

# Marxism hw

1. What did Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels write?
2. In it they said that human societies are always divided into \_\_\_\_\_. The middle class “\_\_\_\_\_” (employers or bourgeoisie) and the workers “\_\_\_\_\_” (proletariat).
3. How did the Industrial Revolution impact these two groups?
4. How did he say capitalism would destroy itself?  
Factories would...  
Large proletariat revolt...  
Workers, sharing the profit, would...  
Workers would...  
After a period of cooperative living and education...
5. Define: pure communism-
6. Marx and Engels had believed that only \_\_\_\_\_ forces dominate society. What do we know today that also influences history?
7. Why has the gap between the rich and poor not widened like Marx and Engels predicted?
8. What happened to communism during the Cold War?

## Marxism

### Marxism: Radical Socialism

The writings of a German journalist named Karl Marx introduced the world to a radical type of socialism called Marxism. Marx and Friedrich Engels, a German whose father owned a textile mill in Manchester, outlined their ideas in a 23-page pamphlet called *The Communist Manifesto*.

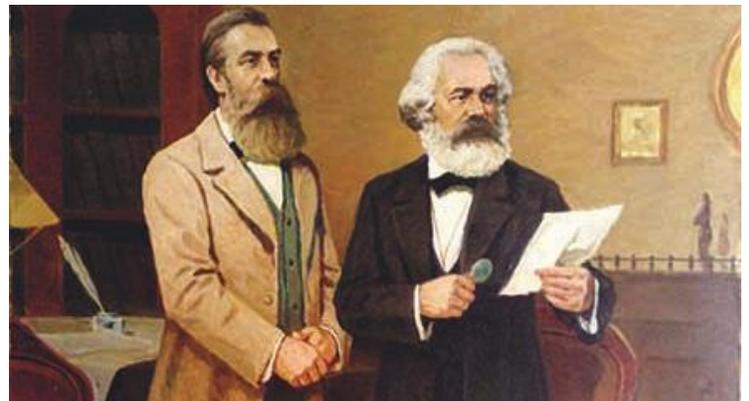
### ***The Communist Manifesto***

In their manifesto, Marx and Engels argued that human societies have always been divided into warring classes. In their own time, these were the middle class “haves” or employers, called the bourgeoisie, and the “have-nots” or workers, called the proletariat. While the wealthy controlled the means of producing goods, the poor performed backbreaking labor under terrible conditions.

This situation resulted in conflict:

“Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild master 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.”

KARL MARX and FRIEDRICH ENGELS, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)



According to Marx and Engels, the Industrial Revolution had enriched the wealthy and impoverished the poor. The two writers predicted that the workers would overthrow the owners: “The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite.”

### **The Future According to Marx**

Marx believed that the capitalist system, which produced the Industrial Revolution, would eventually destroy itself in the following way. Factories would drive small artisans out of business, leaving a small number of manufacturers to control all the wealth. The large proletariat would revolt, seize the factories and mills from the capitalists, and produce what society needed. Workers, sharing in the profits, would bring about economic equality for all people. The workers would control the government in a “dictatorship of the proletariat.” After a period of cooperative living and education, the state or government would wither away as a classless society developed.

Marx called this final phase pure communism. Marx described communism as a form of complete socialism in which the means of production—all land, mines, factories, railroads, and businesses—would be owned by the people. Private property would in effect cease to exist. All goods and services would be shared equally.

Published in 1848, *The Communist Manifesto* produced few short-term results. Though widespread revolts shook Europe during 1848 and 1849, Europe’s leaders eventually put down the uprisings. Only after the turn of the century did the fiery Marxist pamphlet produce explosive results. In the 1900s, Marxism inspired revolutionaries such as Russia’s Lenin, China’s Mao Zedong, and Cuba’s Fidel Castro.

These leaders adapted Marx’s beliefs to their own specific situations and needs.

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels stated their belief that economic forces alone dominated society. Time has shown, however, that religion, nationalism, ethnic loyalties, and a desire for democratic reforms may be as strong influences on history as economic forces. In addition, the gap between the rich and the poor within the industrialized countries failed to widen in the way that Marx and Engels predicted, mostly because of the various reforms enacted by governments.

### **Communism Today**

Communism expanded to all parts of the world during the Cold War that followed the end of World War II. At the peak of Communist expansion in the 1980s, about 20 nations were Communist-controlled, including two of the world’s largest—China and the Soviet Union. However, dissatisfaction with the theories of Karl Marx had been developing. Eventually, most Communist governments were replaced. Today, there are only five Communist countries—China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Laos in Asia and Cuba in the Caribbean.