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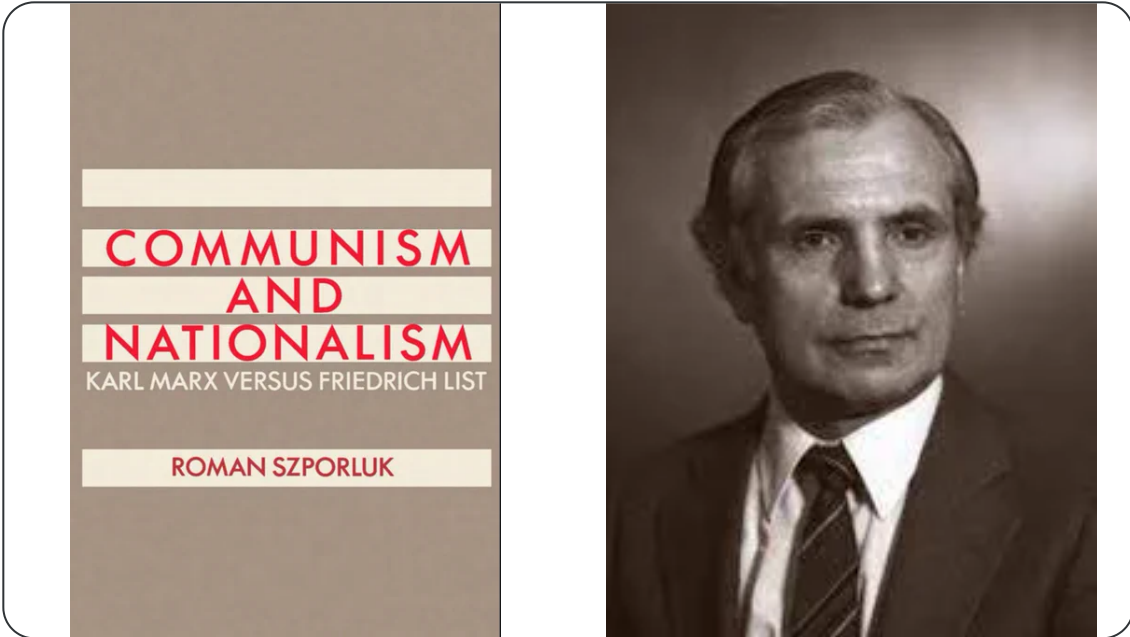


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Communism and Nationalism: Karl Marx versus Friedrich List (1991) by Roman Szporluk



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“The workers have no country”
–Karl Marx (1848)

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Works of Frederick Engels
Speeches in Elberfeld

Source: MECW Volume 4, p. 243;
Delivered in Elberfeld: on February 8 and 15, 1845

[historyisaweapon.com/defcon6/works/...](https://historyisaweapon.com/defcon6/works/)

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It was axiomatic to Marx that industrial progress intensified and sharpened ... an antagonism that would in the immediate future explode in violent revolution. List, in the meantime, preached class cooperation and solidarity in the building of a nation's power.

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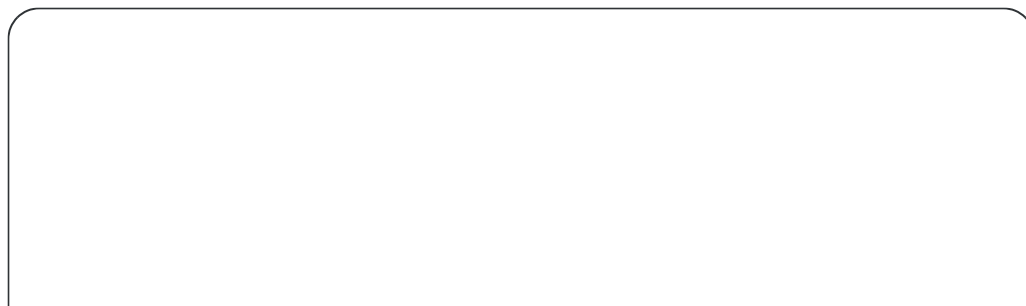
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Marx thought that the Industrial Revolution, and the concomitant rule of the bourgeoisie, promoted the unification of the world and obliterated national differences... List claimed the Industrial Revolution intensified national differences and exacerbated conflicts among nations



When one bears all of this in mind, it is easy to see why Marx found the theories of List, particularly his view of history and his program for the future, not only objectionable but aberrant. The doctrine of List, Marx was convinced, contradicted everything then taking place in the development of society—before his, and List’s, eyes. It was axiomatic to Marx that industrial progress intensified and sharpened the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, an antagonism that would in the im-

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The Industrial Revolution is not necessarily an intellectual revolution. Of itself it is neither nationalist nor internationalist. It is essentially mechanical and material.

Since interpretations of the Industrial Revolution were shaped by philosophical and political ideas that were not themselves a product or “reflection” of the economic processes, it should cause no surprise that other theories treated the meaning and impact of the Industrial Revolution in ways quite different from those of socialism in general and Marxism in particular. In his study of nationalism, first published in 1931, Carlton J. H. Hayes noted that

the Industrial Revolution is not necessarily an intellectual revolution. Of itself it is neither nationalist nor internationalist. It is essentially mechanical and material. It has merely provided improved means and greater opportunities for the dissemination of any ideas which influential individuals entertain. Now it so happened that when the Industrial Revolution began, nationalism was becoming a significant intellectual movement, even more significant than internationalism.¹⁶

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A specifically nationalist reaction to the Industrial Revolution was not reducible to the liberal, conservative, or socialist position.

