

BLOCK IV:
MARXIST TRADITION AND
CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THINKERS

Unit 1: Karl Marx: Dialectical Materialism, Alienation, Theory of State

Unit Structure :

- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Objectives
- 1.3. Dialectical Materialism
- 1.4. Marxian Theory Of Alienation
- 1.5. Marxian Theory Of State
- 1.6. Summing Up
- 1.7. References and Suggested Readings

1.1. Introduction

Marx has committed himself for the welfare of the working class. Karl Marx is known as the father of scientific socialism. Before Marx there were many political philosophers who discussed socialism at length. But Marx was the first philosopher who gave a scientific analysis of socialism. He is regarded as the most influential political philosopher of modern time. His idea of dialectical materialism is one of the major contributions towards political philosophy. The whole Marxian philosophy rests on this concept of dialectical materialism. Though he borrowed this concept from Hegel, it should be mentioned that he did not follow the idea blindly. Hegel explained the concept of dialectics with the help of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis. Unlike Hegel who believes that idea is the essence of universe, Marx opines that matter is the essence of universe. The society progresses through the class struggle. The idea of historical materialism or materialistic interpretation of history too is Marx's contribution. This theory is the actual application of his theory of dialectical materialism. He believes that production is the main human activity and the ownership of means of production decides the course of history. The theory of class struggle is another contribution of Karl Marx. He is of the view that in every society there are two classes and one who owns the means of production dominates the other. As a result of this domination and difference of interest between these two classes, class conflict emerged. This unit also deals with Marxian concept of alienation and state. According to Marx, this loss of control over the products leads to alienation among the workers. In simple terms alienation refers

to powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation and self-estrangement. you will also learn that marx considered state as an instrument in the hands of the capitalist class to exploit the working class. He also believed that state will wither away and a classless and stateless society will be established.

1.2. Objectives

This unit will help you

- To examine Marxian concept of dialectical materialism.
- To explore Marxian concept of alienation
- To understand Marxian concept of state

1.3. Dialectical Materialism

Hegel was the chief exponent of the dialectic method of history. Dialectical implies the process where ideas are formed and clarified in the course of intellectual debate. Dialectic materialism involves thesis anti thesis and synthesis. Thesis is the proposition or the statement which is challenged by the counter proposition. This counter proposition is called the anti thesis. Both thesis and anti thesis are partly true. The outcome of the discussion between thesis and anti thesis is a revised thesis which is known as synthesis. Synthesis combines the valid elements of both thesis and anti thesis.

It must remember here that neither thesis nor anti thesis represent complete truth. Synthesis is nearer truth or perfection as it embodies the true elements of both thesis and anti thesis and free from the untrue elements of the two. Despite this, the synthesis does not present the whole truth. Therefore it again takes the form of thesis and a new anti thesis is formed to counter this thesis. This process of negation continues till it finds the absolute truth. The idea or reason develops through the history of the world. This reality is dynamic in nature and hence cannot be understood through the static concept of formal logic. The new logic formulated by Hegel is called dialectics.

Hegel opined that evolution happens through the process of thesis, anti thesis and synthesis. Marx was highly impressed by the Hegelian logic. But he rejected the Hegelian notion that idea is the principal cause of historical progress. According to Marx, the social ideas and theories of different times represent the material laws of the society. For Marx, the

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ultimate reality is matter in motion. He believes that historical development is caused by economic reasons. Dialectic materialism will establish a society perfectly organized for production where there will be no class division. There are three laws on the basis of which Marx put forward his theory of dialectics.

- a. Transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa is the first law. Marx is of the view that the progress of humanity is not affected by the gradual process of growth but by the sudden jumps. Marx termed this as revolution and believed that it is inevitable.
- b. Unity of opposites is the second law. It implies that unity contains polar opposites. He cited the example of a capitalist society where the bourgeoisie and proletariat exist and they are connected to each other. They cannot develop without each other.
- c. The third law is the negation of the negation. Thesis anti thesis and synthesis are the stages of development. This can be illustrated with the help of feudalism, capitalism and socialism. The contradictions within feudalism led to the rise of capitalism. Again the contradictions within capitalism led to socialism.

