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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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COURSE TITLE: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MARXISM

**MAIN
CONTENT**

POL 315: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MARXISM

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MODULE 1

UNIT 1 LAW OF TRANSFORMATION OF QUANTITY TO QUALITY

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 Assignments

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1.0 INTRODUCTION:

One need not be a Marxist to believe in economic determinism. 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 the dialectic 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 understand these concepts:

1. Dialectics (Hegelian and Marxian)
2. Transition from quantity to quality as 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, cocoa etc. expressed as percentages in tons.

Quantity characterizes 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? E.g. 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). But 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 versa vice 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 relativized 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 100⁰c, 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; lead to 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, and 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 laws 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:

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. We 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 (SAE)

1. Describe how transformations of quantity to quality propel change in nature and society.
2. Identify the linkage between quantitative and qualitative changes.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Explain the transformation of quantity to quality as the basis of change in society
2. Does changes from quantity to quality lead to development all the time

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MODULE 1

UNIT 2. LAW OF UNITY AND CONFLICT OF OPPOSITES

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 Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

What is the motor that triggers change and Marx became curious to find an answer to this, and he made both 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 result in revolution.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

The unit's objectives are as follows:

1. Everything in life and in nature is binary
2. Conflict is the essence of being and is inevitable
3. 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 tight- indissoluble 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 existence, that is the one exist 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 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 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 the 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 the Unity, or essential identity of opposites. Right or utopian socialism seek to make use of this thesis of Hegel's 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 cease. 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 labor (3) Imperial powers and their colonies
- (4) Developed and developing countries 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 labor 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 (SAE)

1. Explain productive forces as basis of contradictions in society
2. Illustrate the inevitability of conflict in society

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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

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‘On the question of dialectics’ - Lenin Dialectics of Nature- Engels

MODULE 1

UNIT 3. LAW OF NEGATION OF NEGATION

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 Assignments

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 result in a contradiction that leads to the production of a new society.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this unit the following are our objectives:

1. Negation of negation presents as a dynamic process
2. It is the heart and soul of progress both in nature and society
3. Negation of negation ensures continuity.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Law of Negation of Negation:

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 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 take their place. Then the plant flowers and finally bear 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 to 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 (SAE)

1. Describe the implications of negation of negation for nature and society.
2. Explain how negation can be avoidable in society.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 1

UNIT 4: HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Historical Materialism

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this unit we should be able to appreciate that:

1. History is dynamic and that there is a logic governing the movement of history.
2. Conflict in nature and in society is inevitable.
3. Class struggles are inevitable and are usually resolved when one class conquers and dominate the rest.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

The ideas of Karl Marx were fostered by three major factors characterizing nineteenth- century Europe. First, the Industrial Revolution had created previously unimagined levels of production, even as the methods of producing and distributing wealth saw a tiny number of people enjoying sumptuous lives while the vast majority of people toiled and lived in inhumane conditions. Workers left their poor but relatively wholesome lives in the countryside only to find themselves confronted by the humiliation of depersonalized sweatshops surrounded by utterly squalid urban slums.

Second, with the 1815 defeat of Napoleon, Europe's monarchs, hoping to preserve their antiquated privileges, inflicted on their subjects the most repressive political conditions experienced up to that time. Attempting to reassemble Humpty Dumpty, they tried to return Europe to its pre-Napoleonic status and restored the ancient regimes, ignoring the goals of the French Revolution. Third, previous advances in science fostered in the nineteenth century's intellectual elite an exaggerated confidence that science would lead to the solution of all human problems. Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) and Charles Darwin (1809-1882) had developed explanations of the laws governing the physical universe and biological development, thus giving rational explanations for things that previously could be explained only by fables, myths, and fairy tales.

Reveling in this liberation from the darkness of irrationalism many nineteenth-century thinkers, including Jeremy Bentham, Herbert Spencer, Auguste Comte, and Sigmund Freud, sought to discover the laws governing human behavior, and to use that knowledge to improve political and social conditions. Karl Marx, chafing under the heavy heel of monarchical oppression, and bitterly offended by the greed and exploitation he saw in capitalism, became a leading figure among these "social scientists." Wretched as the social and political conditions had become, Marx was still optimistic about the future of humanity.

Marx and Engels saw people in historical terms. Individuals, they believed, were destined for freedom and creativity but had been prevented from developing completely because they were slaves to their own basic needs. Before the industrial Revolution, human productivity had not been great enough to provide a sufficient supply of the necessities of life to free people from compulsive toil.

For the Marxists the most common and durable source of factions (political adversaries) has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors and those who are debtors, fall under similar discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divided them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views.

