

Block 1 – Karl Marx

Unit 1: Philosophical Foundations of Karl Marx's Work

1. Biographical Sketch

Early Years (1818–1836)

- **Birth & Family:** Karl Heinrich Marx was born on **5 May 1818** in Trier, a town in the Rhineland, then part of the Kingdom of Prussia.
- **Parents:** His father, **Heinrich Marx**, was a lawyer, and his mother, **Henrietta Pressburg Marx**, came from a prosperous Dutch Jewish family.
- **Religious Background:** The family had **Jewish origins**, but in 1817 his father converted to Protestant Christianity to avoid restrictions on Jews under Prussian law. This early experience of exclusion and adaptation to state power later shaped Marx's sensitivity toward **oppression and alienation**.
- **Education:** In 1835, Marx joined the **University of Bonn** to study law but was more attracted to literature and philosophy. In 1836, he shifted to the **University of Berlin**, where he came under the influence of philosophy and especially Hegelian thought.

Berlin Days (1836–1843)

- **Young Hegelians:** At Berlin, Marx became a member of the **Young Hegelians**, a radical intellectual group that reinterpreted **Hegel's dialectics** in a critical and revolutionary way, questioning religion, politics, and society.
- **Influences:** He attended the lectures of **Eduard Gans**, who introduced him to **theoretical criticism** and **positivist history**, both of which sharpened his analytical methods.
- **Career Path:** Abandoning law, Marx focused on philosophy and journalism. By the early 1840s, he became a contributor and later editor of the **Rheinische Zeitung**, a liberal newspaper in Cologne. His radical writings, however, soon drew government censorship, leading to its suppression in 1843.

Paris and Revolutionary Activity (1843–1849)

- **Paris Move:** After the closure of Rheinische Zeitung, Marx settled in **Paris in 1843**, where he immersed himself in **French socialism** and **British political economy**.
- **Major Development:** In Paris, Marx began formulating his critique of **existing socialism** (utopian and reformist currents) and developing his theory of **scientific socialism**.
- **Friendship with Engels:** In 1844, Marx met **Friedrich Engels**, a lifelong friend and collaborator. Together they wrote **The German Ideology** (1846, unpublished during their lifetime), laying out the materialist conception of history.
- **The Communist Manifesto:** Commissioned by the Communist League, they co-authored **The Communist Manifesto (1848)**, one of the most influential political documents in history.
- **Expulsions:** Marx was expelled from France (1845), moved to Brussels, then expelled again (1848). He briefly returned to Paris but was expelled again in 1849 after revolutionary uprisings failed across Europe.

Exile in London (1849–1883)

- **Life in London:** Marx arrived in **London in August 1849**, where he lived the rest of his life. Despite chronic financial difficulties and poor health, he found intellectual freedom. His family often survived with help from Engels.
- **Political Engagement:** He became actively involved in workers' movements, most importantly the **International Workingmen's Association (First International)**, founded in 1864, where he served on the executive committee.
- **Major Work – Das Kapital:** In 1867, Marx published **Volume I of Das Kapital**, his magnum opus analyzing the capitalist mode of production, surplus value, and exploitation. Volumes II and III were left unfinished but were later compiled and published by Engels after Marx's death.
- **Final Years:** Marx spent his later years revising his manuscripts, studying anthropology and natural sciences, and working on plans for future volumes of Capital. He died on **14 March 1883** in London.
- **Legacy:** He was buried in **Highgate Cemetery**, where his tombstone bears the famous inscription: *"Workers of all lands unite."*

2. Socio-Historical Background

Industrial Revolution (18th–19th Century Europe)

- The **Industrial Revolution** began in Britain during the late 18th century and spread across Europe in the 19th century.
- It marked a fundamental **technological and economic transformation**: inventions like the steam engine, spinning jenny, power loom, and mechanized factories drastically increased productivity.
- This shift created a **new mode of production**—large-scale industry—displacing older systems of manual labor and small-scale craft production.

Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism

- Europe witnessed a gradual **decline of feudal society** where peasants worked under landlords, paying rent or giving a share of produce.
- With enclosures and land privatization, peasants were **dispossessed of land** and forced to migrate in search of work.
- The emerging **capitalist economy** was based on:
 - **Private ownership** of means of production (factories, mines, machines).
 - **Profit motive** as the driving force.
 - **Wage labor** where workers sold their labor power to survive.
- Cities grew rapidly as **urban centers of production**, giving rise to new class divisions.

Decline of Guilds and Rise of Free Labor

- In pre-industrial Europe, work was often regulated through **guilds**—associations of craftsmen who controlled training, quality, and wages.
- With industrialization, **guilds collapsed**; production moved from workshops to factories.
- Workers lost autonomy, becoming dependent on factory owners for wages.
- This gave rise to a **"free labor" market**, where labor was bought and sold like a commodity.
- However, "freedom" was only formal: workers were free from feudal bonds, but in reality **compelled to sell their labor to survive**.

Social Conditions: Poverty and Exploitation

- The **working class (proletariat)** lived in miserable conditions:
 - Long working hours (12–16 hours daily).

- Child labor and women's exploitation.
- Low wages and unsafe working conditions.
- Overcrowded slums with poor sanitation and disease.
- Industrial capitalism generated immense **wealth for the bourgeoisie (capitalist class)** while creating widespread **poverty and alienation for workers**.
- This **sharp class divide** became the basis for Marx's theory of **class struggle**.

Emergence of Labor Movements

- Workers began to **organize against exploitation**:
 - Formation of trade unions.
 - Strikes and protests demanding shorter hours, better wages, and safer conditions.
 - Early socialist and communist groups advocating for collective ownership and equality.
- These movements inspired Marx, who saw them as evidence that the proletariat could become a **revolutionary class** capable of overthrowing capitalism.

3. Intellectual Influences

Marx's theories did not emerge in isolation. They were shaped by the **philosophical, economic, and social thought currents** of his time. He critically engaged with three main traditions: **German Idealism, Feuerbach's Materialism, and Classical Political Economy**.

German Idealism – Influence of Hegel

- **Hegel's Dialectics**:
 - Georg Wilhelm Friedrich **Hegel** (1770–1831) developed a **dialectical method**, explaining historical progress through the conflict of **thesis, antithesis, and synthesis**.
 - For Hegel, history was the unfolding of the **World Spirit** or **ideas**, with contradictions resolved at higher stages.
- **Impact on Marx**:
 - Marx admired Hegel's **dynamic and historical method**—seeing reality as a process of constant change and contradiction.
 - However, Marx **rejected Hegel's idealism** (the primacy of ideas/spirit). Instead, he turned Hegel "**upside down**," arguing that material conditions, not ideas, drive historical development.
 - Thus, Marx retained the **dialectical method** but rooted it in **material reality**—a foundation of **historical materialism**.

Feuerbach's Materialism

- **Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872)** criticized Hegelian idealism and proposed a **materialist view** of reality.
 - His **critique of religion** argued that God is a projection of human qualities—religion alienates people from their true nature.
 - He emphasized **sensuous human existence** over abstract ideas.
- **Impact on Marx**:
 - Marx appreciated Feuerbach's shift to **materialism** and his focus on human beings as natural, social entities.
 - However, Marx criticized Feuerbach for being too **contemplative**—seeing humans only in terms of thought and religion, not in terms of **practical social activity**.

- Marx extended Feuerbach's idea of alienation to the **economic sphere**, showing how under capitalism, workers are alienated from:
 - their labor,
 - the products they create,
 - their fellow workers,
 - and their own human potential.

