

MARXIAN SOCIALISM AS IT SHAPED THE MODERN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

“Socialism is a left-wing social and political ideology which propounds that all men are equal and there should be equal distribution of property and wealth which means public ownership over private ownership. It is an anti-bourgeoisie philosophy that believes that “class struggle is the result of social and economic inequality.” Over the course of history, many monarchs are attributed to have established one or other form of socialism as the absence of private land in the Mauryan state, the idea of sharing of wealth by ancient Greeks, etc. but the idea of socialism gained prominence in Europe by the event of the French revolution which was influenced by Rousseau’s remarkable “theory of social contract” where he says ‘All Men are born free and yet everywhere they are in chains. Karl Marx was inspired by Rousseau. He wrote the communist manifesto and Das Kapital and gave a ‘theory of class struggle’ where he says there have been two different classes since man started holding private property and in his utopian socialism there is no place for private property. The objective of this paper is to study the evolution of Marxian socialism and critically analyze the modern nation-state formed on the ideology of Marx concerning socialism.

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CONCEPT OF SOCIALISM

Socialism is a social economic and political doctrine that calls for public rather than public ownership or control of property or natural resources. It is characterized by social ownership or social contract of means of production and cooperative management of the economy. Social ownership refers to cooperative enterprise, common ownership, state ownership, etc. Socialism is marked by equality and social justice. Owing to the importance of Marx concerning socialism the growth of socialism can be divided into three phases:

1. PRE-MARXIAN SOCIALISM
2. MARXIAN SOCIALISM
3. POST-MARXIAN SOCIALISM

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PRE-MARXIAN SOCIALISM

Origin of socialism is a political movement that has its origin in France at the time of the **France revolution** and the changes brought about by the industrial revolution. The French Revolution was preceded and influenced by Rousseau who attacked inequality and gave the idea of socialism. During the French Revolution, all sorts of socialist ideas for the reconstruction of society were born. Wild gaps were there between the aims of the French Revolution and the actual condition in France after the revolution created serious discontent among people, and led to the overthrow of the existing government in France with a view of building a society based on socialist ideas.

Babeuf: He was considered the father of socialism he was the pioneer in this direction, who tried to convince the capitalist class to provide sufficient resources to workers. This was the rudimentary beginning of socialism. He emphasized compulsory national wealth, social equality, and the Abolition of private property. According to Babeuf nature gave everyone equal right of enjoyment of all goods. In true society, there was no room for ethics. He organized a secret society called the “Society of Equals” which planned an uprising and conspiring of equality in 1796 to remove the directory system during the French Revolution (which was a corrupt institution) and replace it with an egalitarian system based on socialist ideas. He was executed when the government got to know about his conspiracy. He is credited for providing a model for the left wing and the communist movement in the 19th century.

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Utopian Socialism: The term used by Karl Marks and Hegel in the communist manifesto refers to all social ideas that simply presented the vision and distinct goals of an ethically just society as utopian. There will be no class struggle in a utopian society. Utopian society did not believe in any form of class struggle or political revolution.

Henri-de-Simon (Saint Simon): He was the first utopian socialist who was a French aristocrat. He strongly argued that the welfare of all sections should be ensured to make Christianity acceptable even among emigrants and workers. This religiously inclined socialism is called Christian socialism. However, it only remained at a superficial level because people refused to follow it. He did not call for public ownership of public property but did not advocate public control of property through central planning in which scientists, engineers, and industrialists, would participate and anticipate social needs and direct the energies of society to meet them. He is not advocating class struggle. He aimed at better

organization of society, from moral and physical poverty. He founded an organization called a Christian organization.

Charles Fourier: He was a French socialist who was working as a clerk for a small merchant. He was shocked by seeing that thousands of tons of rice were thrown into the sea because it was not sold due to the prevailing low prices (this will destroy the balance of the rice market for perpetuity). He was touched by the plight of the poor workers. He decided to establish a cooperative settlement in France and US.

Robert Owen: He is called as the father of British socialism. He was an industrialist who understood the problem of the laborer class. Earlier he was utilitarian as he was influenced by Bentham. But later he got converted into a socialist. He was in favor of the unemployment relief cooperative village. He set out in 1825 to establish a model of social organization, named (new harmony) in the US, he played a significant role in carrying out the Social Reform movement in England.