In the historical perspective of Marx people are regarded 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: they 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 and 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 idea of dialectical change was developed by the German philosopher Hegel. He applied it to the history of human society, and in particular to the realm of ideas. He saw historical change as a dialectical movement of human ideas and thoughts. Hegel believed society is essentially an expression of these thoughts. Thus, in terms of the dialectic, conflict between incompatible ideas produces new concepts that provide the basis for social change.

Marx materialism- a reversal of the dialectical idealism of Hegel rejected the priority Hegel gave to thoughts and ideas (thesis- antithesis- synthesis).

Dialectical materialism presumes the primacy of economic determinants in history. He argued that the source of change lies in contradictions - in the economic system in particular, and in society in general. As a result of the priority he gives to economic factors - to material life. Marx's view of history is often referred to as dialectical materialism. Since people's ideas are primarily a reflection of the social relationships of economic production, they do not provide the main source of change. It is in contradictions and conflict in the economic system that the major dynamic for social change lies. Since all parts of society are interconnected, however, it is only through a process of interplay between these parts that change occurs.

History begins when humans actually produce their means of subsistence, when they begin to control nature. At a minimum, this involves the production of food and shelter. Marx argued: 'The first historical act is, therefore, 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. The nature of humanity and the nature of society as a whole derive primarily from the production of material life.

In communal society (communalism) every member of society produced both for themselves and for society as a whole; there were no conflicts of interest between

individuals and groups. However, with the emergence of private property and, in particular, private ownership of the means of production, the fundamental contradiction of human society was created. 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 others, 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 history, people are largely unaware of the contradictions that beset their societies. Through dialectical materialism was developed the fundamental Marxist premise that the history of society is the inexorable history of class struggle. According to this premise, a specific class could rule only so long as it best represented the economically productive forces of society; when it becomes outmoded it would be destroyed and replaced and from this continuing dynamic process a classless society would eventually emerge. In modern capitalist society, the bourgeoisie - capitalist class had destroyed and replaced the unproductive feudal nobility and had performed the economically creative task of establishing the new industrial order. The stage was thus set for the final struggle between the bourgeoisie, which had completed its historic role, and the proletariat, composed of the industrial workers, or makers of goods, which had become the true productive class. For Marx history is a cycle of boom and doom of the contending social forces in society.

4.0 CONCLUSION;

The whole history -past epochs is the history of class struggles, based on material interest upon which all contradictions between the classes are to be resolved. Working class should conquer the bourgeoisie political power and this was the revolutionary force in history that Marx and Engels discovered.

5.0 SUMMARY:

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. To the Marxists, the material life derives from the world of nature. Thus, in its law governing conception of nature and its essence, its outlook of the world is dialectical that is something dynamic, constantly in motion and changing. Changes take place in definite patterns in a continuous motion and through conflicting or opposing tendencies in every process in nature and in society. Marxist theory essentially sees the world as an objective reality flowing from the productive forces and the relations of production.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. Explain the concept of historical materialism as the philosophical basis of Marxism.
2. Evaluate the peculiarity of materialism to Marxism.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

1. How relevant is historical materialism in understanding the contemporary capitalist society.
2. Evaluate Marx position on materialism as the only variable propelling change in society.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man-Engels

MODULE 1

UNIT 5. HISTORICAL EPOCH

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Historical epoch.

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

The history of society is the history of struggle between classes. The epochs are marked by two hostile camps standing face to face (oppressors and the oppressed) in a perpetual war with each other. Marx identified (1) communal society (2) slave owning (3)

feudal (4) capitalistic (5) socialistic (6) communistic. Except for communal and communistic all others are stratified.

2.0 OBJECTIVES: the objectives in this unit are to understand the meaning of:

1. epoch or era
2. Class as the essence of change in any epoch
3. Understanding the dialectic (class struggle) as the motion of history

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 HISTORICAL EPOCH:

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 prehistory and provides the only example of a classless society. From then on, all societies are divided into two major classes: masters and slaves in ancient society, lords and serfs in feudal society and capitalists and wage laborers in capitalist society.

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 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. 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 full-time 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 labor.

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 is the dynamic of change and progress in society.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE SAE

1. Identify the basic characteristics of the capitalist epoch.
2. What does communalism have in common with communism?

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Identify the drawbacks in feudalism.
2. Communism is an idealistic stage. Discuss

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MODULE 2

UNIT. 1 ALIENATION

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Alienation

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

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:

Working through this unit successfully, you will be equipped with the capacity to appreciate Marxian concept of alienation in political analysis-

1. Alienation as a distortion of reality
2. Alienation as a veil of false consciousness
3. as a propeller of the market economy

3.0 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. Second, 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. Third, and here Marx is truly paradoxical, the capitalist is criticized for mechanizing 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 mechanization 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 a 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 externalize 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.

