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Karl Marx an Laura und Paul Lafargue in Paris. London, Samstag, 5. März 1870

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Handschriftenbeschreibung:

Soweit aus der Fotokopie zu ersehen ist, besteht der Brief aus einem Bogen weißem Papier. Marx hat die ersten drei Seiten vollständig beschrieben, die vierte Seite ist leer. Schreibmaterial: schwarze Tinte.

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Absender: Karl Marx
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Schreibdatum: 1870-03-05

Empfänger: Laura Lafargue
Empfänger: Paul Lafargue
Empfangsort: Paris

Schlagworte: Privates - Marx (Familie, Gesundheit, Finanzen), Lektüren im Korrespondentenkreis, Internationale Arbeiter-Assoziation (IAA, A.I.T., I.W.M.A.), Fenier, Russland

[London. 5 March, 1870.

Dear Laura and Paul,

You feel certainly great and just indignation at my prolonged silence, but you ought to excuse it as the natural consequence, first, of illness, then of extrawork to make up for the time lost.

The sad news Paul communicated to us, did not take me by surprise. The evening before the arrival of his letter I had stated to the family my serious misgivings as to the **little child**^a. I have suffered myself too much from such losses to not **fully profoundly** sympathise with you. Still, from the same personal experience I know that all wise commonplaces and consolatory thrash uttered on such occasion irritate real grief instead of soothing it.

I hope you will send us good news of little **Schnappi**^b, my greatest favourite. The poor dear little fellow must have suffered severely from the cold so adverse to “la nature mélanienne”. A Propos. Un certain M. **de Gobineau**^c, has published, il y a à peu près dix ans, a work in 4 volumes “**Sur l’Inégalité des races humaines**”^d, written for the purpose to prove in the first instance that “la race blanche” is a sort of God amongst the other human races and, of course, the noble families within the “race blanche” are again la crème de la crème. I rather suspect that M. de Gobineau, dans ce

temps là “premier secrétaire de la légation de France en Suisse”, to have sprung **himself**¹ not from an **XX(?)**² ancient Frank warrior but from a modern French huissier. However that may be, and despite his spite against the “race noire”—[[to such people it is always a source of satisfaction to have somebody they think themselves entitled to mépriser]]—he declares “le nègre” | ou “le sang noir” to be la source matérielle de l’art, and all artistic production of the white nations to depend on their mixture avec “le sang noir”.

I have been much delighted by the last letter I received from my sweet ex-secretary, and much amused by Paul’s description of **Moilin**^f’s soirée^e.

Ce “grand inconnu” seems at last to have found the secret of catching that “gloire” which till now always slipped so treacherously **Fxxx(?)**³ out of his fingers when he had just laid hold of its tail. He has found out that to be successful with the world everything depends upon the circumstance of circumscribing the world within one’s own four walls, where one may nominate himself president and **xxxxt(?)**⁴ **have**⁵ such an audience as will swear in verba magistri.

Here, at home, as you are fully aware, the Fenians sway is paramount. **Tussy**^g is one of their head centres. **Jenny**^h writes on their behalf in the “**Marseillaise**”^d under the pseudonym of J. Williams. I have not only **written treated** the same theme in the Brussels “**Internationale**”^{kj}, and caused resolutions of the Central Council to be passed against their gaolers. In a **circular**^m, addressed by the Council to our corresponding committees, I have **f(?)**⁶ explained the merits of the Irish Question.

You understand at once that I am not only acted upon by feelings of humanity. There is something besides. To accelerate the social development in Europe, you must push on the catastrophe of official England. To do so, you must attack her in Ireland. That’s her weakest point. Ireland lost, the British “Empire” is gone, and the class war in England, till now somnolent and chronic, will assume acute forms. But England is the metropolis of landlordism and capitalism all over the world.

| What is **Blanqui**ⁿ about? Is he at Paris?

You have of course heard nothing of my translator, M. **K.**^{p0} I am in the same predicament^f.

The book of Flerowski^v on “**the situation of the labouring classes in Russia**”^x, is an extraordinary book. I am really glad to be now able to read it somewhat fluently with the aid of a dictionary. This is the first time that the whole economical state of Russia has been revealed. It is a conscientious work. During 15 years, the author travelled from the West to the confines of Siberia, from the White Sea to the Caspian, with the only purpose of studying facts and exposing conventional lies. He harbours of course some delusions about la perfectibilité perfectible de la Nation Russe, et le principe providentiel de la propriété communale dans sa forme Russe. But let that pass. After the study of his work, one feels deeply convinced that a most terrible social revolution—in such inferior forms of course as suit the present Muscovite state of development—is irrepressible in Russia and near at hand. These are good news. Russia and England are the two great pillars of the present European system. All the rest is of secondary importance, even la belle France et la savante Allemagne.

Engels will leave Manchester^y and, at the beginning of August next, settle definitely down in London. It will be a great boon to me.

And now farewell my dear children. Don’t forget to kiss brave little **Schnappy**^z on behalf of his Old Nick.

Erläuterungen

- a) Lafargue, Jeanne (1870-1870)
- b) Lafargue, Charles Étienne (31.12.1868-1872)
- c) Gobineau, Joseph Arthur, comte de (1816-1882)
- d) [Zotero Link für: "Sur l'inégalité des races humaines"](#)
- e) Siehe Paul Lafargue an Karl Marx in London. 9.2.1870.
- f) Moilin, Jules Antoine (Tony) (1832-1871)
- g) Marx, Eleanor (1855-1898)
- h) Marx (Tochter), Jenny (1844-1883)
- i) La Marseillaise
- j) Siehe [Karl Marx: Le gouvernement anglais et les prisonniers fenians](#). In: [L'Internationale. Bruxelles. Nr. 59, 27. Februar 1870; Nr. 60, 6. März 1870](#)¹.
- k) L'Internationale
- l) [Zotero Link für: Karl Marx: Le gouvernement anglais et les prisonniers fenians](#). In: [L'Internationale. Bruxelles. Nr. 59, 27. Februar 1870; Nr. 60, 6. März 1870](#)
- m) [Zotero Link für: circular](#)
- n) Blanqui, Auguste (1805-1881)
- o) [Charles Keller](#)^q.
- p) Keller, Charles (1843-1913)
- q) Keller, Charles (1843-1913)
- r) Charles Keller übersetzte einen Teil von [Karl Marx: Das Kapital. Bd. 1. Buch 1. Hamburg 1867](#)^s – siehe Erl. zu Marx an J. Ph. Becker, zw. 9. u. 15.1.1866: „1200 Seiten Manuscript“. ([MEGA² II/5](#))^t – ins Französische. Siehe dazu [MEGA² II/7](#)^u. S. 715/716.
- s) [Zotero Link für: Karl Marx: Das Kapital. Bd. 1. Buch 1. Hamburg 1867](#).
- t) [Zotero Link für: \(MEGA2 II/5\)](#)
- u) [Zotero Link für: MEGA2 II/7](#)
- v) Pseudonym von [Vasilij Vasil'evič Bervi](#)^w.
- w) Bervi, Vasilij Vasil'evič (1829-1918)
- x) [Zotero Link für: "the situation of the labouring classes in Russia"](#)
- y) Engels siedelte am 20. September 1870 von Manchester nach London über (siehe E. Dupont an Marx, 19.9.1870).
- z) Lafargue, Charles Étienne (31.12.1868-1872)

Kritischer Apparat

- 1) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 2) Tilgung durch Streichung
- 3) Tilgung durch Streichung
- 4) Tilgung durch Streichung
- 5) innerhalb der Zeile eingetragen
- 6) Tilgung durch Streichung