

**Aspects of Western Philosophy**  
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**Module - 26**  
**Lecture - 26**  
**Karl Marx**  
**Historical Materialism**  
**The Significance of the Proletariat**  
**The Base Structure-Superstructure Division**

Welcome to this lecture series on Aspects Western Philosophy; Module 26. This lecture is trying to outline the philosophical contributions of one very important and even when you measure it in terms of contemporary relevance in that way most important I would say philosopher Karl Marx.

We can actually approach Karl Marx philosophy from two-three directions. One is to see him has continuation with the great philosophical tradition in Germany, Kant; then from Kant you know the idealistic tradition is taken to a different heights by a Hegel. But there is one important aspect about Hegel's philosophy; he is addressing a particular problem, the problem of alienation. He is trying to respond to this problem, and as we have seen in the previous lecture he outlines the development of the spirit, the phenomenology of spirit or the development of the spirit as a historical process which begins from consciousness and proceeds to self consciousness and from there culminates in reason. And in this way Hegel would try to overcome the problem of alienation where the individual self or individual mind realizes that it is a manifestation of the universal mind.

So all differences, all contradictions are over come at that stage; the final stage of reason where the ultimate synthesis of infinite with the finite takes place that is Hegel. But, you know we can see that there are so many aspects of Hegel which we would find reappearing in Marxian philosophy, but in a different way. As he belongs to the left Hegelian group, he tries to provide an interpretation of history which is totally different from his predict are Hegel. And while Hegel was trying to spiritualize reality Karl Marx he retains the historical approach of a Hegel, but he is trying to provide a materialistic account, he is trying to provide a materialistic account of history.

So, that is something which we have going to examine in this lecture the historical materialism, where the materialistic conception of history of class; which would be followed by a discussion of the base structure and superstructure division which he maintains in philosophy. And ultimately we will try to see the in this course, the development of history, the development of social history of man would explain the different stages and which according to Karl Marx culminates in classless society that is what we are going to see in this lecture.

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So, we will begin with an examination; brief outline of the materialistic conception of history and its important concerns. Number one, as I have already mentioned its addressing the problem of human freedom and alienation. I would rather say this is one of the prime concerns of Marx which actually makes in relevant even today. When we talk about philosophers, a philosophers relevance in the history we normally what we mean by that is you know a philosophers is relevant in the what you call in the history of philosophy or in the history of ideas is very relevant and even today contemporary philosophers also over a lot him.

So, in that sense many of these thinkers we mention in the history of philosophy of are relevant. But, when it comes to practical applications hardly anyone can compete with Karl Marx. Marxian philosophy is not just a philosophy for contemplation, it is a philosophy of action, it is a philosophy of practice and it is a philosophy that ultimately

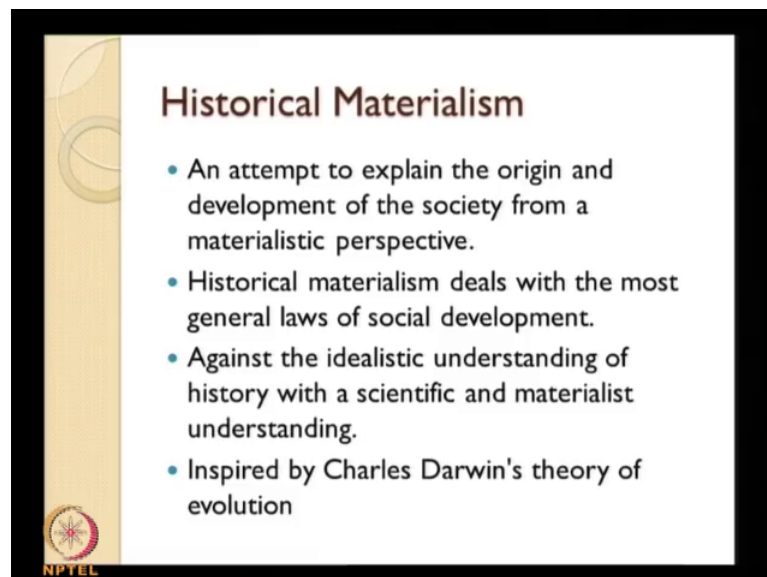
aims at transforming the world or even in that sense reality. So, that is the importance of Karl Marx as he famously stated once philosophers have either to only interpret the world, but the point is to change it.

So, his philosophy is an attempt to do that. And in order to makes such changes he has to come up with an understanding of philosophy, an understanding of human reality and this understanding of philosophy and human reality is initiated with materialistic conception of history where he starts by addressing the problem of human freedom and alienation.

Then again to overcome this problem of alienation Marx proposes that we have to change the world and understand that human realities essentially historical like Hegel, but here as I mentioned he provides a materialistic account of history.


So, it is historical materialism; where he says that the proletariat, the working class plays a very important role, extremely crucial role in change in the world, and also overcoming alienation by changing the world. So, these are the things which we are going to discuss today.

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**Historical Materialism**

- An attempt to explain the origin and development of the society from a materialistic perspective.
- Historical materialism deals with the most general laws of social development.
- Against the idealistic understanding of history with a scientific and materialist understanding.
- Inspired by Charles Darwin's theory of evolution

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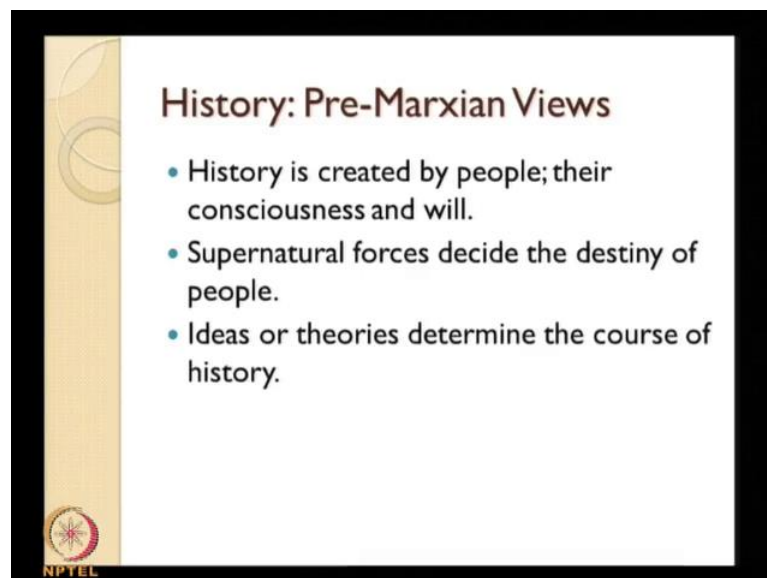
And, now let us start with historical materialism. It is an attempt to explain the origin and development of the society from a materialistic perspective. Why, how human society is has emerged. In fact, Marxian account is really comprehensive, because he starts with

the human origin how human beings have evolved, following the insights from Darwinian philosophy or Darwinian approaches Karl Marx also adopts a kind of very scientific and very rational path in which he explains the evolution of human kind, the evolution man from the animal world, the emergence of man, the emergence of man is a social being, the emergence of societies or social history of man. All these things are outlined in a comprehensive philosophical thinking.

Historical Materialism deals with the most general laws of social development. That is one way in which Marx conceives his philosophy, he says that it scientific philosophy. Scientists are generally interested in or trying to understand the universal laws behind natural phenomena. So, here historical phenomena are analyzed and Karl Marx is trying to arrive at those universal laws which guide or which determine the process of historical phenomena.

The general laws of social development are something which he is trying to describe with an explanation of the historical materialism. And it is against all the idealistic understanding of history with a scientific and materialistic conception is defiantly inspired by the evolution the theory of evolution proposed by Charles Darwin.

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**History: Pre-Marxian Views**

- History is created by people; their consciousness and will.
- Supernatural forces decide the destiny of people.
- Ideas or theories determine the course of history.

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Let us look at the pre Marxian views about history there are different accounts of history even as we have seen Hegel himself provides in account where he tries to see has a

creative process in which the spirit unfolds itself and realizes itself and culminates in the absolute.

So, here there are different versions where histories created by people their consciousness and will, and there are some philosophers who conceive history as constitutive of supernatural forces as these forces deciding the destiny of people. Then ideas or theories determine the course of history. All these are different ways in which you know pre Marxian thinkers have approach a whole phenomenon called history and try to understand it. But Marx's provides a very important very significantly very different view of history where he also tries to explain the development of society as a process where material conditions are being underlined.

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The slide features a title 'Marxism: Development of Society' in a dark red font. Below the title are three bullet points, each starting with a blue dot. The slide has a decorative vertical bar on the left with a circular graphic and the NPTEL logo at the bottom left.

### Marxism: Development of Society

- Society develops in accordance with certain laws which are independent of the wishes and desires of people.
- Development of society can be seen as a process of social production: from human evolution from the apes to complex society formations.
- The process of social production: men come together and enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will and desire.

Now, society according to him develops in accordance with certain laws which are independent of the wishes and desires of people. See it is like any other law, any other scientific law; scientific laws are or natural laws are not they do not function according to the wishes and desires of people. So, they are universal and objective in the sense that they are not our creations, they do not function according to our wishes and desires.

