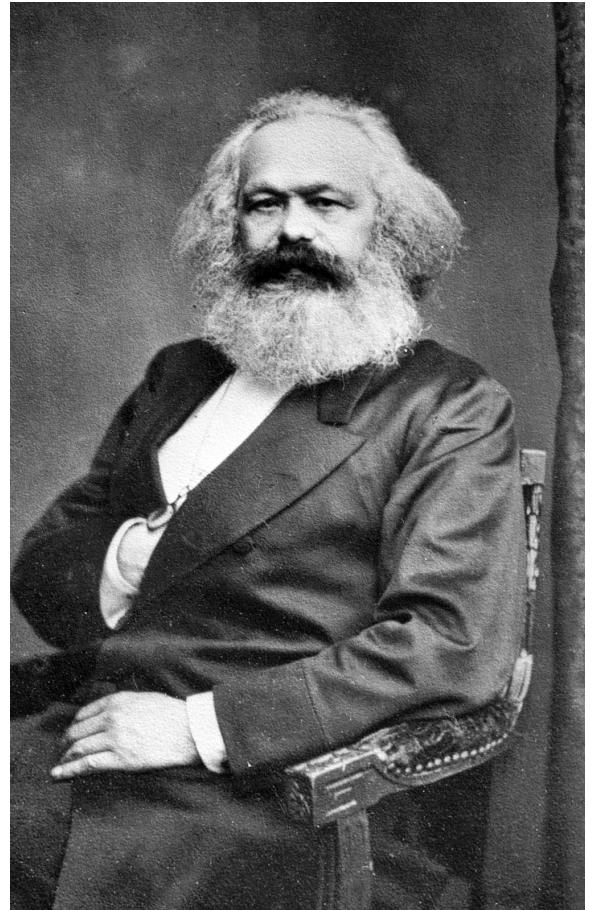


Ways of Looking at the Past: Part 1

IHS History: Lecture 4

Who is Karl Marx and why is he so important?

- German born (1818-1883)
- Philosopher, economist, historian, political theorist, journalist, sociologist
- Occupied with understanding and explaining the capitalist mode of production
- Became its most foundational critics



The Theory of Alienation

- Discussed in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*
- At its most abstract it means surrender of agency
- Four aspects:
 - 1) From the product of labour
 - 2) From the activity of labour
 - 3) From one's own specific humanity
 - 4) From others, from society

Historical Materialism

- Aims to understand society as a product of particular material conditions
- A materialist conception of history
- Production and the exchange of things produced: the basis of all social structure
- Determines the nature of social relations in all societies
- The difference between different stages in history?
- Production and exchange

How is historical change explained?

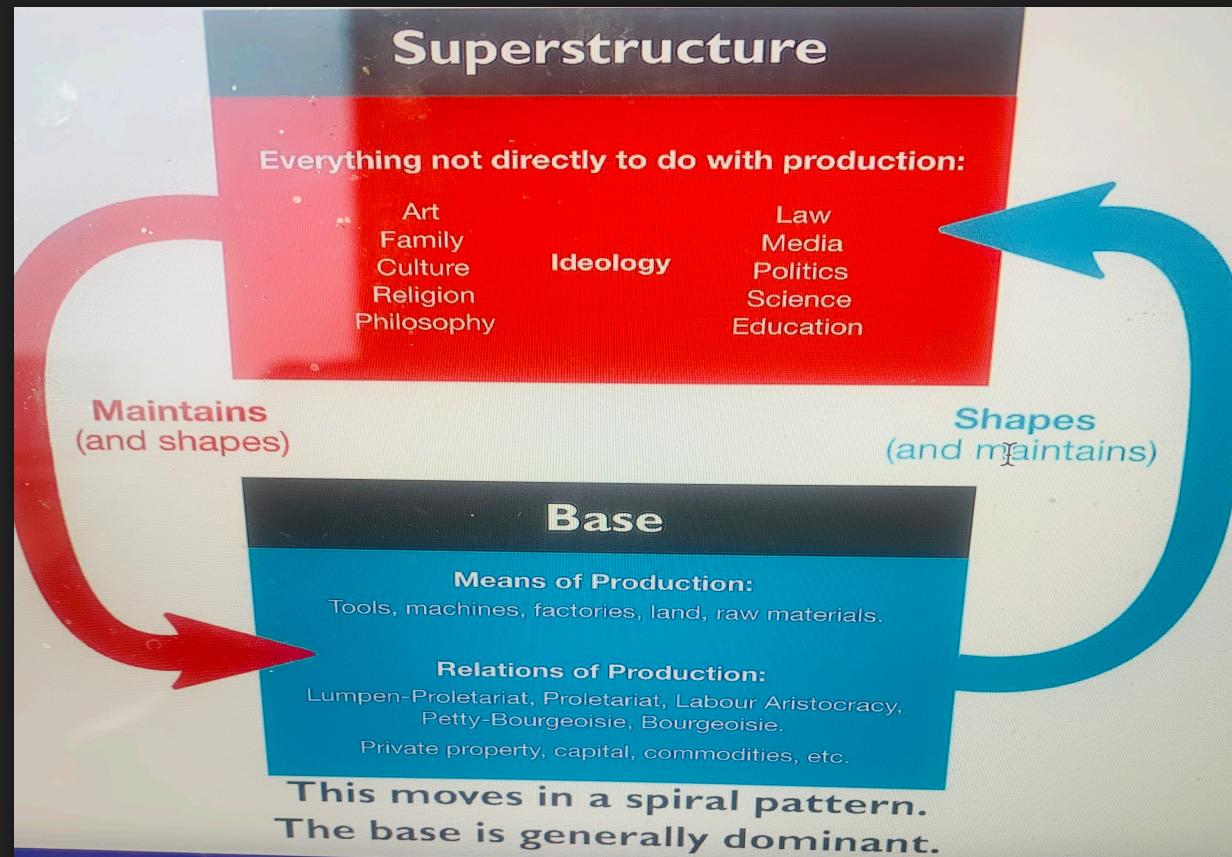
- Each stage of historical development is defined by a particular mode of production
- How does one transition into the other?
- Can be explained through 'dialectical materialism'

