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MARX

*Later
Political Writings*

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY

TERRELL CARVER

University of Bristol



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for

Laurie Michael Carver

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	page viii
Editor's introduction	ix
<i>Chronology of Marx's Life and Career, 1848-1883</i>	xxi
<i>Bibliography</i>	xxiii
Editor's note on texts and translations	xxvi
<i>Glossary of major historical figures</i>	xxviii
 <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> (with Friedrich Engels)	 1
<i>The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte</i>	31
'Introduction' to the <i>Grundrisse</i>	128
'Preface' to <i>A Contribution to the Critique</i> of Political Economy	158
<i>The Civil War in France</i>	163
<i>Critique of the Gotha Programme</i>	208
'Notes' on Adolph Wagner	227
 <i>Index</i>	 258

Acknowledgements

In preparing these translations I have consulted actual and facsimile first editions, as well as the texts established in the first and second versions of the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe*. I have also made use of the *Marx-Engels Werke*, the Marx and Engels *Collected Works*, the Pelican *Marx Library* editions, and the annotated edition of the *Communist Manifesto* edited by Frederic L. Bender (New York: Norton, 1988) and I am indebted to the scholarly work in all of these.

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Editor's introduction

Karl Marx (1818–83) did not write a comprehensive or even exemplary work of political theory. Instead he addressed himself as a political agent to a politics of democratic constitutionalism and revolutionary communism, and to a detailed critique of the economics of the day. It is from those works that his contributions to political theory can be constructed and assessed.

Manifesto of the Communist Party

Marx has left us one work that outlines his views – *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, first published in 1848. This small pamphlet appeared quite fortuitously on the very eve of democratic upheaval and constitutional revolution. His previous writings, largely unavailable to the nineteenth-century audience, play a role in our reading of the *Manifesto* today, and they amplify, as well as explain, some of the arguments made in its pages. For Marx's political writings before 1848, the reader should consult the companion volume in this series, *Marx: Early Political Writings*, edited and introduced by Joseph O'Malley with Richard A. Davis. The *Manifesto* is particularly useful in structuring a reading of Marx's later writings, such as those contained in the present volume, since it introduces and develops a perspective without which the detailed propositions that may be abstracted from Marx's subsequent works are of little use.

Ostensibly the *Manifesto* was written for a small group of self-styled communists who considered themselves representative of

discontented workers. Marx and his friend the journalist and businessman Friedrich Engels (1820–95) saw political possibilities in the Communist League, successor to an even more shadowy League of the Just, and they wanted its international imprimatur for their ideas. They manœuvred its two ‘congresses’ of 1847 into giving them responsibility for a manifesto, which Engels duly drafted (twice) and Marx ultimately produced – late for the printers, as was his habit – in January 1848.

Although very much a joint composition, Marx had the text last and took responsibility for its production. It was published in London in German for distribution throughout western Europe, and, as the document proudly boasts, for immediate translation into other European languages. Such early translations as were undertaken, including an English one of 1850, were not widely circulated, nor did the Communist League play an important role as such in the national revolutions of 1848 and 1849.

Communist politics, in the *Manifesto* and in practice, was conceived in national terms and left to ‘members’ in local circumstances. Some were so conventionally democratic as to stand for the Frankfurt parliament, which sat as a constituent assembly for all of Germany. Others pursued armed action against monarchical armies, who sought to restore the old regime of kingdoms and principalities, almost all non-constitutional in character. Marx and Engels edited a liberal newspaper in the Rhineland which supported constitutional democracy until, in the teeth of political reaction, they as editors advised communists and other readers to fight on alone. The *Manifesto* achieved its widest circulation as the source for a flysheet of demands posted throughout Germany, which Marx and Engels signed. The original document, incidentally, was published anonymously as a statement by the ‘party’.

Marx placed social class at the centre of his conception of politics, but did not venture a comprehensive definition or thorough-going analysis of the term. Generally he argued that classes are defined by differential modes of access to productive resources, and that any given *distribution* of goods and services to individuals is a necessary result of arrangements in the sphere of *production*. In his view, the division of society into classes has been a central feature of human existence, and it is the major problem of modern times. A class-divided society is in a state of ‘more or less veiled civil war’.

