in the consciousness of the people, as an instinct at any rate. . . ." Additional proof for this contention was supplied by observations made by Engels during his last trip to Ireland in 1891. Recorded as a footnote to the 4th edition of The Origin of Family, Private Property and the State, he wrote -

During a few days spent in Ireland, I realised afresh to what extent the country people still live in the conceptions of the gentile period. The landed proprietor, whose tenant the farmer is, is still regarded by the latter as a kind of chief of the clan, whose duty it is to manage the land in the interest of all, while the farmer pays tribute in the form of rent, but has a claim upon him for assistance in times of necessity. Similarly, everyone who is well off is considered under an obligation to assist his poorer neighbours when they fall on hard times. Such is not charity; it is what the poorer member of the clan is entitled to receive from the wealthier member of the chief.

The problematic was not so simple; lingering notions of the clan caused ripples in landlord and tenant concepts of landownership. Instilled with

1. Engels to Marx, November 29, 1869.

a subconscious acceptance of communalism, Engels said, meant that the Irish tenantry found it particularly difficult to "grasp the idea of modern bourgeois property; the Irishman simply cannot get it into his head that there can be property with rights but no duties." This tension underlied the conflict between landlord and tenant which had become common place in the nineteenth century. Tenant determination to win basic assurances on tenure, the right to improvements, etc. sprang from the Irishman's desire to legislate what had been a natural and historic situation. Hence, Engels concluded, referring to the emigrants who were the victims of British policy,

. . .one can easily understand that when Irishmen with these naive gentile conceptions, suddenly find themselves in one of the big English or American towns among a population with completely different ideas of morality and justice, they easily become completely confused about morality and justice and lose all their bearings, with the result that masses of them become demoralised. (1)

In seeking to come to terms with why British conquest had not succeeded in integrating the societies, a point made at the very beginning of the History of Ireland, Engels turned once more to examine how the transition to private ownership had been effected. He noted that the peculiar factor in the Irish case was not the transition but rather the role played by force in bringing it about. Force, he explained, in his preparatory notes for Anti-Dühring, is the state in its organised form acting on behalf of one social class for its own economic reasons.

1. Engels, Origin (1942) pp. 121-2; See further Engels' description of the Irish in Manchester's Irish Town in Condition, pp. 104-7.

Marx has shown in Capital (Accumulation) how at a certain stage of development the laws of commodity production necessarily engender capitalist production with all its chicanery and that no force whatever is needed for that purpose.

When Dühring considers political action to be the ultimate decisive power of history and would have you believe it was something new, he merely repeats what was said by all former historians who also held the view that social forms are determined solely by political forms and not by production.(1)

Force, Engels argued, was resorted to only under specific material conditions; it was, as Marx had acknowledged in Capital, the midwife of change and not its architect.⁽²⁾ Furthermore, when force was employed in conflict with the "natural economic developments," "the contest always ended with the downfall of the political power."⁽³⁾ This was the nub (and prophecy?) of the Irish experience.

The classic case of transition from communalism to private ownership of land showed it occurring "spontaneously," springing from contradictions within the social formation. In these instances, "it was," Engels remarked, "a very gradual process and remnants of communal property generally continued to exist," alongside and complementary to the emerging mode of production. In effect, the transition did not produce instantaneous results.⁽⁴⁾ When

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1. Frederick Engels, "Preparatory Notes", Anti-Dühring (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969) p. 416; Anti-Dühring, p. 194.
 2. Marx, Capital, 1:751; Engels, Anti-Dühring, p. 220.
 3. Engels, "Preparatory Notes", Anti-Dühring; Engels, p. 420: Anti-Dühring, pp. 218-9.
 4. Engels, "Preparatory Notes", Anti-Dühring, p. 416; Engels, Anti-Dühring, p. 194. The co-existence of different modes of production is also dealt with in chapter 3 in respect to the cohabitation of capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production. On Marx's attitude towards primitive communalism and the transition to individual ownership, see Krader, Ethnological Notebooks, pp. 59-61, 81-2.

force was applied, as in the case of England in the 18th and 19th centuries, and Germany in the 19th century, it was only against what he termed the "remnants" of communalism; it had not been, even in these instances, used as a mechanism to totally expropriate communal property. The circumstances of Ireland were notably distinct in this regard; there, Engels claimed, force had been the principal tool of the transition to private ownership. Under the watchful eye of Sir John Davies, communal property was physically transferred out of the control of the clan and into the hands of the newly-created English aristocracy. Centuries of land confiscations, which had left a bloody trail across Irish history, assured the success of this policy on this level alone.

The rub, Engels argued, occurred when the English sought to transfer their physical control into political and social integration. The former was formally enforced through the Act of Union but the latter still created difficulties far into the nineteenth century. Not only did tenants seek to derive from their English landlords communal duties, but they banded together in "factions," a modern "reincarnation" of the celtic gens, to protect themselves against further incursions into their way of life.⁽¹⁾ The British might have won the first round, but they had failed to erase the celtic heritage from the "consciousness of the people."

In the discussion of celtic communal society, as with that of economic links between England and Ireland, Engels' aim was to dramatise the effect that English policy had upon Ireland. The method called for contrasting life under communalism with that under present conditions, overstating the quality of the former so as to emphasise the change

1. Engels, Origin, (1942).

experienced under the latter. It was a method employed successfully by Engels in The Condition of the Working Class in England, which, David McLellan suggests, "was a powerful piece of writing, concise and coherent, only marred, at the beginning, by a ridiculously idyllic picture of rural life of eighteenth century England which industrial progress had so largely replaced." The technique, McLellan continues, was introduced again to add further weight to the quest for communism. "In general, Engels tended to contrast present society both with primitive communism and with future communism and to some extent saw an idealised communism in the past as a model for the communism to come."⁽¹⁾ These remarks, while not disqualifying Engels' remarks on celtic communism, do place them in a certain critical perspective.

There is evidence available now to suggest that Engels might have been too enthusiastic in his account of traditional Irish society. Indeed, at times, even his own remarks leave questions unanswered. For example, Engels' narrative gives little information on the social relations within communal society; one only assumes a general level of equality. According to his information, however, it would appear that despite communalism being "in full force" prior to 1600, cracks were evident. The process by which the clan chief was allowed to acquire land thereafter marked as his "private domain" is left unclear; there is, in addition, no indication as to what effect this gradation in ownership might have produced upon the clan as a whole. Did it alter the majority's relationship to the clan chief, economically and/or socially? Indeed, it might be seen that private ownership of land had already commenced. Ten years later in Anti-Dühring (the reference to communalism having

1. McLellan, Engels, pp. 28 and 72.

been made in a letter to Marx in 1869), Engels called attention to the "formation of a primitive aristocracy, as in the case of the Celts," arising from "voluntariness and custom."⁽¹⁾

An explanation for this discrepancy might be found in Marx's notebooks on capital, recently published under the title, The Grundrisse. In notebook V, Marx referred to communal production; there may exist, he said, various

forms of the commune or tribe member's relation to the tribe's land and soil. . . which depend partly on the natural inclinations of the tribe, and partly on the economic conditions in which it relates to the land and soil in reality, i.e. in which it appropriates its fruits through labour, and the latter will itself depend on climate, physical make-up of the land and soil, the physically determined mode of exploitation, the relation with hostile tribes or neighbour tribes, and the modifications which migrations, historic experiences, etc. introduce.

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1. Engels, Anti-Dühring, p. 194. Recognition of the "formation of a primitive aristocracy" existing among the Celts may be the result of more research, albeit if this was the case, reference to it was peculiarly absent in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, published in 1884, six years after Anti-Dühring. On the distinctions among the early Celts, see John P. Prendergast, The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1865) esp. pp. xivii-xiviii, who depicts how the "chief families had contrived, contrary to the general principles, to appropriate some portions [of land] to themselves, divisible however at the death of the father among all the sons, legitimate and illegitimate alike. The inferior members of the tribe yielded to the chiefs milk and honey, and even money for the grazing of their cows, and were bound to maintain their lords with their wives, sons and daughters, their horses, servants, their dogs and dog boys for a specified number of meals or days in their houses when they went among their dependents 'coshering' as it were called. But they knew no such thing as rent or services in the feudal sense, as an acknowledgment of holding their land from a landlord, liable to forfeiture if not rendered."

The question that needs to be asked is what effect this produced upon the conditions of labour; that is, whether the members of the clan laboured for the chief or for themselves as a whole. Ultimately, Marx concluded, the commune can continue to survive only as long as "the individual does not become independent vis-a-vis the commune. . .If the individual changes his relation to the commune, he thereby changes and acts destructively upon the commune. . ." (1)

Interpreting Engels' remarks about the commune in celtic society in terms of Marx's comments above, the former might have conceded that communal society in Ireland was showing signs of strain; certainly, his comments in Anti-Dühring as well as those regarding the chief's "private domain" would support this view. In this case the English seem to have turned these developments to their own advantage. Indeed, Engels' reference to the willingness of most clan chiefs to assume the new landlord status suggests that they did not hold the tenets of communalism very dear. Thus, the chief had clearly altered "his relation to the commune." This view would be in line with Engels' discussion in Anti-Dühring of the force theory; in this instance, Ireland would not have been "a special case." (2) Force would have been used to transform the

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1. Karl Marx, The Grundrisse, trans. Martin Nicolaus, Pelican Marx Library, Quintin Hoare, ed. (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, Ltd., 1973) p. 486; see also pp. 485-7.
 2. Engels, "Preparatory Notes", Anti-Dühring, p. 416. See Krader, Ethnological Notebooks. Seeking a comparison between the Irish clan system and English feudalism, Marx explained that the Chief's position as the military leader of the clan led inevitably to his acquisition of more and more land, much of which was reclaimed waste. "Thus the Chiefs appear in the Brehon law as perpetually 'giving stock' and the tribesmen as receiving it. By taking stock the free Irish tribesman become the Ceile or Kyle, the vassal or man of man of his Chief, owing him not only rent but service and homage. The exact effects of 'commendation' are thus produced." (p. 298) The transition from the clan system to feudalism, according to Marx (and here he differed sharply from

hierarchical clan into a form commensurate with feudalism; that is to accelerate a transformation already in progress.

While Engels' comments are unable to fully substantiate this interpretation,⁽¹⁾ it does receive assistance from recent historical research. This evidence questions whether it is possible to claim communal property relations "in full force" as late as 1600 as Engels did in 1869. Briefly, Donnacha Ó Corráin, in his book Ireland Before the Normans, disputes Engels' and more traditional assumptions of celtic society, and accounts for the existence of private property relations years earlier than Engels. "Ireland in the ninth and tenth centuries far from being a country of wandering pastoralists in which property was owned tribally [Engels' gens], was a land of settled mixed farmers with a developed sense of private property."⁽²⁾ Indeed, Irish society, according to Ó Corráin, was organised similarly to feudalism with obligatory bonds existing between the kings and his clients. Intensely hierarchical, "what distinguished the noble from the commoner, apart from birth and wealth, was his possession of clients, men bound to him by specific but limited relationships of dependence." The various classes

Engels), arose naturally from within the mode of production. "This natural growth of feudalism was not, as some eminent recent writers have supposed, entirely distinct from the process by which the authority of the Chief or Lord over the Tribe or Village was extended, but rather formed part of it. While the unappropriated waste lands were falling into his domain, the villagers or tribesmen were coming through natural (?) agencies under his personal power." (P.300) Ajoining Marx's comments here with the Grundrisse shows that he did not believe the view, propounded by Engels, that feudalism was introduced in a particularly unique fashion.

1. See footnote in 4th ed. of Engels The Origin (1942) pp. 121-2.
2. Donnacha Ó Corráin, Ireland, Before the Normans, The Gill History of Ireland, No. 2, edited by James Lydon and Margaret MacCurtain, (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972) p. 49.

maintained distinct economic and social relations with the respective noble, some holding land in freehold, while others, lower down the social scale, were equivalent to hereditary serfs "bound to the soil."⁽¹⁾

What could easily be termed the upper class was, according to Irish law, the king of which there existed three grades: the ri (king of the local kingdom), the riuri (who in addition to being king of his own kingdom was the personal overlord of a number of other tribal kings), and lastly the ri ruirech or the "king of over-kings" (who was king of a province). Dynastic wars between kings marked the early history of Ireland; the

greater kings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, partitioned kingdoms, appointed subordinate rulers, granted away whole territories, expelled royal dynasties, made dependent lands of their subordinate kings, and developed power-based territorial kingdoms which bear striking resemblance to the feudal kingdoms of Europe. (2)

In this scenario, clans tended to carve out kingdoms for themselves; each of these were then subdivided into various subkingdoms, subject to the overking of the dynasty. As no clear cut line of succession existed, the dynasty was open to attack from its own members, each perhaps heading its own "organisation and power centre." Hence, in theory only, could the distinction between celtic society and feudalism be seen in the following way: in celtic society, "it was the people who gave the land to the chief, while in the feudal state the chief gave the land to the

1. Ibid. p. 42.

2. Ibid. p. 32; see further pp. 28-79.

people."(1)

Furthermore, Engels' claim in 1891 that the Irish tenantry was hindered in its ability to come to terms with English society because of its (sub)conscious adherence to communalistic notions rings hollow even against his own observations. In an 1888 Interview, he criticised the tenantry's desire to own land - hardly evidence of their difficulty "grasping the ideas of modern bourgeois property" - as responsible for slowing down the possibility of a socialist revolution in Ireland.⁽²⁾ The Irish tenantry rather than displaying an ambivalence towards private property had clutched the concept gladly to its breast. There was no indication that the tenants were so embalmed with the notion of resurrecting celtic Ireland that they would even forego ownership for nationalisation of the land; sadly, Engels said that Davitt's notions remained only a lone whisper.⁽³⁾

In seeking an explanation for Engels' rather peculiar comment in the 4th edition of The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, it seems likely that he was swept away by the emotionalism of his time. The appeal to celtic nationalism on the basis that it sought to reassert the Irish people's historic right to the land found a welcome reception amongst the landless, small holders, and large farmers after the famine. While the comment may be helpful in understanding the tenant

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1. Edmund Curtis, A History of Ireland, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 6th edition 1950) p. 179; see also pp. 196, 202-3.
 2. Interview with Engels", MEI: 343. "People there want first of all to become peasants owning a plot of land. . ."
 3. Engels to Eduard Bernstein, August 9, 1882. ". . .Davitt with his state ownership of the land is so far only a symptom."

rights movement of the 1850s, it was dated by the 1870s. By then, such battle cries helped to augment the size of the Land League. Engels' preoccupation with celtic society sprang from his eagerness to understand more clearly the Anglo-Irish relation as well as his desire to construct a vision of the future communist society. In both areas, although more so in the former, he was not out-of-step with his time: "the information available to late nineteenth century commentators did suggest that something like genuine communal property rights may have existed."⁽¹⁾

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1. Lee, Modernisation, p. 95. But cf. with E. G. Wakefield, An Account of Ireland, vol. 1, p. 238: ". . .property in land was vested in the chiefs only, or leaders of the septs, and that the inferior people were merely tenants at will. The estates of these chiefs, however, were not transmitted from father to son by hereditary descent, but on the death of the proprietor passed on to the eldest of his male relations, the best qualified to be the leader of the tribe; and the most capable by courage and military skill to defend it. Thus custom in ancient times was distinguished both in Ireland and Scotland by the name of Tanistry." See also James Connolly, The Reconquest of Ireland in Labour in Ireland, intro. Robert Lynd (Dublin: Irish Transport and General Workers Union, 1944).

CHAPTER FIVE

MARX, ENGELS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES

1. Introduction
2. The Land Question
3. The National Question

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MARX, ENGELS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES

1. Introduction

Bibliographic sources are crucial to the historian, political commentator and analyst. Intent upon writing an account of a particular incident, event or phenomenon, the researcher employs an array of tools, and procedures through which he, by piecing together various "facts", arrives at a conclusion. Yet, as one is well aware - as indeed were Marx and Engels as evidenced by comments in The Communist Manifesto⁽¹⁾ - it is the effective use and arrangement of these "facts", according to one's (political) philosophy, that is crucial to any interpretation. "The facts are really not at all like fish on the fishmonger's slab. They are like fish swimming about in a vast and inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend, partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use. . ."(2)

This picture of the historian, sifting through mounds of "facts" to arrive at a particular interpretation is fine if material is at hand. The writer's task, however, becomes difficult if either because

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1. For example, "The bourgeoisie creates a world after its own image." See Marx/Engels, Manifesto, CW 6:488.
 2. E. H. Carr, What is History? (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964) p. 23. On various interpretations of "facts," see the humorous Darrell Huff, How to Lie with Statistics (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

of his own location or the unavailability of sources he is dependent on unreliable or dated material. The modern researcher is in an envious position compared with his earlier counterpart. L. M. Cullen expresses the problem raised by this predicament, especially for the present-day researcher who seeks to evaluate that historical data:

The knowledge of the controversialists, and their familiarity with the practical aspects of the problems about which they spoke, were limited. Facts came to the controversialist at second hand, or were merely a reflection of the sanctioned "facts" and prejudices of his milieu and times. . . he spoke from a knowledge of large issues or concern with general problems rather than from an intimate acquaintance with economic questions. . . Moreover, in an age when sources of information were few, and when generalisations could not be disproved by reference to non-controversial and readily accessible facts, successful refutation was difficult and the entry of polemical argument into a community's meagre stock of fact was easy. . . (1)

Certainly, there can be little doubt that Marx and Engels were victims of their time. The absence of any long-term study themselves of the Irish situation meant that they relied heavily upon

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1. L. M. Cullen, "The value of contemporary printed sources for Irish economic history in the 18th century", Irish Historical Studies, vol. 14, No. 54 (September 1964) pp. 146-147. J. K. Galbraith offers a similar view when he wrote: "An appropriate motto for the student of British imperial history might be caveat emptor, for nowhere is there more widespread use of label to delude rather than describe. . . .Age has sanctified generalizations which, upon close analysis, have proved to be exaggerated, undocumented, or untrue." Quoted in A.G.L. Shaw, ed., Great Britain and the Colonies, 1815-1865, Debates in Economic History series, ed. Peter Mathias (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1970) p.27 Cf. David McLellan who argues that Engels' limited knowledge of the SPD made his assessment of developments in Germany lose touch with reality. "The fact that Engels' knowledge of the SPD was limited to its leaders led him to neglect the importance of the economic struggle: his scorn for British trade unions and dismissal

contemporary sources and impressions. Contrary to Sean Cronin's view that their location in London and Manchester, respectively, provided a marvelous vantage point from which to gain an understanding of Ireland,⁽¹⁾ it contributed in some places to a misunderstanding of Irish reality.⁽²⁾ Apart from Engels' cursory trips to Ireland, they did not engage in any original research. Unlike Marx's study of France during 1848-1852 or Engels' writings on Germany, now collected under the title Germany: Revolution and Counter-revolution,⁽³⁾ - where they supplemented personal knowledge with constant communiques from friends - there is no evidence of any such correspondence on the Irish question. Their one serious contact, Joseph P. McDonnell, an ex-Fenian from Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, and later Irish corresponding secretary in the First International, was not a source for Marx's economic study, whatever about Engels' historical work. The key section in Capital, volume one, was written in 1866-67, almost two years before either Marx or Engels met McDonnell in the Amnesty Campaign. Hence, there appears to have been no dialogue with members of the Irish nationalist movement; as such, they were totally dependent upon secondary sources.

of the idea of a general strike led him to pose a stark alternative of legal activities or barricades and have little interest in decentralised grass-roots activities." Engels, p. 52.

