

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MARXISM

POL 315

COURSE GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Economic philosophers are always preoccupied with various conceptions as to how a State can navigate itself in the process of Development. Early Economic philosophers like Adams Smith, David Ricardo, and Thomas Malthus etc. all preached and aligned the issues of development to the practice of capitalism. To this end, they argued that development thrives in the event that the forces of Demand and Supply take charge and regulate the market of nations. However, certain philosophers in the course of history also emerged and gave their perspectives on the issues of societal change and development, and to this class belonged to Karl Marx. Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German philosopher viewed the issues of development from an entirely different prism. To Marx, development arises from the abrupt changes that take place as a result of the dichotomous

struggle that always inevitably ensued between those who own the means of production (the Bourgeoisie) and those who are property-less (the Proletariat), and are just mere labourers in the scheme of things. To this end, Marx saw socialism as the ultimate indicator of societal development; thus establishing a direct opposite paradigm of development to that of the pro-capitalist philosophers. *Theory and Practice of Marxism* therefore presents itself as a course through which students can study specifically the motion as well as drivers of development as had been espoused by Marx. This course: **POL 315 - Theory and Practice of Marxism** is a three (3)-credit unit course for undergraduate students in Political Science. The material has been developed to meet global standards. This Course Guide gives you an overview of the course. It also provides you with relevant information on the organization and requirements of the course.

COURSE AIMS

The general aim of this course is to help you to understand the fundamentals of the *Theory and Practice of Marxism*. Specifically, the course material:

- provides you an opportunity to acquire a critical and analytical mind for understanding conflict and change in society
- exposes you to the reality that every phenomenon is in a dialectical dimension which is the engine room for change and development both in nature and in society
- helps you acquire the skills to evaluate and discuss Marxism literature; you will also be able to appreciate and apply Marxian concepts in case studies, geographical area studies, and current world events which deal with conflict and change both in nature and society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Each unit of this course guide has specific objectives. The units' objectives are at the beginning of each unit; it is important that you read them before you start working through the unit. You may refer to them in the course of the unit to check and monitor your progress. On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- explain the origin and the dynamics of conflict in nature and in society as inevitable
- define socialism
- describe dialectics which is the heart and soul of Marxism

- discuss Marxism (Marxist political economy), and alienation and the meaning of ideology
 - understand the current perspective of socialism in the 21st Century

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and other related materials. You will also need to undertake practical exercises for which you need a pen, a notebook, and other materials that will be listed in this guide. The exercises are to facilitate your understanding of the concepts and issues being presented. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, you will write a final examination.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment Files
5. Presentation Schedule

STUDY UNITS

There are 21 units (organised into five modules) in this course. Some units may be longer and more in-depth than others, depending on the scope of the topics that are in view.

The five modules are as follows:

Module 1	Sources and Components of Marxism
Unit 1	Marxism Introduced
Unit 2	Hegelian Dialectics
Unit 3	English Classical Political Economy
Unit 4	French Utopian Socialism
Unit 5	Philosophical Materialism and Philosophical Idealism: The Dichotomy

Module 2**Karl Marx Dialectics**

- Unit 1 Karl Marx: A Brief Biography
- Unit 2 Laws of Transformation of Quantity to Quality
- Unit 3 Law of Unity and Conflict of Opposites
- Unit 4 Law of Negation of Negation
- Unit 5 Historical Materialism

Module 3**Marxism and the Meaning of Ideology**

- Unit 1 Alienation
- Unit 2 Ideology and False Consciousness
- Unit 3 Base and Superstructure
- Unit 4 State Power and the Superstructure
- Unit 5 Vanguard Party/Proletarian Revolution

Module 4**Understanding the Meaning of Socialism**

- Unit 1 Exploitation and Oppression
- Unit 2 Utopian Socialism
- Unit 3 Marx Scientific Socialism
- Unit 4 Class (A Class in Itself to a Class for Itself)
- Unit 5 Socialist Theory and Working Class Movement

Module 5**Marxist Political Economy**

- Unit 1 Capitalist Economy
- Unit 2 Mode of Production and Relations of Production
- Unit 3 Marx Theories of Value- Commoditisation, Reification, Labour Power, Use and Exchange Value, Surplus Value and Capitalist Primitive Accumulations
- Unit 4 Socialism in the Twenty-First Century (Russia and China, Africa, East Asia, and South America)
- Unit 5 Africa Socialism in Perspective

ASSESSMENT

You will be assessed in two ways in this course – the tutor-marked assignment and a written examination. The marks you obtain in the tutor-marked assignment and

the written examination will make up your final marks. Your TMA will account for 30% of the total score for the course.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAs)

You will have to submit a specified number of the Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs). Every unit in this course has a Tutor-Marked Assignment. Completed TMAs should be submitted with a tutor-marked assignment form to your Tutor. All assignments should reach your tutor on or before the deadline for submissions. If for any reason you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor for a discussion on the possibility of an extension.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

Unit	Title of Work	Weeks
Activity		
Module 1	Sources and Components of Marxism	
Unit 1	Marxism Introduced	Week 1 Assignment 1
Unit 2	Hegelian Dialectics	Week 2 Assignment 2
Unit 3	English Classical Political Economy	Week 3 Assignment 3
Unit 4	French Utopian Socialism	Week 4 Assignment 4
Unit 5	Philosophical Materialism and Philosophical Idealism: The Dichotomy	Week 5 Assignment 5
Module 2	Marx Dialectics	
Unit 1	Karl Marx: A Brief Biography	Week 1 Assignment 1
Unit 2	Laws of Transformation of Quantity to Quality	Week 2 Assignment 2
Unit 3	Law of Unity and Conflict of Opposites	Week 3 Assignment 3
Unit 4	Law of Negation of Negation	Week 4 Assignment 4
Unit 5	Historical Materialism	Week 5 Assignment 5
Module 3	Marxism and the Meaning of Ideology	
Unit 1	Alienation	Week 3 Assignment 1
Unit 2	Ideology and False Consciousness	Week 4 Assignment 2
Unit 3	Base and Superstructure	Week 4 Assignment 3
Unit 4	State Power and the Superstructure	Week 5 Assignment 4
Unit 5	Vanguard Party/ Proletarian Revolution	Week 5 Assignment
Module 4	Understanding the Meaning of Socialism	
Unit 1	Exploitation and Oppression	Week 6 Assignment 1

Unit 2	Utopian Socialism	Week 7 Assignment
2		
Unit 3	Marx Scientific Socialism	Week 8 Assignment 3
Unit 4	Class (A class in Itself to a Class for Itself)	Week 9 Assignment 4
Unit 5	Socialist Theory and Working Class Movement	Week10 Assignment
5		

Module 5	Marxist Political Economy	
Unit 1	Capitalist Economy	Week11 Assignment 1
Unit 2	Mode of Production and Relations of Production	Week 12 Assignment 2
Unit 3	Marx Theories of Value-Commoditisation, Reification, Labor Power, Use and Exchange Value, Surplus Value and Primitive Accumulation.	Week13 Assignment3
Unit 4	Socialism in the 21 th Century (Russia; China; Africa; East Asia, & South America)	Week14 Assignment4
Unit 5	Africa Socialism in Perspective	Week 15 Assignment5

Revision 1
Examination 1
Total **17**

FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to read the unit all over before your examination. The final examination will attract 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions, which reflect the kind of self-assessment exercise, and tutor-marked assignment you have previously encountered. You should use the time between completing the last unit, and taking the examination to revise the entire course.

COURSE MARKING SCHEME

The following table indicates how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

Assessment Marks Assignments (Best Three) Assignment out of Four Marked = 30%

Final Examination = 70%

Total 100

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

In distance learning, the study units replace the conventional university face to face lecture room situation. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer may give you some reading to do, the study units tell you where to read, and the text materials or recommended books you will need. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format.

The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a Reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to get in touch with your tutor.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organise a study schedule; design a 'course overview' to guide you through the course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.

3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late to help.
4. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials; you will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
6. Keep in touch with your study center. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
7. Submit all assignments not later than the due date. Keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination.
8. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them, if you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
9. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
10. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for it to be returned before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
11. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

FACILITATORS/TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

Information relating to the tutorials will be provided at the appropriate time. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must take your tutor-marked assignments to the study center well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will

be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible. Contact your tutor if you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings. Do not hesitate to contact your tutor if:

1. You have difficulty with the exercises
2. You have a question or problem with an assignment or with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list beforehand. You will learn a lot from participating in discussion actively.

SUMMARY

The course guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course of this study.

Also, it teaches you the basic principles of the theory and practice of Marxism. Finally, this course guide is designed to furnish you with the information you need for a fruitful experience in the course.

Notably, your performance will be contingent upon your commitment to the study of this guide. We wish you success with the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.

List of Acronyms

1. **AIDS** - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
2. **BC** - Before Christ
3. **AIIB** - Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank
4. **BRI** - Belt and Road Initiative
5. **CPC** - Communist Party of China
6. **EAC** - East African Community
7. **EMR** - Electronic Medical Report
8. **FDI** - Foreign Direct Investment

- 9. **GDP** - Gross Domestic Product
- 10. **IMF** - International Monetary Fund
- 11. **KBG** - Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Russia)
- 12. **OECD** - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
- 13. **NDB** - New Development Bank
- 14. **SRF** - Silk Road Fund
- 15. **TMA** - Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 16. **U.N** - United Nations
- 17. **U.S** - United States
- 18. **USSR** - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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MODULE 1 SOURCES AND COMPONENTS OF MARXISM

Unit 1	Marxism Introduced
Unit 2	Hegelian Dialectics
Unit 3	English Classical Political Economy
Unit 4	French Utopian Socialism
Unit 5	Philosophical Materialism and Philosophical Idealism: The Dichotomy

UNIT 1 MARXISM INTRODUCED

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
- 3.1 Marxism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Known all over the intellectual world for its radical orientation, Marxism is the system of Marx's views and teachings. Marx was the genius who continued and consummated the three main ideological currents of the nineteenth century, as

represented by the three most advanced countries of mankind: classical German Philosophy, classical English Political Economy, and French socialism combined with French revolutionary doctrines in general. Acknowledged even by his opponents, the remarkable consistency and integrity of Marx's views, whose totality constitutes modern materialism and modern scientific socialism, as the theory and programme of the working-class movement in all the civilized countries of the world, makes it incumbent on us to present a brief outline of his world-conception in general, prior to giving an exposition of the principal content of Marxism, namely, Marx's economic doctrine. Its development postulations have been tested and tried in many climes. Hence, there is the need to examine this course beyond roadside analysis.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- identify the rudiments of Marxism
- understand the foundation for Marxism as a School of Thought

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Marxism

Marxism is a social, political, and economic theory originated by Karl Marx, which focuses on the struggle between capitalists and the working class. He believed that this conflict would ultimately lead to a revolution in which the working class would overthrow the capitalist class and seize control of the economy (Matter, 2013). Central to Marxist theory is an explanation of social change in terms of economic factors, according to which the means of production provide the *economic base* which influences or determines the *political and ideological superstructure*. Marx and Engels predicted the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by the proletariat and the eventual attainment of a classless communist society.

The study of the Marxist theory of development (dialectical materialism) is essential to the building of a Marxist-Leninist party and subsequently for a solidly-grounded revolutionary movement. No doubt that Karl Marx (1818–1883) was the most important of all theorists of socialism. Marx was not a professional philosopher, although he completed a doctorate in philosophy. His life was devoted to radical political activity, journalism and theoretical studies in history and political economy.

Marx was drawn towards politics by Romantic literature and his earliest writings embody a conception of reality as subject to turbulent change and of human beings as realizing themselves in the struggle for freedom. His identification with these elements in Hegel's thought (and his contempt for what he regarded as Hegel's apologetic attitude towards the Prussian state) brought Marx to associate himself with the Young Hegelians. The Young Hegelians had come to believe that the implicit message of Hegel's philosophy was a radical one: that Reason could and should exist within the world, in contrast to Hegel's explicit claim that embodied Reason already did exist. Moreover, they also rejected Hegel's idea that religion and philosophy go hand in hand: that religion represents the truths of philosophy in immediate form. On the contrary, the Young Hegelians saw the central task of philosophy as being the critique of religion; the struggle "against the gods of heaven and of earth who do not recognize man's self-consciousness as the highest divinity (as Marx himself was to put it in his doctoral thesis)."

Marx came to be dissatisfied with the assumption that the critique of religion alone would be sufficient to produce human emancipation. He worked out the consequences of this change of view in the years 1843 to 1845, the most intellectually fertile period of his entire career. Hegel's philosophy, Marx now argued, embodies two main kinds of mistake. It incorporates, first, the illusion that reality as a whole is an expression of Ideas, the absolute rational order (abstract) governing reality. Against this, Marx's position (and on this point he still agrees with the Young Hegelians) is that it is Man, not Ideas, who is the true subject. Secondly, he charges, Hegel believes that the political state; the organs of law and government has priority in determining the character of a society taken as a whole. In fact, according to Marx, this is the reverse of the truth: political life and the ideas associated with it are themselves determined by the character of economic life to which man is sacrosanct.

Marx claims that the ‘species-being’ of Man consists in labour, and that Man is alienated to the extent that labour is performed according to a division of labour that is dictated by the market or capitalism. This constituted some of the injustice of the capitalist system of production. This reality which to Marx accounts for the exploitation of Man by Man would only be addressed by the enthronement of a socialist state through a revolution by the working class; the exploited.

In the mature writings that followed his break with the Young Hegelians, Marx presented a would-be scientific theory of history as a progress through stages. At each stage, the form taken by a society is conditioned by the society’s attained level of productivity and the requirements for its increase. In societies before the coming of socialism, this entails the division of society into antagonistic classes. Classes are differentiated by what makes them able (or unable) to appropriate for themselves the surplus produced by social labour. In general, to the extent that a class can appropriate surplus without paying for it, makes it an exploiting class; conversely, a class that produces more than it receives is said to be exploited.

Although the exploiting classes have special access to the means of violence and coercion, exploitation is not generally a matter of the use of force. In capitalism, for example, exploitation flows from the way in which the means of production are owned privately and labour is bought and sold just like any other commodity. That such arrangements are accepted without the need for *coercion* reflects the fact that the ruling class exercises a special influence over ideas in society. It controls the ideology accepted by the members of society in general (Maguire, 2010).

In *Das Kapital* (Capital), the work to which he devoted the latter part of his life, Marx set out to identify the ‘laws of motion’ of capitalism. The capitalist system is there presented as a self-reproducing whole, governed by an underlying law, the ‘law of value’. But this law and its consequences are not only unclear to the agents who participate in capitalism; they are actually concealed from them.

Thus, capitalism is a deceptive ideology, one in which there is a discrepancy between its ‘essence’ and its ‘appearance’. In Marx’s view, it is inevitable that capitalism should give way to socialism. As capitalism develops, he believes, the increasingly ‘socialized’ character of the productive process will be ever more in conflict with the private ownership of the means of production. Thus the transition to collective ownership (socialism) will be natural and inevitable. But Marx nowhere explains how this collective ownership and social control is to be

exercised. Indeed, he has remarkably little to say about the nature of the society to the struggle for which he devoted his life.

The *Critique of the Gotha Programme* envisages two phases of communist society. In the first, production will be carried out on a non-exploitative basis: all who contribute to production will receive back the value of what they have contributed. But this, Marx recognizes, is a form of 'equal right' that leaves the natural inequalities of human beings unchecked. It is a transitional phase inevitably. Beyond it there lies a society in which individuals are no longer 'slaves' to the division of labour, one in which labour has become 'not only a means of life but life's prime want'. Only then, Marx thinks, 'can the narrow horizon of bourgeoisie right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"' This is the final vision of communism.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Marxism represents Karl Marx's arguments about the system and mechanisms that guides the historical development of man and his society. In it, Marx demonstrated particularly the essential role of conflicts, otherwise known as *dialectics*, in the whole process.

5.0 SUMMARY

Every ideology is a product of the environment of its proponent (s). Marxism is an ideology developed by Karl Marx and his followers. It has both its strengths and weaknesses, the postulations have helped many countries to transform from organic to mechanical stages of development.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

How relevant is Karl Marx background to the development of Marxism?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 THE HEGELIAN DIALECTICS

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Hegelian Dialectics
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is safe to categorically state here that Marxism as propagated by Karl Marx is a product of certain intellectual inspirations i.e. much of the components of Karl Marx's theory were basically ideas borrowed from other philosophers; subsequently synthesized into the Marxist ideology. Among the foundations of Marxism, is the Hegelian Dialectics. Suffice to say that the philosophy of Marxism

is materialism – another component that was borrowed by Marx from Ludwid Feuerbach, another German philosopher. Together with Hegelian dialectics, Marx synthesized the two components into what was now known as Karl Marx’s Dialectical Materialism; a theory that occupies the fulcrum of Marxism. Throughout the modern history of Europe, and especially at the end of the eighteenth century in France, where a resolute struggle was conducted against every kind of medieval practice, against serfdom in institutions and ideas, materialism has proved to be the only philosophy that is consistent, true to all the teachings of natural science and hostile to superstition, Kant and so forth.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- outline the basic arguments of Hegelian Dialectics
- show the nexus between Hegelian Dialectics and Marxism

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Hegelian Dialectics

George W.F Hegel presented a prevailing philosophy on dialectics that became very pronounced in Germany in the 18th and 19th centuries. Hegel had argued that the truth is what is in itself ‘infinite’. Kant had shown that the error of the old metaphysics was that it attempted to traverse the path from the finite to the infinite; that it had used the categories (whose correct application – ‘the understanding’ - consisted in the constituting of experience) improperly in order to comprehend things as they are in themselves (by reason). But for Hegel the dichotomy between the things in themselves and the thought of the things, between reason and understanding, was something which was, in a certain way, already the province of finitude. The fixed opposition of the thing in itself and the thought of the thing was a finite one precisely because it had already been conditioned (by formal logic). It is an opposition that is conditioned, for the character of each term in the pairing is immediately related to and entirely dependent on the other. Hegel says of the finite in the Logic that it is its nature to be related to itself as limitation.

To be related to something else in terms of this fixed opposition is to be finite, according to Hegel. The common place notion of infinity as a continuous unfolding without end is, for Hegel, something which is actually finite. This he stressed is because it derives its meaning from the notion of finitude to which it stands in opposition. It is what Hegel described as a *finitized* infinite or bad infinite – ‘The infinite as thus posited over against the finite, in a relation where they are as qualitatively distinct others, is to be called the spurious infinite it is entangled in irreconciled, unresolved, absolute contradiction the infinite is only the limit of the finite and is thus only a determinate infinite, an infinite which is itself finite.

From within this relation of fixed opposition, thought could not legitimately make the journey to the infinite or unconditioned. The old metaphysicians had tried and subsequently failed, and Kant’s brilliance lies in the fact that he brought the opposition of concepts to the fore in a conscious schematic.

So Hegel is in effect arguing that it is only everything – i.e. the totality which is infinite for it has no logical point outside itself which provides its own frame of reference, from which its nature is to be derived. And now we come to a most important point; the point, in fact, which marks the culmination of classical German philosophy. Hegel’s notion of the infinite is not simply a cleverly contrived response to the problem of the infinite and finite, the conditioned and unconditioned as posed by Kant, Fichte and Schelling among others. Though this writer has outlined in brief Hegel’s conception of what the infinite is, Hegel himself did nothing of the sort. His conception of the infinite was not a schematic definition for such a definition would have been dogmatic. Fichte had endeavoured to subsume Kantian dualism in the absolute ego – itself a totalizing principle – however the principle inevitably floundered for the unity it had provided was artificial; the enforced union and the phenomenal by an all embracing principle of consciousness; a principle which was simply asserted.

Hegel describes his approach as dialectical; it allows each moment in the history of consciousness to unfold immanently, according to its own logic. Hegel in a sense becomes a spectator; he looks on, as each stage in consciousness, through its own internal movement, falls into a moment of negation. Consider the empiricist position which Hume unravels so ruthlessly. At such a point consciousness is compelled to posit what is, on a certain level, an opposed position. Once Empiricism falls into self-contradiction it becomes necessary to posit its opposite – rationalism. But here one must remember that there is identity in difference for

both empiricism and rationalism proceeds from immediacy – the empiricists in terms of the immediacy of matter, the rationalists in terms of the immediacy, the self evidence, of the idea.

Hegel's philosophy, Marx now argued, embodies two main kinds of mistake. It incorporates, first, the illusion that reality as a whole is an expression of the Idea, the absolute rational order governing reality.

Against this, Marx's position (and on this point he still agrees with the Young Hegelians) is that it is Man, not the Idea, who is the true subject. Secondly, he charges, Hegel believes that the political state the organs of law and government has priority in determining the character of a society taken as a whole (Burawoy, 2003). In fact, according to Marx, this is the reverse of the truth: political life and the ideas associated with it are themselves determined by the character of economic life to which man is sacrosanct. Marx claims that the 'species-being' of Man consists in labour, and that Man is alienated to the extent that labour is performed according to a division of labour that is dictated by the market or capitalism. It is only when labour recovers its collective character that men. This is where Karl Marx's Dialectical Materialism stems from where matter stays atop of ideas in human relationships.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Dialectics had no doubt existed before the conception of Karl Marx and Marxism as a whole. It was championed by Fredrick Hegel and Ludwig Feuerbach. Hegel's idealistic dialectics was the foundation that Karl Marx later built his dialectical materialism as it will be explained in the subsequent units of this lecture. Hegelianism is the moment at which thought has developed in and through the history of consciousness such that it is able to consider the series of its own manifestations; as Hegel writes the phenomenology, thought is actively becoming conscious of itself in and through the writer. And that makes the Phenomenology one of the most audacious, exciting and revolutionary texts you will ever read. Because when you read it; you read about the history of thought and the various moments or stages of its phenomenology, those moments are not merely an external list which exist separate to and outside of the reader as a descriptive; those moments in the history of philosophy have always been moving inexorably toward this book itself and it is at this point which thought reaches its most sublime peak; the point at which thought becomes conscious of itself and its life's activity

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has identified one of the sources Marxism as an ideology; the prevailing German philosophy of the era attributed to Hegel. It has delved briefly into the inspiring role the idealist dialectics that Marx was born into helped shaped his philosophy.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the relevance of the ideas of Hegel to the intellectual grooming of Karl Marx?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 ENGLISH CLASSICAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The English Classical Political Economy
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Aside the dialectics work of Fredrick Hegel that dominated the German philosophy, the English classical political economy played significant role in shaping Marxism. Classical political economy, before Marx, evolved in England, the most developed of the capitalist countries. Adam Smith and David Ricardo, by their investigations of the economic system, laid the foundations of the *labour theory of value*. Marx continued his work; he provided a proof of the theory and developed it consistently. He showed that the value of every commodity is determined by the quantity of socially necessary labour and time spent on its production.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain the English classical political economy
- state its relevance to the development of Marxism

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The English Classical Political Economy

By the middle of the nineteenth century, English-speaking economists generally shared a perspective on value theory and distribution theory. The value of a bushel of corn, for example, was thought to depend on the costs involved in producing that bushel. The output or product of an economy was thought to be divided or distributed among the different social groups in accord with the costs borne by those groups in producing the output. This, roughly, was the "Classical Theory" developed by Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Thomas Robert Malthus, John Stuart Mill amongst others. But there were difficulties in this approach. Chief among them was that prices in the market did not necessarily reflect the "value" so defined, for people were often willing to pay more than an object was "worth." The classical "substance" theories of value, which took value to be a property inherent in an object, gradually gave way to a perspective in which value was associated

with the relationship between the object and the person obtaining the object. Several economists in different places at about the same time (the 1870s and 1880s) began to base value on the relationship between costs of production and "subjective elements," later called "supply" and "demand." This came to be known as the Marginal Revolution in political economy, and the overarching theory that developed from these ideas came to be called *neoclassicaleconomics*.

From a political economic point of view, the *Wealth of Nations* addressed the causes underlying comparative rates of growth considered over long periods of time that could be measured in centuries rather than decades. The central problem that interested Smith speaking as a political economist was the conditions under which it was possible for an economy to experience for sustained periods a rising per capita output of goods and an associated rise in per capita real incomes, where the gains would go to all, though not necessarily in equal proportions (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2017)). The experience of such a phenomenon in the middle of the eighteenth century was not common; it was only being glimpsed as a possibility. Smith would argue that England, and perhaps only in England, was it possible to look back on a lengthy period of slow and uneven growth in per capita real incomes for the mass of society. And even in England, for many of the poorest sections of society, the evidence was not sufficiently marked to be self-evident.

Looking North to Scotland, the signs of growth were of much more recent origin and confined to the Scottish Lowlands. Across Europe, even in France, the only comparably rich society, the bulk of economic life was not merely agrarian in character (which was also true of England) but the methods of production were dominated by feudal forms of land tenure and peasant cultivation that had not changed much for many centuries. Another wealthy country, Holland, whose prosperity had been founded on international trade and finance, was already in decline. It seemed to be following the cyclical process of rise and fall experienced by Carthage or Venice.

Karl Marx's political economy like the classical political economists placed great emphasis on the priority of understanding economic forces in any inquiry into society. Its laws, as reformulated by Marx as the foundation for a scientific form of socialist understanding of the world, provided the fundamental clue to most social and political developments (Lenin, 1999). Therefore, while the English Classical

Political Economy emphasized individualism; private property etc, Marx through his thoughts emphasized collectivization, communalism, socialism etc.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The classical political economy as a theory was dominant in the English economic thought prior to the advent of Marxism. The surplus value to that Karl Marx emphasized on in his writings was a critique of the argument on profits by the classical political economists. Each factor of production deserves the reward it gets in the production process as determined by the entrepreneur which became the bourgeoisie in Marxists assessments.

4.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, it has been established that the political economy, as founded by Smith, became the first of the modern social sciences to emerge as a specialist branch of inquiry -- a status that it has largely retained to the present day. This status was questioned on various grounds during the nineteenth century, chiefly by those who wished to refocus socio-political cum economic inquiries.

5.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

How relevant are the arguments of the English classical political economists to Marxism?

6.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 THE FRENCH UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 The French Utopian Socialism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Socialism as a historical epoch as envisaged by Karl Marx which is to replace capitalism was motivated by the socialism that came after the French revolution of 1789 – 1799. Although, modern Socialism in its essence, the direct product of the recognition of the class antagonisms existing in the society of today between proprietors and non-proprietors, between capitalists and wage-workers. But, in its theoretical form, Socialism originally appears ostensibly as a more logical extension of the principles laid down by the great French philosophers of the 18th century. Like every epoch, Socialism had, at first, to connect itself with the intellectual stock-in-trade ready to its hand, however deeply its roots lay in material economic facts.