Classical Political Economy

- Marx studied the works of **Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and other British economists** who laid the foundations of **classical political economy**.
- **Key ideas he inherited:**
 - **Labour Theory of Value:** The value of a commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labor time embodied in it.
 - **Use-Value vs. Exchange-Value:** Smith and Ricardo distinguished between the utility of a commodity (use-value) and its market value (exchange-value).
- **Marx's Critique and Extension:**
 - Marx argued that classical economists **ignored social relations of production**—they analyzed wealth but not the class exploitation behind it.
 - He introduced the concept of **surplus value**:
 - Workers produce more value than the wages they are paid.
 - The difference (surplus value) is appropriated by the capitalist as profit.
 - Thus, Marx transformed political economy into a **critique of capitalism**, exposing exploitation as the hidden foundation of profit.

4. Central Ideas of Karl Marx

Alienation

- **Concept:** Alienation (*Entfremdung*) refers to the condition under capitalism where workers are estranged from their own labor and human essence.
- **Four Aspects of Alienation** (as outlined in Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*):
 1. **Alienation from the Product** – The object created by the worker does not belong to them; it becomes the property of the capitalist.
 2. **Alienation from the Process of Work** – Work becomes repetitive, monotonous, and imposed from outside rather than a free creative activity.
 3. **Alienation from Species-Being (Human Potential)** – Humans are naturally creative and social beings, but capitalism reduces them to instruments of production, denying their full development.
 4. **Alienation from Fellow Humans** – Competitive relations in capitalism pit worker against worker, and workers against capitalists, breaking genuine human connections.
- **Role of Division of Labour:** Industrial capitalism intensifies alienation by dividing work into small, fragmented tasks, stripping labor of creativity and meaning.

Class and Relations of Subordination

- **Definition of Class:** For Marx, class is determined by one's **relation to the means of production**.
 - **Bourgeoisie (Capitalists):** Own the means of production (factories, machinery, capital).

- **Proletariat (Workers):** Own only their labor power, which they must sell to survive.
- **Landowners:** In earlier societies, controlled land and extracted rent.
- **Class in Itself vs. Class for Itself:**
 - **Class in Itself:** An objective category—people occupy the same position in production (e.g., all wage laborers).
 - **Class for Itself:** When workers develop **class consciousness**—awareness of their shared exploitation—and unite in collective struggle.
- **Relations of Subordination:**
 - Capitalist society is structured by dominance and exploitation: the bourgeoisie exploits the proletariat through control over labor and surplus value.
 - This antagonism is the basis of **class struggle**, the “motor of history.”

Means, Relations, Forces, and Modes of Production

- **Means of Production:** Physical and material instruments of production—land, raw materials, tools, machines, factories.
- **Forces of Production:** The combination of **means of production** and **labor power** (human skills, knowledge, organization).
- **Relations of Production:** The social and property relations that structure production—who owns what, who controls labor, and how surplus is distributed.
- **Modes of Production:** A historically specific combination of productive forces and social relations. Marx identified successive modes:
 1. **Asiatic Mode** – Communal property with despotic state control.
 2. **Ancient/Slave Mode** – Masters exploit slaves as direct property.
 3. **Feudal Mode** – Landlords exploit peasants/serfs tied to land.
 4. **Capitalist Mode** – Capitalists exploit wage labor through surplus value.
 5. **Communist Mode (Future)** – A classless, stateless society where means of production are collectively owned, and exploitation is abolished.

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Unit 2: Dialectical Materialism

1. Concept of Dialectics

Traditional Meaning

- The term **dialectic** originates from the Greek word *dialegesthai*, meaning “to converse” or “to discuss.”
- In **classical philosophy**:
 - **Socrates** used dialectics as a method of questioning and dialogue to uncover truth by exposing contradictions in common opinions.
 - **Plato** developed it further as a way of reasoning that moves from the world of appearances to the world of ideas (Forms).
 - **Aristotle** saw dialectics as a method of logical debate, contrasting with scientific demonstration.
- Thus, in its earliest sense, dialectic was **dialogue-based reasoning** aimed at truth through the clash of arguments.

