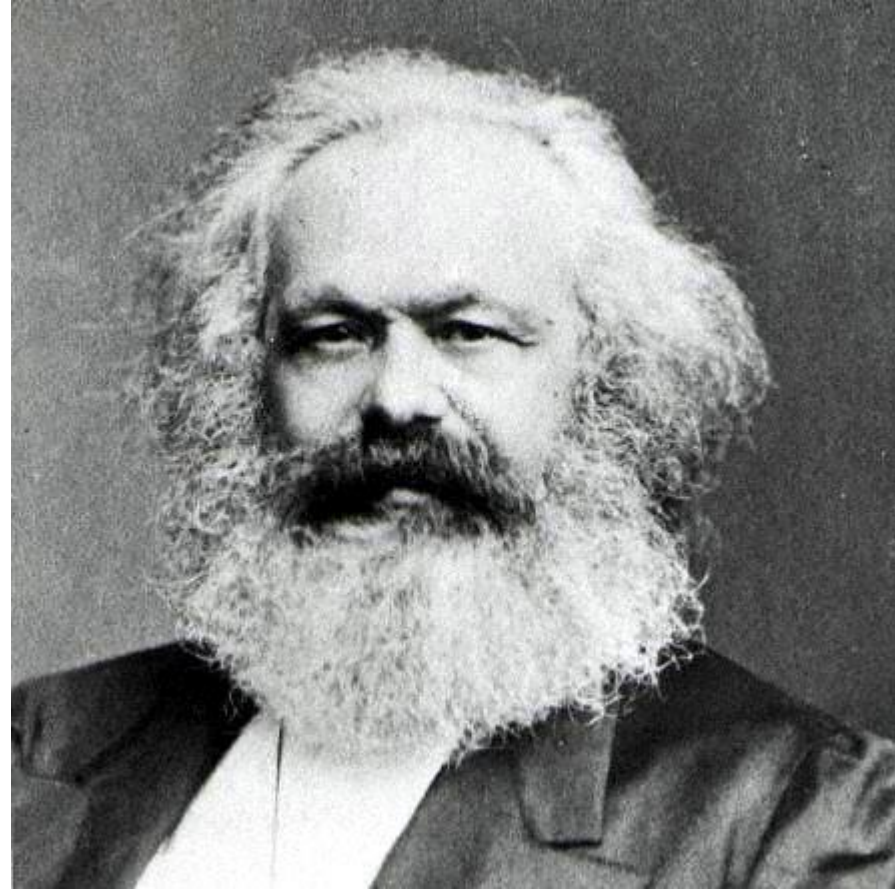


Communism

Marx and Engels. *The Communism Manifesto*

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- German philosopher and economist
- Lived during aftermath of French Revolution (1789), which marks the beginning of end of monarchy and feudal society
- Marx is a central enlightenment figure
- Marx and Engels collaborated on *The Communist Manifesto*; and many other publications