The great men, who in France prepared men's minds for the coming revolution, were themselves extreme revolutionists. They recognized no external authority of any kind whatever. Religion, natural science, society, political institutions – everything was subjected to the most unsparing criticism: everything must justify

its existence before the judgment-seat of reason or give up existence. Reason became the sole measure of everything. It was the time when, as Hegel says, the world stood upon its head; first in the sense that the human head, and the principles arrived at by its thought, claimed to be the basis of all human action and association; but by and by, also, in the wider sense that the reality which was in contradiction to these principles had, in fact, to be turned upside down. Every form of society and government then existing, every old traditional notion, was flung into the lumber-room as irrational; the world had hitherto allowed itself to be led solely by prejudices; everything in the past deserved only pity and contempt.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- trace the root of the French Revolution
- examine the impact of the French socialism on Marxism

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The French Utopian Socialism

Socialism is a social and economic system characterized by social ownership of the means of production and co-operative management of the economy, as well as a political theory and movement that aims at the establishment of such a system wherein all the inhabitants would be happy and free from poverty and its cruel sting.. Here social ownership refers to cooperative enterprises, common ownership, state ownership achieved by nationalism, citizen ownership of equity or any combination of these. At the beginning of the 16th century, Thomas Moore in his ‘Utopia’ outlines this type of society which is criticized by Karl Marx and Engels as a Utopian Socialism. Though they criticized moor’s utopian socialism, on the basis of it they developed their concept modern socialism or scientific socialism at the 19th century (Baylis, Smith and Patricia, 2012)).

No one factor was directly responsible for the French Revolution. Years of feudal oppression and fiscal mismanagement contributed to a French society that was ripe for revolt. Noting a downward economic spiral in the late 1700s, King Louis

XVI brought in a number of financial advisors to review the weakened French treasury. Each advisor reached the same conclusion that France needed a radical change in the way it taxed the public and each advisor was, in turn, kicked out.

Finally, the king realized that this taxation problem really did need to be addressed, so he appointed a new controller general of finance, Charles de Calonne, in 1783. Calonne suggested that, among other things, France begin taxing the previously exempt nobility. The nobility refused, even after Calonne pleaded with them during the Assembly of Notables in 1787. Financial ruin thus seemed imminent. In a final act of desperation, Louis XVI decided in 1789 to convene the Estates-General, an ancient assembly consisting of three different estates that each represented a portion of the French population. If the Estates-General could agree on a tax solution, it would be implemented. However, since two of the three estates—the clergy and the nobility—were tax-exempt, the attainment of any such solution was unlikely.

Moreover, the outdated rules of order for the Estates-General gave each estate a single vote, despite the fact that the Third Estate—consisting of the general French public—was many times larger than either of the first two. Feuds quickly broke out over this disparity and would prove to be irreconcilable. Realizing that its numbers gave it an automatic advantage, the Third Estate declared itself the sovereign National Assembly. Within days of the announcement, many members of the other two estates had switched allegiances over to this revolutionary new assembly. Shortly after the National Assembly formed, its members took the Tennis Court Oath, swearing that they would not relent in their efforts until a new constitution had been agreed upon. The National Assembly's revolutionary spirit galvanized France, manifesting in a number of different ways. In Paris, citizens stormed the city's largest prison, the Bastille, in pursuit of arms. In the countryside, peasants and farmers revolted against their feudal contracts by attacking the manors and estates of their landlords. Dubbed the "Great Fear," these rural attacks continued until the early August issuing of the August Decrees, which freed those peasants from their oppressive contracts. Shortly thereafter, the assembly released the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which established a proper judicial code and the autonomy of the French people.

The success of this revolution motivated Karl Marx in his writings against the oppression, exploitation and annihilation of the bourgeoisie within the social

relation of production. A united proletariat is sine qua non to a change in status quo of capitalist production.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Historians agreed that the French Revolution was a watershed event that changed Europe irrevocably, following in the footsteps of the American Revolution, which had occurred just a decade earlier. The causes of the French Revolution, though, are difficult to pin down: based on the historical evidence that exists, a fairly compelling argument could be made regarding any number of factors. Although, a number of major wars had taken place in the forty years leading up to the revolution and France had participated, to some degree, in most of them. The Seven Years' War in Europe and the American Revolution across the ocean had a profound effect on the French psyche and made the Western world a volatile one. In addition to charging up the French public, this wartime environment took quite a toll on the French treasury. The revolution was a motivation to the writings of Karl Marx.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has assessed the last source of Marxism where he got his inspiration for a revolutionary takeover of the apparatuses of the state and the economy by worker from the exploiting hands of the bourgeoisie.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Show how revolutions inspired by Marxism have led to the establishment of socialism?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 PHILOSOPHICAL MATERIALISM AND PHILOSOPHICAL IDEALISM: THE DICHOTOMY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
- 3.1 The Dichotomy between Philosophical Materialism and Idealism
- 4.0 Conclusion
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- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

There has been an existing argument concerning the relationship between *philosophicalmaterialism* and *idealism* in the propagation of Marxism. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries produced an outcrop of important thinkers who established the German school of classical philosophy. Some like Kant were a mixture of materialism and idealism. Others were idealists out to refute materialism. One of these, however, Georg Hegel, while his philosophical system was idealist, became the first in modern times to develop his philosophy on the basis of the dialectical method. Marx's philosophical materialism alone has shown the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have hitherto languished. Marx's economic theory alone has explained the true

position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism. The dichotomy between these two philosophies has been explained in the unit.

7.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- examine the motivations for philosophical materialism and philosophical idealism
- explain the dichotomy between the two concepts

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Dichotomy between Philosophical Materialism and Idealism

Many people know philosophical idealism in the form of religion. Of course there is an enormous variety of religions and sects. Nearly all have in common a belief in a creator, a god who made the world and everything in it. This view usually holds that the world was created before man and does not depend on man for its existence. This view is thus a form of objective idealism.

Subjective idealism, on the other hand, holds that the material world, nature, being, exist only in men's consciousness, that they are the product of our sensations or ideas. That is, if one ceases to observe them, they do not exist.

Materialism, on the other hand, considers that gods and their powers are man-made, as primitive forms of explanations of natural phenomena which were once mysteries because of man's lack of scientific knowledge, but are nowadays no longer. The many nature gods - thunder, wind, forests, rivers etc. gradually in the course of ages became refined and distilled into a single, omnipotent being. The religions, including Christianity, to which such gods belong are a distorting mirror, in which man, who created them, sees a one-sided reflection of the social life, beliefs and customs of peoples from which they sprang. Why, then, do they not disappear in the light of present-day scientific knowledge? Because the exploiting classes consciously use them as ideological weapons to convince the masses that the problems of this world - wars, starvation, poverty, oppression etc., are caused

by a creator; that man is therefore powerless against them, and can only submit and hope for a better life in another, though mythical, world after death. Without the immense support of the exploiters, rendered in a thousand different ways, gods and religion would quickly lose most of their followings. Religion is consciously used by the bourgeoisie as a form of opium to stupefy the masses and divert them from struggle for socialism.

Subjective idealism is another way of attacking materialism. Its chief spokesman was the English Bishop Berkeley, in the early eighteenth century. Its modern advocates have to disguise it, because, carried to its logical conclusion, by denying the objective existence of everything but one's own sensations, it reduces to the belief that only the speaker exists, a view known as solipsism and ridiculed as such. In a period of political reaction following the defeat of the 1905 Russian revolution, a trend of subjective idealism made its way into Marxism, pretending to be the latest thing in modern science, deriving as it did from the Austrian scientist Ernst Mach.

Materialism is often used by bourgeois parsons and the press to denote the possession of material goods, gluttony, self-indulgence etc., in order to discredit the philosophical outlook of materialism. But the 'gross' materialism invented by the parsons is the province of capital, of the wealthy bourgeoisie, and by no means that of the adherents of the philosophy of dialectical materialism, whose aim is the liberation of mankind precisely from bourgeois rule, from the ideology of self-interest and 'me first', which objectively is served by just those who denounce 'materialism' with such loud and only too often, hypocritical voices.

Materialist dialectics not only rejects all unscientific views on the relation of spirit to nature, of thinking to being. It also opposes the unscientific view that all things exist in separation from each other and are unchanging in all essentials. This outlook, called metaphysics, is part of the religious world view but is not limited to the church. French materialism was also metaphysical in its general outlook. Largely this was due to the limitations of the eighteenth century. Science was still relatively undeveloped, still in the stage of collection and observation of data.

Beginning with the years 1844-45, when his views took shape, Marx was a materialist and especially a follower of Ludwig Feuerbach, whose weak points he subsequently saw only in his materialism being insufficiently consistent and

comprehensive. To Marx, Feuerbach's historic and "epoch-making" significance lay in his having resolutely broken with Hegel's idealism and in his proclamation of materialism, which already "in the eighteenth century, particularly French materialism. The two philosophies asserted the primacy of spirit to Nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded Nature as primary, belonged to the various schools of materialism. Any other use of the concepts of (philosophical) idealism and materialism leads only to confusion. Marx decidedly rejected, not only idealism, which is always linked in one way or another with religion (was not only a struggle against the existing political institutions and against religion and theology) but also against all metaphysics.

4.0 CONCLUSION

So far we have given a general outline of the main aspects of philosophical materialism and of its opposition to philosophical idealism. Most people know philosophical idealism in the form of religion. Of course there is an enormous variety of religions and sects. Nearly all have in common a belief in a creator, a god who made the world and everything in it. This view usually holds that the world was created before man and does not depend on man for its existence. This view is thus a form of objective idealism.

5.0 SUMMARY

Societal development has philosophies that that propel it from one level to another. It has been a contentious issue between the forces of ideas and materials in achieving development. The two philosophies however have valid points and utility for the purpose it was conceived.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Differentiate the lines of contentions between philosophical idealism and philosophical materialism.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 2 KARL MARX DIALECTICS

- Unit 1 Karl Marx: Brief Biography
- Unit 2 Law of Transformation of Quantity to Quality
- Unit 3 Law of Unity and Conflict of Opposites
- Unit 4 Law of Negation of Negation
- Unit 5 Historical Materialism

UNIT 1 KARL MARX: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx was a German Economist, Sociologist, Philosopher etc. who lived between 1818 and 1883. He was a prolific socialist writer, whose writing redefined historically the ideology of Socialism and Communism. His various thoughts and basic arguments were synthesized into the current day disciplinary course – *Theory and Practice of Marxism*. As a revolutionary scholar, Marx through his teaching advanced his deep belief in the inevitability of conflicts, struggles or dialectics as the ultimate driver of societal change and development.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the life and times of Karl Marx
- describe Karl Marx's personality and philosophical dispositions
- explain his ideology and major contributions.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Karl Marx: A Brief Biography

Karl Marx was born on 5 May 1818 the eldest son of Heinrich and Henriette Marx in the provincial town of Trier in the Rhineland, where his father practiced as a lawyer. On his father's side Karl was descended from a Jewish family with a long-standing tradition of rabbis. But his father Herschel (or, since 1814, Heinrich) Mordechai had converted to Protestantism in 1816 in order to escape the Prussian restrictions against the Jews, and he also had Karl and his six brothers and sisters baptized as Protestants. Heinrich Marx was a cultured man, who had great admiration for Leibniz, Lessing, and Kant, and raised his children as liberal and law-abiding Protestants. His wife Henriette, née Pressburg, was the daughter of a Jewish merchant from Nijmegen in the Netherlands.

The person who exerted the most important intellectual influence on the young Karl, apart from his father, was Johann Ludwig von Westphalen, a high-ranking civil servant, who treated the talented young neighbour's boy and schoolmate of his son Edgar as an equal partner in discussions on literary and philosophical themes. While his father acquainted him with the German and French

enlightenment philosophers, Karl would learn about Homer, Shakespeare and the Romantics from his future father-in-law. Presumably, it was also Baron von Westphalen who introduced him to the ideas of Henri de SaintSimon, in which he took a keen interest himself. Until his twelfth year, Karl was educated privately by his father and the local bookseller. In the gymnasium, which he attended from 1830 to 1835, he was conspicuous mainly for his diligence and for his strong interest in literature and fine arts.

From 1835 to 1841 Marx studied at the Universities of Bonn and Berlin. Following his father's advice, he enrolled at Bonn University as a student of Law, but attended courses also in history, medicine, and theology. In 1836 he changed over to the University of Berlin, where at first he continued his studies in law, but then devoted his time and energy mainly to philosophy, after he had come into contact with some of the so-called Young Hegelians, who gathered around the radical theologian and religious critic Bruno Bauer (1809–1882). In 1841 he earned a doctorate with a philosophical dissertation on “The difference between the Democritean and the Epicurean philosophy of nature” at the University of Jena. However, he quickly realized that there was little chance of success for an academic career, in view of the strict actions of the Prussian authorities against radical left-wing Hegelians: his mentor Bruno Bauer, whom he had intended to follow to the University of Bonn, was deprived of his lecture rights. Being thrown back on his own financially by the unexpected death of his father, Marx turned to journalism and began to write articles for the *Rheinische Zeitung* in Cologne, which had been founded by enlightened citizens and industrialists in early 1842. In October, Marx took over the editorship of the liberal and anti-clerical newspaper, increasing it radically. Being watched with mounting suspicion by the censorship authorities, the *Rheinische Zeitung* was banned in March 1843.

In June 1843 Karl Marx and Jenny von Westphalen, the daughter of J.L. von Westphalen, got married. In October the young couple moved to Paris, then the centre of radical thinking and political activism in Europe, where Marx came in contact with men such as Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), Georg Herwegh (1817–1875), Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), and Michail Bakunin (1814–1876), and where he planned to edit, together with Arnold Ruge (1802–1880), a literary-political magazine called the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. The first (and only) issue of these “yearbooks” was published in 1844. It contained inter alia Friedrich Engels' contribution “Umrisse zu einer Kritik der Nationalökonomie”

(“Outlines of a critique of political economy”) and two articles by Marx, “Zur Judenfrage” (“On the Jewish question”) and “Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie” (“A contribution to the critique of Hegel’s philosophy of right”). Marx was very impressed by Engels’ contribution and the first meeting of the two men marked the beginning of a lifelong friendship. In Engels (1820–1895), the son of an industrialist from Barmen, Marx found a most congenial intellectual ally, who would subsequently stand by him in his scientific and political activities as a critical commentator, occasional co-author, generous financial helper, and editor of his unfinished works.

Shortly after his meeting with Engels in the autumn of 1844, Marx began seriously to study political economy. He filled several notebooks with excerpts and commentaries on the economic writings of Boisguilbert and the French physiocrats along with Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo (which he first read in French). He then used his “Paris notebooks” for drafting out a long text that he himself had not considered for publication, but which was published posthumously in 1932 as the so-called *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte von 1844* (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*). In these manuscripts Marx formulated a critique of Hegel’s philosophy and also discussed the specific forms that “alienation” assumes under capitalistic production relations.

In early 1845, Marx was expelled from France on the instigation of the Prussian embassy in Paris. Along his wife and his newly born daughter “Jennychen” he flew to Brussels to continue his studies in political economy. In *Die deutsche Ideologie* (*The German Ideology*), written jointly with Engels in 1845–46, he again discussed critically Hegel’s philosophy and developed the main ideas of what was to be called the materialist conception of history. Marx was expelled from Prussia and deprived of his citizenship. After a brief interval in Paris he moved into exile with his family to England and settled down in London, where he was to stay until the end of his life.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The life and times of Karl Marx has been studied globally and have been very appealing. The reasons for this are not farfetched. Marx is the only socialist scholar who was able to give a practical sequence of repertoires that brings about societal development and most important the desired freedom and good life that every man craves. Although, it is argued by most scholarly authorities that there is actually no

nation that has practiced the socialist ideology purely as espoused by Marx, thus labelling Marx's socialist ideology utopian. In spite of these arguments as to the practicability of Socialism/Communism, there is no gainsaying the fact that the arguments of Karl Marx have stood the test of time. It must be hinted also that the Socialist idea is still in vogue in some parts of the world. Perhaps, nations like China known to operate what is generally called: State-Capitalism: a blend of the good elements of both socialism and capitalism.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you were exposed to the life and times of Karl Marx, though briefly. Marx was a German philosopher who was born to Heinrich and Henrietta Marx in the provincial town of Trier in the Rhineland. He was a revolutionary scholar whose work in no small way shaped the thoughts on socialism and in extension socialists and communist-like states across the globe till date.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the life and times of Karl Marx; identifying the major realities of his life.

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UNIT 2 LAW OF TRANSFORMATION OF QUANTITY TO QUALITY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Law of Transformation of Quantity to Quality
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

One need not be a Marxist to believe in *economicdeterminism*. Indeed, all modern people do, though few rely on it to the extent Marx did. However, one must believe in economic determinism to be a Marxist since it is fundamental to the German philosopher's theories. It is a theory of history and it is the basis for the belief by his followers that Marx created a "scientific" theory of socialism. Dialectics means different things to different philosophers. No single definition can cover all the definite uses of the term. Marxists use the dialectical method in order to clarify perspectives. All realities have more than one side to them.

The concept of dialectics reaches back to the ancient Greeks. Originally, the term was employed by Zeno of Elea from the 5th Century BC to show that the positions

of his opponents gave rise to paradoxes. It suggests that progress is achieved through the creative tension engendered by competing phenomena.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain dialectics (Hegelian and Marxian)
- discuss transition from quantity to quality as the basis of change.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Law of Transformation of Quantity to Quality

The application of the dialectic dynamic to historical progress was first made by Georg Hegel (1770-1831), one of the most influential political philosophers of modern times. Hegel developed a theory of history in which change is hinged on idea, which he believed was motivated by dialectic conflict, as the central theme. He suggested that any reality is two things. It is itself, and it is part of what it is becoming. Thus, the only consistency Hegel saw was change itself. To Hegel, history was simply the process of change brought on by the struggle between ideas and competing nations of people who were following God's scheme for human development. In this process, no truth was ever lost, because the positive was more powerful than the negative. Thus, the result of historical struggle was an ever-improving world.

In modern times Hegel is assumed to have invented the dialectic in which every thesis generates an anti-thesis and then a synthesis (A triad of thesis-antithesis-synthesis). Hegel emphasized ideas as the prime mover of history. Looking at the world around us we realize that anything including man possesses certain features or aspects- that is descriptive marks which define it, express its most important characteristics and its essence. Quality of a thing is the sum total of all those essential features which make it possible and define its inner nature. Things and phenomena are also defined by quantitative as well as qualitative characteristics. Every phenomenon in nature possesses definiteness (quantity and quality)- e.g. every house or flat has its definite floor space, likewise every chemical has its own particular atomic weight etc. The quantity character of things and phenomena are expressed in a variety of ways like knowing the number of machines in a

construction site, quantity of rice, maize, and cocoa etc., expressed as percentages in tons.

Quantity characterises things by their number, size, volume etc. we know that when the quality of things changes, the thing itself changes. Do all changes in quantity bring about changes in the things itself? For example, people who witnessed the damming of the Niger River at Kanji might tell the story thus: *first batch of rocks, second, third batches of rocks were thrown in the Niger and there was no dam until such a time when the number thrown in started manifesting in terms of radical effect on the flow of water. A few more and the river was dammed.* Let us think about what happened here. While the qualitative changes were taking place within certain limits they did not seem to result in the formation of a new quality (in this case, the dam).

However, as soon as they reached a certain definite quantitative limit, or measure, the changes began to produce visible qualitative effects. The law of transformation from quantity to quality- and vice versa, implies that every object transforms from a lower quality to a higher quality. Hence, when water is heated at 100 degree centigrade, it turns into steam and the steam turns into gas and it disappears but returns as water again. Kinetic energy transforms into potential energy, the theory of relativity has even shown us that every form of matter is relativised and can be contained and consumed in various forms without losing its original properties but attaining a higher form. There is measure in everything. Everything has a limit. Quantity and quality always conform to one another as long as they are within the limits of measure.

Quantity changes pile up or accumulate imperceptibly, gradually and do not seem at first to involve the quality nature of a thing; but there comes a moment when quantity changes, having accumulated, lead to changes in a thing's quality- (e.g. watching a kettle of water as it is being boiled.) At first, the water becomes warm then temperature rises 50, 60, 70, 80 – 99 degrees; but it still remains water though some changes are already in evidence; but not such as to make the water lose its essential quality as water but the moment it hits 100c, the water boils more violently and it changes into steam. The accumulated quantitative changes now result in the formation of a new quality; the water becomes steam.

This law starts, at first, as small, imperceptible qualitative changes, by gradual accumulation; and then leads, at some stage, to radical qualitative changes, involving the disappearance of old qualities and the emergence of new ones, which

bring about in their turn, further quantitative changes. As a consequence of quantitative changes, essential changes of a qualitative nature occur, at a certain moment. This moment of transformation to a new quality is called a leap. Both in nature and in society, it is always leaps that bring about new qualities. This was how inanimate nature produced animal nature. The entire evolution of animal world, the transformation of animals from one species to another, also occurred by means of leaps or sudden interruptions of the process of gradual evolution. The quantitative is transformed into qualitative one by means of a leap and transformations cannot occur in any other way.

Applied to society, the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and proletariat will result in conflict that will produce a society in which both the bourgeoisie and proletariat are transformed into a qualitatively better set of people under a new social system called socialism. While capitalism creates antagonism by making private ownership of the means of production central and the defining basis of the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; the socialist system is anchored on collective ownership of the means of production.

While capitalism promotes class division and class inequality, socialism tries to create class harmony and class equality. It should be noted that there is a difference between class and social inequality while they are related they are not the same. Social inequality may still exist amongst the same class and this may create differentiation; but class inequality results in acute division and irreconcilable antagonism between social classes.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Dialectical materialism is the law determining the most fundamental connections between all things and phenomena in nature and society, including consciousness as the central theme of Marxist dialectics. Transformation of quantity to quality propels change in nature and in society.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you learnt that dialectical materialism is the philosophical theory developed by Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels. Marx formulated his theory of dialectical materialism by combining the traditional view of a universe composed solely of matter with the dialectic of G.W.F Hegel. Marx analysis of capitalism places economic forces as the determining forces in the making of history. You also learnt how at a specific temperature, solid ice changes to liquid water- then at a higher temperature to steam – a gas – and that the three apparently different

substances are actually different manifestations of the motion of the same water molecules.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Describe how transformation of quantity to quality propels change in nature and society.
- ii. Identify the linkage between quantitative and qualitative changes.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Explain the transformation of quantity to quality as the basis of change in society.
- ii. Does change from quantity to quality lead to development all the time?

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UNIT 3 LAW OF UNITY AND CONFLICT OF OPPOSITES

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content

3.1 Law of Unity and Conflict of Opposites

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

What is the motor that triggers change? Marx became curious to find an answer to this, and he undertook a critique of Hegel and Feuerbach. Formal logic sees cause and effect as opposites, but for Marxists, the two categories merge, mix and melt into each other, all the time. From the works of Hegel, Marx derived the concept of dialectic or change and from Feuerbach; he derived the concept of materialism, i.e. the centrality of matter- or the material world, to change. This was how Marx came about his philosophical worldview of Dialectical Materialism. This law of dialectics enables us to appreciate why opposite processes for example the bourgeoisie and proletariat, will conflict and how this leads to intense class struggle and finally results in revolution.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- examine the claim that everything in life and in nature is binary
- discuss the assertion that conflict is the essence of being and is inevitable
- explain the claim that conflict produces change in nature and society.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Law of Unity and Conflict of Opposites

This law deals with contradictions. Do contradictory aspects and trends exist in things and phenomena? Thinking of the structure of atom; it possesses both positively and negatively charged particles. The ideas of contradictions have occupied the minds of scientists for a longtime. The example of atoms shows that opposing aspects do exist in things, in nature. Let us look at man and the animals; two opposite processes are going on within our bodies at the same time: cells are both growing and dying away and if one of these processes ceases the living

organism dies. These types of contradictions are common in society and in nature. These are dialectical contradictions.

Opposites are mutually exclusive phenomena or aspects of the phenomena-left & right, north & south; good & bad etc. In reality, opposites in nature and life are not separated from one another by a Chinese wall. Each can be comprehended only in its relation to the other. There is always some relationship between connected opposites. A contradiction can be defined as a relationship between two opposites, and the opposites appear as two sides of the contradiction. Opposites are linked tightly (indissoluble), such that each opposite is unable to exist alone; we call this the unity of opposites. The opposites do not simply exist side by side, but are in unity to one another. The unity of opposites consists in their indissoluble connection. Together they comprise a single contradictory process. Opposites determine one another's existence; that is, the one exists only because the other does.

The law of unity and conflict of opposites states that opposite forces will attract or unite; and the same forces will repel each other- just like that between male and female, assimilation and excretion, day and night, motion and rest, and the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. For example, somebody cannot keep consuming food or fluid without going to the toilet to excrete some waste, otherwise the person will die.

Though the process of assimilation and excretion are opposite processes, however they lead to development or growth. A person must eat to survive, but the same person must also excrete faeces and urine in order to survive otherwise his/her stomach will bulge and result in death. A car can only move on a resting plain, a car cannot move on a moving plain, if it does, there will be no friction, and hence, no movement. The same thing holds with the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat- as the bourgeoisie cannot make profit or even own industry without the proletariat; but the relationship between both of them produces contradictions that result in social revolution and a new society.

The conflict of opposite is the source of development: the conflict between opposites signifies the striving of each to obtain predominance over the other in a process or phenomenon. We have seen that there is unity in the development of any process or phenomena? Hegel claimed that the main thing in development is Unity, or essential identity of opposites. Right or utopian socialism seeks to make use of this thesis of Hegel to prove the possibility of social harmony. They wish to gloss over the hostile contradictions in bourgeois society. It is the struggle between

opposites that plays the main part in development and not Unity. This struggle is constant and never ceases. Conflict of opposites is the source of development of motion. Development is the struggle of opposites. For example in living nature, the external struggle of opposite forces – mutation and heredity. A contradiction of any kind possesses, so to say, a history of its own: its contradiction -emergence, growth (sharpening) and resolution.

A conflict is resolved when the conflict between the opposites comprising it becomes so sharp that their further existence together becomes impossible. The essence of the law of unity and conflict of opposites thus consists in the fact that internally contradictory aspects indissolubly united but, at the same time, in constant conflict are inherent in all things and processes. It is this conflict of opposites that is the source - the driving force of progress. Lenin calls this law the heart and soul of dialectics.

Examples of basic contradictions

- (1) The complex two world system – capitalism and socialism
- (2) Between capital and labour
- (3) Imperial powers and their colonies
- (4) Developed and Developing countries
- (5) Advanced and Emerging Economies, etc

In addition to isolating the basic contradiction in any phenomenon we must distinguish between internal and external, antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. It is internal contradiction that plays the decisive role in all development. Antagonistic are based on irreconcilable opposite class interest whereas non-antagonistic based on forces that have common basic interest (e.g. between two workers). Examples of Antagonistic forces are (between forces and classes, between labour and peasantry (socialist societies) and between Colonial people and imperialists).

Antagonistic contradictions are overcome through a bitter struggle by social revolution while non-antagonistic are usually resolved through education, persuasion, self-criticism etc. The absence of antagonistic interests and contradictions in socialist society does not mean that it has no contradictions at all. The contradictions here can be resolved successfully within the framework of the existing social relations.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The law of unity and conflict of opposites deals with contradictions. The conflict of opposite is the source of the development: The conflict between opposites signifies the striving of each to obtain predominance over the other in a process or phenomenon. The unity and conflict of opposites exist in nature and in society.

5.0 SUMMARY

The law of unity and conflict of opposites states that opposite forces will attract or unite and the same forces will repel each other, just like between male and female, assimilation and excretion, day and night, motion and rest, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is by the process of unity and conflict of opposites that sustainable renewals are guaranteed in nature and in society.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain productive forces as basis of contradictions in society.
- ii. Illustrate the inevitability of conflict in society.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Describe how conflict and unity of opposites play out in capitalism.
2. Demonstrate how conflict can be eliminated in a bourgeois society.