Pierre Joseph Proudhon: He was the most radical socialist thinker in the pre-Marxian era. He outrightly criticized capitalism and private property. In his famous article titled “**What is property**” in it he highlighted that property is nothing but theft. He criticized the concentration of wealth in a few hands. The theory of Proudhon was rejected by Karl Marks. Michael Bakunin supported the ideology of Anarcho socialism, hence supported Proudhon. According to Anarcho socialism ideology, every dominating institution must be questioned and eliminated if it failed this ideology on the state which led to serious controversy with Marx.

Bakunin: He is considered as Father of modern anarchism and self-governing society. He advocated a Voluntary administrative system. He proposed that there should be no state but a welfare community. His ideology provided the base for the Russian Revolution.

Louis Blanc: He advocated for the establishment of social workshops for laborers, and workers to organize the means of production. In other words, workers were to dominate the economic system rather than capitalism. When Blanch become the minister in France he promoted this concept at the national level which led to the establishment of a national workshop.

French was more fertile than Britain but Socialism developed in Britain

In the late 18th century various reasons like the shortcoming of the industrial revolution and inequality was prevailing in society. Socialist ideas were spreading both in France and Britain, but as per as France is concerned it was always ahead of Britain in the realm of ideas, since the age of incitement. Similarly early socialist thinkers and socialist ideas also arrived in France in terms of utopian socialism. French Revolution also provided an intellectual and social environment in which this ideology and this spokesman could flourish. The French Revolution was influenced by the work of Rousseau, whose social contract theory and discourse. Inequality among men had seeds of socialism. French philosophers like Babeuf, Saint Simon, Louis Blanch, and Charles Fourier prepared a breeding ground for many theories like socialist theory socialist thinkers, and movements bore less concrete results in France, then Britain France was a politically unstable country and there were frequent revolutions. So socialist ideas could not be transformed into any stable political system.

Democratic tradition and British society were liberal to accept different ideas and it gave way to the voice to come in front. The influence of the individual class in Britain was much more liberal than aristocratic dominance in France. French leaders were strongly against any socialist movement and were ready to crush it after the Paris commune in 1781. Adam Smith in his book advocated the idea of the less is fair doctrine. Where the state had no role or minimum role to play in the economy and economic process. In such a scenario individual liberty would flourish unhindered and gradually perfect competition will emerge regulated by the invisible hand of the market forces. In contrast to these racist hopes, Marx derived more cynical and exploitative outcomes. From such a policy of no state intervention, Marx said that perfect competition was an illusion and dominant player will further enhance their dominance. More further says that wealth accumulated would serve as means of furthering material gain and then the rich would grow richer at the expense of the poor. Smith glorified the less is faire doctrine whereas Marx saw the negative and disastrous impact of this doctrine.

MARXIAN SOCIALISM

Introduction

Marxian socialism is called Scientific Socialism given by Karl Marx and Hegel. Karl Marx was the founder of scientific socialism, he had to leave Germany because of his revolutionary

idea and activities. He spent the rest of his life in exile. He was a long-term friend of Frederic Hegel. Both were associated with Berlin University. Marx and Hegel began to present an analysis of the socioeconomic system.

WORKS- *Communist Manifesto and Das Kapital.*

It was Marx who gave the new direction to socialism, expanded it and established some definite principles, and created a basis for its progress. He belonged to Germany and was of the Jewish faith. In the communist manifesto (1848) He focused on three important principles Historical materialism, Class struggle, Theory of surplus value.

Theory of surplus value: According to Marx laborer is the source of value and all wealth is produced by laborers. Labors in the capitalist system do not get the value of the product, but they received just enough for themselves and their family to live. Surplus wealth goes to the capitalist class which is produced by labor. The appropriation of surplus value constitutes fundamental injustice of the modern industrial system as per marks. The gradual concentration of wealth among the bourgeoisie was scientifically explained by Marx through the theory of surplus value. Karl Marx writes another literary work Das Kapital (1867) where he highlights that the industrialist class is digging its own grave as the working class revolution is bound to happen for material equality. This concept was taken further to emphasize that with the proletariat revolution, a stateless and classless society will come into being, which was its ultimate objective.

