

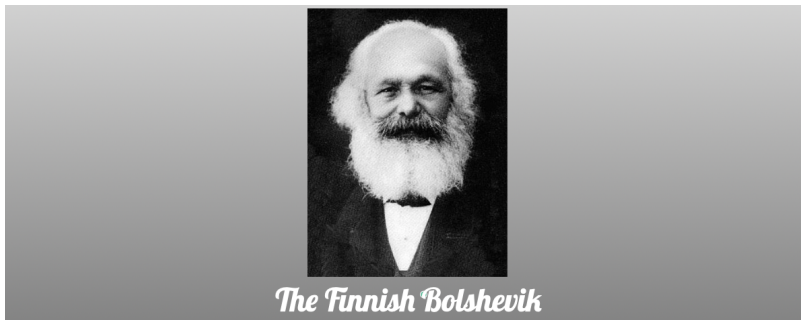
# Guide to Marxist Economics – Ep 2. Slavery (birth of the state & cities, fall of Rome etc.)

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*The Finnish Bolshevik*

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Another unassuming, direct chat by the Finnish Bolshevik on topics that most people are unaware of, or fail to understand.

## Guide to Marxist Economics - Ep 2. Slavery (birth of the state & cities, fall of Rome etc.)



### [TheFinnishBolshevik](#)

Each episode of the series will discuss one important topic of Marxist political economy. This video discusses the first class society: and the slave mode of production.

The video covers the following topics: -Rise of slavery -Rise of the state (and armies) -Rise of classes (slaves vs owners + peasants, handicraftsmen, lumpen) -Separation of cities and countryside -Division of labor: --Separation of handicraft from agriculture --Separation of banking and merchants from producers -Rise of science, philosophy etc. -Fall of the slave-owning mode of production

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The textbook <https://www.marxists.org/subject/econ...>

<https://revolutionarydemocracy.org/ar...> Other episodes: Communism For Beginners - Basics of ML playlist. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list...> Audiobook of "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" by Engels <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8W2Ga...>

## A D D E N D U M

In his *Institutiones* (161 AD), the Roman [jurist Gaius](#) wrote that:

*[Slavery is] the state that is recognized by the [ius gentium](#) in which someone is subject to the dominion of another person contrary to nature.*

– *Gaius, Institutiones 1.3.2*<sup>[21]</sup>

The 1st century BC Greek historian [Dionysius of Halicarnassus](#) indicates that the Roman institution of slavery began with the legendary founder [Romulus](#) giving [Roman fathers](#) the right to sell their own children into slavery, and kept growing with the expansion of the [Roman state](#). Slave ownership was most widespread throughout the Roman citizenry from the [Second Punic War](#) (218–201 BC) to the 4th century AD. The Greek geographer [Strabo](#) (1st century AD) records how an enormous slave trade resulted from the collapse of the [Seleucid Empire](#) (100–63 BC).<sup>[31]</sup>

The [Twelve Tables](#), Rome's oldest legal code, has brief references to slavery, indicating that the institution was of long-standing. In the tripartite division of law by the jurist [Ulpian](#) (2nd century AD), slavery was an aspect of the [ius gentium](#), the customary [international law](#) held in common among all peoples (*gentes*). The "law of nations" was neither considered [natural law](#), thought to exist in nature and govern animals as well as humans, nor [civil law](#), belonging to the emerging bodies of laws specific to a people in Western societies.<sup>[41]</sup> All human beings are born free (*liberi*) under natural law, but slavery was held to be a practice common to

all nations, who might then have specific civil laws pertaining to slaves.<sup>[4]</sup> In ancient warfare, the victor had the right under the *ius gentium* to enslave a defeated population; however, if a settlement had been reached through diplomatic negotiations or formal surrender, the people were by custom to be spared violence and enslavement. The *ius gentium* was not a legal code,<sup>[5]</sup> and any force it had depended on "reasoned compliance with standards of international conduct".<sup>[6]</sup>

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The Roman Empire was hugely dependent on forced labour. It was a key foundation on which Rome's power, wealth and influence was built. A great many slaves were set to work in menial and manual jobs – including agriculture, mining and construction. As historian Philip Matyszak explains, these types of jobs could be particularly brutal. "Being sent to the mines was a drawn-out death sentence," he says "They worked in very dangerous, very unhealthy conditions lit by oil lamps, constantly breathing in fumes. They worked in a state of acute misery." Unfortunately, those working above ground in agriculture fared little better. "They were treated by the farmers as part of the livestock; offered as much compassion as was given to the cattle, the sheep and the goats." (SLAVERY IN ANCIENT ROME, WORDS: NIGE TASSELL)

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**AT THE END OF THE DAY, SLAVERY, THOUGH PROBABLY AN ALMOST INEVITABLE PHASE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN SOCIETY, IS A SYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONALISED VIOLENCE AND TERROR.**

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