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UNIT 4 LAW OF NEGATION OF NEGATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Law of Negation of Negation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The law of negation of negation states that an object is always negating itself and in the process producing a higher form of a new object, hence the Hegelian trinity of (thesis- anti-thesis= synthesis). An object in aligning with an opposite object produces an entirely new object. A husband conjugates with the wife to produce a baby. That baby takes the features (both physical and internal) from both parents. The bourgeoisie and proletariat- when locked in a struggle trigger a contradiction that leads to the production of a new society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss how negation of negation engenders a dynamic process
- explain how negation of negation is the heart and soul of progress both in nature and society
- illustrate how negation of negation ensures continuity.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Law of Negation of Negation

This law has a critical place in Marxism. The content of this law as given it by Marx and Engels was, in essence, that of a repeated process of the new superseding the old, which is a basic feature of all development. This simply means that in the unfolding of the struggle of opposites in any contradiction, at a certain point a new state emerges, replacing or negating the former state, and in turn it itself becomes negated in further development, and so on. Thus the process appears as a 'negation of the negation.' This can more simply be called the superseding of the old by the new. What is new in a thing is the opposite to that which is old. Conflict takes place between these opposites, or 'aspects' of the contradiction, leading eventually to the dominance of the new over the old and the emergence of a new quality. Just as the chick supersedes the egg, further development sees the adult bird supersede the chick. In each case the new supersedes the old.

Negation of a former state by a new state is a fundamental law of development. Geology is a multifold record of the replacement of one era by another. In biological development, both in plants and animals, innumerable new species have negated former species. Likewise, in society, new social systems arise as a result of development determined by society's own laws of motion, each replacing a previous socio-economic formation; from primitive communism to slavery, to feudalism, to capitalism, to socialism. Whatever natural phenomenon we care to take, it has a beginning, a period during which it develops, grows and finally a period when it grows old and out lives itself. Nothing is finite, absolute, and sacred.

Everything bears the stamp of inevitable negation -disappearance etc. The continuous process of renewal, the dying away of old phenomena and the emergence of new ones is what we mean by negation. The replacing of the old by the new one means that the old is continually being negated. The new phenomena that appear in nature and society also go their natural way. They grow old with time and then new phenomena and forces take their place.

What was once new and had emerged as a negation of the old is now itself negated by something new and more vigorous. This is called negation of the negation and the world possesses an infinite number of processes like this. This process of negation goes on without end and without interruption, e.g. a crop goes through stages-germination of seeds, their growth and the ripening of the crop, and the same condition awaits man. The seed ceases to exist in the course of germination

i.e. they are negated. Then the plant grows from them to take their place. Then the plant flowers and finally bears fruit, then the plant dies away. This is the second negation: it is the negation of a negation.

Implications

Beginning with some seeds, we got more seeds- ten or twenty fold. It is creation rather than repetition. It constitutes two qualitative, different stages of development from lower-higher stages- from simple to more complex. So the law of negation of negation, states that in the course of development, each higher stage negates or eliminates the previous stage by raising it a step higher, while retaining all that is positive in it.

Negation is dialectical only when it serves as a source of development. For communists, negation is always linked with constructive creation. Development that occurs through negation of negation is progressive in character both in nature and in human society- e.g. the progressive transition from the non-organic to organic and evolution in the animal world from simple living beings to man.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Various theories abound on the social development of society. Has society always been like this? If not, then it means there have been changes. What were responsible for these changes? Each of us holds one world outlook or another (even if it is not developed) on our existence, on the society, on our destiny and role as human beings. Marxist philosophy is one of such outlooks of viewing and appraising society.

5.0 SUMMARY

Marxist methodology is, basically, made up of dialectical materialism and historical materialism. The fundamental contradictions of class societies will eventually find expression and will finally be resolved by the dialectic of historical change. Negation of negation shows the basis of contradiction and the role of change in society. This is crucial in understanding the structure, forms and character of the society and the processes of social change. The law of negation of negation implies that every object transforms from a lower quality to a higher quality-hence, developmental trajectory is linear and in a continuum.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Discuss the implications of negation of negation for nature and society.
- ii. Explain how negation can be avoidable in society.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain how negation of negation sustains progress.
2. Negation engenders renewal. Discuss.

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UNIT 5 HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Historical Materialism
 - 3.2 Dynamics of Historicism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The history of mankind right from the inception of sedentary life has always been the history of struggles. History and civilization has been product of time and space. Man's effort has been gradual and incremental, cumulatively. Every historical change is propelled by the dynamics of conflict which is dialectical and is prevalent both in nature and in society. Historical materialism is a philosophical idea, and is founded on the Marxist notion that social evolution (history) is governed by certain objective laws that will inevitably lead mankind to progressive continuum of simple to complex life. For the Marxists, the moving force in history is class and its attendant contradiction that is always resolved when one class overthrows and dominates other social forces. Historical Materialism as a philosophy therefore presents the evolutionary process in the course of history and how man at every given epoch in History fought for his material existence i.e for his survival.

The history of every society, argued Marx, is the history of class struggle (Slaves vs Slave Masters; Serfs vs Feudal Lords; Proletariats vs Bourgeoisies). The epochs are marked by two hostile camps, standing face to face (oppressors and the oppressed) in a perpetual war with each other. The aforementioned hostility arises squarely from the dialectics (fight) over the appropriation of the surplus value resulting from the social relations of production. In evaluating the historical evolution of the human society, Marx identified 6 historical epochs; socio-economic formations, viz: (1) communal society (2) slave owning (3) feudal (4) capitalistic (5) socialistic (6) communistic. Except for communal and communistic, all others are stratified i.e all other socio-economic formations were characterized by class and the attending conflicts that come with such societal class stratification.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe epoch or era; Marx's six epochs of human history;
- discuss class as the essence of change in any epoch;
- explain dialectics (class struggle) as the motion of history.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Historical Materialism

Marx believed that Western society had developed through four main epochs: primitive communism, ancient society, feudal society, and capitalist societies. Primitive communism is represented by the societies of pre-history and provides the only example of a classless society. From then on, all societies became divided into two major classes: masters and slaves in ancient society, otherwise known as Slavery society, Lords and Serfs in feudal society and Capitalists and Wage Laborers in capitalist society.

3.2 Dynamics of Historicism

The dynamics of Historical Materialism x-rays the underlying causes of struggles for every society in the course of history and they include:

- 1. Objects of Labour:** The objects of labour refer to the various resources, always owned by the oppressing class; which goes into the labour process. A good example will be the maize (grains), fertilizers, etc. that were used for agriculture in the Feudal Society.
- 2. Instruments of Labour:** These refer to the working implements that were employed in the production process. That is – the Hoes, Cutlasses, Irrigation Cans that were used in driving the production process. Also, notably, this factor of production was within the control of the oppressing class which has the wherewithal for their purchase.
It must be hinted at this juncture that the Objects of Labour and the Instruments of Labour together constitute the Means of Production, always owned by the oppressing class.
- 3. Labour (Human Labour):** Labour is the human energy that is needed in the entire process of production, and it is very instructive to note that labour is always under the oppressed class' domain. The rationale for labour in the production process becomes much evidenced when one appreciates the fact that the Means of Production cannot operate in a vacuum. Thus, they must be employed decisively by a man through the instrumentality of labour.

It must be hinted at the point that when Labour is dependent on the Means of Production (Objects and Instruments of Labour), the resultant outcome is the Mode of Production, otherwise known as an era/epoch in Marxist's parlance.

- 4. Social Relations of Production:** This explains the nature of the relations that existed between both classes at every epoch. In Slave society, the first class society, the oppressed were treated as slaves with no iota of freedom. In the Feudal and proceeding society, a little level of freedom was given to the oppressed class; in capitalism however, the oppressed are totally free but technically enslaved through the instrument of wage labour. The social relations of production simply refers therefore to the way the life of both the oppressed and the oppressor were defined and organized at every epoch of human history (i.e. their roles in the process of production as well as that of the society generally).
- 5. Surplus Value:** Understanding Marx's historical materialism is simply understanding the theory of *Surplus Value*. Recall, the oppressed in relation to the production process only has labour to provide, which the oppressing class cannot provide for itself, given its social status. Thus, this division of the prerequisites of production amongst the two classes is basically the underlying factor for societal conflicts since production means an involuntary relation between the oppressor (owning the means of production) and the oppressed (owning the labour which is also inevitable if there must be production). Given the influence of the oppressor over the oppressed, there is bound to be exploitation in the society and in Marxism, this is known as the Surplus Value. Surplus Value therefore refers to the additional value created by the labourer's effort in the production process in excess of what he is offered for his labour. This is now the source of all conflicts in every epoch because; the oppressed sets out to challenge the status quo at every epoch demanding a better share of the output from the social production process.

During each historical epoch, the labor power required for production was supplied by the subject class that is by slaves, serfs and wage laborers respectively. The subject class is made up of the majority of the population, whereas the ruling or dominant class forms a minority.

Classes did not exist during the era of primitive communism, when societies were based on a socialist mode of production. In hunting and gathering band, the earliest form of human society, the land and its products were communally owned. The men hunted and the women gathered plant/food, and the produce was shared by members of the band. Classes did not exist since all members of the society shared the same relationship to the means of production. Every member was both producer and owner; all provided labor power and shared the products of their

labor. Hunting and gathering is a subsistence economy, which means that production only meets basic survival needs. Classes emerged when the productive capacity of society expanded beyond the level required for subsistence. This occurred when agriculture became the dominant mode of production as assisted by Slavery referencing the relations of production. In an agricultural economy, only a section of society is needed to produce the food requirements of the whole society. Many individuals were thus freed from food production and are able to specialize in other tasks. The rudimentary division of labor of the hunting and gathering band is replaced by an increasingly more complex and specialized division. For example, in the early agricultural villages, some individuals became fulltime producers of pottery, clothing and agricultural implements.

As agriculture developed, surplus wealth - that is goods above the basic subsistence needs of the community - were produced. This led to an exchange of goods, and trading developed rapidly both within and between communities. This was accompanied by the development of a system of private property. Goods were increasingly seen as commodities or articles of trade to which the individual rather than the community had right of ownership.

Private property and the accumulation of surplus wealth, form the basis for the development of class societies. In particular, they provide the preconditions for the emergence of a class of producers and a class of non-producers. Some people are able to acquire the means of production, and others are therefore obliged to work for them. The result is a class of non-producers which owns the means of production, and a class of producers which owns only its labour. This production division of labour spanning through the Slavery mode of production, the Feudal, and currently is experienced, though in another form, in present-day capitalism as practiced by majority of nations across the globe.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From a Marxist perspective, the relationship between the major social classes is one of mutual dependence and conflict. Thus, in capitalist society, the bourgeoisie and proletariat are dependent upon each other. Wage laborers must sell their labor power in order to survive, as they do not own a part of the means of production and lack the means to produce goods, independently. They are, therefore, dependent-for their livelihood, on the capitalists and the wages they offer.

5.0 SUMMARY

Marx identified the western society as being made up of epochs and each with its class antagonism. Classes create conflict and change. The history of all known societies is the history of the struggle of classes; and it is the dynamic of change and progress in society.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Identify the basic characteristics of the capitalist epoch.
- ii. What does communalism have in common with communism?

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Outline the disadvantages of feudalism.
2. Discuss the claim that Communism is an idealistic.

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MODULE 3 MARXISM AND THE MEANING OF IDEOLOGY

Unit 1 Alienation

Unit 2 Ideology and False Consciousness

Unit 3 Base and Superstructure

Unit 4 State Power and the Superstructure

Unit 5 Vanguard Party/Proletarian Revolution

UNIT 1 ALIENATION

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Alienation

3.2 Alienation and Capitalism

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In The Communist Manifesto (1848) Marx takes a rather dim view of earlier socialists, largely dismissing them as naive idealists responsible for fantastic pictures of future society. He contrasts their pipe dreams with his own hard headed scientific socialism which is founded on the notion of class struggle as the driving force behind historical progress.

Marx's communism is a militant form of socialism that can be attained only through violent revolution; ending industrial capitalism, together with the capitalist class (bourgeoisie) who profit from its exploitative returns, will, as a matter of historical necessity, be overthrown in spontaneous uprisings of the working class (proletariat). Eventually, the social class controlling the new dominant means of production will win the struggle to create its own political and social conditions.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss alienation as a distortion of reality
- describe alienation as false consciousness
- explain alienation as a driver of the market economy.

3 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Alienation

By interacting with nature in what is termed labor, individuals develop and change their own character. The essence of human beings, therefore, becomes closely related to their work. For Marx work was a form of self-creation and Man is constantly developing and changing-creating his own nature. In other words, the product of our labor is part of us, and something of us is in the things we produce through our work. This attitude might appear naive at first glance; yet which of us has not felt great satisfaction at having made something by hand? Do we not feel a closer relationship with objects we have made ourselves?

Marx's theory of work and his attitude toward capitalism led him to his theory of human self-alienation. Marx believed that workers became alienated from themselves because of three exploitative features of capitalism. First, since work can be a form of self-creativity, it should be enjoyable, Marx reasoned. Yet, because the capitalists squeeze every possible cent of profit from the workers, they make the conditions of work intolerable. Consequently, instead of enjoying work or the act of self-creation, the members of the proletariat grow to hate the very process by which they could refine their own natures. Consequently, they become alienated from a part of their own selves.

Secondly, Marx believed that capitalists must exploit the workers in order to produce a profit. The capitalists force the workers to sell the product of their labor and then use that product against the workers to exploit them further. This, Marx claimed, forces the workers to regard their own product, something that is actually part of them, as alien and even harmful to them; thus, it becomes another form of

self-alienation. Thirdly, and here Marx is truly paradoxical, the capitalist is criticised for mechanising production because this process robs laborers of their skills and reduces them to little more than feeders of machines. All the creativity is taken out of work, making it impossible for people ever to develop their humanity fully: this is the ultimate alienation. Marx clearly, saw himself as a prophet of the future. He claimed that socialism was the coming economic system and that it would become even more productive than capitalism. Yet, in this theory he is resentful of mechanisation and even appears to look back nostalgically to an earlier era. Within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productiveness of labor are brought about at the cost of the individual laborer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over, and exploitation of, the producers.

The system mutilates the laborer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hated toil. The worker is estranged from his intellectual potentialities of the labor-process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power. They distort the conditions under which he works, subjecting him during the labor-process to despotism, transforming his lifetime into working time beneath the wheels of the Juggernaut of capital.

Alienation is a situation in which creations of humanity appear to humans as alien objects and such creations are seen as independent from their creators and invested with the power to control them. People create their own society, but will remain alienated until they recognize themselves within their own creation. Until that time, humans will assign an independent existence to objects, ideas and institutions and be controlled by them. In the process they lose themselves, become strangers in the world they created: they become alienated.

Religion provides an example of human alienation. In Marx's view religion does not make man. However members of society fail to recognize that religion is of their own making. They assign to the gods an independent power, a power to direct their actions and shape their destiny. The more people invest in religion, the more they lose themselves. The more man puts into God, the less he retains of himself. In assigning their own powers to supernatural beings, people become alienated from themselves. Religion is a reflection of a more fundamental source of alienation. It is essentially a projection of the social relationships involved in the process of production. If people are to find themselves and abolish illusions of

religion, they must abandon a condition which requires illusions. Humanity must therefore eradicate the source of alienation in the economic infrastructure.

In Marx's view, productive labor is the primary most vital human activity. In the production of objects, people objectify themselves; they express and externalise their being; then they lose themselves in the object. The act of production results in human alienation. This occurs when people regard the products of their labor as commodities, as articles for sale in the market place and the objects of their creation are then seen to control their existence. They are seen to be subject to impersonal forces, such as the law of supply and demand, over which they have little or no control. The object that labor produces, its product, confronts it as an alien being, as a power independent of the producer. In this way people are estranged from the objects they produce; they become alienated from the most vital human activity -productive labor.

3.2 Alienation and Capitalism

Alienation reaches its height in capitalist society, where labor is dominated by the requirements of capital, the most important of which is the demand for profit. These requirements determine levels of employment and wages, the nature and quantity of goods produced, and their method of manufacture. Workers see themselves as prisoners of market forces over which they have no control. They are subject to the impersonal mechanisms of the law of supply and demand. They are at the mercy of the periodic booms and slumps that characterise capitalist economies. The workers therefore lose control over the objects they produce and become alienated from their product and the act of production. Their work becomes a means to an end, a means of obtaining money to buy the goods and services necessary for their existence. Unable to fulfill their being in the products of their labor, the workers become alienated from themselves in the act of production. Therefore, the more the workers produce, the more they lose themselves.

In Marx's view, the market forces that are seen to control production are not impersonal mechanisms beyond the control of humanity: they are human made. Alienation is therefore the result of human activity rather than external forces with an existence independent of humanity. If the products of labor are alien to the worker, they must belong to somebody else. This somebody else is the capitalist who owns and controls the means of production and the products of labor, who appropriates the wealth that labor produces.

Given the priority Marx assigns to economic factors, an end to alienation involves a radical change in the economic infrastructure. In particular, it requires the abolition of private property and its replacement by communal ownership of the means of production that is, the replacement of capitalism by communism. Marx saw communism as the complete and conscious return of man unto himself as a social being.

4.0 CONCLUSION

For the Marxist upon the attainment of communist society, conflicts of interest will disappear and antagonistic groups such as capitalists and workers will be a thing of the past. The products of labor will no longer be appropriated by some at the expense of others. With divisions in society eradicated, humans will be at peace with their fellows, and they will produce both for themselves and others at one and the same time. In this situation each of us would have doubly affirmed himself and his fellow man.

5.0 SUMMARY

Alienation springs not from impersonal market forces but from relationships. Alienation will come to an end when the contradiction between human consciousness and objective reality is resolved; then people will realise that the situation in which they find themselves is human made and therefore subject to change by human action.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. How did factory system escalate alienation in the early stages of capitalism?
- ii. Alienation is a reflection of Marx's humanism. Explain.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the role of alienation in sustaining capitalism.
2. What are the linkages between alienation and commoditisation in capitalism?

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UNIT 2 IDEOLOGY AND FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Ideology and False Consciousness
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ideology is a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group without further examination. These ideas are invoked in order to justify or denounce a particular way of social, economic or political organisation. In this sense, ideology is a matter of faith; it has no scientific basis. An ideology is action-

oriented. It presents a cause before its adherents and induces them to fight for that cause, and to make sacrifices for its realisation.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain how ideology can be applied as a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group, party or nation without further examination
- discuss how ideology can be applied as the science of ideas which examines how different ideas are formed, how truth is distorted, and how we can overcome distortions to discover true knowledge.

4 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Ideology and False Consciousness Ideology

Heywood, 2007 applied the term 'ideology' in two contexts- (a) a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group, party or nation without further examination; and (b) the science of ideas which examines as to how different ideas are formed, how truth is distorted, and how we can overcome distortions to discover true knowledge. In this context, ideology means a set of those ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group without further examination. These ideas are invoked in order to justify or denounce a particular way of social, economic or political organisation. In this sense, ideology is a matter of faith; it has no scientific basis. Adherents of an ideology think that its validity need not be subjected to verification. Different groups may adhere to different ideologies; hence differences among them are inevitable. Ideology, therefore, gives rise to love-hate relationship which is not conducive to scientific temper. Examples of some ideologies are: liberalism, capitalism, socialism, Marxism, communism, anarchism, fascism, imperialism, nationalism, internationalism, etc. An ideology is action-oriented. It presents a cause before its adherents and induces them to fight for that cause, and to make sacrifices for its realisation.

The term 'ideology' was, originally, devised to describe the science of ideas. In this sense, it seeks to determine how ideas are formed, how they are distorted, and how true ideas could be segregated from false ideas. It was Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836), a French scholar, who first used the word 'ideology' during 1801-15 in his

writings on the Enlightenment. He defined it as a study of the process of forming ideas - a science of ideas. Tracy observed that ideas are stimulated by the physical environment; hence empirical learning (gained through sense experience) is the only source of knowledge. Supernatural or spiritual phenomena have no role to play in the formation of real ideas. Science is founded on these ideas. People could use science for the improvement of social and political conditions.

For Marx, ideology is a distortion of reality, a false picture of society. In view of the contradictions that beset historical societies, he canvasses a set of Ideas (on best form of society and government, and Science of Ideas (on how ideas are formed and distorted). These he said are captured as:

- a matter of faith characterised by closed minds interested in the search for better society
- instrument of politics that demands subordination to authority.
- a matter of critical examination characterised by open minds interested the search for better options
- instrument of politics that allows individuals to question authority, and difficult to explain their survival.

Despite its internal contradictions, capitalism has continued in the West for over 200 years. This continuity can be explained in large part by the nature of the ideology in the superstructure of society. In all societies the superstructure is largely shaped by the base. In particular, the relations of production are reflected and reproduced in the various institutions, values and beliefs that make up the superstructure.

Thus, the relationships of domination and subordination found in the base will also be found in social institutions. The dominant social group or ruling class, that is the group which owns and controls the means of production, will largely monopolise political power, and its position will be supported by laws which are framed to protect and further its interests. In the same way, beliefs, values and ideas will reflect and legitimate the relations of production.

Members of the ruling class produce the dominant ideas in society. These ideas justify their power and privilege and conceal from all members of society the basis of exploitation and oppression on which their dominance rests. Thus, under feudalism, honor and loyalty were dominant concepts of the age. Vassals owed loyalty to their lords and were bound by an oath of allegiance that encouraged the

acceptance of their status. In terms of the dominant concepts of the age, feudalism appeared as the natural order of things.

Under capitalism, exploitation is disguised by the ideas of equality and freedom. The relationship between capitalist and wage labourer is defined as an equal exchange. The capitalist buys the labor power that the worker offers for hire. The worker is defined as a free agent, since he or she has the freedom to choose his or her employer. In reality equality and freedom are illusions: the employer-employee relationship is not equal it is an exploitative relationship. Workers are not free, since they are forced to work for the capitalist in order to survive. All they can do is exchange one form of 'wage slavery' for another. The contradictions embedded in the structure of society must eventually find expression.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Ruling-class ideology produces false class consciousness, a false picture of the nature of the relationship between social classes. Members of both classes tend to accept the status quo as normal and natural and are largely unaware of the nature of exploitation and oppression. In this way, the conflict of interest between the classes is disguised and a degree of social stability produced, but the basic contradictions and conflicts of class societies remain unresolved.

5.0 SUMMARY

Marx refers to the dominant ideas of each epoch as ruling class ideology. Ideology blinds members of society to the contradictions and conflicts of interest that are built into their relationships. As a result, they tend to accept their situation as normal and natural, right and proper. In this way a false consciousness of reality is produced which helps to maintain the system. However, Marx believed that ruling class ideology could only slow down the disintegration of the system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Describe the place of ideology in today's world.
- ii. In what ways do ideologies conceal exploitation of the workers?

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the rise and fall of ideologies in society.
2. Evaluate the relationship between ideology and false consciousness in society.

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UNIT 3 BASE AND SUPERSTRUCTURE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Base and Superstructure
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Marx saw all societies as composed of two basic parts- the *foundation (base)* and the *superstructure*. The foundation of any society, according to this theory, is material which is the substructure upon which rest the superstructure (legal, art, religion, education, government, etc). There are two major social groups- bourgeoisie and the proletariat (a ruling class and a subject class) with their mutually antagonistic interests in a capitalistic society. The substructure produces the material base while the superstructure provides the maintenance imperatives for the society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain how societies are (by their nature) stratified
- analyse the claim that the power of the ruling class comes from their ownership and control of the means of production.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Base and Superstructure

The under listed indicators or characteristics underpin the explanation of the relationship between Base and Superstructure:

1. There are two major social groups- bourgeoisie and the proletariat (a ruling class and a subject class).
2. The power of the ruling class comes from its ownership and control of the means of production (land, capital, labour power, buildings and machinery).
3. The ruling class exploits and oppresses the subject class.
4. As a result, there is a basic conflict of interest between the two classes.
5. The various institutions of society, such as the legal, religious, and political systems, are instruments of ruling class domination and serve to further its interests.
6. Only when the means of production are communally owned will classes disappear, thereby bringing an end to the exploitation and oppression of some by others.

From a Marxist perspective, systems of stratification derive from the relationships of social groups to the means of production. Marx saw all societies as composed of two basic parts: the foundation (base) and the superstructure. The foundation of

any society, according to this theory, is material. In other words, the economic system is at the base of the society. Marx further divided the economy into two basic factors: the means of production and the relations of production.

The means of production are the resources and technology at the disposal of a particular society, and their interrelationship determines the kind of economic system the society enjoys. The relations of production (or social classes) are determined by the affiliation between human beings in the society and the means of production. The owners of the means of production enjoy the most beneficial position in the economy and thus become members of the most influential social group- the ruling class. In a pastoral society the ruling group would be those who own the most livestock; in an agrarian society the greatest landowners would dominate; and in an industrial society the capitalist class rules.

The foundation of society (the economic and social class systems) determines the nature of society's superstructure, which rests upon the foundation. The superstructure is composed of all non-material institutions in the society, and each is arranged in a way that suits the ruling class. Included in the superstructure are values, ideology, government, education, law, religion, art, and so forth.

As the superstructure of society - the major institutions, values and belief systems - is seen to be largely shaped by the economic infrastructure, the relations of production will be reproduced in the superstructure. Therefore, the dominance of the ruling class in the relations of production will be reflected in the superstructure in particular, the existing relations of production between individuals must necessarily express themselves also as political and legal relations. For instance, the various ownership rights of the capitalist class will be enshrined in and protected by the laws of the land. Thus the various parts of the superstructure can be seen as instruments of ruling class domination and as mechanisms for the oppression of the subject class. The function of the superstructure is to assure the rulers continued dominance and to keep the ruled in their place. Marx conceived of government as a tool of class oppression that manipulates all the cultural elements in the society to the advantage of those who controls the economy. A class becomes a class for itself when the forces of production have developed to the point where they cannot be contained within the existing relations of production. In Marx's words: For an oppressed class to be able to emancipate itself, it is essential that the existing forces of production and the existing social relations should be incapable of standing side by side.

Revolutionary change requires that the forces of production, on which the new order will be based, have developed in the old society; therefore, the new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society. The free market does not guarantee that merit is equally rewarded for all social groups. Social justice may therefore be promoted if the state intervenes.

4.0 CONCLUSION

There are two major social groups: bourgeoisie and the proletariat (a ruling class and a subject class). As a result, there is a basic conflict of interest between the two classes. The ruling class exploits and oppresses the subject class. The free market does not guarantee that merit is equally rewarded for all social groups. Social justice may therefore be promoted when the state intervenes on behalf of the oppressed classes.

5.0 SUMMARY

The essence of capitalism is that the means of production, distribution and exchange - the factories, mines, railways and other resources needed to produce goods and services - are privately owned and exploited by individuals (or individual firms) to generate wealth for themselves. The foundation of society (the economic and social class systems) determines the nature of society's superstructure, which rests upon foundation. Accordingly, for most of its history, socialism has held that the surest way to remedy the ills of capitalism is for the state to nationalise these productive resources (take them into public ownership) and to manage them on behalf of all society's members.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain the linkage between economic substructure and the superstructure of your society.
- ii. Describe the characteristics of economic substructure in capitalism.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Evaluate the position of the material base in any society.
2. Explain how the superstructure can create false consciousness.

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UNIT 4 STATE POWER AND THE SUPERSTRUCTURE

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 State Power and the Superstructure
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The power of the capitalist in a bourgeois society comes mainly from his ownership and control of the means of production. The state functions in the interest of the bourgeoisie.

