

The European Heritage in Economics and the Social Sciences
Series Editors: Jürgen G. Backhaus · Günther Chaloupek
Hans A. Frambach

Jürgen Georg Backhaus
Günther Chaloupek
Hans A. Frambach *Editors*

200 Years of Friedrich Engels

A Critical Assessment of His Life
and Scholarship



Springer

Contents

Introduction	1
Günther Chaloupek and Hans A. Frambach	
Friedrich Engels at 200 Revisiting His Maiden Paper “Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy” (1844)	9
Heinz D. Kurz	
The Internal Contradiction of Land Rent and Young Engels’ Critical Theory of Private Ownership	37
Tang Zhengdong	
Engels, Werner Sombart, and the Significance of Marx’s Economics	47
Günther Chaloupek	
Friedrich Engels and Positivism: An Attempt at Classification	63
Hans A. Frambach	
Engels’ Conceptions of Dialectics, Nature, and Dialectics of Nature	77
Kaan Kangal	
Friedrich Engels and the Revolution	91
Frits van Holthoon	
Remarks on the Embarrassed Publishing History of Engels, <i>Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England</i>	107
Wilfried Nippel	
“Economic Facts Are Stronger Than Politics”: Friedrich Engels, American Industrialization, and Class Consciousness	121
James M. Brophy	
Engels’ Strategic Advice to the Representatives of the Italian Labour Movement	137
Paolo Dalvit	

Friedrich Engels and Electricity 153
Eberhard Illner

**Two Sides of Young Friedrich Engels: Private Letters
and Professional Studies** 167
Karl-Heinz Schmidt

Engels' Conceptions of Dialectics, Nature, and Dialectics of Nature



Kaan Kangal

Engels' name stands and falls today with a variety of his contributions to socialist thought and Marxist philosophy. Yet there is one particular component of the Marxist body of thought that has been subject to a group of controversies for quite some time for which Engels is usually held responsible: dialectics and dialectics of nature. It is curious and ironic that a theoretical contribution to an intellectual tradition within the history of European political philosophy could be perceived and depicted as a major distortion of that tradition. In Engels' case, this irony is captured by the phrase "the Engels problem." In this chapter, I will first briefly summarize what "the Engels problem" is about and lay out its connection to the reception history of Engels' dialectics. Then, I will delve into the general outlines of Engels' dialectics and focus on his intentions, tasks, and purposes in pursuing dialectics in some of his prominent works on this theme from 1870s to 1880s, most notably in *Anti-Dühring* and the *Dialectics of Nature*. In the final section, I will briefly discuss some of the open questions of Engels' natural dialectics.

1 The Engels Problem

The so-called Engels problem is perhaps as old as a footnote in Georg Lukács's 1923 book *History and Class Consciousness*. Lukács (1971, 24) famously claimed there that "Engels – following Hegel's mistaken lead – extended the [dialectical] method also to the knowledge of nature." On Lukács's (1977, 175) reading, Engels' dialectics was misleading insofar as Marx's dialectical method was limited to "historical-social reality," while "natural knowledge" lacks "crucial determinations

K. Kangal (✉)
Nanjing University, Nanjing, PR China