Intriguingly Marx suggests in the *Manifesto* that this is true whether political participants acknowledge it or not, and whether or not there is any overt struggle to be observed. Property relations are the key to the way that productive resources are controlled, and the *Manifesto* provides examples of different types. One of Marx's most important claims is that property relations, forms of the state and politics, indeed social institutions in general, are highly variable and have changed from one epoch to another. Thus there can be no timeless and universal deductive account of human society, most particularly one that presumes or argues the necessity of private property as a universal phenomenon. For Marx civilisation is built on the shifting sands of class struggle, and government has been a device employed by the well-off and powerful to contain the poor and exploited.

Marx argued that there is no credible and democratic solution to the problem of class-society that is exclusively political, rather than substantially economic. Abolition of private property, or 'bourgeois property' as he styled it, was the communist slogan that he proudly announced in the *Manifesto*. Specifically it was private property as capital – 'property which exploits wage-labour' – that communists should aim to replace with public control of productive resources.

The *Manifesto* argues that an analysis of property must precede, perhaps even supersede, an analysis of authority, legitimacy and other traditional concepts, and that a change to communism could only be the result of mass action and democratic politics. Fuller accounts of democratic institutions, political leadership, revolutionary organisation and communist social relations appeared in later works.

The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte

The Eighteenth Brumaire helps to fill out the views outlined in the *Manifesto*. It was also an attempt at consolation – a major theme in the later Marx – for the failure of even democratic constitutionalism, to say nothing of the communist movement. Of more theoretical interest today is the way that Marx handled the indeterminacy of human actions, arguing an overall structure of economic motivation in individuals, and of economic crisis in the social system, whilst sketching in the varied complexity of French political life.

In the early 1850s Marx published a series of articles in German on contemporary French politics for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung-Revue*, a short-lived left-liberal newspaper that he and Engels edited in London, and *The Eighteenth Brumaire* was written as a follow-up. The paper was intended for German-speaking readers at home and in exile. *The Eighteenth Brumaire* was first published by an emigrant '48er in New York, and it represents Marx's most sustained mature effort at satire, parody and invective. It must count as the best argued defence ever of the view that 'history is the history of class struggles', even if in it not all action in politics is traceable to social class, nor all outcomes to revolutionary action presented as advances towards communism.

For Marx a political theory was supposed to have an overtly self-fulfilling quality, as it was no mere reflection of what was supposed to be the case. In his view no theorist can really be just a theorist, all theorists are participants in some political process, and denials of political intent merely disguise an inevitable political content.

The Louis Bonaparte of the title was a nephew of the great emperor, sometime soldier and president of the republic established in 1848 after the overthrow of the 'July Monarchy' of Louis Philippe, king of the French. Marx was furious that Bonaparte was elected head of state in a national vote, and even more enraged when he mounted a *coup d'état* in December 1851 and suspended the republic indefinitely. The 'eighteenth Brumaire' of the title is a reference to the date (according to the revolutionary calendar) of the coup executed by the first Bonaparte against the Directory.

Behind the scorn and invective heaped on the admittedly somewhat comic Louis Bonaparte, Marx traced a process of liberal regression. As the democratic left and authoritarian right disagreed on 'the property question', so elements in the political centre were forced to choose. The 'party of order' figures large in Marx's account and represents a broad coalition of middle-class or 'bourgeois' forces, with the peasantry as a crucial ally. In striking language Marx dramatised the way that democrats, advocating redistributive economic policies, were smeared as communists and extremists. Conversely those democrats who feared for their economic interests were attracted by the wily Bonaparte, and Marx chronicles their ruin when a military dictatorship was declared.

In the light of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* it cannot be said that Marx's understanding of politics was reductionist and determinist. His more abstract theorisations of politics, as in the texts which follow, need to be interpreted in conjunction with the detailed analyses that he actually undertook.

'Introduction' to the *Grundrisse*

The 'Introduction' (1857) to the *Grundrisse* shows Marx enquiring into the specifics of how to study the property relations of modern society. This is an uncorrected manuscript that has had extensive attention only since the 1970s, but it has been widely read since then as a key link between the Marx's 'philosophical' methods and his 'economic' analysis. A number of important methodological problems are discussed there in novel ways.

