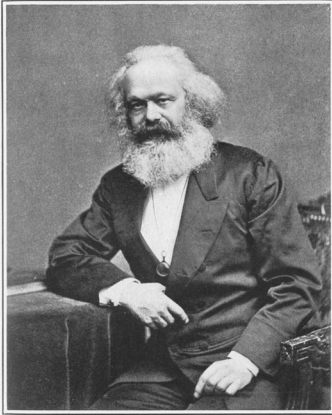


Who is Karl Marx? What is *The Communist Manifesto*?

Directions: Read the excerpt below and respond to the questions on the right.



Karl Marx

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Karl Heinrich Marx (May 5, 1818 – March 14, 1883) was a revolutionary activist and a prolific writer. Trained as a philosopher, self-educated as a political economist, and an organizer of the International Workingmen's Association, Marx became interested in social change during his university studies.

Upon receiving his doctorate in absentia from the University of Jena in 1841, Marx was hired as editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*, a German

newspaper. There he championed the rights of peasants against the Prussian government in an editorial column. This led to his opponents accusing Marx of being a "**communist**" and to his being **ostracized**. Marx left for Paris where he continued to suffer accusation from the Prussian and the French government.

Marx developed his revolutionary theories over a period of four decades beginning in 1843. He formulated his theories with the intention to liberate wage workers or laborers from the capitalist societies of nineteenth century Europe. He maintained that in order to emancipate humanity from economic domination, a social revolution was needed. The envisioned result would transform the existing economic structures, and create a society in which property, particularly the means of production would no longer be held privately. Marx's theories were developed in close collaboration with Friedrich Engels.

[...]

In 1848, Marx published *The Communist Manifesto* where he shared his ideas on the impacts of capitalism and the need for a revolution. To Marx, feudal lords, land owners and capitalists were pitted against the ruled working class. This claim is summed up in the opening line of *The Communist Manifesto*: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." Marx predicted the demise of capitalism through a workers' revolution that would lead to a utopian "classless society" where, according to Marx, "people work according to their ability and get according to their needs" and "in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

1. When did Karl Marx become interested in social change?

2. What did Marx do while an editor for *Rheinische Zeitung*? How was he treated?

3. What were Marx's early revolutionary ideas concerned with?

4. What did Marx hope would be the impact of his revolutionary ideas?

5. Who did Marx work closely with to develop his ideas?

6. What did Marx believe about the relationship between the rich and poor?

7. What did Marx believe history was made of?

8. What did Marx believe would lead to the demise or end of capitalism?

Source: http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Karl_Marx

Lenin's Political Ideology [Beliefs] vs. Karl Marx

Vladimir Lenin identified himself as a follower of the ideas of Karl Marx, a Marxist, but his political beliefs showed that he changed Marx's Communism to fit the Russian context. He made his argument for turning Russia into a Communist state stronger by citing Marx.

Marx Believed	Lenin Believed
The working class would be the ones to start the Communist revolution and overthrow the capitalist class	Intellectuals could start the revolution of the working class against the capitalists
In order to get to a Communist state a civilization must first be industrialized and live under the rule of the bourgeoisie [the rich capitalists]	An agrarian country, like Russia, could skip the industrial stage that Marx described and create a Communist state

Lenin and Bolsheviks Gain Support Amongst Peasants, Workers, and Soldiers

Lenin returned to Russia in 1917 after being in exile for his political beliefs. When he returned to lead the Bolsheviks, they were not a powerful political party, but they gained popular support from peasants, workers, and soldiers through meetings and speeches when they expounded upon their slogan, "**Peace, Land, and Bread.**" If in power, they promised peace by taking Russia out of WWI. They would take control of all of the land in Russia and re-distribute it evenly to peasants and workers, and end starvation by taking control of farms to produce more food and give it out equally to the population.

November Revolution: Bolsheviks Seize Power

In November, 1917, the Bolshevik party leaders and a group of factory workers who supported them called the Red Guards, joined by some soldiers that left the Russian army, attacked the provisional government in Petrograd. Lenin the Bolsheviks took control of the government in a couple of days and several other similar actions were taken by Bolsheviks in other important Russian cities.

The Bolsheviks set about transforming Russia into the world's first **Communist** nation. They renamed Russia the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**, also known as the Soviet Union.

On the eve of the take-over Lenin wrote a *Call To Power*, a piece outlining the reasons for the Bolshevik's actions and their plans for when they are in power.

Lenin: Call to Power, Oct 24, 1917

1	The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.
2	

3	
4	With all my might I urge comrades to realize that everything now hangs by a thread;
5	that we are confronted by problems which are not to be solved by conferences or
6	congresses (even congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses,
7	by the struggle of the armed people.
8	
9	...We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, having
10	first disarmed the officer cadets, and so on.
11	
12	We must not wait! We may lose everything!
13	
14	Who must take power?
15	That is not important at present. Let the Revolutionary Military Committee do it, or
16	" <i>some other institution</i> " which will declare that it will relinquish power only to the true
17	representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the army, the interests of
18	the peasants, the interests of the starving.
19	
20	...If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Soviets but on their
21	behalf.
22	The seizure of power is the business of the uprising...
23	
24	...It would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the
25	chance slip, knowing that the salvation of the revolution, the offer of peace, the
26	salvation of Petrograd, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants
27	depend upon them.
28	
29	The government is tottering. It must be given the death-blow at all costs.
	Source: Fordham Modern History Sourcebook. http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1917lenin1.asp