

Marx/Engels Collected Works

Volume 1: 1835-1843

The first volume of Marx and Engels' Collected Works (MECW) covers Marx's life from 1835 to March 1843. The earliest works in the collection are from his gymnasium examinations written in August of 1835. Whether or not these should be taken as expressions of Marx's thought is debatable. They include a composition on the ideal profession (3-9), the exegesis of John 15: 1-4, and the reign of Augustus. The last was composed *ex tempore* in Latin, and provides an account of the Republican period, Augustus, and the Neronian age. The school's final estimation of Marx's Latin and Greek knowledge is preserved as well:

In Latin, even without preparation he translates and explains with facility and circumspection the easier passages of the classics read in the gymnasium; and after due preparation or with some assistance frequently also the more difficult passages, especially those where the difficulty consists not so much in the peculiarity of the language as in the subject-matter and train of thought. His composition shows, in regard to material, a wealth of thought and deep insight into the subject-matter, but is often overladen with irrelevancies; in regard to language, he gives evidence of much practice and striving for genuine latinity, although he is not yet free from grammatical errors. In speaking Latin, he has acquired a fairly satisfactory fluency.

In Greek, his knowledge and abilities, in regard to understanding the classics read in the gymnasium, are almost the same as in Latin.¹

While Marx's knowledge of ancient Latin and Greek is extraordinary by contemporary standards, it was part and parcel of the German gymnasium education system. In 1835, Marx attended the University of Bonn before transferring to the University of Berlin the following year. At the University of Berlin, he prepared to complete a dissertation on the history of Roman law, which would have prepared him to work in the Prussian civil service. He also prepared a translation of Tacitus' *Germania*, Ovid's *Tristia*, and Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. To his own consternation and the extreme frustration of his father, Marx found a fatal flaw in his doctoral work which ultimately led him to abandon the subject and the school of historicism all together. Under the influence of his studies in Hegel and the Young Hegelians, he instead completed his

¹MECW 1, p. 643

dissertation on the philosophy of epicurus and Democritus: Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature (25-108). His preparatory studies are also preserved: Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy (403-509). Today, Marx would be considered a ‘Classicist’ who specialized in ancient Greek philosophy. The extent to which these early works are related to his mature ideas is a debated topic. However, his lifelong commitment to the problem of false abstraction (i. e. ideology) and understanding the material barriers that stand between history and the realization of liberation unquestionably began in these years. His thought is framed by the language and ideas of Classical antiquity, and his work cannot ultimately be understood without an understanding of the role they played in shaping his thought.

The following provides a list all references in Volume 1 to ancient Greece or Rome. See Appendix for the alphabetical index. All pages reference the MECW volume page numbers.

Gymnasia [1835]

1. Does the Reign of Augustus Deserve to be Counted Among the Happier Periods of the Roman Empire²
2. Certificate of Maturity for Pupil of the Gymnasium in Trier³
 - Marx’s Latin ⁴
 - Marx’s Greek⁵
3. Does the Reign of Augustus Deserve to be Counted Among the Happier Periods of the Roman Empire⁶

University [1836-1841]

1. Letter from Marx to His Father⁷
 - Roman Law⁸
 - Tacitus Germania⁹
 - Ovid Tristia¹⁰
 - Aristotle Rhetoric¹¹

²MECW 1, p. 639-642: Covers history of Punic Wars, Augustan Age, Nero.

³MECW 1, p. 643-644

⁴MECW 1, p. 643

⁵MECW 1, p. 643

⁶MECW 1, p. 10-21

⁷MECW 1, p. 10-21

⁸MECW 1, p. 12-17

⁹MECW 1, p. 17

¹⁰MECW 1, p. 17

¹¹MECW 1, p. 19

2. Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature¹²
3. Notebooks on Epicurean Philosophy¹³

Journalism: Rheinische Zeitung [1836-1841]

1. Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction¹⁴
 - Vergil Aeneid¹⁵
 - Roman Censors¹⁶
 - Robespierre and the Roman emperors¹⁷
 - Delphic Apollo¹⁸
 - Roman Geese, Capitol¹⁹
 - Pompey²⁰
 - Pallas Athena²¹
 - Pompey²²
 - Tacitus Historia²³ []
2. Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Province Assembly.²⁴
 - Caesar²⁵
 - Epimenides²⁶
 - Pythagoras²⁷
 - Pompey²⁸
 - Athens²⁹
 - Diogenes³⁰

¹²MECW 1, p. 25-108

¹³MECW 1, p. 403-509

¹⁴MECW 1, p. 109-131

¹⁵MECW 1, p. 109

¹⁶MECW 1, p. 110

¹⁷MECW 1, p. 119

¹⁸MECW 1, p. 122

¹⁹MECW 1, p. 126

²⁰MECW 1, p. 126

²¹MECW 1, p. 126

²²MECW 1, p. 126

²³MECW 1, p.

²⁴MECW 1, p. 132-181

²⁵MECW 1, p. 132: Use of 3rd person.

²⁶MECW 1, p. 133

²⁷MECW 1, p. 134

²⁸MECW 1, p. 135

²⁹MECW 1, p. 137

³⁰MECW 1, p. 140

- Juvenal Satires³¹
- Greek Religion³²
- Solon³³
- Pericles³⁴
- The Spartans³⁵

3. The Leading Article in No. 179 of the Kölnische Zeitung³⁶

- Lucian's Dialogue of the Gods³⁷
- Fetishism and Greece³⁸
- Fall of Ancient World³⁹
- Lucretius⁴⁰
- Lucian⁴¹
- Classics in German Education⁴²
- Zeus (Corybantes and Cabiri)⁴³
- Augustine City of God⁴⁴
- Caesar⁴⁵
- Heraclitus⁴⁶
- Aristotle⁴⁷
- Greek Tragedy⁴⁸

4. Communism and the Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung⁴⁹

- Aristotle Metaphysics⁵⁰

³¹MECW 1, p. 146: 6.223

³²MECW 1, p. 172: believing in Scythians, Lydians, Near Eastern gods

³³MECW 1, p. 178

³⁴MECW 1, p. ? : Thucydides History 1.2.60

³⁵MECW 1, p. ? : Herodotus History 2.7.135, Sperthias and Bulis and Persian Hydarnes

³⁶MECW 1, p. 184-202

³⁷MECW 1, p. 185

³⁸MECW 1, p. 189: Pericles, Sophists, Socrates, Alexander, Rome, Cicero, Epicurean, Stoic, Sceptics

³⁹MECW 1, p. 190

⁴⁰MECW 1, p. 190

⁴¹MECW 1, p. 190

⁴²MECW 1, p. 193

⁴³MECW 1, p. 196

⁴⁴MECW 1, p. 198

⁴⁵MECW 1, p. 199

⁴⁶MECW 1, p. 201

⁴⁷MECW 1, p. 202

⁴⁸MECW 1, p. 202

⁴⁹MECW 1, p. 215-221

⁵⁰MECW 1, p. ? : 1.2 (982b)

- Plato⁵¹
- 5. Proceedings of the Sixth Rhine Province Assembly⁵²
 - Roman Law, Property⁵³
 - Oracle of Dodona⁵⁴
- 6. A Correspondent of the Kölnische Zeitung vs. the Rheinische Zeitung⁵⁵
 - Greece and Rome⁵⁶
- 7. Stylistic Exercises of the Rhein- und Mosel-Zeitung ⁵⁷
 - Homeric Style⁵⁸
- 8. To Arnold Ruge. April 27, 1842 ⁵⁹
 - Leda and Swan⁶⁰
 - Thersites⁶¹

⁵¹MECW 1, p. 220

⁵²MECW 1, p. 224-263

⁵³MECW 1, p. 233

⁵⁴MECW 1, p. 244

⁵⁵MECW 1, p. 277-279

⁵⁶MECW 1, p. 277

⁵⁷MECW 1, p. 373-375

⁵⁸MECW 1, p. 374

⁵⁹MECW 1, p. 387-388

⁶⁰MECW 1, p.

⁶¹MECW 1, p.