

# French studies understanding languages



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## **French studies / understanding languages**

Understanding Languages In terms of political relevance, the Communist Manifesto is clarion call to all the “oppressed” people to stand up and demand more accountability from their political leaders. The manifesto inspired some of the most groundbreaking social and political upheavals the world has seen. From the French Revolution to Russia’s October Revolution, the manifesto sparked an increased awareness of political injustices committed by the bourgeoisie and other ruling classes (Webber, 2012: 35). For example, in France, the ruling class became unsettled by lower classes’ increasing demand for social and political equality. Millions of French peasants read the manifesto and identified politics as the source of most of their problems. The ruling class, having obtained political power, used it to promote their interests while ignoring peasants’ plight. The only way to fight back was to gain political power because it was the key to unlocking greater equality and benefits for peasants (Webber, 2012: 39).

However, the working class understood that political power would not be handed to them on a silver platter; they needed to fight for it. At the time of its publishing, few countries around the world had thriving political movements that allowed peasants to express their opinions and influence political affairs (Webber, 2012: 45). Elite ruling classes employed political power to use military might in crushing any potential uprisings. The manifesto is still relevant today because it provides a clear approach to “uprooting” political treachery that is common among modern-day bourgeoisie. The solution is to use non-political means to reach out to all peasants and then bring about political change. To make this possible, the

manifesto promotes the use of socio-political movements to rouse rebellion among political peasants.

The manifesto is an excellent literary piece that contains explicit and subliminal messages to all working class people or anybody that wants to bring change to the society. The manifesto uses clever wording and combination of phrases to strike a chord with its readers (Laski, 2014: 18). For example, terms used to describe the bourgeoisie are laced with potent meanings that are sure to arouse anger and rebellion against the ruling class. The manifesto also makes heavy use of imagery and metaphors, using these two literary devices to make and further connections between the ruling class, religion and evil. For example, in some of the passages, the authors subliminally equate the ruling class to evil and peasants as martyrs who are being “persecuted” for no good reason (Laski, 2014: 21).

From the first pages to the last, the manifesto makes use of repetition to hammer home its message to its audience. Descriptive terms used to represent the bourgeoisie are constantly repeated throughout the work. In addition, the manifesto uses exemplification and analogies to illustrate points and assertions (Laski, 2014: 27). It is easy for a reader to mistake it for a literary work when it is in fact a political publication that is written from a literary perspective. The language of the manifesto conforms to the language of the era in which it was written. This is a deliberate attempt by the authors to get through to its readers (Laski, 2014: 34). The authors understood that appropriate language allowed peasants to get the message and to interpret it in the intended manner: violently or ideologically.

## References

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Webber, M. (2012) Rethinking society in the 21st century: critical readings in sociology, Toronto, Canadian Scholars Press.