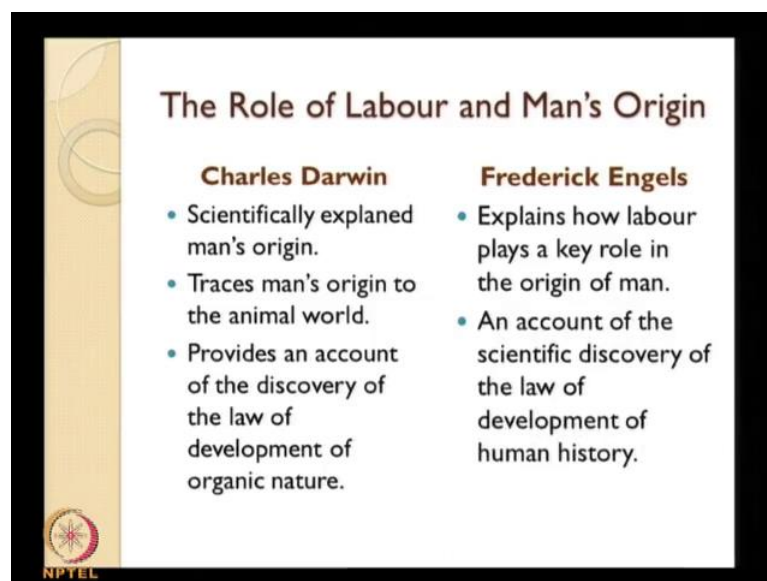
So, when Marx tries to introduce his conception of history or his philosophy which is says is scientific is also searching for such universal objective scientific laws that are independent of the wishes and desires of people, that would guide the development of society or the process of social development. So, the development of society can be seen

as a process of social production. That is the most important aspect of Marxian approach. It is a process of social production from human evolution from the apes to the complex society or social formations he is trying to outline this history. So what is it? The process of social production what happens is that, men came together and enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their wills and desire.

So, this is as the cuts of Marxian understanding of social development, he identifies labour and production as extremely significant and extremely important aspects of human reality. And then he tries to show that this activity of production is essentially a social activity where people have to come together, and as society develops there is a lot of cooperation between the peoples needed. And as a result production becomes social production where people have to enter into different kinds of relationships. And this laws according to which they enter into such kinds of relationship with each other with nature and with various things and artifacts are not something which happen according to their wishes and desires. They are independent of their will and desire.

Now what is it? Here let us look at Darwin's theory and the Marxian appropriation of this theory or the communist the appropriation by tangles another very important thinker in the development of Marxism.

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The slide is titled "The Role of Labour and Man's Origin" and is presented in a white box with a black border. On the left side of the box, there is a vertical yellow bar with a circular logo at the bottom that says "NPTEL". The main content is divided into two columns. The left column is headed "Charles Darwin" and lists three bullet points: "Scientifically explained man's origin.", "Traces man's origin to the animal world.", and "Provides an account of the discovery of the law of development of organic nature." The right column is headed "Frederick Engels" and lists two bullet points: "Explains how labour plays a key role in the origin of man." and "An account of the scientific discovery of the law of development of human history."

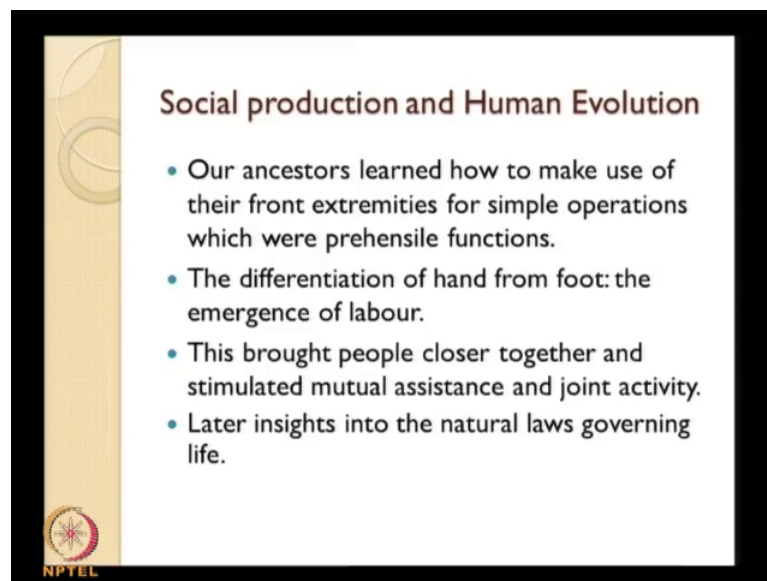
Charles Darwin	Frederick Engels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scientifically explained man's origin.</li><li>• Traces man's origin to the animal world.</li><li>• Provides an account of the discovery of the law of development of organic nature.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explains how labour plays a key role in the origin of man.</li><li>• An account of the scientific discovery of the law of development of human history.</li></ul>

So, Charles Darwin had stated that he try to provide a scientific explanation for man's origin in his theory of evolution. He traces man's origin to the animal world as all of us

know that we have our predecessors in the animal world the aids. And this provides an account of discovery of the law of development of organic nature. How, in a creative conflict, a creative interaction with nature and surroundings different organisms different species different animals evolved and ultimately the evolution of man with consciousness. So, this is what Darwin was trying to do with his scientific explanation of the origin of species.


Frederick Engels though in principle except this he (Refer Time: 11:25) takes it and explains how labour plays a key role in the origin of man. So, this is the Marxian contribution to the theory of evolution species evolution of man. So, he recognizing the important role played by labour, an account of the scientific discovery of the law of development of human history.

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**Social production and Human Evolution**

- Our ancestors learned how to make use of their front extremities for simple operations which were prehensile functions.
- The differentiation of hand from foot: the emergence of labour.
- This brought people closer together and stimulated mutual assistance and joint activity.
- Later insights into the natural laws governing life.

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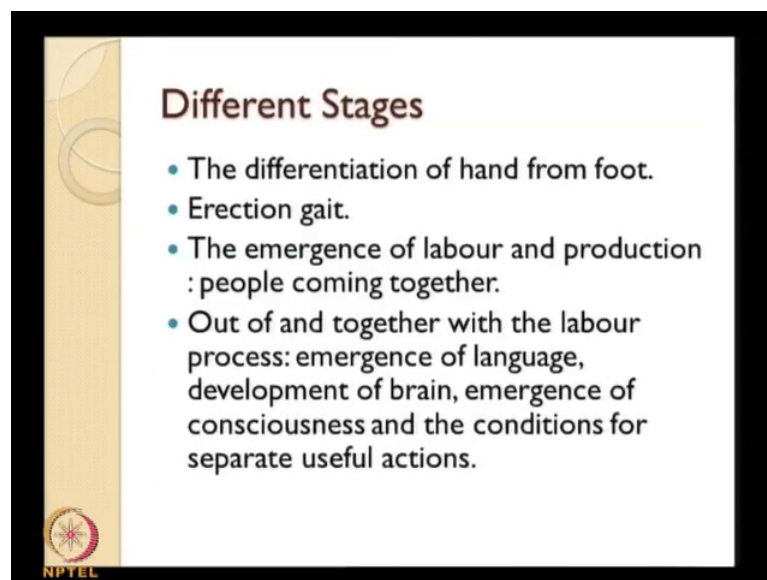
So, what is says is our ancestors learned how to make use of their front extremities for simple operations which are prehensile functions, the differentiation of hand from foot the emergence of labour. That states very important the history the evolution of man, the human species. Suddenly, they realize that the hands can be differentiated from the foot and can be used for different functions, you can handle something. And with hand you can do certain things it is a tool now.

Since you can do certain things you need greater brain hand coordination. This becomes a necessity in order to use the hand as a tool you need greater contribution greater

sharpness of the brain so gradually brain also developed and then ultimately consciousness developed. And since you can use your hand for doing several things you can have a social life, you can come together all kinds of social developments also follow. So, this is how you know the process of evolution is being further described by the Marxian philosophers, the differentiation of hand from foot.

This brought people closer together and stimulated mutual assistance and joint activity; and later insights to the natural laws governing life which ultimately led to the development of sciences and other technological activities which actually were responsible for human civilization. Again it is a process of reacting to nature in a certain way.

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So there are different stages let us briefly outline them the differentiation of hand from foot which I have mentioned erection gait is a very important stages where you know this differentiation happen , that you can really get up and stand on your two legs and where you do not have to support your entire body with your two hands and the two hands are free now, you can use it as a tool.

The emergence of labour and production people coming together out of and together with the labour process emergence of language like, when people come together they would start interacting and the impact process of interaction language develops and with



language a consciousness emergence and the conditions of separate useful actions also evolve.

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**Labour and Production**

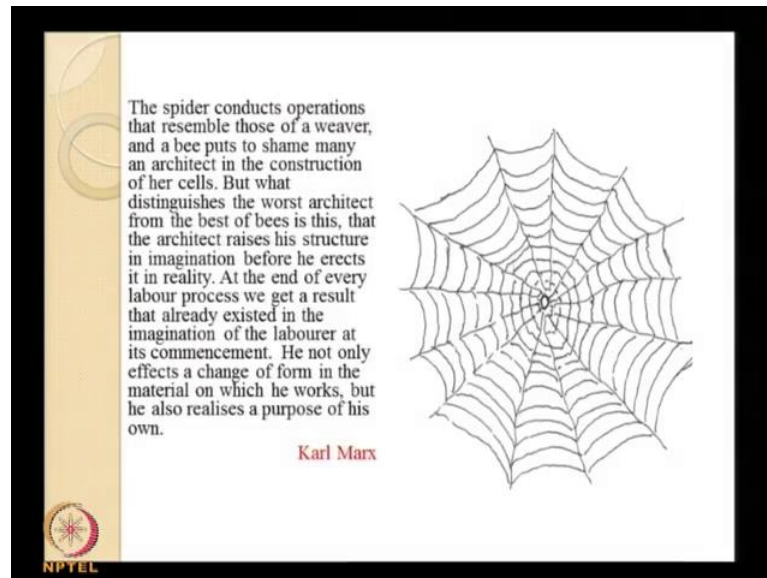
- Specialization of the hand : can employ a tool to make changes in nature.
- A specific human activity: Production.
- People come together and cooperate: social production.