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Karl Marx

marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

Meanwhile, once *modern* politico-social reality itself is subjected to criticism, once criticism rises to truly human problems, it finds itself outside the German *status quo*, or else it would reach out for its object *below* its object. An example. The relation of industry, of the world of wealth generally, to the political world is one of the major problems of modern times. In what form is this problem beginning to engage the attention of the Germans? In the form of *protective duties*, of the *prohibitive system*, of *national economy*. Germanomania has passed out of man into matter, and thus one morning our cotton barons and iron heroes saw themselves turned into patriots. People are, therefore, beginning in Germany to acknowledge the sovereignty of monopoly on the inside through lending it *sovereignty on the outside*. People are, therefore, now about to begin, in Germany, what people in France and England are about to end. The old corrupt condition against which these countries are revolting in theory, and which they only bear as one bears chains, is greeted in Germany as the dawn of a beautiful future which still hardly dares to pass from *crafty* theory to the most ruthless practice. Whereas the problem in France and England is: *Political economy*, or the *rule of society over wealth*; in Germany, it is: *National economy*, or the *mastery of private property over nationality*. In France and England, then, it is a case of abolishing monopoly that has proceeded to its last consequences; in Germany, it is a case of proceeding to the last consequences of monopoly. There it is a case of solution, here as yet a case of collision. This is an adequate example of the *German* form of modern problems, an example of how our history, like a clumsy recruit, still has to do extra drill on things that are old and hackneyed in history.



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Karl Marx

marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

It is not the *radical* revolution, not the *general human* emancipation which is a utopian dream for Germany, but rather the partial, the *merely* political revolution, the revolution which leaves the pillars of the house standing. On what is a partial, a merely political revolution based? On *part of civil society* emancipating itself and attaining *general* domination; on a definite class, proceeding from its *particular situation*; undertaking the general emancipation of society. This class emancipates the whole of society, but only provided the whole of society is in the same situation as this class – e.g., possesses money and education or can acquire them at will.



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Karl Marx

marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

For the *revolution of a nation*, and the *emancipation of a particular class* of civil society to coincide, for one estate to be acknowledged as

the estate of the whole society, all the defects of society must conversely be concentrated in another class, a particular estate must be the estate of the general stumbling-block, the incorporation of the general limitation, a particular social sphere must be recognized as the notorious crime of the whole of society, so that liberation from that sphere appears as general self-liberation. For one estate to be *par excellence* the estate of liberation, another estate must conversely be the obvious estate of oppression. The negative general significance of the French nobility and the French clergy determined the positive general significance of the nearest neighboring and opposed class of the *bourgeoisie*.



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Marx's overall historical judgement was simply a deduction from his philosophical principles, his teleology, in which the perfect force of liberation, ie, the proletariat, had to be contrasted with an opponent lacking any virtues whatsoever, ie, the German bourgeoisie.

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Karl Marx
marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

Where, then, is the *positive* possibility of a German emancipation?

Answer: In the formulation of a class with *radical chains*, a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, an estate which is the dissolution of all estates, a sphere which has a

universal character by its universal suffering and claims no *particular right* because no *particular wrong*, but *wrong generally*, is perpetuated against it; which can invoke no *historical*, but only *human*, title; which does not stand in any one-sided antithesis to the consequences but in all-round antithesis to the premises of German statehood; a sphere, finally, which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating itself from all other spheres of society and thereby emancipating all other spheres of society, which, in a word, is the *complete loss* of man and hence can win itself only through the *complete re-winning of man*. This dissolution of society as a particular estate is the *proletariat*.