Having argued that politics must be analysed in an economic setting, Marx strove to find the best way of doing this for the economic order that was displacing all others globally. That, of course, was 'the capitalist mode of production', or 'modern bourgeois society', so vividly described in the *Manifesto*.

The 1857 'Introduction' demonstrates a linkage between specialist works of political economy and the ordinary concepts and behaviour that occur in real life. The linkage is one of mutual reflection: the inequalities and exploitation of real life are mirrored in economic science, and the 'market' behaviour traced abstractly in works of political economy emerges eventually in the reality of wages, employment and property. Thus a close philosophical dissection of leading political economists, and a refutation of their doctrines, was politically crucial to the communist project.

In the 'Introduction' (1857) Marx recorded a decision to focus on the concept 'capital' in his analysis, making it his implied point of departure and actual point of completion. 'Capital', he wrote, 'was the power ruling over everything.' Though when he came to publish his 'critique of the economic categories' as *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, he omitted the 'Introduction' (1857), the work is notable for revealing that wide-ranging explorations of method and substance preceded the more dogmatic summary statements he offered to the public two years later.

'Preface' to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*

The 'Preface' of 1859 to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* represents a very brief introduction to the first instalment of Marx's political analysis of capitalist society, but it does this in a curiously de-politicised form. Indeed the choice of title reveals an interesting strategic ploy, in that Marx aimed to address a specialist audience in political economy. His overarching project was to reveal to them, through unimpeachable argument, that class struggle was serious, worsening and yet the bearer of its own resolution in the 'classless' society of communism. All three of those claims, so he argued, had been denied by the galaxy of respected authors whom he termed collectively 'the political economists'.

The propositions of the 'guide for my studies' that Marx included in the 'Preface' are amongst the most enigmatic passages that he ever wrote. As a statement of his 'outlook' they reappeared in a footnote to the first volume of *Capital* at its publication in 1867, and there they might have rested. The little critique of 1859 was never widely circulated, and most of the material in it was incorporated into the later opening volume of Marx's *magnum opus*.

One person, though, was gripped by Marx's text, and used it extensively at the time in reviews and in later years in explicating Marx. That was Engels, whose own presentation of Marx and his work was founded in part on the propositional generalisations that feature uniquely in the 'Preface'. Engels' reading of them as scientific laws, or law-like tendencies, became authoritative for both pro- and anti-Marxists. When in the twentieth century Marx was selected and collected as an academic writer, the 1859 'Preface' became in that context the centrepiece for inquiry. How were these propositions to be understood and tested? Their role in introducing Marx's detailed inquiries took second place, and metonymically they came to stand for his thought as a whole. The better-illustrated discussions of the *Manifesto*, the more intensely political analysis in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, and the more exploratory conceptual studies in the economic works, from the *Grundrisse* through the various drafts and published volumes of *Capital*, were then 'rigorously' judged against Marx's 'guiding' insights.

'Guiding' these insights may have been, but what Marx actually wrote and published contradicts them in detail often enough to put

paid to any notion that they were supposed to be true in some necessary or invariable sense. Indeed the propositions themselves display an ambiguity that reflects haste and inattention – Marx was late to the press as usual. Reading the supposedly central ‘Preface’ in the light of the other materials collected in the present volume, and in the companion volume of earlier writings, will make it easier to make some sense of the mixed metaphors Marx employs. These are now world famous, but are arguably confused even in the original. Marx did not seem to see these propositions as the foundations for a doctrine, but even if he did, he would surely have expected readers to move well beyond them in seeking to understand what he had to say.