Hegel's Idealist Dialectic

- **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831)** transformed dialectics into a **philosophy of history and reality**.
- For Hegel, reality and history unfold through **contradictions** within ideas:
 - A concept (thesis) generates its opposite (antithesis).
 - Their conflict is resolved in a higher unity (synthesis).
- This movement is **not static but dynamic and progressive**—each synthesis becomes a new thesis, producing further contradictions.
- The ultimate goal was the unfolding of the **Absolute Idea** or **World Spirit** realizing itself in history, culture, and the state.
- Thus, Hegel's dialectic was **idealist**: it placed the primacy on **consciousness, thought, and spirit**, with material conditions seen as secondary expressions.

Marx's Materialist Inversion

- Marx admired Hegel's **dialectical method** but rejected its **idealist foundation**.
- He argued that it is not **ideas** that drive history, but **material conditions**—the way people produce and reproduce their lives.
- **Materialist Dialectic (Dialectical Materialism)**:
 - Contradictions exist within the **material world**, especially in the **relations of production**.
 - Example: In capitalism, the contradiction between **bourgeoisie (owners of capital)** and **proletariat (workers)** drives social change.

- These contradictions cannot be resolved by thought alone but through **practical activity and social struggle**.
- Marx's famous phrase: he "turned Hegel on his head" by making dialectics a **science of historical materialism** rather than a logic of ideas.
- Thus, for Marx, **history progresses through real contradictions in economic and social life**, culminating in revolutionary transformations (e.g., capitalism → socialism → communism).

2. Three Laws of Dialectics

Dialectics, as understood by Marx and Engels, is not simply a logical method but a **law of development in nature, society, and thought**. It explains how contradictions and change operate universally. Engels systematized it into **three fundamental laws** in *Dialectics of Nature* and *Anti-Dühring*.

1. Unity and Conflict of Opposites

- **Principle:** Every phenomenon, object, or process contains **contradictory forces or tendencies** within itself.
- These contradictions are not accidental but **essential and inherent**.
- The **struggle between opposites** generates motion, transformation, and development.
- **Examples:**
 - In society: the contradiction between **bourgeoisie and proletariat** drives capitalist development and revolutionary change.
 - In nature: attraction vs. repulsion, life vs. death, stability vs. change.
- **Marx's Application:** Capitalism develops by exploiting workers, but this very exploitation produces the conditions for its own overthrow through class struggle.

2. Negation of the Negation

- **Principle:** Development proceeds through stages of **negation**—each new stage arises by overcoming the contradictions of the previous one.
- But negation does not mean total destruction—it preserves certain elements of the old form while creating something new (a **higher synthesis**).
- **Formula:** Old stage → Negation → Negation of that negation = Higher form.
- **Examples:**
 - In history:
 - Feudalism (thesis) was negated by capitalism (antithesis).
 - Capitalism itself will be negated by socialism/communism (synthesis).
 - In nature: A seed is negated when it becomes a plant; the plant is negated when it produces new seeds, which preserve the cycle on a higher level.
- **Marx's Application:** Communism is not a simple return to primitive communal life but a higher stage that **negates capitalism** while retaining its technological progress and productive capacity.

3. Transformation of Quantity into Quality

- **Principle:** Change occurs not only suddenly but also through **gradual accumulation of small, quantitative changes** that eventually produce a **qualitative leap** once a threshold is crossed.
- **Examples:**
 - In nature: Water gradually heated (quantitative change) turns into steam at 100°C (qualitative change).
 - In society: Increasing exploitation and worsening conditions (quantitative accumulation) lead to revolutionary upheaval (qualitative transformation).

- **Marx's Application:** Capitalist contradictions—falling wages, concentration of wealth, and intensifying crises—accumulate until they trigger a revolutionary transformation into socialism.

3. Application to Modes of Production

Marx applied dialectics to human history through his theory of **historical materialism**. He argued that societies develop through successive **modes of production**, each containing contradictions that lead to its transformation into a new mode.

