

## **Karl Marx (1818-1883)**

Received doctorate in philosophy from University of Berlin in 1841

1843: After his newspaper was closed by the government, moved to Paris

1844: Began collaboration with Friedrich Engels & wrote *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*

1845: Expelled from France, moved to Brussels, co-authored *The German Ideology*

1848: Co-authored *Communist Manifesto* for the Communist League

1849: Moved to London, began to withdraw from activism and undergo research into the workings of capitalism

1852: Began *Capital*, first volume published in 1867

1864: Joined the *International* (disbanded in 1876)

Final years spent in poverty and illness

# The Communist Manifesto

## I. Bourgeois and Proletarians

Driving force of history: class struggle

Current struggle between bourgeoisie & proletariat

The bourgeoisie (capitalists) have changed the world

- Expanded world markets (and made nations less important)

- Taken over the state

- Replaced all relationships with market exchanges

- Accomplished many wonders

- Constantly developed new forms of production, resulting in creation of “more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together”

- Urbanized population

Capitalism is plagued by crises of over-production that require expansions of markets

The bourgeoisie have brought into existence the proletariat

- Proletariat must sell its labor to survive

- Work has lost its individual character, proletariat made into “appendage of the machine”

- Cost of production has been reduced to subsistence level

- Proletariat grows in numbers and strength with the growth of industry

- The proletariat organize and gains political rights

“What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.”

## II. Proletarians and Communists

Communists share interests with the proletariat, point out their common interests and represent the interests of the movement

Their goal is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and, more specifically, abolish private property

Objection: Communists want to abolish “the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man’s own labor”

Response: The bourgeoisie don’t create any thing of value, but exploit the proletariat. The private property of the proletariat has already been abolished.

Objection: Communists want to abolish the family

Response: The bourgeoisie have already destroyed the family

Objection: Communists want to abolish nations

Response: The proletariat has no nation

Ideas depend upon the conditions of material existence: “The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.”

### **Conclusion of the Manifesto**

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Working men of all countries, unite!