Discounting the ‘great men’ theory of history

“The final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men’s brains, not in man’s better insight on eternal truth and justice but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch”

- Friedrich Engels

Base and Superstructure

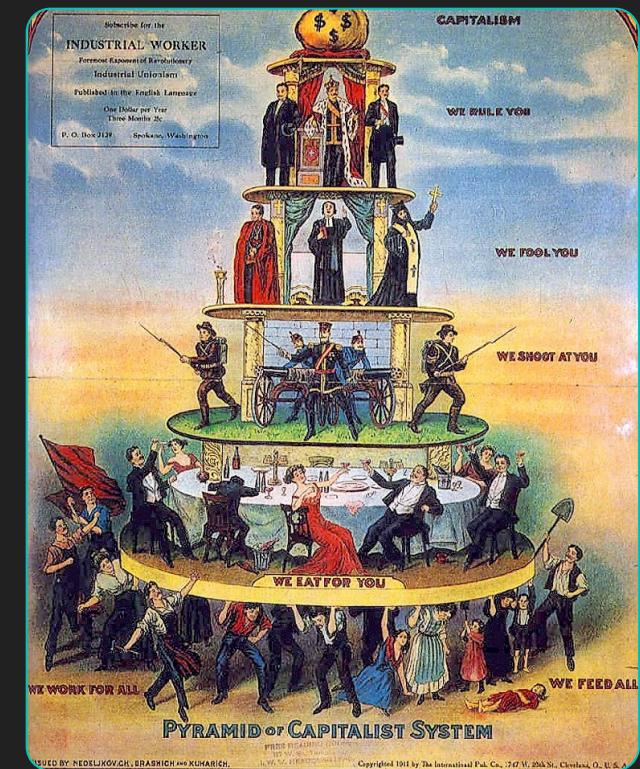


The realization of historical progression

- From slavery to feudalism to capitalism
- Result of the contradictions between each historical epoch being resolved
- Through:
 - 1) The development of the society's productive forces
 - 2) Transformation of the relations of production through **CLASS STRUGGLE**

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle"

- Karl Marx



The nature of all modes of production

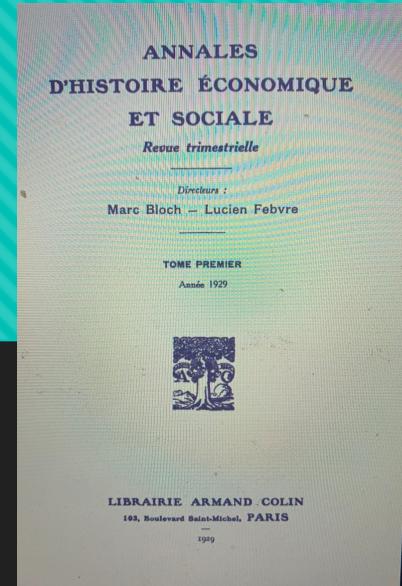
- The fraught co-existence of the exploiters and the exploited
- The struggle between them drives social historical change