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 characterize 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 realize that the situation in which they find themselves is human made and therefore subject to change by human action.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. How did factory system escalate alienation in the early stages of capitalism?
2. Alienation is a reflection of Marx's humanism discuss.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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

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MODULE 2

UNIT. 2 IDEOLOGY AND FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS

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 Assignments

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 organization. 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 realization.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

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

Ideology is applied in two contexts:

- (1) As a set of ideas which are accepted to be true by a particular group, party or nation without further examination; and
- (2) As 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.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1. IDEOLOGY AS 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 organization. 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 realization.

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.

The figure below illustrates

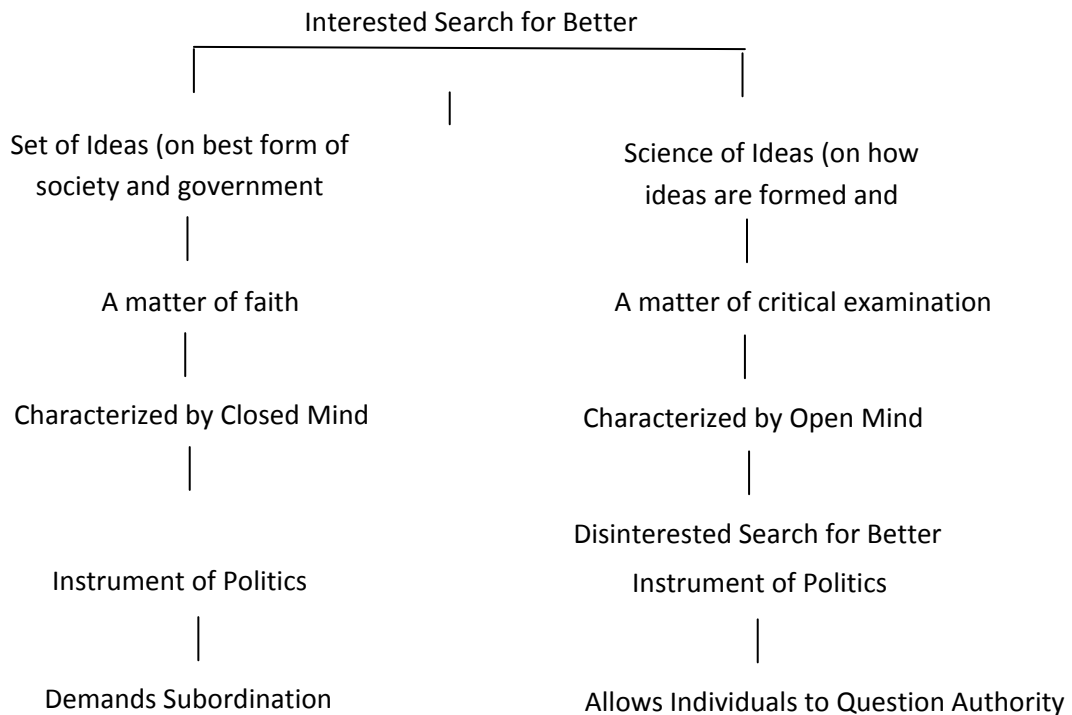


Figure 1. Adapted from Gauba, (2007:13)

For Marx Ideology is a distortion of reality, a false picture of society. In view of the contradictions that beset historical societies, it appears 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 infrastructure. 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 infrastructure 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 monopolize 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 laborer 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 (SAE)

1. Describe the place of ideology in today's world
2. 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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MODULE 2

UNIT 3. BASE AND SUPERSTRUCTURE

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 Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Marx saw all societies as composed of two basic parts: the foundation 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 understand the following:

1. Societies are by their nature stratified.
2. Stratification is the basis of exploitation and domination
3. 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

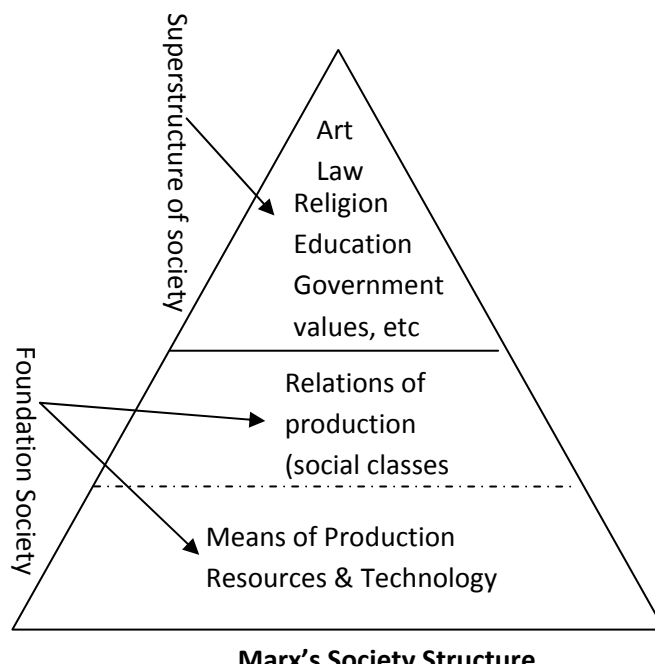


Fig.2

- 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, labor 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 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 is 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 super-structure is composed of all nonmaterial 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. (See adapted Figure. 2)

