

Nutzungshinweise:

Diese Druckansicht dient nur zu Arbeitszwecken. Zitieren Sie ggf. direkt die [digitale Edition](#). Dieses Werk ist lizenziert unter einer Creative Commons Namensnennung - Nicht-kommerziell - Weitergabe unter gleichen Bedingungen 4.0 International Lizenz.

Zitiervorschlag:

Karl Marx an Laura und Paul Lafargue in Paris. London, Donnerstag, 28. Juli 1870. In: Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe digital, hg. v. der Internationalen Marx-Engels-Stiftung, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin. URL <https://megadigital.bbaw.de/briefe/detail.xql?id=M8552984>

Karl Marx an Laura und Paul Lafargue in Paris. London, Donnerstag, 28. Juli 1870

Lindenberg, Thomas (Bearbeitung)
Lura, Caroline (Bearbeitung)

Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW) Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe

Handschrift: Handschrift: RGASPI f. 1 op. 1 d. 5599

Handschriftenbeschreibung:

Soweit aus der Fotokopie zu ersehen ist, besteht der Brief aus einem Bogen dünnem, stark vergilbtem Papier. Marx hat zunächst die erste und dritte Seite vollständig, danach die zweite Seite vertikal beschrieben, die vierte Seite ist leer. Schreibmaterial: schwarze Tinte.

Der Textverlust („[suc]ceeded“, „[cu]ts fro[m]“) durch beschädigtes Papier konnte rekonstruiert werden.

Von unbekannter Hand: Vermerk mit Bleistift oben links auf der ersten Seite: „1 B 12“.

Erstveröffentlichung: in russischer Übersetzung: Voprosy istorii KPSS. No. 1. Moskau 1957. S. 80–82.
in der Sprache des Originals: Lettres et documents de Karl Marx (1958). S. 177–179.

Absender: Karl Marx

Schreibort: London

Schreibdatum: 1870-07-28

Empfänger: Laura Lafargue

Empfänger: Paul Lafargue

Empfangsort: Paris

Schlagworte: Krieg Deutschland-Frankreich, Frankreich, Preußen, Lektüren im Korrespondentenkreis, Großbritannien – Politik, Wirtschaft, Geschichte, Russland

| 28 July, 1870.

My dear children,

You must excuse the long dela¹y of my answer. You know I cannot stand heat. It weighs down my energies. On the other hand, I was overwhelmed with business, the German “friends” firing at me a Mitraillease of letters which, under present circumstances, I could not decline answering at once.

You want of course to hear something of the war. So much is sure that L. Bonaparte^a has already missed his first opportunity. You understand that his first plan was to take the Prussians unawares and get the better of them by surprise. It is, in point of fact, much easier to get the German-French army—a mere soldiers' army till now—ready than the Prussian one which consists largely of a the civilian element forming the Landwehr. Hence, if Bonaparte, as he at first intended, had made a dash even with halfcollected forces, he might have [suc]ceeded to surprise the fortress of Mayence, to push simultaneously forward in the direction of Würzburg, thus to separate

Northern from Southern Germany, and to throw consternation amidst the camp of his adversaries. However, he has allowed this opportunity to slip. He saw unmistakable signs of the national character of the war in Germany and was stunned by the unanimous², quick, immediate adhesion of Southern Germany to Prussia. His habitude of hesitation, so much adapted to his old trade of conspirator planning coups d'état and plebiscites, got the upper hand, but this method will not do for war which demands quick and unwavering resolution. He ~~let his~~(?)³[...](?)~~dropped~~ let his first plan slip⁴ and resolved to collect his full forces. Thus he lost his advantage of a first start, of surprise, while the Prussians have gained all the time necessary for mobilising their forces. Hence you may say that Bonaparte has already⁵ lost his first campaign.

Whatever may now be the first incidents of the war, it will become extremely serious. Even a first great French⁶ victory would decide |2) nothing, because the French army will now find in its way three great fortresses, Mayence, Coblenz, and Cologne, ready for a protracted defence. In the long run, Prussia has greater military forces at her disposal than Bonaparte^b. It may even be that on one side or the other she will be able to cross the French frontier and make “le sol sacré de la patrie”—according to the Chauvinists of the Corps Législatif this sol sacré is situated only on the French side of the Rhine—the theatre of war!

Both nations remind me of the anecdote of the two Russian noblemen accompanied by two Jews, their serfs. Nobleman man(?)⁷ A strikes the Jew of Nobleman B, and B answers: “Schlägst Du meinen Jud, schlag ich Deinen Jud”. ~~##~~⁸ So both nations are seem reconciled to their despots⁹ by being allowed, each of them, to strike at the despot of the other nation.

