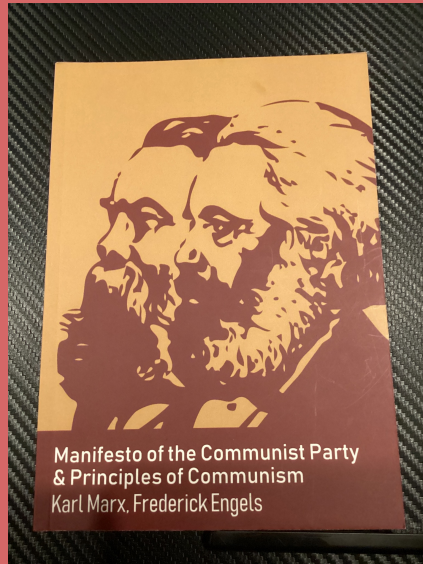


# The Communist Manifesto



Karl Marx & Frederick Engels

①

# The Communist Manifesto

3 - First appeared as pamphlet in London, 1848

**REVOLUTION** brewing across Europe

23 page pamphlet published as manifesto of the Communist League

9 **K. Marx** 1883 Preface - Engels

"all history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes"

11 1888 Preface

"Wherever independent proletarian movements... show[ed] signs of life, they were ruthlessly hunted down"



②

(Marx & Engel's crew:)

## International Working Men's Association

14 Engels - "Socialism was, in 1847, a middle-class movement, [while] Communism was a working-class mvmt."

Continues: "Socialism was, on the Continent at least, 'respectable'; Communism was the very opposite."

16 English translator - Samuel Moore

26 1892 Preface: "The Revolution of 1848, which under the banner of the proletariat, after all, merely let the proletarian fighters do the work of the bourgeoisie"

Me: a liberal revolution that still was better for workers than before?

28 Engels: "1848 was not a socialist revolution, it paved the way, prepared the ground for the latter"

"The fruits are ripening"

③

# Manifesto of the Communist Party

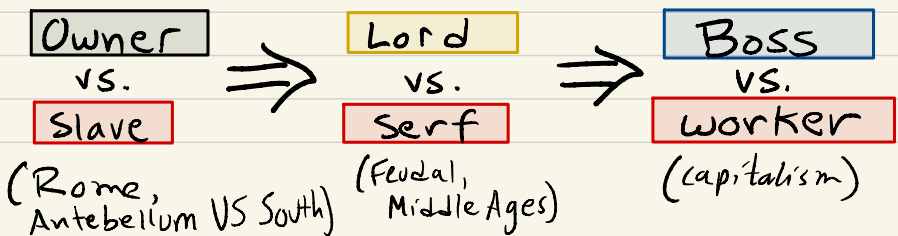
3) "A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism."

- conservative forces - priests, kings, cops and capitalists conspire to fight back radical movements like communism
- Manifesto intended to be a public declaration of their aims and views

## Chapter 1: Bourgeois and Proletarians

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of **CLASS STRUGGLES**"

- oppressor vs. oppressed in different forms throughout history



# "Two Great Hostile Camps" / Classes:

## Bourgeoisie

vs.

## Proletariat

AKA the "owners",  
"bosses", capitalists

AKA the "proles",  
the workers,  
the working class

↓  
Sprang from traders, merchants, lords, conquerors who amassed capital and used it to purchase, build or seize the means of production

↓  
Sprang from the serfs, the former slaves, the landless & poor, and small time craft and tradesmen priced out of their markets and unable to keep up; guildsmen now unable to produce goods on their own as industry expands

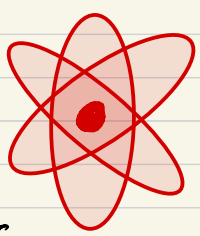
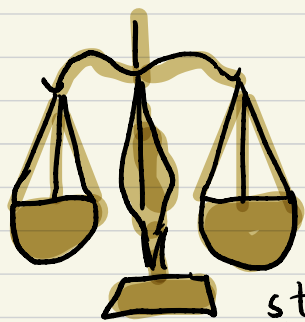
↓  
Discovery of New World and colonial expansion helped bourgeoisie gain wealth & land

↓  
have no capital to offer for sale except their own labor

↓  
the modern state is a tool used to serve their interests

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- The **bourgeoisie** slowly gained strength, status and privilege as their numbers and wealth increased from the late middle ages to the industrial age
- the **bourgeoisie** ended **feudal relations** and, through **liberal revolutions**, the **absolute power of kings**
- power in their ideal society no longer comes from divine right or heredity - it's from **wealth**
- When the dominant class oppresses the weaker class now, it is more subtle than the age of knights, lords, or ancient empires



"The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every hitherto honoured 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-labourers."

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To be fair, the bourgeoisie has spearheaded great feats of culture, engineering, and exploration through its pursuit of profit

- BUT it's also a destructive force. The capitalist HAS to innovate in order to survive a competitive market and this means revolutionizing the way it produces goods and the ways it exploits workers. With this constant force, all of society changes.