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Now, a little bit on labour and productions; specialization of a hand where you can employ like a tool and make changes in nature. You can hold certain things you can throw, you can make changes in the world with your hand, and this is a very important stage in the process of evolution. And a specific human activity called production actually becomes relevant in this contest.

So, historically, genetically this evolution process is very important and production plays important role in taking it further. People come together and cooperate; so this is what is call social production.

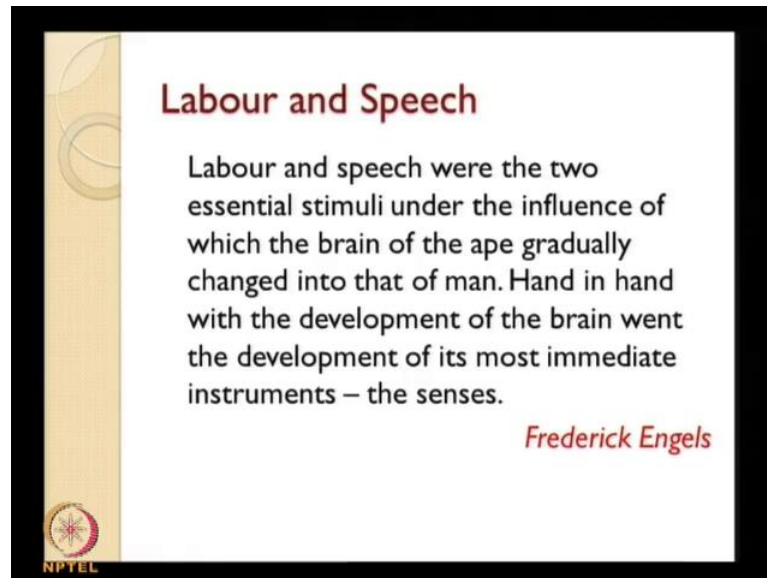
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This is a quote from Karl Marx; on the right hand side you would see a model of a spider man. So, Marx says the spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what designates the worst architect from the best of bees is this that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour process we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own.

So, it is something which comes from inside of the labourer. So the production or labour, production activity is where something which is internally there in imagination which already existent is being materialized. So, in one sense we can say that the essence is being materialized in the process of production. So, that is why labour or production plays a very important role in Marxian philosophy.

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**Labour and Speech**

Labour and speech were the two essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man. Hand in hand with the development of the brain went the development of its most immediate instruments – the senses.

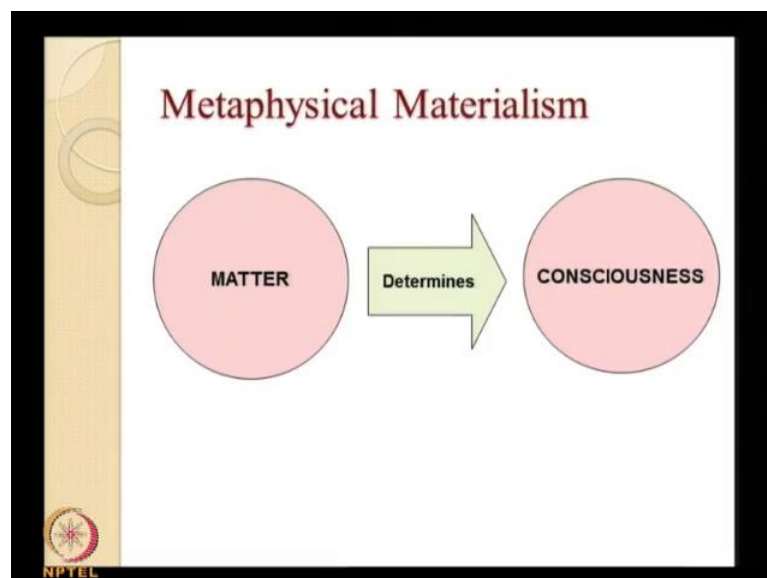
*Frederick Engels*

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And it is very closely associated with the notion of speech, and then from there to consciousness. So, this is what Engels says I quote. Labour and speech were the two essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man. Hand in hand with the development of the brain went the development of its most immediate instruments the senses.

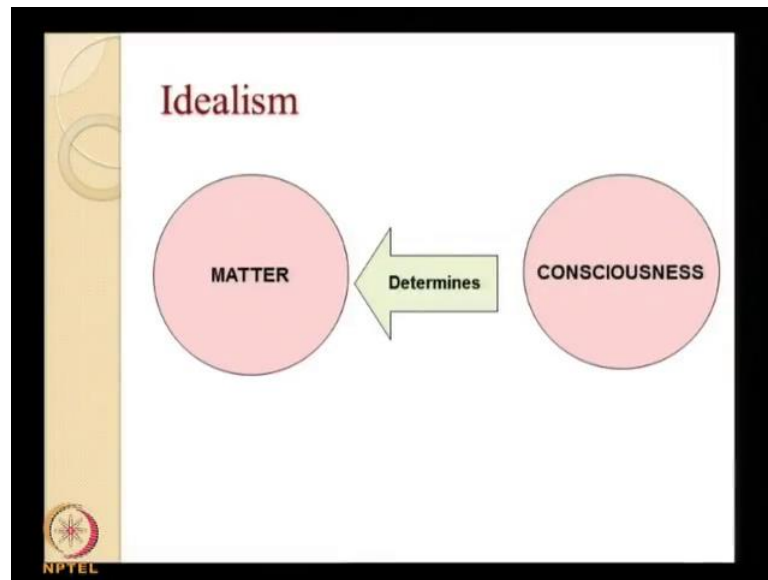
So, everything, speech, senses, everything developed which ultimately led to the evolution of man and as the intelligent creature he is today.

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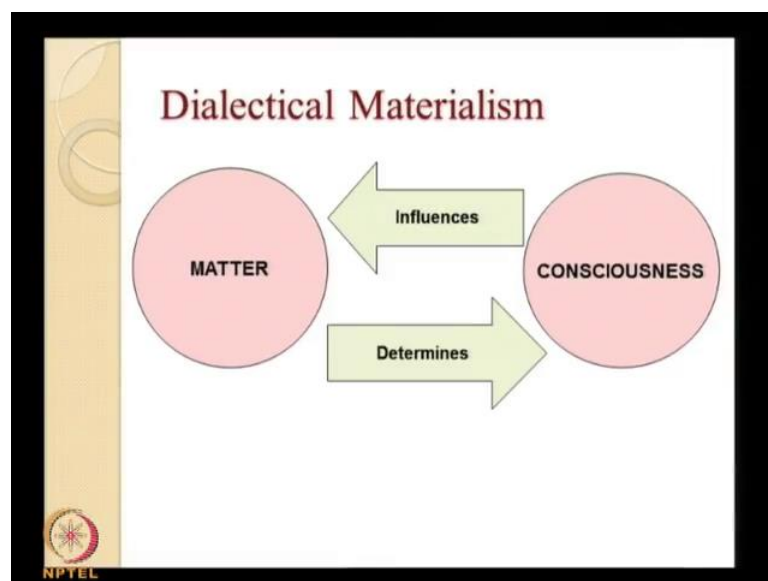
So, here these are some of the interesting aspects of that the materialistic conception which Marx is trying to initiate. It is different from other conceptions materialism. For example, there is a notion of metaphysics materialism where the philosophers would argue that matter determined consciousness.

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And idealism on the other hand as just an opposite view was consciousness determines matter.

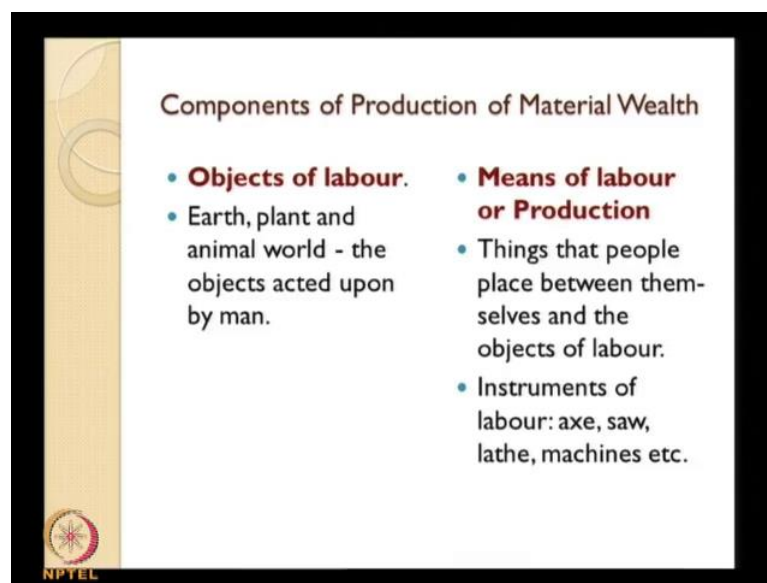
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And dialectical materialism where matter determines consciousness which in turn influences matter. So, it is a creative interactive dialectical process that Marx envisages.