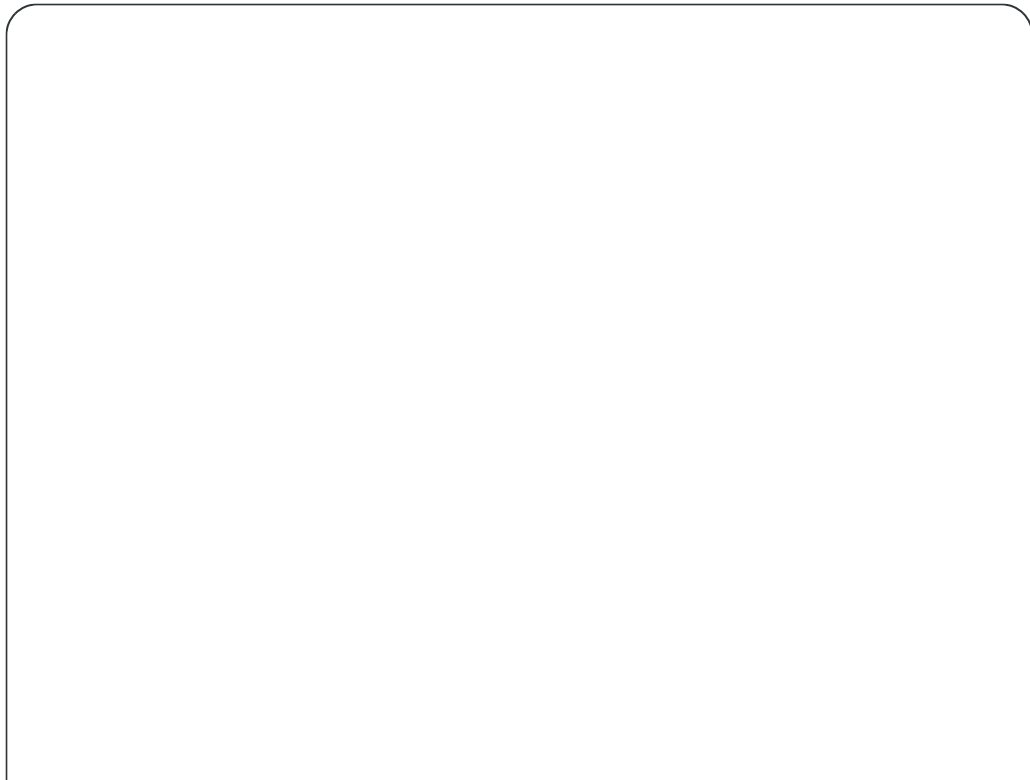


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“The German bourgeois is the knight of the rueful countenance, who wanted to introduce knight-errantry just when the police and money had come to the fore.”

Karl Marx [hiaw.org/defcon6/works/...](https://hiaw.org/defcon6/works/)





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The German bourgeois comes on the scene *post festum*, that it is just as impossible for him to advance further the political economy exhaustively developed by the English and French... It is still more impossible for him to achieve in practice a further advance of industry...

Marx

It is highly characteristic of Herr List that, despite all his boasting, he has put forward *not a single proposition* that had not been advanced long before him not only by the defenders' of the prohibitive system, but even by writers of the "School" invented by Herr List — if Adam Smith is the theoretical starting-point of political economy, then its real point of departure, its real school, is "civil society" [*die bürgerliche Gesellschaft*], of which the different phases of development can be accurately traced in political economy. Only the illusions and idealising language (phrases) belong to Herr List. We consider it important to give detailed proof of this to the reader and must claim his attention for this tedious labour. He will derive from it the conviction that the German bourgeois comes on the scene *post festum*, that it is just as impossible for him to advance further the political economy exhaustively developed by the English and French as it would probably be for them to contribute anything new to the development of philosophy in Germany. The German bourgeois can only add his illusions and phrases to the French and English reality. But little possible as it is for him to give a new development to political economy, it is still more impossible for him to achieve in practice a further advance of industry, of the by now almost exhausted development on the present foundations of society.



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"We can free ourselves from England abroad only if we free ourselves from industry at home."

Karl Marx [hiaw.org/defcon6/works/...](https://hiaw.org/defcon6/works/)

England's industrial tyranny over the world is the domination of industry over the world. England dominates us because industry dominates us. We can free ourselves from England abroad only if we free ourselves from industry at home. We shall be able to put an end to England's domination in the sphere of competition only if we overcome competition within our borders. England has power over us because we have made industry into a power over us.



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Marx saw List's simultaneous support of free trade within a united Germany and defense of external tariffs as contradictory: "The German philistine" wants to exploit the proletarians of his country, "but he wants also not to be exploited outside the country."

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Marx saw List's simultaneous support of free trade *within* a united Germany and defense of external tariffs as contradictory: The "German philistine" wants to exploit the proletarians of his country, "but he wants also not to be exploited outside the country." The idea of "nation" did the trick:

He puffs himself up into being the "nation" in relation to foreign countries and says: I do not submit to the laws of competition; this is contrary to my national dignity; as the nation I am being superior to huckstering. . . . Within the country, money is the fatherland of the industrialist.⁷



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An economic factor was not the only determinant of national unity. Had Marx admitted as much, he would have recognized that nationality could not be wholly reduced to class economic interests.

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Marx preferred to not allow that there was more to the unity of the German nation than the selfish interest of the German bourgeoisie.

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Surely some German bourgeoisie actually benefitted from a free-trade relationship with foreign countries even if free trade hurt other (perhaps most) German capitalists? ...Marx did not ask such questions.

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Marx felt the policies recommended by List would allow the German bourgeoisie “to exploit his fellow countryman, indeed exploit them even more than they were exploited from abroad,” because protective tariffs require sacrifices from the consumers.