1. Primitive-Communal Society

- **Features:**
 - Common ownership of land and resources.
 - Cooperative labor—hunting, gathering, simple agriculture.
 - Low productivity due to primitive tools and technology.
- **Contradictions:**
 - Gradual **quantitative improvements** (use of fire, stone tools, domestication, agriculture) increased productivity.
 - This surplus created conditions for **private appropriation** of resources.
- **Outcome:** The emergence of **private property** led to the rise of slavery, marking the transition to the next mode.

2. Slave-Ownning Society (Ancient Mode)

- **Features:**
 - Slaves considered property of masters—absolute ownership of both people and means of production.
 - Sharp division between slaveholders and slaves.
 - Economy based on exploitation of slave labor.
- **Contradictions:**
 - Frequent **slave revolts** and resistance.
 - Economic stagnation due to reliance on forced labor, lack of innovation, and overextension of empires (e.g., Rome).
- **Outcome:** Internal tensions and revolts negated the system, giving rise to **feudal relations of serfdom** (negation of the negation).

3. Feudal Society

- **Features:**
 - Landlords (nobility) owned land; peasants/serfs worked under obligation, bound to the land.
 - Production was largely agrarian with limited commerce.
 - Rigid hierarchy, with the church and aristocracy holding power.
- **Contradictions:**
 - Growth of **towns and crafts** encouraged free trade and wage labor.
 - Merchants and early capitalists challenged feudal restrictions.
 - Peasant revolts and pressures for freedom grew.
- **Outcome:** These conflicts eroded feudalism and opened the way for **capitalist relations**—private ownership, markets, and free wage labor.

4. Capitalist Society

- **Features:**
 - **Means of production** privately owned by the bourgeoisie (capitalist class).
 - **Proletariat (workers)** sell their labor power for wages.
 - Collective, large-scale production—but profits privately appropriated.
- **Contradictions:**
 - The more capitalism develops, the more it creates **social production** (factories, industries involving thousands of workers).
 - But this social labor benefits only private capitalists—**contradiction between collective production and private appropriation**.
 - Periodic crises (overproduction, unemployment, inequality) sharpen class struggle.
- **Outcome:** Growing contradictions lead to **proletarian revolution** and transition to socialism.

5. Communist Society (Future)

- **Features:**
 - Abolition of private property in the means of production.
 - Collective/public ownership of resources and industries.
 - Classless and stateless society—no exploitation.
 - Distribution principle: “**From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.**”
- **Resolution:** Communism represents the **negation of capitalism’s contradictions**, restoring human freedom, creativity, and social harmony on a higher level than primitive communalism.

4. Social Change and Revolution

History as Succession of Revolutions

- For Marx, history is not a smooth, gradual evolution but a process of **qualitative leaps** driven by contradictions within each mode of production.
- When productive forces (technology, labor, organization) come into conflict with existing relations of production (property ownership, power structures), the system enters into **crisis**.
- The resolution comes through **social revolution**, which overturns the old system and ushers in a new mode of production.
- Thus, **class struggle is the motor of history**—each ruling class defends the old system, while the oppressed class pushes for revolutionary change.

Bourgeois and Proletarian Revolutions

- **Bourgeois Revolutions** (e.g., English Revolution 1640s, French Revolution 1789):
 - Overthrew feudal monarchy and aristocracy.
 - Established **capitalist relations**—private property, free markets, parliamentary democracy.
 - Replaced feudal lords with the **bourgeoisie as the ruling class**.
- **Proletarian Revolution (Future):**
 - Will overthrow the **bourgeoisie and capitalist system**.
 - Unlike past revolutions (which replaced one exploiting class with another), the proletarian revolution aims to **abolish class divisions altogether**.
 - It will create a new social order based on collective ownership and equality.