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 nationalize these productive resources (take them into public ownership) and to manage them on behalf of all society's members.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. Explain the linkage between economic substructure and the superstructure of your society.
2. Describe the characteristics of economic substructure in capitalism

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Evaluate the position of the material base in any society

2. Explain how the superstructure can create false consciousness

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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Anti-During- Engels

MODULE 2

UNIT. 4 STATE POWER AND THE SUPERSTRUCTURE

1.0 introduction

2.0 objectives

3.0 Main content

3.1 State power and the superstructure

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 tutor-marked assignments

7.0 references/further reading

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 understand the following:

1. The state is an instrument of class rule
2. The state is a product of class differentiation
3. Political power is merely organized power for domination

3.0 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 organized 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 recognize 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 socialize 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 organized power of one class for oppressing another.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXE (SAE)

1. How do the superstructures promote bourgeois interest in capitalist society?
2. Identify the roles of the substructure in society

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 2

UNIT. 5 VANGUARD PARTY AND PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

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 Assignments

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 understand the following:

1. The meaning and roles of the vanguard party
2. Proletarian revolution
3. 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 fore front. 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 apologetes 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 organizer and director of the proletarian revolution. In *What Is to Be Done?*, published in 1902, Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov - better known as Lenin, future 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.

Recognized 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 fossilized 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.

(b) 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. In 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 (SAE)

1. Explain the self serving interest of the vanguard party in socialist revolution .
2. Explain the dictatorship of the proletariat.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS:

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 3

UNIT. 1 EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Exploitation and Oppression

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

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 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 understand:

1. That inequality in society is a product of social organization rather than biological differentiation.
2. Have an understanding of 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 materialize. 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 mechanized 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 depersonalization of labor 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 rationalized 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 worked hard. 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 must 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 mist 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 out lived 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 organization 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 characterized 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 cold wars and a hostile east/west divide between socialist and capitalist camps.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. Explain the connections between scarcity and exploitation.
2. 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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MODULE 3

UNIT 2. UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Utopian Socialism

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

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 understand that:

1. Egoism is inherent in man.
2. Utopian socialism is pervasive and attractive
3. Some efforts were 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 recognized 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 criticized 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. Lassalle 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 realize 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 unionize, 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 realized 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 nationalization 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 centralized 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 lionized 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 (SAE)

1. Identify the basic characteristics of utopian socialism.
2. Utopian socialism is dead. Discuss

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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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MODULE 3

UNIT 3. SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objective

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Scientific Socialism:

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Readings

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 understand

1. The nature and origins of scientific socialism
2. Its logic and pervasiveness.
3. The outcomes and challenges.

3.0 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 realize it in practice. Utopians criticized 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 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 industrialization 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 centralize 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 centralize 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 proletariat 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 (SAE)

1. Evaluate scientific socialism as a tool for social analysis
2. Compare scientific socialism with the idealists

6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT

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

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MODULE 3

UNIT 4: CLASS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Class:

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

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 understand:

1. Meaning of class
2. Class consciousness and struggle
3. Class in itself and a class for itself

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 it entails of the development of human society In terms of the materialist forces at work and what bring 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 realization of the nature of exploitation. Members of a class then develop a common identity, recognize their shared interests and unite, so creating class solidarity. The final stage of class consciousness and class solidarity is reached when members realize 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, realizing that the gap between their interests and those of the bourgeoisie was unbridgeable, would rise up, overthrow their oppressors, 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 realized 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 contradictions, 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 SAE:

1. Identify the uniqueness of Marxian conception of class.
- 2 what role does class consciousness play in the struggles of classes

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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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MODULE 3

UNIT 5. SOCIALIST THEORY AND THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Socialist theory and the working class

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Basically historical materialism 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:

The objectives in this unit are:

1. Demonstrate Socialist theory and its relevance
2. Socialist theory's impact on the working class
3. 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 hitherto 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 stabilize 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 utilized as a commodity in the service of capital. However, the feudal relations of production, which involved landed property with serf labor 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.

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 polarization 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 polarization 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 realizing how versatile and pragmatic the capitalist system could be, and he failed to appreciate how astonishingly productive industrialization 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 criticized 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 (SAE)

1. Identify the uniqueness of Marx historical analysis
2. Describe the basics of Marxist theory.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)

1. Identify 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 FOUR

UNITE 1: CAPITALIST ECONOMY

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Capitalist economy

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

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 are expected to familiarize yourself with the Marxian concept of capitalism theoretically and practically in political discourses.