1. Cronin, Marx and the Irish Question, p. 3.
2. These problems have been pointed out throughout the thesis. Cf. Christopher Harvie, "Ireland and the Intellectuals, 1848-1922", New Edinburgh Review, No. 38/39 (Summer/Autumn 1977) p. 33.
3. Frederick Engels, Germany: Revolution and Counter-revolution with the collaboration of Karl Marx, edited by Eleanor Marx (New York: International Publishers, 1969)

As mentioned in previous chapters, one should nevertheless not deride what they managed to achieve. Indeed, given that the conceptions of what was known from the English side as the "Irish question" was framed from two divergent and equally biased viewpoints, Marx and Engels eschewed a remarkably perceptive and cunning insight into the situation. By way of conclusion, this chapter will seek to briefly examine the prevailing opinions of the cause of the crisis as well as of its solution in order to ascertain what influence they might have had upon Marx and Engels' writings. Part II will concern itself generally with contemporary opinion, while part III will look specifically at the question of nationalism.

2. The Land Question

Writing to Sigismund Borkheim in March 1872, Frederick Engels referred to three texts, which, in the absence of any history from "our standpoint", would serve as a useful introduction to the Irish Question. The books cited were The Cromwellian Settlement by John P. Prendergast (2nd ed. 1870-71), Memoir of Ireland by Daniel O'Connell (1869) - "For the main historical events" - and The Irish People and Irish Land by Issac Butt (1867). Prendergast and O'Connell's books were an historical account of British (mis)rule in Ireland from the first conquest in the 12th century. In passages that bear witness to Marx and Engels' reliance on these sources, the authors documented the long and somewhat abortive history of land confiscations, a pattern of attempts ultimately consecrated by the Act of Union in 1800. As O'Connell said, with the Union "Ireland

lost everything and got nothing. . ."(1) Where O'Connell concentrated on historical events, Prendergast sought to portray the destructive policy of English rule by focusing attention upon the communal life and "spirited character of the Irish" prior to conquest - this technique was used equally as effectively by Engels in the History of Ireland.

While the historical accounts were similar, the solutions offered were not. Prendergast for his part refrained from considering this aspect of the question. O'Connell rested his case upon the demand to repeal the Union, and restore the domestic parliament which had existed between 1789 and 1800, otherwise known as Grattan's Parliament. On the other hand, Issac Butt, a Trinity College economist and in the 1870s leader of the moderate Irish nationalist party, turned his attention specifically to the land question. Advocating elsewhere a form of federalism to solve the overall political issue,⁽²⁾ he proposed the introduction of security of tenure (63 years), with a fixed rent at a fair letting, and just rights for the tenant-farmers. Claiming that the precarious existence of tenants was the brunt of the problem, his plan would "obtain most of the advantages of 'peasant proprietorship' without destroying the influence of the gentry of the country. . ."(3)

Unlike either Prendergast or O'Connell, Butt also examined the state of Irish manufactures. He claimed that the serious and abrupt

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1. Daniel O'Connell, A Memoir on Ireland Native and Saxon, vol. 1 (London: Charles Dolman, 1843) p. 31.
 2. Isaac Butt, The Irish People and Irish Land. A Letter to Lord Lifford; with comments on the publications of Lord Lifford and Lord Rosse (Dublin: John Falconer, 1867) p.5ff; see also Lawrence McCaffrey, "Irish Federalism in the 1870s: A Study in Conservative Nationalism", Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, new series, vol. 52, pt. 6 (1962).
 3. Ibid. p. 274; see also pp. 55-59.

decline of woollen, flannel, blanket and carpet manufacturing in and around Dublin between 1800 and c.1840 was due to the poverty of the population. Dismissing the commonly-held view that it was the Act of Union which was responsible for the decline (an opinion held by O'Connell), he said ". . . a respectable woollen manufacture could have been maintained in Ireland by home demand. The wretchedness of the people prevented the existence of a domestic market, and therefore our manufactures fell. The history of industry abundantly teaches us that it is from the encouragement of home consumption that all manufactures take their rise." Again, the source of the problem, he argued, was unscrupulous landlordism which kept southern, as distinct from Ulster, tenants as "serfs". Fixity of tenure would, on the other hand, by granting freedom encourage "the habits of manly independence and industry," thus solving the agricultural and manufacturing problem. (1)

The lesson of all three authors was, nevertheless, simple. The roots of the Irish question lay deep in history; more precisely - especially in the case of Prendergast and O'Connell - the blame for Irish "distress and economic ills" could be placed firmly and squarely on "English mismanagement". (2) It is not fully apparent why Engels should have referred to these books. A glance at his long working-bibliography, contained in

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1. Ibid. p. 100-1. As stated in chapter two, Marx used Butt's figures to support his own criticism of the Act of Union, although it was not particularly the point Butt was making. Butt's attention was directed at manufacturing in the South of Ireland; he was interested to arrive at the reason for the woollen/textile industry's existence in Belfast and its decline in Dublin. His conclusion was tenant-poverty. See pp. 94-105.
 2. E. R. Norman, The Catholic Church and Ireland in the Age of Rebellion, 1859-1873 (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1965) p. 4.

part in Appendix Two, reveals that most sources would have conveyed a similar viewpoint. On the other hand, compared to many of the sources listed, these books had been recently published, and hence were likely to be widely available; this last point was important because Borkheim's initial query - of which there is no record - came on behalf of Adolf Sorge, then in New York.⁽¹⁾ Finally, there is no doubt that taken as a package the reader would have emerged with a fairly complete picture of the problem from an Irish perspective - and certainly the closest to Marx and Engels' own views given the absence of the latter.

What of Marx and Engels' other sources? For the most part this material was used by Engels in preparation for the History of Ireland. Marx's sources are somewhat obscure; reading the footnotes in Capital, it seems he relied principally upon reports from poor law inspectors, census returns, agricultural statistics, and reports of the commissioners of Inland Revenue.⁽²⁾ In the case of Engels' material, this concentrated on the early years of English conquest, from the 12th to the 17th centuries, emphasizing that the cause of the Irish question was to be found there. The intent, as evidenced from Engels' History, was to contrast the potential of Ireland - e.g. its land, minerals, sea, climate, people etc. - with the pattern of English invasions and subjugation. Books such as Petrie's Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, anterior to the Anglo-Norman Invasion, O'Connor's History of the Irish Catholics, Ware's The Antiquities and History of Ireland, O'Donovan's Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by

1. Cf. Engels to Marx, November 17, 1869.
2. Reference to this material is listed in Appendix 1, section 4.

the Four Masters, and Senchus Mor's Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland sought to portray the naturalness, culture, and normality of the Irish people and their way of life, and hence to demolish the generally accepted "English" notion that the Irish were in need of salvation. The latter case was most clearly put forward by Goldwin Smith who argued in Irish History and Irish Character that

As Ireland is, in its agricultural produce, the supplement of England, so are the endowments of the Kelt the supplement to those of the Saxon. What the Saxon wants in liveliness, grace and warmth, the Kelt can supply; what the Kelt lacks in firmness, judgement, perseverance, and the more solid elements of character, the Saxon can afford. (1)

Works such as Juke's Student's Manual of Geology, Kane's The Industrial Resources of Ireland, Beaufort's Memoir of a Map of Ireland, Boate's Ireland's Natural History, Ruttly's Natural History of the County of Dublin, Patterson's An Essay on the Climate of Ireland, and Moryson's Itinerary. . . [of] Ireland provided essential county by county documentation of soil quality, climate and agricultural/mineral potential. Of these, Kane and Beaufort argued for progressive use of agricultural and manufacturing resources. Wakefield's Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political, Young's Tour of Ireland, Caird's The Plantation Scheme or the West of Ireland as a Field for Investment, Lavergne's Rural Economy of England, Scotland and Ireland, Trench's Realities of Irish Life - based upon his experience as a landlord's agent beginning in 1843 - and Butt's earlier

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1. Goldwin Smith, Irish History and Irish Character (Oxford & London: J. H. & Jas. Parker, 1861) p. 14. Smith carefully delineated between Normans and Saxons; he blamed the former for all the problems in Ireland.

mentioned Irish People and Irish Land detailed the plight of agriculture.⁽¹⁾ For the most part, all authors concurred: the land was over sub-divided into tiny and inefficient holdings; tenants were handicapped for a variety of reasons - depending upon the author's persuasion - including ignorance of techniques, too little capital, lack of security of tenure, high rents, and unscrupulous middlemen and/or landlords. Solutions varied, as will be seen below, but it is obvious that the information was crucial for Marx and Engels' understanding of the prevailing situation.

In contrast to the general uniformity of Marx and Engels' sources, opinion on the Irish question was, in the nineteenth century, divided. While most everyone agreed that relations between England and Ireland desired attention and some form of alteration, not everyone shared similar ideas on what the problem was, or indeed, how to solve it. The term "Irish question" was sufficiently vague and meaningless to be the prominent debating point irrespective of political persuasion. As for the cause, it had its political and economic facets.

Irish nationalists, stretching from Daniel O'Connell to the Young Irelanders and later to the Fenians, argued that the source of discontent stemmed most recently from the Act of Union (1800), and beyond that to centuries of conquest, confiscation and destruction. In 1800, O'Connell had argued in his Memoir, "consummated the crimes which, during nearly seven centuries, the English government perpetrated against Ireland. It was the year of the destruction of the Irish legislature. It was the

1. Full reference for these books can be found in the bibliography.

fatal, ever to be accursed year of the enactment of the Union."⁽¹⁾
Establishment of the Union went further than denial of legislative independence, however.

Nationalists argued that the merging of Ireland into a single economic and commercial unit dominated by England had resulted in severe depression in Ireland's manufactures, especially, woollen, cotton, silk, and printing. Overpowered and depressed by competition, Irish manufactures were shut out of every market by English superior capital and influence. Irish industrial enterprise was stunted and confined within narrow bounds. Excessive rents drained necessary capital from the country.⁽²⁾ In essence, political dominance meant economic collapse. Retribution was to be sought in repealing the Act of Union - a demand to which militant nationalists proscribed and imposing protective tariffs.

While the demand was eminently reasonable given contemporary appraisals of commercial and manufacturing decline, it was principally the objective pursuit of the urban bourgeoisie who clearly had the most to gain. Nevertheless, the call was taken up by various trade unionists who believed, as did everyone else, that full legislative independence would bring economic prosperity - indeed, the solution was merely the inverse of the presumed cause of decline. The problem, as L. M. Cullen, states is that those who called for protectionism for Irish industry did so from an assumption that the Union had caused the decay. As protectionism was not an answer to Irish economic problems in the early 1800s, it is "doubtful whether the continuation of protection could have insulated the

1. O'Connell, Memoir, p. 26.

2. George O'Brien, The Economic History of Ireland (From the Union to the Famine) (Clifton, N. J.: Augustus M. Kelley, reprint, 1972) pp. 570, 444.

Irish industries from long-term decline. Outside Belfast the cotton industries had already lost ground rapidly before 1825. . . .Specialisation, a large scale of production, and the external economies associated with the intense localisation of the woollen industry of Yorkshire and of cotton in Lancashire created a rapidly improving competitiveness against which protection could not prove an adequate answer."⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless the United Trades Association during the 1860s combined with a number of unions and businesses to promote various "Buy-Irish" campaigns

1. Cullen, Economic History, p. 107. Protection sought to return the country to the boom years that existed just prior to the turn of the century. See, for example, O'Connell's explanation in Memoir, p. 26. See also, R. D. C. Black, "The Irish Experience in Relation to the Theory and Policy of Economic Development," in Youngson, Economic Development p. 201; Isaac Butt, who held the Whately Chair of Political Economy at Trinity College, Dublin, was the first academic economist after Adam Smith to argue in favour of protectionism as the means to increase employment. See R. D. C. Black, "Economic Studies at Trinity College Dublin", Hermathena, No. 71 (1948) p. 54f. H. F. Kearney offers a poignant criticism of the economic-nationalist understanding of the relationship between England and Ireland implied in the above support for protectionism: ". . .the economic policies of seventeenth century governments, take their place as one factor, not always the most important, within a general economic situation. . . . Finally, if the actions of governments were not all-important, Irish economic history is more complex than is often supposed and cannot be summed up in a list of acts of parliament. The English parliament was not exclusively preoccupied in legislating against the interests of Ireland. And yet, studies of the economic history of Ireland during the seventeenth century have tended to be dominated by this simple, almost simple-minded, conception of the economic relationship which existed between England and Ireland. . . . 'Ireland' and 'England' have been seen almost as human beings, instead of complex, articulated societies, in which different economic interests would create tension both internal and external. 'England' is described as capable of being 'roused to jealousy' or as possessing 'a contemptuous hatred' of Ireland. As a consequence of this anthropomorphism, it has followed that whenever an act was passed in the English legislature which had the effect, direct or indirect, of restricting Irish trade, historians have described 'England's' actions in terms of 'jealousy' or 'envy' or other similar human emotions." "Mercantilism and Ireland, 1620-1641" in Desmond Williams, ed. Historical Studies, vol. 1 (London: Bowes and Bowes, Ltd. 1958) pp.66-67.

through the launching of Industrial Exhibitions.⁽¹⁾ Similarly, the Chartists in the 1840s had adopted the repeal campaign to their own programme of democratic demands.

The complement to the demand for repeal and protection was the issue of land. Here again, there was a similar line of thought ranging across the period. Agricultural poverty, nationalists claimed, was the result of English landlordism, which deprived rack-rented tenants of their basic subsistence. Deepening agrarian (economic) nationalism "which fed on the frustration caused by the Act of Union in 1801 strengthened the democratic opposition to the landlord class by identifying them in terms of reference as an alien class."⁽²⁾ The land struggle was thus portrayed as the continuation of a centuries long struggle against the foreign invader. To make the point more bluntly, life before the English was often visualised as communal bliss; retribution against recalcitrant landlords prior to the famine as well as during the land war of the 1870s and 1880s were justified in that they sought to reconquer celtic Ireland. Hence, Celtic revivalism and nationalism were in tandem,

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1. See, for example, A. C. Davies, "The First Irish Industrial Exhibition: Cork, 1852", Irish Economic and Social History, vol. 2, (1975) pp. 46-59. The December 19, 1864 issue of the Freeman's Journal recorded the meeting of a deputation of the Working Mens Association (United Trades Association) to the Executive Committee of the Dublin International Exhibition. Shanley, Keegan and MacNamee sought the permission of the Committee to establish a Working Mens Exhibition as part of the main exhibition. Their desire was to show what Dublin working men could do in order to convince people that almost every kind of good work could be done in Ireland. Indeed, a recent meeting of the UTA had condemned purchasing English products that could be made in Ireland for less.
 2. L. M. Cullen, "The Re-interpretation of Irish Economic History", Topic, No. 13 (Spring 1967), p. 73.

dialectically giving rise to each others momentum. As C. J. Dewey argues

what ancient Celtic literature proved - or was held to prove - was that from time immemorial the whole Celtic race had enjoyed rights such as those contemporary Irish. . .tenant leagues were demanding. Presented as an appeal for the restoration of rights only recently, incompletely, and unjustly abrogated, the tenant-right campaign acquired a force it would otherwise have lacked. (1)

The nationalist view of the land question concurred on the necessity to reform landlord-tenant relations. Moderates, however, such as D. C. Heron, Professor of Political Economy and Jurisprudence at Queens College, Galway, and Issac Butt, argued for security of tenure. By eliminating the landlord's arbitrary power of eviction, they claimed, the cause of agricultural decay could be halted without necessitating the eradication of landlordism. In effect, Butt's proposals sought to simulate peasant-proprietorship, which was demanded by the extremists, in an attempt to whittle away the latter's growing popularity. His design was to bring about the transition from "semi-feudal tenure" to capitalism by transforming the "peasant" into an efficient and enterprising tenant-farmer. (2)

A slightly more radical sounding approach was taken by the Young Irelander, James Fintan Lalor. He argued in 1848 that the

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1. C. J. Dewey, "Celtic Agrarian Legislation and the Celtic Revival: Historicist Implications of Gladstone's Irish and Scottish Land Acts, 1870-1886", Past and Present, vol. 64 (1974) p. 43; see pp 43-9.
 2. Black, Economic Thought pp. 47-8, 51-2; see also his "The Classical Economists and the Irish Problem", Oxford Economic Papers, new series, vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1953) pp. 26-40.

entire ownership of Ireland, moral and material, up to the sun and down to the centre, is rested of right in the people of Ireland; that they, and none but they, are the landowners and law makers of this island. . . I hold and maintain that the entire soil of a country belongs of right to the entire people of that country, and is the rightful property, not of any one class, but of the nation at large, in full effective possession, to let it whom they will, on whatever tenure, terms, rents, services and conditions they will. . . (1)

Strongly influenced by the application of Irish independence to Blackstone's interpretation of English law - by which he substituted Ireland in place of King in "all land belongs ultimately to the Crown"⁽²⁾ - Lalor effectively linked nationalism to the land question, a "precedent later to be taken up with vigor by the Land League."⁽³⁾ Lalor was not concerned with abolishing private ownership of land but, as with Butt and Heron, only to transform the present bleak existence of most tenants. This could be accomplished by forcing landlords to "swear allegiance to Ireland and to accept the conditions of tenure laid down by her;⁽⁴⁾ those who refused to "adopt the only course that can now save a struggle" were to be ousted. Interestingly, Lalor did not call for "peasant proprietorship;" as with

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1. Nathaniel Marlowe, ed. and intro., James Fintan Lalor Collected Writings, (Dublin & London: Maunsel & Co. Ltd., 1918) p. 57
 2. Thomas O'Neill, "The Economic Ideas of James Fintan Lalor", Irish Ecclesiastical Review, vol. 74 (1950) p. 402.
 3. Michael Gallagher, "Socialism and the Nationalist Tradition in Ireland, 1798-1918", Eire-Ireland, vol. 12, No.2 (1977) p. 75.
 4. O'Neill, "Lalor", p. 404; see also p. 400.

the aforementioned moderates, he was primarily concerned with two of the three F's: fixity of tenure and fair rent. Although he often embellished his pronouncements with the term "class" - "It is a mere question between a people and a class - between a people of eight million and a class of eight thousand" - it is clear that neither his language nor his goals bore any resemblance to socialism.⁽¹⁾

The most extreme position - echoed by such nationalist newspapers as Piggot's Irishman and the Irish People (the official organ of the Fenians) - urged peasant proprietorship as the only solution.⁽²⁾ Nevertheless, by the latter 1860s, even economists clearly in the classical mold had converted in favour of ownership. J. S. Mill, John Bright and others⁽³⁾ advanced various schemes by which landlords could sell out their interest, and tenants could purchase their holding; Bright proposed the idea of a "land bank" to sell land directly to tenants. For nationalists, proprietorship was the inevitable consummation of Lalor's land for the people analysis, yet, the cry "land for the people" met with varying interpretations.