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Theory of dialectical materialism: The Marxist concept of dialectic is associated with the social life of man. Contradiction and antagonistic stage in material condition gave a stimulus to change this this kind of antagonism continues till the time the rational mode of production comes into being. Historical materialism is a supplementary theory in which Marx says that material resource has been acquired by the powerful section that has determined all equation of society. Thus it is also termed economic determinism.

Theory of class struggle: It is a supplementary theory of historical materialism. Marx put forward the view that in all ages, there existed two antagonistic classes, i.e. master slaves in ancient, feudal serfs in medieval, and industrialist labor in modern – haves and have-nots. This development took place because of the error in the mode of production in which some established ownership over the means of production and forced others to provide labor.

Therefore haves and have-nots come into existence. They represent the clash of interest between haves and have-not and there is no possibility of harmony.

Theory of revolution: Hegelian dialectic represents dialectical idealism his view is that progress reset on the rise and fall of ideas. He (Hegel) postulates that the thesis is existence and is not the absolute truth and is not stable. That is why antithesis comes into being because the thesis does not hold absolute truth. The conflict between thesis and anti-thesis destroys some elements which are not true and the remaining synthesis gives rise to a new thesis, but even this process will continue till the time of absolute truth. This process will continue till the time absolute truth is achieved. This will be done when there is the establishment of a classless and stateless society.

Limitations of Marxism Socialism: Marx is considered the greatest thinker of the 19th century mainly because he gave a new direction to socialism, expanded it, and established some definite principles for its progress. Marx was living in the age of the industrial revolution. He was looking at the condition of the newly industrialized society firsthand. He saw that, though the labor class is incidental to the mode of production the surplus of that production is assumed by the bourgeoisie giving only a marginal part of that to the workers as a wage which was the bare minimum fulfilling his needs.

It saddens Marx and he advocates for a system in which there is a rational mode of production the balance of which is not tilted towards any among the bourgeoisie and proletariat. In advocating so Marx ignores other depressed classes of contemporary times like agricultural laborers, plantation laborers, artisans, peasants, landless agriculturists, and so on. While advocating an equitable mode of production in favor of laborers Marx ignores the risk born by the bourgeoisie class upon investing a sum of capital in a given establishment. Marx focuses on the surplus made by them upon profit but Marx ignores the possibility of loss and then the entire burden of loss goes to the investor as in such circumstances also bourgeoisie has to give the wage of labor. Hence Marx does not give due credit to investors.

In his theory of revolution, Marx advocates that there will be a perpetual struggle between the classes in society until there is the establishment of a classless and stateless society. The struggle Marx is pointing to can cause a large-scale war and bloodshed. Which can collect a huge toll on human life and property, how can such a way be a solution to social inequality?

Marx's idea of a classless and stateless society is a myth since there will always be natural and psychological inequality. Some people will have more potential than others and some will be more innovative than others, this will further promote their status in society. Here the solution can be an equitable distribution of wealth. The idea of Marxian Socialism gave rise to the Bolshevik labor revolution in Russia (Russian Revolution), this led to the spread of communism around the world which in turn gave birth to the USSR the leader of the Communist world. The power struggle between the Communist and Capitalist regimes (led by the US) later developed as COLD WAR which was incidental to almost all global issues of 2nd half of the 20th century.

Communist International: Marx during his lifetime convened a communist conference in London in 1864, which is called as "first international". It continued for several years. Which even witnesses serious ideology of Marx was opposed by the philosophy of anarchism strongly advocated by Bakunin. This resulted in the end of the first international in 1872 without any major decision. Thereafter several criticisms were highlighted against Marxian socialism. By the end of the 19th, Marxian socialism began to spread to different countries of the world. To unite the workers globally communist leaders convened the "2nd International at Paris 1889". During this conference different opinions have been expressed about the promotion of socialism at the same time it was unanimously prescribed to celebrate the 1st of May as Worker's Day as well as tried to fix the number of working hours for women and children.