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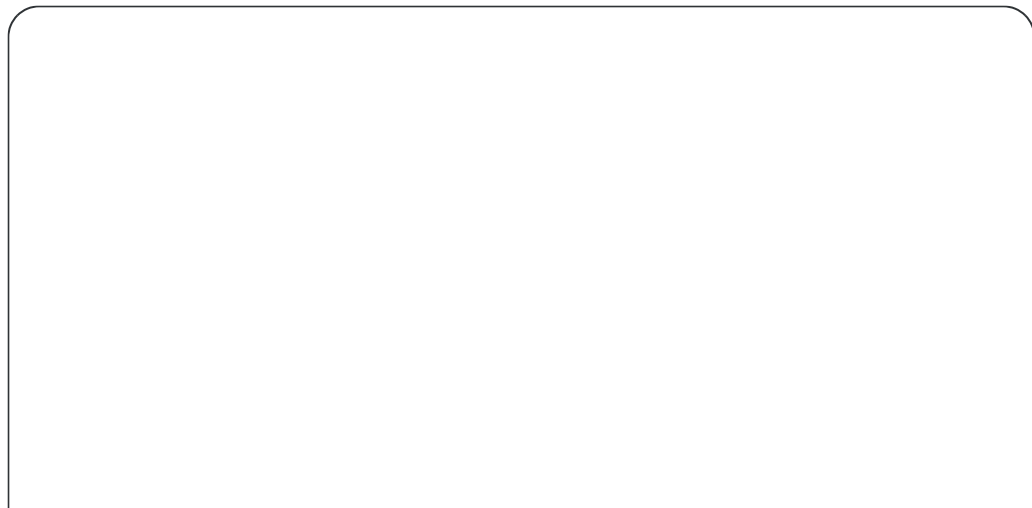


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Karl Marx

[hiaw.org/defcon6/works/...](https://hiaw.org/defcon6/works/)



Humble as is Herr List's attitude to the nobility, the ancient ruling dynasties and the bureaucracy, he is to the same degree "audacious" in opposing French and English political economy, of which Smith is the protagonist, and which has cynically betrayed the secret of "wealth" and made



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Karl Marx

hiaw.org/defcon6/works/...

The German bourgeois is religious even when he is an industrialist. He shrinks from speaking about the nasty exchange values which he covets and speaks about productive forces [*von produktivkräften*]; he shrinks from speaking about competition and speaks of a national confederation of national productive forces; he shrinks from speaking of his private interest and speaks about the national interest. When one looks at the frank, classic cynicism with which the English and French bourgeoisie, as represented by its first — at least at the beginning of its domination — scientific spokesmen of political economy, elevated wealth into a god and ruthlessly sacrificed everything else to it, to this Moloch, in science as well, and when, on the other hand, one looks at the idealising, phrase-mongering, bombastic manner of Herr List, who in the midst of political economy despises the wealth of "righteous men" and knows loftier aims, one is bound to find it "also sad" that the present day is no longer a day for wealth.



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Karl Marx

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The *Saint-Simon* school has given us an instructive example of what it leads to if the *productive force* that industry creates unconsciously and against its will is put to the credit of present-day industry and the two are confused: *industry* and the *forces* which industry brings into being unconsciously and without its will, but which will only become human forces, man's power, when industry is abolished. This is as much an absurdity as if the bourgeois wanted to take the credit for *his* industry creating the proletariat, and in the shape of the proletariat the power of a new world order. The forces of nature and the social forces which industry brings into being (conjoins up), stand in the same relation to it as the proletariat. Today they are still the slaves of the bourgeois, and in them he sees nothing but the instruments (the bearers) of his dirty (selfish) lust for profit; tomorrow they will break their chains and reveal themselves as the bearers of human development which will blow him sky-high together with his industry, which assumes the dirty outer shell — which he regards as its essence — only until the human kernel has gained sufficient strength to burst this shell and appear in its own shape. Tomorrow they will burst the chains by which the bourgeois separates them from man and so distorts (transforms) them from a real social bond into fetters of society.

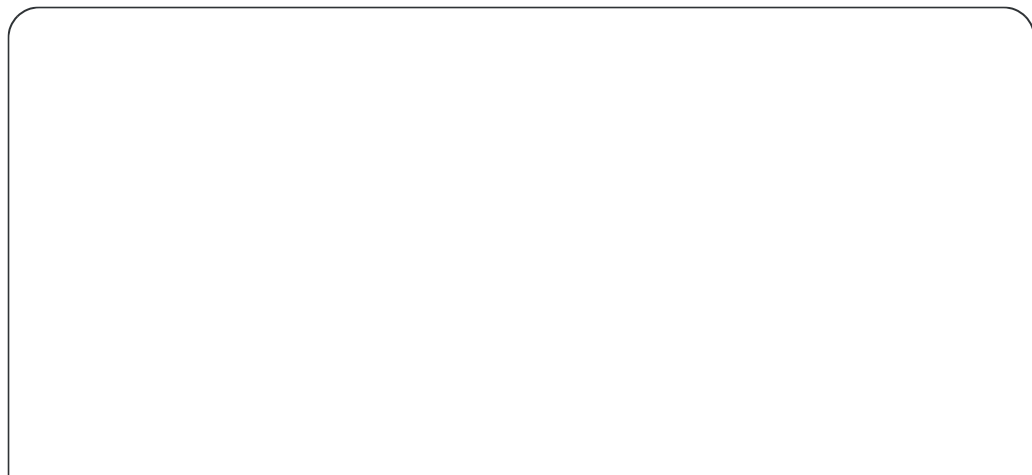


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Karl Marx

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The protectionists have never protected small industry, handicraft proper. Have Dr. List and his school in Germany by any chance demanded protective tariffs for the small linen industry, for hand loom-weaving, for handicraft production?