"All that is solid melts into air,  
 all that is holy is profaned,  
 and man is at last compelled  
 to face with sober senses, his  
 real conditions of life, and  
 his relations with his kind."

←  
 Marx  
 +  
 Engels

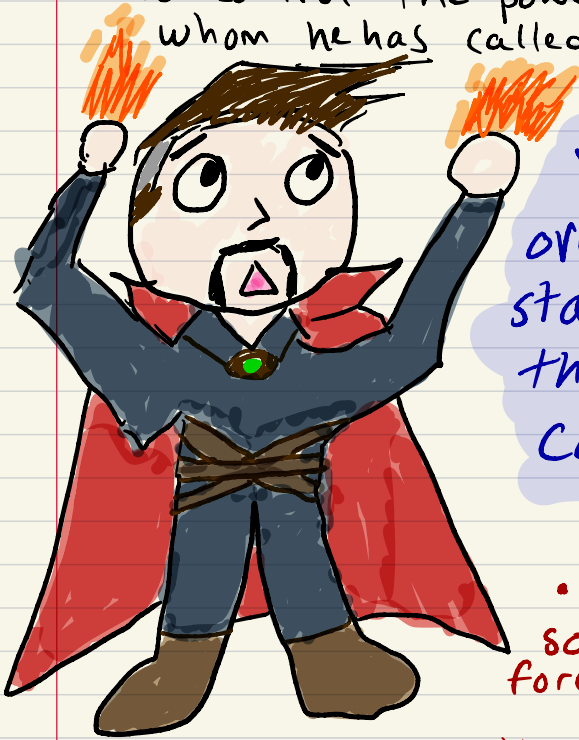
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- the market must be "constantly expanding" under capitalism
- bourgeoisie "concentrated property in a few hands"

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- Capitalism is a beast no one can truly control - bourgeoisie is like "the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells"



"The crises of overproduction are starting to come through... and I can't stop them!"

- When crises occur, some of the productive forces are destroyed

• in any other age, a crisis of overproduction would be absurd

- capitalists get through crises by
  - a) destroying the businesses that are least able to weather them
  - b) securing new markets
  - c) exploiting their existing ones even harder



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**Bourgeoisie** calls upon the **PROLETARIAT** to produce for them

- have to work, and **sell their labor**, in order to live
- that work has to **make capital** (in this case, a product or service that can be sold for a profit) for a **capitalist**

Marx & Engels: workers become "an **appendage of the machine**"

- capitalists/bourgeoisie basically only pay workers their "**means of subsistence**" in wages.



**Means of subsistence:** what it takes for a worker to live - enough to eat, have shelter, pay bills, meet basic needs, sleep and come back to work again

- oh, and make babies, then raise them to be the next generation of workers



**REMEMBER:** the **LABOR THEORY OF VALUE**

- workers create more value than their bosses pay in wages; that **SURPLUS VALUE** goes to the capitalist, not the worker

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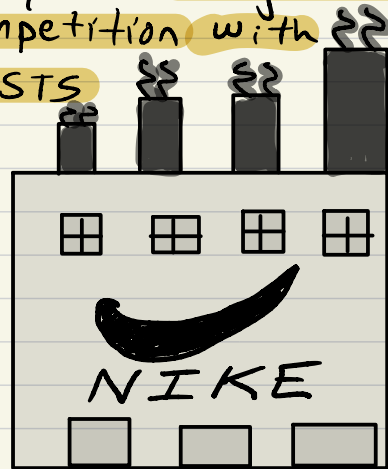
THE LOWER-MIDDLE CLASS - tradespeople,

small business owners, small farmers and soon are all slowly squeezed by the rising costs of doing business in competition with

BIG-TIME CAPITALISTS



GETS  
WRECKED  
BY



- Small businesses can't beat the scale & efficiency (& lower prices) of the big ones that invest their capital in new methods of production

42

- Revolutions of 1848 - proles fight against remnants of the old order, and the middle-class elements, but this only clears the field for the bourgeoisie

43

- competition between workers keeps them from unifying into a cohesive movement

44

"The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary... they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history"

ME: Was Marx mistaken here? Maybe not for his time, but history since has shown many of these groups have reason to throw in with the proles and can even be allies

- mentions the "dangerous class" of vagrants, criminals, etc.
- The lumpenproletariat
- could be allies, or be co-opted by bourgeoisie

YOU ARE (ALMOST) HERE

46

# HOW DOES IT END?

The need to accumulate profit, expand & compete leads to exploitation of workers so severe that workers can't survive their daily lives, much less buy the goods & services they produce. Consumer spending slows, profits fall. Misery reigns. The system collapses

