

From Karl Marx's CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF
RIGHT, 1844 (

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"The basis of irreligious criticism is this: man makes religion; religion does not make man....But man is not an abstract being, squatting outside the world. Man is the human world, the state, society...Religion is the general theory of this world, its encyclopedic compendium, its logic in popular form, its spiritual point d'honneur, its enthusiasm, its moral sanction, its solemn complement, its general basis of consolation, and justification. It is the fantastic realization of the human being inasmuch as the human being possesses no true reality."

"Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a headless world, and the soul of soulless conditions...The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men is a demand for their real happiness. The call to abandon their illusions about their condition is a call to abandon a condition which requires illusions. The criticism of religion is, therefore, the embryonic criticism of this vale of tears of which religion is the halo.....

"It is the task of history, therefore, once the other-world of truth has vanished, to establish the truth of this world. The immediate task of philosophy, which is in the service of history, is to unmask human self-alienation in its secular form now that it has been unmasked in its sacred form. Thus the criticism of heaven is transformed into the criticism of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law, and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics."

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"It is clear that the arm of criticism cannot replace the criticism of arms. Material force can only be overthrown by material force but theory itself becomes a material force when it has seized the masses. Theory is capable of seizing the masses when it demonstrates ad hominem, and it demonstrates ad hominem as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But, for man the root is man himself.

"Theory is only realized in a people so far as it fulfils the needs of the people. Will theoretical needs be directly practical needs? It is not enough that thought should seek to realize itself; reality must also strive towards thought."

From ALIENATED LABOR

"We shall begin from a contemporary economic fact. The worker becomes poorer the more wealth he produces and the more his production increases in power and extent. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more goods he creates. The devaluation of the human world increases in direct relation with the increase in value of the world of things. Labor does not only create goods; it also produces itself and the worker as a commodity.....This fact simply implies that the object produced by labour, its product, now stands opposed to it as an alien being, as a power independent of the producer...."

"Political economy begins with labour as the real soul of production and then goes on to attribute nothing to labor and everything to private property...From the relation of alienated labour to private property it also follows that the emancipation of society from private property, from servitude, take the political form of the emancipation of the workers."