The state is not neutral because it protects the interest of the capitalist over and above other classes in society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the state as an instrument of class rule
- explain how the state is a product of class differentiation
- expatiate the claim that political power is merely organised power for domination.

5 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 State Power and the Superstructure

The state is, essentially, the coercive instrument of class rule (domination, economic and political power) in a class stratified society. For Marx the state is a committee for the management of the common affairs of the bourgeoisie (Communist manifesto). The state is not neutral but stands to protect the interest of one class over the others. For Marx, the state will wither away with the destruction of private property which will put to end all class induced privileges in society. The state is a product of class differentiation in society. Political power is merely organised power of one class for oppressing another. For example, in a society with feudal arrangements in which the land is owned by tiny elite, the serfs work the land and the surplus value expropriated by great nobles will develop institutions in their superstructures- that will be beneficial to the powerful aristocratic class of landowners. The educational systems tend to justify these political situations and religion tends to be structured in a hierarchical fashion.

For Marx, religion is "the opiate of the people", because he believed that it drugged them, numbing their senses and disposing them to put up with their wretched existence so that they would be rewarded in a "mythical" after life. The Church acts to support the capitalistic systems although it is certainly not difficult to find circumstances that contradict Marx's views about how economics predisposes society; one would be amiss not to recognise that indeed there is much to be learned from his analysis. It is true, for example, that the areas that developed extensive capitalist systems-England, Holland, Switzerland, Northern Germany, Scandinavia, and the United States also accepted Protestantism as their dominant religious form. Even in Catholic France, which also built a substantial industrial

base, the Huguenots (French Protestants) own a disproportionately large percentage of the capital wealth.

It is also true that societies make concerted efforts to socialise their citizens. That is, they take great pains to inculcate in their people the dominant values and norms of society and these attitudes invariably accrue to the benefit of the people who control the system. In the United States, for example, American Government is a required course in most states at the elementary, high school, and college levels. Why is this subject thought to be so important? The study of government assumes that democracy depends on a well-informed citizenry as a requirement, yet these courses (especially in the lower grades) do more than simply inform students. Great effort is expended to develop a positive attitude among students about their system of government. Clearly, this example illustrates the conscious attempt by society's leaders to instill in each generation the values that society espouses. Political power, in Marxist theory, comes from economic power. The power of the ruling class therefore stems from its ownership and control of the means of production.

In the same way, the position of the dominant class is supported by beliefs and values which are systematically generated by the infrastructure. As noted earlier Marx referred to the dominant values of class societies as ruling class ideology, since they justify and legitimize ruling class domination and project a distorted picture of reality. For example, the emphasis on freedom in capitalist society, illustrated by phrases such as 'the free market', 'free democratic societies' and 'the free world', is an illusion that disguises the wage slavery of the proletariat.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Political power, in Marxist theory, comes from economic power. The power of the ruling class therefore stems from its ownership and control of the means of production. In the same way, the position of the dominant class is supported by beliefs and values which are systematically generated by the infrastructure. The state plays the roles of sustaining and reinforcing the status quo which favors the bourgeois class.

5.0 SUMMARY

The state is essentially the coercive instrument of class rule. For Marx, the state is a committee for the management of the common affairs of the bourgeoisie

(Communist manifesto). The state is not neutral but stands to protect the interest of one class over the others. For Marx the state will wither away with the destruction of private property which will put to end all class induced privileges in society. The state is a product of class differentiation in society. Political power: is merely organised power of one class for oppressing another.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. How do the superstructures promote bourgeois interest in capitalist society?
- ii State the roles of the substructure in society.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the sources of bourgeois power.
2. How can the state be neutral in a class divided society?

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UNIT 5 VANGUARD PARTY/ PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Vanguard Party and Proletarian Revolution
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The history of human society is not the product of impersonal forces; it is the result of people's purposive activity. Since people make society, only people can change society. Proletarian revolution puts an end to the exploitation and oppression by the bourgeoisie by establishing a dictatorship through collective ownership of the means of production and gradual withering of the state. The goal of the Vanguard Party is not to take power in the name of the proletariat; it is simply to lead the masses in a revolutionary struggle. For Marxists, the proletarian revolution will resolve permanently all the contradictions in society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the meaning and roles of the vanguard party
- explain proletarian revolution
- discuss proletarian dictatorship.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Vanguard Party and Proletarian Revolution

(a) Vanguard Party

The literal meaning of the term- vanguard is to be the front runner; in the forefront. Lenin made use of this word to denote the role of the communist party (Bolsheviks) in the Russian revolution. The goal of the Vanguard party is not to take power in the name of the proletariat; it is simply to lead the masses in a revolutionary struggle. In the context of revolutionary struggle, *vanguardism* is a strategy whereby the most class-conscious and politically advanced section of the proletariat becomes the apologists of the revolution. The revolutionary party, based on the Leninist concept of the vanguard party midwives the socialist project. For Lenin communist unity is embodied in a Marxist-Leninist Party, which is guided by a dedicated intelligentsia as the vanguard of the revolution. One of the greatest contributions to Marxism since the death of Engels in 1895 was Lenin's conception of the vanguard party as the organiser and director of the proletarian revolution. In *What Is to Be Done?*, published in 1902, Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov - better known as

Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia - accepts Marx's analysis of ideology.

Power and Vanguard Party

Of all the subjects on which he wrote, Marx is probably least clear in discussing the political system that would exist after the revolution. Basically, he conceived of the proletarian state as developing in two steps. First, he expected that the proletariat would create a dictatorship. The purpose of the dictatorship of the proletariat would be to eliminate all but a single proletarian class. Since all human strife emanated from social class differences, according to Marx, human harmony was possible only if class differences were eradicated. This goal could be achieved through a process of re-education. Although the purpose of the dictatorship of the proletariat is quite clear, the exact nature of the institution remains shrouded in ambiguity and has been the subject of considerable debate.

Lenin, who took an elitist attitude, insisted that the dictatorship should be over the proletariat as well as superior to all other elements in the society. He argued that not only should the Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) lead the revolution, but that it should also become the dictator of the proletariat. Since Marx insisted on a democratic format in all other things and since he never attempted to form a communist party, as Lenin later did, it is highly unlikely that he meant to imply the model Lenin employed. Marx expected that the overwhelming number of people in society would be among the proletariat when the revolution occurred.

Hence, if he meant that the dictatorship was to be by the proletariat, the situation would indeed be different. The huge majority of people-the proletariat-would impose its egalitarian policies on the tiny corps of remaining capitalists. In numerical terms, at least, such a system would be more democratic than that which Lenin ultimately put in place. In any event, as the dictatorship succeeded in redirecting the society toward the socialist utopia, more and more people would adopt the socialist ethic, meaning willingness to work to one's capacity and to share the fruits of labor with the rest of society. This concept is clearly the most revolutionary aspect of Marx's thought. Like all leftists, he believed people could change, redirecting their lives and actions toward more desirable goals. To this end, Marx expected the dictatorship to encourage people to abandon their selfish, atomistic ways, adopting collective or organic values.

In the Communist Manifesto of 1848 the assumption had been that the workers would rise up spontaneously to overthrow their oppressors, but Lenin feared that the dominant ideology would induce a 'false consciousness' that would blind them to their own interests and induce them in effect to connive in their own oppression. His concern seemed particularly plausible in the case of Russia, which was a desperately poor country that had progressed little beyond agrarian feudalism; it had barely entered the stage of industrial capitalism (as required by orthodox Marxism) and was very far from having developed an enlightened revolutionary proletariat. What was needed, in Lenin's view, was a vanguard party of professional revolutionaries - an elite group of radicalized intellectuals like himself - who would lead the workers to revolution and guide them in setting up a temporary dictatorship of the proletariat.

Many of the problems for communism in its various 20th-century incarnations can be traced back to the fundamental loss of faith in the people that was reflected in Lenin's development of the vanguard theory and what became known as Marxism-Leninism. Marx well understood the psychology of dominance and oppression. The ruling ideas of every epoch are the ideas of the ruling class; the prevailing 'ideology' – the system or scheme of ideas expressed in the media, in education etc., always reflects the views of the dominant class, determining orthodox opinion, defending the status quo, and so serving to justify unequal relations of economic and political power.

Recognised now as one of the most momentous documents ever published, *The Communist Manifesto*- made surprisingly little impact on its first appearance. A short tract of fewer than 12,000 words, written in collaboration with Friedrich Engels and published in 1848, it was originally intended as a (platform for the largely ineffective, quarrelsome and short-lived Communist League. In the Manifesto's closing lines, Marx gives perhaps the most resounding and portentous rallying cry ever delivered: The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

All communist regimes claimed to be democratic, but more or less implicit in this claim was the belief that the people were not yet ready or able to govern themselves. For this reason, real-world communist states became fossilised in what was supposed to be a transitional phase: political power remained concentrated in

the vanguard, and the dictatorship was not of the proletariat but of the increasingly centralized communist party and so it proved, to a tragic degree, in the world's experience of socialist/communist states in the 20th century. Here, if anywhere, the more things changed, the more they stayed the same.

Capitalist class structures were replaced by rigid hierarchies, in which a new political class governed in its own interests. Command economies lumbered along inefficiently under the corrupt direction of huge and unaccountable central bureaucracies, producing not surpluses but bread queues and price riots. In almost every case, the classless paradise promised by Marx quickly degenerated into dystopian nightmare.

Proletarian Revolution

Dupre (2010) defines proletariats as the lowest or the poorest class of citizens whose main duty is to produce children for the Roman state. According to Marxism, Proletariats are working classes and are all wage earners collectively and they are those who sell their labor or work for wages. They have no means of production or property and must sell their labor to survive. Marx raised the term from its derogatory connotation to its sociological use referring to working class.

Proletarian revolution is the political revolution in which the working class attempts to overthrow the bourgeoisie.

Marxist Theory of Revolution

Marx vacillated over whether violence was necessary to achieve socialist goals. During the early part of his professional life, he clearly suggested that one could not hope for a change from a capitalist system to a socialist one without violence. Gradually, however, he began to weaken this position until finally he admitted that certain systems (such as those in England, Holland, and perhaps the United States) might be responsive enough to adopt socialism by nonviolent means. Violence was still necessary elsewhere however; Lenin would again insist that no meaningful change could occur without violence.

Helping to develop class consciousness is the role Marx saw for himself and his revolutionary colleagues. Calling his followers the vanguard of the proletariat, Marx advised that their function was to do what they could to instill in the worker an understanding of the true nature of a class-driven society. Importantly, Marx did not advocate that revolutionaries should organize and lead the revolution. He saw their function as more educative than activist. Once fully aware of their circumstances, the proletariat would take care of the revolution themselves. Marx's

attitude toward revolution and revolutionaries is particularly important because, as we shall see in Lenin, who was supposedly a disciple of the German master, abandoned this rather passive role for a more activist one.

Proletarian revolution puts an end to the exploitation and oppression by the bourgeoisie by establishing their dictatorship through collective ownership of the means of production and gradual withering of the state. For Marxists the proletarian revolution will resolve permanently all the contradictions in society. Karl Marx and his followers hold that proletarian revolution is historically inevitable. The history of human society is not the product of impersonal forces; it is the result of people's purposive activity, since people make society, only people can change society.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Radical change results from a consciousness of reality and direct action. Thus members of the proletariat must be fully aware of their situation and take active steps in order to change it. Although a successful revolution depends ultimately on the economic situation, it requires human initiative. People must make their own utopia.

5.0 SUMMARY

Proletarian revolution is the political revolution in which the working class attempts to overthrow the bourgeoisie. For Marxists the proletarian revolution will resolve permanently all the contradictions in society. Karl Marx and his followers hold that proletarian revolution is historically inevitable.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain the self-serving interest of the vanguard party in socialist revolution.
- ii. Discuss the dictatorship of the proletariat.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Proletarian revolution does not eliminate inequality. Discuss.
2. Proletarian regimes only succeed in substituting one class of dictatorship with another. Illustrate with examples.

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MODULE 4 UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF SOCIALISM

CONTENTS

Unit 1 Exploitation and Oppression

Unit 2 Utopian Socialism

Unit 3 Marx Scientific Socialism

Unit 4 Class (A Class in Itself to a Class for Itself)

Unit 5 Socialist Theory and Working Class Movement

UNIT 1 EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Exploitation and Oppression
- 4.0 Conclusion
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This work brings out the major themes in the writings of Karl Marx essentially from the historical, philosophical, economical dimensions which are voluminous, and which ran for over 40 years. Man has always grappled with the challenge of overcoming the paucity of resources. Right from the inception of agriculture man has been able to influence and control nature with the attendant increased productivity but has not achieved on permanent basis an equitable method of distributing resources without creating camps- of the haves and have-nots.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit you should be able to:

- analyse the claim that inequality in society is a product of social organisation rather than biological differentiation
- expatiate on exploitation and oppression as the basis of stratification and domination of individuals in society.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Exploitation and Oppression

Karl Marx was born in Trier, Germany to prosperous Jewish parents in 1818. Marx earned his Ph.D in Philosophy at the University of Jena. His graduation and his radical political ideas resulted in his being forced out of one European country after another between 1844 and 1848. Engels became Marx's lifelong collaborator and benefactor. Marxism is the economic and political philosophy named after Karl Marx (1818–83) and his associate Friedrich Engels (1820-1895). The political situation in Europe was repressive as various leftist groups demanded political

reforms of the ancient ruling monarchies. Finally, rebellions broke out across the continent in 1848. Marx and Engels were commissioned to write a brief essay setting forth the ideology of the impending revolution; and this tract, hastily written in Belgium, the Communist Manifesto became the blue print of socialism. It was a brief sketch of Marx's ideas and includes several important ideas that Marx adapted from the work of his friend Engels. As the rebellions were suppressed one after the other, Marx took refuge in England in 1849. There he settled into a scholarly life, spending most of his time in the British Museum researching and writing. Marx brooded over the years as the proletarian conflagration he anticipated failed to materialise. Yet, he remained confident of the acuity of his theory, and his intellectual prowess was so great that he dominated the socialist movement throughout his life. It was only after his death that major variations of his thought attracted substantial followings among socialists. Socialism developed as a protest against the harsh exploitation of workers and of other ordinary people that was common to capitalism.

The Industrial revolution, which was made possible by the use of scientific methods, had given people a new framework for thought. It also brought mechanised production and replaced human or animal energy with steam. Yet, as machines and energy sources became more sophisticated, costs of mass production exceeded the resources of the individual. Consequently, age industries were replaced by the factory system. Family ownership of industries was eventually displaced by stock market investors and professional managers. Each of these developments removed ownership from production and estranged the owners from the workers.

This new economic system allowed people with money to buy up the machinery and factories needed to produce goods. People who had been self employed, or at least had worked closely with their employers, found them forced into the factories, mills, and mines. The resulting de-personalisation of labour was increased by the new machinery, which tended to make old skills obsolete. Workers were put behind machines to perform monotonous and menial tasks requiring no skills beyond those needed to keep the machines functioning properly, even as wages were suppressed because skilled jobs disappeared.

The factory system brought with it a whole new way of life. People were herded into the cities, where housing was cramped and squalid. Sanitation facilities were so woefully inadequate that people were forced to live in filth. The factories

themselves were dark, damp, and unventilated. Having isolated the workers from anything that might reduce their productivity, the owners sealed them in stuffy, dimly lit workrooms. Thousands died of asthma and tuberculosis because the air they breathed were contaminated by smoke, steam, dust, and filth. Many people toiled as long as sixteen hours a day in the summer and thirteen and a half hours in the winter, sometimes seven days a week. At times workers could not even leave the factories and were forced to sleep beneath the machines to which they were enslaved.

Women and children were the most desirable laborers because they could be paid less and were least likely to resist the harsh discipline, beatings, and other cruelties imposed on them. The family unit disintegrated. A working mother might seldom see her children unless they also worked in the factory. Small children were left completely unattended for long periods. Men, usually the first to be fired, sometimes had to depend on the earnings of their wives and children for subsistence. The disgrace and humiliation of these circumstances often drove men to leave home, to dissipate in drunkenness, to perpetrate cruelties on their families, or even to commit suicide. The owners were often indifferent to the suffering in their factories. Some capitalists rationalised the wretched conditions of the laborers by claiming that industry saved these people from idleness, the greatest sin of all. Others used Social Darwinist arguments, claiming that the laborers were obviously inferior to the owners and should be made to work harder.

They resolved that eventually the inferiors would die out, leaving only the strong. The owners imposed heavy fines and even corporal punishment for whistling or talking at work, for working too slowly, or for being late. The law gave the workers no protection and demanded a heavy penalty for theft. The political oppression and economic exploitation, together with the social evils that accompanied them, were decried by reformers. They demanded that they be replaced by a system that treated people justly and humanely.

The Industrial revolution of 17th and 18th century created a large laboring non-propertied class which made mass thought and mass action feasible. The contest between landed aristocracy and manufacturers was replaced by a contest between capitalists and laborers. Capitalism led to increase in the powers of producing wealth, which unfortunately was for the few while the mass is condemned to toil and poverty. Socialism is all about changing the social positions to enrich the whole society. Today, great new productive forces have been created by science and technology but it becomes ever more evident that the capitalist class cannot

direct the development and use of those forces for the benefits of the majority of mankind. Today means exist to feed and clothe, provide education, culture, equal opportunity, provide all with high standard of living if all the discoveries were used and supplies directed where they are most needed. For example, nuclear energy and unlimited power production, automation that can lighten labor and turn out goods profusely; medical science that can stamp out diseases, biology and agricultural science that can ensure enough food for the world etc. Instead resources both human and material remain unemployed because of the profit motives of the capitalist system which promotes stupendous wealth in the midst of poverty. The capitalist market economy promotes the exploitation of those who lack capacity and capability of control of the means of production.

For Marx, wealth is created by labor and primitively accumulated by the capitalist class. If resources are equitably distributed in society, where will the profits for the big capitalist monopolies come from? Shortages, scarcity and manner of capitalist intrigues are created to keep the free market economy afloat. Vast resources are squandered on weapons of mass destruction. People even fear higher technology innovation for fear of crisis and unemployment. The profit system converted men's achievements into threats to their livelihood and very existence. This is final sign that the system has outlived its time and must be replaced by another.

Karl Marx, as a humanist, was primarily moved by the untold hardship and sufferings that was prevalent in Europe at the turn of the 19th Century especially during the nascent stages of industrial revolution.

The newly introduced system of production which replaces artisanship, family businesses, and cottage industries with factory system was highly disruptive and succeeded in uprooting the already existing social relationships in society. The less privileged in society were the worst hit by the industrial revolution. The revolution brought so much misery to the people that Marx unequivocally canvassed for its overthrow by the working class as a just and a viable means of restoration of dignity of mankind.

The starting point is that Marx maintains that in society only labor produces wealth. Wealth in capitalist society is produced by the labor power of the workers. However, much of this wealth is appropriated in the form of profits by the capitalists, the owners of the means of production. The wages of the workers are well below the value of the wealth they produce. There is thus a contradiction between the forces of production, in particular the labor power of the workers

which produces wealth, and the relations of production which involve the appropriation of much of that wealth by the capitalists.

A related contradiction involves the technical organisation of labor and the nature of ownership. In capitalist society, the forces of production include the collective production of goods by large numbers of workers in factories. Yet the means of production are privately owned, and the profits are appropriated by individuals. The contradiction between the forces and relations of production lies in the social and collective nature of production and the private and individual nature of ownership.

Marx believed that these and other contradictions would eventually lead to the downfall of the capitalist system. He maintained that, by its very nature, capitalism involves the exploitation and oppression of the worker. He believes that the conflict of interest between capital and labor, which involves one group gaining at the expense of the other, could not be resolved within the framework of a capitalist economy.

Marx saw history as divided into a number of time periods or epochs, each being characterised by a particular mode of production. Major changes in history are the result of new forces of production. Thus, the change from feudal to capitalist society stemmed from the emergence, during the feudal epoch, of the forces of production of industrial society. This resulted in a contradiction between the new forces of production and the old feudal relations of production. Capitalist industrial society required relations of production based on wage labor rather than the traditional ties of lord and vassal. When they reach a certain point in their development, the new forces of production will lead to the creation of a new set of relations of production. Then, a new epoch of history will be born which will sweep away the social relationships of the old order. However, the final epoch of history, the communist or socialist society that Marx believed would eventually supplant capitalism will not result from a new force of production; rather it will develop from a resolution of the contradictions contained within the capitalist system.

Collective production will remain but the relations of production will be transformed. Ownership of the means of production will be collective rather than individual, and members of society will share the wealth that their labor produces. No longer will one social group exploit and oppress another. This will produce an

infrastructure without contradiction and conflict. In Marx's view this would mean the end of history, since communist society would no longer contain the contradictions which generate change.

Exploitation is a matter of surplus labor - the amount of labor one performs beyond what one receives in goods. Exploitation has been a socio-economic feature of every class society, and is one of the principal features distinguishing the social classes. The power of one social class to control the means of production enables its exploitation of the other classes.

In pre-capitalist economies, exploitation of the worker was achieved via physical coercion. In the capitalist mode of production, that result is more subtly achieved; because the worker does not own the means of production, he or she must voluntarily enter into an exploitive work relationship with a capitalist in order to earn the necessities of life. The worker's entry into such employment is voluntary in that he or she chooses which capitalist to work for. However, the worker must work or starve; thus, exploitation is inevitable, and the "voluntary" nature of a worker participating in a capitalist society is illusory. For Marx exploitation and oppression of the working class by the bourgeois will continue to be the basis of its power in society.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The theory of Marxism provides you with the opportunity to gain mastery and in-depth understanding of dialectic method as concepts and as tools of analysis in political science.

5.0 SUMMARY

It has been suggested that Karl Marx- probably after Jesus Christ and prophet Mohamed, is the most popular man that has ever lived. Marx propelled scientific socialism as a programmatic alternative towards resolving conflict in society. Socialism was perceived as an alternative system that will eliminate age long challenge of scarcity and distribution of resources in society. Towards the turn of the century at least one third of the world was living under one form of socialism or the other. Until late 80's and early 90's Marxism was a competing paradigm of governance in the world leading to the Cold War and a hostile east/west divide between socialist and capitalist camps.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain the connections between scarcity and exploitation.
- ii. Socialism leads to end of exploitation and oppression. Discuss.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify the basis of exploitation in society.
2. Explain exploitation as the basis of capitalist power.

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UNIT 2 UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Utopian Socialism
- 4.0 Conclusion
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The history of efforts of man to create and sustain equanimity has been legendary. There has been this pervading belief that egoism inherent in man can be mitigated based on appeal to religion, morals, ethics and good consciousness of men to overcome the challenge of inequity in society. The central theme of this brand of socialism is to reform society not to uproot it. Thus, utopians were largely reformers and gradualists.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain the assertion that egoism is inherent in man
- expatiate the claim that utopian socialism is pervasive and attractive
- highlight the efforts made by some utopian reformers to overcome the challenge of inequity in society.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Utopian Socialism

Utopian socialist movement developed from a sincere desire for equity within society. The early propagators of this brand of socialism were Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, Auguste Comte, De Sismondi, David Ricardo, Saint-Simon, Lassale,

and Louis Blanc; and others included the Young European Association, growing out of Mazzini's Italian movement that worked for union freedom, the Young German Society founded by German refugees in Paris. Members of this movement were among the first to appreciate the social applications of the Industrial Revolution. For the first time, they concluded society could be able to produce enough for all to have enough to meet their needs. If it is possible to feed/house everyone, thus satisfying the most basic human needs; is it moral not to do so?

Predictably, they argued that lavishing wealth on a few while most others languish, in squalor was, indeed, immoral. The utopians created small local communes, believing that their communes would become prototypes of the new social order but unfortunately all their efforts to run communes failed to produce desired outcomes. There was this moral conviction that human equality demands that people who share in work should equally participate in consuming the fruits of their labor.

Scientific socialism by contrast, is founded on the Marxist notion that social evolution (history) is governed by certain objective laws that will inevitably lead mankind to socialism. The stirrings of socialism began shortly before the French Revolution. Jean -Jacques Rousseau, although not a socialist, developed several ideas that became the foundation of the new ideology. Rousseau's concept of the organic state is basic to the ideology of socialism. Rousseau viewed people as individual parts of a holistic society and so complete was the union of individuals with the groups that the value of their accomplishments would be measured by the amount of benefits the society derived from them. Rousseau's ideas deeply influenced Francois-Noel Babeuf (1760-1797), who lived during the early stages of the French Revolution. Babeuf recognised that the revolution would fall short of its radical goals of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.

Accordingly, Babeuf called for yet another revolution, one that would create social justice for the common person. Babeuf, however, did not live long enough to make more than a momentary impact on the left wing of the French revolutionaries. Falling foul of the revolutionary leaders in France, he was sent to the guillotine in 1797 at the age of thirty-seven. After Babeuf, socialism was largely humanitarian and was based on the moral conviction that human equality demands that people who share in work must participate in consuming the fruits of their labor. It is thought perverse to allow some people to prosper while others suffer in a society that produces enough for all to satisfy their needs.

Utopians concerned themselves with concessions from capitalism. They sought temporary gains through reforms. Cooperative socialism of Owen drew its inspiration, and experience from utilitarian ideal. In France the workers supported Louis Blanc [1813-1882] in his agitation for social workshops to be set up by the state and managed by workers under state supervision. He taught that all men had right to subsistence, and right to work and each should produce according to his ability and receive according to his needs. He appealed to the state to carry out his program. Utopians attempted to apply the precepts of Christianity to the solution of society problems.

The Catholic Church calls on the teaching of the bible as duties of the rich to poor. Early Christians called for cooperation rather than competition. They attacked doctrines of scientific socialism of Marx which is materialistic and anti-Christian. They criticised legal freedom of workers which is not accompanied by economic freedom as having no meaning. They called for state intervention in redistribution of wealth and that this could be achieved without class violence as predicted by Marx. Lassale was a brilliant spokesman for German labor. He believed that workers should control the state and governmental interventions rather than private initiative should direct economic life. He saw the state as an instrument for mankind to realise its destiny and attain high degree of culture. The state must act for the welfare of the community.

Through his activities as an agitator and propagandist the first worker's association in Germany was formed in 1863. In contrast to Marx he fought for changes through democratic channels. His chief political demand was universal suffrage. He believes there is a greater chance of lasting sources in a steady advance toward social reform rather than in the possibilities offered in revolutionary violence. With this view in mind he led the social movement to toward immediate and obtainable goals. He secured political rights of workers to unionise, and encouraged the promotion of safety standards leading to reduced occupational hazards.

Another influential utopian socialist was Charles Fourier (1772-1837). Not only was he a critic of capitalist economics, but he also became a vocal opponent of traditional institutions such as religion, marriage, and the family. Perhaps his most important criticism centered on the structure of society under capitalism. Objecting to the nation-state, Fourier envisioned a society broken up into thousands of small, politically independent, self-sustaining communal entities. These communities could associate with one another in a type of confederacy in which the fundamental independence of each unit remains unchanged.

The government of the communes was to be democratic, the labor and its products being shared equally by all the members. In such a simple setting, Fourier believed, life would be pleasant and work would become an enjoyable activity in which all would take part willingly. Fourier's influence was significant and several communes based on his model were started, but each failed and was abandoned.