The Fenians were unique among Irish nationalist movements in that they were totally absorbed in the aim of independence. "As to the land

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1. Marlowe, Lalor, p. 42 and 59.
 2. Black, Economic Thought, p. 49.
 3. See Black, "Classical Economists", pp. 35-6; E. D. Steele, "J. S. Mill and the Irish Question: The Principles of Political Economy, 1848-1865", and "J. S. Mill and the Irish Question: Reform and the Integrity of the Empire, 1865-1870", Historical Journal, vol. 13, Nos. 2 and 3 (1970) pp. 216-236, 419-450, respectively; also Patrick O'Farrell, England and Ireland Since 1800 (London and Oxford: University Press, 1975) p. 36.

problem, Luby was convinced that no worthwhile reform could be got from the British parliament; 'the true land-measures, the establishment of a peasant proprietary, can only be got from an Irish legislature.'"⁽¹⁾ In this light Marx's reference to the Fenians' possessing "socialistic tendencies," because they desired to end "foreign appropriation of the soil," was premature. Not until the "new departure" of 1879 when Fenians joined with land leaguers did the former concern themselves in an "indispensable" manner with the land question - and then, solely in the quest for independence. Only Michael Davitt, founder of the Land League and an ex-Fenian, understood the land question in terms of nationalisation, at one point indicating that "to allow the British government to become owner or steward of Irish land was not more anti-national than paying taxes or calling upon it to advance necessary funds for carrying out a scheme of peasant proprietorship."⁽²⁾ Unfortunately for Davitt,

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1. Moody, "The Fenian Movement", The Fenian Movement, p. 105.
 2. Quoted in Paul Bew, Land and the National Question in Ireland, 1858-82 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1978) p. 230. Davitt was influenced by Henry George whose assessment of "poverty" and the land question in the USA, England and Ireland led him to advocate the introduction of a land tax. "What is required for the improvement of land is not absolute ownership of the land, but security for the improvements." Progress and Poverty, (London: C.Kegan Paul & Co. 1879) p. 357. Therefore, he argued, it was not necessary to confiscate the land, only the rent. The "state becomes [the] universal landlord without calling herself so, and without assuming a single new function." (p. 364) George's feelings about property ownership, particularly interesting insofar as they affected Davitt, were bedded in a romantic illusion of the 19th century, manifested in the ideas of natural law. (cf. Lalor as mentioned above in the text) Although his ideas were radical at the same time, he stood as no stalwart to private ownership or forebearer of socialism. In this regard Engels' comments to Sorge in a letter dated April 19, 1890 are most enlightening: "The Gasworkers and General Labourers [Union] admit all unskilled workers into their ranks, and in Ireland the agricultural labourers are also pushing themselves in - from this comes the annoyance of Davitt who can't get beyond Henry George and the latter's local Irish politics which he sees in danger here, although without any reason."

the majority voice in the agricultural community favoured the plan put forward by the large tenant-farmers or ranchers whose designs on ownership disclosed their bourgeois goals. Similar to their urban counterparts, they desired independence as a means to achieve economic superiority as a class. Independent, the urban bourgeoisie - until then hampered by competitive trade with England - would impose tariffs while the rural bourgeoisie would assume their dominance over the newly created proletariat. Irish nationalism was bourgeois nationalism, as it was elsewhere in Europe at the time; there was very little concern with social reorganisation.⁽¹⁾

Nationalists were not the only group concerned with Ireland. Indeed, the problems of Ireland were often being brought to the notice of England by classical economists, whose positions did not vary enormously from their Irish contemporaries.⁽²⁾ The lack of great divergence in opinion, particularly marked in the area of the land question, where both groups concurred in their animosity towards any scheme which would seek to seriously displace and erode landlord/capitalist interest, is not surprising given their general class adhesion. R. D. C. Black outlined the three main positions adopted on the land question by classicalists:

- 1) introduction of large capitalistic farming
through the eradication of the tenants and their
replacement by wage-labourers,

1. See Gallagher, "Socialism."

2. Black, "Classical Economists", p. 26.

- 2) maintenance of land status-quo although granting security of tenure and tenant's right to compensation for improvements, and
- 3) defense of small-scale farming, which in addition to the social and moral arguments implied in number 2 above, claimed it was just as (or more in the case of J. S. Mill) efficient as capitalistic farming with the added advantages of being labour rather than capital-intensive in a country where the former was plentiful and the latter lacking.⁽¹⁾

Classicalists viewed economic development in Ireland as not only desirable but practicable; they claimed that unity between England and Ireland was a fact and, thus, the priority must be directed towards ensuring Ireland's complementary role in the English economy. Consequently, there was never any doubt about seeing the improvement of the Irish economy within a free-trade context;⁽²⁾ as such, protectionism, manipulation of exchange rates or major fiscal variations remained solely within the nationalists' ken. Slight differences existed however on the question of

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1. Black, Economic Thought, pp. 28-9. See also, Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland. p. 8.
 2. H. Scott Gordon, "The Ideology of Laissez-Faire", A. W. Coats, ed. The Classical Economists and Economic Policy, Debates in Economic History series, ed. Peter Mathias (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1971) pp. 199-200. Regarding the question of public works and government investment, see Black, Economic Thought, pp. 167, 184, 192, 194-5, 201-2.

how to alter the ratio of population to capital and land - Ireland, as Scotland, it was claimed, was the "victim of a Malthusian crisis, due to indiscriminate procreation and low agricultural productivity. . ." (1) Malthus recommended reducing the population through forced emigration schemes - whereby the government was encouraged to provide monetary incentives for those willing to travel - and the reclamation of wasteland. Others, such as Bright, argued in favour of the introduction of free-trade concepts into land - the Encumbered Estates Acts, 1848, and 1849 and the Deasy Act, 1860, were the result of this point of view - opening the country to enthusiastic capitalists who would be encouraged to invest heavily. Free traders argued that market forces of supply and demand would inevitably lead to a redistribution of available land to those landlords and tenants most capable and best equipped. "Survival of the fittest" would eliminate the thousands of tenants who had been allowed to multiply under very untenable circumstances prior to the Great Famine.

Without a doubt, the end goal for the classicalists - as for Marx and the nationalists (although the latter would, for obvious reasons, have been more reticent about admitting it) - was to establish an economic land system on the English model; hence, position number one was favoured. Problems, however, arose when free-traders sought to create the necessary conditions while ignoring various cries for tenants rights. "In 1860, at the apogee of the free-trade campaign, Deasy's Act abolished Irish peasantry's customary tenants rights, while Cardwell's Act - without actually abolishing family settlements - enhanced the power of life-tenants to raise capital for agricultural improvements on the

1. Dewey, "Celtic Agrarian Legislation", p. 32.

security of settled estates." Resistance to such moves spurred various tenant-rights movements, which justified their actions with a "historicist" claim on celtic custom. Interestingly, this reaction provoked alterations in the classicalist response to the Irish land question. C. J. Dewey explains: Influenced by historicist claims that agrarian unrest was the result of a conflict between celtic and English "commercial" laws, and by ethnological studies of Sir Henry Maine and others,

conventional estimates of the peasant proprietor were revised. When continental peasant proprietors (as distinct from Irish cottiers and Scottish crofters) were found to be more productive, more comfortable - and more conservative - than the English day-labourer, political economists like Thornton and Mill began to argue that the incentive ownership conferred on the actual cultivation of the soil more than compensated for his inability to exploit 'economies' of scale. As the momentum of 'socialist' attacks on 'property' mounted, businessmen realized that the visible concentration of landownership in a small class of large landowners heightened the vulnerability of all forms of property, and toyed with the creation of a class of peasant proprietors far more conscious of the sanctity of property than the notoriously degraded English day-labourer.(1)

Despite the radical tones of celtic custom, they were quickly redirected through ownership to political conservatism. Indeed, by 1910 the majority of tenants had been converted into owners. Nevertheless, having run aground in the forceful measures of free-trade during the 1850s and 1860s, capitalist agriculture on the English model had subtly replaced the inefficient landlord/tenant system by the turn of the century.(2)

What is particularly remarkable about the two main positions on Ireland was their similarity. Ignoring the question of independence,

1. Ibid., p. 33, 42.

2. Black, "Irish Experience", pp. 199-200; Black, Economic Thought, p. 34; Solow, The Land Question pp. 10-11, 19-20.

economic solutions posed by Irish nationalists shared common ideological ground with English classicalists. Although the former glossed their demand with the characteristic cry for independence, it only thinly veiled the reality of the class objective. In both instances, applied solutions were directed towards private ownership and capitalist economies.

Marx differed from Irish nationalists and English classicalists in that he declared the capitalist mode of production to be a progressive development on the road to socialism; the Irish did not adhere to that final goal. Strangely, however, Marx seemed unable to truly grasp the inherent conservative quality of Irish nationalism - Engels did rightly identify Daniel O'Connell as pursuing "miserable, petty middle-class objectives" - when it came to the land question. Misreading the politics of the Fenians, he was enthused that they could successfully merge nationalism with socialistic concerns. To that end, he anticipated the "new departure" of 1879 when he stated in 1870 that "the land question has been up to now the exclusive form of the social question. . . because it is at the same time inseparable from the national question." Yet, neither Marx nor the Fenians in the 1870s or 1880s suspected that the demand for independence would be dropped in the face of economic gain.⁽¹⁾

1. Matt Harris, a Fenian and Land Leaguer, was suspicious of the common Fenian view that nationalism would flourish once the tenant had acquired his freedom from the landlord. Explaining his views before the Special Commission, 1888; "I took the chance of the movement, but I was rather inclined to think that so far from assisting in bringing about the independence of Ireland, that it would have the opposite effect; that when the farmers would be emancipated and get their lands, such men would look on the boundary of their farms as the boundary of their country, because farmers as a rule are very selfish men." Quoted in Bew, Land and the National Question, p. 229.

As Marx and Engels were committed to a policy that would bring socialism to England, Irish nationalism was of paramount importance to their strategem; insofar as that accomplishment provided the means for socialism to arise in Ireland as well, it would be welcomed. But that was clearly secondary.

As far as the specifics of the land question were concerned, Marx and Engels shared some common ground with those who desired a solution in conformity with celtic custom. Certainly, Engels' numerous references to Ireland prior to the English - most pronounced in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State - bear direct resemblance to many of the ideas of the period. He was not alone in the belief that pre-conquest Ireland was a superb example of primitive communism. Nevertheless, while he used that data to explain why Irish resistance to the English was as persistent as centuries had proven, he clearly did not envisage the construction of peasant proprietary upon the land. It is likely that he would have seen such endeavours as blasphemous, as they bore no relationship to the vision of Ireland to which he often referred. Furthermore, neither Engels or Marx would have concurred with Lalor's concept of the Irish people. Nationalisation of the land - which presumed the abolition of private ownership - was their ultimate solution.

Finally, as to the Act of Union, which Irish nationalists blamed for Ireland's manufacturing distresses and failures, Marx and Engels seem to have blindly agreed. Often their position on this issue is ambiguous, but without serious indepth analysis of the conditions of manufacturing, the Union was a tangible and realistic target. And clearly, they were not particularly concerned with exploring too deeply into the matter. In this regard, they shared Isaac Butt's conclusions that protectionism was essential for an independent Ireland. Marx's stance

is curious given his overwhelming support for free trade principles as the best method for accelerating capitalist growth internationally. Indeed, in a speech in 1848, he argued strenuously against protectionism precisely because it ultimately hindered the ability of the proletariat to advance to socialism.

If they speak consciously and openly to the working class, then they summarise their philanthropy in the following words: It is better to be exploited by one's fellow-countrymen than by foreigners.

I do not think the working class will be for ever satisfied with this solution, which, it must be confessed, is indeed very patriotic, but nonetheless a little too ascetic and spiritual for people whose only occupation consists in the production of riches, of material wealth.

But the protectionists will say: 'So when all is said and done we at least preserve the present state of society. Good or bad, we guarantee the labourer work for his hands, and prevent his being thrown on to the street by foreign competition.' I shall not dispute this statement, I accept it. The preservation, the conservation of the present state of affairs is accordingly the best result the protectionists can achieve in the most favourable circumstances. Good, but the problem for the working class is not to preserve the present state of affairs, but to transform it into its opposite.(1)

In contrast, Engels accepted the "infant-industries" argument for countries such as Germany and the United States stating that "without protection against foreign industry. . . [the bourgeoisie] would be crushed

1. Karl Marx, "The Protectionists, the Free Traders and the Working-Class", September 1847, CW 6:280.

and trampled within a decade."⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, neither Marx or Engels adopted an economic-nationalist stance and in this they differed from Butt and others. Nor did they strike out fetishistically at the Act of Union, seeing it as the blunt end of a conspiratorial whip, but rather argued that tariffs temporarily placed would provide the proper conditions to enable capitalism in Ireland to prosper. Adopted as a tactic rather than in-principle, they thought tariffs could encourage capitalist development in Ireland in the short-term, and the march towards socialism in the long run.⁽²⁾

3. The National Question

Nationalism as a political ideology appears to be an extremely complicated phenomenon in that whether emotionally or politically we applaud certain nationalist endeavours and criticise others. In other words, nationalism seems to have a progressive and a reactionary facet to it.⁽³⁾ It is, however, as any political ideology, a specific historic phenomenon that must be analysed within a precise context. Its birth generally coincides with the rise of capitalism and the formation of the

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1. Frederick Engels, "Protective Tariffs or Free Trade System", June 1847, Marx/Engels, CW 6:93; Cf. Engels, "Protection and Free Trade", Neue Zeit, 1868, wherein he applauds free trade.
 2. For a discussion on this, see Horace B. Davis, Nationalism and Socialism. Marxist and Labor Theories of Nationalism to 1917 (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1967) pp. 7-11.
 3. See Tom Nairn, "The Modern Janus", New Left Review, No. 94 (November/December 1975) pp. 5, 17; E. J. Hobsbawm, "Some Reflections on 'The Break-Up of Britain'", New Left Review, No. 105 (September/October 1977) p. 10.

modern nation-state. Initially a European development of the nineteenth century, although not ignoring its historic preconditions, it is perhaps best symbolised by the events of the French Revolution of 1789. Carlton Hayes explains that nationalism emerges from

an extraordinary complex of economic, political, social and intellectual developments: the invention and spread of printing; the rise of national vernaculars as literary languages, accompanied by the decline of Latin and other international languages; the revolutionary growth of capitalism and the middle classes, the role of aggressive divine right monarchs in suppressing feudalism and in consolidating and secularising their realms on a national basis; the religious upheavals which eventuated in the disruption of Christendom and the establishment of state churches.(1)

In the Communist Manifesto Marx and Engels also referred to this progressive aspect of national-building and nationalism. To quote at length:

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors,'

1. Quoted in Eugene Kamenka, ed. Nationalism, the Nature and Evolution of an Idea (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd, 1976) p. 7. See also Tom Nairn, "Scotland and Europe", New Left Review, No. 83 (January/February 1974) pp. 60-1, who argues that "Nationalism in general is (in Ernest Gellner's words) 'a phenomenon connected not so much with industrialisation or modernisation as such, but with its uneven diffusion.' It first arose as a general fact. . .after this 'uneven diffusion' had made its first huge and irreversible impact upon the historical process."

and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment.' . . .In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct brutal exploitation. . .

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. . .All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. . . .In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations. . . .

