

Overview of Political Ideologies

- I. Liberalism
- II. Conservatism
- III. Socialism
- IV. Communism
- V. Fascism



Raphael's "The School of Athens"

Political Ideology

- **Political Ideology:**

- (1) A coherent set of ideas of on how people should live together
- (2) A plan of action for applying these ideas

- **Four key functions:**

- **Explanatory** (How the world Works [Empirical])
- **Evaluative** (Deciding whether things are good or bad [Normative])
- **Orientation** (Supplies the holder with a sense of identity)
- **Programmatic** (What to do and how to do it)

Foundational Disputes

■ Human Nature

- 'Naturally' good, cooperative, even perfectible
- Inherently flawed, evil, dangerous

■ Individual versus Collective

- A *normative* choice with empirical implications

■ Conception of Freedom

- Freedom as an 'essentially contested concept'
- 'Freedom from...' versus 'Freedom to...'

I. Liberalism

- Desire for a free, open, tolerant society
- Humans as rational and able to recognize and promote self-interest
- Liberty and equality of opportunity
- Classical Liberalism versus Modern (Welfare) Liberalism

J.S. Mill



Liberalism's 'Four Functions'

- **Explanatory:** Social conditions are the result of individual choices and actions
- **Evaluative:** Societies work best when individuals are free to do as they wish without harming or violating rights of others
- **Orientation:** Rational, self-interested individuals (and hence equal)
- **Programmatic:** programs for promoting individual liberty (classical) and opportunity (welfare)

II. Conservatism

- Human imperfection
- Focused on conserving existing social order
- Custom and tradition as 'latent wisdom'
- Organic view of society
- Acceptance of inequality
- Freedom and order



Edmund Burke

Conservatism's 'Four Functions'

- **Explanatory:** Social conditions are the result of human imperfections (intellectual and moral)
- **Evaluative:** Success is a question of social order and harmony
- **Orientation:** Each of us is part of a greater whole, and we should act with interest of society (not just self) in mind
- **Programmatic:** Slow and cautious change

III. Socialism

- Flaws of Liberalism
 - Individualism and Social Class
 - Economics and Political Power
- Economic Equality as 'True Equality'
- Economic Planning and the Welfare State



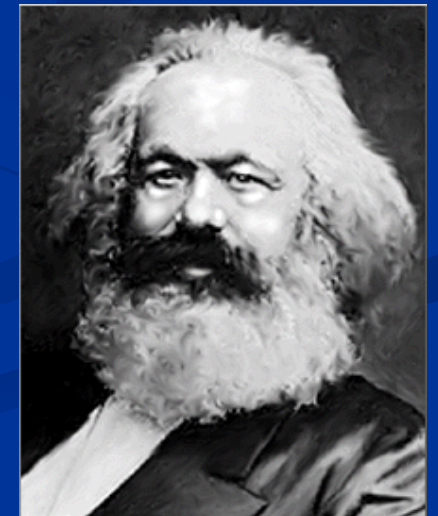
Robert Owen
(British capitalist
turned socialist who
Founded 'socialist
colony' in New
Harmony, IN)

Socialism's 'Four Functions'

- **Explanatory:** Social conditions can only be understood by reference to economic and class relations
- **Evaluative:** Sharpness of economic divisions (exploitive?) determines health of society
- **Orientation:** People should think of themselves in terms of their economic (class) position
- **Programmatic:** Policies must be put into place to advance economic equality (which is a prerequisite for 'true' political equality)

