

## **Marx: Main Points:**

### **1. Influences:**

1. Hegel's Idealism: Mind as reality
2. Feuerbach's Materialism: Religion as Alienation

### **2. Marx's Critique of Idealism (The "German Ideology")**

1. Marx asserts the reality of the material world
2. Production, rather than ideas, is seen as the main human activity
3. Ideas are formed within the relations of production

**3. Hegel's influence on Marx:**

1. Dialectical historical development
2. Feuerbach separates contemplation from Praxis
3. Feuerbach lacks a sense of history in relation to human nature
4. Feuerbach relates religious ideas to society, but does not go on to analyse that society

#### **4. Marx & Ideas**

1. Mode of production (i.e. Forces of Production + Relations of Production) shapes social life
2. Mode of production is historically created
3. Ideas are a reflection of the economic base
4. Ideologies (sets of ideas) have social and political consequences
5. Ideology produces false consciousness

## 5. Alienation

1. Relations of production and Alienation are intertwined:  
In capitalism the proletarian is alienated from:

The Product of Labour

The production process

From other workers (due to competition)

As production is the primary human activity the worker is alienated from him/her self.

*However:*

C J Arthur from Introduction to "The German Ideology" Students edn, Pub. Lawrence & Wishart: (pp15-19)

"If one asks for the reason why the worker is in such a miserable situation, in which his product, and even his very activity, belong to someone else, in which he cannot find satisfaction in his work and his product, but on the contrary experiences these as alien, as hostile; it might seem that it is the rule of private property or more specifically Capital that is to blame.

However, there is one snag in defining the relation in terms of private property as cause and alienated labour as effect - Marx said exactly the opposite. It is worth quoting the whole passage:

'The relationship of the worker to labour engenders the relationship to it of the capitalist... private property is thus the product, the result. The necessary consequence, of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself.

Private Property thus results by analysis from the concept of alienated labour, i.e. of alienated man...

## Marx Summary (5) © 2001 Roger Jones

True it is as a result of the movement of private property that we have obtained the concept of alienated labour from political economy. But on analysis of this concept it becomes clear that though private property appears to be the source, the cause of alienated labour, it is really its consequence, just as the gods in the beginning are not the cause but the effect of man's intellectual confusion. Later this relationship becomes reciprocal'.

Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844"

## **6. Marx & Class Conflict**

1. Until communism is achieved each historical epoch will produce antagonistic social classes.
2. The Ruling Ideas in every epoch are those of the Ruling Class
3. The contradictions of capitalism will lead to the proletariat losing their False Consciousness. I.E. They will become Class conscious
4. Revolutionary ideas will only become real when economic conditions allow.

## 7. Criticisms of Marx

### a. Popper:

1. Communism did not take hold in capitalist societies
2. Calls Marx an "Historicist", i.e. suggests that for Marx History performs a metaphysical role.
3. Argues that the history is necessarily unpredictable

### b. From Liberal view point

1. The individual is the unit of analyses (Mill, Popper)
2. Liberal Capitalist societies are pluralistic, i.e. no simple opposition of 2 social groups.

### c. General:

1. Marx does not argue for his materialism philosophically.