The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments and systems of taxation, became lumped into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier and one customs-tariff. . .(1)

Stressing this aspect of nation-states, Marx wrote to Engels on June 20, 1866, attacking the attitude of the Proudhonists who claimed that "all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices.'" It was this mentality, Marx claimed, that "dissolved everything into small 'groups' or 'communes', which in turn are to form an 'association', but no state. And this 'individualisation' of humanity and the corresponding 'mutualism' are to go on while history comes to a stop in all other countries and the whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution." It was precisely the reversal of the normal development of history, away from small isolated units, that the

1. Karl Marx/Frederick Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972) pp. 33-6.

Proudhonists wanted to re-establish, in other words to go backwards in history. (1) As Rosdolsky points out, this view did not suggest

that the proletariat should be indifferent with respect to national movements, should display a sort of 'nihilism' in questions of nationality. When the Manifesto says that the workers 'have no country', this refers to the bourgeois national state, not to nationality in the ethical sense. The Workers 'have no country', because, according to Marx and Engels, they must regard the bourgeois national state as a machinery for their oppression, and after they have achieved power they will likewise have 'no country' in the political sense, inasmuch as the separate socialist national states will be only a transitional stage on the way to the classless and stateless society of the future, since the construction of such a society is possible only on an international scale ! (2)

In this context, nation-states were not nationalist in the sense that groups of "peoples" desired autonomous representation irrespective of size and resources, but rather they sought the construction of unified,

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1. Joseph Petrus argues that Marx "considered both the nation and nationality as secondary phenomena to be abolished along with distinct classes and states." See "Marx and Engels on the National Question", Journal of Politics, vol. 33 (1971) p. 804. This is undoubtedly true in the movement towards socialism; in the development of capitalism, however, as Marx's comment about Proudhon show, nations were an essential ingredient. Indeed, it was ultimately capitalism itself which slowly but surely eradicated national divisions not the working class. Note Marx's comments in the Manifesto, op. cit. p. 35: "National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature. The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production. ... compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production. . . In one word, it creates a world after its own image."
 2. Roman Rosdolsky, "Workers and Fatherland: A Note on a Passage in the Communist Manifesto", Science and Society, vol. 29, No. 3 (Summer 1965) pp. 336-7.

viable economic and political units. The establishment of nation-states of the nineteenth century was in the objective interest of the bourgeoisie. Initially supported by the ideological concerns of liberalism - most marked by Hobbes, Bentham and Locke - democratic notions of equalitarianism and representation became vital in the 19th century. Nationalism was the political expression of bourgeois capitalism, fundamentally linked to the ideological concerns of liberal-democracy.⁽¹⁾ Hence, in the 19th century, we find national movements among the Germans, the Italians, the Yugoslavs, the Poles, the Greeks and so on. That the formation of particular nation-states involved the dissolution of, for example, the obsolete empires of Austria, Turkey and Russia, should not

1. Liberal-democracy brings together two seemingly contradictory notions; liberalism generally refers to belief/respect in the individual, emphasizing individual ability, expectations, survival, etc., while democracy is equated with egalitarian notions of popular sovereignty (rule by the people). Bentham, Hobbes and Locke are usually associated with the ideas of liberalism; this is particularly so in that their expression of man in society best benefits man under capitalism. For example, Bentham claimed in his utilitarian fashion that wealth accorded happiness; consequently, he who had the most wealth had the most happiness. Man's natural desire was to maximise his happiness; he did this by acquiring or consuming. Hence, as Macpherson outlines, Bentham saw natural man as consumer man or capitalist man. Similarly, Hobbes emphasized natural man as competitive man whose uncontrolled passion for economic and/or political power forced him into a constant battle with his equally competitive neighbour. Using the image of the market, Hobbes reasoned that, while various devices might ease the conflict, in the end, only some would emerge on top while the remainder would constantly struggle to survive. Again, as with Bentham, this was man in his natural surroundings. Finally, Locke stated that not only has man a right to the goods and land of his labour, but that with the arrival of money, there was no limit to the amount an individual might accumulate. Indeed, Locke's argument led him to accept as natural that man could sell his own labour, a basic tenet of capitalism. Ultimately, each theory combined to postulate class division as natural and not particular to specific modes of production: in this way, the idea of unlimited accumulation of property leads inevitably, despite a theoretical equality of man, to inequality in ownership; not everyone can acquire the same amount. The introduction of democratic notions in the 19th century, in response to rising working class anger

obscure the fact that the main aim was the unification of viable political and economic units sharing similar characteristics.⁽¹⁾

Socialists, notably Marx and Engels, were not satisfied with an analysis that stressed only nationalism's positive features. Instead, they grasped the issue dialectically, noting in the Manifesto that as capitalism expanded and extended itself, it created "a class of labourers, who lives only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital." Consequently, nationalism was necessary insofar as it produced the conditions essential for the workers to successfully educate and organise themselves for socialism in the future:

. . . not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons - the modern working class - the proletarians. . . The bourgeoisie itself,

at their political disenfranchisement, sought to regulate individualism and to some extent reverse the tide. Government's attempted to exist as a middle ground between these two notions; the modern welfare state is such an example. In the end, however, there is an ever-present internal conflict occurring between these two wedded concepts that appears in the day-to-day politics of modern society. This conflict can best be expressed this way: "What is incompatible with the concept of man as exorter, enjoyer, and developer of his power, is not the concept of man as infinite desirer of needs but the concept of man as infinite appropriator. For if man, to realise his essence, must be allowed to appropriate without limit, he must be allowed to appropriate land and capital as well as goods for consumption." The result is that all the land and capital is appropriated by some men, leaving the rest unable to use their powers to acquire resources necessary for the full expression of their desires. For a fuller discussion of these points see C. B. MacPherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism (London: Oxford University Press, 1962); The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy (London: Oxford University Press, 1977); Democratic Theory, Essays in Retrieval (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

1. Hobsbawm, "Reflections", p. 5.

therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie."(1)

The significance of this perspective is that national movements were consistently analysed in terms of their historic or internationalist purpose and outcome. Neither Marx or Engels purported a view that was in principle either for or against "independent statehood for any nation."⁽²⁾ Would the victory of the nationalist forces aid the development of capitalism and hence socialism? Or, were the interests being pursued fundamentally backward, in that they strove to revive a nation that had been discarded years earlier and/or which would not appreciably aid the pursuit of socialism? Indeed, the ultimate aim was internationalism - or more specifically, the unity of the working class; once nationalist desires blocked that development, they ceased to be progressive. In this light, modern separatist movements would be considered a qualitatively different phenomenon.⁽³⁾

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1. Marx/Engels, Manifesto, pp. 39, 43. Reference to "political. . . education" is to the democratic process, electoral reform, political parties, etc., which in the eyes of Marx and Engels, as well as other such as Lenin, formed a necessary background for successful organisation of the working class. It was the absence of this environment which necessitated the particular form of clandestine organisation advocated by Lenin in What is to be Done? in 1902.
 2. Hosbawm, "Reflections", p. 9.
 3. Cf. their analysis on the role of nationalism with that of social classes. See, for example, Frederick Engels, "The Abdication of the Bourgeoisie", September-October 1889, and "Social Classes - Necessary and Superfluous", August 1-2, 1881, in Marx/Engels, Articles on Britain (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971) pp. 395-400, 384-7, respectively. See also Nicos Poulantzas, Political/Power and Social Classes, trans. editor, Timothy O'Hagan (London: New Left Books and Sheed and Ward, 1973).

Surveying the pan-slavic movements of Germany and eastern Europe during the mid-19th century, Engels, came to mark a distinction between what he termed progressive nations, and "history-less" or non-progressive nations. He argued that history was full of examples of

scattered remnants of numerous nations, whose nationality and political vitality had long been extinguished, and who in consequence had been obliged, for almost a thousand years to follow in the wake of a mightier nation, their conqueror. . . These dying nationalities, the Bohemians, Carinthians, Dalmatians, etc., had tried to profit by the universal confusion of 1848, in order to restore their political status quo of A.D. 800.

It was the fact that these nationalities should attempt to interfere with the natural progress of history that Engels condemned. Rather, he claimed, "the natural and inevitable fate of these dying nations was to allow this process of dissolution and absorption by their stronger neighbours to complete itself."⁽¹⁾

There was, in Engels' analysis, no room for individual nationalities to assume that their particulars were superior to those of international

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1. Engels, "Restoration of Order - Diet and Chamber", April 1852, Germany; pp. 85-6. For a more indepth look at Marx and Engels' analysis of various nationalist movements of the 19th century see: Hermann Wendel, "Marxism and the South Slay Question", Slavonic Review (December 1923) pp. 289-307; N. Rjasanoff, "Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels uber die Polenfrage", Archiv fur die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung, vol. 6 (1916) pp. 175-221; H. Malcolm MacDonald, "Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and the South Slav Problem in 1848-9", University of Toronto Quarterly, vol. 8 (1939) pp. 452-60; H. Malcolm MacDonald, "Marx, Engels, and the Polish National Movement", Journal of Modern History, vol. 13 (1941) pp. 321-334; Petrus, "Marx and Engels on the National Question", pp. 797-824; Karl A. Wittfogel, "The Marxist View of Russian Society and Revolution", World Politics (July 1960) pp. 487-508; Solomon F. Bloom, The World of Nations (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1967).

pursuits; more importantly, they should not presume the right to reassert a redundant status. To do so was, in effect, to confuse the crucial distinction between nations and nationalities. This stance was similar to that taken by Marx when he said of (the Proudhonist) Lafargue: "I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the modern French nation."⁽¹⁾ The vague, romantic notion, generally associated with the petit-bourgeoisie and peasantry, that held an a-historical nationalism superior to internationalism, was reactionary.

In the period of bourgeois democracy, nations must define themselves first in accordance with their contribution to the success of the immediate bourgeois-democratic revolution, and secondly, in their ability to contribute to capitalist development, bringing closer the catastrophe of capitalism and the inevitable proletarian revolution. Whether nations were economically progressive relative to one another, and/or were capable of providing leadership - in effect, bringing capitalist civilisation - to less developed countries, could also be a contributing criteria. Thus, applauding the French invasion of Algeria, Engels stated that "after all, the modern bourgeois, with civilisation, industry, order, and at least relative enlightenment following him is preferable to the feudal lord or to the maurauding robber, with the barbarian state of society to which they belong."⁽²⁾

But, whether nations played a progressive role was only of "historically relative importance."⁽³⁾ Nations were considered

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1. Marx to Engels, June 20, 1866, SC : 167.
 2. Engels, "France in Algeria," The Northern Star, January 22, 1848, quoted in Davis, Nationalism, p. 64.
 3. Lenin, "The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxemburg", Lenin on Ireland (Dublin: New Books, 1970) p. 18 - my emphasis.

revolutionary only within an international context, one that was fluid, and flexible depending upon existing material conditions. As the bourgeoisie was the revolutionary class in the period leading from feudalism to capitalism, the proletariat assumes that role in the struggle for socialism. If one understands Marx and Engels' analysis of nationalism in this manner, there are no grounds for accusing them or adopting a (German) chauvinistic position towards Poland and the slavic nationalities. For example, on May 23, 1851, Engels wrote pessimistically to Marx expressing the view that Russia had more "elements of civilisation, education, industry, and of the bourgeoisie than the 'Poles whose whole nature is that of the idle cavalier.'" Yet twelve years later, when Russia lay dormant and Poland steaming, Marx and Engels reversed their earlier position, clearly cognisant of Poland's new strategic importance.

As nationalism was progressive only relative to historical circumstances, their antagonism to the slavic nations in 1848 becomes comprehensible. The slavic nationalities, Engels argued, had sided with reaction in order to perpetuate their own individual interests.

And well known in Central Europe are the intrigues by which Russian policy supported the new-fangled system of Panslavism, a system that which none better could be invented to suit its purposes. Thus, the Bohemians and Croatian Panslavists, some intentionally, some without knowing it, worked in the direct interest of Russia; they betrayed the revolutionary cause for the shadow of a nationality which, in the best of cases, would have shared the fate of the Polish nationality under Russian sway.(1)

On the other hand, Poland, whose attainment of national independence would benefit progressive interests, must be totally encouraged and supported in

1. Engels, "Panslavism - The Schleswig-Holstein War", February 1852, Germany, p. 59.

its struggles. Engels explained this position to Kautsky on February 7, 1882:

It is not our job to hold back the Poles from efforts to win the conditions of their future development, or to tell them that from the international standpoint their national independence is an entirely secondary matter, when it is on the contrary the condition of all international collaboration.

Twenty years earlier, Engels had written his article "What has the working class to do with Poland ?" (1866) where he said that the common relation of the Polish question to the Irish was that they were the Achilles' Heel of two capitalist nations - the former Russia, and the latter the English Empire.

It was, furthermore, the duty of advanced bourgeois nations to bring civilisation to less developed nations; - nations that might, like India, be laying somnolant under the Asiatic Mode of Production. Thus, Marx heralded Britain's entry into India as the "only social revolution ever heard of in Asia."⁽¹⁾ Britain's conquest had a two-fold mission: "The annihilation of old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of western society in Asia."⁽²⁾ In contrast, pan-slav resistance against German intrusion was reactionary in the sense that its victory would only result in the

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1. V. G. Kiernan, Marxism and Imperialism (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd, 1974) p. 172.
 2. Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India", New York Daily Tribune, August 8, 1853, in Avineri, Karl Marx p. 132-3; see also, Marx, "The British Rule in India", New York Daily Tribune, June 25, 1853, in above edition, pp. 88-95.

retardation of historical development. Historical reality proved, Engels claimed that "this tendency of absorption on the part of the Germans had always been and still was, one of the mightiest means by which the civilisation of Western Europe had been spread in the east of that continent. . ." ⁽¹⁾ To attempt to prevent the spread of capitalist civilisation was politically wrong. Likewise, it was incumbent upon advanced nations to realise their duty with regard to nations, such as India, which were incapable of progressing on their own. "United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." ⁽²⁾

Marx and Engels were careful not to confuse the national question with that of socialism. The Provisional Rules of the International Working Mens Association, written by Marx, put the national question into a proletarian perspective. It read: ⁽³⁾

that the emancipation of labour, is neither a local, or a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries.

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1. Engels, "Restoration of Order. . ." p. 86.
 2. Marx/Engels, Manifesto, p. 55. Cf. with Engels on Ireland, in Chapter 4.
 3. Documents of the First International, vol. 1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, n.d.) pp. 288-289.

Similarly, the Critique of the Gotha Programme proclaimed:

It is altogether self-evident that, to be able to fight at all, the working class must organise itself at home as a class and that its own country is the immediate arena of its struggle. So far its class struggle is national, not in content, but as the Communist Manifesto says, 'in form'. (1)

While they saw the struggle for socialism ultimately as an international one - as "every business man knows. . . German trade is at the same time foreign trade"⁽²⁾ - it was "based on nations. If nations did not exist, they would have to be created. Great national states in Europe, wrote Engels, are 'the unavoidable pre-conditions for the harmonious international co-operation of the peoples' under the rule of the proletariat."⁽³⁾ Hence nationalism concerned the establishment of bourgeois democratic nations; socialism was the struggle amongst capitalist and worker within each independent nation.

The importance of this distinction can be gauged from their assessment of the Irish question. Principally, Marx and Engels considered the Irish question, insofar as a solution to its dire economy, would eliminate unnatural tensions burgeoning among the English working class. In order for that to occur, they reasoned, Ireland would need to achieve independence,

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1. Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, a revised trans. (New York: International Publishers, 1966) pp. 12-3.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Davis, Nationalism, p. 13.

as it was the economic link between the two islands by way of the Act of Union (as it affected manufacturing) and English landlordism which resulted in the constant emigration flows from Ireland to England. Initially, influenced by Chartist supremacy, they had believed that the democratic strength of the English working class could demand and obtain the abolition of the Act of Union. Once Chartism had waned, they thrust their support behind Fenianism. Fenianism was doubly attractive because Marx believed that the struggle for nationalism might also encompass a move against landlordism in general, precisely because of its foreign connection. This thinking seems, perhaps only in retrospect, to have been without much foundation; indeed, by the mid-1870s, disillusioned with Fenianism's antics, both Marx and Engels concluded that the push towards bourgeois democracy could only successfully be waged and won through the parliamentarians. The establishment of an independent Ireland would finally resolve the Irish question for the English working class, until then befuddled by its own bourgeoisie to believe that the enemy was a national minority in its own midst. On the other hand, Ireland - having established its own parliament with powers to impose tariffs - would proceed along the capitalist road, and then towards socialism.

Significantly, nowhere in this review of Marx and Engels' position on Ireland is there the understanding that national independence was tantamount to socialism. Engels was very specific on this point: in 1844, he had clearly stated that the source of Irish ills only appears to come from across the sea; in 1888, when asked about the potential for a social revolution in Ireland, he commented that people there want to be peasants owning a plot of land. ⁽¹⁾ In the first instance,

1. "Interview with Engels", MEI: 343. Refer also to Engels, Condition p. 309-310.

independence would enable the Irish to see that the source of its economic problems were indigenous and not imported. Secondly, while the land question was the major social question, precisely because it linked nationalism with a demand to restructure agriculture a solution to that problem did not mean socialistic reorganisation of land holdings.

Their support for Parnell and Co., beginning in the mid-1870s, although representing a significant change in emphasis, puts the lid on any suggestion that Marx and Engels were concerned with provoking a nationalist-cum-socialist revolution in Ireland. Whatever about Marx's suggestions about the Fenians, the latter never seemed to have espoused socialistic notions themselves; neither did they consider the land or labour questions as their terrain, except insofar as they could be used to bring about independence. Interestingly, then, Marx and Engels position on Ireland falls under the mold carved out in response to the circumstances of 1848. That is, support for Irish self-determination was principally based upon the question of the establishment of bourgeois democracy and through it, the best conditions for the class struggle.⁽¹⁾ This would mean that the events in Ireland had little influence on Marx and Engels' understanding of nationalism. Instead, their earlier formulation of a communist approach to the issue was applied to the Irish case.

Did their stance mean support for Irish independence in its own right? There is no evidence that either Marx or Engels would have become concerned with the issue of Irish independence if it had not

1. For a brief discussion of this point see Paul Bew, Peter Gibbon and Henry Paterson, The State in Northern Ireland, 1921-72 (Manchester: University Press, 1979) pp. 10-19.

developed into the monumental issue of 19th century English politics. In other words, support for Irish nationalism was not an abstractly conceived position that placed all claims for independence on a similar and equal footing. Certainly, as Engels was careful to point out, the fact that conquest had not resulted in assimilation lent credence to the Irish cause. There is no indication that because Ireland operated as a colony of England that it ought, automatically, to be entitled to independence in the 19th century. Fundamentally, Marx and Engels' position rested on grounds totally devoid of emotionalism; their view of Ireland always came back to its internationalist role. As Engels explained to Kautsky in 1882: "I therefore hold the view that two nations in Europe have not only the right but even the duty to be nationalistic before they become internationalistic: the Irish and the Poles. They are most internationalistic when they are genuinely nationalistic."⁽¹⁾

How did this position compare with their contemporaries ?