1. Capitalist economy as marked by increased productivity
2. Capitalism as exploitation and oppression
3. Creation of two hostile camps –proletariat and bourgeoisie.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 CAPITALIST ECONOMY:

Rooted in the Industrial Revolution, socialism's origins reach 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 rationalized, 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 summarized 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 maximizing 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 organize 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 **pauperization**.

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 characterized 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 (SAE)

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

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Can capitalism be jettisoned in today's world?
- 2 identify how we can eliminate competition in capitalism

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 4

UNIT 2 MODE AND RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION

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 Assignments

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:

This unit will demonstrate the importance placed on:

1. Production and the centrality of labor
2. Ownership of means of production
3. Relations of production

3.0 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, while Marxists argue that production is more important than market and Marxists contend 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 co-existence 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 (SAE)

1. The mode of production determines the character of society. Discuss
2. Identify the link between mode of production and relations of production.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS:

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

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 4

UNIT 3. MARX THEORIES OF VALUES

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Marx theories of value- Commoditization, reification, labor power,

Use and exchange value, surplus value and Capitalist primitive accumulations.

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this unit we highlight the importance of these concepts towards understanding Marxist political economy-

1. Reification
2. Commoditization
3. Labor power
4. Use and exchange value
5. Surplus value and primitive accumulation of capital

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 MARX THEORIES OF VALUE:

Reification, Commoditization, labor 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 means the thingification of things as 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, i.e. 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) COMMODITIZATION:

Is the transformation of goods and services, as well as ideas or other entities that normally may not be considered goods into a commodity? Commoditization is used to describe the process by which something which does not have an economic value is assigned a value and commoditization shows how market values can replace other social values. It describes the transformation and marketization 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) LABOR 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.

Labor 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 labor-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 equals 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 a 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, 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 might 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 monopolize 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. First it relates to the form of accumulation that takes place in pre-capitalist social formations including feudal societies and non-capitalist. Second 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 realization 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 conceptualization 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 industrialized 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 industrialized 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.

Second, 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 comprador bourgeoisie 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, commoditization, 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 (SAE)

1. Reification and commoditization mask exploitation. Discuss
2. Explain the expropriation of values and oppression in capitalism

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 4

UNIT 4: MARXISM AFTER MARX

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 Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

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.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the unit you should understand the meaning of:

1. Orthodox Marxism
2. Revisionism
3. Marxism- Leninism

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 MARXISM AFTER MARX:

Orthodox Marxism Guided at first by Engels himself, the orthodox Marxists was led by Karl Kautsky (1854-1938) after Engels's death in 1895. Kautsky was a distinguished scholar, but his political acumen did not match his academic skills and he led his followers into a hopeless dilemma.

As the name implies, the orthodox Marxists clung rigidly to Marxist theory and resisted change to it. Such single-minded devotion to a set of ideas stifled imaginative thinking, ultimately spelling its doom among intellectuals and practical politicians alike.

Looking forward to the revolution that would end the capitalist state forever, Kautsky's followers refused to cooperate in social reform with non socialist governments. This attitude badly weakened the orthodox position. Depending on the workers for support, the Kautskyists brought on their own failure by opposing programs that would improve the proletariat's lot.

Desperately needing legislation on maximum hours, minimum wages, working safety, and social insurance, and caring little about the expected utopia following the proletarian revolution, the workers abandoned the orthodox Marxists for more practical political parties. Forced by the pressure of events to retreat inch by inch from his inflexible position, during the last two decades of his life Kautsky supported liberal reforms and admitted that revolution might not be necessary after all. Eclipsed by the other two socialist schools and driven from his adopted home in Vienna into exile in Amsterdam by the Nazi annexation of Austria, Kautsky died a pauper in 1938.

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 organized 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. But 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. Galvanized 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 realized. 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, dialectic materialism, predicted a proletarian revolution that never occurred. Indeed, as the revisionists pointed out, the conditions of labor 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 rationalization 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 centralization 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 realize 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 said: 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 authorized 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 industrialized 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 characterized 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.

4.0 CONCLUSION:

The death of Marx created a situation in which the socialist movements no longer enjoy the guidance of a single dominant thinker. The resulting ambiguity encouraged creativity, and eventually three distinct socialist doctrines emerged: orthodox Marxism, revisionism, and Marxism-Leninism and many more in latter times.