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Karl Marx

✂ Thus, as means are constantly being found for the maintenance of labor on cheaper and more wretched food, the minimum of wages is constantly sinking. If these wages began by letting the man work to live, they end by forcing him to live the life of a machine. His existence has no other value than that of a simple productive force, and the capitalist treats him accordingly. This law of the commodity labor, of the minimum of wages, will be confirmed in proportion as the supposition of the economists, Free Trade, becomes an actual fact. ✂ Thus, of two things one: either we must reject all **political economy** based upon the assumption of Free Trade, or we must admit that under this same Free Trade the whole severity of the economic laws will fall upon the workers. ✂

To sum up, what is Free Trade under the present conditions of society? Freedom of Capital. When you have torn down the few national barriers which still restrict the free development of capital, you will merely have given it complete freedom of action. So

long as you let the relation of wages-labor to capital exist, no matter how favorable the conditions under which you accomplish the exchange of commodities, there will always be a class which exploits and a class which is exploited. It is really difficult to understand the presumption of the Free Traders who imagine that the more advantageous application of capital will abolish the antagonism between industrial capitalists and wage-workers. On the contrary. The only result will be that the antagonism of these two classes will stand out more clearly.

Let us assume for a moment that there are no more Corn Laws or national and municipal import duties; that in a word all the accidental circumstances which to-day the workingman may look upon as a cause of his miserable condition have vanished, and we shall have removed so many curtains that hide from his eyes his true enemy.

He will see that capital released from all trammels will make him no less a slave than capital trammelled by import duties.



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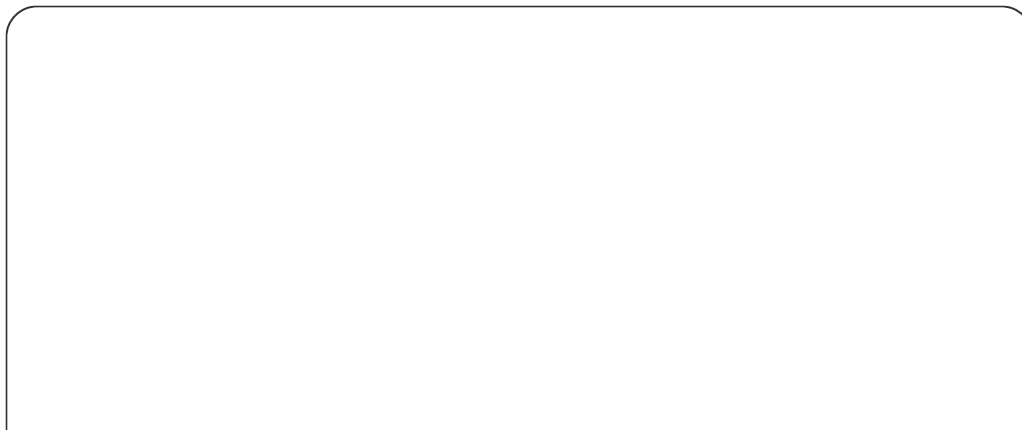


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At first, Marx thought a program to build capitalism in one country was bound to fail if it tried to emancipate that country from the workings of the world capitalist market

Szporluk



At first, as in the "List Critique," he thought a program to build capitalism



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Karl Marx

marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

The German bourgeoisie developed so sluggishly, timidly and slowly that at the moment when it menacingly confronted feudalism and absolutism, it saw menacingly pitted against itself the proletariat and all sections of the middle class whose interests and ideas were related to those of the proletariat. The German bourgeoisie found not just one class behind it, but all Europe hostilely facing it. Unlike the French bourgeoisie of 1789, the Prussian bourgeoisie, when it confronted monarchy and aristocracy, the representatives of the old society, was not a class speaking for the whole of modern society. It had been reduced to a kind of estate as clearly distinct from the Crown as it was from the people, with a strong bend to oppose both adversaries and irresolute towards each of them individually because it always saw both of them either in front of it or behind it. From the first it was inclined to betray the people and to compromise with the crowned representatives of the old society, for it already belonged itself to the old society; it did not advance the interests of a new society against an old one, but represented refurbished interests within an obsolete society. It stood at the helm of the revolution not because it had the people behind it but because the people drove it forward; it stood at the head because it merely represented the spleen of an old social era and not the initiatives of a new one. A stratum of the old state that had failed to break through and was thrown up on the surface of the new state by the force of an earthquake; without faith in itself, without faith in the people, grumbling at those above, frightened of those below, egoistical towards both and aware of its egoism; revolutionary with regard to the conservatives and conservative with regard to the revolutionaries. It did not trust its own slogans, used phrases instead of ideas, it was intimidated by the world storm and exploited it for its own ends; it displayed no energy anywhere, but resorted to plagiarism everywhere, it was vulgar because unoriginal, and original in its vulgarity; haggling over its own demands, without initiative, without faith in itself, without faith in the people, without a historic mission, an abominable dotard finding himself condemned to lead and to mislead the first youthful impulses of a virile people so as to make them serve his own senile interests – sans eyes, sans ears, sans teeth, sans everything – this was the Prussian bourgeoisie which found itself at the helm of the Prussian state after the March revolution.





