**Marx (1818-1883)**

**Historical Materialism:** "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.” History itself is nothing but an endless power struggle over controlling the means of production (the natural resources, etc.needed to live.) All struggles, though they may appear to be over nationalism or religion etc., are really rooted in a class struggle over the means of production.

All cultural beliefs (ideologies) follow material/economic relationships; we cannot escape our economic lives (our dependence on others for goods and services) and all of our basic beliefs -- and Marx does mean all -- are a reflection of those economic relationships. History is shaped by economic relations alone. Elements such as religion, culture, ideology, and even the individual human being, play a very little role.

**The Means (or Mode) of Production:** This is Marx's term for all the material things necessary to produce wealth or products -- it includes everything (except labor) necessary to make and distribute stuff. It includes: natural resources (like land, minerals, oil, trees etc.), tools and factories; means of distribution (like roads and highways, vehicles), the way in which a society *organizes* itself for material production, etc.

Modern society has been “simplified” into two classes:

Proletariat (working class): those individuals who sell their labor and do not own the means of production

Bourgeoisie (Business owners): those who "own the means of production" and exploit the proletariat.

The Proletariat are always struggling to become the Bourgeoisie and the Bourgeoisie are always struggling to keep them from doing so. All conflicts, including all wars, including all racism, including all sexism, are essentially this conflict: a battle between these two social classes over the means of production.

The proletarians live only as long as they can find work, and they can find work only as long as their labor increases capital. They are a commodity, and are vulnerable to all the fluctuations of the market. Due to the development of machines and the division of labor, the proletarian's work has lost all "charm;" the proletarian is simply an appendage of a machine, and has thus become *alienated*.

**Alienation** is the systemic result of living in a socially stratified society, because being a *mechanistic part* of a social class alienates a person from his and her humanity. Working under capitalism alientates workers, because they do not produce freely as an expression of their true human potential and aspirations but under coercive conditions that dictate what and how they must produce. Each worker is an instrument, a thing, not a person; and so what should be familiar about work is made foreign by capitalism.

Workers are alientated in four ways:

* Alienation from product of labor: The object produced doesn’t belong to worker. The product of labor becomes an alien object that workers do not control and that comes to rule over them.
* Alienation from process of labor: In the process of labor, humans must suppress their unique human qualities as potentially free producers and subordinate themselves to external control. Labor becomes merely a means to an end (surviving), rather than a means of self development and an end in itself.
* Alienation from other workers: workers relate to others workers not as full human beings but as means to an end and as competitors for their jobs. Obscures fact that workers have same interests, but are pitted against each other. Turns others into objects and commodities (“job market”).
* Alienation from human "species being": workers suppress their unique human capacities for self-expression through creative labor, i.e., they suppress what distinguishes them as a species from other animals. “I am not my job.”

Capitalist Ideology argues that profit belongs to whomever controls capital (material goods and means to produce and distribute those goods). Because this ideology permeates all levels of society, everyone in a capitalist society is trained to view everyone else as a commodity, an object: we are all taught to see each other as something we can exploit...and in a free-market society, this exploitation is the highest good. (Think how success is *defined* in Capitalist society…)

Marxist Ideolodgy argues that profit margins are actually largely located in labor, thus labor has economic value. Capital may belong to the capitalist, but labor belongs to each man or woman him or herself. The working class is exploited in the form of profit: what the laborer rightly earned is given to the capitalist. This is key: no man can own or control the value of another man's labor or the relationship is inherently exploitive and, thus, immoral.

Capitalism is inherently unstable...........

…….. And thus: ReVoLuTioN is inevitable!

The elimination of social classes (and the ensuing conflicts) cannot come about through reforms or changes in government. Rather, a revolution will be required.

But this revolution will be different. In the past, when a class got the upper hand, it tried to subject all of society to its own mode of appropriation. However, the proletariat lack any property of their own to retain or expand. Rather, they must destroy all ways of securing private property at all. Another unique characteristic of the proletariat is that, while past movements were started by minorities, the proletariats are a vast majority, and are acting in the interest of that majority.

Here is the course of revolution Marx thinks will happen:

1. Abolition of private property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.

2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.

3. Abolition of the rights of inheritance.

4. Confiscation of the property of emigrants and rebels.

5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.

6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.

7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of wastelands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

8. Equal liability of all labor. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equitable distribution of the population over the country.

10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc.

*"Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite!"*

- Karl Marx