Irish nationalism in the nineteenth century was divided into its militant and moderate wings.⁽²⁾ Its history is often recounted in a manner which emphasizes aborted risings as hiatuses. There were various attempts to create an Irish republic during the century; the term republic takes its guiding light from the French Revolution, which incidently, granted

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1. Engels to Karl Kautsky, February 7, 1882.
 2. Engels gave his own account of the two strands in a letter to Eduard Bernstein, June 26, 1882. On this subject, see also Thomas Brown, "Nationalism and the Irish Peasant, Review of Politics, vol. 15, No. 4 (October 1953) pp. 403-45; Strauss, Irish Nationalism.

financial and military aid to the United Irishman rebellion of 1798. The United Irishmen sought to establish a republic with no constitutional links to England; their unrelenting and "uncompromising stance. . . contributed importantly to the evolution of the 'physical force' variety of later Irish nationalism."⁽¹⁾ Despite the belief that the United Irishmen stood for a non-sectarian society based upon "the men of no property," they were motivated towards "a complete break from England [which] would give Ireland the economic rights, and the Irish professional classes the political power, that justice demanded."⁽²⁾ That unsuccessful rising was followed five years later by another led by Robert Emmet. Again, the attempt ended "ignominiously in a military failure." Ignoring for a moment the entrance of the moderate Daniel O'Connell, the "physical force" tradition next appeared in 1848. When the rest of Europe was aflame with revolution, the Young Irelanders - a breakaway from O'Connell's Repeal Association - attempted a rising. Unorganised and lacking support, it was quickly put down.⁽³⁾ Fenianism arose in 1856 from the dust of 1848, but represented a more militant and inflexible nationalism. Unlike its predecessors, Fenianism did not gloss its nationalism with social rhetoric; yet, like the others it desired complete separation from England.

In contrast, the moderate wing was willing to negotiate on the question of independence depending upon the bounty. O'Connell, often termed The Liberator, came to prominence through his aim to end religious

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1. Gallagher, "Socialism", p. 65. For a historical novel on the subject, see Thomas Flanagan, The Year of the French (London: MacMullan Ltd., 1979)
 2. Thomas Pakenham quoted in Gallagher, "Socialism", p. 66.
 3. See Marx, from "Speech on the Polish Question", MEI: 51.

discrimination which blocked political and economic participation of Catholics. When Emancipation came in 1829, it traded the enfranchisement of those who could pay the £10 poll-tax for the previous religious barrier; its bourgeois bias was thus revealed. During the mid-1840s, he suggested the idea of federalism instead of separation, but quickly withdrew the idea upon meeting strong resistance.⁽¹⁾ Thereafter, he concentrated on a campaign urging repeal of the Act of Union, which left the relationship between England and Ireland quietly unresolved.

The idea of federalism was not revived until 1870 when, in the aftermath of Fenianism, Isaac Butt proposed it. In September 1870, he was prominent in establishing the Home Government Association which advocated the creation of a home parliament for Ireland, but one that would maintain a federal contract with England. The proposal called "an Irish Parliament composed of Crown, Lords, and Commons with jurisdiction over the internal affairs of Ireland and control over local resources and revenue;" Westminster would retain control over colonial affairs, foreign policy and imperial defense.⁽²⁾ Coming at a time when militant nationalism was reaching a low point, federalism appeared to be a means of avoiding the extremes of Fenianism yet reaching an acceptable solution. By the mid-1870s, however, Home Rulers, as they came to be called, had failed to achieve any results; they were accused by extremists of neglecting the land question and by the clergy of ignoring religious education. Reluctant to alienate the Protestant gentry - initially the movement's keenest advocates - if he avidly supported land reform, Butt found himself losing out to the more militant

1. McCaffrey, "Irish Federalism", p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 11.

demands of Catholics, who by this point, had come to identify their cause with complete separation. By the end of the decade, Butt had been removed and replaced as leader of the Parliamentary nationalists by Charles Stuart Parnell, also a Protestant landlord, but one willing and eager to court and be courted by militant nationalists, in particular the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) or Fenians.

The IRB under John Devoy, still committed to complete separation, sought to use the idea of peasant proprietorship, urged by Parnell, as a means to awaken peasant support for nationalist ideas. Parnell, however, did not share the Fenian's views. In fact, as Paul Bew recounts, his "position was the polar opposite. A good measure of land reform (which he clearly believed it possible to extract from parliament) would end the agrarian social conflict and thereby bring the landlords into the nationalist ranks and thus greatly strengthen the demand for Home Rule."⁽¹⁾ This stand placed him firmly in the Buttite camp. Despite sharing with the Fenians the belief that the "land question was the key to the nationalist question," Parnell remained a constitutionalist.⁽²⁾

Marx and Engels' view adopted ideas held by both sides of the nationalist spectrum. Initially, Engels, under the influence of the Chartists had called for repeal of the Act of Union. Repeal was not necessarily commensurate with complete separation; rather, it proscribed the establishment of a domestic parliament, possibly along the lines outlined later by Butt. Marx noted an alteration in this thinking by 1867. The Fenian trial in Manchester that year had shown that federalism was no longer a viable solution because of the intense animosity felt by each side towards the other. Perhaps, he concluded, "after separation

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1. Bew, Land and the National Question, p. 226.
 2. See Alan O'Day, The English Face of Irish Nationalism (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1977).

there may come federation."⁽¹⁾

Regarding the theoretical concerns of the national question, Irish nationalists did not see independence as the first rung in the socialist ladder. Whatever about various statements by Tone, Lalor or Davitt which expressed concern with social problems, there is no indication that any of them saw themselves in the (pre)socialist mold. Their aim was the creation of an independent Ireland. Indeed, this desire to establish a republic along French lines was first and foremost in their minds.

It was to that tradition that Marx and Engels pinned their sails. There is no question that they thought Irish nationalism represented anything beyond the establishment of an independent bourgeois Ireland. As in the economic sphere, here also, Marx and Engels differed from their contemporaries in that they saw the bourgeois nationalist revolution only as the first stage. Nevertheless, they were still surprised and disbelieving that prominent personalities in particular and the Fenians in general should have displayed such adverse reactions to the International. Did this reveal a certain naivete on their part? Perhaps. Certainly they should have been forewarned given the experience elsewhere, in particular in France, where liberal democrats showed themselves to be noxiously hostile to any ideas with a socialist tinge. In addition, the social composition of Irish nationalism - bourgeois leadership of a peasant base - was not exactly the component of revolutionary socialist change. Engels had this to say in 1869 upon his return from Ireland: "The worst about the Irish is that they become corruptible as soon as they stop being peasant and turn bourgeois. True, this is the case with most peasant nations. But in Ireland it is

1. Marx to Engels, November 2, 1867.

particularly bad. That is why the press is so terribly lousy."⁽¹⁾
Indeed, as early as 1850 in an address to the Communist League, Marx and Engels had described how the interests of the tenantry and that of communists would inevitably collide. While communists might join forces with petit-bourgeois democrats in the change from feudalism, that would only be a tactical and temporary move. A clash between communists and the petit-bourgeoisie would shortly arise over the agrarian question. It was here that the latter would seek to implement private ownership of land. "As in the first French Revolution, the petty bourgeois will give the feudal lands to the peasants as free property, that is to say, try to leave the rural proletariat in existence and form a petty-bourgeois peasant class, which will go through the same cycle of impoverishment and indebtedness which the French peasant is now still caught in."⁽²⁾

Despite these perceptive pronouncements, Engels' famous remark of 1888 appears to have been made with a sense of cautioned wonderment; it is even less likely that Marx, given his prognosis for capitalist expansion, anticipated the extent of peasant proprietary demands. It seems clear that they believed that Irish nationalism contained within it a progressive wing, which, upon securing independence, would separate and forge ahead towards socialism. It was precisely for this reason that Marx appreciated the Fenian's actions, and applauded the International's endeavours in Ireland. Equally, Marx perceptively linked the land and the national questions together. What neither Marx or Engels understood,

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1. Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869; see also Marx to Engels, December 4, 1869; Engels to Marx, December 9, 1869.
 2. "Address of the Central Authority to the League", March 1850, CW 10: 284-5.

however, was the intensely petit-bourgeois orientation of the nationalist movement particularly in its linkages with the land question. Not until James Connolly at the turn of the century was there a serious socialist input into the nationalist debate. It is, therefore, unfortunate that given their theoretical understanding of the land question - Marx's writings on France in 1850 are in sharp contrast to his almost whimsical appraisal of the Irish - they should have misinterpreted the direction of Irish nationalism.

Finally, it could be said that Marx and Engels relied too heavily upon an impressionistic assessment of nationalism's approaching victory. As such, they were overly-optimistic of its success; their support ranged across the board from the Young Irelanders in 1848, to the Fenians in the 1860s, to Parnell in the 1880s. The sensation generated by the widespread support for independence in the Catholic south undoubtedly coloured their own vision with respect to its possible timing as well as the likelihood of opposition. As for the last point, their almost mechanical prognosis for political developments in Ireland overshadowed what a more intensive examination would have exposed. Failure to gaze even fleetingly at the dual economy of the island and its resultant political ideologies led Marx and Engels into a political trap also patronised by Irish nationalists; Ulster unionism was more than a mere manifestation of British conservatism.⁽¹⁾ Indeed, anxious to

1. On this point, see especially Patrick Buckland, Irish Unionism, 1885-1923. A Documentary History (Belfast: H. M. S. O., 1973) Unionist opposition to Home Rule or full independence was based on two general and widely-held beliefs:

(1) in response to nationalist criticism of the Act of Union, they argued that "the British connection had assisted the economic and social development of all classes and creeds, particularly by way of legislation on behalf of Roman

adapt a pattern of history, as outlined by the Communist Manifesto, to the circumstances of Ireland led them astray. Not only was independence the result of an unforeseen negotiation which divided the country, but capitalist growth was also much slower than conceived possible. These problems do not negate the general flow of their arguments, but rather attest to the fact that, as Marx and Engels would surely have agreed, in each case the particular material conditions must be taken into account.

Catholics, by land acts and later by what may conveniently be described as social security measures", and

- (2) reacting to appreciably more active missionary activity of the Catholic clergy as well as basic religious differences, they feared that "Home Rule" would be "Rome Rule". (p. 2)

See further pp. 1-94.

CONCLUSION

Most commentators on Marx, Engels and Ireland have chosen to concentrate solely upon their somewhat mechanistic political strategy that linked Irish nationalism to the maturation of the English proletariat.⁽¹⁾ Indeed, there have been two interpretations of that political pose. The more generally accepted and widely publicised view portrays Marx and Engels as men, who, through their wide-ranging support of the Fenians, saw the pursuit of national independence for Ireland as an essential step for Ireland, England and socialism in general. For the most part, that interpretation of political events is accepted uncritically. Alternatively, authors such as Michael Naumann, suggest that their support for Ireland and Fenianism bore more resemblance to youthful enthusiasm rather than careful political and economic considerations. In a strongly worded review of Marx and Engels, Naumann argues:

But in reality. . .the observations and writings of Marx and Engels on the Irish question, when added up, in no way constitute a scientifically acceptable, all-embracing analysis of Ireland, but a great number of cynical, enthusiastic, impatient and sometimes imprecise observations, which can only carry one meaning - to add to the emancipation of humanity by Marx and Engels, and the great hero of modern time, Prometheus in mass, the Proletariat.(2)

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1. See O'Grada, "Marx", which is an exception.
 2. Naumann, Der Strukturwandel des Heroismus, p. 274.

It is unfortunate that while the first view propounds a vacuous, simplistic understanding, the second reverses the direction, showing itself to be similarly devoid of a comprehensive appreciation of Marx and Engels' writings on Ireland.

As illustrated throughout this thesis, Marx and Engels' support for Irish self-determination embraced a much more comprehensive appreciation of politico-economic factors than has hitherto been realised. While one could suggest that they encouraged a mechanistic linkage between English socialism and Irish nationalism, Marx's "deeper study" of capitalist growth in England ensured that they understood the complexities of that relationship more than their contemporaries. Indeed, the key to why they felt that Irish Fenianism, and then Parnellism would provide significant reverberations among the English aristocracy is to be found in Marx's short consideration of Ireland, in the first volume of Capital. Herein, he and Engels offered something new and exciting for anyone's reading of Irish economic development in the nineteenth century that has sadly gone unobserved.

Afterall, examination of the forces of capitalist accumulation, in relation to England, led Marx to the realisation that that facet of the capitalist mode of production engineered the particular phenomena of pre - and post-famine Ireland. As discussed in chapter two, capitalist accumulation created the inevitable inequality of development that distinguished English industrialisation from Irish agrarianism. Engels had emphasized an even earlier source of this distinction; having noted the various natural features of each island, he remarked that it was only natural that proximity and competition would exaggerate and deny certain economic tendencies. These properties would be further enhanced or negated as capitalism developed. Any hint that the two islands operated

as single economies was exploded politically by the Act of Union but moreso by the economic ramifications of the Great Famine. Hence, what was occurring was a process of uneven development within the British context.

Maintenance of the Union had, however, implications beyond that illustrated by agricultural and population statistics. Indeed, Marx and Engels argued that the link helped extend the life of an otherwise dying English aristocracy, and buoy the life-supports of the bourgeoisie. Both classes, whilst economically at odds with one another, received sustenance from the link with Ireland. If, however, the link was broken, it might help to bring socialism closer in England. In this regard, they lent support initially to the Chartists, then to the Fenians, and ultimately to Parnell.

Two points, made here, deserve further emphasis. First, the political position so often quoted by commentators on Marx and Engels received its raison d'être from Marx's economic analysis. Without such emphasis, their understanding of Irish nationalism is reduced to the overly mechanistic strategy so beloved by recent writers. Second, Marx and Engels' use of historical materialism as a method of analysis allowed them to spurn the Fenians once the latter proved no longer politically significant. This was not the adoption of political opportunism, as Fenianism had clearly ceased to represent a progressive force in Irish nationalism; indeed, as Engels recognised, they had been replaced by constitutional nationalism. Their support for Parnell indicates their overwhelming concern to bring their programme to fruition as quickly as possible. Their eagerness to promote a successful nationalist revolution in Ireland, which would accelerate the social revolution in England, was uppermost in their minds. Once they believed that Parnell would accomplish this move more efficiently,

they grasped the Home Rule nettle.

Problems arose, however, in that neither Marx or Engels were adequately aware of the Irish political climate. Attuned primarily, if not entirely, to the vocal nationalist movement, they were observedly ignorant of more conservative voices, whether they sprang from the unionist or agrarian camp. In the first instance, they were surprisingly unaware of resistance to Home Rule; a position that revealed an almost simplistic appraisal of the Irish economy. Uneven development was a feature not only of the British economy but also of the singular Irish economy. Secondly, Marx's understanding of the development of capitalism led him to misapply its lessons to agriculture. Adopting the general prognosis of centralisation and concentration to agrarian circumstances, he and Engels were blind to various machinations of the nascent rural bourgeoisie. Landlord-tenant relations may have helped Marx to acquire a greater understanding of rent, but it failed to educate him on the conservatism of tenants.

Finally, Engels' study of Irish history, which has been consistently ignored, deserves greater attention. Indicative of the rather emotive climate which engulfed Irish nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century, the History of Ireland would, nevertheless, have been a significant contribution to our understanding of Irish and English history if it had been completed. Emphasis is correctly placed upon land confiscations as the dominant feature of the 16th and 17th centuries; concern for the erosion of celtic customs was similarly prominent in the minds of many Irish nationalists during his time, finding renewed expression first in the tenant movements and then in the Land League. Nevertheless, historicist reliance upon the existence of a primitive form of communism among the native Irish is, at times, in sharp contrast

to Engels' otherwise more materialist analyses.

While readers may be familiar with certain aspects of their Irish writings - most notably their (early) support for Fenianism - a full-scale study of these writings was long overdue. Often dismissed because of their inaccuracies and omissions, the thesis has sought to produce an indepth analysis of Marx and Engels' examination of major political and economic trends of nineteenth century Ireland. Further, the thesis has sought to project their ideas and prognoses against the background of which they wrote, continually asking how well they understood what they wrote about; very seldom have these questions been asked about Marx and Engels' writings. In effect, I have sought to set the record straight; they produced an enlightening and penetrating study, at times abound with inaccuracies and omissions, but perhaps no more than many of their contemporaries.

APPENDIX 1

MARX AND ENGELS ON IRELAND: AN ANNOTATED CHECKLIST

Marx and Engels' writings on Ireland, which are collected in this checklist, spread over fifty years, albeit they were only absorbed in the politics and study of the Irish question from 1867 to 1870; not coincidentally, this period also marked the major activity of the General Council of the First International, and the aborted rising and other actions of the Fenians. They did not, however, accomplish any full scale study of the Irish conditions. Marx devoted a chapter to Ireland in Capital, volume one, although it served as an "illustration" of the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation, and Engels wrote the first two chapters of a History of Ireland but never completed the proposed book. Thus, the primary source for their analysis of the Irish question remains to their correspondence, predominantly between themselves, but often with Ludwig Kugelmann, Friedrich Sorge, Eduard Bernstein, Wilhelm Liebknecht, and Marx's daughters, Eleanor, Jenny and Laura. After Marx's death, Engels' correspondence with various European socialists, and his articles provide an enlightening interpretation of the Home Rule movement and Gladstone's land acts.

What follows is a survey of the writings, speeches, and manuscript notes of Marx and Engels on the Irish Question. It expands considerably upon the introduction offered by R. Dixon's edition, Ireland and the Irish Question. A Collection of Writings by Karl Marx

and Frederick Engels,⁽¹⁾ which is a collection of reprints of their major texts. In contrast, this checklist is a comprehensive listing of all their writings on Ireland, although it is possible that other articles or letters will still be discovered. In compiling the checklist, some discrimination has been used; merely the mention of the word "Ireland" did not justify its inclusion.

All the necessary bibliographic material is provided with each entry. The date listed for an article or document is the time of publication; for a letter, it is the time of writing. This dual classification is due to the unavailability for all entries, in the former cases, of the date when the piece was written.

The Marx und Engels Werke⁽²⁾ is cited as the primary source for the availability of the entry, albeit an asterick preceding an article or letter indicates that it can also be found in the Dixon edited collection aforementioned.⁽³⁾ Whenever necessary, a brief exposition follows the entry noting the content. This annotation is not included in section IV, Manuscripts, except in a few cases, as the bulk of the material contained therein are abstracts from the specific text. These notes were taken by Engels for his research in preparation for a history of Ireland.

The material is organised in the following manner:

- I. Articles and Books
- II. Correspondence
- III. The International Working Mens Association
 - A. The General Council Meetings
 - B. Documents
- IV. Manuscripts
- V. Supplement

(1) Prepared by L. I. Golman and V. E. Kunina (New York: International Publishers, 1972).

(2) (Berling: Dietz Publishing House, 1973-74).

(3) Abbreviations used in the checklist are listed at the end.

I. ARTICLES AND BOOKS

- *1. "Letters from London"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: June 27, 1843 (Der Schweizerische Republikaner, no. 51. MEW 1:477-9) Remarks on Daniel O'Connell and the movement for the repeal of the Act of Union.

