

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marx was an economic determinist: The driving force of history is class struggle. Under capitalism, the classes are the bourgeoisie & proletariat.

Marx's Labor Theory of Value

The value of any commodity is ultimately derived from the labor used to create it. Capitalism obscures the fact that labor is the ultimate source of value.

Workers are *exploited* because they are paid less than the value they produce with their labor.

E.g., workers are paid for the value of four hours of labor, but they work eight hours. The value of the four additional hours of work is *surplus value* kept by the capitalist.

Alienated Labor

Capitalism produces four types of alienation.

1. Workers are alienated from the products of their labor: The products don't belong to the worker. The more the worker produces, the less the worker has.
2. Workers are alienated from the labor process: Labor is forced, doesn't satisfy the worker, is only a means, belongs to another.
3. Workers are alienated from their bodies and human potential: Workers' life-activity is a means to physical existence, not an end in itself.
4. Workers are alienated from other workers: Other types of alienation are reflected in social relationships.

Base (structure) & Superstructure

Economic relations are the "base" that determines everything else: knowledge, government, arts, family life, religion, and so on.

Ideology is the intellectual activity of the superstructure that express dominant class interests and justify the status quo.