

in health allowing later pregnancies; decline in the popularity of the Christian view that marriage is pleasing to God; all of these have contributed to greater flexibility in the organisation of intimate relations.

**MARSHALL, THOMAS H. (1893–1981)** For many years professor of sociology at the London School of Economics, Marshall is best known for his pioneering writings on the concept of citizenship. In *Class, Citizenship and Social Development* he (1963) argued that modernisation had been accompanied by an expansion of the rights of the **citizen**: from legal rights (such as the right to a fair trial) in the 18th century; to political rights (such as the right to vote) in the 19th; to welfare rights (such as safety-net social security benefits) in the 20th century. The implied model of the attainment of successive rights has been criticised by some feminist authors who have noted that women sometimes acquired rights in a different order with, for example, many legal rights coming after the right to vote.

**MARX, KARL (1818–83)** Although his work is cited as often by those who disagree with him as by his supporters, Marx has had an enormous effect on sociology. After finishing his education in Germany, Marx became a journalist but, unable to find employment writing the kind of articles that concerned him, emigrated to Paris in 1843. There he mixed with other émigré radicals, became a socialist and met Friedrich **Engels** (who was his colleague as well as financial backer and should be credited with much of what follows below). Expelled from France, Marx moved to Brussels and then to London where he spent 34 years in writing and political activity.

In his early work Marx was interested in **alienation**, by which he meant the workers' lack of control over the production and disposal of their product. He also wrote extensively about the relationship between the

economy and other elements of society. With the theory of the **base and superstructure**, he argued for a consistent relationship between the way that the means of production were owned, the way work was organised and everything else of importance in a society. Although he permitted that institutions such as the state and the family could sometimes be independently influential, what was distinctive about his social analysis was the primacy given to the economic base. In this sense he was an advocate of **materialism** and opposed to **idealist** accounts of social change which emphasised the importance of novel ideas.

For Marx all societies are **class** societies with people set against each other by their differing relationship to the means of production. In capitalist economies this takes the form of a central divide between those who own capital (the factories, the machines, the money to buy raw materials) and those who have to live by selling their labour power. Although Marx recognised the complexity caused by the apparent existence of other classes, these are dismissed as survivals from earlier economic forms.

Marx's model of class is not just a description and explanation of current social divisions. It is also the key to a general theory of social evolution, often referred to by Marx's supporters as his 'theory of history'. Class conflict is the motor which drives change. In any stage of evolution the economy can only develop so far within a particular set of class relations. Eventually there is upheaval with the new rising class casting aside the old and creating a new set of relationships. Just as the bourgeoisie had overthrown the old feudal aristocracy to create capitalism, so the working class would overthrow the capitalists to create a socialist economy. And there history would end because socialism, as it is based on common ownership of the means of production, cannot have class divisions; hence there can be no more class struggle and no further change.

Marx was not just an analyst; he was a political agitator (and was cattily scornful of mere philosophers). Although confident of the way history was going, he spent much of his life encouraging others to hasten its progress.

Were Marx a chemist or biologist he would have long been forgotten because he was wrong far more often than he was right. His key claim about the exploitative nature of capitalism depended on out-dated assumptions derived from the **labour theory of value**. Subsequent advances in our knowledge have shown much of his historical and anthropological knowledge to have been faulty (and hence cast doubt on the pre-capitalism stages of his evolutionary model). And his predictions could hardly have been more wrong. Capitalist societies did not become increasingly polarised between labour and capital: instead the middle-class grew and the importance of **manual labour** steadily declined. Class conflict did not intensify; capitalist societies proved enviably stable. Far from becoming ever-poorer until they were driven by despair into radical action; the industrial working classes of capitalist economies prospered. There were no revolutions in capitalist economies: the two most important countries to experience revolution (Russia and China) were largely agrarian and feudal.

Still, Marx was correct about a good deal. His emphasis on the endlessly competitive nature of capitalism is reflected in present-day concerns over globalisation, for example. But he was right about the things that were least unique to his work and similar claims can be found in many other authors' writings. He remains important to sociology because his work exemplifies the keystone of the discipline: that to understand people we must understand their relations with each other and with social structures; because his body of work is so large that people with widely divergent interests can find in it something that inspires them and locates their work in a tradition which gives it some

legitimacy; because his mixing of conceptual analysis and political activism appeals to many; and because his generally critical view of modern societies remains popular.

**MARXISM** The legacy of Karl **Marx** can be divided into two parts: practical politics and social analysis. For much of the 20th century a large number of states were ruled by communist parties that legitimated their rule by claiming to represent Marxism-Leninism (a body of ideas originally formulated by Marx and Friedrich **Engels** and developed by V.I. Lenin, one of the leaders of the 1917 Russian revolution). Far from confirming Marx's predictions, the spread of communism in eastern and central Europe was entirely due to warfare and state political power. In the final years of the 1939–45 war the Soviet Union was able to take control of eastern Europe and impose communist regimes in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic states and the eastern half of Germany. In the period from the 1950s onwards, as liberation movements challenged European imperialism in Africa and Asia, many nationalist parties adopted the language of Marxism; not because its ideas suited their conditions particularly well, but because it justified a general anti-western posture and because it ensured financial backing from the Soviet Union.

As Marxist parties seized power by force in circumstances quite unlike those which Marx regarded as essential for revolution, it is a little unfair to regard the regimes that were so created as exemplars of Marxist political thought but it is not entirely accidental that all such regimes were totalitarian and oppressive. While the communist leaders of the Soviet Union, Poland and Bulgaria quickly forgot (if they ever knew) the intricacies of Marxism, they were, like messianic religious leaders, reinforced in their actions by the belief that history and virtue were on their side. Once private ownership of the means of production was replaced by 'social' ownership in the hands of