Now, it is this conception which is associated with the notion of alienation which Marx conceives as the most significant philosophical and material worry of human kind. Overcoming alienation is the greatest human task which Marx is trying to achieve or accomplish with the help of his materialistic understanding of this reality, particularly human reality.

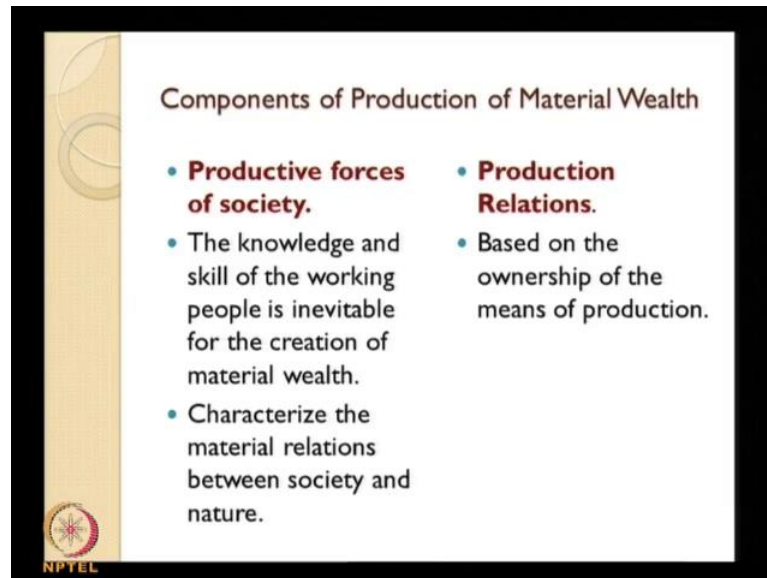
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Now objects of labour, what do you mean by objects of labour? All those things earth, plant, an animal world the objects acted upon by man with his equipment tools and other things. So, this is object of labour.

And when you talk about means of labour or production things that people place between themselves and the object of labour are the means of labour or production. There are instruments of labour like; axe, saw, lathe, machines, etcetera. We are trying to outline the components of production of material wealth.

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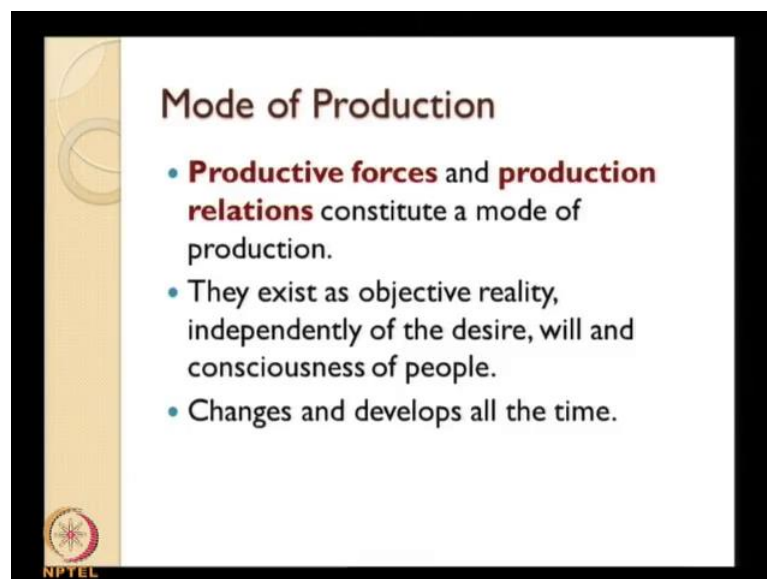
### Components of Production of Material Wealth

- **Productive forces of society.**
  - The knowledge and skill of the working people is inevitable for the creation of material wealth.
  - Characterize the material relations between society and nature.
- **Production Relations.**
  - Based on the ownership of the means of production.

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Again you have the productivity forces of society which constitute the knowledge and skill of the working people which is inevitable for the creation of material world, and it characterizes the material relations between society and nature. And when you talk about the other component production relations; it is based on the ownership of the means of production. These are some of the important components, and now we will try to outline their important relationships, we should explain Marxian philosophy in comprehensive fashion.

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### Mode of Production

- **Productive forces and production relations** constitute a mode of production.
- They exist as objective reality, independently of the desire, will and consciousness of people.
- Changes and develops all the time.

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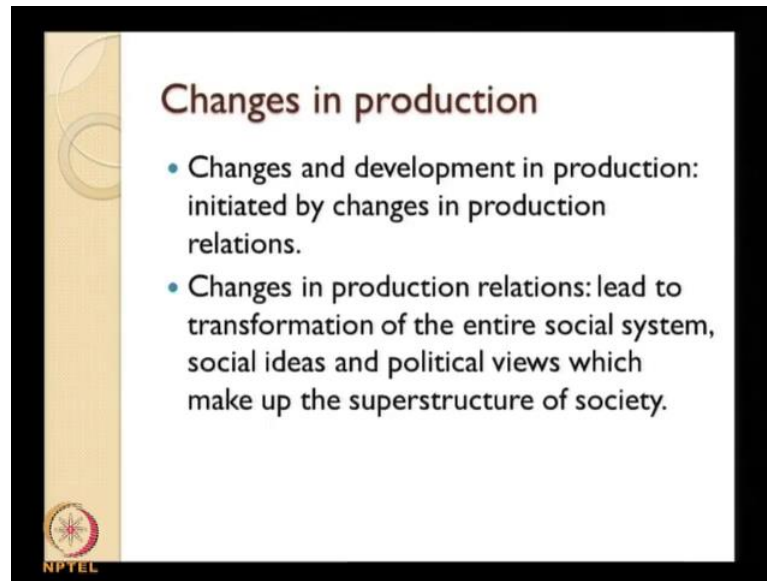
So, let us talk about mode of production. So, there are the productive forces on the one hand and production relations on the other hand which constitute a mode of production. What mode of production a particular society follows, is determined by the productive forces which we have already seen, the knowledge and skill of the working people; and then the production relations which is nothing but based on the ownership, who owns the means of production so that matters.

See for example, according to Marxian theory there are different stages of human evolution. One particular stage for example, feudalism the land is owned by certain feudal lords and there are (Refer Time: 19:22) and other workers who are landless workers who actually have our controlled over the wealth's of society. So, based on that you know there relationship with nature, the relationship with their objects of work, and the relationship with the owners of work all these constitute production relation.

So, you have productive forces and production relations they constitute the mode of production of a particular society. In a capitalist society this mode of production would be of a different kind and in a feudal society it will be of another kind. They exist as objective reality independently of the desire will and consciousness of people. This is somewhat is something I mentioned some time back when I said you know he was trying to outline universal laws of history, like a scientist would try to outline the universal laws of nature.

Changes and develops all the time. So, this is another aspect of Marxian philosophy he says that it is a historical process it is not static. The mode of production which depends on the productive force and the production relations keep on changing, so from feudalism to capitalism there is a very significant change. Now the capitalist are the owners of factories and technologies and other things and the property less working class or proletariat we call them, their relationship is different from the kind of relationship they have with nature, within themselves, and with their capitalist is different from the kind of relations that existed during the feudal era.

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**Changes in production**

- Changes and development in production: initiated by changes in production relations.
- Changes in production relations: lead to transformation of the entire social system, social ideas and political views which make up the superstructure of society.

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Now changes in development are production is initiated by changes in production relations. Marx is trying to gradually outline the process of historical change. What happens, how change takes place? Changes in production relations lead to transformation of the entire social system, social ideas, and political views which make up the superstructure of any society.

So, it is this production relationship which is very crucial, the nature of this relationship the changes that take place within this relationship it actually leads to a kind of transformation the entire social system. And which ultimately replaces the socio-economic system that is existent today. So, such changes and replacements and transformations are result of the changes that take place in the production relationships.



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The slide features a title 'Replacing of Socio-Economic Systems' in a dark font. Below the title are three bullet points, each starting with a blue dot. The first bullet point discusses the conflict between productive forces and production relations. The second bullet point describes the resolution of conflict through the replacement of old production relations with new ones. The third bullet point states that the old socio-economic formation is destroyed and replaced by a new one. In the bottom left corner, there is a circular logo with a red and white design, and the text 'NPTEL' is written below it.

### Replacing of Socio-Economic Systems

- Productive forces develop faster than production relations and they may conflict with each other.
- Resolution of conflict: replacement of the old production relations with new ones.
- Destruction of the old socio-economic formation and its replacement by a new one.

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Productive forces develop faster than production relations and they may conflict and they may each other. So, I mentioned about the productive forces they develop faster than the production relationships and there is a conflict. Resolution of the conflict happens with the replacement of the old production relations with new ones; in the example of feudalism and capitalism we this quite visible.

Feudalism encounters certain difficulties, certain conflicts within the system because there was conflict between the productive forces and the production relationships. The society can no longer pull on with this conflict, so a resolution becomes inevitable which ultimately led to the creation of a different society with the different set of relationships and socio-economic conditions.