Two Phases of Post-Capitalist Society

- **Socialist Phase (Lower Phase of Communism):**

- The proletariat captures state power and establishes the **dictatorship of the proletariat** (rule by the majority class).
- State is still necessary to suppress counter-revolution and manage production.
- Division of labor continues, but exploitation is reduced as surplus is redistributed for collective welfare.
- Distribution principle: **“To each according to his work.”**
- **Communist Phase (Higher Phase of Communism):**
 - With the disappearance of class antagonisms, the **state itself “withers away.”**
 - Division of labor is overcome—individuals can freely develop multiple capacities.
 - Abundance allows the principle: **“From each according to ability, to each according to need.”**
 - Society becomes fully **classless, stateless, and non-exploitative.**

Unit 3: Class and Class Struggle

. Defining Social Class

General Definition

- For Marx, a **social class** is not defined merely by income or status but by a group’s **relationship to the means of production** (land, factories, capital, tools, resources).
- Classes are thus rooted in the **economic structure of society**, not just in individual attributes.

Key Criteria for Class

1. Objective Dimension (Economic Position)

- Classes are objectively determined by their **place in the production process**:
 - **Owners of Means of Production** (bourgeoisie, landlords, capitalists).
 - **Non-Owners** who sell their labor power (proletariat, peasants, workers).
- This objective position defines the **relations of exploitation and domination** between classes.

2. Subjective Dimension (Class Consciousness)

- A class becomes historically significant when its members develop a **shared awareness of their common interests**.
- Marx distinguished between:
 - **Class in Itself**: A group of people who occupy the same structural position (e.g., all wage laborers).
 - **Class for Itself**: When that group becomes **self-aware** of its exploitation and organizes collectively for change (e.g., unions, revolutionary parties).

- This subjective awakening transforms a passive economic group into an **active political force**.

1.

2. Historical Classification of Classes

Marx argued that classes are not eternal but **historically specific**. They arise, develop, and disappear with changes in the **mode of production**. Each stage of human history is characterized by distinct class structures rooted in property relations.

1. Primitive-Communal Society

- **Features:**
 - Early human societies (hunter-gatherers, primitive agriculture).
 - **No private property**—land and tools were communally shared.
 - **No classes or exploitation**—resources distributed equally within the group.
- **Class Character:** Classless society.

2. Slave-Ownning Society (Ancient Mode)

- **Features:**
 - Emerged with agricultural surplus and private ownership of land and people.
 - **Masters** owned both the means of production and the labor force (slaves).
 - Slaves were treated as property, exploited for economic gain.
- **Class Character:** Masters vs. Slaves.
- **Contradiction:** Slave exploitation created revolts and inefficiencies, paving the way for feudalism.

3. Feudal Society

- **Features:**
 - Dominant in medieval Europe.
 - Land was the principal means of production, controlled by **lords/nobility**.
 - **Serfs/peasants** worked the land, bound by obligation rather than free choice.
 - Production was agrarian, supplemented by small crafts and trade.
- **Class Character:** Lords vs. Serfs.
- **Contradiction:** Growth of towns, commerce, and free labor undermined feudal structures, opening the path to capitalism.

4. Capitalist Society

- **Features:**
 - Means of production (factories, capital, technology) owned by **bourgeoisie (capitalist class)**.
 - **Proletariat (working class)** owns only labor power, which they sell for wages.
 - Based on **wage labor, surplus value extraction, and profit motive**.
- **Class Character:** Bourgeoisie vs. Proletariat.
- **Contradiction:** Collective production vs. private appropriation → leads to crises and revolutionary struggles.

5. Communist Society (Predicted Future)

- **Features:**
 - Abolition of private ownership of means of production.
 - Collective/public ownership and planned production for human need, not profit.
 - Elimination of exploitation and inequality.
- **Class Character:** Class distinctions and antagonisms **extinguished**.
- **Outcome:** True classless society—end of historical class conflict.

3. Intensification under Capitalism

Marx argued that capitalism does not just create classes—it **intensifies class contradictions** to an unprecedented degree.

1. Concentration of Workers in Factories

- Industrial Revolution brought large-scale **factory production**, replacing scattered artisan or peasant labor.
- Workers are gathered in huge numbers, laboring collectively under capitalist supervision.
- This physical **concentration of the proletariat** makes it easier for them to recognize common conditions and develop solidarity.

