Marx & Socialism
• **Economist, Historian, Philosopher, Journalist (1818–1883)**

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**Karl Marx: A Mini-Biography**
A Two-Class Analysis

• **Proletariat:** the working class who do not share in the profit of their labors

• **Bourgeoisie:** owners – upper class - those who profit from the labors of others
On Economic Alienation & Wage Slavery

- What defines & identifies a person is her/his labour & the products of her/his labour
- A person becomes separated from their labour when she/he sells that labor for a wage and thus becomes separated from the products and profits of labour
- When that person is separated from the profits of her/his labour, she/he becomes alienated from their self
- This alienation results in the wage slavery of that person
• For Marx, freedom is defined in terms of freedom from “alienation” & “economic exploitation” (Fromm)

• But Marx also defines freedom in terms of freedom to “…realize certain spiritual and moral values.” (Fromm)
• “In fact, the realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and of external utility is required. In the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of material production in the strict meaning of the term.”

A Marxist Concept of Freedom
Quite clearly the aim of socialism is man. It is to create a form of production and an organization of society in which man can overcome alienation from his product, from his work, from his fellow man, from himself and from nature; in which he can return to himself and grasp the world with his own powers, thus becoming one with the world. Socialism for Marx was, as Paul Tillich put it, "a resistance movement against the destruction of love in social reality."


Eric Fromm on Marx
• Socialism, for Marx, was never as such the fulfillment of life, but the condition for such fulfillment. When man has built a rational, nonalienated form of society, he will have the chance to begin with what is the aim of life: the "development of human power, which is its own end, the true realm of freedom."

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Eric Fromm on Marx
Socialism, for Marx, is a society which permits the actualization of man's essence, by overcoming his alienation. It is nothing less than creating the conditions for the truly free, rational, active and independent man; it is the fulfillment of the prophetic aim: the destruction of the idols.

Eric Fromm on Marx
Capitalism

- Creates “*synthetic, artificially produced needs*” inconsistent with real needs which “*are rooted in his nature...whose fulfillment is necessary for the realization of his nature.*”

The Idols
Religion

• Marx fought against religion exactly because it is alienated, and does not satisfy the true needs of man. Marx's fight against God is, in reality, a fight against the idol that is called God. Already as a young man he wrote as the motto for his dissertation "Not those are godless who have contempt for the gods of the masses but those who attribute the opinions of the masses to the gods."
The State

- If the state or the society is meant to serve the realization of certain spiritual values, the danger exists that a supreme authority tells man—and forces him—to think and behave in a certain way. The incorporation of certain objectively valid values into social life tends to produce authoritarianism.... The rebellion against princely authority occurred in the name of the nation, and for a while the national state promised to be the representative of freedom. But soon the national state devoted itself to the protection of the material interests of those who owned capital, and could thus exploit the labor of the majority of the population.
Socialism ...returned to the idea of the "good society" as the condition for the realization of man's spiritual needs. It was antiauthoritarian, both as far as the Church and the State are concerned, hence it aimed at the eventual disappearance of the state and at the establishment of a society composed of voluntarily cooperating individuals. Its aim was a reconstruction of society in such a way as to make it the basis for man's true return to himself, without the presence of those authoritarian forces which restricted and impoverished man's mind.... Socialism is the abolition of human self-alienation, the return of man as a real human being.

On Spiritual Alienation
...if, as Aldous Huxley put it, "our present economic, social and international arrangements are based, in large measure, upon organized lovelessness," then Marx's socialism is a protest against this very lovelessness, against man's exploitation of man, and against his exploitativeness towards nature, the wasting of our natural resources at the expense of the majority of men today, and more so of the generations to come. The unalienated man, ...is the man who does not "dominate" nature, but who becomes one with it, who is alive and responsive toward objects, so that objects come to life for him.
For Marx, socialism meant the social order which permits the return of man to himself, the identity between existence and essence, the overcoming of the separateness and antagonism between subject and object, the humanization of nature; it meant a world in which man is no longer a stranger among strangers, but is in his world, where he is at home.

Fromm: Marx’s Realization of Man