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Marx's strictures against the German bourgeoisie can only make sense if one recognizes that there was nothing "national" in the class itself or its conduct.

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Frederick Engels

marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

Question 21: *Will nationalities continue to exist under communism?*

Answer: The nationalities of the peoples who join together according to the principle of community will be just as much compelled by this union to merge with one another and thereby supersede themselves as the various differences between estates and classes disappear through the superseding of their basis — private property.

Question 22. *Do Communists reject existing religions?*

Answer: All religions which have existed hitherto were expressions of historical stages of development of individual peoples or groups of peoples. But communism is that stage of historical development which makes all existing religions superfluous and supersedes them.



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Karl Marx

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Only when the real, individual man re-absorbs in himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual human being has become a *species-being* in his everyday life, in his particular work, and in his particular situation, only when man has recognized and organized his “own powers” as *social* powers, and, consequently, no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of *political* power, only then will human emancipation have been accomplished.



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Marx’s basic principle is that all mediation between the individual and mankind will cease to exist.

quoted from Kolakowski

The “web of mystification” Marx wanted to destroy included not only those bonds arising out of class division and exploitation, but also religious and national ties.

Marx’s basic principle is that all mediation between the individual and mankind will cease to exist. This applies to all constructions, rational or irrational, that interpose themselves between the individual and his fellows, such as nationality, the state, and law. The individual will voluntarily identify himself with the community, coercion will become unnecessary, the sources of conflict will disappear.⁵⁰

This conclusion of Kolakowski agrees with that reached by Michael Löwy after a different line of argument. According to Löwy, Marx’s pre-1848 writings contain a “cosmopolitic/internationalist . . . projection of a *world city*, a universal *Gemeinschaft*.”⁵¹



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from The Communist Manifesto

marxists.org/archive/marx/w...



The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance, they are revolutionary, they are only so in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert



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“The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.”

from The Communist Manifesto marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

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”, and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous “cash payment”. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom — Free Trade. In one word for

...
exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.



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The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood.

Communist M.



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“Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.”

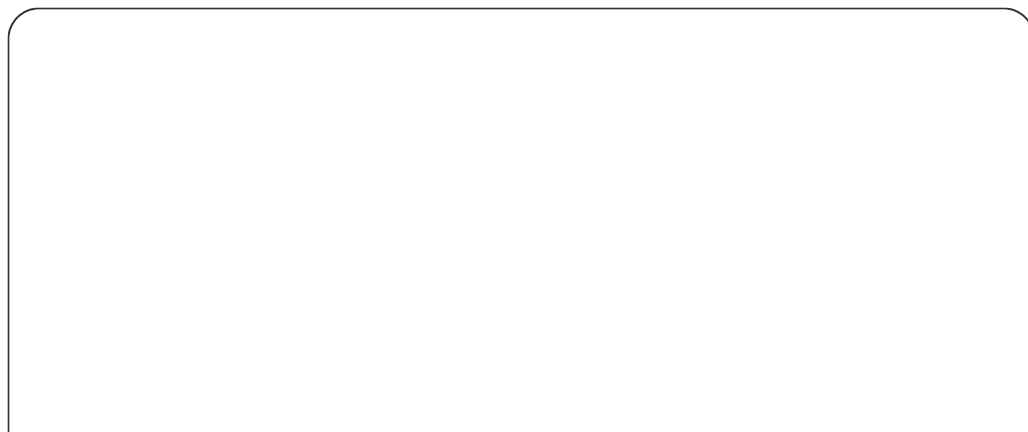
The Communist Manifesto marxists.org/archive/marx/w...



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Nationalism has proved an uncomfortable anomaly for Marxist theory and, precisely for that reason, has been largely elided, rather than confronted... Marxists have used the concept of “national bourgeoisie” but have not made any serious attempt to justify the adjective



In a recent book, Benedict Anderson draws attention to Marx's statement, quoted above, on the "proletariat of each country" and "its own bourgeoisie." He warns: "In any theoretical exegesis, the words 'of course' should flash red lights before the transported reader." This occasion



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Marx did not think the world economy needed a single state. He must have thought the unhindered operation of the world economy and the free functioning of a world market were secured by free trade, and he took for granted its continued existence.

Szporluk

Anderson's criticisms are well taken and present a serious question to contemporary Marxists. As for Marx in 1847–1848, he appears to have used those expressions quite casually, without attaching theoretical or practical significance to the more basic fact tacitly acknowledged: the continued existence of separate states. But if political forms and structures are a reflection and an instrument of economic relations, why should separate states survive the conditions of a *world* market? Why should a unitary world economy not produce for its own convenience a "corresponding" political "superstructure"?

One answer would be that Marx did not think the world economy needed a single state. He must have thought the unhindered operation of the world economy and the free functioning of a world market were secured

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Communism and Nationalism

by free trade, and he took for granted its continued existence. (This assumption is not contradicted by his reference to "one customs tariff," because it appears in a context in which he describes how heretofore isolated provinces of one state were unified by means of establishing "one code of laws, one national class interest, one frontier, and one customs tariff.")²⁹



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“The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth.”

The Communist Manifesto

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of the feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.



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“Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers.”

