

Marx: Materialism

Sociology

The base-superstructure model, class conflict, and what follows.

The argument in its own terms, then the terms it uses.

Core claims

Production relations shape the rest of social life.

Every epoch has an owning and a working class.

Class position comes from ownership of the means.

Conflict, not consensus, drives historical change.

Ideology presents sectional interests as universal.

Alienation separates workers from product and self.

Key terms

Base: forces and relations of production.

Superstructure: law, politics, religion, culture.

Surplus value: output beyond the wage paid.

Class in itself vs class for itself.

False consciousness: misreading one's own interest.

Proletarianisation: skilled work made routine.

Educational reference. Marx's account of conflict is widely used; his predictions of polarisation and revolution are heavily contested.