2. Legal Freedom vs. Economic Compulsion

- Capitalism presents workers as “**free laborers**”: legally free to sell their labor to any employer.
- But this freedom is deceptive—workers are compelled to sell labor power because:
 - They **own no means of production**.
 - Survival requires entering the wage-labor market.
- Thus, workers are “**doubly free**” (Marx):
 - Free from feudal obligations, but
 - Free of ownership of productive resources → forced into wage labor.

3. Emergence of Exploitation and Class Awareness

- Capitalist profit is derived from **surplus value** (unpaid labor).
- As exploitation deepens, workers begin to recognize:
 - Their **shared plight** (long hours, low wages, insecurity).
 - The **structural nature** of their oppression (not individual but systemic).
- This leads to the formation of **trade unions, collective bargaining**, and eventually **political movements** demanding systemic change.

4. Class Struggle and Revolution

For Marx, **class struggle** is the **driving force of history**. Every major transformation in human society—from slavery to feudalism to capitalism—has come through conflicts between **oppressor and oppressed classes**.

1. Intensification of Class Antagonism

- In capitalism, the contradiction between:
 - **Productive forces** (large-scale industry, advanced technology, collective labor)

- and **Relations of production** (private ownership, profit motive) becomes sharper over time.
- The system reaches a stage where **productive forces outgrow exploitative relations**, creating recurring crises (overproduction, unemployment, inequality).

2. Call for Global Proletarian Revolution

- Marx and Engels famously declared: “**Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.**”
- Because capitalism is global, the proletarian revolution must also be **international**.
- Workers across nations share the same structural position (selling labor power) → their emancipation requires **collective, worldwide struggle**.

3. Proletarian Revolution and Its Outcomes

- **Immediate Aim:**
 - Overthrow the bourgeoisie.
 - Abolish private ownership of the means of production.
 - Establish collective/public ownership.
- **Transitional Phase:**
 - The **dictatorship of the proletariat:**
 - Rule by the working class to suppress capitalist resistance.
 - Retains a state apparatus, but oriented toward social equality.
- **Final Aim:**
 - A **stateless, classless, communist society**.
 - Distribution based on the principle: *“From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”*

5. Marx’s Concept of Alienation

Alienation (*Entfremdung*) is one of Marx’s central critiques of capitalism, especially in his early writings (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*). It refers to the way in which workers become **estranged from themselves, their work, and other people** under capitalist production.

1. Alienation from the Product

- The worker produces goods but does not **own or control** them.
- The product becomes the **property of the capitalist**, and often returns to the worker as a commodity they must buy.
- Instead of expressing creativity, the product **confronts the worker as something alien and hostile**.

2. Alienation from the Labour Process

- Work under capitalism is not an expression of creativity but a **mechanized, repetitive, and externally imposed activity**.
- The worker’s activity is controlled by the capitalist for profit, not by the worker for self-realization.
- Labour becomes **forced labor**—done only as a means of survival, not as a fulfilling human activity.

3. Alienation from Species-Being (Human Essence)

- Humans, unlike animals, realize their essence through **free, conscious, creative activity**.
- Capitalism denies this potential by reducing work to a **means of subsistence**, stripping it of creativity and universality.
- Thus, workers are alienated from their **true human nature**.

4. Alienation from Fellow Humans

- Capitalist competition pits worker against worker (for jobs, wages, promotions).
- Social relations are mediated by **commodities and money**, reducing people to economic roles.
- Instead of solidarity, capitalism fosters **individualism, rivalry, and mistrust**.

Overcoming Alienation

- Alienation is not a psychological problem but a **structural condition of capitalism**.
- True liberation requires:
 - Abolishing private ownership of the means of production.
 - Reorganizing production around human need, not profit.
 - Restoring work as a **creative, cooperative, and self-fulfilling activity**.
- This can only be achieved through a **revolutionary transformation** toward communism.

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