5.0 SUMMARY:

The first socialist revolution occurred in Russia in October 1917 against the theoretical and practical postulations of Marxism. Bolsheviks revolution came in contrast to the proletarian revolution envisaged by Marxists. The proletarian revolution is yet to occur in Europe which was expected to lead based on its level of industrialization that was supposed to produce the necessary conditions for proletarian revolutions. Following Marx death Marxism have been interpreted and adapted in so many ways and 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, dialectic materialism, predicted a proletarian revolution that never occurred. 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 characterized by human harmony.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. Explain Marxism-Leninism.
2. Compare and contrast revisionism with orthodox Marxism.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

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

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 4

UNIT 5: 20TH CENTURY PRACTICE OF MARXISM (RUSSIA AND CHINA)

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 20th century practice of Marxism

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Scientific socialism was conceived in Europe by Marx and Engels based on the exigencies of industrialization that took place in the 19th century. Europe was expected to midwife the socialist revolutions based on the theoretical postulations of Marxism. Paradoxically these predictions never happened, until Russia in October 1917 gave the world the first socialist revolution and subsequently china in 1949 and the political landscape of the world changed. Against the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels the first socialist revolution occurred in a semi- feudal and marginally industrialized country in Europe making Marxist predictions fortuitous till date.

2.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit exposes us to the practical challenges inherent in the application of scientific socialism in society:

1. Russia (USSR)
2. China.
3. Africa, East Asia and South America.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 20TH CENTURY PRACTICE OF MARXISM (RUSSIA AND CHINA, AFRICA, EAST ASIA AND SOUTH AMERICA)

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 socialize 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 modernize, industrialize, and centralize the country in the 1930s. These programs called for the nationalization of all industries, trades, and occupations and included the collectivization 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 collectivization 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 industrializing 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-Stalinization program. However, in Eastern Europe the de-Stalinization 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. Realizing 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 its own 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 decentralization was needed to get things moving again. The problem was that the only people who could successfully carry out the decentralizing 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 cabal led by **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 modernize and privatize 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 organize 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 Ruralization 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. Because 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 centralized in a massive effort to catapult industrial production to new heights. The farms were also collectivized 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 liberalization 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 centralized 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-radicalize 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 counterrevolutionary 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 radicalized, 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.

On 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 organize 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. But 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 2,002, 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 liberalization 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 liberalization; 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 liberalization is tolerated, political liberalization 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 Falun Gong, 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 modernize 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 realized 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 proletarianized, 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

Tienanmen 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 proletarianized 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 proletarianized by being taught the socialist ethic, but that they need never leave the farm to complete the transformation.

PERMANENT REVOLUTION:

Easily the most radical major form of Marxism, Maoism's principle of permanent revolution makes the development of a conservative status quo impossible. Both Marx and Lenin made vague references to the concept of permanent revolution, and Leon Trotsky adopted it as a major theme. Mao, however, took the notion even beyond Trotsky's position. He argued that revolution was a means by which people achieved their goals. The road to socialism, he claimed, must be constantly punctuated with violence. This conflict, after all, is the essence of the dialectic. Great progress, born of turmoil and social disruption, is an inevitable fact of life. The same holds for socialists' relations with capitalist societies.

There can never be true peace or permanent accommodation with capitalism because the two systems diametrically contradict each other. Violent struggle between these two antagonistic systems is therefore unavoidable and can be interrupted only by brief periods of mutual restraint. Specifically taking issue with Khrushchev's doctrine, Mao contended that peaceful coexistence is a fantasy that can be pursued only at the risk of betraying the revolution itself.

THE MASS LINE:

Mao feared above all that the Chinese Revolution might fall prey to deadly institutionalization and bureaucratic inertia. Combining his theories of populism and permanent revolution, Mao rejected Lenin's elitist reliance on the party to lead the revolution. Mao maintained that the people are intrinsically red and that given the proper ideological direction; they can be trusted to strive for revolutionary goals. Accordingly, Mao resorted to the mass line, calling for the mobilization of the masses again and again, thus visiting a series of sociopolitical thunderbolts on the land. The anti landlord campaign (1949-1952), the first five-year plan (1953-1957), the Hundred Flowers Campaign (1957), the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960), and the Great Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) were major events in which the people were mobilized to accomplish the goals of the revolution. Besides these epic movements, literally hundreds of campaigns were initiated, and indeed are still being invoked, to reach desired goals: Anti-insect and anti rodent campaigns, anticorruption movements, sanitary campaigns, and tree planting campaigns are examples of the frequent phenomena of Chinese life that entreat citizens to produce more, conduct themselves properly, and stamp out hazards to health. China's great resource, and its great curse at the same time, is its immense population. The mass-line technique represents Mao's attempt to turn a disadvantage into an advantage.