However, it must be said that the 1859 ‘Preface’ represents the traditional and by far the most influential and familiar way of approaching Marx. That text can be read as the doctrinal foundation for Marxism, a science of law-like tendencies in economic and political life guaranteed by abstractly formulated ‘materialist premises’ or concretely perceived ‘class struggle’. The traditional Marxist reading, however, is not the only one. The same propositions can also be examined as ‘empirical’ propositions in social science, or as attempts at such. Thus they have been criticised as unfalsifiable, and so unworthy of scientific notice (by Sir Karl Popper); or as falsifiable, but proven false through close investigation of historical and contemporary circumstances (by G.A. Cohen). Both readings are at the heart of the academic enterprise that Marxology has become, and both have generated intensely interesting intellectual debate. Neither puts Marx into perspective as a political theorist, particularly one who expected to contribute to contemporary accounts of ‘the social question’ in the context of both industrially developed, and newly industrialising countries.

The Civil War in France

In *The Civil War in France* Marx reluctantly brought his work on French politics up to date in the 1870s. The occasion was another unhappy setback for democratic forces, socialists and communists amongst them. Consolation and inspiration were major themes again, as in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*. *The Civil War in France* represents a kind of sequel.

The French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 had been followed by an insurrection in Paris. Resistance to the Prussians, and to a Prussian-imposed settlement, marked the uprising as a nationalist one. This rebellion arose out of disgust with the politicians who spoke for the French after the capture of the Emperor Napoleon III (the Louis Bonaparte of Marx's earlier broadside) at the humiliating battle of Sedan.

The form of domestic government that was to succeed the defunct Second Empire was of necessity an issue in the major cities, and in Paris above all, with its history of democratic revolutionary action. In his writings of the period Marx advised against a democratic rebellion, arguing rightly that forces combining liberals, who were opposed to socialist 'extremism', with the Prussians, who wanted a 'stable' France, would overpower any Parisian experiment in communal democracy and economic cooperation.

However, once the Commune was founded Marx did what he could in terms of international publicity and assistance – as always from London. *The Civil War in France* emerged as an encomium for an event that had attracted extreme notoriety in Europe. Marx's comments were published anonymously in London for distribution in Europe and the United States, and this text was his most extended attempt to write in English. It was swiftly translated into German by Engels.

Marx aimed to set the record straight, as he saw it, and to find some hope for the future – though the bloodbath visited on the Communards in 1871 was hardly inspirational. In the twentieth-century context it is his sketchy comments on communist society that have attracted attention to this text, together with his spirited defence of democratic forms of political organisation. The form of the 'ideal society' is a question familiar within political theory, and the way that representative democracy aims to bridge the gap between the individual will and collective decision-making is similarly a well-known problem.

Although Marx was an anti-utopian thinker who refused to generate detailed schemes and models for future communist society, he nonetheless vouchsafed some views on what communism was actually going to be (other than 'a historical movement that is proceeding under our own eyes', as it says in the *Manifesto*), and on how decisions would be made concerning collectively controlled

resources (other than the 'free development of each is the condition for the free development of all', in the same text). Hence the interest that *The Civil War in France* has aroused centres chiefly on the view, propounded by Engels, that for Marx the Paris Commune represented the 'advancement of the proletariat to ruling class, [the] victory for democracy', mentioned in the famous pamphlet of 1848.

Many of the critical comments directed at Marx's admittedly brief account of the political 'secret' of the Commune make the economic regulation and political institutions of modern 'welfare democracy' sound impossible on any terms, let alone his. It must be said, however, that Marx's communism required the eventual abolition of the money economy altogether, as he argued in the opening chapter of *Capital*, but it is not clear under those circumstances how economic information is to be transmitted through democratic institutions to the spheres of production and consumption. Ultimately democratic institutions were to take responsibility for authoritative plans, but such plans were not to be authoritarian, precisely because they were to be the outcome of democratic decision-making. However, there are no practical clues or examples given by Marx to support these particular views.

In Marx's admittedly selective account of politics under the Commune he praised the institution of municipal councillors, chosen by universal manhood suffrage, responsible to the electorate, and revocable by them if mandated instructions were not obeyed. He envisaged a hierarchy of local and district communes, each sending representatives to a higher body, culminating in a national one handling the 'few but important' functions of central government. Unlike the 'democracies' of Marx's time or ours, these representatives and their paid officials were to be awarded only working-class wages. The standing army was to be abolished, the people were to be armed as a militia, and the police were to be responsible to their communes. Marx had no faith in an 'independent' judiciary and argued that magistrates and judges were to be made elective. The church was to be disestablished, though religious belief could evidently have survived, and free education was to be made available to all.

