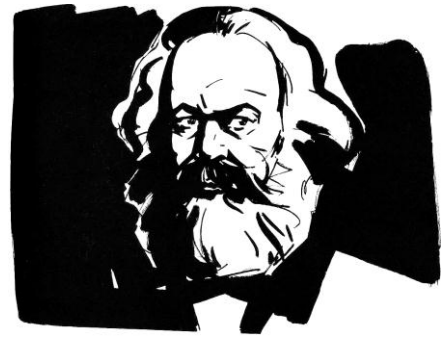


Excerpt from Karl Marx & Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)



During the spread of the industrial revolution across Europe, German philosopher Karl Marx became increasingly concerned with the developing social divisions between the industrial middle class and the industrial working class. Marx came to refer to these groups as the “Bourgeois” (those that owned the means of production) and the “Proletariat” (those that sell their labor to the Bourgeois). Marx’s criticisms of such inequality became of the basis of socialist thought.

The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles.

...In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones... Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes, directly facing each other: **Bourgeoisie** and **Proletariat**...

In proportion as the bourgeoisie’s **capital** (wealth) is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piece-meal, are a commodity, and are thus exposed to all the [evils] of **competition**, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired [job], that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race...

...Masses of laborers, crowded into the factory, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial

army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the over-looker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself.

But with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more...the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. There upon the workers begin to form [**trade unions**] against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers... This organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier... every class struggle is ultimately a political struggle.

...**Wage-labor** rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.