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### Law of Social-Economic Formation

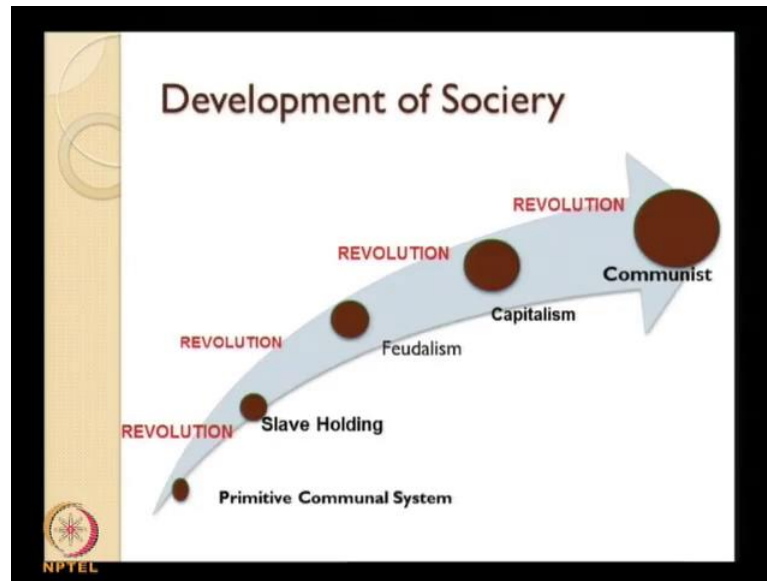
- The result of the conflict between production forces and production relations.
- This universal law had governed the entire history of human society.
- Govern all progress of material production and of society as a whole.
- Five socio-economic formations: the primitive-communal, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist and communist

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So, the destruction of the old socio-economic formation and its replacement by the new one happens here. Marx says that the social formation, socio-economic formation actually happens according to certain laws.

So what is it; the result of the conflict between production forces and production relationships. This universal law had governed the entire history of human society; this is what I mention about the universal law of history. And it governs all progress of material production and of society as a whole. And there are according to the Marxian view five socio-economic formations which start from the primitive, communal, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist, and communist.

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So, this figure will outline it, the on the bottom you can see the primitive communal system which encounter certain inner conflicts and as a result there is this revolution take place which leads to the next one slave holding. Again due to this conflict between modes of production and the revolution taking place which leads the feudalism. And again as a result of the inner conflict revolution takes place leads capitalism.

And now at present we are in this stage and (Refer Time: 24:05) envisages do self further lead to communism as the result of a revolution. But then, this stage is very important because, when Marx compose this words the capitalism was emerging in Europe and many European nations are already witness rapid industrialization he thought that the evolution to the next stage with the revolution its needs to be initiated by the working class. So, that is where you know he thought proletariat or the working class plays a very important role.

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The slide is titled "The Role of Revolution" and features a list of five bullet points. The NPTEL logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the slide.

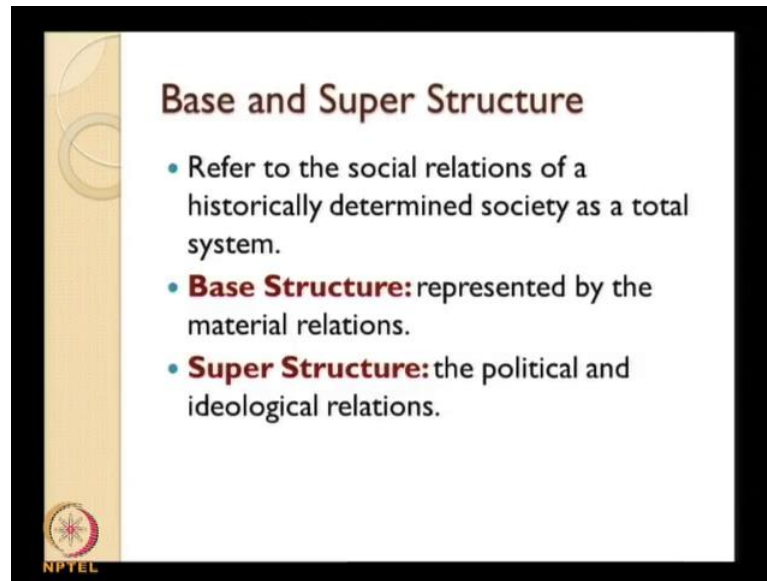
- The conflict ultimately reaches the stage of revolution.
- Transition from one socio-economic formation to another means.
- There is an intermediary stage of social upheaval.
- A socio- historical and law-governed process of development of human society.
- Underlines the the progressive character of social development.

The revolution the conflict ultimately reaches the stages of revolution transition from one socio-economic formation to another. And there is an intermediary stage of social upheaval which needs to be resolves that confusion needs to be overcome. And a socio historical, a law governed processes of development of human society. It underlines the progressive character of social development.

So, we can see that a kind of theology, a kind of progress it is not just blind change but a progress from one stage then that stage progresses, the more it progresses the more its conflicts become apparent and expose. And these ultimately necessitate a kind of a resolution which happens with the help of revolution which takes it to the next stage, and it goes on.

Now, before we really get into the last section where will discuss the problem of alienation let us clarify a point here, in the materialistic conception of history which is called the historical materialism; there Marx makes the distinction between the base structure and the superstructure of a society.

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**Base and Super Structure**

- Refer to the social relations of a historically determined society as a total system.
- **Base Structure:** represented by the material relations.
- **Super Structure:** the political and ideological relations.

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So, this distinction refers to the social relations of a historically determined society as a total system, conceived society as a total system. And every society will have a base structure which is represented by the material relationships, like how different people are related to each other; the class differences, the proletariat or the haves and the have nots. And then again the superstructure is constituting the political and ideological relations.

Everything that comes under that law politics morality religion everything comes under the superstructure. That is the reason why many people criticize Marxism for being an economic reductionist. He would say that the economic relationships constitute the base structure which is very important for any society.

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### Base and Super Structure

- Base Structure
- Base of a society
- The totality of the historically determined relations of production.

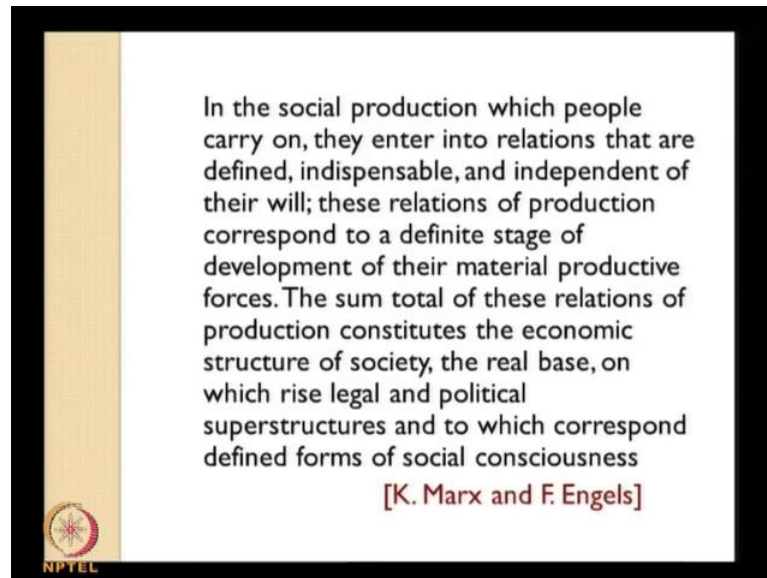
- Superstructure
- Totality of the ideological relations, views, and institutions
- Law and the state, morality, religion, philosophy, art, political and legal forms of consciousness and the institutions corresponding to them.

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So, this base structure which is the bases of society, the totality of the historically determined relations of production which is nothing but the economic relations. And the superstructure is constitutive of the totality of the ideological relations views and institutions which I have already mention. Law, the state, morality, religion, philosophy, art, political, and legal forms of consciousness and the institutions corresponding to them.

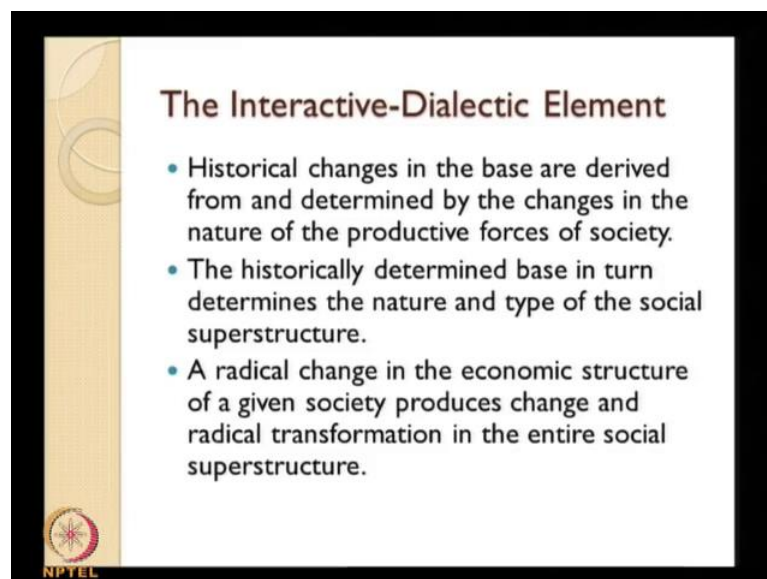
So, all these constitute the superstructure which is based on the base structure. The super structure under goes changes in accordance with the changes which happens to the base structure the economic relationships.

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So, here there is a quote from the collected works of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, I quote. In the social production which people carry on, they enter into relations that are defined, indispensable, and independent of their will. These relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of productions constitute the economic structure of society which is the real base, on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond defined relations of social consciousness; and quote.