It takes considerable imagination to see all this in the actual Commune itself, especially given the character of the reports that Marx received in the press. Eyewitnesses, of course, may have told him

a different story. The text is clearly a meditation on what he took to be the principles that emerge in democratic politics, and his 'ideal' institutions to be reasonable extrapolations that the Commune was never able to realise. How close those arrangements stand to an immediate 'dictatorship of the proletariat' (a phrase Marx only occasionally used or endorsed) or to a 'transitional socialism' preceding communism itself, are mysteries that Marx himself did not address.

Critique of the Gotha Programme

At the close of this volume are two short manuscripts. The first, Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, is by far the better known, as it was drawn from his literary legacy by Engels and published in 1891 within the context of German socialist politics. The Gotha Programme had been formulated for the unification congress of May 1875. At that venue the Social Democratic Workers' Party, whose leaders Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel were in communication with Marx and Engels, and the General German Workers' Union, whose founder Ferdinand Lassalle had died in 1864, were to be unified as the Socialist Party of Germany. Marx and Engels had rejected Lassalle's brand of socialism for two reasons. First they held it to be insufficiently critical of capitalism and a money-economy. Secondly they considered it to be insufficiently suspicious of the existing German state, and too sanguine towards reformist 'solutions' to the social question. These issues were still alive in the 1890s, so that Marx's words in the *Critique* represented a posthumous intervention (by Engels) in the political scene, as the Gotha Programme was then itself up for revision at the Erfurt congress.

In twentieth-century terms, however, it is Marx's critique of liberalism that has attracted attention. Was it valid or useful to describe *all* legal 'rights' as 'bourgeois' rights? Property rights in productive resources, perhaps, but even civil rights to personal property, free expression, to equality before the law? What arrangements for the use and enjoyment of resources did he envisage, then, for communist society? How would those relations be organised? Is there any way of doing this without the mechanism of rights and

the apparatus of constitutional, legal and judicial institutions of enforcement?

Marx seemed to be asserting that rights were indissolubly connected with interests construed not just individualistically but egoistically, and that under communism such a 'bourgeois' basis for behaviour would of course have been abolished. It would seem to follow that in communist society any differences or disputes would presumably be of a quite different character, and so their resolution would proceed differently, without need for 'rights'. Cooperative forms of production would make possible, and indeed would generate, a realm of individual interests in collectively beneficial relations. Marx has lately been taxed (by Jon Elster) with assuming a fallacious identification of individual with collective interests, and ignoring the dynamics of actual processes of individual and collective change. His references in the *Critique* to socialism as a transitional stage, and to differential rewards for all in society in proportion to work actually done, merely restate the problem.

'Notes' on Adolph Wagner

The final work in the present volume is the least well known, Marx's "'Notes" on Adolph Wagner', probably the last substantial work penned before his death in 1883. Wagner was a reforming economist and self-identified socialist. Marx disputed Wagner's self-identification and did not welcome the offer of support. The manuscript had no currency at the time of writing (1879–80) or for many years after. Indeed it attracted little attention till the 1970s, when the context was highly academic and theoretical. At that point the following questions were under consideration, and the 'Notes' were scrutinised for answers. Did Marx have an account of 'human nature'? If so, did it explain or predict all actions, most actions or just some actions? Or did he view individuals as determined by larger forces – economic structures, 'dialectical' laws or class interests?

The attack on Wagner has also helped somewhat in getting a grip on Marx's career as a political theorist. Had he changed his mind in any fundamental way about how theory should be done? Was his conception of the proper starting point for politically effective

theory the same as in his early career? If so, what exactly was it? If not, how had it changed, and what had it become?

The 'Notes', read in that light, offer an intriguing challenge to previous concepts of 'man' in political theory. (Marx used *der Mensch*, rather than *der Mann*, so it might be argued that the term 'man' as he used it lacked at least some of the sexist overtones of the English term.) 'Man' for Marx was always a self-creation, not wholly, of course, but for political purposes Marx always looked to culture for his explanations rather than biology. Political theory, then, could not be read off 'man's' material nature. 'Man' was a conceptual and practical interpreter of the material relationship that 'he' (and, in Marx's writing, very occasionally 'she') had with nature. As 'man' altered nature in the course of that relationship, so the relationship was itself altered. In that way 'man' was never the same from era to era in any respect that was fundamental for political theory.

