

Timothy Ryan
AP Euro
Period C
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Historical Essay Analysis

Title: Karl Marx (#27)

Author: Michael H. Hart

Author's thesis: The writings of Karl Marx have had a greater impact in the world than that of any other philosopher.

Author's evidence:

- a) The writings of Marx and Engels form the theoretical basis of Communism and many forms of socialism
- b) His writings have influenced most major Communist leaders in the past century
- c) Marxism has garnered over a billion followers and has been responsible over 100 million deaths
- d) Major world powers such as Russia and China adopted Communism
- e) Though his ideas were not new or even wholly correct, they motivated people to adopt Communism
- f) After a century of prominence, Marxism seems to be dying out

Author's conclusion about the significance of the topic:

Karl Marx was one of the most influential writers of the past decade. His influence has spanned nearly a century, been implemented in across the world, and has been the cause of 100 million deaths. In this sense, he has had a greater impact than even Hitler or Napoleon.

List below questions you have about the reading.

1. Had Karl Marx not existed, would Communism have achieved such notoriety?
2. Did Marx intend for his writings to have such a negative impact on the world?

To what extent does your knowledge of the period support or conflict with the author's thesis?

My knowledge of the period does not conflict with the significance of Marx's writings. Communism is a major topic of the twentieth century, and its impact on the world is expansive. That his writings were the cause of such worldwide turmoil is a logical conclusion.

Write a paragraph in your own words explaining the gist of the article, the nature of the evidence, and the significance of the topic.

Karl Marx, who originated "scientific socialism" and was the co-author of the work *Communist Manifesto*, has had a greater impact on the world than any other philosopher. The scale at which his ideas have been implemented or derived from is massive. In the past century, various Communist groups have caused worldwide turmoil for the sake of Marxism. The movement itself was an economic and political disaster, but it also more widespread and devastating than any other philosopher's legacy, or even the legacies of Napoleon or Hitler. The author uses basic statistics about the scale on which his ideas have been implemented and used as an excuse to cause devastation to support his assertion that Marxism was a highly influential movement. While Marxism is certainly a main theme of the twentieth century, it doesn't have a significant impact until after Marx's death in 1883.