

1 | Background

- At the same time as 1848: The People's Spring was happening, Marx and Engel wrote the Communist Manifesto.
 - Inspires USSR in 1917
- Both were part of a secret society called the Communist League and the manifesto was created as a pamphlet for mass distribution
- Begins with the idea that Communism was haunting Europe (in reality this was more likely to be the The People's Spring)
 - Emphasizes the idea of class struggle and claims all of history is rooted in it
 - Progression in a society is based in conflict between dominant and subordinate classes
 - Depicts revolution of proletariat as an inevitability and that it will head towards egalitarianism
- Waited on distribution originally, then as the conservative trend came to be he was exiled from Prussia, then France
- Only participated in revolution in the form of People's Spring.
- Supported Paris Commune, radical government which led to lots of death in Paris, due to intermediate step of 'dictatorship of the proletariat'
- Wished for something to disrupt Russian autocracy to motivate working class (didn't happen until WW1)

2 | Marxism

- Material focus: the *means of production* (aka what produces things of value) is what is important
 - In feudalism land would be the means of production
 - In capitalism it would be capital
- Those who control the means of production have essentially all the power
 - This is called the bourgeoisie for capitalism, and the subordinates the proletariat
- Natural evolution: primitive-communal, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, then communism
- Capitalism is already failing: the inequity means that workers make things they cannot afford and as a result overproduction can be disastrous at times that lead to layoffs
 - More economic crises, angrier workers
 - More awareness of situation
 - Revolution
- When workers own the means of production the superstructure of human nature will change
 - No more social classes
 - No greed due to different superstructure
- No crime or government
 - Government exists only to perpetuate class dominance
 - No classes, no crime

3 | Legacy

- Scientific view of society with economic determinism has persisted to modern times
- Helped foster socialism in Europe
- Communism not very relevant until Russian revolutionaries
- Russia was where Marxism expanded
 - No legal parties under tsardom, all illegal and secret
 - Das Kapital was translated and got attention
 - Vladimir Lening was the leader of the Bolshevik faction
 - * Bolsheviks seized power after the war in Nov 1917
 - * Revised version of Marxism for Russia called Marxism-Leninism
 - * Survived until 1991 collapse of USSR
 - * Also very popular throughout rest of world