An equally enigmatic figure of utopian socialism was Robert Owen (1771-1858). A self-made industrialist, Owen was basically a conservative man who ardently supported Britain's social, political, and economic institutions. A talented administrator, he had risen from the position of clerk to that of owner of a textile mill by his mid-twenties.

He, however, was concerned about the wretched condition of his employees and became associated with Jeremy Bentham and other social reformers of the day. Owen was strongly opposed to "dole" programs in which people were simply given money by the government or by charities. However, he realised that capitalism need to be tempered by concern for the basic humanity of people and that it could destroy human dignity when left unchecked. Further, he was unshakably convinced that exploitation of the worker was ultimately unprofitable and that everyone would be better off if the working environment were improved.

Acting on these convictions, Owen reformed the management policies of his own Lanark, England mill by raising wages, encouraged trade unionism, rejected the exploitation of women and children, encouraged universal education, and created a company store where employees could buy goods at reduced rates, he achieved remarkable results. In less than five years, production at New Lanark had risen markedly, the workers at the mill were far better off than workers anywhere else in England, and Owen had made a fortune, this happy circumstance proved, to Owens's satisfaction, that, as Marx was later to contend, character was conditioned by the economic and social environment. Bad working conditions were not only immoral but simply bad business, unnecessarily depressing the workers and lowering profits as well.

Encouraged by his early success, Owen retired from his business enterprises at the age of fifty-eight and dedicated himself to popularizing and testing his controversial ideas. Traveling widely on speaking tours, he was well received in the United States, even making a speech to Congress. He opposed the imposition of socialism on a people by its government and warned that people themselves had to be prepared to adopt it before it could be successful. However, he believed the

worst excesses of capitalism had to be curbed so that the worker would not be exploited. Owen also opposed nationalisation of industries, though he favored producer cooperatives.

Like Saint-Simon, Owen was perhaps more a liberal capitalist than a true socialist. Still, he is considered the founder of British socialism, and his moderate approach set the tone for many of England's social reforms. Like most other utopian socialists, Owen was convinced that communal living was the wave of the future and that a few successful examples would prove the attractiveness of this lifestyle. So, convinced, he invested several years of effort and his entire fortune in unsuccessful attempts to establish communes.

Most noted was the effort at New Harmony, Indiana (1825-1828), purchased by Owen after another group had unsuccessfully tried to start a communal colony there and the Owen experiment also failed. Interestingly, America was regarded as the land of opportunity and hope by socialists as well as capitalists. Here, it was thought, a new society could be founded, one that was insulated from the stratification and prejudices of the old world. Although these communal experiments failed, several attained an importance beyond their role as socialist experiments.

Asserting the labor theory of value, the utopian support of the worker against the owner gave an important development of trade unionism by giving it an economic doctrine and moral basis. Their emphasis was on moral wish for mutual human kindness and compassion, and Saint-Simon's strongest contributions to socialist arguments were his criticisms of capitalism. Capitalism is wasteful because it pitted people against each other and imposed poverty on many to produce wealth for a few. Capitalists made profits far beyond their own productivity, a fact Saint-Simon decried, thereby making him popular with the French working class.

As a partial solution to the evils he saw in the capitalist system, Saint-Simon proposed a centralised banking system that would make for social investments. He also called for the elimination of property inheritance and supported universal education. - ideas that did not become generally known until after unhappy eccentric's suicide, however, when a cult of admiring followers lionised him and probably credited him with beliefs he did not actually hold. Important as the utopians were to the development of socialism, their influence is largely limited to their own generation and the one following. Even so, the failure of the communes

led to a general disillusionment with the theories on which they were based, and popular attention soon turned from utopianism to more practical concerns.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Utopian socialism was drawn up from British, French and German sources. It was a mixture of French utopian and German idealism with their emphasis on the value of the state. The utopians believed that people would be encouraged, to understand that socialism was the only moral economic system. The utopians were strongly silent about their economic agenda and in this way; they avoided the crucial issue of how community can be sustained at all in the face of market-driven economic inequalities.

5.0 SUMMARY

Socialism before Marx remained largely a vision; Utopians criticized capitalist society as unjust. Utopians had vision of a better order of society and gave it form, color and proclaimed it far and wide. For utopians socialism was based on reason and justice and they appealed first to the rulers to embrace the truth of socialism and put it into practice. They were the first to expose and condemn capitalism and had vision of socialism as the alternative to capitalism but could not show concrete ways to achieve socialism; because they had no conception of the laws of social change and could not point to the real force capable of creating a new society.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Mention the basic characteristics of utopian socialism.
- ii. Utopian socialism is dead. Discuss.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify the basic differences between utopian and scientific socialism.
2. Discuss factors that account for the failure of all utopian experiments.

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UNIT 3 MARX SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Scientific Socialism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Socialism arose as a protest against the inhumanity of unregulated, raw capitalism. Decrying private property, individualism, and selfishness, socialism is founded on three principles: (1) public ownership of production, (2) the welfare state, and (3) equality and sharing the abundance. Socialism emerged as an ideology just before the turn of the eighteenth century. Socialism tasks individuals to produce as much as they can and, in the spirit of social consciousness, to share their product with the society at large. By this means, it is assumed, each will get the greatest benefit, thereby creating the best possible life for all.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the nature and origin of scientific socialism

- explain the logic and pervasiveness of scientific socialism
- highlight the outcomes and challenges of scientific socialism.

6 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Scientific Socialism

The early conceptions of socialism were largely utopian (cooperative socialism, syndicalism, guild system etc.) and they all had vision of a better order of society and gave it form, color and proclaimed it far and wide but they could not say how to realise it in practice. Utopians criticised capitalist society as unjust. Scientific Socialism was developed on the fundamental Marxist premise that the history of society is the inexorable history of class struggle.

Marx and Engels based socialism on a scientific understanding of the laws of development in society and of the class struggle and they showed how socialism could be won, by arming the working class of its historical mission. The blue print of the socialist revolution is the communist manifesto (1848). This book-communist manifesto which was hurriedly put together by Marx and his close associate Fredrick Engels contains the tenets of Marxism. Marx saw history as the history of class struggles of the haves against the have-nots (oppressors against oppressed).

Marx saw history as whole social movement of class struggles. Marx saw contending classes as products of economic development of society. Politics, religion, law, morals etc., are nothing but reflection of the relations built in the economic substructure of the society. The whole history man right from the inception of settled life -past epochs is the history of class struggles, based on material interest upon which all contradictions between the classes were resolved. This is sometimes referred to as economic determinism or materialist interpretation of history. Men enter into relations with their fellow men in the course of material pursuit and general quest for subsistence.

For Marx, in production, men not only act on nature but also on one another (production has a social character) but appropriation is private. In understanding the laws of historical development Marx and Engels showed that socialism was not a utopian dream but a necessary outcome of capitalist development and emphasized the necessity of working class as having a historical mission to battle the capitalists and win the war on behalf of all the oppressed classes in capitalism. Supporting Marxism's historical premises are its economic theories. Of central

importance are the labor theory of value and the idea of surplus value. Marxism supposes that the value of a commodity is determined by the amount of labor required for its manufacture. The value of the commodities purchasable by the worker's wages is less than the value of the commodities he produces; the difference, called surplus value, represents the profit of the capitalist. Thus the bourgeois class has flourished through exploitation of the proletariat.

The capitalist system and the bourgeoisie were seen as marked with weaknesses and contradictions, which would become increasingly severe as industrialisation progresses and would manifest themselves in increasingly severe economic crises leading to highly industrialized nations, where the crises of capitalism and the consciousness of the workers would contradict, that the proletarian overthrow of bourgeois society would succeed. Although this process was inevitable, communists were to speed it up by bringing about the international union of workers, by supporting the interests of the working class, and by helping to prepare workers for their revolutionary roles.

The proletariat, after becoming the ruling class, was to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state and to increase productive forces at a rapid rate. Once the bourgeoisie had been defeated, there would be no more class divisions, since the means of production would not be owned by any group. The coercive state, formerly a weapon of class oppression, would be replaced by a rational structure of economic and social cooperation and integration. The proletariat, after becoming the ruling class, was to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state and to increase productive forces at a rapid rate.

Once the bourgeoisie had been defeated, there would be no more class divisions, since the means of production would not be owned by any group. The coercive state, formerly a weapon of class oppression, would be replaced by a rational structure of economic and social cooperation and integration. Such bourgeois institutions as the family and religion, which had served to perpetuate bourgeois dominance, would vanish, and each individual would find true fulfillment. Thus social and economic utopia would be achieved, although its exact form could not be predicted.

4.0 CONCLUSION

For Marx, the proletariat is the progressive that has a historical mission to unite, win political power, deprive the capitalist of any power, and stamp out its resistance impose their dictatorship through its own party which they called communist party.

5.0 SUMMARY

Marxism is basically an ideology which is based on the principle that the working class or proletarian are the most progressive and most qualified class to bring about revolution that will achieve social equality in society. This feat has never been accomplished by any other class throughout history. This is the unique nature of Marxism and the uniqueness of the proletariat. Marx scientific socialism states that changes in society are occasioned by contradictions generated by social relationship between two antagonistic social classes namely the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This contradiction gets to a breaking level resulting in change or social revolution.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Evaluate scientific socialism as a tool for social analysis.
- ii. Compare scientific socialism with the idealists.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Highlight the revolutionary tenets in scientific socialism.
2. Explain the relevance of scientific socialism in today's world.

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UNIT 4 CLASS (A CLASS IN ITSELF TO A CLASS FOR ITSELF)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Class
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Class is a group of people who live under the same economic condition. Class from a Marxist viewpoint; is a social group whose members share the same relationship to the means of production. In Marx opinion, the modern society is split into two camps facing each other, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is a social division based on the living conditions - objective economic conditions of individuals in society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the meaning of class
- explain class consciousness and struggle.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Class

The Marxist theory builds on the discoveries and findings of natural scientists to arrive at profound and fundamental conclusions of the development of the society.

Materialists before Marx are agreed on the primacy of material life over consciousness. The difference between earlier materialists with Marx was their failure to understand the linkages in the historical processes of development with the material foundation of life. They did not see the connections between the laws of natural science and social change.

Classes are products of history and have to do with the development of human society- in terms of the materialist forces at work and what brings about social change, not by chance but by clearly defined dialectical laws and the patterns of historical development. Classes are the dynamic of history across time and space. For example, in a feudal epoch, there are two main classes distinguished by their relationship to land (the crucial part of the means of production in an agricultural society). They are the feudal nobility who own the land, and the landless serfs who work the land. Similarly, in a capitalist era, there are two main classes: the bourgeoisie or capitalist class, which owns the means of production, and the proletariat or working class, whose members own only their labor which they hire to the bourgeoisie in return for wages.

For Marx and Engels, the capitalist mode of production has outlived its usefulness. The bourgeoisie class must be overthrown by the proletariat.

A Class for itself and a Class in itself

Marx distinguished between a 'class in itself' and a 'class for itself'. A class in itself is simply a social group whose members share the same relationship to the means of production. Marx argued that a social group only fully becomes a class when it becomes a class for itself. At this stage, its members have class consciousness and class solidarity.

Class Consciousness: is a term used by Marxists in referring to the awareness of class interest and a willingness to pursue them. He identified bourgeoisie and proletariat as main classes and others –petit bourgeoisie, intelligentsia, and peasantry and the lumpen proletariat, etc. Class consciousness means that false class consciousness has been replaced by a full awareness of the true situation, by a realisation of the nature of exploitation. Members of a class then develop a common identity, recognise their shared interests and unite, so creating class solidarity. The final stage of class consciousness and class solidarity is reached when members realise that only by collective action can they overthrow the ruling class, and take positive steps to do so. Marx hoped that the proletarian revolution

would shortly follow and the communist utopia of his dreams would finally become a reality.

Class Struggle

According to Marx, the first priority for any society is to produce whatever is required to ensure its own survival. Such production can only be achieved with the 'mode of production' characteristic of the age -the combination of raw materials that are available, the tools and techniques that exist to process them, and the various human resources that can be called upon. The underlying structure imposed by these economic factors determines, in turn, the pattern of social organization within the society as a whole, and in particular, the relations between the various social elements, or classes.

At each historical stage, Marx asserts, one class is dominant and controls the current mode of production, exploiting the labor of other classes in order to further its own interests. The various modes characteristic of past and present ages are, however, always unstable. Inherent 'contradictions' in the relations between the various social elements lead inevitably to tensions and upheavals, and eventually to conflict and revolution in which the dominant class is overthrown and replaced.

Karl Marx, a well-known atheist, believed that religion was a sop to the masses: a conservative force that the capitalist class exploited to keep the workers enslaved. It acted, in his view, like a painkiller - an opiate - that stupefied people and resigned them to their wretched conditions as part of God's plan; it is the opium of the people. The bourgeoisie, the dominant class under capitalism, had used their economic power to generate vast wealth for themselves by buying and selling commodities at a profit that was due to the labor of the working class (the proletariat).

Such exploitation, Marx claimed, would necessarily escalate and bring about ever greater impoverishment of the proletariat. Eventually a crisis would occur when the working class, realising that the gap between their interests and those of the bourgeoisie was unbridgeable, would rise up, overthrow their oppressors, and take control of the means of production.

To defend their interests against a bourgeois counter-revolution, they would establish 'a dictatorship of the proletariat'. This would be a transitional state, however, whose power would gradually wither away, to be replaced - at the end of history by fully realised communism: a stable, classless society in which there is true freedom for all. Karl Marx developed his theory of economic interpretation of

history from his dialectical materialism. History of all class society is the history of class struggle. The relationship is that of exploitation and domination. Society in essence is a veiled coalescence of the relationship of oppressors and the oppressed. Marx believed that the class struggle was the driving force of social change. He stated that the history of all societies up to the present is the history of the class struggle. A new historical epoch is created by the development of superior forces of production by a new social group.

These developments take place within the framework of the previous era. The merchants and industrialists who spearheaded the rise of capitalism emerged during the feudal era. They accumulated capital, laid the foundations for industrial manufacture, factory production and the system of wage labor all of which were essential components of capitalism. The superiority of the capitalist mode of production led to a rapid transformation of the structure of society. The capitalist class became dominant, and although the feudal aristocracy maintained aspects of its power well into the nineteenth century, it was fighting a losing battle. The class struggles of history have been between minorities. Capitalism, for instance, developed from the struggle between the feudal aristocracy and the emerging capitalist class, both groups in numerical terms forming a minority of the population. Major changes in history have involved the replacement of one form of private property by another and of one type of production technique by another: capitalism involved the replacement of privately owned land and an agricultural economy by privately owned capital and an industrial economy. Marx believed that the class struggle that would transform capitalist society would involve none of these processes. The protagonists would be the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, a minority versus a majority. Private property would be replaced by communally owned property. Industrial manufacture would remain as the basic technique of production in the new society.

Marx believed that the basic contradictions contained in a capitalist economic system would lead to its eventual destruction. The proletariat would overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize the means of production, the source of power. Property would be communally owned and, since all members of society would now share the same relationship to the means of production, a classless society would result. Since history is the history of the class struggle, history would now end. The communist society which would replace capitalism would contain no

contradiction, no conflicts of interest, and would therefore be unchanging. However, certain changes were necessary before the dawning of this utopia.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Marx and Engels based socialism on a scientific understanding of the laws of development in society and of the class struggle. They showed how socialism could be won, by arming the working class to fulfill its historical mission.

5.0 SUMMARY

Conflict is an inevitable reality both in nature and human society. Socialism as alternative paradigm to capitalism until recently has demonstrated its capacity as an instrumentality for liberating the energies of the suppressed and emasculated working class and the peasantry (USSR, China, Cuba, Africa, Latin America and the former eastern bloc of Europe, etc.). Socialism/Marxism presents a radical method of understanding phenomena with the possibility of reconciling the inherent contradictions that abounds. The theory and practice of Marxism provides us with the opportunity to gain mastery and in-depth understanding of the tools and concepts of political science.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Discuss the uniqueness of Marxian conception of class.
- ii. What role does class consciousness play in the struggles of classes?

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify the basic differences between liberal and Marxian conception of class.
2. Evaluate Marx class analysis in relation to contemporary world.

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UNIT 5 SOCIALIST THEORY AND WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Socialist Theory and the Working Class
 - 3.2 The Transition from Capitalism to Communism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Basically, *historicalmaterialism* has a schema that has five stages namely (1) communal society (2) slave owning society (3) feudal society (4) capitalist society (5) socialist society (6) communist society. Both the communal and communist societies are classless societies. Hence, human society started as a classless society and is expected under historical materialism to result in a classless society. Communal society is, however, not the same as a communist society; both qualitatively are different. A communist society is a more sophisticated and superior society than a communal society. Also while most communal societies in history transformed into class divided societies, communist societies are the limit of human society. Marx stated that it will take a longer and more difficult time to transform from socialism to communism, because of the numerous contradictions that will be produced. What, however, needs to be underscored here is that the transformation of society from a lower to a higher level for example from slave owning to feudal society or from feudal to capitalist society, all took the form of

social revolution; that is why Marx stated that revolutions are the locomotives of history and he went on to project that the class that could pull this through in capitalist society are the members of the working class.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss Socialist theory and its relevance
- highlight the impact of Socialist theory on the working class
- explain the impact of Socialist theory on capitalist transformations.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Socialist Theory and the Working Class

Karl Marx developed his theory of economic interpretation of history from his dialectical materialism. History of all class society is the history of class struggle. Society in essence is a veiled coalescence of the relationship of oppressors and the oppressed. Marx regarded people as both the producers and the products of society. They make society and themselves by their own actions. History is, therefore, the process of human self-creation; yet people are also a product of society- and are shaped by the social relationships and systems of thought that they create. An understanding of society, therefore, involves a historical perspective which examines the process whereby humanity both produces, and is produced by, social reality.

A society forms a totality and can only be understood as such. The various parts of society are interconnected and influence each other. Thus, economic, political, legal and religious institutions can only be understood in terms of their mutual effect. Economic factors, however, exert the primary influence and largely shape other aspects of society.

The history of human society is a process of tension and conflict. Social change is not a smooth, orderly progression which gradually unfolds in harmonious evolution. Instead, it proceeds from contradictions built into society, which are a source of tension and ultimately the source of open conflict and radical change.

History begins when humans actually produce their means of subsistence, when they begin to control nature. The first historical act is the production of material

life. Production is a social enterprise, since it requires cooperation. People must work together to produce the goods and services necessary for life. From the social relationships involved in production develops a 'mode of life' which can be seen as an expression of these relationships. This mode of life shapes human nature. Through its ownership of the means of production, a minority is able to control and command and enjoy the fruits of the labor of the majority.

Since one group gains at the expense of the other, a conflict of interest exists between the minority who owns the means of production and the majority who perform productive labor. The tension and conflict generated by this contradiction are the major dynamic of social change. For long periods of time, humanity is, at most, vaguely aware of these contradictions; yet even a vague awareness produces tension. This tension will ultimately find full expression and be resolved in the process of dialectical change.

The course of human history involves a progressive development of the means of production - a steady increase in human control over nature. This is paralleled by a corresponding increase in human alienation, an increase that reaches its height in capitalist society. An understanding of human history, therefore, involves an examination of these relationships, the most important of which are the relations of production. Apart from communities based on primitive communism at the dawn of history, all societies are divided into social groups known as classes.

The relationship between classes is one of antagonism and conflict. Throughout history, opposing classes stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an open fight and that class conflict forms the basis of the dialectic of social change. In Marx's view, expressed in the opening line of the Communist Manifesto, the history of all existing society is the history of the class struggle. Class divisions result from the differing relationships of members of society to the means of production. The structure of all societies may be represented in terms of a simplified two-class model, consisting of a ruling and a subject class.

The ruling class owes its dominance and power to its ownership and control of the means production. Members of both the main social classes are largely unaware of the true nature of their situation, of the reality of the relationship between ruling and subject classes. Members of the ruling class assume their particular interests are those of society as a whole; members of the subject class accept this view of reality and regard their situation as part of the natural order of things. This false consciousness is due to the fact that the relationships of dominance and

subordination in the economic infrastructure are largely reproduced in the superstructure of society.

Ruling class dominance is confirmed and legitimated in legal statutes, religious proscriptions and political legislation. The consciousness of all members of society is infused with ruling-class ideology, which proclaims the essential rightness, normality and inevitability of the status quo. While the superstructure may stabilise society and contain its contradictions over long periods of time, this situation cannot be permanent. This process may be illustrated by the transition from feudal to capitalist society. Industrial capitalism gradually developed within the framework of feudal society. In order to develop fully, it required 'the free wage laborer who sells his labor power to capital. This provides a mobile labor force that can be hired and fired at will, and so efficiently utilised as a commodity in the service of capital.

However, the feudal relations of production, which involved landed property with serf labour chained to it, tended to prevent the development of wage laborers. Eventually, the forces of production of capitalism gained sufficient strength and impetus to lead to the destruction of the feudal system. At this point the rising class, the bourgeoisie, became a class for itself, and its members united to overthrow the feudal relations of production. When they succeeded, the contradiction between the new forces of production and the old relations of production was resolved.

Once a new economic order is established, the superstructure of the previous era is rapidly transformed. The contradiction between the new infrastructure and the old superstructure is now ended. Thus the political dominance of the feudal aristocracy was replaced by the power of the newly enfranchised bourgeoisie. The dominant concepts of feudalism, such as loyalty and honor, were replaced by the new concepts of freedom and equality. In terms of the new ideology, the wage laborer of capitalist society is free to sell his or her labor power to the highest bidder. The relationship between employer and employee is defined as a relationship between equals- the exchange of labor for wages as an exchange of equivalents; but the resolution of old contradictions does not necessarily mean an end to contradictions in society. As in previous eras, the transition from feudalism to capitalism merely results in the replacement of an old set of contradictions by a new set.

3.2 The Transition from Capitalism to Communism

The predicted rise of the proletariat is not strictly analogous with the rise of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie formed a privileged minority of industrialists, merchants and financiers who forged new forces of production within feudal society. The proletariat forms an unprivileged majority which does not create new forces of production within capitalist society.

Marx believed, however, that the contradictions of capitalism were sufficient to transform the proletariat into a class for itself and bring about the downfall of the bourgeoisie. He saw the magnitude of these contradictions and the intensity of class conflict steadily increasing as capitalism developed. Thus there is a steady polarisation of the two major classes as the intermediate strata are submerged into the proletariat. As capital accumulates, it is concentrated more and more into fewer hands - a process accompanied by the relative pauperization of the proletariat. Production assumes an increasingly social and cooperative character as larger and larger groups of workers are concentrated in factories. At the same time the wealth produced by labor is appropriated by fewer and fewer individuals, and the processes magnify and illuminate the contradictions of capitalism and increase the intensity of conflict.

The communist society, which Marx predicted would arise from the ruins of capitalism, beginning with a transitional phase, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Once the communist system has been fully established, the dictatorship's reason for being (and therefore its existence) will end. Bourgeois society represents 'the closing chapter of the prehistoric stage of human society'. The communist society of the new era is without classes, without contradictions. The dialectical principle now ceases to operate. The contradictions of human history have now been negated in a final harmonious synthesis.

Criticism

There is little indication of the proletariat becoming a class for itself. Rather than moving towards a polarisation of classes, critics argue that the class structure of capitalist society has become increasingly complex and differentiated. In particular, a steadily growing middle class has emerged between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. Turning to communist society, critics have argued that history has not borne out the promise of communism contained in Marx's writings. Obviously, the changes forecasted have not come to pass. Marx clearly erred, at least in the short run, by not realising how versatile and pragmatic the capitalist system could be,

and he failed to appreciate how astonishingly productive industrialisation would become.

Significant social inequalities are present in communist regimes, and there are few, if any, signs of a movement towards equality. The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980's and early 1990's suggests that the promise of communism has been replaced by the desire for Western-style democracies.

Particular criticism has been directed towards the priority that Marx assigned to economic factors in his explanation of social structure of society. He has been criticised heavily on the withering away of the state and the disappearance of class contradictions following proletarian revolution displacing the bourgeoisie permanently.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Marxist perspectives provide a radical view of the nature of social stratification. They regard stratification as a divisive rather than an integrative structure. They see it as a mechanism whereby some exploit others, rather than as a means of furthering collective goals. Marxists focus on social stratification is central to Marxist theory.

5.0 SUMMARY

The key to understanding society from a Marxist perspective involves an analysis of the infrastructure. In all historical societies, there are basic contradictions between the forces and relations of production; and there are fundamental conflicts of interest between the social groups involved in the production process, in particular the relationship between the major social groups is one of exploitation and oppression. The superstructure derives largely from the infrastructure and therefore reproduces the social relationships of production.

It will, thus, reflect the interests of the dominant group in the relations of production. Ruling class ideology distorts the true nature of society and serves to legitimate and justify the status quo. However, the contradictions in the infrastructure will eventually lead to a disintegration of the system and the creation of a new society in which there is no exploitation and oppression.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Discuss the uniqueness of Marxist historical analysis.
- ii. Describe the basics of Marxist theory.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. State the major features of communism and socialism.
2. Explain the feasibility of Marx's perspective of his world and the possible errors.

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MODULE 5 MARXIST POLITICAL ECONOMY

CONTENTS

Unit 1 Capitalist Economy

Unit 2 Mode of Production and Relations of Production

Unit 3 Marx Theories of Value- Commoditisation, Reification,
Labor Power, Use and Exchange Value, Surplus Value and Capitalist Primitive
Accumulations

Unit 4 Socialism in the Twenty-First Century

Unit 5 20th Century Practice of Marxism

UNIT 1 CAPITALIST ECONOMY

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2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Capitalist Economy

4.0 Conclusion

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6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Capitalism had increased human productivity to the point at which all basic material needs could be satisfied. Nevertheless, it was exploitative in nature, so that the goods produced were not equally distributed; in fact, the reverse was true.

Marx assumed that the victory of the proletariat was inevitable; it would be a victory of the exploited over the exploiter. He posits that if all other oppressor classes in capitalist society were eliminated, the source of all human strife would disappear and a new, classless society holding its goods in common would emerge. In this socialist society all people would find peace and happiness

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe capitalist economy as marked by increased productivity
- discuss capitalism as exploitation and oppression
- expatiate on the creation of two hostile camps –proletariat and bourgeoisie.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Capitalist Economy

Rooted in the Industrial revolution the origin of socialism dated back to pre-revolutionary France. The Utopians-early humanitarian socialists, though well-meaning, were discredited for their normative socialism with their impractical idealism and their failed social experiments. Their failure left the field open to Karl Marx's "scientific" approach. Believing that he had discovered the formula by which human history could be rationalised; Marx thought that people's ideas are conditioned by their economic environment and that economic change stimulates a dialectic conflict between those ruling and those ruled in society. He gave prominence to two principal classes (proletariat and bourgeoisie) in capitalist society.

According to Marx, the final conflict will find the capitalist and proletarian classes engaged in a struggle that the proletariat will win because, although the capitalist system is productive, it is also exploitative and parasitic. When the proletariat class comes to power, it will establish a dictatorship, which, in turn, will create a socialist economy and eliminate all non-proletarian classes. In this final state, government itself will have withered away and all class distinctions will have been obliterated, leaving people free from necessity and exploitation and at liberty to cultivate their natural gifts. This development will lead to greater productivity and the elimination of poverty. As each country becomes socialist in its turn, national

boundaries will disappear and eventually a single utopia will replace the divided, exploitative, and cruel world of capitalism.