Thus Marx's starting point was always a fully historical and exceptionally malleable view of 'man', subject only to constraints that were themselves variable with respect to what 'man' had become and what 'he' was trying to do. As human nature was so open-textured, and so subject to reconstruction in the economic context, political theorists would have to be genuinely political in their task, as they, too, are part of the social process by which 'man' is continually re-created.

Chronology of Marx's life and career, 1848–83

- 1848 Feb.: Publishes *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, jointly written with Engels, and issued anonymously in London.
- 1848–9 Editor of and contributor to the *Rheinische Zeitung*, daily newspaper published in Cologne.
- 1849 April: Publishes articles posthumously collected as *Wage Labour and Capital*.
- 1849 Aug.: Moves to London.
- 1850 Publishes articles posthumously collected as *The Class Struggles in France* in *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, edited with Engels and published in Hamburg.
- 1850 Sept.: Death of infant son Guido.
- 1851–2 Writes *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* and publishes it in German in New York.
- 1852 April: Death of infant daughter Franziska.
- 1855 April: Death of eight-year-old son Edgar.
- 1853–7 Publishes some hundreds of newspaper articles on current topics in world politics for European and American newspapers.
- 1857–8 Writes 'Introduction' and other *Grundrisse* manuscripts, posthumously edited and published.
- 1859 Publishes *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (with 'Preface') in Berlin.
- 1861–3 Writes manuscripts posthumously edited and published as *Theories of Surplus Value*, vol. I, II and III.
- 1864 Sept.: Helps to found International Working-Men's Association ('First International').

- 1864–5 Writes manuscripts posthumously edited and published as *Capital*, vol. III.
- 1865 Writes English-language lectures posthumously published as *Value, Price and Profit*.
- 1865–7 Finishes manuscript of vol. I of *Capital*.
- 1867 Publishes vol. I of *Capital* in Hamburg.
- 1869 Publishes 2nd edn of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* in Hamburg.
- 1867–79 Writes manuscripts posthumously edited and published as *Capital*, vol. II.
- 1871 Publishes *The Civil War in France* in London as an 'Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association'.
- 1872 Publishes 2nd edn of vol. I of *Capital* in Hamburg; and new edn of the *Manifesto*, with jointly signed preface, in Leipzig.
- 1872–5 Contributes to French translation of vol. I of *Capital*, published in Paris in two parts.
- 1875 Writes manuscript posthumously published as *Critique of the Gotha Programme*.
- 1879–80 Writes manuscript posthumously published as 'Notes' on Adolph Wagner.
- 1880–1 Writes manuscripts posthumously published as *Ethnological Notebooks*.
- 1881 Dec.: Death of Jenny Marx (wife).
- 1883 Jan.: Death of Jenny Marx (daughter).
- 1883 March: Dies in London, aged 64, of lung disease and general ill-health.

Bibliography

Further works by Marx

The *Collected Works* of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (begun 1975) is still in progress from Lawrence and Wishart (London) and International Publishers (New York), and it provides English versions of major works, manuscripts and letters with copious notes. The texts of this set in approximately fifty volumes are based on the scholarly work of the second series of the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (begun by Dietz Verlag of East Berlin in 1972, and projected to comprise over a hundred volumes); this set presents all works whatsoever in the original language with considerable scholarly apparatus. The prospects for continuing the series now seem assured, as the project has passed from East German and Soviet hands to the new International Marx-Engels Foundation based in Amsterdam, and new guidelines for the edition were published in 1993.