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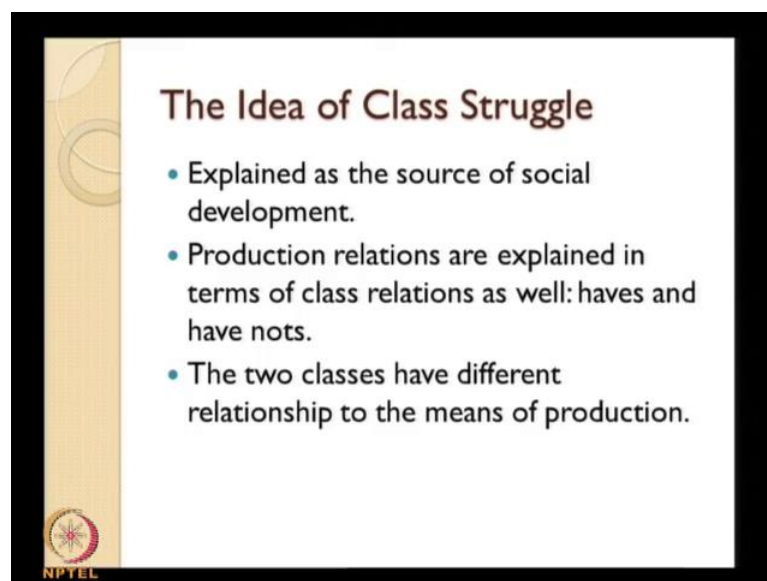


This would also highlight the interactive-dialectical element in social formation. The low itself highlight this dialectical and interactive element. Historical changes in the base are derived and determined by the changes in the nature of the productive forces of society. The historically determined base in tern determines the nature and type of the social superstructure. Radical change in the economic structure of a given society produces change and radical transformation in the entire social superstructure.

So, instead of saying that one is dependent on the other Marx would high light the fact that they are interactive, one would determine the other and influence the other vice versa.

Let us now come to the conclusion part of our lecture. I would try to highlight to important things here; the problem of overcoming alienation, and the role played by the proletariat class in this process. As we have seen from primitive communism to the modern communism particularly, the stage in between capitalism and communism is something which Karl Marx says we have to act. The point of philosophy is to change the world not to interpret it. So, here there is a need to act from capitalism to communism. We have to change the society because this social system is essentially exploitative which takes away freedom from a huge number of people; the proletariat.

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So, we will try to see that the idea of class struggle which is again at the center of Marxian theory it explained as the source of social development. Karl Marx could see the

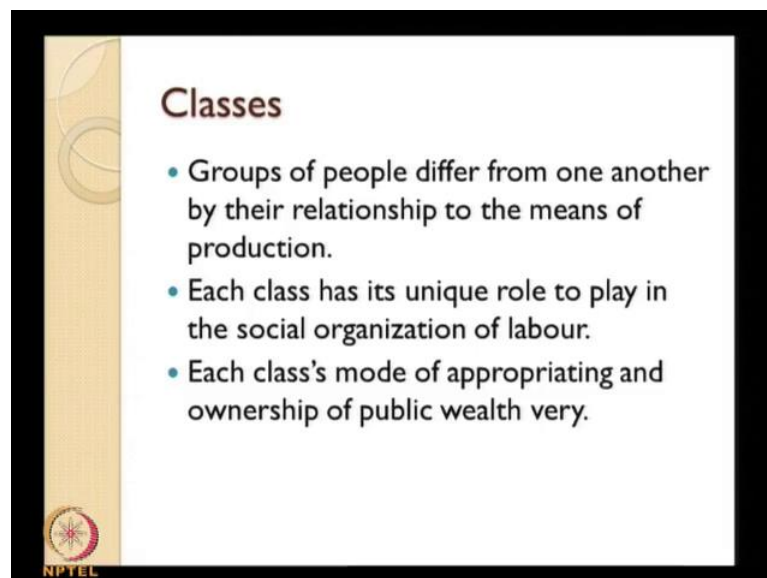


entire history of human kind as a struggle between to class haves and have nots. So, the notion of and the concept of class struggle is at the center of Marxian philosophy.

So, the production relations are explained in terms of class relations as well haves and have nots. And the two classes have different relationships to the means of production, those who have, and those who possess the means of production they own it, they own the means of production, but those who do not have the proletariat class or to the working class have no ownership over the means of production. They are just selling their labour and labour according to Marx as we have seen earlier is nothing but the essence of man.

Because, in labour or in the activity of production man realizes brings out something for his imagination, materializes his imagination into the real world. So, in that process the essence is materialized. And when you have your essence as your product in front of you, and when you realize that you have no right over it your essence is being sort taken away from you which means that you are taken away from yourself; entire thing your freedom everything you have to surrender because you have no control over your life. So, this according to Marx is a miserable philosophical worry, it is a miserable situation which needs to be overcome; this is what he means by alienation.

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**Classes**

- Groups of people differ from one another by their relationship to the means of production.
- Each class has its unique role to play in the social organization of labour.
- Each class's mode of appropriating and ownership of public wealth vary.

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And what is the class? A class or classes are groups of people that differ from one another by their relationship to the means of production. Based on the relationship whether they own it or do not own it, based on that the classes differ. And there are

primarily two classes the class of haves and the class of have nots. And what they have what they do not have depend on the production relationships.

Each class has its unique role to play in the social organization of labour; and each class's mode of appropriating and ownership of public wealth very. So, for example, the Bhushava or the capitalist, the property owning capitalist they have control over the means of production; they own everything and the property less working class have no ownership at all. So, their relationship social wealth vary from the relationship of the capitalist.

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**Emergence of Classes in Human History**

- Primitive society was classless.
- People lived in small communes enjoying equal rights.
- Everything was common.
- Level of economic development was very low.
- With social development and progress, classes evolved in relation to production relationships.

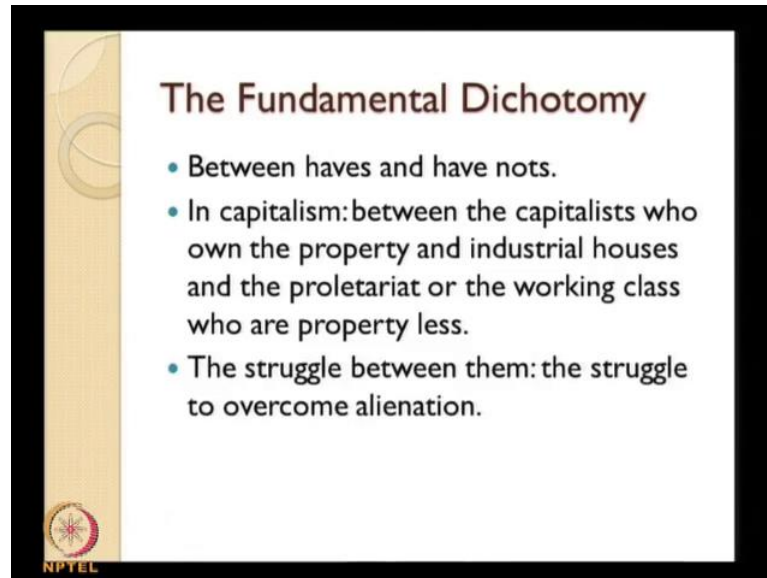
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Emergence of classes in human history; Marx here provides a very interesting explanation of human history. What is says that primitive society, the primitive communism which have already mentioned a in one of my earlier slides; it is basically classless where people lived in small groups or sometimes even individually and where they basically did things for their fundamental survival, and where there is not much of social progress and the concerns for social progress was also not there.

So, people live in small communes small communities and joy equal rights everything was common. Level of economic development was very low. With social development and progress classes started evolving, because you need to have very sophisticated relationship between man and nature and man and man. So, this kind of a situation actually resulted in the evolution of complex social structures.

So, with development that progress; social development and progress classes also evolved. You cannot operate with the kind of primitive equality existed among our (Refer Time: 33:50).

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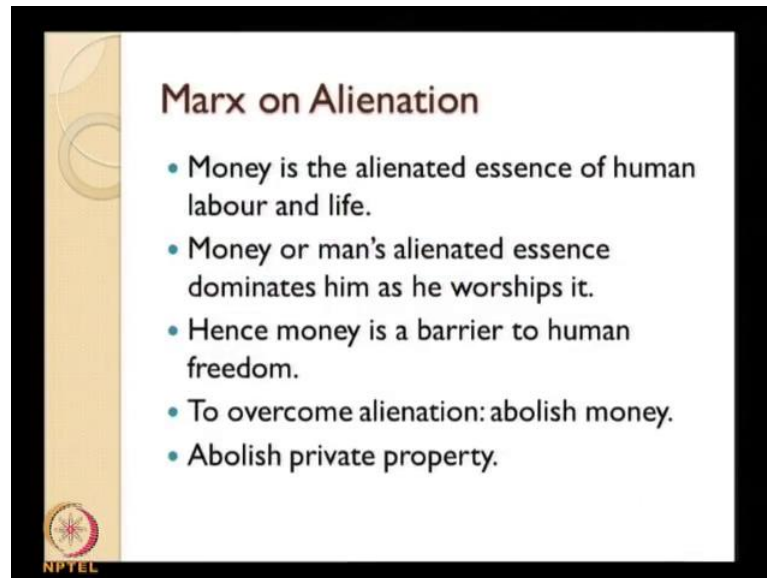


Now the fundamental dichotomy also emerges in terms of classes, the class of haves and the class of have nots. And in capitalism between the capitalist who own the property and the industrial houses and the factories and the proletariat or the working class who are property less; the struggle between them, the struggle to overcome alienation.