Marxist political economy rests on the understanding that social production is the base or sub structure of the society. Human society would cease at a particular point if there is no production- biological or material.

Marx economics-although highly critical of capitalism, Marx did see it as a stepping stone on the way towards a communist society. Capitalism would help to develop technology that would free people from material need; there would be more than enough goods to feed and clothe the population. In these circumstances, it would be possible to establish successful communist societies in which the needs of all their members are met.

The basic characteristics of a capitalist economy may be summarised as follows:

- Capital includes money, equipment, machinery, and lands used in financing the production of commodities for private gain. In a capitalist economy, goods and the labor power; raw materials and machinery used to produce them, are given a monetary value. The capitalists invest their capital in the production of goods.
- Capital is accumulated by selling those goods at a value greater than their cost of production.
- Capitalism therefore involves the investment of capital in the production of commodities with the aim of maximising profit in order to accumulate more capital.
- Money is converted into commodities by financing production, those commodities are then sold and converted back into money at such a price that the capitalists end up with more money than they started with.
- Capital is privately owned by a minority, the capitalist class.

In Marx's view, capital is gained from the exploitation of the mass of the population, the working class. Marx argued that capital, as such, produces nothing; only labor produces wealth. Yet the wages paid to the workers for their labor are well below the value of the goods they produce.

Marx believed that this first contradiction would be highlighted by a second that is the contradiction between social production and individual ownership. As capitalism developed, the workforce was increasingly concentrated in large factories where production was a social enterprise. Social production juxtaposed with individual ownership illuminates the exploitation of the proletariat. Social production also makes it easier for workers to organise themselves against the

capitalists. It facilitates communication and encourages recognition of common circumstances and interests.

Apart from the basic contradictions of capitalist society, Marx believed that certain factors in the natural development of a capitalist economy would hasten its downfall. These factors would result in the polarization of the two main classes: the gap between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will become greater and the contrast between the two groups will become starker. Such factors include- the increasing use of machinery which will result in a homogeneous working class; since machinery obliterates the differences in labor, members of the proletariat will become increasingly similar. The differences between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers will tend to disappear as machines remove the skill required in the production of commodities.

The difference in wealth between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat will increase as the accumulation of capital proceeds. Even though the real wages and living standards of the proletariat may rise, workers become poorer in relation to the bourgeoisie. This process is known as *pauperisation*.

The competitive nature of capitalism (cycles of boom and dooms) means that only the largest and most wealthy companies will survive and prosper. Competition will depress the intermediate strata - those groups lying between the two main classes - into the proletariat. Thus, the petty bourgeoisie, the owners of small businesses, will sink into the proletariat. At the same time the surviving companies will grow larger and capital will be concentrated into fewer hands.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Capitalism as an epoch in human development has done so much to liberate man from the state of subsistence to condition of affluence; but has been haunted by the inequity in the enjoyment of the resources so produced by the productive forces. For Marx, labor creates wealth which is expropriated and appropriated by the capitalist class while the creators of the wealth languish in poverty and misery. For the Marxists, Capitalism is harsh, unjust and must be destroyed in the interest of humanity.

5.0 SUMMARY

Capitalist society is by its very nature unstable characterised by the cycle of booms and dooms which translates to periods of growth and depressions. . The basic

conflict of interest involves the exploitation of workers by the capitalists. It is based on contradictions and antagonisms which can only be resolved by its transformation. In particular, the conflict of interest between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat cannot be resolved within the framework of a capitalist economy.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Demonstrate the basic contradictions inherent in employer-employee relations in capitalism.
- ii. Compare the working class of today with Marx's time.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Can capitalism be jettisoned in today's world?
2. Discuss how competition can be eliminated in capitalism.

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UNIT 2 MODE AND RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content

3.1 Mode of Production and Relations of Production

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Marxist political economy is essentially a critique of capitalism both in its monetarism and neo-liberalism. The emphasis is on the significance of production; the centrality of labor in production and the exploitation of workers. It seeks to connect the ownership and non-ownership of the means of production to exploitation and class contradictions or class struggle.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss production and the centrality of labor
- explain the importance of ownership of means of production
- describe relations of production.

4.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Mode and Relations of Production

The key difference between Marxist political economy and the bourgeois economics is the fact that Marxists lay emphasis on production and the role of labor while the bourgeois economist place emphasis on market and profit. While Marxism argues that production is key; bourgeois economics claim that market and profit are more important. Also, while Marxists argue that production is more important than market and that labor is key to production, bourgeois economists contend that capital is key to production.

In a more general sense, they make a claim of trinity-labor, capital and land. These disagreements are ideological because while Marxists try to show the importance of labor in production bourgeois economists seek to show the importance of the capitalist. Underlying this disagreement is the historical role of which class is most progressive or which is bound to make history.

A mode of production is defined within a socioeconomic context in the Marxist schema of historical materialism examples feudal, capitalist or socialist. There are three elements that define a mode of production namely the ownership of the means of production, the productive forces, and the social relations of production. In a slave owning society ownership of the slave was the slave owner. In a feudal society the means of production which was land belonged to the landlord. In a capitalist society the means of production which is the industry belonged to the bourgeoisie but in a socialist society the means of production belonged to the proletariat and all those who produce.

The productive forces are those who are involved in actual production. The slave who was the property of the slave owner was the producer, in feudal societies the serfs were the producers and in capitalism the proletariats were the producers. Social relations of production are a process of the kind of contradictions generated by the way production is carried out and the contradiction it generates. There is no mode of production that exists in pure form. They often coexist with other modes of production. For example, under feudal societies there were still remnants of slave owning mode of production. Under capitalism there are still remnants of the feudal mode of production. This explains why although Nigeria is a dependent capitalist society, however over 60% of its people are farmers and not workers this is because remnants of pre-capitalist societies are still to be found in capitalist societies. The coexistence of two or more modes of production is called socio-economic formation

4.0 CONCLUSION

Two major classes and relations emerge from mode of production (owners of productive forces and mutually antagonistic classes of oppressors and the oppressed). Every society need not go through the modes of production in sequential order and features of a mode of production can exist side by side with another. For example in Nigeria, the dependent rent- seeking capitalist order is imbued with remnants of feudalism. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life.

5.0 SUMMARY

Production should be understood from two areas- the owners and controllers of production and production relations which refers to relations between people engaged in production. Mode of production refers to two defining elements in production, i.e. level of means productive forces and the relations of production. Human history has witnessed about five modes of production- primitive communism, slavery society, feudalism, capitalism and socialism.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. The mode of production determines the character of society. Discuss.
- ii. Show the link between mode of production and relations of production.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How does the objective economic condition of individuals predicate life chances in society?
2. Illustrate how two or more modes of production can co-exist in a historical epoch.

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UNIT 3: MARX THEORIES OF VALUE, COMMODITISATION, REIFICATION, LABOUR POWER, USE AND EXCHANGE VALUE, SURPLUS VALUE AND CAPITALIST PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Marx Theories of Value- Commoditisation, Reification, Labour Power, Use and Exchange Value, Surplus Value and Capitalist Primitive Accumulations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Marxist theory builds on the discoveries of and findings of natural scientists to arrive at profound and fundamental conclusions on the development of the society. Materialists before Marx are agreed on the primacy of material life over consciousness. The difference between earlier materialists with Marx was their failure to understand the linkages in the historical processes of development with the material foundation of life. They did not see the connection between the laws of natural science and social change.

The Marxist theory of social development derives from the materialist conception of history. Its main thrust of human existence rests on the existence of matter or material life as opposed to predestination taught by religion and the world of spirit. Social consciousness is therefore the outcome of social being. Ideas can only flow from material life and conversely and this fundamental foundation applies to all human development and its history.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss reification in relation to its importance to Marxist political economy
- explain commoditisation, labour power, use and exchange value in the light of importance to Marxist political economy
- describe surplus value and primitive accumulation of capital.

6.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Marx Theories of Value- Commoditisation, Reification, Labour Power, Use and Exchange Value, Surplus Value and Capitalist Primitive Accumulations

(a) Reification

Literally "making into a thing" or "objectification"; it is a process of regarding something impersonally. In Marxism, reification relates to a process of making things- to the extent that the nature of social relationships is expressed as relationships between traded objects.

Reification involves manipulation of consciousness to distort reality. Marx argued that reification is an inherent and necessary characteristic of economic value; such that it manifests itself in market trade. In other words, the inversion in thought between object and subject, or between means and ends, reflects a real practice where attributes (properties, characteristics, features, powers) which exist only by virtue of a social relationship between people are treated as if they are the inherent, natural characteristics of things, or vice versa; and attributes of inanimate things are treated as if they are attributes of human subjects.

This implies that objects are transformed into subjects, and subjects are turned into objects, with the result that subjects are rendered passive or determined, while objects are rendered as the active, determining factor. Reification is a specific form of alienation. Commodity fetishism is a specific form of reification.

(b) Commoditisation

This is the transformation of goods and services, as well as ideas or other entities that normally may not be considered goods, into a commodity. Commoditisation is used to describe the process by which something which does not have an economic value is assigned a value and commoditisation shows how market values can replace other social values. It describes the transformation and marketisation of relationships, formerly untainted by commerce, into commercial relationships in

everyday use. An extreme case of commoditization is **slavery**, where human beings themselves become a commodity to be sold and bought.

(c) Labour power

The biggest task for all human existence and, therefore, of all history, is that humans must be in a position to live in order to be able to make history. Labor power is the potential of humans to do work. Labour power deals with the abstraction of human labor into something that can be exchanged for money. Capitalist buy it from workers, usually, for a period of time (week, month) for an agreed wage. The system of labour-power relies on the belief that the laborer chooses freely to enter into a contractual relationship with an employer who purchases that worker's labor power as a commodity and then owns the goods produced by the worker. The worker is exploited insofar as he has no other option. The capitalist seeks to provide the laborer only enough money to subsist and to produce more for the capitalist.

(d) Use and exchange value

For the capitalist, use value is the utility of a commodity and the exchange value is the equivalent by which the commodity is compared to other objects on the market. Marx distinguishes between the use-value and the exchange value of the commodity. Use value is inextricably tied to the physical properties of the commodity; that is, the material uses to which the objects can actually be put, the human needs it fulfills. In the exchange of goods on the capitalist market, however exchange values dominate.

Two commodities can be exchanged on the open market because they are always being compared to a third term that functions as their "universal equivalent" a function that is eventually taken over by money. The exchange value must always be distinguished from use-value because the exchange relation of commodities is characterized, precisely, by the abstraction from their use values. In capitalism money performs the roles and most times hides the real values of commodities in terms of labor expended in the production of commodities.

(e) Surplus value

This theory is an extension of David Ricardo's theory of value, according to which the value of a commodity is determined by the value of labor spent on it. According to Marx labor is the sole creator of value. Marx points out that the value of a commodity is equal to the value of labor spent on its production. The

difference between the value of wages and commodities is known as surplus value. This surplus value is appropriated in the form of profit by the capitalists because they are non-producers; the bourgeoisie are therefore exploiting the proletariat, the real producers of wealth.

Marx maintained that in all class societies the ruling class exploits and oppresses the subject class. There is need to make profits and promote capital so the capitalist will pay their workers only subsistence wages enough to feed themselves and their families to bring them back to work the next day. The capitalists force workers to produce an excess, or surplus value, and they keep that sum for themselves as a profit.

According to this theory, the workers' intrinsic value is the money needed to feed themselves and their families. Anything they produce above the subsistence level is surplus value. Since under Ricardo's iron law of wages, the capitalists pay only a subsistence wage, they keep the surplus value produced by the workers as their profit. For example, let us say that it takes six hours of work to produce the necessities of life for a laborer and his or her family. If the employer forces the laborer to work for thirteen hours, yet only pays subsistence wage, the capitalist has forced the laborer to surrender seven hours of surplus value; because the surplus value can be produced only by labor, Marx goes on to argue that it belongs to the laborer by right.

Accordingly, any profit the capitalists make from the labor of their employees is ill-gotten and exploitative. The capitalist is, therefore, a villain, a parasite who lives by sucking the economic lifeblood of the proletariat, and must be erased from society when the proletariat takes over. Needless to say, Ricardo, the capitalist economist, would not have agreed with this conclusion. Ricardo believed that the capitalists' control of property distinguished them from other people and justified their exploitation of the worker, for such exploitation creates capital, thus assuring further productivity.

At this point you may be wondering how Marx expected capital to develop if profits, or surplus value, were not allowed. The answer is simple- Marx did not oppose capital per se; he rejected the capitalist. He did not condemn profit; he opposed private profit. The German scholar knew that capital was necessary for production, but he rejected the notion that it should be controlled by private individuals. Capital, he suggested, was created by all and should be owned by all.

Marx certainly did not oppose creating surplus value to be used to invest in increased productivity. What he objected to was that private citizens should be allowed to monopolise the means of production and use that power to force workers-the creators of value-to surrender their goods in order to survive. Put differently, no one should be allowed to profit from the labor of another. On this point, Marx's differences with Ricardo are more moral than economic in nature.

(f) Primitive Capital Accumulation

Primitive capital accumulation can be understood or defined in three major ways. In the first instance, it relates to the form of accumulation that takes place in pre-capitalist social formations including feudal societies and non-capitalist. Secondly, it relates to the capital that is accumulated and transformed into real capital. This is the form which Merchant Capital takes. The term, relates to any form of accumulation that is crude or acquired by means other than through exploitation of the proletariat and the realisation of proletariat and the market. Hence, corruption and looting of the public treasury by greedy public office holders is also a form of primitive capital accumulation.

The key challenge in countries of the Third world is that many of the comprador bourgeoisie and merchant capitalist have not been able to transform Primitive capital into real form of accumulation. This can be explained by several factors. The first has to do with the experience of colonial rule - which created undeveloped capitalism in the colonies. This is the context of the conceptualisation of what is called the blocked capitalist thesis. In other words, capitalism did not have the auto centric and dynamiting impact on the colonies in the same way it had on the industrialised countries of the north at the point of their-capitalist development.

Colonialism is based on the principle of exploitation of one nation by another, of cheap sources of raw materials and ready market for the finished goods of the industrialised countries of the world; and in both cases they determine the price at which to buy the product of the colonies and ex- colonies, and they also determined at what price to sell their finished goods. This resulted in unequal exchange between the countries of the north and the third world nations. This gave leverage and undue advantage to countries of the capitalist north and it provided the basis for the continued domination of the Third world countries, even after formal colonial rule was over, in the form of imperialism.

Secondly, the economies of the ex-colonies were disarticulated and produced what the peoples of the colonies did not need. These economies were essential cash crop

based, rather than food crop based. The colonies were forced to depend on imports from the north to survive. This disarticulation is the key to the understanding of underdevelopment. The third element is that the emergent ruling classes in these countries had a weak material bases. The nationalist and emergent ruling classes in third world countries were mostly an educated elite made up of professionals such as teachers, lawyers, medical doctors and engineers. They did not have the kind of wealth that was acquired through primitive capital accumulation or mercantilism that could be transformed into capital. As such a lot of them had to depend on the state to acquire wealth. In this sense, rather than transform into true capitalists, they transformed into a comprador bourgeoisie.

A *compradorbourgeoisie* is a parasitic class that depends on the state for survival, rather than on ownership of factories or the means of production for survival. The bureaucratic bourgeoisie is also part of this parasitic class. The common form of accumulation in third world countries is due to the low organic composition of capital or technological development. The low organic composition of capital partly explains why wages are lower in third world countries and why indeed the exploitation of labor is also more intense in Third world countries.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Socialists of all kinds are united in their determination to oppose the many perceived injustices brought about by capitalism. They seek to create a more just society by countering capitalism's tendency towards creating false consciousness thereby leaving power in the hands of the minority who win out in the dog- eat-dog world of competition and exploitation prescribed by the laws of the market.

6.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we did highlight the importance of these concepts towards understanding Marxist political economy. Reification, commoditisation, labor power, use and exchange value, surplus value and capitalist primitive accumulations are important concepts and tools used by Marx and Engels to further the course of radical political economy. Most of these concepts, for the Marxist, are creations of the bourgeoisie to create and sustain false consciousness that propels capitalism.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Reification and commoditisation mask exploitation. Discuss.
- ii. Explain the expropriation of values and oppression in capitalism.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Distinguish between use and exchange values in capitalism.
2. Explain the linkage between exploitation and primitive capitalist accumulation.

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UNIT 4 SOCIALISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 3.1 Marxism after Marx
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

When Marx died, the socialist movement no longer enjoyed the guidance of a single dominant thinker. Yet, the resulting ambiguity encouraged creativity, and

eventually, three distinct socialist doctrines emerged- orthodox Marxism, revisionism, and Marxism-Leninism.

7.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain orthodox Marxism
- discuss revisionism
- describe Marxism- Leninism
- explain the relevance of socialism in 21st Century

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Socialism in the 21th Century

The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it. In this famous remark, written in 1845, the radical socialist Karl Marx makes it clear that the goal of his work is to move beyond theory to action; his ultimate purpose is practical and revolutionary change. Just three years later, Marx and his collaborator Friedrich Engels published the Communist Manifesto. Although its immediate impact was slight, this slim text - little more than a pamphlet - arguably did more than any other document to change the history of the 20th century.

In the opening words of the Manifesto, Marx conjures up the 'spectre of communism' which was haunting the powers of old Europe in the first half of the 19th century. This menacing incubus was an upwelling of extreme socialists, who had mobilised on behalf of working people oppressed and impoverished in a transformation of industrial production that had brought great wealth to their capitalist employers. Their objectives were the violent overthrow of capitalist society and the abolition of private property.

In the century after Marx's death in 1883, this specter rose again in a wave of communist regimes, first in Russia, then in Eastern Europe, China and elsewhere. Bringing to life his ideas - or what passed for his ideas - in the real world, these regimes left a trail of human suffering that tarnished his name. In a Marxist state, however, ideology teaches that politics results from economic conditions and that both are inseparable parts of the same historical development.

The political limitations of nationalisation are perhaps even greater than its economic problems. Of all the socialist societies, only the communists saw total socialisation as the ultimate goal. In the past three decades, however, even the communist states have begun to experiment some limited forms of market economics.

In all other socialist countries, regardless of how long socialist governments have held power; large portions of the economy remain under private ownership. Production, however, is not the central economic focus of socialist thinking. Much more important to the socialist is the distribution of the goods and services produced in the society. To the capitalist, private property is the reward for individual effort and economic achievement. When this sad, bizarre chapter in human history drew to a close in the years after 1989, Marx's vision of revolutionary struggle culminating in a classless socialist society seemed as bankrupt as the broken-down states that had usurped the name of communism. With the collapse of the USSR and its Eastern European allies in 1989, and following strategic shifts inside the People's Republic of China, the growth of the communist wing of the socialist movement reversed into sharp decline. The Communists had established socialisms - based on state ownership of industrial enterprises and central planning - that had shown spectacular rates of economic growth and exemplary advances in the standards of living for the mass of their citizens. However, they had not been able to create the broader social conditions needed to sustain that growth, to simultaneously protect themselves from a hostile capitalist world, and all the while to retain the ideological and political support of their countries' populations.

When serious crises hit them in the late 1980's, few social forces proved able or willing to save or rebuild the systems that the communists had constructed. Worse still, those systems speedy conversions into varying forms of monopoly capitalism and corrupted politics raised further disquieting questions about what the systems of actually existing socialisms really had been.

Regardless of the specific programs used, socialism is not always completely egalitarian. It tends to narrow the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Yet, only the most fanatic socialist wants to eliminate all differences in material status. Most socialists recognise that people are different: Some are more talented or hard-working than others and should be rewarded for their extra contributions. Still, they believe that all people have a right to a reasonably comfortable life, given the

economy's ability to produce enough for all. Consequently, they want to eliminate poverty.

Socialists look forward to a time when the productivity of society will have been increased to the point at which there is abundance for all. It is hoped that this happy state of affairs, impossible in earlier times, will bring about profound changes in people's conduct, attitude and belief. In previous eras, scarcity made it necessary for people to compete with one another. In the competition for goods, they treated each other inhumanely in order to survive. Forced into conflict with each other in order to make a living people became trapped in a pattern of conduct that not only was harmful to them but also prevented them from developing their nobler aspects.

Now, however, for the first time technology has created a situation in which people can produce enough to satisfy all their basic needs. As the general material conditions of society improve specific differences in material status among individuals will decrease, since there will be plenty for all, traditional property values such as private ownership of money, and the accumulation of luxuries by one class while others live in squalor will disappear. A new society will emerge, one in which the citizen are equal footing with one another.

As class differences begin to disappear, so too will a major source of social strife, resulting in a happier, more tranquil society. Of course only Marxist socialists argue that all human strife is caused by class difference yet, all socialists are convinced that materialism is a major feature in social and political relationships. Removing the cause of material anxieties therefore greatly improves social relationships within a particular state.

The equalising characteristics of socialism are central to our understanding of it. Socialists often claim to have egalitarian goals, but in fact, they are simply trying to replace old ruling classes with new ones, denying basic human equality in the process. Individual equality is a major feature of the new socialist order, and this social equality leads directly to a democratic political system Neo-liberal ideologues portrayed the collapse of the USSR and Eastern Europe as proof positive that the long battle between capitalism, on the one hand, and socialism or communism, on the other, had been definitively won by the former. To remain a communist or even a socialist, in their traditional senses, was portrayed as a sign of selfdelusion.

History had rendered its verdict; it was final; and there was no appeal. Not only had the USSR and its Eastern European allies collapsed, but their subsequent gangster capitalism, crony capitalism and other unattractive capitalisms further undermined socialists' confidence in their earlier views of actually existing socialisms. Yet in the 21st Century - especially in the wake of the global credit crunch which exposed the evils of unbridled capitalism - perceptions have shifted.

It may be true, as is sometimes suggested, that communism is destined to failure because it is based on a misunderstanding of human psychology. Still, it is possible, now that the toxic dust of real-world communist regimes has settled, to admire once again the fundamental decency of Marx's vision of a society in which each gives according to his ability and takes according to his need.

Revisionism

Edward Bernstein (1850-1932) was the founder of the revisionist school of socialist theory. Finding that several Marxist predictions did not match actual historical developments, Bernstein began to develop a revised, more moderate socialist theory. He was aided in this effort by the brilliant French socialist Jean Jaures (1859-1914). Perhaps the most significant characteristic of the revisionist doctrine is that it represents the return of socialism to its original humanitarian motivations, rescuing it from the moral sterility of Marx's "scientific" socialism. Bernstein and Jaures were not unappreciative of Marx's contribution to socialist thinking, but they felt compelled to challenge almost every major Marxist principle. Of course, no socialist could deny the importance of economic determinism, but the revisionists believed that Marx had given it too great a role as a political stimulant. Economics, they argued, is an important motivator, but it is not the only one, nor is its impact on human motives constant, since it tends to decrease as people satisfy their most basic needs.

Noting that Marx had misjudged the development of capitalism, Bernstein pointed out that the capitalist class was increasing in size rather than decreasing, despite Marx's prediction. Literally millions of people were entering the capitalist class by buying stocks. Further, as more and more governments bowed to the demands of organised labor and other social reformers, wealth was becoming more evenly spread within the society and the lot of the proletariat was improving instead of growing worse. It was obvious to the revisionists that rather than racing toward inevitable self destruction, capitalism was evolving and adjusting to new

circumstances. It was becoming less exploitative and more generous to the workers in the distribution of goods. Since Marx had not anticipated this development, Bernstein reasoned it proper for socialism to modify its strategy to accomplish its goals.

Revolutionary socialism began to seem inappropriate as a way of ending the evils of capitalism. Would it not be far better to develop evolutionary ways of achieving socialism? This speculation led Bernstein, Jaures, and their followers to conclude that their cause would be better served by abandoning dogmatic theories and supporting pragmatic political policies designed to achieve socialism peacefully and gradually through existing European political systems by winning elections. This adjustment introduced a very successful political movement. Nearly every non-Marxist socialist movement owes its origins to these practical political thinkers. They founded the modern democratic socialist movement.

Bernstein's influence did not stop at the shores of the Atlantic. Though the Americans Daniel De Leon and Big Bill Haywood proposed militant socialism in their Socialist Labor Party, their efforts met with little success. However, Eugene V. Debs and Norman Thomas carried socialism to modest popularity with the revisionist approach of their Socialist Party in the United States. Although not precisely revisionist, a second development in contemporary humanitarian nonviolent socialism developed in England during the late 1800s. Founded in the tradition of John Stuart Mill in 1884, the year after Marx's death, the Fabian Society was dedicated to bringing socialism to England.

Like Robert Owen twenty years earlier, the Fabians rejected the policy of forcing socialism on society. They argued that socialism must be accepted from the bottom up rather than imposed from the top down. Yet, they were confident that socialism would be adopted by all freedom-loving people because they were convinced that only socialism was compatible with democracy. Consequently, if a people were committed to democracy, as the English surely were, socialism could not be long in coming.

Largely consisting of literary figures, including George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, the Fabian Society was particularly well suited to its task. It, usually, avoided direct political activity and concentrated on convincing the English people that socialism was the only logical economic system for the British nation. The Fabians carried their message to the people in pamphlets, in articles written for journals and newspapers, and in their novels and

short stories. Adapted as it was to the British style and temperament, Fabianism was very successful. Today's British Labor Party is a descendant of the Fabian movement.

Marxism-Leninism

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov Lenin (1870-1924) of Russia, became a revolutionary early in life and found himself exiled to Switzerland in 1900. There he fell in with a tiny but fractious cabal of Russian Marxists. Unable to agree, these revolutionaries splintered, with Lenin leading the Bolsheviks, whereas the founder of Russian Marxism, Georgi Plekhanov (1857-1918), headed the Mensheviks. The Mensheviks were not unlike the orthodox Marxists in that they believed that before socialism was possible, capitalism had to set the stage for it and that the workers would eventually rise up against their capitalist exploiters. Lenin, on the other hand, insisted that the development would not occur on its own. In trying to apply Marx's theories to the political reality of the times in which Lenin found himself, and being more flexible and creative than the German master, he found it necessary to make significant changes to Marx's work.

Theories of Revolution

Although originally believing that socialism could be born only through violent revolution, Marx later held out hope that it might evolve peacefully in certain liberal societies. Lenin, on the other hand, never wavered in his belief that revolution was necessary if socialism was to become a reality. Marx taught that the revolution would take place when the workers had developed a clear awareness of the exploitation and hopelessness of their station. Galvanised in their misery, they would become a unified political force. Relying on the trade unions and other agitators to teach the workers about the hopeless oppression they endured-what Marx called class consciousness he expected that the proletarian revolution would eventually erupt automatically, ending the bourgeois state and bringing the workers to power.

Lenin also contradicted Marx on this point. He argued that the proletariat would not develop class consciousness without the intervention of a revolutionary group. Thinking labor unions too easily controlled by capitalists, Lenin believed that a different group was needed to ignite the revolution. To justify this concept, he expanded on Marx's rather unimportant theory of the vanguard of the proletariat. Unlike Marx, who gave the vanguard of the proletariat no other task than teaching class consciousness, Lenin, the more skilled political strategist, saw the vanguard

itself as the principal revolutionary agent that would overthrow the government and establish a socialist state before the proletariat itself fully developed class consciousness.