Introductions to Marx's political thought

There are two books for students that introduce Marx's political thought, paying special attention to his activities as a political agent and to the centrality of economic issues or 'material production' throughout his work. One is *Marx: An Introduction*, by Wal Suchting (Brighton: Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1983), and the other is my *Marx's Social Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). For a somewhat more advanced level of discussion on similar premises

the student is advised to consult Richard W. Miller's *Analyzing Marx: Morality, Power and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). A wide range of current disciplines rank Marx as an important authority and contributor, and there are original essays for students of political and moral philosophy, philosophy of science, history, sociology, aesthetics and theology (amongst others) in *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*, edited by myself (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). There are annotated essays on the major concepts in Marx, such as class, capitalism, communism and revolution, together with detailed references to primary and secondary sources, in my *A Marx Dictionary* (Cambridge: Polity, 1987).

Biographies of Marx

The most comprehensive current biography of Marx is David McLellan's *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1973). Although the earlier works receive more attention than the later ones, the book includes considerable detail on the interrelationship between Marx's political activities and his works. For a moving evocation of historical and personal context Isaiah Berlin's *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment* is still worth reading (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939, 4th edn 1982; London: Fontana edn forthcoming 1995). *Karl Marx: Interviews and Recollections*, edited by David McLellan (London: Macmillan, 1981) collects numerous quite different perceptions of the man and his work. There is also an older compilation, *Reminiscences of Marx and Engels* from Progress Publishers of Moscow (n.d.).

Studies on Marx's politics and political theory

Two classic studies were produced when scholarly attention was turned to the 'early Marx', but both books set a context for the later period in Marx's life and treat the writings of that time in some detail. These are Shlomo Avineri's *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968 and repr.), and Allen W. Wood's *Karl Marx* (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981). Avineri situates Marx in the context of Hegelian critique and evolves the theories of

alienation and revolution from philosophical origins, but his consideration of Marx's work on French politics, beginning with the Terror and continuing to the civil war of 1871, develops a controversial account of Marx's political theory. Wood's book presents a topically arranged discussion of Marx's views on various concepts relevant to political philosophy – alienation, morality, justice, explanation, etc. – and focuses particularly on the way that Marx advocates revolution but dismisses many potent arguments for it as ideological. *Marx's Theory of Politics*, by John M. Maguire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), does much the same job. For a detailed consideration of Marx's political involvements up to 1853, with considerable attention to the theoretical tensions and ambiguities therein, the reader should consult Alan Gilbert's *Marx's Politics: Communists and Citizens* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1981). Two recent examinations of Marx's relationship with and usefulness to the theory of democracy stand out: Michael Levin, *Marx, Engels and Liberal Democracy* (London, Macmillan, 1989), and Keith Graham, *The Battle of Democracy: Conflict, Consensus and the Individual*, (Brighton: Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1986).

Editor's note on texts and translations

All translations in this volume are new and are based on first editions or reliable copy-texts of manuscripts unpublished in Marx's lifetime. Successive editors have hardly altered the 'classical' English translations, produced between the 1880s and the 1930s, of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, the 'Preface' to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, and the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. *The Civil War in France* was written in English, and so does not pose a problem. The manuscript materials – the 'Introduction' of 1857 to the *Grundrisse* and the "'Notes" on Adolph Wagner' – appear in my own translations of 1975. I am grateful to Basil Blackwell Ltd for permission to reproduce this material from my *Texts on Method*.

It is my aim as editor of the present volume to depart substantially from the way that Marx has previously been presented in English, and in other languages, including German (which was not always the original language of his work). Marx was made responsible for a doctrine or doctrines by Engels and by subsequent Marxists, and by editors who took the view that he should be presented doctrinally in terms of what his thought *became*, according to a posthumous scheme, rather than what it arguably was, when his writings were generated in the political context that prevailed at the time of first publication or authorial production. Famously Marx commented: 'I am not a Marxist.'

I have tried to capture something of the freshness of the moment, even when this means a certain awkwardness in expression or

deviation from later terminology. Interestingly the two works (other than the first volume of *Capital*) that Marx was able to see reproduced in his own lifetime – the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (new edn 1872) and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (2nd edn 1869) – were offered by him to the reader as ‘historical’ documents with only minimal correction and updating. He remarked that ‘we have no longer any right to alter’ the *Manifesto*, and that revising *The Eighteenth Brumaire* ‘would have robbed it of its peculiar colouring’. Engels, by contrast, generally adopted a much more intrusive editorial policy, appending footnotes, re-writing passages and ‘correcting’ terminology so as to make the texts that he produced consistent with his view of Marx’s ‘scientific’ achievements. Thus readers familiar with the traditional English versions of these *Later Political Writings* will find differences, and a number of stock terms and phrases have disappeared.