2. "The Position of England--The Eighteenth Century"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: September 7, 1844 (Vorwärts !, no. 72; written February. MEW 1: 561-6) Comments on the progressive effects of capitalism on the development of communication--Ireland is an example.

3. "The Position of England--The British Constitution"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: September 28, 1844 (Vorwärts !, no.78; written March. MEW 1:580-3) The Church of Ireland is viewed as an extension of the English state in Ireland.

4. Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts - First Manuscript, "Wages of Labour"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: 1844 (CW 3:244) Discussion of the Irish population, with specific attention to the numbers of poor.

- *5. The Condition of the Working Class in England

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: June 1845 (Leipzig; written September 1844-March 1845. MEW 2:302-23, 473-85; chapters 5 and 11) A study of the English working class examines the Irish as an integral part of that working class, especially mentioning the cause and result of the mass emigration from Ireland in the 1840s, and the living conditions in Manchester.

- *6. "Commercial Crisis in England/The Chartist Movement/Ireland"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: October 26, 1847 (La Réforme; written October 23. MEW 4:325-7) Observations on the effects of the 1846 famine and the rise in emigration from Ireland on the increased competition between nationalities in the English working class.

*7. "Coercion Bill for Ireland and the Chartists"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: January 8, 1848 (La Réforme; written January 4. MEW 4:439-41) Remarks on the passage of the Coercion Bill.

*8. "Feargus O'Connor and the Irish People"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: January 9, 1848 (Deutsche-Brusseler-Zeitung, no.3) MEW 4:442-3) Reaffirmation of Feargus O'Connor's leadership of the Irish, through whom Engels hoped the Irish would support the Chartist demands as a first step towards the repeal of the Act of Union.

*9. "[Speech on the Polish Question]"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: February 22, 1848 (Célébration, à Bruxelles, du deuxième anniversaire de la Revolution Polonaise du 22 Fevrier 1846, Brussels. MEW 4:519-22) Reference to the national and democratic demands of the Irish political movement.

*10. "Cologne is in Danger"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: June 11, 1848 (Neue Rheinische Zeitung, no. 11. MEW 5:59-62) Comments on the wave of repression throughout Europe following the revolutions of 1848. In Ireland, participants in the Young Irelanders' rising were imprisoned.

11. "Pauperism and Free Trade/The Approaching Commercial Crisis"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: November 1, 1852 (NYDT, no. 3601; written October 15. MEW 8:367-73) Marx questioned a statement of the President of the Board of Trade on Irish emigration.

12. "Parliament/Vote of November 29/Disraeli's Budget"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: December 28, 1852 (NYDT, no.3650; written December 10. MEW 8:471-7) Account of Disraeli's budget with reference to its effects on Ireland.

13. "A Weak, Aged Government/The Future of the Coalition Ministry"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: January 28, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3677; written January 11. MEW 8:484-9) Commentary on the promotion of three members of the Irish Brigade for their part in the defeat of the Derby Ministry.

14. "Political Perspectives/Trade Prosperity/A Case of Death by Starvation

Author: Karl Marx

Date: February 2, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3681; written January 13. MEW 8:490-8) Remarks that the promotion of the three Irishmen, mentioned no. 12 above, has not succeeded in buying off the support of the Irish Brigade for the Coalition Government.

- *15. "Elections/Financial Clouds/The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: February 9, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3687; The People's Paper, no. 45, March 12. MEW 8:499-505) Comparison is drawn between Irish and Scottish land clearances, and the transformation from clan ownership to private property.

16. "Parliamentary Debates/The Clergy and the Struggle for the Ten Hour Day"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: March 15, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3716; written February 25. MEW 8:535-40) Remarks on the attempts by both the Catholic Church and Irish landlords to smear the Irish Tenant Right Movement.

17. "Forced Emigration/Kossuth and Mazzini/The Refugee Question/Election Bribery in England/Mr. Cobden"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: March 22, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3722; The People's Paper, no. 50, April 16; written March 4. MEW 8: 541-7) Statistical and analytic account of Irish and Scottish emigration.

18. "Feargus O'Connor/Defeat of the Ministry/The Budget"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: May 3, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3758; written April 19. MEW 9:56-61) Reference to the role of the Irish Brigade, the Irish M.P.'s, in Parliament under the Coalition Ministry of Peelites and Whigs.

- *19. "Indian Question/Irish Tenant Right"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: July 11, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3816; written June 28. MEW 9:157-63) In a discussion of the Leasing Powers Bill for Ireland, Marx criticised the prevalent concept of rent, and British policy in Ireland.

- *20. "Financial Failure of Government/Cabs/Ireland/The Russian Question"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: August 12, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3844; written July 29. MEW 9:227-37) Exposure of the claim that Ireland is a "paradise for the labourer" by the use of statistics on increasing insanity.

- *21. "The War Question/British Population and Trade Returns/Doings of Parliament"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: August 24, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3854; written August 12. MEW 9:252-64) Account of the Parliamentary debate of August 9, 1853, on three landlord and tenant bills affecting Ireland.

- *22. "Lord Palmerston, I"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: October 19, 1853 (NYDT, no. 3902; The People's Paper, no. 77, October 22; published as a pamphlet, 1853 and 1854, London; written October 14. MEW 9:355-62) Comments on Palmerston's attitude towards Catholic Emancipation.

- *23. "Blue Books/Parliamentary Debates of February 6/Irish Brigade"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: February 21, 1854 (NYDT, no. 4008; written February 7. MEW 10:57-63) Criticism of the dealings of the Irish Brigade, the Irish M.P.s, with the Whigs.

24. "Attack at Sevastopol/The Clearing of the Landed Estates of Scotland"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: June 2, 1854 (NYDT, no. 4095; written May 19. MEW 10:235-9) Details given of the forced expropriation of Irish and Scottish tenants.

- *25. "Ireland's Revenge"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: March 16, 1855 (Neue Oder-Zeitung, no. 127. MEW 11:117-9) Observations on the political relationship of the Irish Brigade and the Whigs, and on the radical economic transformations of the post-famine period in Ireland.

- *26. "From Parliament [...The Irish Struggle]"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: July 16, 1855 (Neue Oder-Zeitung, no. 325. MEW 11:354-7) Exposure of the background to the passage of the Compensation Bill, pointing again to the relationship between the Irish Brigade and the Whigs.

*27. "Lord John Russell"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: August 8, 10, 15, 1855 (Neue Oder-Zeitung, nos. 365, 369, 377; a shortened version of the August 8th article was printed in NYDT, August 28; written August 4, 6 and 12, respectively. MEW 11:392-401) Analysis of the political chicanery of the Whigs on the Irish Question.

28. "The English Factory System"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: April 28, 1857 (NYDT, no. 4999; written April 10. MEW 12:187-93) Statistics given on the growth and concentration of the flax trade in the northern counties of Ireland.

*29. "The Question of the Ionian Islands"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: January 6, 1859 (NYDT, no. 5526; written December 17, 1858. MEW 12:663-67) Writings on the nature of colonialism, with reference to Ireland.

*30. "The Excitement in Ireland"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: January 11, 1859 (NYDT, no. 5530; written December 24, 1858. MEW 12:668-72) Discussion of the relationship between Orangeism and the Tories, and of the historical and material base of secret societies in Ireland.

*31. "Population, Crime and Pauperism"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: September 16, 1859 (NYDT, no. 5741; written August 23. MEW 13:490-5) An illustration of the increasing immiseration of the Irish shown in the increase of crime and pauperism.

32. "The State of British Manufacturing Industry"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: August 6, 24, 1860 (NYDT, nos. 6016, 6032; written July 10 and 14, respectively. MEW 15:78-88) Statement on the relation between the demands of British manufacturing and Irish labour, and on textile manufacturing in Ireland.

33. "The Crops in Europe"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: September 6, 1860 (NYDT, no. 6043; written August 21. MEW 15:133-6) Discussion on potential agricultural production, including the potato in Ireland.

*34. "The Crisis in England"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: November 6, 1861 (Die Presse, no. 305; written November 1. MEW 15:348-51) Explanation for the dominance on Irish economic life by the potato.

*35. "English Humanism and America"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: June 20, 1862 (Die Presse, no. 168; written June 14. MEW 15:508-10) Comments on the silence in parliamentary and social circles on poverty in England and Ireland.

*36. Capital, volume I

Author: Karl Marx

Date: 1867 (Hamburg, MEW 23:726-40 [section 7, chapter 25]) Ireland is discussed as an illustration of the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation, in a chapter likewise titled. Concentrating on the period 1860-65, Marx analysed the transformation in agricultural production, and the introduction of capitalist relations of production.

*37. "The British Government and the Fenian Prisoners"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: February 27 and March 6, 1870 (L'internationale, nos. 59 and 60; written February 21. MEW 16:401-6) Description of the treatment and condition of Fenian prisoners.

*38. "Letters from London, III--Meeting in Hyde Park"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: November 17, 1872 (La Plebe, no. 117; written November 14. MEW 18:188-90) Account given of a meeting in Hyde Park, November 3, 1872, to demonstrate against the condition of Irish prisoners in England.

39. "Letters from London, IV--Meeting in Hyde Park/The Position in Spain"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: December 14, 1872 (La Plebe, no. 122; written December 11. MEW 18:191-3) Article refers to the government's attempt to ban the recent demonstration, November 3, 1872, in Hyde Park.

*40. "From the International"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: July 2, 1872 (Der Volkstaat, no. 53; written June 19-20. MEW 18:472-5) Report on the support by the British Section of the International for the demand for the release of Irish prisoners.

*41. "The English Elections"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: March 4, 1874 (Der Volksstaat, no. 26; written February 22. MEW 18:494-9) Commenting on the election of 1874, Engels analysed the changes in the political spectrum since the 1860s--the dissolution of the Fenians and its replacement by the Home Rule movement.

*42. Anti-Dühring

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1878 (MEW 20) Remarks on communal landownership which existed throughout Europe and Asia. A similar social structure had existed in Ireland prior to the land confiscations.

*43. Dialectics of Nature

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1880 (MEW 20) Brief discussion of the effect of the potato famine in Ireland.

*44. "American Food and the Land Question"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: July 2, 1881 (The Labour Standard, no. 9; written the end of June. MEW 19:270-2) Discussion of the progressive effects of increasing American competition on agricultural production in England and Ireland.

*45. "Bismark and the German Working Men's Party"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: July 23, 1881 (The Labour Standard, no. 12; written mid-July. MEW 19:280-2) Comparison between the repressive laws under Bismark and those imposed in Ireland by the British government.

46. "Social Classes--Necessary and Superfluous"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: August 6, 1881 (The Labour Standard, no. 14; written August 1-2. MEW 19:287-91) An analysis of the role of classes during specific modes of production; hence, an examination of the aristocracy under capitalism in England and in Ireland.

47. "The Irish Struggle"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: July 13, 1882 (Der Socialdemokrat) This is the publication of Engels' letter to Eduard Bernstein of June 26, 1882, which Wilhelm Liebknecht published without permission and with some alteration. Regarding the publication of the letter, see Engels' letter to E. Bernstein, August 9, 1882.

The article, like the letter, traces the history of two trends in Irish politics, the agrarian and the liberal-national, and discusses the current political situation.

*48. "Jenny Longuet, Née Marx"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: January 18, 1883 (Der Socialdemokrat, no. 4; written January 13. MEW 19:331-2) Obituary comments on Jenny Longuet, Marx's daughter, noting her contribution in support of the Fenians.

*49. The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1884 (Hottingen-Zurich; written the end of March to May 26. MEW 21:127-40 [chapter 7]) Entitled the Gens with Celts and Germans, the chapter describes the condition of the gens and the family in old celtic law, referring to Welsh and Irish customs.

50. "England in 1845 and 1885"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: March 1, 1885 (The Commonweal, no. 2; Die Neue Zeit, no. 6, June; written mid-February. MEW 21:191-7) Remarks on the economic relation of Ireland to England.

*51. "Interview with Engels"

Date: September 20, 1888 (New Yorker Volkszeitung; Der Socialdemokrat, October 13. MEW 21:511) Reply to questions on the possibility of a social revolution in Ireland, and on the relationship between the English working class and the Irish question.

*52. "Preface to the English edition of The Condition of the Working Class in England"

Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1892 (London; written January 11. MEW 22:265-78) This preface contains some of the material found in the 1885 article listed above, and notes the changes in the housing conditions of the Irish community in Manchester, and the effects of free trade on Ireland.

*53. Capital, Volume III

Author: Karl Marx
Editor: Frederick Engels
Date: 1894 (Hamburg. MEW 25:627-52 [chapter 37]) Entitled the Introduction to the Concept of Ground Rent, the chapter describes rent in Ireland which included interest on improvements made by the tenant.

*54. "The Peasant Question in France and Germany"

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: 1894-5 (Die Neue Zeit, Bd. 1, no. 10, Stuttgart; written November 15-22, 1894. MEW 22:483-505) Acknowledging the inevitable death of traditional small scale production, Engels urged socialists to seriously study the peasant question lest the peasants should join forces with large landowners on the basis of property ownership. This warning equally applied to Ireland.

II Correspondence

1. Marx to Ferdinand Lassalle

Date: January 23, 1855 (MEW 28:612-5) Account of the reduction in Irish cultivated land for 1854, and the overall agricultural effect of the repeal of the Corn Laws.

2. Marx to Engels

Date: January 31, 1855 (MEW 28:427-31) A summary of of the major parliamentary debates/events for 1853-4, including legislation affecting Ireland.

*3. Engels to Marx

Date: May 23, 1856 (MEW 29:56-8) Account of Engels' first trip to Ireland with Mary Burns.

4. Marx to Engels

Date: July 6, 1863 (MEW 30:361-7) Reference to the favours given members of the Irish aristocracy in return for political support of the government. This letter should be seen alongside of articles nos. 12, 13, 17 and 24 above which had been written slightly earlier.

5. Marx to Engels

Date: February 13, 1866 (MEW 31:178-9) Reference to a letter received at the General Council of the International, January 16, from Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa, wife of the Fenian leader, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa.

6. Marx to Engels

Date: December 17, 1866 (MEW 31:268-9) An expression of ambivalence regarding the recent membership of James Stephens, Fenian leader, in the International.

7. Marx to Sigfrid Meyer
Date: April 30, 1867 (MEW 31:542-3) Reference to the discussion on Ireland in Capital, volume one.
8. Marx to Engels
Date: June 3, 1867 (MEW 31:301-2) Mention of a document on the treatment of Fenian prisoners having been ordered.
9. Marx to Engels
Date: June 22, 1867 (MEW 31:305-7) Reference to the above document on the Fenians.
10. Marx to Engels
Date: June 27, 1867 (MEW 31:312-3) Criticism of the above document on the Fenians.
11. Engels to Marx
Date: September 1, 1867 (MEW 31:334) Remarks on the draft of the section on Ireland, Capital, volume I.
- *12. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann
Date: October 11, 1867 (MEW 31:560-2) Note made that the land question was the key political question in Ireland.
13. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann
Date: October 12, 1867 (MEW 31:563) Reference made to the rescue of Fenians from a prison van in Manchester.
14. Engels to Marx
Date: November 1, 1867 (MEW 31:373) Remarks on Disraeli and the Tories with reference to the Irish Church.
- *15. Marx to Engels
Date: November 2, 1867 (MEW 31:374-6) Comments on the Fenian trial in Manchester, on the role of his supporters within the Reform League, and on the nature of English rule in Ireland (land evictions).
- *16. Engels to Marx
Date: November 5, 1867 (MEW 31:377-8) Commentary on the farcical nature of the Manchester trial; also a request for the source of information on land evictions mentioned in Marx's letter of November 2.

*17. Marx to Engels

Date: November 7, 1867 (MEW 31:379-80) Reference to two meetings of the Reform League in which the International was actively engaged to strengthen pro-Fenian sentiments. The meetings were held on October 31 and November 5.

*18. Engels to Ludwig Kugelmann

Date: November 8 and 20, 1867 (MEW 31:567-9) Remarks on the growing support within the Reform League and the English working class for the Fenians.

*19. Engels to Marx

Date: November 24, 1867 (MEW 31:387) Commenting on the execution of the Fenians involved in the Manchester episode, Engels foresaw that their deaths would provide the nationalist cause with martyrs.

20. Marx to Engels

Date: November 27, 1867 (MEW 31:390-1) Acknowledgement that involvement with the Fenian "affair" had delayed correspondence to Engels.

21. Marx to Engels

Date: November 28, 1867 (MEW 31:392) Remarks that Marx must be "diplomatic" publically about support for the Fenians.

*22. Engels to Marx

Date: November 29, 1867 (MEW 31:396-7) Engels agreed with a cautious stand on the Fenians. Further comments are offered on the execution of the Fenians, and the response to it by Catholic priests.

*23. Marx to Engels.

Date: November 30, 1867 (MEW 31:398-400) Account of events at preceding meetings of the International's General Council, followed by comments on the changed nature of English policy and rule in Ireland in the post-famine period, and the necessary political and economic solutions.

*24. Marx to Engels

Date: December 14, 1867 (MEW 31:409-10) Criticism of the Fenian bombing of Clerkenwell prison.

25. Marx to Engels

Date: December 17, 1867 (MEW 31:412) Request that Engels write a review of Capital, volume I, for the Irishman, Dublin, with emphasis on Ireland.

*26. Engels to Marx

Date: December 19, 1867 (MEW 31:413-4) Condemnation of the Clerkenwell incident.

*27. Marx to Engels

Date: March 16, 1868 (MEW 32:45) Comment on the treatment of Irish prisoners in England.

*28. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann

Date: April 6, 1868 (MEW 32:542-3) Reference to the political use made by Gladstone of the Irish Question, and to the relation between the Irish Church, and English landlords and the government. Comments also on the Disestablishment Bill.

29. Marx to Engels

Date: October 10, 1868 (MEW 32:179-81) Discussion of the concept of rent, theoretically, and in the perspective of the specific historical and economic experiences of Ireland.

*30. Marx to Engels

Date: March 1, 1869 (MEW 32:263-6) Discussion of a book on monetary exchange between England and Ireland. Comment also on British amnesty policy and prison conditions.

*31. Engels to Marx

Date: September 27, 1869 (MEW 32:373-4) Account of his second trip to Ireland with Lizzie Burns and Eleanor Marx.