The Communist Manifesto

The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry whose involuntary promoter is the

Industry, whose inevitable promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.



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“In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, [the Communists] point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality.”

The Communist Manifesto

In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to the other working-class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement.

The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to

pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.



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The Communist Manifesto marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

The fight of the Germans, and especially of the Prussian bourgeoisie, against feudal aristocracy and absolute monarchy, in other words, the liberal movement, became more earnest.

By this, the long-wished for opportunity was offered to “True” Socialism of confronting the political movement with the Socialist demands, of hurling the traditional anathemas against liberalism, against representative government, against bourgeois competition, bourgeois freedom of the press, bourgeois legislation, bourgeois liberty and equality, and of preaching to the masses that they had nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by this bourgeois movement. German Socialism forgot, in the nick of time, that the French criticism, whose silly echo it was, presupposed the existence of modern bourgeois society, with its corresponding economic conditions of existence, and the political constitution adapted thereto, the very things those attainment was the object of the pending struggle in Germany.



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The Communist Manifesto marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

While this “True” Socialism thus served the government as a weapon for fighting the German bourgeoisie, it, at the same time, directly represented a reactionary interest.

the interest of German Philistines. In Germany, the *petty-bourgeois* class, a relic of the sixteenth century, and since then constantly cropping up again under the various forms, is the real social basis of the existing state of things.

To preserve this class is to preserve the existing state of things in Germany. The industrial and political supremacy of the bourgeoisie threatens it with certain destruction — on the one hand, from the concentration of capital; on the other, from the rise of a revolutionary proletariat. “True” Socialism appeared to kill these two birds with one stone. It spread like an epidemic.



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In Marx's historical scenarios, however, the prospect of a national alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry, which to him was more reactionary than the bourgeoisie itself, was unthinkable. Clearly, Marx has been proven wrong.

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Third, Herder criticized the domination by one nation and culture over another nation and culture because for him alien rule (which included culture domination) was the most objectionable expression of alienation. Herder especially resented French dominance because it sought to *impose* its own standards and values on others and, while doing so, falsely presented these French “products” as universal or “cosmopolitan.” Herder denied, as a matter of principle, that such cosmopolitanism or universalism was possible.

Fourth, Herder and his German contemporaries were aware that French culture, including language, owed its dominant and privileged position in no small measure to its association with the French state, to the fact that France was a powerful country. They resented this element of coercion in French influence. It was not hard for Herder's successors to conclude that while culture was indeed autonomous, it depended for its normal growth on political arrangements, and that ultimately political independence was

on political arrangements, and that ultimately political independence was required to prevent foreign domination over domestic culture.

Fifth, under Herder's inspiration, German nationalists (and other nationalists after them) began to view relations between nations in terms of an "unequal exchange" or "uneven development." They thought that the condition of one nation was adversely affected by the terms under which its relations with other nations were conducted. Herder was the first to suggest this view with reference to culture. Later thinkers and activists extended it to politics and economics as well and indeed postulated a linkage between politics, economics, and culture as spheres in which nations interacted and competed with each other. They introduced the idea of stages of development by which one nation could be judged as more or less "developed" or "backward" than others. Herder's concept of a national culture emphasized the importance of learning from others. As we shall see, this idea would be central in the thought of Friedrich List, particularly in his *National System of Political Economy* (1841).

Finally, Herder's charges against French claims to cosmopolitanism may have been one of the earliest formulations of the idea of "ideology." List would subsequently raise an identical charge against Britain by arguing that the doctrine of free trade, which the British had pronounced cosmopolitan and therefore equally beneficial to all humanity, was in actuality biased to favor England's selfish interest. List pointed out that this was so because nations were not at the same stage of development as England.



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Sooner or later, European nationalists had to react to industrialization... It was List who linked the economic aspect of a nation's life to the nation's culture and politics in a synthesis that enabled nationalism to compete successfully with its rivals...

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Roman Szporluk

When German economic thought of the early nineteenth century was critical of modern economic practices in the West (such as industrialization), when it rejected the values and principles underlying the new economy—for example, individualism—and denied the autonomy of the economic sphere from the political and from the state, it could draw on an earlier German philosophical and administrative ("cameralist") tradition. In that tradition, "the state" had been extolled as a moral entity, as the embodiment of moral values. Critics of Western individualism, nationalism, and democracy supported their views on the authority of the state by drawing from Hegel's philosophy.¹³





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List was an ideologist of industrialism and industrialization. At the same time, he subordinated the economy to a noneconomic entity—nation—and wanted the economy to serve the nation.

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First of all, even before List's arrival, there existed in America an intellectual and political current of thought called "the national school."

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The first of the national economists was Alexander Hamilton

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List affirmed his devotion to the principles of political freedom, constitutional government, and the rights of man. But his concept of national interest ... required a body, an institution, composed of persons who stood above all those particularistic interests.

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List's theory recognized as productive those whom the labor theory considered unproductive: teachers, scientists, doctors, lawyers, judges, policemen, soldiers, officials, artists, and so forth.

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Marx was moving from a vertical vision of the world—class against class—to a horizontal one, with different parts of the world seen in relation to one another. This was the essence of List’s vision.