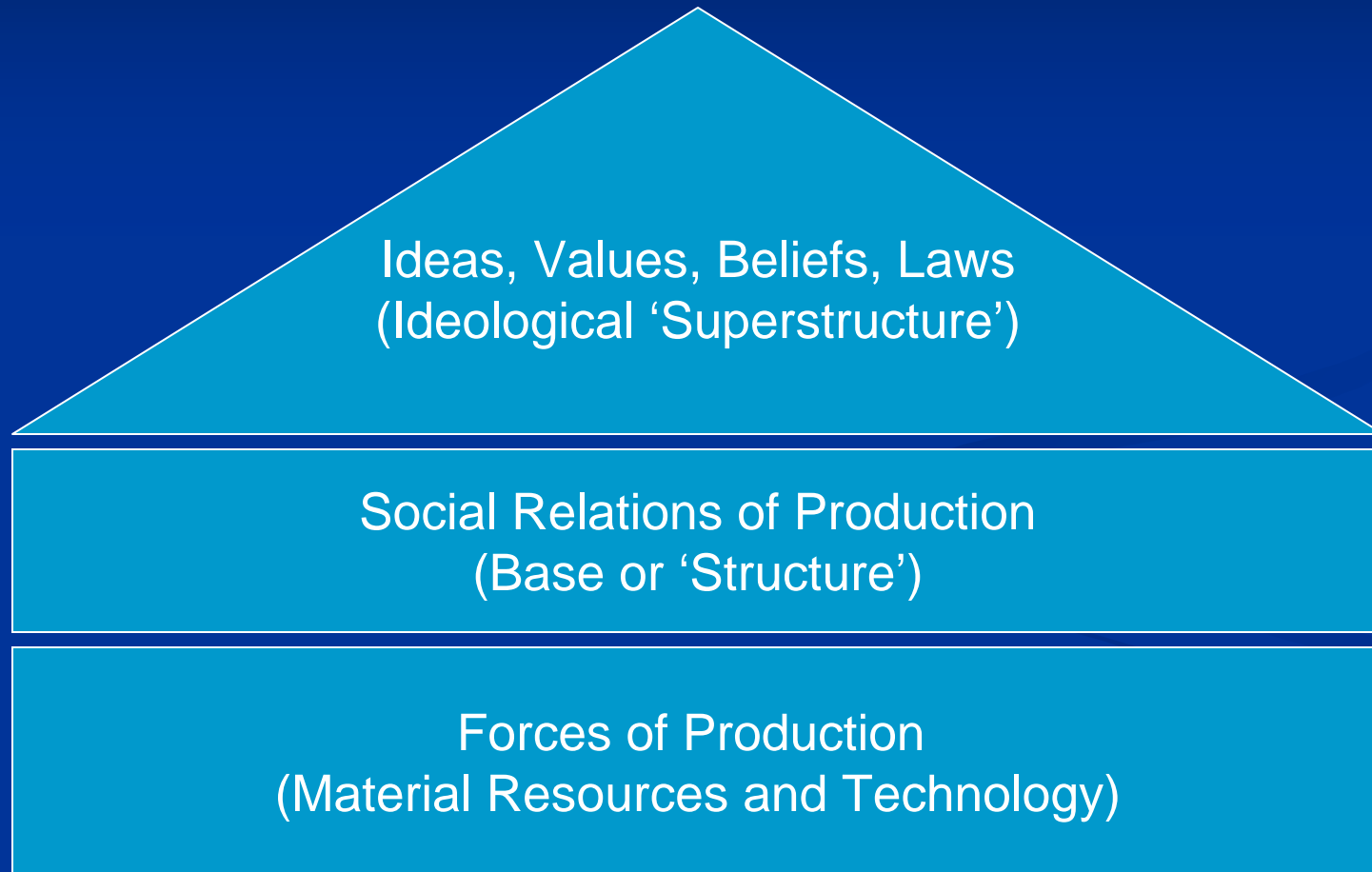
IV. Communism

- Historical Materialism
 - Economic (material) foundation of social change
 - Class conflict as engine of history
- Historical progression
 - Primitive Communism → Slave-based Empires → Feudalism → Capitalism → Communism
- Inherent contradictions
 - Capitalism, profit and exploitation
 - Revolution



Karl
Marx

Marxist View of Society



Communism's 'Four Functions'

- **Explanatory:** Social conditions determined by economic and class relations
- **Evaluative:** Sharpness of class divisions determines 'stage of development'
- **Orientation:** People should think of themselves in terms of their class position
- **Programmatic:** Policies must be put into place to advance movement toward communist revolution and 'classless society'

V. Fascism

- Organic view of society (society *over* individual)
 - Mussolini Slogan: *credere, obbediere, combattere* (Believe, obey, fight)
- Irrationalism
- Rejection of Democracy
- Elitism
- Statism
- Militarism
- Hypernationalism/Racism
 - Nation/People as determining identity



Fascism's 'Four Functions'

- **Explanatory:** Problems from 'enemies of the nation or people' (scapegoats)
- **Evaluative:** Strength and unity of the nation or people
- **Orientation:** Define yourself as part of nation/people (not as individual)
- **Programmatic:** Establish fascist elite in uncontested power (Believe, obey, fight).