*32. Engels to Marx

Date: October 24, 1869 (MEW 32:378-9) Remarks on the effects of colonial policy on both the colonised and the coloniser, as exemplified by the Irish and British situation.

33. Marx to Engels

Date: October 30, 1869 (MEW 32:380-1) Reference to the preceding General Council meeting where Marx was selected to draw up a resolution supporting amnesty for Fenians.

*34. Engels to Marx

Date: November 1, 1869 (MEW 32:382-3) Review of the editorial behaviour of The Beehive on the Fenian question, and reference to Engels' intended study of Ireland.

*35. Marx to Engels

Date: November 6, 1869 (MEW 32:384-5) Referral to pamphlets on Ireland he had posted to Engels.

36. Marx to Engels

Date: November 12, 1869 (MEW 32:388-9) Comment on the anti-clerical tone of Fenian amnesty meetings in Ireland, and on the forthcoming debate within the General Council on Ireland.

*37. Engels to Marx

Date: November 17, 1869 (MEW 32:390-1) Observations on the election campaign of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, a Fenian, for Parliament, and on the attitude of The Beehive on the Irish Question. Mention is also made of books to be purchased and read on Ireland.

*38. Marx to Engels

Date: November 18, 1869 (MEW 32:392-4) Details given of the General Council meeting held November 16 when a debate on the Irish Question was held and Marx proposed a resolution on that issue.

*39. Engels to Marx

Date: November 19, 1869 (MEW 32:395-400) Recommendations made on the resolution proposed by Marx on the Irish Question at the General Council, November 16.

*40. Marx to Engels

Date: November 26, 1869 (MEW 32:401-5) O'Donovan Rossa's victory in the election is applauded. An account is also given of the debate in the General Council, November 23, on Marx's resolution.

*41. Engels to Marx

Date: November 29, 1869 (MEW 32:406-7) Discourse on historical research by Sir John Davies, and on the positive results brought politically by O'Donovan's election.

*42. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann

Date: November 29, 1869 (MEW 32:637-9) Full statement and explanation of the importance of the Irish Question, and its significance for the English working class.

*43. Marx to Engels

Date: December 4, 1869 (MEW 32:408-9) Comments on the final debate on the resolution in the General Council, and on the refusal of Richard Pigott, publisher of The Irishman, Dublin, to print reports of the Council's discussions on Ireland.

*44. Engels to Marx

Date: December 9, 1869 (MEW 32:410-2) Remarks on The Irishman's attempts to shield Ireland from working class and socialist influences by refusing to print developments within the General Council on Ireland. A comparison is made to Daniel O'Connell.

*45. Marx to Engels

Date: December 10, 1869 (MEW 32:413-6) Statement noting the alteration in Marx's position on the Irish Question, citing the importance of the effect of an Irish revolution in England.

*46. Marx to Engels

Date: December 17, 1869 (MEW 32:421-3) Explanation of the protest by the Curriers Society, affiliated to the International, against the Irish resolution of November 16.

*47. Engels to Marx

Date: January 19, 1870 (MEW 32:426-7) Comments on proposals by John Bright for land purchase schemes in Ireland, and on Irish bibliographic material.

*48. Engels to Marx

Date: January 25, 1870 (MEW 32:429-30) Discussion of bibliographic material on Ireland, especially for the Anglo-Norman period.

*49. Engels to Marx

Date: February 17, 1870 (MEW 32:445-7) Remarks on Gladstone's Land Bill.

*50. Marx to Engels

Date: February 19, 1870 (MEW 32:448-9) Discussion of Gladstone's speech in the House of Commons, February 15, and the Irish vote in support of George Odger in the 1870 election in Southwark.

51. Marx to Engels
- Date: February 21, 1870 (MEW 32:450) Reference to a letter sent to Caesar de Paepe on the condition of Fenian prisoners and urging publicity of the same in the continental press.
- *52. Marx to Engels
- Date: March 5, 1870 (MEW 32:454-5) The background is given to the series of eight articles written by his daughter Jenny for La Marseillaise on Fenian prisoners. Reference is also made to a debate within the American Congress on the Fenians.
- *53. Marx to Paul and Laura Lafargue
- Date: March 5, 1870 (MEW 32:655-9) Brief account of his family's activities in support of the Fenians, and an explanation of the political importance of the Irish Question in its relation to England.
- *54. Engels to Marx
- Date: March 7, 1870 (MEW 32:456-7) Reference to Jenny Marx's articles in La Marseillaise, and to receipt of a copy of the old Irish laws.
55. Marx to Engels
- Date: March 10, 1870 (MEW 32:459) Reference to the articles in La Marseillaise.
56. Engels to Marx
- Date: March 13, 1870 (MEW 32:460-1) Analysis of the 1870 Land Bill.
- *57. Marx to Engels
- Date: March 19, 1870 (MEW 32:462-3) Reference to the enclosure of appropriate copies of La Marseillaise, and of the response to the second article.
58. Engels to Marx
- Date: March 21, 1870 (MEW 32:464-5) Observations on the political pressure exerted on Gladstone by Jenny Marx's articles.
59. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann
- Date: March 28, 1870 (Die Neue Zeit, no. 15, 2nd volume, 1901-2; MEW 32:664) Enclosed is a copy of the Confidential Communication written by Marx, January 1, 1870, for the General Council. It contains a thorough presentation of the views of Marx and the Council on the Irish Question.

- *60. Marx to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt

Date: April 9, 1870 (MEW 32:665-70) Based upon the Confidential Communication, this letter is Marx's most complete statement on the political significance of the Irish Question: the relation between Irish emigrants, the English working class and capitalism, the primacy of land as the social question in Ireland, and the necessity for Irish independence.

- *61. Marx to Engels

Date: April 14, 1870 (MEW 32:473-7) Reference to 1870 agricultural reports for Ireland, and to the increasing tension between land labourers and the farmers and tenant-farmers.

- *62. Engels to Marx

Date: April 15, 1870 (MEW 32:478-80) In reply to Marx's letter, Engels provided a detailed description of the Irish bogs and townlands. He also remarked on the 1870 parliamentary reports with respect to Ireland.

63. Marx to Engels

Date: April 28, 1870 (MEW 32:485-8) Comparison between English and Irish agrarian crimes, and remarks on Richard Pigott, publisher of The Irishman, Dublin.

64. Engels to Marx

Date: April 29, 1870, (MEW 32:489-91) Remarks on Richard Pigott, and on Engels' study of old Irish laws.

65. Engels to Marx

Date: May 8, 1870 (MEW 32:500-2) Comments on the behaviour of the English police, and on Irish family law.

66. Marx to Engels

Date: May 11, 1870 (MEW 32:507-8) Discussion of Irish bibliographic sources.

- *67. Engels to Marx

Date: May 15, 1870 (MEW 32:509-11) Remarks on Irish historiography, and on the Commissioners for the Publication of the Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland.

68. Marx to Engels

Date: May 16, 1870 (MEW 32:512-3) Reference to the corrupt nature of the Irish Law Commission.

*69. Marx to Jenny Marx (daughter)

Date: May 31, 1870 (MEW 32:682-3) Reference to the History of Ireland being written by Engels.

70. Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann

Date: June 27, 1870 (MEW 32:685-6) Regarding Marx's study of the land question based on Irish and Russian source material.

71. Marx to Engels

Date: July 5, 1870 (MEW 32:519-22) Reference to Ludwig Kugelmann's request for O'Donovan Rossa's photograph.

72. Marx to Engels

Date: July 8, 1870 (MEW 32:527) Reference to a letter written by Richard Pigott to Jenny Marx, Marx's daughter.

73. Engels to Natalie Liebknecht

Date: December 19, 1870 (MEW 33:167-8) Reference to Engels' wife, Lizzie Burns, as a "revolutionary Irish-woman", and to the amnesty granted Fenians by the British government.

74. Engels to Carlo Cafiero

Date: July 1-3, 1871 (MEW 33:655-9) A comparison between tenant-farmers of Italy with those of Germany, France, Belgium and Ireland.

75. Engels to the Firm Miller and Richard (draft)

Date: September 9, 1871 (MEW 33:279) Remarks on the allegations made against Joseph P. McDonnell, Fenian, and Irish Corresponding Secretary of the International as of October 1871.

*76. Marx to Friedrich Adolf Sorge

Date: November 29, 1871 (MEW 33:351-3) Comments on the allegations against J.P. McDonnell, and on O'Donovan Rossa.

*77. Engels to Sigismund Borkheim

Date: Beginning of March, 1872 (MEW 33:413) Referral to the book in preparation on Ireland, and the suggestion of three basic books to be read on Irish history.

78. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge
- Date: March 17, 1872 (MEW 33:432-3) Suggestion made of the publication of an article on Arthur O'Connor, a leader of the United Irishmen in 1798 and uncle of Chartist Feargus O'Connor, in The Irish Republic, New York.
79. Marx to Paul Lafargue
- Date: March 21, 1872 (MEW 33:436-7) Reference to the growth of Irish sections of the International in England, America and Ireland.
80. Engels to Theodor Cuno
- Date: April 22 [-23], 1872 (MEW 33:446-9) Reference to the harassment of John de Morgan, who founded the International branch in Cork, by the Catholic Church.
81. Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht
- Date: April 23, 1872 (MEW 33:450-2) A note regarding the posting of two Irish documents, unnamed, to Liebknecht.
82. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge
- Date: November 16, 1872 (MEW 33:537-41) Reference to developments within the British Federal Council concerning support for Ireland, the departure of J.P. McDonnell to America, and the arrival of John de Morgan in England.
83. Marx to Engels
- Date: May 25, 1876 (MEW 34:14-6) Comments on Disraeli and the Fenian Question.
- *84. Marx to Engels
- Date: August 1, 1877 (MEW 34:65-7) Reference to the tension within the Home Rule Association.
- *85. Marx to John Swinton
- Date: November 4, 1880 (MEW 34:472-3) Discussion of the relation between Irish land and the English aristocracy in terms of the class composition of the political parties.
- *86. Engels to Jenny Longuet
- Date: February 24, 1881 (MEW 35:162-5) Outline given of the 17th century land confiscations, the abolition of the penal laws, the grant of Maynooth College, and the establishment of national schools.

*87. Engels to Eduard Bernstein

Date: March 12, 1881 (MEW 35:169-72) Analysis of the part played by the Irish Land Bill, 1881, in the intensification of class and political contradictions in the English parties.

*88. Marx to Jenny Longuet

Date: April 11, 1881 (MEW 35:177-81) Remarks on the Coercion and Arms Act, and the 1881 Land Bill.

*89. Engels to Eduard Bernstein

Date: April 14, 1881 (MEW 35:182-3) Comments on the forthcoming debate on the Land Bill and the coalition formed of Liberals and Irish M.P.s.

*90. Marx to Jenny Longuet

Date: April 29, 1881 (MEW 35:186-7) Remarks on the 1881 Land Bill.

*91. Marx to Jenny Longuet

Date: December 7, 1881 (MEW 35:240-3) Remarks on a comment by an Irish bishop against private landownership.

*92. Marx to Engels

Date: January 5, 1882 (MEW 35:30-1) Comments on the reaction of Irish landlords to Gladstone's Land Act.

93. Marx to Pjotr Lawrowitsch Lawrov

Date: January 23, 1882 (MEW 35:262-4) Remarks on advances within the English working class movement, and the pending political crisis, wherein the Irish Question figures prominently.

*94. Engels to Karl Kautsky

Date: February 7, 1882 (MEW 35:269-73) Observations on the national question in an international perspective with a discussion of the significance of Ireland.

*95. Engels to Eduard Bernstein

Date: May 3, 1882 (MEW 35:315-6) Reference to the Democratic Federation, Gladstone's policies in Ireland, and landlord reaction to tenant purchase schemes.

*96. Engels to Eduard Bernstein

Date: June 26, 1882 (MEW 35:337-41) Examination of the history of the agrarian and liberal-national trends

in Irish politics, with a view to the future primacy of the Home Rule question. For further comment, see No. 46, Articles, "The Irish Struggle".

- *97. Engels to Eduard Bernstein
- Date: August 9, 1882 (MEW 35:348-50) Comments on the publication of Engels' letter to Bernstein of June 26th by Wilhelm Liebknecht in Der Socialdemokrat of July 13th.
98. Engels to Laura Lafargue
- Date: March 31, 1884 (MEW 36:130-2) Reference to Michael Davitt's contribution to English working class papers.
- *99. Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht
- Date: December 1, 1885 (MEW 36:396-8) Remarks on the 1885 election and the political strength of the Home Rulers.
- *100. Engels to Johann Philipp Becker
- Date: December 5, 1885 (MEW 36:400-1) Remarks on the election results which gave the Irish M.P.s under Charles Stewart Parnell the balance of power within the House of Commons.
101. Engels to Eduard Bernstein
- Date: December 7, 1885 (MEW 36:403-4) Description of Hyndman's activities in England, contrasting his political strength with that of Parnell.
102. Engels to Paul Lafargue
- Date: December 7, 1885 (MEW 36:405-7) Comparison between H. M. Hyndman and Parnell.
103. Engels to Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis
- Date: February 4, 1886 (MEW 36:434-5) Discussion of the "rundale" system of land parcellisation in Germany with reference to the system in Ireland.
- *104. Engels to Eduard Bernstein
- Date: May 22, 1886 (MEW 36:486-7) Remarks on Tory reaction to the Home Rule Bill, and the introduction of the Irish Arms Bill.
105. Engels to Paul Lafargue
- Date: April 13, 1887 (MEW 36:640) Comments on Davitt.

- *106. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge
Date: June 18, 1887 (MEW 36:674-5) Regarding the Irish Coercion Bill.
107. Engels to Laura Lafargue
Date: October 11, 1887 (MEW 36:708-10) Remarks on the political manoeuvres of the Tories and Liberals on the Irish Question.
- *108. Engels to Florence Kelley-Wischnewetzky
Date: February 22, 1888 (MEW 37:26-8) Discussion of the Tory party and Home Rule.
109. Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht
Date: February 23, 1888 (MEW 37:29-30) Comparison between Robert Victor von Puttkamer, Bismark's Interior Minister, and Arthur Balfour, Secretary for Ireland.
- *110. Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht
Date: February 29, 1888. (MEW 37:36-7) Referring to the Irish flags in general with implications for the heightening situation in Ulster.
- *111. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge
Date: December 7, 1889 (MEW 37:320-3) Considerations on the next general election in England with reference to Ireland.
- *112. Engels to August Bebel
Date: January 23, 1890 (MEW 37:349-51) Comments on Charles Stewart Parnell's support for the Tory party in the 1886 election.
113. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge
Date: April 19, 1890 (MEW 37:393-4) Comments on Michael Davitt.
- *114. Engels to Nikolai Frantsevich Dandelson
Date: June 10, 1890 (Additional Ms. 38075, BM; MEW 37:414-5) Discussion of the concept of rent in the Irish context.
- *115. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge
Date: February 11, 1891 (MEW 38:30-3) Remarks on the attitude of Parnell and Michael Davitt towards the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers of Great Britain and Ireland.

*116. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge

Date: August 9-11, 1891 (MEW 38:142-4) Reference to a report drawn up by Eleanor Marx on behalf of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers in Dublin.

*117. Engels to Natalie Liebknecht

Date: December 2, 1891 (MEW 38:231-2) Comments on the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers in Ireland.

*118. Engels to Hermann Schüller

Date: March 30, 1892 (MEW 38:313-5) Remarks on the (American) bourgeoisie's tactic to divide the working class along national lines, including the Irish emigrants in this manner.

*119. Engels to Nikolai Frantsevich Danielson

Date: June 18, 1892 (Additional Ms.38075, BM; MEW 38:363-8) The role of domestic industry in the transition to capitalism is illustrated by the Irish example.

*120. Engels to August Bebel

Date: July 7, 1892 (MEW 38:392-4) Remarks on the forthcoming 1892 election.

121. Engels to Charles Bonnier (draft)

Date: December 3, 1892 (MEW 38:532-3) Commentary on the international political situation cites the Irish Question as of paramount importance.

*122. Engels to August Bebel

Date: January 24, 1893 (MEW 39:13-5) Comments on Keir Hardie's proposed imitation of Parnell's tactics in the 1886 election.

*123. Engels to Friedrich Adolf Sorge

Date: November 10, 1894 (MEW 39:307-11) Criticism of Keir Hardie with respect to his position on Ireland.

III INTERNATIONAL WORKING MENS ASSOCIATION

A. General Council Meetings

1. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: October 26, 1869 (Doc. 3:171-4) Address on the importance of the amnesty demonstration held in Hyde Park, October 24, 1859.
- *2. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: November 9, 1869 (Doc. 3:176-7) Proposed discussion on the attitude of the British Government and the working class towards the Irish Question.
- *3. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: November 16, 1869 (Doc. 3:177-84; MEW 16:570-3) Opened debate on the Irish Question with a discussion of the history of the amnesty movement and Gladstone's response to it. He proposed a resolution on the issue of amnesty.
- *4. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: November 23, 1869 (Doc. 3:184-90; MEW 16:573-4) Spoke in response to remarks on his proposed resolution of November 16.
- *5. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: November 30, 1869 (Doc. 3:191-4) Spoke in response to remarks on his resolution of November 16.
- *6. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: December 14, 1869 (Doc. 3:195-6) Commented on the relation between the Irish, the English, and the European political issues.
- *7. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: April 26, 1870 (Doc. 3:227-30; MEW 16:574-5) Criticism of The Beehive's coverage and attitude towards the General Council especially on the Irish debates. Marx was delegated to write a declaration for publication following from the debate. The resolution was presented at the General Council meeting of May 17.
8. Speaker: Frederick Engels
Date: January 31, 1871 (Doc. 4:110-8) Remarked on England's military strength, and the opportunity afforded the Irish if English troops were withdrawn during the current European situation.

