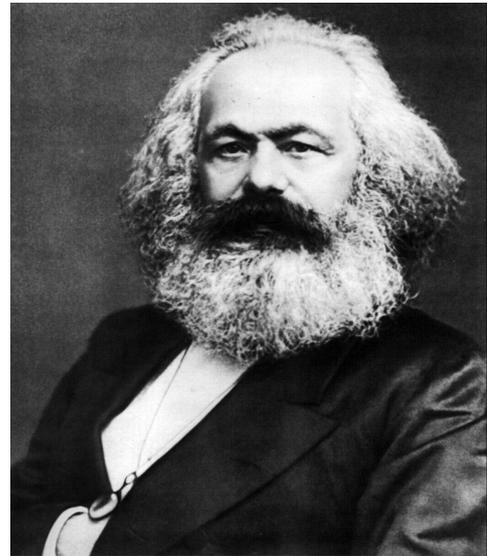


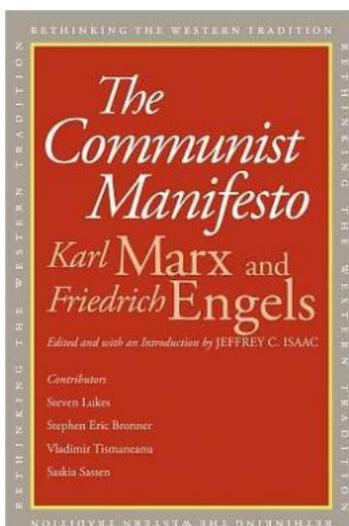
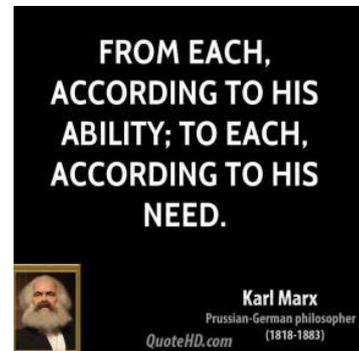
Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Karl Marx is one of the most famous writers and economists who has ever lived. Marx was born in Prussia which was then part of the German Confederation. So we can say that Marx was German. His mother was Jewish, so we can also say that he was Jewish, although he was raised as a Lutheran Christian



Marx was an economist-historian. He was one of the first people to understand that the **industrial revolution** had changed the course of history. This had created two main classes of people: the rich owners of capital and the workers. He described the workers as the '**proletariat**' and the capitalists as the '**bourgeoisie**'. He explained that in a post-industrial society, a country would be organised in the interests of **the elite** (the rich) but that they would pretend to the workers that it was actually run for the interests of the workers. Because the workers were less educated, they could be fooled (think about the doctor versus Kino in *The Pearl*). Karl Mark argued that by selling his or her labour to another person, there is a spiritual loss and that person has lost their freedom.

However, Marx claimed that there would be a political struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and that in the end there would be a **revolution** and the workers would take power. After the workers take power, they would set up a system in the interests of the workers which he called **Socialism** and that this would lead to **Communism**. This is sort of what happened in Russia and in China - but in fact what has happened in China and Russia is that one elite group was replaced by another elite group and nothing has really changed for the workers.



Karl Marx wrote two famous books: **The Communist Manifesto** (1848) and **Das Capital** (written between 1867–1894).

Communism is an ideal of equality between people, where the workers own the capital and everybody has what he needs. Some people say that this is only a dream and not possible because people are too selfish. Other people think that it is the capitalist system that makes people selfish and communism is possible.

What do you think?