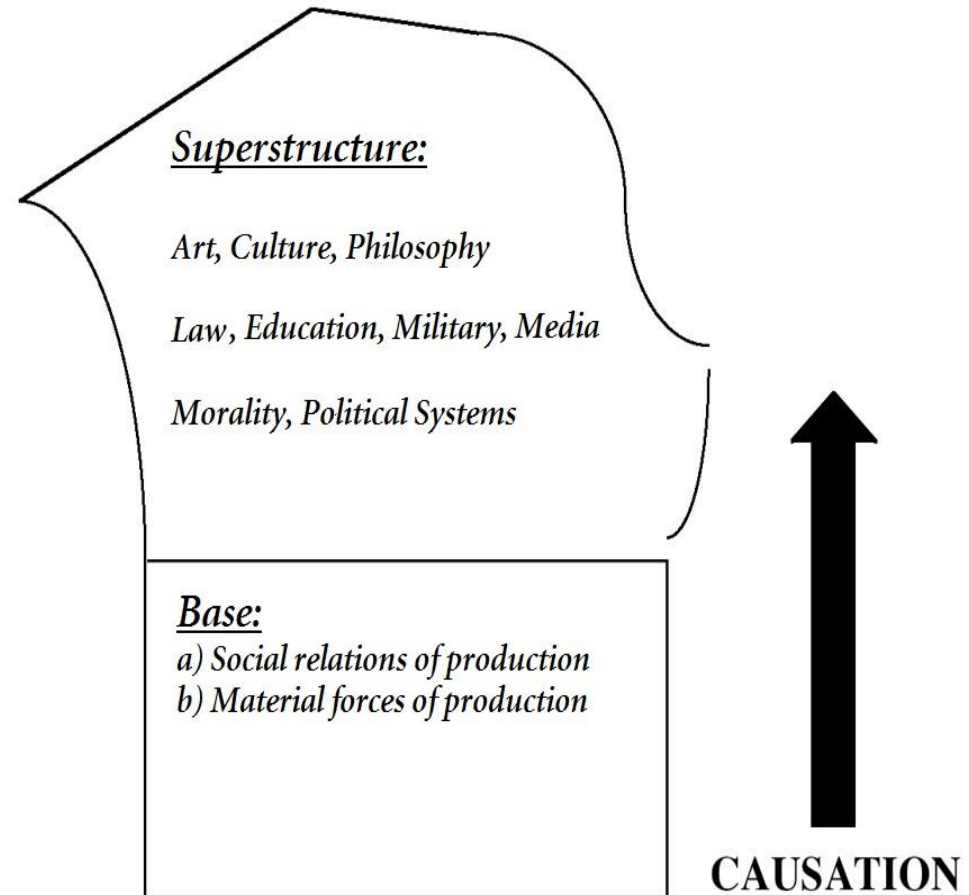


Dialectical Materialism

- What is history? How do societies proceed to develop through history?
- **Hegel**: history is a set of ideas (ideologies)
 - history proceeds in a general direction in a dialectical process
 - Thesis: prevailing ideas
 - Anti-thesis: thesis comes into conflict with scrutiny
 - Synthesis: new thesis emerges from conflict
 - E.g. feudalism comes in conflict with capitalism
- **Marx**: history is the struggle for material (economic) resources
 - history proceeds in a unique direction but not by resolving conflicts in idea
 - Marx's calls his theory of history **dialectical materialism**

Structure of Society

- Marx and Engels divide society into two parts: base and superstructure
- Social consciousness corresponds to superstructure; base unconscious
- Base and Superstructure are ordered; all levels influence others but the lower the level the more influence it has
- Material forces of production
 - Technology; Natural resources
- Social relations of production
 - Relationship between those who own and control material forces of production and those who work for them



The Base

- **Material forces of production**

- E.g. primitive hunting society: game, hunters' bows arrows, etc.
- E.g. agrarian society: seeds to be planted, farm tools, plows, mills, ...
- E.g. industrial society: raw materials (iron, wood, oil), the machinery for extracting these material from their natural states, the factories in which materials turned into commodities, etc.

- **Social Relations of Production**

- Humans organize themselves to extract materials, make commodities, build factories, etc.
- All society is divided into two classes: owners and workers (labourers)
- Owners own or control material forces of production; workers are used for labor
- E.g. hunting society: males hunt for game; females run household, raise children
- E.g. capitalist system: bourgeoisie are owners of capital (shareholders, management), proletariat are workers

- **Owners exploit workers and live off the money which the workers earn**

- Owners are the dominant class, the smaller class
- Owners rule by force: they own or controls the police force, army, etc.
- Owners rule by influencing "consciousness" or common ideology
- Workers put up with this inequality because:
 - They are oppressed wage slaves and cannot fight the system
 - They are indoctrinated by ideology and religion into believing what they are told by the powerful.

Base and Superstructure

- Marx and others gave a scientific theory to understand the major ideological and material components of society and a theory of how societies change over time
- The forces of superstructure (E.g. Art, Media) causally influence other parts of the superstructure
 - Social 'forces' can, therefore, be studied scientifically like Newton's forces of motion
 - Historical events (e.g. Beginning of WWII, French Revolution) can be studied from this framework (see Marxists historians)
- The base and superstructure evolves in a definite direction (dialectical materialism)
- Examples
 - Art world influences politics or ethics
 - Philosophy influences ethical views
 - Media influences politics
 - Political Sphere influences media
 - Education influences politics, law

How does historical change occur?

1. The means of production change

- Compare a plow and a tractor: plow – cheap, requires heavy labor; the tractor – expensive (requires capital to purchase), does not require heavy labor
- This technological advance changes the relations between the owners and workers
- The original plow anyone could have, the modern tractor requires significant capital – it cannot be owned by anyone and requires someone to finance its ownership. Thus the modern farmer has to go to a capitalist (or become one himself) to own a tractor whereas the traditional farmer does not.

2. Class Antagonism: workers are exploited and at some point they realize that they. This leads to social changes and rebellion, and revolution

- French Revolution: abolished feudal property; replaced it with capitalist property
- The creation of large cities => concentrations of capital economic power
- The development and use of technology => the capitalist need to constantly produce more technology, the development of which upsets relations between , and so provides new productions and so new capital to own

Stages of Historical Development

- History proceeds in one direction
- **Primitive Communism (tribal):** low tech, common ownership
- **Despotism:** master-slave society
- **Feudalism:** peasants work on land, lords rule
- **Capitalism:** private ownership of means of production
- **Socialism:** centralized (public) ownership of means of production
- **Communism:** utopian communism

Marx and Engels on Capitalism

- More on this on topic on Monday
- Marx and Engels do not think that Capitalism should never have happened
- In the course of history, Marx and Engels thinks it is a necessary step
- They also observe improvements:
 - Capitalism is incredibly productive;
 - It creates new technologies and other forms of innovation
- But, there are a several internal conflicts to capitalism that make it unsustainable

Socialist Society

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank
6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.
7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State
8. Equal liability of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, esp. for agriculture.
9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of all the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children factory labor

Communist Utopia

- No private property
- No state
- Property is publically owned
- “From each according to Ability, to each according to his Need”