①  
"What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers

## Chapter II

### Proletarians and Communists

- 47
- Marx and Engels spend some time identifying themselves with the interests of the proletariat
- 48
- However, communists are described by the authors as:
    - NOT nationalistic
    - in solidarity with all workers everywhere
    - dedicated to overthrowing bourgeoisie & gaining political power for the proles

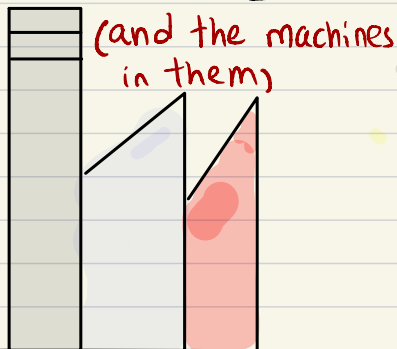
**SUMMED UP: ABOLISH PRIVATE PROPERTY!**



Wait - that's terrifying, right?  
What about small businesses, or my house?

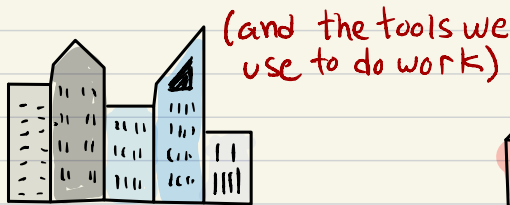
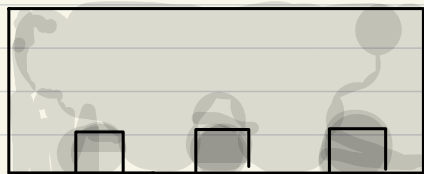
# What IS Private Property?

FACTORIES

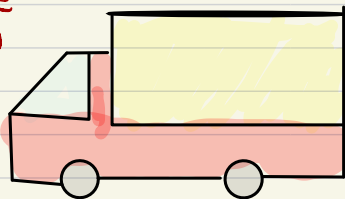


★ If it's Used to Produce Commodities to be bought and sold!

WAREHOUSES



OFFICE TOWERS

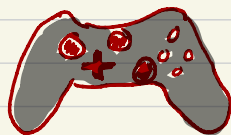
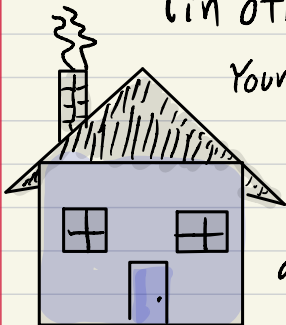


TRUCKS

# What is not private property?

(in other words, what's our personal property?)

Your house, your videogames, your toothbrush



and pretty much everything else you have when you clock out of work!

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• Marx and Engels discuss the price of labor, and the means of subsistence

• freedom of the market is really only freedom for the bourgeoisie, because as proles are exploited to the point where they can't survive, only the wealthy will enjoy that freedom

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"Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society - all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of that appropriation"

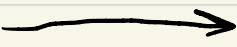
- Marx & Engels

- opposes exploiting the labor of women + children

- "the working men have no country"  
• national differences will diminish as the global working class unites  
• causes of war will be reduced or eliminated

55

### GOAL OF THE REVOLUTION:

"wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie... centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e. of the proletariat organized as the ruling class"  
(continued) 

- initially, these measures must be "despotic" - read "forceful" or authoritarian if needed
- "measures will of course be different in different countries"

Generally:

- 1) Abolish private holding of productive land property
- 2) Heavy progressive income tax
- 3) An end to inheritance
- 4) Confiscate property of those who fight the workers or leave the country
- 5) National bank with monopoly on credit & lending
- 6) centralize communication & transportation
- 7) Everyone works - "industrial armies" for production & agriculture
- 8) Free education & abolishing child labor as known at the time

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Discuss: are some of those ideas obsolete or undesirable from a modern point of view, even as a socialist? Why or why not? Have socialist movements since taught us another way is possible?

## CHAPTER III:

### Socialist and Communist Literature

- 57
- Authors discuss earlier socialist movements beginning in feudal eras
    - notes that **Christianity** has historically been critical, hostile, or skeptical of private property, the state, and even the institution of marriage
- 59
- Petit-bourgeois socialism
- 60
- German socialism
- 63
- Conservative "Bourgeois" socialism
    - reforms that preserve existing, unjust order with some extra mercies at the margins



(16)

- 65
- Utopian Socialism (Gracchus Babeuf, Fourier, etc.)
    - care for proletarians as a suffering class, do not prioritize them on the basis of the true value they create
    - want peaceful change, non-revolutionary, without prejudice toward exploitative classes
    - Marx and Engels believe them doomed to failure

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## CHAPTER IV

- Suggest that communists align w/ various other parties and groups to achieve common aims

- France - critical support and tentative alignment w/ Social Democrats

- America - some common interest w/ agrarian reform parties

- Germany is their focus as they believed it had the most industrial and revolutionary potential

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"WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!"