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The Russian problem clearly presented Marx with issues that posed fundamental challenges to his historical conception. He did not live long enough to address them directly or to show that he understood the implications of the admission that there could be *two kinds of revolution* occurring simultaneously in different parts of the world, each arising out of different circumstances and causes and yet ultimately compatible with one another. This was unlike the 1848 scenario in which one revolution (proletarian) followed another (bourgeois) as the latter’s antagonist. Marx’s admission of the possibility that a backward country might make up for its economic and social deficiencies by the use of political measures—revolution—in its march to communism brings to mind List’s view that backward but developing countries could compensate for their relatively lower level of economic development by resorting to political measures, such as government tariff and customs policies, promotion of science and education, and so on. In any case, Marx was moving from a vertical vision of the world—class against class—to a horizontal one, with different parts of the world seen in relation to one another. This was the essence of List’s vision.



1



2



9



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Engels marxists.org/archive/marx/w...

It is historically impossible for a great people even to discuss internal problems of any kind seriously, as long as it lacks national independence. Before 1859, there was no question of socialism in Italy; even the number of Republicans was small, although they formed the most active element. Only after 1861 the Republicans increased in influence and later transferred their best elements to the Socialists. The same was true in Germany. Lassalle was at the point of giving up his work as a failure, when he had the fortune of being shot. Only when in the year 1866 the greater Prussian unity of petty Germany [*die grosspreussische Einheit Kleindeutschlands* – ed] had been actually decided, the Lassallean, as well as the so-called Eisenach parties assumed some importance. And only after 1870 when the Bonapartist appetite of intervention had been removed definitively the thing got really going. If we still had the old *Bundestag*, where would be our Party? The same happened in Hungary. Only after 1860 it was drawn into the modern movement: fraud on top, socialism below.

Now you, may ask me, whether I have no sympathy whatever for the small Slavic peoples, and remnants of peoples, which have been severed asunder by the three wedges driven in the flesh of Slavdom: the Germans, Magyars and Turks? In fact I have damned little sympathy for them. The Czecho-Slovak cry of distress ‘*Boze ak jus nikto nenj’ na zemi ktoby Slavom [sic] spraviedlivost cinil?*’ [‘Is there, oh God, no man on earth who will render the Slavs their due?’ – ed] is answered from Petersburg, and the entire Czech national movement tends in a direction in which the Tsar will *spraviedlivost ciniti* [render them their due – ed]. The same with the others, Serbs, Bulgarians, Slovenes, Galician Ruthenes (at least in part). But we cannot stand for these aims. Only when with the collapse of Tsarism the nationalist ambitions of these dwarfs of peoples will be freed from association with Panslavist tendencies of world domination, only then we can let them take their fate in their own hands. And I am certain that six months of independence will suffice for most Austro-Hungarian Slavs to bring them to a point where they will beg to be readmitted. But these tiny nations can never be granted the right, which they now assign to themselves in Serbia, Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia, to prevent the extension of the European railroad net to Constantinople.



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In Germany, the so-called Historical School in economics represented the new nationalist approach. Its leading figure was Gustav von Schmoller (1838–1917). Schmoller thought that “all protective movements are closely connected with national sentiments, strivings after international authority, [and] efforts toward the balance of power.” He expected such protectionist efforts to continue because along with developed states there existed those states that aspired to achieve economic development and because all kinds of “weapons” could be used for economic purposes.⁸ Schmoller and the other leading representative of the German protectionist school, Adolph Wagner, admitted (as noted by Arcadius Kahan) that national interests and national policy did not always agree with the requirements of economic rationality, and they therefore subordinated the latter to the former.⁹ Thus Wagner argued that not only such national needs as defense, civil administration, justice, education, and welfare, but “also the maintenance of the permanent economic and numerical strength of the nation through an adequate and sturdy agrarian population [requires] sacrifices.”¹⁰

George Lichtheim, in his book *Imperialism*, points out that Schmoller’s “main theme throughout his career was that economic life depended on political decision-making.” In this connection, Lichtheim approvingly quotes Charles Wilson, who defined mercantilism as “state-making—not state-making in a narrow sense, but state-making and national economy-making at the same time.”¹¹



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It appears the nationalists simply believe that political considerations should override economic criteria when conflict arises between the two. — Szporluk

Economists have tried to determine whether those nationalist approaches to industrialization, including the fascist variant, are the most rational from the economic point of view.³¹ Yet one may doubt whether it is at all possible to evaluate such questions in academic terms. It appears the nationalists simply believe that political considerations should override economic criteria when conflict arises between the two. Their outlook may be summarized in several simple propositions. First, they take a territorially

bound state, not the world, as their basic geographic and political unit of reference. Second, they treat the state as a nation-state that needs to be built economically, politically, and culturally, not as one that already exists and is fully developed. Third, they assign a leading role in nation-building to the intelligentsia, that social stratum which claims to rise above sectional economic or occupational interests. (List never developed this theme of leadership, but some of the current ideas on national leadership are implicit in List's argument.) Fourth, and very important, dependency theories see the world as consisting of three kinds of interrelated nations: developed, developing, and underdeveloped. This is List's own classification, although his precise words were different.



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Hey @Hamiltonianist, that was a great write up.

