

# Marx, Karl



Karl Marx, the founder of communism

Karl Marx, the founder of Communism, described Charles Darwin's book *The Origin of Species*, which set forth the basis of the theory of evolution, as "a book which contains the basis of natural history for our views." [29](#)

Marx demonstrated his regard for Darwin by dedicating his own most important work, *Das Kapital*, to him. His own handwriting in the German edition of the book read, "Mr. Charles Darwin / On the part of his sincere admirer / Karl Marx." [30](#)

The American researcher Conway Zirkle explains why Marx and Engels, the founders of Communism, so readily accepted the idea of evolution after Darwin published *The Origin of Species*:

Evolution, of course, was just what the founders of communism needed to explain how mankind could have come into being without the intervention of any supernatural force, and consequently it could be used to bolster the foundations of their materialistic philosophy. In addition, Darwin's interpretation of evolution-that evolution had come about through the operation of natural selection-gave them an alternative hypothesis to the prevailing teleological explanation of the observed fact that all forms of life are adapted to their conditions. [31](#)

The social scientist Tom Bethell, who works at the Hoover Institute in America, explains the fundamental reasons for the link between the two theories:

Marx admired Darwin's book not for economic reasons but for the more fundamental one that Darwin's universe was purely materialistic, and the explication of it no longer involved any reference to unobservable, nonmaterial causes outside or 'beyond' it. In that important respect, Darwin and Marx were truly comrades. [32](#)

The bond between Marxism and Darwinism is an evident fact on which everyone agrees. This link is set out in biographies of Marx, and is described in a biography of Marx brought out by a publishing house specializing in books with Marxist views:

Darwinism featured a series of facts that supported, proved the reality of and developed Marxist philosophy. The spread of Darwinist, evolutionist ideas created a suitable groundwork for Marxist thought to be understood by the working class in society as a whole. . . Marx, Engels and Lenin attached great value to Darwin's ideas and indicated the scientific importance of these, thus accelerating the spread of those ideas. [33](#)

On the other hand, Marx based historical progress on economics. In his view, society went through various historical phases, and the factor determining them was changes in the relationship between means of production and production itself. The economy determined everything else. This ideology described religion as a fairy tale invented for coercive economic purposes. In the eyes of this superstitious conception, religion was developed by the ruling classes to pacify those they ruled, and was "the opium of the masses."

In addition, Marx thought that societies followed a process of development. A slave-based society developed into a feudal society, and a feudal society turned into a capitalist one. Finally, thanks to a revolution, a socialist society would be constructed, whereupon the most advanced social stage in history would be attained.

Marx's views were evolutionist even before the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. However, Marx and Engels experienced difficulties in accounting for how living things came into being. That was because in the absence of a thesis accounting for living things on the basis of *non-creation*, it was impossible to maintain that religion was an invented falsehood and to base all of history on matter. For that reason, Marx immediately adopted Darwin's theory.

Today, all forms of materialist thinking-and Marx's ideas in particular- have been totally discredited, because in the face of scientific findings, the theory of evolution on which materialism based itself has been completely invalidated. Science refutes the materialist assumption that denies the existence of anything apart from matter, and shows that all living things are the work of a sublime creation.

29. David Jorafsky, *Soviet Marxism and Natural Science*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, p.12.

30. Ralph Colp, Jr., "The Contacts Between Karl Marx and Charles Darwin," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Apr.-Jun., 1974), pp. 329-338.

31. Conway Zirkle, *Evolution, Marxian Biology and the Social Scene*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959, pp. 85-86.

32. Tom Bethell, "Burning Darwin to Save Marx," *Harper's Magazine*, December 1978, pp. 31-38..

33. Karl Marx, *Biyografi* (Biography), Sorun Publishing, 1995, p. 368.

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