

DOCUMENT XII: PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE ISSUED BY THE GREEK NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Source: James Harvey Robinson. *Readings in European History*. Vol. 2. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906.

We, descendants of the wise and noble peoples of Hellas, we who are contemporaries of the enlightened and civilized nations of Europe, we who behold; the advantages which they enjoy under the protection of the impetuous aegis of the law, find it no longer possible to suffer without cowardice and self-contempt the cruel yoke of Ottoman power which has weighed upon us for more than four centuries, a power which does not listen to reason and knows no other law than its own will, which orders and disposes everything despotically and according to its caprice. After this prolonged slavery we have determined to take arms to avenge ourselves and our country against frightful tyranny, iniquitous in its very essence, an unexampled despotism to which no other rule can be compared.

The war which we are carrying on against the Turk is not that of a faction or the result of sedition. It is not aimed at the advantage of a single part of the Greek people; it is a national war, a holy war, a war the object of which is to reconquer the rights of individual liberty, of property and honor, rights which the civilized people of Europe, our neighbors, enjoy to-day; rights of which the cruel and unheard of tyranny of the Ottomans would deprive us—us alone—and the very memory of which they would stifle in our hearts.

Are we, then, less reasonable than other peoples, that we remain deprived of these rights? Are we of a nature so degraded and abject that we should be viewed as unworthy to enjoy them, condemned to remain crushed under a perpetual slavery and subjected, like beasts of burden or mere automatons, to the absurd caprice of a cruel tyrant who, like an infamous brigand, has come from distant regions to invade our borders? Nature has deeply graven these rights in the hearts of all men; laws in harmony with nature have so completely consecrated them that neither three nor four centuries—not thousands nor millions of centuries—can destroy them. Force and violence have been able to restrict and paralyze them for a reason, but force may once more resuscitate them in all the vigour which they formerly enjoyed during many centuries; nor have we ever ceased in Hellas to defend these rights by arms whenever opportunity offered.

Building upon the foundation of our natural rights, and desiring to assimilate ourselves to the rest of the Christians of Europe, our brethren, we

have begun a war against the Turks, or rather, uniting all our isolated strength, we have formed ourselves into a single armed body, firmly resolved to attain our end, to govern ourselves by wise laws, or to be together annihilated, believing it to be unworthy of us, as the descendants of the glorious peoples of Hellas, to live henceforth in a state of slavery fitted rather for unreasoning animals than for rational beings.

Ten months have elapsed since we began this national war; the all-powerful God has succored us; although we were not adequately prepared for so great an enterprise, our arms have everywhere been victorious, despite the powerful obstacles which we have encountered and still encounter everywhere. We have had to contend with a situation bristling with difficulties, and we are still engaged in our efforts to overcome them. It should not, therefore, appear astonishing that we were not able from the very first to proclaim our independence and take rank among the civilized peoples of the earth, marching forward side by side with them. It was impossible to occupy ourselves with our political existence before we had established our independence. We trust these reasons may justify, in the eyes of the nations, our delay, as well as console us for the anarchy in which we have found ourselves. . . .

Epidaurus, January 15/27, 1822: the First Year of Independence

DOCUMENT XIII: KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS

Source: *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Edited and annotated by Frederick Engels. Chicago: Charles Kerr & Company, 1888.

A spectre is passing through Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the powers of old Europe have joined in a holy crusade against this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French radicals and German police-spies.

Bourgeoisie and Proletarians

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. . . .

The modern bourgeois society, that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society, has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeois period, possesses, however, this distinctive feature; it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole

is more and more splitting into two great hostile camps, into two large classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. . . .

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. The market has given an immense development to commerce, navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long chain of developments, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the mediaeval communes (i.e., free cities), here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany), there taxable "third state" of the monarch (as in France), afterwards, in the period of manufacture proper, serving either the semi-feudal or absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the representative State, exclusive political sway. Finally, with the establishment of large industry and the world market the bourgeoisie conquered exclusive political domination for itself in modern states with representative governments. The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary role in history.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn assunder 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 fervor, 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. . . .

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured up to order out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor? . . .

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie (i.e., capital) is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed, a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only as long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like any other article of commerce and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Proletarians and Communists

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

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to 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 the common interests of the entire proletariat independent 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.

The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of the march, the conditions and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The most immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat. . . .

In this sense the theory of the Communists may be summed up in a single sentence: Abolition of private property.

We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquired property as the fruit of a man's own labor, which property is alleged to be the ground work of all personal freedom, activity, and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of the petty artisan or that of the small peasant a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that: the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean modern bourgeois private property?

But does wage-labor create any property for the laborer? Not a bit. It creates capital, that is, that kind of property, which exploits wage-labor, and which cannot increase except upon condition of getting a new supply of wage-labor, for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage-labor. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

To be a capitalist, is to have not only a purely personal, but also a social status in production. Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion.

Capital is therefore not a personal, it is a social power.

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of property that is changed. It loses its class-character. . . .

The charges against Communism made from a religious, a philosophical and generally, from an ideological standpoint are not deserving of serious consideration.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conceptions, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence in his social relations and in his social life?

What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes in character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of the ruling class. . . .

In short, the Communists everywhere support revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They declare openly that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at the prospect of a Communist Revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Working men of all countries, unite!

DOCUMENT XIV: THE PEOPLE'S CHARTER, 1842

Source: R. G. Gammage. *History of the Chartist Movement 1837-1854*. London: Truslove & Hanson, 1894.

Be it therefore enacted:

That from and after the passing of this Act, every male inhabitant of these realms be entitled to vote for the election of a Member of Parliament; subject, however, to the following conditions:

1. That he be a native of these realms, or a foreigner who has lived in this country upwards of two years, and has been naturalized.
2. That he be twenty-one years of age.
3. That he be not proved insane when the lists of voters are revised.
4. That he be not undergoing the sentence of the law at the time when called upon to exercise the electoral right.