This disagreement is what lies behind an important difference in expectations between Marx and Lenin. Because Marx thought that a class-conscious proletariat would spontaneously rise up against capitalist exploitation, he expected that the dictatorship of the proletariat would exist for a relatively brief period during which the small number of remaining non proletarians would be reeducated, creating a classless society. In Lenin's plan, by contrast, the vanguard would trigger a revolution long before the conditions that Marx anticipated actually developed. In this case, socialism would be imposed on the society by a minority instead of being forced on the governing elite by the majority.

Although Lenin's model would bring the revolution on sooner, the dictatorship of the proletariat would have to last much longer than Marx anticipated because such a huge percentage of the population would have to be transformed into a socialist proletariat before the ideal society could be realised. Also, Lenin was very specific about the structure and character of his revolutionary vanguard: a small, disciplined, totally dedicated group. It must include only the best in the society because its job of carrying out the revolution demanded total commitment. For his part, Marx was vague about the vanguard of the proletariat. One cannot be sure whether he intended the proletariat to assume the role of dictator itself until only one class existed or if a dictator was to govern all, including the proletariat.

Lenin, on the other hand, was quite specific on this subject. The vanguard of the proletariat (the Bolshevik Party, renamed the Communist Party in 1918) was to become a collective dictatorship. In other words, the Bolshevik Party would carry out the revolution and then impose a dictatorship on the entire society until it was prepared to enter the utopian stage. Thus, as Lenin saw it, the dictatorship of the proletariat was not to be a dictatorship by the proletariat but a dictatorship of Bolsheviks over the proletariat.

Lenin also created a structure for the vanguard of the proletariat at the international level. In 1919, he created the International Communist Movement, the Comintern. It was supposed to spread revolution and socialism throughout the world. Meeting with only mixed results, the Comintern was eventually transformed by Stalin after Lenin's death. Instead of a revolutionary catalyst, it became a mere appendage of Soviet foreign policy. Thus, socialist internationalism was overwhelmed by

Russian nationalism. In the short run, the efficacy of Lenin's activist and elitist tactics seemed borne out by the 1917 revolution in Russia. However, non-Leninist Marxists argue that the recent collapse of the Soviet Union proves that Marx was in the long run correct. A successful Marxist society cannot be created by an elite group that imposes such a society on unwilling masses from the top down. Rather, they aver, it can only be successful when the people are fully prepared to accept it. Put differently, so far as the question of popular acceptance of socialism is concerned, Lenin's elitist approach is an unfortunate and erroneous departure from Marxist democratic principles.

Imperialism

As the twentieth century began, the pressure from critics of Marxist theory became intense. Marxism was not only attacked by capitalists and conservatives but also questioned by a growing number of socialists. The core of the theory, *dialectical materialism*, predicted a proletarian revolution that never occurred. Indeed, as the revisionists pointed out, the conditions of labour were improving in the industrial countries, making the revolution appear to be a myth. Hard pressed to explain this seeming contradiction, Lenin studied the trends of capitalism in search of a solution to the dilemma. His conclusion was a clever analysis that went far beyond a simple rationalisation of Marx's error.

Since Marx's death a new kind of capitalism had developed. As he predicted, firms became larger, though less numerous, their financial needs growing along with their size. But, needing vast amounts of capital to sustain their huge enterprises, the corporations became increasingly dependent on banks for financing until the bankers themselves gained control of the monopolies. Marx had not foreseen this new financial structure, which Lenin called finance capitalism. Finance capitalism marked a new, much more exploitative stage than the previous condition of industrial capitalism. Under these new conditions, the owners of the means of production (bankers and financiers) contributed absolutely nothing to the productivity of the plants they controlled. For example, J. P. Morgan, a noted financier, created the Northern Securities Trust in the late 1800s, tying up all the major railroad trunk lines in the United States. He also put together the world's first billion-dollar corporation, United States Steel, in 1901. Morgan and his associates knew nothing at all about the railroad or steel business. Yet, by manipulating capital they gained control of two basic U.S. industries. Since they contributed nothing to the productivity of those two industries, the Marxist interpretation of the

labor theory of value held that the fantastic profits of these robber barons were stolen from the rightful owners, the proletariat.

In addition, the very fact that the national economies were monopolizing industry was having a profound effect on the international scene. The centralisation of ownership was occurring because it was becoming harder to profit from domestic markets. New markets had to be found. At the same time, Lenin believed that the ownership class had begun to realise the truth in the Marxist prediction of a revolution by a proletariat whose misery could no longer be borne. This led the owners to find new sources of cheap labor and resources. Thus, they began to export their exploitation through colonialism. The foreign exploitation of which Lenin wrote began in earnest in the 1880s, too late for Marx to assess its significance.

The new colonialism, which Lenin called, imperialist capitalism, also delayed the proletarian revolution. Driven to increase profits, yet needing to protect themselves against a rebellion by their domestic proletariat, the capitalists began to exploit the labor of the colonial people. Then, to relax the tensions created by their previous domestic exploitation, the capitalists shared some of their new profits with their domestic workers. Not only was the domestic proletariat's revolutionary tension reduced by this improvement in living standards, but their virtue was corrupted. Allowing themselves to be "bought off" by profits stolen from the colonial proletariat, the domestic workers became partners in the capitalist exploitation of the unfortunate colonial people. This economic prostitution disgusted Lenin, who saw it as yet another evil policy of the capitalist enemy.

Capitalist imperialism, however, was ultimately self-destructive, Lenin thought. Eventually all the colonial resources would be consumed by the various capitalist states. With no more colonies to subdue, the profit hungry imperialist nations would begin to feed off each other, causing strife and conflict that would end in a general confrontation among the capitalist imperialist powers. Imperialism, Lenin declared in 1916, is the final stage of capitalism. It will ultimately lead to a conflict in which the capitalists will destroy each other. Thus, Lenin concluded that World War I was a giant struggle in which the imperialist nations hoped to finally settle their colonial conflicts, and that socialists should take advantage of this conflict by seizing control of Western governments after the capitalists had exhausted themselves in futile fraternal warfare.

Although Lenin's theory of imperialism explained why the Marxist revolution had not yet occurred among the advanced industrial states in the West, there was still no answer to the question of why it had occurred in a tenth-rate industrial country such as Russia. Fruitful thinker that he was, Lenin again turned to imperialism for an explanation. Developing his theory of the weakest link, he argued that colonialism gave the advanced industrial countries a tremendous competitive advantage over the less developed, non-colonialist capitalist states. If the latter were to compete against the cheap labor and raw materials available to their imperialist opponents, they would have to exploit their own labor force even more. The increased exploitation suffered by the workers in the less advanced countries would naturally push them toward revolution at the very moment when the proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries was being bought off with a share of the colonialist spoils. Russia, Lenin concluded, was the weakest link in the capitalist chain, making the first Marxist revolution there quite logical.

Achieving the Utopia

Completing his blueprint for the practical application of Marx's (sometimes, vague) theories, Lenin outlined the economic and political development of the future workers' paradise. The economic system to be used by the Bolshevik dictatorship of the proletariat was what Lenin called state socialism. According to this theory, the state was to control all elements of the economy. The workers-employees of the state-would produce a profit, and the profit, or surplus value, would then be returned to the society by way of investments to increase productivity, social and governmental programs to aid and protect the citizens, and consumer goods to benefit the society.

The maxim Lenin articulated for distribution of goods to citizens paraphrases Marx's famous statement- *From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs*. Instead, Lenin proposed- *From each according to his ability, to each according to his work*. This formula is even more practical than it appears at first glance. Marx had seen the dictatorship creating a single proletarian class imbued with the socialist ethic by one of two methods: educating the masses to convince them of the wisdom of socialism or simply removing them from the society. Here Lenin introduced a third technique for achieving the single-class utopia. He authorised forcing people into submission to the socialist leaders by withholding from dissidents the necessities of life: starving them into submission to the dictatorship of the proletariat. More practical than Marx, Lenin contradicted the German master several times. More an activist than a philosopher, he was always

concerned with the workability of a process, often leaving theoretical inconsistencies to sort themselves out. He ignored the democratic spirit of Marx's theory in favor of an elitist revolution, claiming that its utopian ends justified its extreme means. He violated the dialectic by demanding an early revolution, which he followed with an elitist dictatorship that Marx almost surely never intended. He used his theory of imperialism to describe a stage of capitalism not foreseen by Marx; he then used it to explain why the revolution happened first in Russia and failed to take place in the highly industrialised countries.

Finally, along with state socialism, Lenin proposed a new kind of labor exploitation about which Marx would have had serious qualms. Yet, with all their twists and turns, these modifications and amendments were always intended to bring to fruition the Marxist ideal: a society at peace with itself in a world characterised by human harmony. Never losing sight of this goal, Lenin often surprised his own followers with the depth of his conviction and the totality of his Marxist commitment. However, like Marx before him, Lenin failed to foresee many of the terrible events that followed the establishment of the Soviet Union.

Russia

Lenin came to power in 1917 by leading the movement that brought down the brutal tsarist government. With little experience in government, Lenin withdrew Russia from World War I in 1918 by making peace with Germany. Immediately afterward, Lenin had to turn his efforts to defeating the counterrevolutionary white armies that surrounded him during the Russian civil war (1918-1921). Meanwhile, the western allies, including the United States, invaded Russia in 1919, trying to bring the Communist regime down. In the midst of this conflict and confusion Lenin also tried to create a socialist state at one fell swoop. But his efforts to expropriate factories and farms failed miserably. Production collapsed and famine ravaged the land until a rebellion against the government erupted among once loyal Soviet sailors just as the civil war was won.

Moving decisively, Lenin brutally suppressed the rebellion of his former allies, but at the same time, he retreated from efforts to socialise the economy. The entire economy, except industry, finance, communications, and transportation, was returned to private hands.

Efforts were made to increase production to prewar levels, and then a new effort to create socialism was to be launched. Even as Lenin relaxed his grip on the

economy, however, the Communist party began to tighten its political control over the society. Opposition parties were outlawed and destroyed. The trade unions were brought under state control. The national boundaries began to take shape as the Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan were brought into the union. More important, the party gradually became bureaucratically oriented instead of revolutionary in its focus. As the communist party consolidated power, productivity increased, until, Lenin's death in 1924, the great revolutionary could take solace in the knowledge that his political creation would survive him.

Lenin's death was followed by a leadership struggle during which Joseph Stalin (1876-1953) ruthlessly outmaneuvered his adversaries, one by one. Giving vent to his paranoia, Stalin warned of a capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union that could be broken only by resorting to nationalism. Stalin entreated his followers to build socialism in one country, making it impregnable against its capitalist enemies. Stalin advocated this strategy in opposition to the proposal of his archrival, Leon Trotsky (1879-1940), to engage in permanent revolution against capitalism until worldwide socialism was achieved. Stalin's conservative nationalistic appeal, however, struck a chord with his war-weary compatriots, and he gained their support in his struggle for dominance.

The policy of building socialism in one country is also of the greatest ideological significance. This policy is of particular importance, for nationalism is the most powerful political idea of the era. Under Stalin, the strongest internationalist ideology in recent history was completely overwhelmed by the irresistible onslaught of nationalism. Though Stalin was the first to adapt Marxism-Leninism to nationalism, later varieties of Marxism only underscore the grip in which nationalism holds it.

In 1929, with Trotsky out of the way, Stalin decided it was time to initiate the first of the five-year plans, a crash program to modernise, industrialise, and centralise the country in the 1930s. These programs called for the nationalisation of all industries, trades, and occupations and included the collectivisation of the farms. They also forced the Soviet people to make enormous sacrifices so that resources could be diverted from the production of consumer goods to the military and heavy industry.

The forced collectivisation of the farms and the sacrifice of consumer goods caused incredible misery and millions of deaths. These ruthless policies were not without success. However, compressing into ten years the advances other states

stretched out over several decades, the first two five-year plans catapulted the Soviet Union to the status of a major industrial power.

In the process of industrialising the Soviet Union, Stalin created a personality cult that portrayed him as the infallible, omnipotent leader. At the center of a totalitarian state, Stalin used terrorism as his governing tool. Purging his enemies, real or imagined, he saw millions die-of famine, in remote forced labor camps, or at the shooting wall. The next decade brought World War II. Absorbing the devastating Nazi invasion in 1941, Soviet troops gradually pushed the Germans back to their homeland by 1944. Retreating into Germany, the Nazi armies abandoned Eastern Europe before the Soviet onslaught. Inspired by the soviet success Stalin moved for the complete subjugation of the Eastern European states that fell under Soviet influence.

One country after another they fell to Soviet control, only to find that their liberation from the Nazis was simply the first step in the imposition of a new equally severe regime. Reeling from the slaughter and pillage that caused the deaths of 27 million Soviets and destruction of a quarter of the national wealth, Stalin imposed a regime of unparalleled severity on the Eastern European countries, some of which (Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania) had willingly helped Hitler despoil the Soviet Union.

These states were harnessed to the Soviet reconstruction and defense effort- Stalin forced them to contribute heavily to the Soviet economy and postponed their own recovery. The long dark rule of Stalin finally ended with his death in 1953. Victorious in the power struggle occasioned by Stalin's death, Nikita Khrushchev (1894-1971) brought an end to the worst excesses of Stalin's terrorism through his de-Stalinisation program. However, in Eastern Europe the de-Stalinisation campaign led to uprisings that were brutally suppressed, thus making it clear that Khrushchev's liberalization policies had definite limits.

In relations with the West, however, Khrushchev pursued a liberalization strategy that met with unfortunate rejection. Realising that nuclear weapons made a general war between East and West unthinkable, Khrushchev invited the capitalists to engage in peaceful coexistence, thus contradicting the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of permanent revolution with its assumption that capitalism and socialism are fatally incompatible. Perhaps taken in by itsown anti-Soviet propaganda, the United States refused to take Khrushchev's overtures seriously and the Cold War continued

apace, coming breathtakingly close to disaster during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962.

Although Khrushchev successfully managed to end the Stalinist terror, his attempt to reform Stalin's planned economy failed miserably. The Soviet economy was tightly controlled by a ponderous, stifling bureaucracy that decided the quantity of raw materials to be exploited annually, how many products would be manufactured, at what price they would be sold, and where in the country they would be sold. This antiquated system caused productivity to flag, and Khrushchev was sure that economic decentralisation was needed to get things moving again. The problem was that the only people who could successfully carry out the decentralising reforms were the very people who benefited most from keeping things unchanged—the bureaucrats. Accordingly, Khrushchev's increasingly frantic schemes to reform the system ended in repeated failures. Ultimately, they cost him his job.

In 1964, Khrushchev was removed from office by a profoundly conservative Leonid Brezhnev (1906-1982). Repelled by Khrushchev's incessant and seemingly ill-conceived reforms, the Kremlin leaders became consumed with creating stability. Stability soon became political and economic stagnation, however. Job security was almost absolute from top to bottom in the society. Government officials became corrupt, and workers became even less conscientious than before. Absenteeism, alcoholism, shoddy production, breakage, and waste increased to serious proportions. Squeezed by low productivity and an enormous defense budget as they tried to equal the United States' military capacity, the Soviets saw shortages of staples as well as luxuries become a serious and constant problem. Shortages in state stores encouraged people to satisfy their needs illegally as the black market became pervasive throughout the society.

A spiritual malaise set in, and ideological conviction declined abruptly in the waning years of Brezhnev's tenure. The decline of popular resolve in response to corruption and scarcity was exacerbated by the growing gerontocracy governing the system. Few of the, aging bureaucrats left their powerful positions; hence there was little upward mobility for the younger generations, and the system was sapped of the vitality it had previously enjoyed. Hope for reform dimmed as one aging, infirm leader after another followed Brezhnev to power.

Finally, in 1985, Mikhail S. Gorbachev (born in 1931) was named General Secretary of the Communist Party. Well educated, energetic, and progressive,

Gorbachev believed that the moribund Soviet Union had to change if it was to survive. Beginning cautiously at first, but then quickly expanding his program, Gorbachev launched an astonishing series of economic, cultural, and political reforms. He demanded greater labor discipline, encouraged limited free expression, and even attempted to reduce the stultifying power the Communist Party exercised over the government.

Like Khrushchev, Gorbachev failed. Resisted by bureaucrats who resented the loss of power his reforms threatened, by economic managers who were wary about the amount of personal responsibility they would have to bear for production, and by the workers themselves, who refused to cooperate with a policy that called upon them to work harder with no concrete assurance that their lives would improve, the economic reforms stalled in Russia. However, grasping the opportunity to use reform to loosen the Soviet grip, many minority national groups within the Soviet Union and peoples of Eastern Europe organized separatist movements that ultimately destroyed the Soviet Union.

Trying to stop the inevitable, hardliners within the Soviet communist party arrested Gorbachev in an attempted coup. This too failed, however. Gorbachev was freed, but as its constituent parts (Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, and so on) and countries of Eastern Europe declared their independence, the Soviet Union simply dissolved.

Russia was led to independence by former Communist Party leader Boris Yeltsin (born in 1931). Unfortunately, his courageous political acts were not matched by governmental integrity. Russia's effort to modernise and privatise its economy became immersed in intrigue and corruption. Productivity plummeted even as a dozen or so ruthless business persons (the oligarchs) used political bribery, and other nefarious techniques and contacts, to buy up vast portions of the Russian economy. Finally, Yeltsin voluntarily stepped aside in favor of the handpicked Vladimir Putin, (born in 1952), whose policies appear well intended but whose heavy-handed governing style reminds some observers of the Soviet methodology. In what he claims are efforts to bring the oligarchs to heel, he has intimidated the independent media. The fact that he was previously a KGB official, and that about a quarter of the Russian political elite have military, intelligence, or security backgrounds, adds to the public foreboding. However, among the public he continues to be very popular, although some of his political and economic policies have recently engendered broad discontent and protests. Whatever Putin's

intentions were, clearly Marxism-Leninism in this part of the world has been abandoned.

China

Imperial China, one of history's most successful political systems, was based on the principles of Confucianism. Confucianism is as much a political theory as a code of moral conduct. Indeed, in this ancient philosophy, moral conduct and a well-ordered state are equated. Confucius taught that all people should know their place and should accept it, thus maintaining a harmonious society, the most desirable state of affairs. The law, rooted in Confucian teaching, provided that the scholarly mandarins, and other elements of the elite, would rule and the peasantry would obey.

This sociopolitical arrangement served the Chinese remarkably well for centuries. For its part, Asia turned inward and became isolated from foreign influences. China, Japan, and Korea placed a premium on tradition, rejecting new ideas as harmful. As a result, the West surpassed the East in developing modern technology and political doctrines that accommodated the changes brought about by the new economic order.

As the East's resistance was worn down by the pressure of the West's technological superiority, the philosophies of the ancient regimes began to appear less viable, and Western ideologies, such as nationalism and later Marxism, became more appealing. Though these Western ideas were modified somewhat, the fact remains that the East has been captivated by Western institutions, economic styles, and political idea systems.

Though China's traditional power seemed antiquated, the imperial system survived foreign occupation and domestic rebellion until early in the twentieth century. The inevitable could not be forestalled indefinitely, however, and the Chinese Revolution began in 1911, with its belligerent phase continuing until 1949. In 1911, the Manchu Dynasty ended with the child emperor, Pu Yi, abdicating in response to overwhelming pressure. The leader of the victorious republican forces was an unimposing, idealistic man, Sun Yatsen' (1866-1925). His ideology was a somewhat confused mixture of Western political theories, mild socialist economic ideas, and Eastern traditions. He was too idealistic and naive to understand completely the forces he had helped unleash, however, and China's needs were far too complex for his simplistic solutions. In the end he was outmaneuvered by the

Machiavellians surrounding him, and he spent the rest of his life struggling with autocratic elements in China.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) was founded with Soviet help in 1921. Attending the first party congress was a radical young school teacher, Mao Tse-tung (1893-1976). Although he began at a low rank, his devotion to the cause and his keen insight into the problems of the revolution soon caught the attention of his superiors. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was becoming increasingly interested in China; because he was perceived as a socialist, Sun's appeals to the West for aid in his struggle were repeatedly rebuffed.

Finally, he turned to the Soviet Union, which was quick to appreciate the potential for revolution in China. The Soviets not only aided the founding of the CPC but also helped Sun organise his own party, the Kuomintang. Hoping that its influence in China would grow if its protégés won control of the government, the Soviet Union pressed for a Kuomintang-CPC alliance in a struggle to bring order to China. The country had fallen into chaos, with its far-flung provinces governed by tyrannical and petty warlords. Sun's death in 1925 brought to power his lieutenant, Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975). Chiang, a military man, turned the Kuomintang to the right—a move that resulted in increasingly strained relations with the CPC. Finally, in 1927, Chiang suddenly attacked the communists. Thousands of them were slaughtered by Chiang's army. The CPC escaped utter annihilation only by fleeing the cities for the safety of the countryside.

The Ruralisation of Chinese Communism

Two years before the Kuomintang attacked the communists, Mao had become unhappy with the progress of the revolution. Thus, he had returned to his native Hunan province in southeastern China and studied the peasantry as a revolutionary force and called on communists to abandon the cities for the countryside because the peasants, not the proletariat, were China's true revolutionaries. With this he laid the foundation of Maoist thought, and it, together with Chiang's betrayal and the communist failure to rouse the proletariat in the cities, ended the domination of the Soviet Union over the CPC. China went on to develop a brand of Marxism distinct from the Soviet version.

The Long March

Finally gaining an almost decisive military advantage over the communists in 1934, the Kuomintang army surrounded them in the south and threatened their

destruction. To avoid annihilation, the communists broke out of the encirclement leaving their southern base behind and fled to safety in northern China. This epic retreat, called the long march, was the low point of the CPC's history and lasted a full year. About 100,000 people set out on a journey that took them 6,000 miles. Since it was more a running battle than a march, scarcely 35,000 survived. As if the hardships of the trek and attacks by the forces of Chiang and other warlords were not enough, the long march precipitated a leadership struggle within the CPC, and Mao gained the top position in the party a position he would hold until his death.

The march finally ended in Shensi province in north-central China, where a new base was established in 1936. Hostilities between the communists and the Kuomintang would have continued if the Japanese had not become an overriding threat in the same year. The resulting alliance was actually only a truce, however, permitting two enemies to deal with a third force threatening both. Nevertheless, the war efforts of each partner were restrained, since each saved its energy for the inevitable struggle that would take place when the Japanese were defeated. The Japanese were finally vanquished in 1945, and the China question emerged once again.

The United States, which clearly favored the rightist Kuomintang, tried to negotiate a coalition government between Mao and Chiang. Ironically, Stalin, who believed that the communists could not yet defeat Chiang, also pressured Mao to join in a coalition government. Mao and Chiang were both convinced that they could win the struggle, however, so they each refused to compromise. The upshot was the last phase of the belligerent period of the Chinese Revolution (1946-1949) as the two sides became locked in mortal combat. Since he had not been able to control the other warlords and because his government was cruel, corrupt, and foolish, Chiang had lost popular support. His military superiority, so obvious on paper, melted away. Mao, on the other hand, enjoyed great popular support in the north and considerable appeal in the south. A series of stunning defeats saw Chiang giving ground until finally, in 1949, all was lost and he fled to the island province of Taiwan.

The Political Stage of the Revolution

The communist regime in China has been marked by a series of important, sometimes traumatic, events. Mao Tse-tung remained a radical force in Chinese politics, often plunging China into tumultuous programs aimed at achieving great

goals for his people. When they failed, the reforms were followed by periods of consolidation that evolved into the staging grounds for the next set of Mao's radical reforms. This behavior pattern was repeated again and again, growing in intensity right up to Mao's death in 1976. Mao launched a number of profound reforms upon his accession to power.

With regard to industry, Mao used the Soviet model. Declaring the first five-year plan, the economy was centralised in a massive effort to catapult industrial production to new heights. The farms were also collectivised as part of the plan. The economic and social dislocation caused by the plan engendered violent resistance, and force was used to accomplish the government's goals.

By 1957, although many of the plan's goals had been achieved, the CPC leadership increasingly felt that Mao's radicalism was becoming counterproductive thus, a movement developed to maneuver him into retirement. Hoping to outflank his moderate detractors, Mao suppressed them with a sudden liberalisation of his own. Always the revolutionary, he again took the initiative. A Great Leap Forward was announced, based on the twin pillars of Mao's ideology: conquering material want by applying superior willpower (a very un-Marxist idea) and overcoming technological problems by organizing China's vast population.

Intended to vastly increase the industrial and agricultural output of China, the great leap forward was an immense failure. The society actually took several staggering steps backward. The first five-year plan had centralised heavy industry. Yet, the great leap forward attempted to reverse this trend. Instead of bringing the workers to the factories, the factories were carried to the workers. For example, thousands of families were given small furnaces and iron ore and urged to produce pig iron in their backyards. Unfortunately, the iron they produced was of such poor quality it was practically useless. On the collective farms radicalism was the order of the day. Attacking the family as a bourgeois institution, Mao tried to destroy it by extending communalism beyond work and ownership. Barracks were built, mess halls raised, and people encouraged to identify with the commune as a whole instead of only with the family.

By 1960 all pretenses that the new program was succeeding were dropped. Production had fallen drastically, and famine threatened the stability of the regime. Mao retreated into semi-retirement and the great leap forward was forsaken. The backyard industries were abandoned, and the barracks and mess halls gradually disappeared from the collective farms. Unwilling to surrender the revolution to the moderates in 1966, Mao seized his first opportunity to re-radicalise China. Calling

for a great cultural revolution, he inspired youthful radicals to form units called the Red Guard. Swarming like enraged bees, the Red Guard took over party and government headquarters, schools and factories, communes and collectives.

The new revolutionaries subjected officials, teachers, workers, and peasants to rump trials and condemned them for counter revolutionary offenses. The turmoil spread as violence increased, destroying property, purging officials, and disrupting life. Striking out against moderation, the bureaucracy, the intellectuals, and other non radical elements, the Red Guard made the whole society captive to its destructive fanaticism.

By 1969 the situation had become so bad that even Mao admitted that things had gone too far. The army was turned on the Red Guard and order was finally restored. When the dust settled, China found itself radicalised, but bruised and bleeding as well. Productivity had plummeted again, and the government and the party were in disarray. Thousands of pragmatic moderate party members and government officials were purged and replaced by radical zealots. The moderates' fortunes, at low ebb in 1969, began to recover gradually in the early 1970s, as people, tired of radical imposed disruption and sacrifice, began to demand a better standard of living for their families. While Mao lived, the radicals led by the infamous Gang of Four, of which Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, was the central figure, were able to remain dominant. Upon Mao's death in 1976, however, the radicals were quickly purged, and the moderates, led by Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997), plunged into a number of reforms that have brought China back from the brink of self-destruction. The legal system, the social structure, the party, and the bureaucracy were all changed dramatically. Even more important, perhaps, the economy was transformed.

Reminiscent of the Soviet, China's leadership has returned about 75 percent of the economy to private hands and to the market forces, retaining most heavy industry, transportation, and communications in the hands of the state. The Chinese refers to their economy as market socialism. As a result of the reforms, the communes have disappeared and peasants, farming land leased from the state, sell many of their goods on the open market. Private entrepreneurs organise small family businesses, inefficient state enterprises are allowed to go bankrupt, and state workers are paid on the basis of productivity rather than according to Mao's egalitarian policies. As a result, China's productivity has dramatically increased, fostering an economic growth rate that is among the world's highest. However, these economic

achievements have been accompanied by many social problems. Inflation has pushed formerly fixed prices to unprecedented heights.