So, Marxian attempt is to explain this relationship between the property on capitalist and the property less working class, it is a kind of exploitative relationship. The proletariats are always exploited by the capitalist in the situation, and there is a struggle, there is a conflict between them because they are increasingly become aware of this exploitation and there is a conflict. And as a result of conflict there is a necessity for a resolution of this conflict which Marx thought needs to be supplemented by ideas of alienation.

Because, the real problem is not exploitation, the real problem is alienation. And to overcome alienation, once you overcome alienation you can overcome the problem of exploitation as well.

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### Marx on Alienation

- Money is the alienated essence of human labour and life.
- Money or man's alienated essence dominates him as he worships it.
- Hence money is a barrier to human freedom.
- To overcome alienation: abolish money.
- Abolish private property.

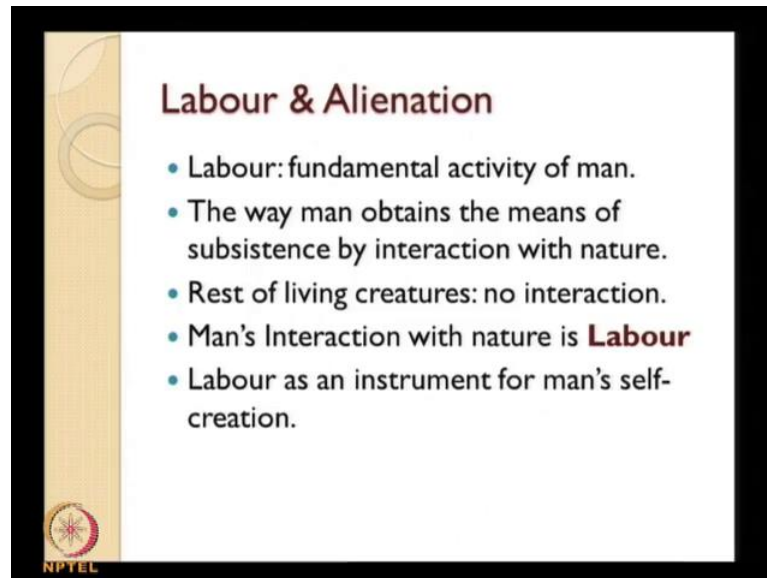
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Now, let us see Marx on alienation; Marxian theory about alienation is very interesting he says that, money is the alienated essence of human labour and life. See for example, a worker works for survival, he goes to the factory and works for his owner of the factory. And according to Marxian theory what is labour, in labour or in production he is actually materializing what is there in his imagination, which is nothing but his own essence. So, the labour or production is a production of essence. The product is the essence, the materialize form the essence. But ironically the person who has produced, the worker, the proletariat who make this production activity has no right over what he has produced.

So, this product which is actually his essence is taken away from him, it remains over against him as his alienated essence which actually challenges him because it is going to be taken away from him. And this he is post to do is because he is actually selling this for the sake of money to the capitalist. So money, it is for the sake of money he does it and money here remains as the alienated essence of labour and life.

Money or man's alienated essence dominate him as he worships it, because he has to worship it, he does everything for the money he is ready to even give his own essence for the sake of money. Hence, money is a barrier to human freedom. So abolished of money is the only source to overcome alienation. Abolish private property.

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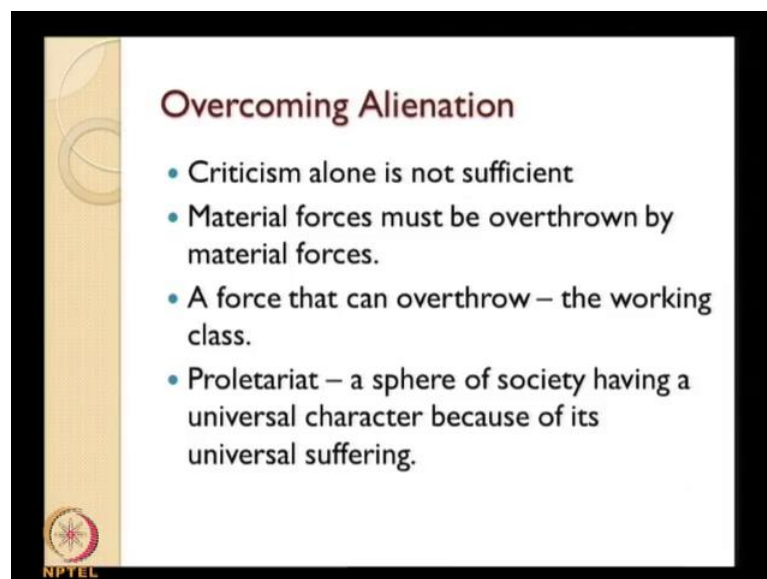


### Labour & Alienation

- Labour: fundamental activity of man.
- The way man obtains the means of subsistence by interaction with nature.
- Rest of living creatures: no interaction.
- Man's Interaction with nature is **Labour**
- Labour as an instrument for man's self-creation.

Because the root cause of this alienation, the root cause of this exploitative relationship lies in the idea of private property. Now again labour and alienation; labour is the fundamental activity of man which I have already explained so I am not going to the details here. The way man obtains the means of subsistence by interactions with nature and the rest of living creatures there is no interaction, I have already explained this with the quote of Marx where compares human labour or human production with the bees or a spider's weaving skills.

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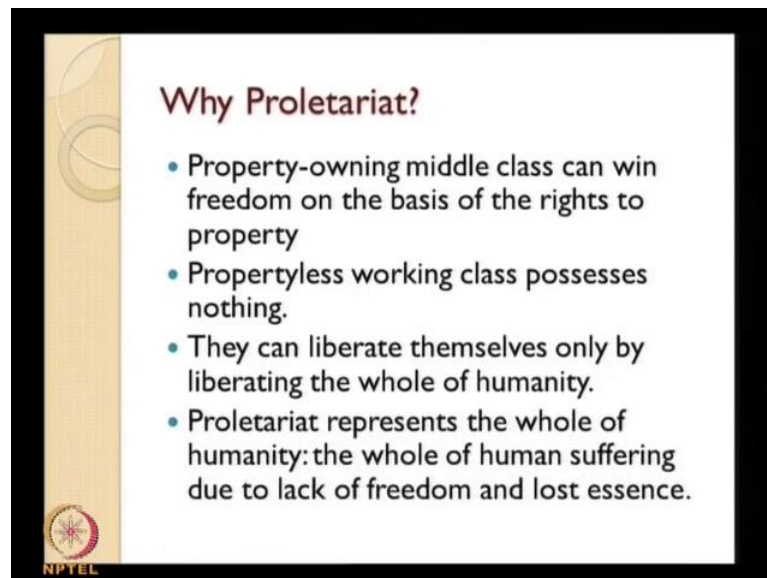
### Overcoming Alienation

- Criticism alone is not sufficient
- Material forces must be overthrown by material forces.
- A force that can overthrow – the working class.
- Proletariat – a sphere of society having a universal character because of its universal suffering.

But that is not labour, that is not production that is quite following a natural instinct. In the case of man there is a creation of something from imagination which is called production. Man's interaction with nature is labour which is an instrument for man's self creation by engaging himself in the activity of production man creates himself. And this is this becomes a perennial issue for Marx. And Marx says that the central philosophical vary is how to overcome alienation, and here criticism alone is not sufficient. He says that we have to see what has actually caused this alienation. The causes of alienation are certain material conditions.

So, in order to overcome alienation you have to actually overcome these material forces which created alienation. And these material forces which created alienation needs to be over thrown by material forces, another set of material forces which is supplied by the labours, the proletariat class. A force that can over throw the system is the working class. Through revolution he wants the proletariat to initiate a revolution, the famous slogan you have nothing to lose, but only change workers of all were unite and the proletariat is a sphere of society having a universal character because of its universal suffering.

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**Why Proletariat?**

- Property-owning middle class can win freedom on the basis of the rights to property
- Propertyless working class possesses nothing.
- They can liberate themselves only by liberating the whole of humanity.
- Proletariat represents the whole of humanity: the whole of human suffering due to lack of freedom and lost essence.

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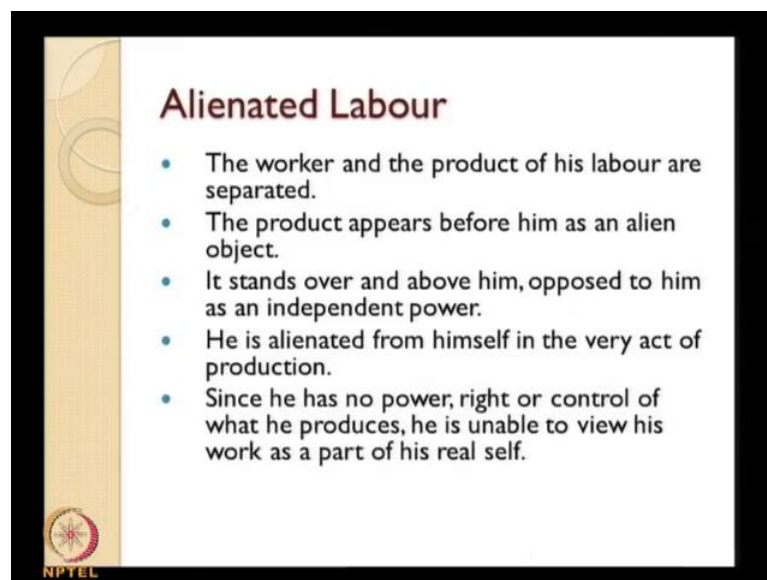
Why proletariat? He identifies the proletariat as having this historical responsibility of initiating the revolution that ultimately culminates in communism result in a kind of overcoming all forms of alienation.