9. Speaker: Frederick Engels
Date: February 7, 1871 (Doc. 4:118-26) Responded to criticism of his comments at the previous meeting with regard to Ireland.
10. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: March 14, 1871 (Doc. 4:150-7) Commented on the necessity for a debate on the Irish Question in light of the formation of an Irish section of the International and the impending conflict on the continent involving England.
11. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: June 6, 1871 (Doc. 4:204-8) In a discussion of slanderous attacks made against the International, Marx remarked that the Fenian Brotherhood was not affiliated to the International.
12. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: July 4, 1871 (Doc. 4:226-31) Defense of Joseph P. McDonnell outlining his contribution to the Irish political movement.
13. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: August 1, 1871 (Doc. 4:246-51) Proposed the election of a corresponding secretary for Ireland.
14. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: October 2, 1871 (Doc. 4:283-88) Proposed Joseph P. McDonnell as corresponding secretary for Ireland. Engels seconded the nomination.
15. Speaker: Frederick Engels
Date: March 19, 1872 (Doc. 5:129-36) Proposed a General Council communication be written on the increasing harassment of the Cork branch of the International.
16. Speaker: Karl Marx
Date: April 2, 1872 (Doc. 5:139-45) Criticism of John Hales' position on the Irish branches of the International.
17. Speaker: Frederick Engels
Date: April 9, 1872 (Doc. 5:145-52) Commented on the General Council declaration entitled Police Terrorism in Ireland.
- *18. Speaker: Frederick Engels
Date: May 14, 1872 (Doc. 5:193-9) Criticism of John Hales' motion condemning the formation of Irish branches of the International.

19. Speaker: Frederick Engels
Date: July 9, 1872 (Doc.5:247-55) Criticism of John Hales' motion restricting mobility of membership as aimed against Irish members.

B. General Council Documents

1. "Inaugural Address of the International Working Mens Association"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: November 1, 1864, adopted by the Central Council (Der Socialdemokrat, nos.2 and 3, December 21 and 30, 1864; written October 21-27. Doc. 1:277-85; MEW 16:5-13) Discussion of the social consequences of capitalist development refers to conditions in Ireland.
- *2. "Memorial of the General Council of the International Working Mens Association to the Right Honourable Gathorne-Hardy, Secretary of State" (The Fenian Prisoners at Manchester and the International Working Mens Association")

Author: Karl Marx
Date: November 24, 1867 (Le Courrier Français, no. 163; written November 20. Doc. 2:312-3; MEW 16:219-20) On the condition of Fenian prisoners in English prisons.
3. "Fourth Annual Report of the General Council of the International Working Mens Association" (Brussels Congress)

Author: Karl Marx
Date: September 9, 1868 (The Times; Der Vorbote, no.9; Le Peuple Belge, supplement entitled "Troisieme congres de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs. Compte rendu officiel", Brussels, 1868; written September 1, Doc. 2:324-9; MEW 16:318-23) Review of the General Council's activities including those with respect to Ireland and the Fenians.
4. "Resolution of the General Council on the Suppression by the British Government of the Irish Amnesty Struggle"

Author: Karl Marx
Date: November 16, 1869 (Doc. 3:183; MEW 16:383) This resolution was proposed at the General Council meeting of that date.

- *5. "Confidential Communication: The General Council to the Federal Council of Romance Switzerland"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: January 1, 1870 (Doc. 3:354-63; MEW 16:384-91) Major statement of the International's position on Ireland concerned with the strategic relation of the Irish struggle to a socialist revolution in England.

- *6. "Position of the International Working Mens Association in Germany and England" (London Conference)

Author: Karl Marx

Date: September 22, 1871 (MEW 17:653) Remarks that the role of the International is to relieve antagonism between English and Irish workers.

- *7. "Police Terrorism in Ireland"

Author: Karl Marx with George Milner and J. P. McDonnell

Date: April 9, 1872 (Published as a leaflet. Doc. 5:149-50; MEW 18:677) Regarding the increased intimidation of members of the Cork branch of the International by the police.

- *8. "Report of the General Council to the Fifth Annual Congress of the International Working Mens Association" (Hague Conference)

Author: Karl Marx

Date: September-October 1872 (Published as a leaflet in German; International Herald, nos. 27-29, October 5, 12, 19, 1872; Der Volksstaat, no. 75, September 18. Doc. 5:453-62; MEW 18:129-37) Reference to Galdstone's policy and the growth of the International in Ireland.

IV. MANUSCRIPTS

- *1. "Notes for an Undelivered Speech on Ireland"

Author: Karl Marx

Date: November 26, 1867 (Doc. 2:253-8; MEW 16:439-44) The speech, intended for the General Council meeting of that date, outlined the economic situation in post-famine Ireland, and discussed the Fenians as a progressive response to the conditions. See Marx's letter to Engels, November 30, 1867, for the background as to why the speech was not delivered.

- *2. "Outline of a Report on the Irish Question to the Communist Educational Association of the German Workers Association in London"
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: December 16, 1867 (MEW 16:445-58) Examination of pre- and post-famine conditions in Ireland with emphasis on the role of England as the primary cause.
3. Notebook "Hibernia"
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: 1869 (Ms. B115, ISH) Notebook contains historical review of major events in the years 1779-1801 in Ireland, and notations from issues of The Irishman, Dublin, for October and November 1869.
4. Notes on "Certain advertisements out of Ireland, concerning the losses and distresses happened to the Spanish Navie upon the West Coastes of Ireland," London, 1588
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: [1869] Ms. B90, Heft 84, pp. 6-7, ISH)
5. Irish Census for 1861, published July 1861
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: n.d. Ms. B91A, p.191, ISH) Notes on the census.
6. Notes and Excerpts from M. T. Sadler, Ireland, Its Evils and their Remedies. 1829
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: circa May 1869 (Ms. B114, notebook 106, pp. 113-125, ISH)
7. Ireland: Natural Conditions, Ancient Ireland (History of Ireland, chapters one and two)
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: end 1869-1870 (Ms. H21, ISH; MEW 16:461-98) From Engels' proposed book on Irish history.
- *8. "Disposition on Ireland"
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. H22, ISH) Outline of the chapters proposed for a History of Ireland.
9. "Disposition on Ireland (2e Capital)"
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. H23, ISH) Outline notes for the 2nd edition of Capital relating to Ireland.

10. Translation of the Irish poem, "We strike therein with swords."
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms.H24, ISH)
11. Notes on criminality, and social conditions in Ireland (agrarian murders)
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms.H25, ISH)
12. Notes on Ancient Irish History
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms.H26, ISH) Notes relate to the Battle of Clontarf, 1014.
13. Bibliographic notes on English and Irish History
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms.H27, ISH) Extensive listing of major works on Irish history to be consulted for his book on Irish history. More than 200 works cited.
14. Notes and Excerpts from Nassau W.Senior, Journals, Conversations and Essays Relating Ireland. 2 Volumes. London
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869 (Ms. J13, notebook 1, pp. 14-23, ISH)
15. Notes and Excerpts from W. St. Trench, Realities of Irish Life. 3rd edition, 1869
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms J15, notebook II, p. 2-5, ISH)
16. Notes and Excerpts from Wm. Carleton, The Squanderers of Castle Squander, 1852
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869 (Ms. J15, notebook II, pp. 6-10, ISH)
17. Notes and Excerpts from Th. Moore, The History of Ireland, 1835
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J15, notebook II, pp. 10-20, ISH)
18. Notes and Excerpts from M. O'Conor, (Beginning), The History of the Irish Catholics, 1813
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J15, notebook II, pp. 21-25, ISH)

19. Notes and Excerpts from Sir John Davies, Historical Tracts, 1786
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J16, notebook V, pp. 2-9, ISH)
20. Notes and Excerpts from J. Beete Jukes, The Student's Manual of Geology, 1862
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J16, notebook V, pp. 10-12, ISH)
Excerpts concern Irish land and soil qualities, with reference to climate and geophysical properties.
21. Notes and Excerpts from E. Ledwick, Antiquities of Ireland, 1790
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J16, notebook V, pp. 12-14, ISH)
22. Notes and Excerpts from W. Camden, Britain, 1637
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870 (Ms. J16, notebook V, pp. 14-16, ISH)
23. Notes and Excerpts from T. Croftin Cooker, The Tour of M. d. la Boullaye le Gouz in Ireland a.d. 1644
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J16, notebook V, pp. 16-20, ISH)
24. Notes and Excerpts from G. Cambrensis (Sylvester Gerald Barry), Topography of Ireland, and Ireland Invaded, 1870 (Topographia Hibernica and Hibernia Expugnata)
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1869-1870 (Ms. J16, notebook V, pp. 20-21, ISH)
25. Notes and Excerpts from M. O'Connor, (End), The History of the Irish Catholics, 1813, with a glossary of other works
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870- (Ms. J18, notebook III, pp. 2-20, ISH)
This is the second notebook on this work, see above No. 18.
26. Notes and Excerpts from Goldwin Smith, Irish History and Irish Character, 1861
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870- (Ms. J19, notebook IV, pp. 2-4, ISH)

27. Notes and Excerpts from J. Gordan, A History of Ireland, 1806
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870- (Ms. J19, notebook IV, pp. 4-8, ISH)
28. Notes and Excerpts from J.G. Kohl, Travels in Ireland, 1843
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870- (Ms. J19, notebook IV, pp. 9-10, ISH)
29. Notes and Excerpts from Spencer, Campion, Hammer and Marleburrough, Ancient Irish Histories, 1809
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J20, notebook VI, pp. 2-10, ISH)
30. Notes and Excerpts from George Petrie, The Ecclesiastic Architecture of Ireland, 1845
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J20, notebook VI, pp. 1-2, ISH)
31. Notes and Excerpts from John P. Prendergast, The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland, 1865
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J20, notebook VI, pp. 13-23, and J21, notebook VII, pp. 2-3, ISH)
32. Notes and Excerpts from Gerald Fitzgibbon, Ireland in 1868
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J21, notebook VII, pp. 3-7, ISH)
33. Notes and Excerpts from Leonce de Lavergne, The Rural Economy of England, Scotland and Ireland, 1853
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J21, notebook VII, pp. 7-10, ISH)
34. Notes and Excerpts from Edw. Wakefield, An Account of Ireland, 1812
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J21, notebook VII, pp. 10-24, and J25, notebook XII, pp. 1-24, ISH)
35. Notes and Excerpts from Th. Carte, A History of the Life of James, Duke of Ormond, 1736
Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870 (Ms. J22, notebook VIII, pp. 2-3, ISH)

36. Notes and Excerpts from John N. Murphy, Ireland, Industrial, Political and Social, 1870

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J23, notebook IX, pp. 2-12, ISH)

37. Notes and Excerpts from James Godkin, The Land War in Ireland, 1870

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J23, notebook IX, pp. 13-20, ISH)

38. Varia on a History of Irish Confiscations

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J24, notebook X, pp. 1-19, ISH)

A review of the trends during the 16th and 17th centuries.

39. Notes and Excerpts from W. St. Trench, Realities of Irish Life, 1869

Author: Karl Marx

Date: circa 1870 (Ms. B117, notebook 107, p. 17, ISH)

Both Marx and Engels read this book and took notes from it, see above No. 15. Reference is made to the book in their correspondence, see Engels to Marx, September 27, 1869.

40. Notes and Excerpts from John G. MacCarthy, Irish Land Questions, 1870

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: 1870-1881 (Ms. J26, notebook XI, pp. 2-3, ISH)

41. Notes and Excerpts from Senchus Mor, Ancient Laws of Ireland, 1865 and 1869

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: 1870-1881 (Ms. J26, notebook XI, pp. 3-9, ISH)

- *42. Chronology of Ireland

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: circa 1870 (Ms. J40, notebook XV, pp. 3-12, ISH)

Chronological account of historical dates, 200 BC-1646.

43. Notes and Excerpts from Sir John Davies, Historical Tracts, 1786

Author: Frederick Engels

Date: n.d. (Ms. J46, notebook (NR) XXV, pp. 1-4, ISH)

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44. Notes and Excerpts from Ch. Vallancey, A Grammar of Ibero-Celtic or Irish Language, 1773, and Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, 1856
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: n.d. (Ms. J49, notebook XXVIII, pp. 2-15, ISH)
- *45. Fragments of the History of Ireland
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: May-mid June 1870 (MEW 16:499-500)
- *46. Notes for the "Preface of a Collection of Irish Songs"
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870 (written July 5. MEW 16:501-2) According to L.I. Golman in MEI, this preface was intended for publication in 1870 as a preface to Erins-Harfe, a collection of songs based on the words of Thomas Moore's Irish Melodies. It did not appear in 1870, and was first published in Movimento Operaio, No. 2, Milan, 1955.
47. Additional Material for Capital, vol. I, 2nd edition, chapter 23 (on Ireland)
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1870-1872 (Ms. J27, ISH) The material contains additional reference notes on land clearances after the famine, giving further weight to comments made by Marx in the above chapter.
48. "Relations between the Irish Sections and the British Federal Council"
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: May 14, 1872 (Doc. 5:297-300; MEW 18:79-81) Engels' record of his report given to the General Council meeting of that date.
49. Notes and Excerpts from Deas, Anatomy of Ireland, 1672
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: 1876-1878 (Ms. B139, notebook 131, p. 48, ISH)
- *50. Preparatory Notes to Anti-Dühring
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: 1878 (MEW 20) Discussion of the transition from communal to private landownership with an example of Ireland.
51. Notes and Excerpts from Murrough O'Brien, "Irish Rent, Improvements, and Landlords," in Fortnightly Review, vol. 28, no. 166, new series, October 1, 1880, pp. 409-421
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: 1880 (Ms. B161, notebook 145, pp. 44-47, ISH)

52. Excerpts from Henry Summer Maine, Lectures on the Early History of Institutions
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: 1880-1883 (The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx, trans. and ed. by L. Krader, [Assen, the Netherlands: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1972]) Maine's book dealt with the Irish social formation under Brehon Law.
- *53. Synopsis of J. P. Greene's, History of the English People, vol. 1, 1877
- Author: Karl Marx
Date: 1881-1882 (Ms. B166, notebook 149, ISH)
- *54. Footnote to the 1891 edition of the Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State
- Author: Frederick Engels
Date: circa September-October 1891 (MEW 21:129-30)
Observations on the attitude of the Irish peasantry to landlords and property ownership.

V. SUPPLEMENT

- *1. "Record of a Speech on the Irish Question delivered by Karl Marx to the German Workers' Educational Association in London"
- Author: Johann Georg Eccarius
Date: December 16, 1867 (MEW 16:550-2) Review of the British rule and policy in Ireland, and the resulting conditions. For Marx's notes for this speech see above Manuscripts, No. 2.
2. Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig Kugelmann
- Date: October 30, 1869 (MEW 32:700) Remarks on Eleanor Marx's trip to Ireland with Engels and Lizzie Burns.
- *3. "Address of the Land and Labour League to the Working Men and Women of Great Britain and Ireland"
- Author: Johann Georg Eccarius
Editor: Karl Marx
Date: 1869 (Published as a pamphlet; written about November 14, 1869. Doc. 3:345-51; MEW 16:564-9) Remarks on conditions in Ireland.

4. Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig Kugelmann
Date: December 27, 1869 (MEW 32:702-4) Comments on the 1869 O'Donovan Rossa election victory, and religious divisions in Ireland.
5. Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig and Gertrud Kugelmann
Date: May 8, 1870 (MEW 32:712-3) Remarks on Jenny's articles for La Marseillaise.
6. Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig Kugelmann
Date: July 17, 1870 (MEW 32:716-7) Remarks on Jenny's attempt to secure a photograph of O'Donovan Rossa for Kugelmann, and references to the inquiry set up by the British government to look into prison conditions of Fenians.
7. Eleanor Marx to Engels
Date: August 12, 1870 (MEW 33:677) A request for a photograph of O'Donovan Rossa.
8. Jenny Marx to Engels
Date: August 18, 1870 (MEW 33:678) Comments on her daughters' political sympathies.
9. Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig Kugelmann
Date: October 3, 1871 (MEW 33:684-5) Remarks on O'Donovan Rossa's criticism of the Paris Commune.
10. Jenny Marx (daughter) to Ludwig and Gertrud Kugelmann
Date: December 21-2, 1871 (MEW 33:690) Comments on the Irish living in England.

ABBREVIATIONS

- BM British Museum Library, London
- CW Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works, 12 vols. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1975-79)
- Doc. Documents of the First International, 5 vols., prepared by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism (Moscow: Progress Publishers, n.d.)

- ISH Refers to manuscripts held in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
- MEI Ireland and the Irish Question. A Collection of Writings by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, prepared by L. I. Golman and V. E. Kunina, ed. R. Dixon (New York: International Publishers, 1972)
- MEW Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, Werke (Berlin: Dietz Publishing House, 1973-4)
- NYDT New York Daily Tribune

APPENDIX 2

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES ON ENGLISH AND IRISH HISTORY,
COMPILED BY FREDERICK ENGELS BETWEEN 1869 AND 1870

Frederick Engels' preliminary work for his History of Ireland yields an impressive and extensive knowledge of Irish history. His notebooks reveal pages of copious notes and comments. He also prepared an extensive working bibliography of all major aspects of Irish history, geography, agriculture, and culture. Interestingly, this bibliography does not include all works used by either Engels or Marx, as even a cursory glance through their correspondence and writings would indicate. This material is currently held in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Manuscript No. H27. This appendix seeks to illustrate the depth of Engels' preparatory work by giving excerpts from these bibliographic notes. Difficulty deciphering the manuscript, as well as Engels' own curious notations - much of which omitted titles and/or incorrectly cited them - has not made it possible for a complete listing of all his material.

For the most part, only the author, title, and publication date have been noted here. Where Engels' listing was incomplete, I have added the appropriate information. Where Engels noted a specific edition, that has remained unaltered; in cases where it might differ from the original - possibly, being incorrectly cited - or where no date was noted, new information has been included in parenthesis. Omitted from inclusion in this appendix, is Engels' reference to what appears to be library or folio

numbers from the Chetham Library, Manchester. I have ignored instances where the reference was crossed out, possibly noting that Engels had already read the book. I have arranged the material alphabetically, and not randomly as Engels had them noted, repeating some works twice. Finally, there are four sections to this listing:

1. Books and Speeches
2. Newspapers, Alamanacs and Maps
3. Parliamentary Papers
4. Authors Without Titles

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- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
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| | <u>Pieces of Irish History, 1807</u> |
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| BARRINGTON, SIR MATTHEW | <u>Letter to Sir Robert Peel (1848?)</u> |
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| BOATE, GERARD | <u>Ireland's Natural History (1652)</u> |
| BORLACE, EDMUND | <u>The History of the Exercrable Irish Rebellion, traced from many preceding acts, to the grand eruption the 23 of October, 1641, and thence pursued to the Act of Settlement, 1662 (1680)</u> |
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JOSEPH P. MCDONNELL

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