THE BOURGEOISIE:

When the communists came to power in 1948-1949, the economy was in a sorry state, having been battered by almost four decades of war and revolution. Notwithstanding Marxist doctrine, Lenin's experience taught that immediate socialization of an economy could be dangerous. Though merchants and industrialists were not a large percentage of the population, Mao and his advisers knew that they were important to the economic stability of China; consequently, he decided that, at least for a time, some members of the bourgeois class had to be tolerated in China. Such a rationalization for maintaining capitalism has implications far beyond a simple pragmatic accommodation. In Mao's theory of non antagonistic contradictions, China was seen to be made up of four

harmonious classes: the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie (intellectuals, artisans, and managers), and the national bourgeoisie (patriotic merchants and business owners). These diverse classes could coexist in peace because, although different, their interests were not necessarily in conflict.

By contrast, the evil elements in society were those that exploited the Chinese people: the landlords and the imperialist capitalists (capitalists with foreign ties). In this theory Mao took a stance that is typical of leaders in countries that were formerly colonies. The question of class differences, the feature of utmost importance to Marx, was played down, and foreign exploitation, or imperialism, was stressed. Imperialism is a major theme in Maoist thought, as in Lenin's, though their definitions differ.

To combat the evils of imperialism, Mao, like Stalin, turned to nationalism. Accordingly, although never greatly appreciated, Chinese capitalists who had no foreign dealings were tolerated, whereas those with foreign connections were severely persecuted. This blatant contradiction of Marxist ideals demonstrates that nationalism and anti-imperialism are powerful factors in Mao's thought. Nonetheless, when the communists thought they had learned enough to run the privately owned enterprises themselves, even the national bourgeoisie was eliminated and the enterprises were nationalized. Interestingly enough, many divested capitalists were kept on to run the plants they formerly owned. A few even lived long enough to regain ownership of their factories during the reforms of Deng and Jiang.

GUERRILLA WARFARE:

Perhaps the Maoist idea most widely applied is the theory of guerrilla warfare. Both Marx and Lenin believed that power could be seized at a single stroke and that the violent portion of a Marxist revolution would be very short.

The two differed only on tactics, Marx believing that the revolution would happen by itself, Lenin supporting a conspiratorial approach. Mao, by contrast, argued that revolutions in less developed countries would have to be protracted over a long period.

Lacking a doctrine to justify such a revolution, Mao developed one himself, setting down its principles in his famous work (*Guerrilla Warfare*). In this book Mao divides guerrilla warfare into two basic parts: military and political.

Mao saw the military part of a guerrilla war as having three distinct phases.

During the first phase the soldiers concentrate on building secure bases, or safe zones, in which to rest, refit, and train their troops. The second phase involves numerous small groups attacking the enemy by means of ambush and other guerrilla activities. The final phase begins only after victory is certain and consists of large troop maneuvers and battles similar to those of a conventional war.

As Mao saw it, the only real objective of guerrilla warfare is to destroy the fighting capacity of the opponent. He admonished his followers to pick their fights wisely, engaging the enemy only when they were certain of victory. Territory, he averred, must never be a major goal. Indeed, only the safe zones should be defended. Any area given up to a superior force will, with cunning and patience, be regained later. This clever strategy is most clearly expressed in Mao's famous dictum, cited in (Baradat, 2006:199) When guerrillas engage a stronger enemy, they withdraw when he advances; harass him when he stops; strike when he is weary, pursue him when he withdraws.

Of greatest importance is the guerrillas' constant field position, from which they always put pressure on the enemy. Never destroyed, always there, the guerrillas give an appearance of invincibility, humiliating the enemy, who in the eyes of the people cannot defeat a ragtag band of jungle fighters.

More important to Mao than military operations were the political activities of the guerrilla force. Mao fully expected every soldier to do more teaching than fighting. The war would be won by convincing the peasants of the rightness of the cause rather than by defeating the enemy militarily. This emphasis on converting the people is in reality another expression of the peasant-centeredness of Mao's thought. His strategy, to surround the cities with the countryside, had little to do with actually holding territory. Rather, it was based on a desire to win the support of the peasants, thus isolating the enemy in the cities and making its defeat inevitable. Mao was very explicit about the

methods that should be used in converting the peasants. First, the soldiers must set a good example. Mao therefore banned the use of opium in the army and insisted that the troops treat the local people with respect. He also commanded that officers live no better than their troops. When a guerrilla unit first occupied an area, it was to gain the confidence of the peasants by helping them create local governments. This would weaken their political loyalty to the enemy. Moreover, local councils would serve as a base of local resistance if the area ever had to be left to the enemy. Next, the land was to be redistributed taken from the landlords and given to the people who farms them-thus giving the peasants an economic stake in the guerrilla cause. Also, the guerrilla soldiers would devote a good deal of time to rebuilding the villages in order to put the peasants on an equal and friendly footing with the soldiers as they shared their labor. During this process, the guerrillas would constantly teach the peasants the goals of the revolution, pointing out its benefits and reminding them of the enemy's evil policies. By such means, Mao believed, the guerrilla force would build an invincible base of support. As peasant support grew, supplies, recruits, and information about the enemy would increase, strengthening the guerrilla units. At the same time, the enemy would grow increasingly isolated and weak as the ring around the cities became tighter and tighter, eventually stifling the enemy's initiative and sapping its power. In time the pressure would become unendurable and would bring about the enemy's collapse.