So, the proletariat has got a historical responsibility here because the property owning middle class can win freedom on the basis of the rights to property. They are already enjoying freedom. So, they are not really worried about freedom they are not really worried about the problem of alienation, though they are also alienated from humanity in a very significant way. Propertyless working class possesses nothing. They can liberate themselves only by liberating the whole of humanity; only by realizing the whole of human self in them.

So, proletariat represents the whole of humanity, the whole of human suffering due to lack of freedom and lost essence. Because, in this very peculiar economic relationship which is exploitative were the proletariat is force to sell his product which is nothing but his own essence materialized through labour. When he does this, actually he suffers a loss of self. He suffers a loss of essence and also has to sacrifice his freedom.


So, only by regaining this freedom and regaining the lost essence you can gain independents, you can gain happiness or overcome alienation. This can be done only with a revolution.

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**Alienated Labour**

- The worker and the product of his labour are separated.
- The product appears before him as an alien object.
- It stands over and above him, opposed to him as an independent power.
- He is alienated from himself in the very act of production.
- Since he has no power, right or control of what he produces, he is unable to view his work as a part of his real self.

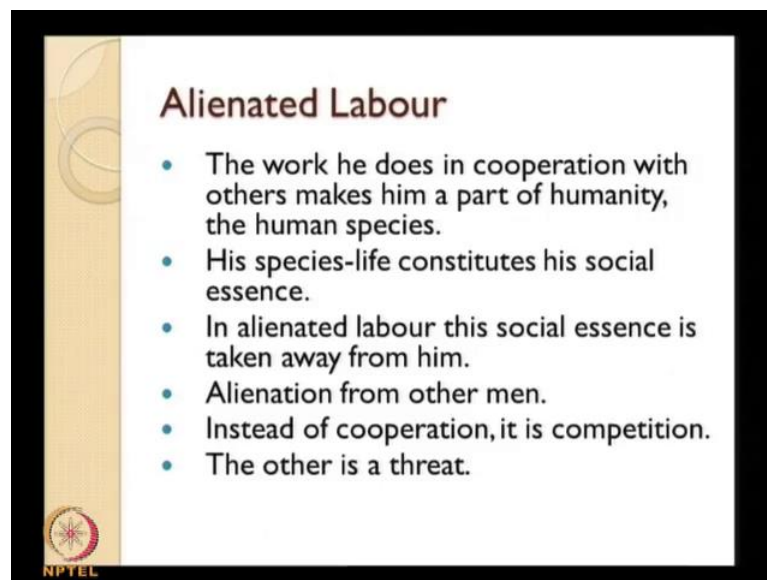
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So alienated labour what happens is that, the worker and the product of his labour are separated I already mentioned this. They appear before him as an alien object, because he has no control over it, he has no right to possess it. And it stands over and above him

opposed him as an independent power, someone else has power over it. And then he is alienated from himself in the very act of production.

So, under such condition of production what happens is that your alienated from yourself, the worker is alienated from himself in the very act of production. Since he has no power right or control of what he produces he is unable to view his work as part of his real self. The moment he does it, it is taken away from him, he has no controlled over it.

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The slide is titled "Alienated Labour" in a dark red font. It features a list of six bullet points in black text. The slide has a white background with a black border. On the left side, there is a vertical yellow bar with a circular logo at the bottom that says "NPTEL".

- The work he does in cooperation with others makes him a part of humanity, the human species.
- His species-life constitutes his social essence.
- In alienated labour this social essence is taken away from him.
- Alienation from other men.
- Instead of cooperation, it is competition.
- The other is a threat.

The work he does in cooperation with others make him a part of humanity which is the human species actually an ideal conditions this is what is happening. Every human labour has a social element. So, this social element, if you realize this social element in your individual activity of production that consists in the realization of your social self as well, or rather you realize that your becoming a part of humanity the human species.

The species life constitutes the social essence of man. In alienated labour this social essence is taken away from him because there is he has no option to in the great himself with the rest of humanity, with the rest of the human species. Here what happens is that is alienated from other men instead of cooperation he competes with other workers.

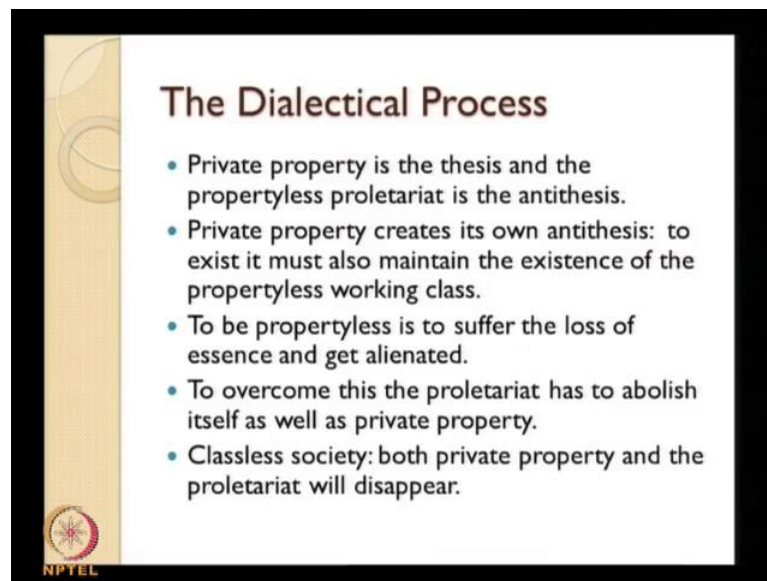
Because this, again you know the supply demand equation that works in classical economics. Even in the case of in the market more the number of employees are available jobless, the less the demand for them naturally the wages would come down.



So, they are exploited there in terms of low wages they are exploited. And instead of cooperating with them they compete with each other, because they know that the supply is more and the demand is less.

Now in the under such circumstances each worker would perceive the other his co worker as a threat which is again the loss of social essence.

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**The Dialectical Process**

- Private property is the thesis and the propertyless proletariat is the antithesis.
- Private property creates its own antithesis: to exist it must also maintain the existence of the propertyless working class.
- To be propertyless is to suffer the loss of essence and get alienated.
- To overcome this the proletariat has to abolish itself as well as private property.
- Classless society: both private property and the proletariat will disappear.

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And overcoming alienation consisting resolving all such problems; abolition of private property is at the core of all these issues. So, Marxism very strongly advocates the abolition of private property, as it causes alienation from nature and other men. See in what happens in private property, once you are mesmerize by the paradigm of private property is that even your senses your entire perception of the world is controlled dominated by this notion of private property. You will not be able to appreciate the worth and value and beauty of anything in nature independent of this conception of private property. You always see it as something which you possess, what would be the value if I possess it, instead of appreciating its value or worth independent of being possessing it. So, this is the danger of having this notion of private property at the back drop.

Abolition of wages and money; this is another thing. As I mentioned the wages will come down, but hiking the wages is not a solution rather the abolition of wages in total, the abolition of money itself is the fundamental solution. In this the context a Marx

introduces the dialectical materialism where the working class or the preliterate has the historical responsibility of initiating a revolution a materializing or nothing but bringing out the conflict that already exist in society. Capitalist versus proletariat classes and ultimately this reaches to the synthesis of classless society.

The dialectics emergence from the concept of private property; and classless society both private property and the proletariat will disappear in that synthesis of classless society. Interesting thing is that the private property is the thesis and property less proletariat is the antithesis. Private property creates its own antithesis, because not at continue to exist private property a must maintain the existence of a property less working class. And to be property less is to suffer the loss of essence and get alienated.

I have already mentioned, what do you mean by property less? Property less ultimately means that you have no controlled over the product which is ultimately the product of your labour which is nothing but your own essence; so alienated labour, alienated essence. So, under such circumstances the property less is to suffer the loss of essence and get alienated. And to overcome this, the proletariat has to abolish its self as well as private property.

So, unless you abolish private property, because private property requires for its own subsistence the maintenance of a propertyless working class, which ultimately means sufferings, loss of self etcetera, and this has to be overcome. The class less society which hey which Marx's envisages is nothing but the culmination, the ultimate synthesis of the dialectical relationship between the working class or the haves and have nots, the capitalist and the working class.

As we have seen in the stage of evolution or social evolution, social change happens from the stage of capitalism according to Marx to communism which can be materialized only with the over throwing of the material forces of capitalism by the working class by means of a revolution. And this happens by abolition of private property, abolition of money, and abolition of all forms of exploitation.

And I would rather conclude by saying that Marx is important is not just because he has proposed a philosophy which ultimately finds a kind of particle application, but also trying to integrate with this particle application a very interesting and a very important

problem which human kind has been facing from its beginning, the problem of alienation.

And trying to find a solution to this fundamental problem by providing an account of history, and how this account of history ultimately culminates in a process where man has to do something creative in order to initiate the process; the revolution, the proletariat has to do that which ultimately results in a classical society were all exploitations, all differences, everything is abolished, everything is overcome. So, that is the importance of Marxism. In this will wind up this lecture.

Thank you.