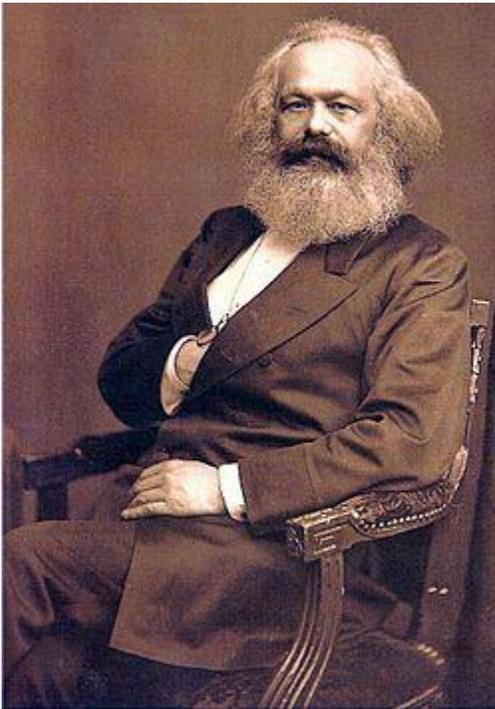


Communist Manifesto, 1847

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels



*Karl Marx was a German philosopher, political economist, historian, political theorist, sociologist, and revolutionary socialist, who developed the socio-political theory of Marxism. He published various books during his lifetime, with the most notable being *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) and *Capital* (1867-1894), many of which were co-written with his friend, the fellow German revolutionary socialist Friedrich Engels.[3]*

Born into a wealthy middle class family in Triers, Marx went on to study at both the University of Bonn and the University of Berlin, where he became interested in the philosophical ideas of the Young Hegelians. Following the completion of his studies, he became a journalist, writing for a radical newspaper, where he began to use Hegelian concepts of dialectical materialism to influence his ideas on socialism. Moving to Paris, France in 1843, he began writing for other radical newspapers, as well as writing a series of books, several of which were co-written with Engels. Exiled to Brussels in Belgium in 1845, he became a leading figure of the Communist League, before moving to London, England in 1849, where, living in poverty, he proceeded to continue writing and formulating his theories about the nature of society.

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

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild-master [3] and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes...

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 bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other -- bourgeoisie and proletariat...

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors", and has left no other nexus between people than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment". It has drowned out 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 has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers.

Karl Marx: Communist Manifesto

1. According to Marx and Engels, on what struggle is the history of society based?
2. Who is oppressed in each of the following relationships?
 - a. Patrician and Plebeian
 - b. Guildmaster and Journeyman
 - c. Bourgeoisie and Proletariat
3. According to Marx and Engels, there has always been oppression. Why do they feel that their epoch is worse than previous epochs?
4. According to Marx and Engels, what ties bound the lord to his serfs?
5. What ties now bind the bourgeoisie to the proletariat?
6. Why do Marx and Engels believe that the ties between a lord and his serfs were more acceptable than those between the bourgeoisie and proletariat?