There were mistranslations and obscurities in the traditional English versions. Indeed I was consistently struck by the awkward and clumsy English through which Marx has been transmitted. I have tried at all times to adhere to the flow and tone of Marx’s German, and to find appropriate expressions and metaphors in English that reflect, as much as possible, his forthright and punchy style. Every translation is an imperfect reflection, but I hope that mine is more vivid than previous renditions. I have corrected minor errors without indication. Where I have felt that editorial insertions are required to help the reader, or where the text itself is excessively abbreviated and requires amplification, I have used square brackets to enclose my insertions. For some works there are more complicated editorial notes.

Translation is inevitably interpretation, and interpretation is inevitably personal. I hope that I have been clear about what I have attempted to do in this collection: to present Marx in selected, complete writings as a political theorist who was deeply, though analytically engaged in politics. And about the way that I have tried to do it: using first editions rather than later edited versions, and striving for clarity in reaching a present-day audience.

Glossary of major historical figures

Names that are generally familiar, or are merely mentioned in passing, or are sufficiently explained in the text, are omitted from this list.

Babeuf, Gracchus (1760–97)

Organiser of the ‘conspiracy of equals’ during the French revolution; executed under the Directory.

Barrot, Odilon (1791–1873)

Leader of the liberal opposition under the ‘July’ monarchy, then chief minister during the second republic from December 1848 to October 1849.

Bastiat, Frédéric (1801–50)

Political economist and author of *Economic Harmonies*.

Bismarck, Prince Otto von (1815–98)

Minister-President of Prussia under the federal regime from 1862 to 1871, then Imperial Chancellor from 1871 to 1890.

Blanc, Louis (1811–82)

Revolutionary socialist and member of the provisional government in early 1848; emigrated to London in August, and returned to France in 1871, when he was elected to the national assembly; favoured state-sponsored workers’ cooperatives.

Blanqui, August (1805–81)

Revolutionary communist during the 1848–9 revolution, and leader of an insurrection against the Government of National Defence in October 1870.

Brentano, Lujo (1844–1931)

German economist and advocate of an ‘academic’ socialism.

Buchez, Philippe Joseph Benjamin (1796–1865)

Theorist and propagandist for state-aided workers' cooperatives in France, chiefly during the 1830s and 1840s.

Carey, Henry Charles (1793–1879)

American political economist and author of a three-volume *Principles of Political Economy*.

Cassagnac, Bertrand Granier de (1806–80)

Journalist and editor; proponent of authoritarian rule; thought to have been the author of or major contributor to the proposed revision of the constitution favouring Bonaparte in 1849.

Cato (95–46 BC)

Stoic politician and republican opponent of Julius Caesar; committed suicide when Caesar won the civil war and thus came to be considered a martyr to the republican cause.

Caussidière, Marc (1808–61)

Democrat and participant in the Lyons uprising of 1834 against the 'July' monarchy; prefect of the Paris police from February to June 1848; part of the mid-1848 emigration of democratic politicians to England.

Cavaignac, Louis-Eugène (1802–57)

Republican politician and general, war minister then chief executive for the second republic after May 1848.

Changarnier, Nicolas Anne Théodule (1793–1877)

Monarchist politician and general; commander of the Paris national guard.

Constant, Benjamin (1767–1830)

Liberal political figure under the restoration, in opposition to the reactionary King Charles X.

Cousin, Victor (1792–1867)

Philosopher and Minister of Education for Thiers in 1840 under the 'July' monarchy.

Cromwell, Oliver (1599–1658)

Leader of the English revolution against the monarchy; Lord Protector of the Commonwealth after 1653.

Danton, Georges Jacques (1759–94)

Jacobin during the French revolution; guillotined under the terror.

Darasz, Albert (1808–52)

Participant in the Polish insurrection for national liberation in