



TOPIC 10.3. PRIMARY SOURCES: MARXIST VS. EVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

EVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

The introduction to [Edouard Bernstein: Evolutionary Socialism](#) states:

Edouard Bernstein (1850-1932) faced the problem – for Social Democrats – that things did not work out as badly as predicted in the Communist Manifesto. He was a colleague of Engels, and claimed Engel's support in dismissing revolutionism, and calling for an evolutionary socialism, or as it is more commonly called "revisionism."

Read Bernstein's essay and answer one or more of the following questions:

Why does Bernstein think evolutionary socialism is superior to orthodox Marxist socialism? In what respect does he think the *Communist Manifesto* is in error?

What does Bernstein see as the key prerequisites for obtaining government control by the working classes?

How does Bernstein use Engels to bolster his arguments in favor of evolutionary socialism?

What reasons does Bernstein give for not focusing on the ultimate vision of a socialist future? How could such a lack of clarity of the desirable future potentially have negative consequences if/when socialists do gain control of government?