Accounting for roadblocks

- History is not linear as this makes it appear
- There exist setbacks and regressions
- Evident in the historical record of the 20th century
- The defeat of communism and the perseverance of capitalism
- The contradictions still exist and will continue to propel society towards the next stage of historical development

The French Histographical Revolution/rebellion

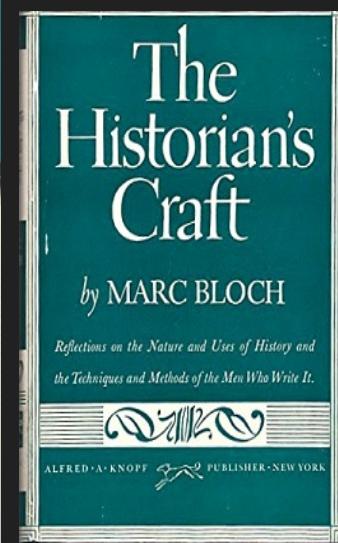
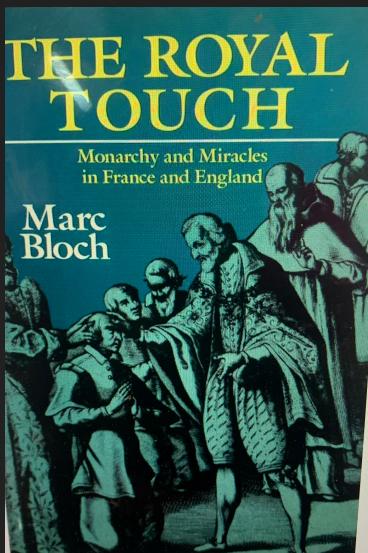
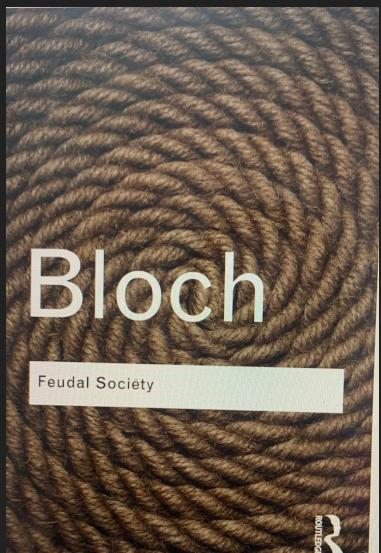
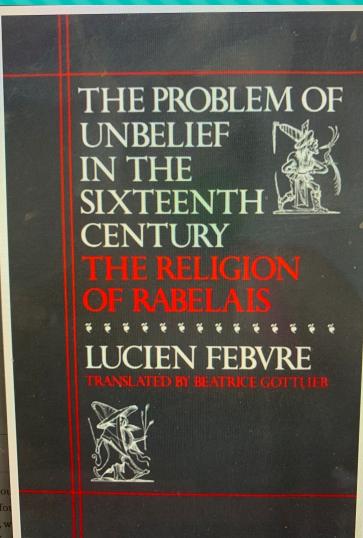
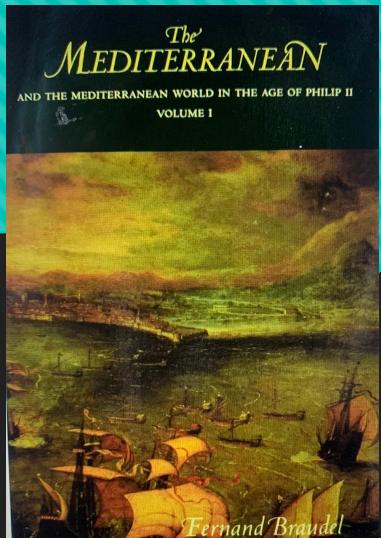
- Founded by Marc Bloc and Lucien Febvre
- Journal founded in 1929 (Annales: Economic and Social History; in 1946 it became Annales: Economies, Societies and Civilizations)
- What was it a rebellion against?
 - 1) Rankian history
 - 2) Marxist historiography



The main historiographical interventions

- Incorporating methods of all the social sciences
- Elevates the discipline of history above all the others
- Unfolding the layers of a society or region over a long span of time: The *Longue Duree*
- The writing of a ‘total history’

Some seminal works



The Royal Touch : Marc Bloc (1923)

Feudal Society: Marc Bloc (1939)

*The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century:
The Religion of Rabelais* by Lucien Febvre

The Mediterranean: Fernand Braudel (1949,
revised in 1966)

The Historian's Craft by Marc Bloch (1953)

Themes of interest

- The question of belief
- Geography
- Emotions
- Climate and environment
- Folklore
- The question of notions : around youth, childhood, old age