~~xfxx~~(?)¹⁰ In Germany the war is considered as a national war, because it is a war of defence. The middle-class (not to speak of the Krautjunkerthum) overdoes itself in the manifestations of loyalty. ~~Wxxx-xxxx~~(?)¹¹ One believes himself taken back to the times of 1812 sqq “für Gott, König und Vaterland” with the old donkey Arndt^c: “Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland^d”!

The ~~pxxxxxx~~(?)¹²~~xxx~~(?)¹³ singing of the Marseillaise at the bidding of the man of December is of course a parody, like the whole history of the second empire. Still it shows that he feels that “Partant pour la Syrie” would not do for the occasion. On the other hand, that old damned ass, Wilhelm^e “Annexander”, sings “Jesus meine Zuversicht”, flanked on the one side by the “larron” Bismarck^f and, on the other, by the “policier” Stieber^g!

On both sides it is a disgusting exhibition.

Still there is this consolation, that the workmen protest in Germany as in France. In point of fact the war of classes in both countries is too far developed to allow any political war whatever to roll back for long time the wheel of history. I believe, on the contrary, that the present war will produce results not at all expected by the “officials” on both sides.

| I i(?)nclosetwo¹⁴[cu]ts fro[m]Liebke^hs Volksstaatⁱ. You will see that he and Bebel^j behaved exceedingly well in the Reichstag.

For my own part, I should¹⁵ like that both, Prussians and French, trashed each other alternately, and that—as I believe will be the case—the Germans got ultimately the better of it. I wish this, because the definite defeat of Bonaparte^k ~~will~~(?) is likely to provoke Revolution in France, while the definite defeat of the Germans would only protract the present state of things for 20 years.

The English upper classes are full of moral indignation against Bonaparte^l at whose feet they have fawned for 18 years. Then they wanted him as the¹⁶ saviour of their privileges, of rents and profits. At the same time, they know the man to be seated on a volcano the¹⁷ which unpleasant position forces him to trouble peace periodically, and makes him—beside his parvenuism—an unpleasant bedfellow. Now they hope that to¹⁸ solid Prussia, protestant Prussia, Prussia backed by Russia, will fall the part of keeping down revolution in Europe. It would for them be a safer and a more respectable policeman.

As to the English workmen, they hate Bonaparte^m more than Bismarckⁿ, principally because he is the aggressor. At the same time they say: “The¹⁹ plague on both your houses”^o, and if the

English oligarchy, as it seems very inclined, should take part in the war against France, there will be a “tuck” at London. For my own part, I do everything in my power, through the means of the International^q, to stimulate this “Neutrality” spirit and to baffle the “paid” (paid by the “respectables”) leaders of the English working class who strain every nerve to mislead them.

I hope the measures as to the houses within the fortification rayon will not hurt you.

Thousand kisses to my sweet little Schnaps^r.

Yours devotedly

Old Nick

Erläuterungen

- a) Napoléon III (1808-1873)
- b) Napoléon III (1808-1873)
- c) Arndt, Ernst Moritz (1769-1860)
- d) [Zotero Link für: Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland](#)
- e) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)
- f) Bismarck-Schönhausen, Otto von (1815-1898)
- g) Stieber, Wilhelm (1818-1882)
- h) Liebknecht, Wilhelm (1826-1900)
- i) Der Volksstaat
- j) Bebel, August (1840-1913)
- k) Napoléon III (1808-1873)
- l) Napoléon III (1808-1873)
- m) Napoléon III (1808-1873)
- n) Bismarck-Schönhausen, Otto von (1815-1898)
- o) **Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet**^p. Act III, Scene 1.
- p) [Zotero Link für: Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet](#)
- q) Internationale Arbeiter-Assoziation (IAA) / International Workingmen's Association (IWA) / Association Internationale des Travailleurs (AIT)
- r) Lafargue, Charles Étienne (31.12.1868-1872)

Kritischer Apparat

- 1) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 2) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 3) Tilgung durch Überschreibung des ursprünglichen Textes
- 4) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 5) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 6) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 7) Tilgung durch Streichung
- 8) Tilgung durch Streichung
- 9) über der Zeile eingetragen
- 10) Tilgung durch Streichung
- 11) Tilgung durch Streichung

- 12)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 13)** Tilgung durch Streichung
- 14)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 15)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 16)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 17)** innerhalb der Zeile eingetragen
- 18)** über der Zeile eingetragen
- 19)** über der Zeile eingetragen