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POST-MARXIAN SOCIALISM

Leninism

A form of communism emerged in Russia. Lenin was the leader of the Russian revolution i.e. Bolshevik revolution. In November 1917 instead of waiting for workers to develop class consciousness, Lenin use a small group of committed revolutionaries, to through the existing regime. Lenin involves the role of small groups in organizing the revolution. It emphasized the concept of war communism in which all the resources of the state are used to win first against capitalism and then control over resources for rapid economic development. Lenin equated class struggle with imperialism and colonialism as the highest stage of capitalism and advocated the end of imperialism at the global level. Under the leadership of Lenin, Russian Revolution took place against the rule of inefficient monarchs (tear).

This type of communism is called Leninism.

Maoism: Emerging in China under the leadership of Mao Zedong Mao organized the communist revolution by using peasantry. The level of industrial development was negligible in China and the agrarian economy was dominant (used peasants). During the first half of the 20th century, China was under feudalism most of the land was under the control of landlords and peasants were suffering immensely. Marx was having a very low opinion about Pease ante. According to Mark class consciousness was there in industrial workers. Marx believes more in industrial workers but Mao believes more in peasants (Marx-influenced by Industrial Revolution in Britain). Maoism inspired peasant societies throughout the world to organize a revolution for overthrowing the existing exploitative regime.

Stalinism: This form of communism was established under Joseph Stalin, the Soviet president. It was characterized by the domination of supreme leadership. One idea is followed by all without any scope of opposition (A totalitarian system). Opposition is treated ruthlessly and it involves excessive violence. Negligible freedom is available to people.

Fabian Socialism (Nehru, Besant): It is a Centrist and Milder version of socialism. Instead of revolution, they favor gradualism to bring socialism into the scene. Fabians unlike Mark do not attack capitalism, but they consider capitalism plays a woeful role in society.

Syndicalism: It is inspired by Proudhon's idea and developed out of the French trade union movement. It is based on a trade union organization. The aim was to replace capitalism and the state with a loose federation of locale workers.

IMPACT OF MRXISM ON WORLD MOVEMENT

The most significant contribution of Marx to the world movement is the Russian Revolution which further had a cascading effect on the growth of communism and associated events with that. Russian Revolution which can also be termed as the Bolshevik Revolution was a violent expression of people's discontent with the unpopular Tsarist regime. Despite Russia's trembling economic condition during the First World War Tsar Nicolas pushed Russia into the war and after there is defeat on the eastern front when Russian soldiers were retreating they were instructed to destroy the crops en route. This led to the food crisis in Russia. Workers inspired by the ideals of Marxian utopian socialism led a violent revolution to overthrow the monarchy. The most immediate result of this violent revolution was war communism.

The aftermath of this revolution gave birth to a communist regime in Russia and its adjoining nations, later they came together under one Soviet called USSR. The Communist model stood as a force against the Bourgeoisie dominant Capitalist model of the state system. The great economic depression saw a downtrend in the efficiency of capitalist regimes to sustain major economic crises. On the other hand state-controlled economy of the USSR was doing well under the same circumstances. This increased the popularity of the Communist model many fold and the USSR emerged as a potent force against the Capitalist model.

The ideological clash between the two blocs USSR as head of the Capitalist world and the US as head of the capitalist world gave COLD WAR (1945-91). Though it was never fought on the ground its Impact was far-reaching. Over time these blocs tried to influence the politics of newly born third-world nations. Some of the significant results of COLD WAR politics were the Suez crisis, the Cuban missile crisis, the Oil crisis, the Partition of Korea, the Vietnamese Civil War, the Chinese Civil War, Israel-Arab War. Finally in 1991 with fall of the USSR due to popular discontent and economic crisis gave rest to COLD WAR politics and there was a rise of a unipolar world. Since then many countries have emerged as superpowers following their ideology, as a result, global politics experiencing the rise of a multipolar world.

In today's world when we look at Marxian ideals of a classless society, it gives a flavor of the anti-liberal political system which can curb democracy and individual liberty. It discourages private enterprise and calls for a revolution. But it also appeals to social justice, a society with no poverty, no inequality, equitable distribution of wealth, and a responsible and proactive government which can rarely be achieved in a Capitalist government. So we have to pretty much trade off one for the other.

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