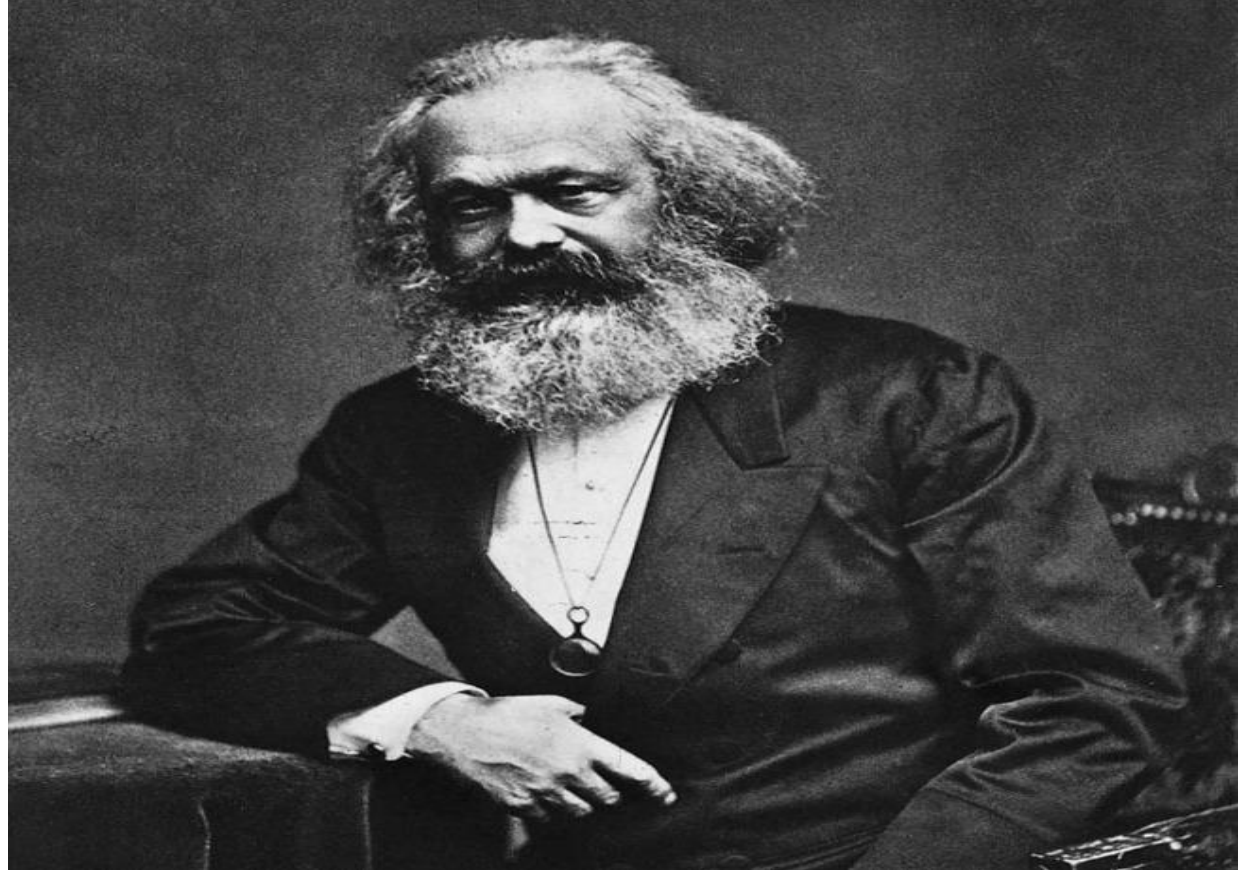




**MARXISM™**



REVOLUTIONARY  
SOCIALISM  
Marxism

# KARL MARX 1818-1883

- ◉ Wrote (along with Friedrich Engels) two main works
  - ◉ **1848: The Communist Manifesto**
  - ◉ **1867: Capital**

# MARX

## SCIENTIST OR PHILOSOPHER

Nowadays, Marx is considered to be a political philosopher, however he never advocated this label himself, preferring instead to be seen as a scientist.

What's the difference?

# ANSWER

- Scientists tend to take an ‘empirical’ evidence-based approach to their work.
- Marx felt he could SEE the evidence for his theories in action, principally things like the French Revolution in 1789

# THERE ARE THREE KEY PRINCIPLES OF MARXISM

◉ 1: Historical Materialism

◉ 2: Dialectical Change

◉ 3: Class Consciousness

# 1: HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

- ⦿ *“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.”*
- ⦿ 1: Define this

# ANSWER

- Marx believed that class struggle was at the heart of most, if not all human conflict and action.
- For example, take the Reformation. Some may have thought this was about religion (Catholics vs Protestants), however a Marxist would say that the comparatively poorer Protestants were rising up against the exploitation and corruption within the rich institution of the Catholic Church

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE

- ◉ WW1 is usually perceived to be about nationalism and militarism, however what would the Marxist reading be? How can we identify Class as the route of this conflict?
- ◉ Who died in the trenches?
- ◉ Who made the decisions?



# NOW YOUR TURN

- Describe the Marxist reading of these historical events/movements
- 1: Colonialism & Slavery
- 2: The Holocaust
- 3: The Black Lives Matter movement
- 4: The Crusades
- 5: The Capitalist Structure

## 2: DIALECTICAL CHANGE

- ◉ This is a process of **change and development** brought about by conflict of **two opposing forces**.
- ◉ Because Marx interpreted History in class terms, the **two opposing forces** for him are the **exploited and exploiters**.
- ◉ The change and development will be a change from one form of politics (**capitalism**) to another (**communism**) and will happen via revolution.

# THINK OF...

- Pros and Cons of using a revolution to obtain political change. (5 mins)



# REVOLUTION?

- ◉ Pros

- ◉ Quick
- ◉ Complete Change

- ◉ Cons

- ◉ Violent
- ◉ Historically unreliable and unstable (look at 1789/1917)
- ◉ Undemocratic

# 3: CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

- ◉ Before a proletarian revolution can take place, the proletariat needs to:
  - ◉ A: Realise that it is oppressed
  - ◉ B: Form together to spearhead the revolution



# CAN YOU INTERPRET MARX?

- Explain what Marx is saying in each of the three quotations from the Communist Manifesto?