Many people have witnessed a distinct improvement in their lives, and a budding middle class bourgeoisie has developed but others, especially in the rural areas, remain poor. The gap between rich and poor is growing very large and very rapidly. Health care for the masses has declined as the state's socialist medical services retreat before the budding market economy. Industries powered by coal, together with a significant increase in the number of automobiles on the road, have combined to foul the air. The UN now ranks China as the world's third most polluted country.

As Deng aged, he gradually withdrew from day-to-day operation of the government and party. Wisely, he began early to groom younger people to succeed him, so that his 1997 death caused a minimum of disruption in a country that had previously witnessed severe political changes following the death of a paramount leader. Jiang Zemin replaced Deng and presided over the most successful period of economic growth in China's history. Bowing to term limits for China's leaders put in place by Deng, Jiang stepped aside and was replaced by Hu Jintao (born in 1942) as General Secretary of the CPC in 2002, as president of the People's Republic in 2003, and as chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission in 2004.

Unlike Jiang, who is associated with policies encouraging economic development at almost any price, Hu has made more populist appeals, calling for reforms to redress the imbalance of wealth and other policies to create a social safety net for the poor. Yet, political instability may be awaiting China. After a decade of spectacular growth, the economy is slowing. This, coupled with a growing ideological ambivalence (a recent reform now allows even capitalists to join the CPC) among the Chinese people, causes some concern for the leadership. Corruption, always a problem in China, has grown worse with economic progress and ideological retreat. How can the CPC lead China to a better, purer world when its members have become politically cynical and financially corrupt, even as the radical elements demand a re-dedication to Maoist principles?

Meanwhile, social liberalisation is progressing apace. The once puritanical society has abandoned the drab Mao suits for more colorful and fashionable clothing.

Foreign films and other products are commonplace. Sexual love, once a forbidden topic, is now among the most popular themes in literature, music, and film. Even nightclubs and disco dancing are enjoyed by those who can afford them. Sex shops, now relatively commonplace in the cities, sell everything from pornographic videos to supposed aphrodisiacs. AIDS has accompanied sexual liberalisation; as a result, government programs now encourage the use of condoms, and sex education is offered in some schools. At the same time, the explosion of individual economic liberty and its benefits are accompanied by rising levels of vagrancy, vice, corruption, juvenile delinquency, and crime of all sorts.

Although social liberalisation is tolerated, political liberalisation clearly remains banned. Since 1989, when the leadership turned the army on thousands of youthful protesters at Tienanmen Square in Beijing demanding representative government and an end to official corruption, the authorities have continued to punish political dissidents and to steadfastly reject any suggestion that they relax their grip on the reins of power. For his part, Hu has favored democratic reforms, but so far his advocacy has been vague and his actions in this area very timid. China's pattern of insisting on economic reform and political orthodoxy has been consistently applied.

Hong Kong was returned to China by the British in 1997, and Macao, a small enclave across the Pearl River estuary from Hong Kong, was returned to China by Portugal in 1999. In each case, these former colonies have been allowed to continue their capitalistic economic practices, but a gradual political tightening appears to be occurring at the same time. Tibet, formerly an independent country but now a dissident territory of the People's Republic of China, suffers from severe political repression. And Taiwan, although still independent of the People's Republic, feels increasing pressure to reunify with its continental parent.

In China proper, various dissident movements have been suppressed. Fledgling opposition parties have been broken up. The religious movement *FalunGong*, whose doctrine is critical of the current regime, has been actively repressed. Other religious activities that the state views as politically motivated have met with persecution. Nor has the CPC ignored the political potential of new technology; Internet users in China must contend with strict rules, monitoring, and even suppression if they engage in forbidden political activity. Several political activists have been jailed for their use of the Internet. This runaway information system and powerful public opinion shaper has alarmed the government.

It is currently trying to control Internet use by technological blackouts and by arrests of Internet users who step over the censorship line. The iron rice bowl, China's social contract that promises material security in exchange for political acquiescence, still appears to be in place, albeit perhaps somewhat less firmly than before. The course of reform on which China has embarked, if completed, could modernise the country and draw it even further from the radicalism of its founders. Yet, it would be a mistake to assume that a return to Mao's extremism is impossible, for Chinese history teaches that no enemy is ever completely and finally defeated. With this in mind, let us now examine Maoist thought, which has the people accepting political domination while the party and government provide material security.

The Principles of Maoism

Mao's major contribution to Marxism-Leninism, known as Maoism or Maoist thought, undoubtedly, was adjusting it to fit Asian culture. To accomplish this goal, he made certain modifications of the theory itself, focusing on the central concept of social class. An agrarian country lacking even the small industrial base available to Russia in 1917, China was overwhelmingly rural, so Mao turned to the peasants for political strength. **Populism:** Mao and others realised that the future of the Chinese Revolution was in the hands of the peasantry. The problem of reconciling this practical reality with Marxism inspired him to develop a unique variation on the Marxist theme- populism.

Taking a page from the populists' book, Mao gave the peasants a leading position in the society. Of course, the peasants would eventually have to be proletarianised, but in the meantime their virtues were announced to the world in Maoist literature. Mao believed that the peasants' simple, pure character, unblemished by the evil influences of urban sophistication, was the bulwark of Chinese strength. Later, during the Cultural Revolution, he called on Chinese sophisticates to learn from the people, as scholars, students, managers, public officials, and townspeople were sent down that is, forced to the farm to relearn basic values through hard manual labor. Millions of people were sent to the villages to toil in the fields, disrupting their lives for a decade or more.

Perhaps demonstrating that the current Chinese leadership is not so far removed from Maoism as might be wished, it exacted the same punishment on the students

after the Tiananmen Square debacle. Thousands of students were forced to serve time on the farms, learning about the roots of China before being allowed to return to their studies. Populism poses an ideological dilemma. If the peasants are the true foundation of Chinese society, how are they to be proletarianised without destroying their positive features? Mao solved this problem by resorting to a typically Chinese but very un-Marxist idea. Much less an economic determinist than Marx, Mao argued that ideological purity was more important than economic training and that the proletarian mentality could be developed through educational as well as economic experience.

Hence, he maintained that the peasants might be proletarianised by being taught the socialist ethic, but that they need never leave the farm to complete the transformation.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): China's New Grand Strategy

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled major components of what has since become known as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a new foreign policy thrust focused on development initiatives. During an address to Nazarbayev University in the Kazakh capital, Astana, on September 7, 2013 Xi announced China's desire to "jointly build an economic belt along the Silk Road" with Central Asian partners to "deepen cooperation and expand development in the Euro-Asia region." A month later, in an address to Indonesia's parliament, China's president encouraged Southeast Asian states to work with China to develop the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Subsequently, China has put more "meat" on the bones of such aspirational statements through the identification of six core "economic corridors" linking the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road; the establishment of supporting multilateral financial institutions, such as the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) and Silk Road Fund (SRF); and the publication of an official "blueprint" by the National Development and Reform Commission for the implementation of BRI. Beijing has also backed the initiative with a considerable financial commitment, earmarking \$40 billion for the Silk Road Economic Belt, \$25 billion for the Maritime Silk Road, \$50 billion for the AIIB, and \$40 billion for the SRF. This ambitious agenda has sparked a variety of reactions among governments throughout the regions encompassed by the initiative and by external commentators and analysts. In the main, there have been three major interpretations of BRI. The first view holds that BRI is driven by Beijing's geopolitical goals to break perceived U.S. "encirclement" in the Asia-Pacific and

constrain the rise of India. A second view emphasizes the economic underpinnings of the initiative. Here, BRI is seen as a direct outgrowth of China's economic travails after the global financial crisis, notably its long-standing desire to redress economic imbalances between its coastal and interior provinces and to find outlets for excess production capacity. In this view, geopolitical gains that may come from the success of BRI are welcome but of secondary importance. Finally, others have pointed to BRI as an outgrowth of Beijing's increasing desire to augment its growing economic and strategic influence with a "soft power" narrative that presents China as an alternative leader to the global hegemony of the United States. Thus, there are two but interconnected arguments in this context. First, it suggests that BRI is clearly motivated by Beijing's desire to resolve long-term domestic, economic, and geopolitical challenges. Domestically, BRI is guided by China's ongoing state-building agenda in its traditional frontier regions (such as Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and Yunnan). Economically, BRI flows from the quest of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to ensure the ongoing economic growth on which its legitimacy depends by finding new outlets for Chinese capital and exports. Geopolitically, BRI with its focus on developing trans-Eurasian connectivity centered on China speaks to Beijing's desire to construct a viable strategic and economic alternative to the current international order. Second, BRI constitutes a grand strategy that integrates these factors in pursuit of Beijing's decades-long goal of returning to great-power status without provoking overt counter reactions from its neighbors and the United States. As such, BRI did not spring fully formed from the mind of Xi but builds on the corpus of foreign and security policy concepts bequeathed by his successors. Most significantly, BRI represents an overturning of Deng Xiaoping's famous maxim of "biding time and building capabilities." Xi's vision, embodied in BRI, posits China's continued economic development and stability as an engine of regional and global stability.

Merits of the Chinese's BRI Programme

- **Better infrastructure for better development:**

The BRI is believed will have huge impacts on infrastructure and transportation development projects in participating countries to reach it declared connectivity goals. Short-term development starts with infrastructure projects' investments that trigger huge mobilization of resources, expertise, technology and labors. Long-term development will occur as OBOR's long lasting investments opportunities will revive

economies, sponsor development and solve social issues, example is the opportunities for solving regular power outages and insufficient transportation networks for Pakistani manufacturing sectors which will result more jobs, lower consumers costs, and increased attractiveness for international investments.

- **Reduced trade time and costs:**

The BRI, is argued, will give the world a cheaper and faster transports by the establishment of global trading routes and overcoming customs check points' issues and trading barriers that increases trade time and costs through global facilitation agreements, trade barriers removal and information sharing platforms towards achieving countries standards' harmonization and certifications mutual recognition. De Soyres et al. (2018) working paper on World Bank stressed that OBOR can reduce trade times and costs for participating countries by 3.2% and 2.8% respectively, and 2.5% and 2.2% worldwide. De Soyres (2018) notes on the World Bank portal showed that shipping time is expected to decrease by an average of 1.2% across all countries in the world.

- **Increased Gross Domestic Product (GDP):**

The development of global efficient infrastructure and transportation, reduction in trade time and cost, increased trade, increased international investments will increase the economies size, transactions and growth; this will warrant global increase in GDP. Zhai (2017) Journal of Asian Economics estimates a 1.3% welfare gain of global GDP by 2030. Bird, Lebrand and Venables (2019) working paper on World Bank forecasts direct benefits of around 1.4% of GDP for Central Asia region.

- **Green and sustainable development:**

The BRI targets a green, healthy, sustainable and peaceful development with action plans for CO2 emissions reduction, environmental friendly energy sources use, biodiversity protection, increasing protected and forest areas and substantial negative impacts reduction on biodiversity and natural resources. International Renewable Energy Agency Director, Adnan Amin

(2018) highlighted BRI potential to expand electricity markets in high renewable energy potential countries other than current electricity grids interconnection and using renewable energy. Aggarwal (2017) article on Forbes showed that a \$25 billion of China's issued bonds for infrastructure investments were targeting clean and green energy, clean transport, resource conservation and recycling, pollution prevention and control and energy efficiency, with approximately equal shares of 17-21% each and 8% for ecological protection and climate change.

- **Power Balance:**

BRI is serving China's huge economic growth, thus the multipolar world with the powerful United States, European Union and China may come to balance in terms of economic power and military power. This may halt the control of core nations over international systems and reduce world conflicts especially with China massive BRI which is targeting peaceful exchange and mutual benefits. Realist theory stresses that conflicts can only be avoided by balance of powers, a world with balanced powers where peace is dominant, nation's sovereignty is respected and multiple economic prosperity chances will warrant nation's growth, development and prosperity.

Demerits of the BRI Programme

- **China's debt trap and sovereignty threats in Asia:**

The massive OBOR projects requires a huge financing through loans and china has the solution, EURObiz (2019) reported that 89% of BRI projects was financed through china's owned banks, less than 10% financed through Silk Road Fund, the AIIB and NDB. The issue is the debts itself as BRI countries are vulnerable to a sustainable debt traps like Sri Lanka which has a 82% debt to GDP ratio in 2017 as per EMR report (2018), it suffered sovereignty issues as they struggled to fulfill their financial obligations for Hambotonta Port infrastructure development, consequently it was forced to abandon 70% of the port and lease it for 99 years to China as the owner of financing banks. Kuo and Kommenda (2018) on the guardian discussed china's concessions' acquisition through debt traps like the 2011 acquisition of 1,158km² Tajikistani disputed territory for deleting their debts. Reuters

(2018) reported IMF warnings about how problematic increase in debt causes financial difficulties high debts countries. Other states are severely indebted to China for BRI infrastructure development loans and vulnerable to potential sovereignty issues.

- **China's neo-imperial and neo-mercantile expansion in Africa**

African nations are considerably subjected to China's imperial and neo-colonial expansions. Bräutigam (2011) showed china's declared foreign countries aids with a US\$37.7 billion in 2009, a 46.7% were directed to Africa and targeting unlimited cheap access of African natural resources. Hitchens (2008) discussed expanded Chinese influence in Africa which sponsors corruption directly or indirectly to gain cheap African resources in exchange of Chinese products. Tull (2006) showed that China reaching these targets by targeting countries with difficult political transitions like Zimbabwe by supporting democratic transitions claims, or in mineral-rich countries like Angola by supporting socio-economic development claims or in post-conflict states like Liberia in peacekeeping claims to extended violent conflicts.

In recent years, more African countries have joined the Belt and Road Initiative. The strategic location of some countries, such as Kenya, Tanzania, and Somalia (the shore of the Indian Ocean), as well as Egypt and Djibouti (the shore of the Mediterranean Sea), make them natural BRI partners because they connect Africa, Asia, and Europe. In addition, for these countries and many others on the African continent, joining the BRI can help them meet urgent infrastructural needs for their development.

Of all the direct and indirect benefits of closer China-Africa cooperation in BRI projects, trade growth and job creation are perhaps the most salient. More trade – both intra-continental and international – means more jobs for the African economies, which are currently experiencing a very high unemployment level among recent graduates. Providing jobs to these graduates will lead to more social stability and sustainable development.

Though BRI progress has been made in infrastructure construction as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements, there are daunting challenges that cannot be ignored. The four major challenges and suggestions on how to minimize or overcome them are as follows:

a. Political Risks:

Political risks are, arguably, the biggest challenge to the BRI in Africa. Social and political unrest in Africa may fundamentally change a nation's favorable attitude toward BRI projects and Chinese investments in general. For example, every country in East Africa except for Tanzania experiences political instability during election years. Pre- and post-election violence leads to death and significant socio-economic damage. During election periods, many nations in the East African Community (EAC) and the Horn of Africa, including Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Eritrea, and Somalia, experience security-related challenges and cyclical political instability. Tanzania has managed to avoid political instability due to policies designed and implemented by its leader and "independence hero," Julius Nyerere, who utilized "inclusion" and "political leadership succession mechanisms" to prevent inter-ethnic violence and coup d'états for political succession. Following Tanzania's example, other nations could successfully deal with the political instability challenge that may potentially hinder the development of BRI infrastructure projects. When political risks are addressed, the BRI projects should be protected from all unnecessary spending that makes the projects too expensive for recipient countries.

b. Runaway Costs:

The second major challenge related to the rising cost of BRI infrastructure projects is corruption. Certain countries have already started canceling or reconsidering a number of projects. Both African and non-African countries have carried out investigations to find out reasons behind the very high cost of projects. For instance, in 2018, Sierra Leone called off a China-funded airport project at the cost of \$318 million out of debt-burden concerns. The project had been commissioned by former Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma. Similar projects cancellation occurred in Malaysia, where the newly elected government led by former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad suspended BRI related projects. The suspended projects are related to the East-Coast Rail Link and the Singapore-Kuala Lumpur High-Speed Railway for high costs, uncertain economic viability,

and corruption allegations. To ensure more transparency and avoid unnecessary spending, procurement and public tendering have attracted a lot of interest in the Chinese model of project implementation. It is argued that the opaque nature of many BRI negotiations lacks competitive bidding and prevents public and private sector scrutiny.

c. Inflated Expectations:

The risk of overestimating benefits from BRI projects affects the successful implementation of the project. Overestimating the positive impacts or benefits of infrastructural projects can result in high exploitation or inadequate use of said infrastructure. For instance, though not in Africa, Chinese-funded Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka is claimed to be highly unexploited, with no container traffic; and because Sri Lanka could not pay the loans, it had to give China a 99-year lease for debt relief. Mattala Rajapaska International Airport, also in Sri Lanka, has often been referred to as “the World’s emptiest international airport.” Originally planned for a million travelers annually, it serves mere 10 to 20 travelers daily. In Sierra Leone, the Mamamah International Airport funding was called off for economic unprofitability. These examples highlight the need for high-quality planning for economic purposes. There is a need to take a long-term perspective on BRI development in Africa, both in terms of the amount of capital invested and the extent to which new projects stimulate the local economy. The aforementioned risks and challenges must be handled by both the African and the Chinese stakeholders to ensure a bright future for the BRI on the African continent.

d. Policy Barriers:

Economic and policy barriers have often been cited as one of the challenges in Africa and other developing countries, meaning that the BRI’s potential benefits are not guaranteed. These include cross-border delays, long and tedious procedures in customs and foreign direct investment (FDI) restrictions, which are more prevalent in BRI economies than in other nations. For instance, World Bank data indicate that while it takes an average of 10 days to import among G7 countries, it takes an average of 21 days to export goods to Africa. In terms of industrial land access, foreign firm start-ups, commercial disputes

arbitration, and FDI policies, BRI economies are more cumbersome and have more restrictions compared with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) economies. For example, in Kenya, the process of starting up a business requires rounds of procedures and documentation (payment of taxes, licensing, among others), and often encounters extensive transaction periods, occasionally overlapping title deeds, and corruption.

Unless complementary policy reforms are carried out, infrastructure investment returns are likely to be low or even negative. A report by the World Bank concludes that the BRI could increase trade among participating countries by up to 4.1 percent, and these impacts would be tripled, on average, if reforms in trade match the advancement in transport infrastructure. It is important for Africa to carry out economic and policy reforms that will support its development path as well as the current BRI's infrastructure development. Furthermore, careful and realistic analysis of the projects' returns should be thoroughly conducted. Lack of such analysis to clearly indicate economic viability often leads to the risk of overestimating projects' benefits.

The BRI was intended to connect various parts of the world. While it faces objections from different countries, in the African context, it has a significant impact as it provides an alternative source of development capital for the continent. For the past two decades, China has been doing business with Africa with the aim of balancing power-relationships between the continents. The role of the initiative in providing development opportunity at the global, regional, and local levels makes the BRI highly acceptable in Africa. If BRI African nations harmonize their development plans to achieve complementarity and compatibility between policies and infrastructure implementation, the benefits would be even more significant. Africa suffers from insufficient and poorly developed infrastructure that impedes trade growth. Thus, investing in trade and transport-related infrastructure such as airports, railways, ports, roads, and other connections ought to remain a priority, and adequate financing should be availed toward this goal. Thus, Africa as a continent should come up with a clearly defined BRI response strategy to

strengthen its bargaining power and also ensure that assistance and investment from China are aligned to the national and regional strategies. Overall, the BRI provides a platform to cement China-Africa cooperation. Improvement of physical transport infrastructure and connectivity is significant; however, the present and possible challenges need to be addressed. Political risks, rising project costs, economic and policy barriers, and more, need to be addressed and streamlined across Africa to facilitate successful infrastructural projects implementation and reap the expected benefits. In addition to policy barriers, Africa's political instability during election seasons needs to be addressed, for inter-ethnic violence and the use of force to ascend to power leads to severe socioeconomic damage and loss of lives. Inclusion of all ethnic groups in the management of national affairs and peaceful political succession at the top leadership level constitute key policies to stabilize nations that are involved in BRI infrastructure projects.

The rising cost of BRI projects is another major challenge that needs urgent attention for the benefit of China and countries cooperating in these projects. Transparency at all stages of these projects, from project negotiation, procurement and public tendering, to implementation, has to increase to avoid embezzlement of project-allocated funds. There is also a need for in-depth due-diligence exercises and strong partnerships to overcome these challenges. Over the past few years, China has provided ever more funding and resources for BRI projects. However, the implementation cannot be China's sole responsibility. Strong partnership and cooperation among Chinese and African enterprises is a prerequisite for the BRI's success in Africa.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Although many Marxist experiments have recently failed, it is important to study them and the few Marxist societies that still exist. The challenges of Marxism in respect of the differential routes that was followed in Russia and China following the collapse of the Berlin walls shows the inescapability of centrality of people and environment in shaping the direction any developmental trajectory based on received principles/dogmas. The different paths followed by the two most powerful

Socialist countries in the world show that doctrines are never enough to get the necessary results we desire in any venture at any point in time.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have perused the experiences of Russia and China as prototypes of practical application of Marxian theory in real life situations and have learnt that the theoretical position of Marxism differs significantly from formulation to implementation. That most projections in Marxism are utopia and the egoism in man cannot be entirely removed, may be at best reduced but cannot be eliminated in its entirety. Today the first successful socialist country (USSR) is gone; and China remains afloat because of its capacity and capability to adapt and regenerate socialist principles within the context of a uni-polar world that thrives on neoliberalism.

Today China is predicated and is being run on the principle dubbed as the iron rice bowl which is a mixture of democratic centralism and market liberalism. The economy is liberalised while efforts are sustained in stifling the sphere of politics and governance. In china politics and governance is tightly controlled and managed leaving no space for political liberalisation.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain the failure of Marx's prediction in Europe.
- ii. How does Mao's position differ from Lenin's?

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Why do you think Socialism failed in Russia?.
2. What factors are responsible for the resilience of Chinese Socialism?

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SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain Marxism-Leninism.
- ii. Compare and contrast revisionism and orthodox Marxism.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Communism is utopia. Explain.
2. Discuss the major ideological and practical contributions that Lenin made to Marxist thought.

UNIT 6 AFRICAN SOCIALISM IN PERSPECTIVE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 African Socialism in Perspective
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As many African countries gained political independence in the 1960s and 1970s, there was the desire by the new African states to embrace a socio-political cum economy system outside the one preached by American capitalism and Russian Socialism. The adoption of an *Afrocentric* ideology in the name of African Socialism became prominent. This socialist ideology was based on the mid – 20th century ideas of central planning/state controlled economy that is guided by African values, norms and customs as well as mutual aid and trust for members of the community. Thus, similar forms of African socialism were introduced inter alia in Ghana by Kwame Nkrumah, (Scientific Socialism), Tanzania by Julius Nyerere (Ujamaa), Zambia by Kenneth Kaunda (Zambian Humanism) and Zaire by Mobutu Sese-Seko (Mobutism).

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- examine the motivations for African socialism
- highlight the dynamics of African socialism.

4.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 African Socialism

African socialism is a belief in sharing economic resources in a “traditional” African way, as distinct politician of the 1950s and 1960s professed their support for African socialism, although definition and interpretations of this term varied considerably. This is because African socialism has not been the product of on single thinker. One example of a definition of African socialism was phrasal as a metaphor by the Graft Johnson from the university of Ghana, in 1992. The African extended system large Providing the motor for a drive towards socialism there is generally to be found a conviction that man's creative potential can only be fully realised in a society which transcends the cultural centrality of 'possessive individualism' and in which a signal measure of economic and social equality, the preconditions for genuine political democracy, are guaranteed.

In the best of socialist intellectual work, however, socialists have been equally interested in economic development and in the full release of the potential for growth of the productive forces in a society. Within this tradition it was perhaps Marx who most dramatically fused the concern for economic development and the concern for the elimination of class inequalities in his presentation of the socialist case. He argued that the inequalities of the bourgeois society of his day increasingly meant that the potential of the available industrial machine would not be realised: inequality and muffled productive forces thus went hand in hand.

Certain class inequalities have sometimes proved to be historically necessary to foster the full release of the potential for growth of the social productive forces; this is too obvious a fact to require emphasis. But the existence either of some necessary *dichotomy* between 'development' and 'equality' or, on the contrary, of

some necessary link between the two cannot be postulated a priori. It has to be ascertained empirically through an analysis of the relationship between the class structure of a society and its economic development at each historical juncture. A sophisticated socialist case in contemporary Africa must therefore fuse a concern for played in the development equation by the existence and emergence of classes and groups with differential interests and access to benefits.

Moreover, as will be argued in this article, one does in fact find the productive potential of African societies, and therefore their development and structural transformation, constrained by the present pattern of world and domestic economy and society; the available surplus is ill utilized drained away, for example, as the repatriated profits of overseas firms or consumed by self-indulgent domestic elites- and the generation of a larger surplus from, for example, an aroused and mobilised peasantry discouraged. As this suggests, it is the pattern of current inequality, in particular, which tends thus to hamper a rise in productivity.

A viable socialist strategy directed towards these twin concerns will have to face dilemmas of choice in three closely related policy areas. On the level of the international economic and social system, one confronts the spectre of international capitalism and a grave inequality of financial power, realities which, as will be shown, can be major constraints on general development. On the domestic scene, one faces the problem of the relationship between 'town', the centre of administration and of such industrialisation as takes place, and 'country', an interaction from which real development could spring but which all too often defines the split between unequal and unconnected spheres of a society falling short of genuine transformation. Finally, one has the problem of agricultural development itself in a rural sphere where inequalities can and do begin to emerge, although, at least in the short run, these have a rather more ambiguous impact on the pace of development than the other inequalities already hinted at. It is the absence of a really hard-headed look at the actual pattern of inequalities within contemporary Africa and in the world at large and at the direct relationship of this pattern to the trajectory of growth and development itself which explains the superficial character of much of the gloss on 'African Socialism' presented by its practitioners.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The present heterogeneous and "multi-tribal" character of African societies reflects the circumstances of Africa's colonization and partition, managed without regard to either the interests or the natural divisions and institutions of its peoples. The administrative and political infrastructure devised by colonial powers so as effectively and economically to govern colonies was "feudal", both in its basic principles and organization, as well as in its assimilation and amplification of the pre-colonial feudal patterns of authority. The colonial "state" inherited by the new African leaders is essentially no more than an administrative convenience and a legal fiction. Their concern therefore is to "modernize" it, to "democratize" its structure and procedures, and above all to make it an efficient instrument, for purposes both of nation-building and of "national development"; to do and achieve all this, *without* forfeiting at the same time their own authority at the hands of changes and forces they have themselves inaugurated. The fear of capitalism made African leaders to embrace socialism after the attainment of political independence.

6.0 SUMMARY

The bottom-line of African Socialism is that government should centrally plan the development of the African societies in accordance with the prevailing socio-cultural values of the various peoples of Africa. It would be wrong to write the history of African socialism purely in terms of its extremities whether in terms of the dependency theory, which explains underdevelopment simply in terms of the loss of surplus in the colonial and neo colonial economy or solely in terms of what it failed to achieve in economic terms.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Socialism was embraced by the pro-marxist African leaders at independence with varied impacts in their states. Discuss.
- ii. What were the challenges faced in the implementation of African socialism?

7.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the implications of African Socialism on African development.
2. Analyse the position that Socialism in its present form is likely to remain a viable ideology for Africa to explore.

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