SOCIALISM STUDY GUIDE

French Revolution during National Convention (Committee of Public Safety): first time in European history where the government tried to totally plan the economy (e.g. Robespierre’s Law of Maximum sought to freeze prices for certain goods)

Early French Socialists:
Characteristics:
• Believed in Enlightenment idea that people were not evil by nature. They could be virtuous in a suitable environment.
• Against private property and competition
• Equality for women

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Idea</th>
<th>Application</th>
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<tr>
<td>Henri de Saint-Simon:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sought cooperation between intellectuals and industrial managers</td>
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<td>• Gov’t would vanish as it would no longer be needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Fourier</td>
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<td>• Sought small model communities of 1,620 people.</td>
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<td>• Untested in Europe</td>
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<td>• Followers established communities in U.S.</td>
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<td>Robert Owen (English)</td>
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<td>• Like Fourier, sought cooperative communities</td>
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<td>• Attempted to start union movement in England</td>
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<td>• Untested in Europe</td>
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<td>• Founded New Harmony, Indiana</td>
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<td>• Union movement failed during Owen’s time</td>
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<td>Louis Blanc</td>
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<td>• Gov’t had responsibility for welfare of citizens</td>
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<td>• Competition is evil.</td>
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<td>• Gov’t workshops financed by gov’t but owned and operated by workers</td>
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<td>• Gov’t workshops established in France after Revolution of 1830.</td>
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<td>• Closing of workshops in 1840s led to ugly class conflict during Revolution of 1848 (“June Days”)</td>
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<td>Pierre Proudhon, What is Property? (1840)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Value of labor was stolen by the bourgeoisie</td>
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<td>• Private property should be abolished.</td>
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<td>• Considered by some to be an anarchist</td>
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<td>• Influenced Marx and Engels</td>
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SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM (KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS)

The Communist Manifesto (1848) and Das Kapital (1861): Intended to replace utopian hopes and dreams with a brutal, militant blueprint for socialist working class success.

Karl Marx: Theory of dialectical materialism
- The economic interpretation of history: all human history has been determined by economic factors (mainly who controls the means of production and distribution).
- The class struggle: Since the beginning of time there has been a class struggle between the rich and the poor or the exploiters and the exploited.
- Theory of Surplus Value: the true value of a product was labor and, since the worker received a small portion of his just labor price, the difference was surplus value, “stolen” from him by the capitalist.
- Socialism was inevitable: Capitalism contained the seeds of its own destruction (overproduction, unemployment, etc.)
- Violent revolution:
  - The increasing gap between proletariat and bourgeoisie will be so great that the working classes will rise up in revolution and overthrow the elite bourgeoisie.
  - Will create a “dictatorship of the proletariat.” WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!
  - Creation of a classless society: Will result as modern capitalism is dismantled.
  - “From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs,” will take place.

Marxism led the negative response to industrialization
- Socialists united in 1864 to form the First International (Marx one of the principal organizers)
- Growth of socialist parties after 1871 was phenomenal (esp. Germany--S.P.D.; also France, Belgium, Austria-Hungary)
- 1883, Socialists exiled from Russia formed Russian Social Democratic party in Switzerland and it grew rapidly after 1890.

Revisionism: became the dominant form of socialism in late 19th century and early 20th century Europe until the Russian Revolution
- As workers gained right to vote and to participate politically in the nation-state, their attention focused more on elections than on revolutions
- Workers’ standard of living rose gradually but substantially after 1850 (no need to revolt)
- Growth of labor unions reinforced trend toward modernization
- Increasingly, unions focused on bread-and-butter issues--wages, hours, working conditions—rather than pure socialist doctrine.
- Genuine collective bargaining, long opposed by socialist intellectuals as a “sell-out” was officially recognized as desirable by the German Trade Union Congress in 1899.
- A series of strikes proved effective in gaining concessions from employers.
- Edward Bernstein: Evolutionary Socialism (1899) argued Marx’s predictions of ever-greater poverty for workers & ever-greater concentration of wealth in fewer hands had been proved false.
Impact of socialism on European politics became profound by late 19th century

- **Germany:** Social Democratic Party (S.P.D.): Marxist; advocated sweeping social legislation, the realization of genuine democracy, and the demilitarization of the German gov’t.
  - Bismarck forced to institute sweeping reforms in order to minimize the threat from the left
    - 1879, a protective tariff instituted to maintained domestic production
    - Modern social security laws established
    - National sickness and accident insurance laws passed in 1883 & 1884.
    - Old-age pensions and retirement benefits established in 1889
    - Regulated child labor
    - Improved working conditions

- **France:** Socialists led by Jean Juarès gained seats in Chamber of Deputies from 1905 to 1914

- **England:**
  - **Fabian Society** (1883) advanced a form of revisionist Marxism
    - Sought political democracy and economic socialism
  - 1893, Keir Hardie's **Independent Labor Party** rapidly became a vocal 3rd party.
    - Attracted trade unionists, socialists, and those who thought that Conservative and Liberal Parties had no genuine interests in the needs of the general public
  - Foundations for social welfare state created in decade before WWI (meant to guarantee each citizen with a decent standard of living)
    - Right of unions to strike was put into law.
    - Gov’t insurance was provided for those injured on the job
    - unemployment insurance & old-age pensions enacted.
    - Compulsory school attendance law went into effect.
    - Taxes increased on the wealthy (to help fund the welfare state)

**Russian Revolution:**
- **Vladimir Lenin** seeks to create a Marxist society **(communism)**
  - Differs from Marx in that he believes revolution will have to be initiated by a small group of elite professional revolutionaries.
  - **NEP:** Lenin forced to take a “necessary step backwards” and incorporate some capitalism in order to help Russia recover from civil war.
- **Stalin** imposes ruthless communist dictatorship during **Five-Year Plans**

**1919ism:**
- Communists (“Spartacists” led by Rosa Luxembourg) temporarily took control of Berlin
- Inter-war Period: leftist groups became a major political force
- Popular Front in France led by Leon Blum in mid-1930s
- Mussolini was a leading socialist writer in Italy before turning to fascism.
- Communists were the major target of Nazis in 1933

**Post-WWII:**
- Communism spreads to Eastern Europe (1945), North Korea (1945), China (1949), Cuba (1959), Vietnam (1950s) and others.
- Welfare state established in a number of Western European countries: England (under Atlee and the Labour Party), West Germany, France

**Influences “New Left” student movements of 1960s (e.g. Paris student revolts in 1968)**

1989-1991, fall of communism in Eastern Europe