Successful not only in China, Mao's ideas on guerrilla warfare were applied throughout the Developing World, including Vietnam, where the United States was defeated by a force with inferior firepower but superior strategy and commitment. Adopting Mao's military ideas to Latin American conditions, Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba and there developed a unique variant of Marxism.

OTHER PLACES (AFRICA, EAST ASIA AND SOUTH AMERICA)

Apart from the established strongholds of socialism in USSR and China there were other places that came under the influence of socialism in one form or the other. In the eastern flank of Europe which was heavily influenced by the activities of the Soviet Union during

the prosecution of the Second World War and beyond led to imposition of communism in these places (Warsaw bloc) and in Eastern Asia, South America and Africa. The nature, character and the content of the socialism practiced in these places were as variable as their geographical locations. In Cuba following the Castro's revolution of 1959 socialism emerged as the political and economic fulcrum of the state. Cuba has remained communist till date in spite of the collapse of the soviet bloc and the subsequent triumph of capitalism. In the east of Asia communism still hangs on edge in North Korea. In Africa there were countries like Tanzania, Mozambique, Libya Khadafy, and Ethiopia under Mengtsu, Egypt under Abdel Nasser all practiced one form of socialism or the other particularly in Tanzania under the reign of Julius Nyerere, there were attempts to implement a kind of utopian socialism tinged with a bit of African communalism but all attempts failed to achieve the stated goals of socialism and were subsequently abandoned. Today communism is seen as a leper who has to be approached with all sense of caution. Today the world is under the tutelage of capitalism which translates to a uni-polarity of economic and political systems.

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 still afloat because of its capacity and capability to adapt and regenerate socialist principles within the context of a uni-polar world that thrives on neo-liberalism. 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 liberalized 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 liberalization.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. Explain the failure of Marx's prediction in Europe
2. How does Mao's position differ from Lenin's?

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Attempt an account for the failure of socialism in Russia
2. What factors are responsible for the resilience of Chinese Socialism?

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MODULE 4.

UNIT 6. 21st CENTURY COMMUNISM

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

3.1 20th century practice of Marxism

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

In the course of the last two centuries a bewildering array of widely divergent socialist ideas and programs have been dreamt up: from the idealistic plans of the early utopian socialists; through the revolutionary schemes of Marx and Engels; to the more moderate proposals of social democrats. While many of these schemes remain dreams only, a few have come to transformative life: some bringing great advances in social justice and equality, others blighting lives and whole societies. There have been many incarnations of socialism but its core values and basic aims have remained remarkably consistent.

2.0 OBJECTIVES: At the end of this unit you should understand the following:

1. The state of Marxism in 21st century
2. Adaptive capabilities of socialism and
3. Its resilience

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 21ST CENTURY COMMUNISM:

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 mobilized 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 nationalization are perhaps even greater than its economic problems. Of all the socialist societies, only the communists saw total socialization 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 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 recognize 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 equalizing characteristics of socialism are central to our understanding of it.

socialism 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

Neoliberal 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 self-delusion. 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.

4.0 CONCLUSION:

Marxism offers a general explanation of society as a whole, and as a result is sometimes known as macro-theories. They regard society as a system; hence they are sometimes referred to as system theories hence they tend to see human behavior as shaped by the system. From a Marxist viewpoint, behavior is ultimately determined by the economic infrastructure. In the final analysis these three processes - the obliteration of the

differences in labor, the pauperization of the working class, and the depression of the intermediate strata into the proletariat - will result in the polarization of the two major classes and becomes the hallmark of capitalism.

5.0 SUMMARY:

To sum up, socialism is much more than an economic system. It goes far beyond the socialization of the economy and the redistribution of wealth. It foresees a completely new relationship among individuals based on a plentiful supply of material goods. The goal is a completely new social order in which human cooperation is the basis of conduct and productivity.

Furthermore, socialists argue that the elimination of material hardships will relax human tensions as never before, creating a much more pleasant atmosphere in which people can live and develop.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (SAE)

1. Socialism is still relevant in 21st century world dominated by neo-liberalism. Discuss
2. Can socialism ever rise again as a competing paradigm to capitalism?

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Identify the implications of a uni-polar ideology for the new world orders
2. Socialism in its present form is likely to remain a viable ideology. Discuss

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