

### Karl Marx and Communism

While Adam Smith believed that free market capitalism would lead to better opportunities for everyone, Karl Marx, a German economist and philosopher pointed out some flaws in this system. He pointed out that the factory workers had genuine opportunities but were being exploited as a consequence of the capitalist system. In other words, the abuses were not merely the result of the way in which capitalism was practiced, but there was a flaw.

In *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote that the working class would eventually revolt and take control of the means of production. All the instruments of power—the governments, the courts, the police, the church—were on the side of the rich against the workers. Once the class struggle was resolved by the massive uprisings of the exploited, Marx predicted that the instruments of power would no longer be needed. The impact of Marxism was enormous, and served as the foundation of socialism and communism.

Marx and Engels were not just theorizing, they were also observing, and there was much discontent to support their view. Great numbers of people with influence began to realize how inhumane the factory system was and started to do something about it.

1. What problem did Marx see with the capitalist system?
2. According to Marx what was going to happen with the working class?
3. What did Marxism inspire?

Marxism was an economic and political philosophy named for Karl Marx. It is also known as scientific socialism. Marxism has had a profound impact on contemporary culture; modern communism is based on it. This is fundamentally, a system of social organization in which property (especially real property and the means of production) is held in common. Most modern socialist theories derive from Marxism, including socialism. Socialism is a general term for the political and economic theory that advocates a system of collective or government ownership and management of the means of production and distribution of goods.

It has also had tremendous effect on academia, influencing disciplines from economics to philosophy and literary history. Although no one treatise by Marx and his coworker Friedrich Engels cover all aspects of Marxism, the *Communist Manifesto* suggests many of its premises.

1. What is communism?
2. What is the difference between Marxism and capitalism?