Marx has concluded that each phenomenon is related to other one. They should be studied in the light of interaction. They should be studied as changing and developing. He believes that contradictions are the motive force behind all development.

Stop To Consider

Class Struggle

Class is an important unit of the society. It is an economic unit. It is already known to you that in every society there are mainly two classes- the haves and the have nots, the propertied and the property less class, the rich and the poor. According to Marx, one class can be distinguished from another class on the basis of two factors. These are- ownership of the means of production and control of labour powers of others. Marx, on the basis of these two factors in his Communist Manifesto talked about three distinct classes in the society. The capitalist class is the owner of the means of production and it also purchases the labour power of others. The worker class neither owns the means of production nor possesses the ability to purchase the labour of others. Rather, they sell their own labour. The third class known as the petite bourgeoisie class owns sufficient

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means of production but cannot buy the labour of others. Marx has not defined this class in details. Marx defines a class on the basis of ownership of means of production. He holds that the class is not determined by the occupation but by the ownership of means of production. For eg. if there are two blacksmiths and one owns the shop while the other is a paid labourer in that shop, then both belongs to two different classes in spite of their same occupation.

You have already learnt that according to Marx, the labour class earns their income by selling their labours while the capitalist class earns its income by exploiting the labourers. The capitalist class owns the products of the laboureres. Whatever they produce belongs exclusively to the capitalist class. They need to work in the factories under hard and fast rules. They work in a mechanization process which ultimately alienates them from their respective products and even from their own self as well. They are left with no other options than to work in a mechanical way. Work becomes necessary for their survival. He is of the view that all the classes possess different interest and these differences in interest lead to class struggle in the society. It has already been mentioned that both the capitalist and the working classes hold opposite views which is the reason behind this class struggle. Marx cited various examples like Roman Revolution, Glorious Revolution, Russian Revolution, Chinese Revolution etc. In the Roman Revolution the slave class of Rome revolted against their masters under the leadership of Spartacus. Glorious Revolution was led by the bourgeoisie against the feudal class. The Chinese Revolution was a revolution of the working class against the bourgeoisie. He opines that the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle. It needs mention here that Marx has attributed various reasons for the emergence of class conflict in the society. The negligence of the capitalist class towards the proletariat is one of them. The capitalist class as the controller of legal and political system makes laws which are not in favour of the working class. This leads to the conflict between the two classes. Again, the exploitation by the capitalist class also induces the conflict. The labour is a perishable commodity and therefore the labourers need to sell their labour at any cost. The capitalists take advantage of this situation and exploit the labourers. This also gives rise to conflict in the society. The capitalist tendency to expand leads to the establishment of big factories consequently leading to the concentration of labourers near the factory area. This has given the labourers a chance to unite and put their demands in front of the capitalist class. By now, you have learnt that according to

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Marx, society progress as through class struggle. He criticized the present system of society where the capitalist class dominates the working class. He holds the view that this capitalist domination should be replaced by the socialist system where the means of production shall be owned by the working class. He believes that in course of time the dictatorship of proletariat will be established which will lead to the withering away of states and ultimately a stateless and classless society will be established. In conclusion, we can sum up the elements in Marx's view of class conflict as follows-

- Classes are authority relationships and it is based on property ownership.
- A class is based on shared life situations and interests.
- There are two classes in the society and all the economic and social relationships revolve round these two classes.
- Class struggle leads to structural change.

SAQ:

Do you think only economic factor can bring about changes in the society? Give reasons in support of your answer. (20+ 30 words)

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1.4. Marxian Theory of Alienation

In the previous section you have learnt the concept of class and class struggle put forwarded by Marx. You have also learnt that the labourers work under pressure and they are not free to choose their own action. According to Marx, this loss of control over the products leads to alienation among the workers. In simple terms alienation refers to powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation and self-estrangement. This concept of alienation is based on human relationship. But this view of human relationship is not based on equality but on the superiority of one man over another as this theory is based on the relationship of master and slave. The dictionary meaning of the term alienation is “withdrawing or separation of a person or his affections from an object or position of former attachment”. If we see from historical perspective, the concept of alienation has been developed due to the factors like the low level of the productive forces, from human subordination to the land and from

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the domination of the feudal ruling class. Hegel opines that realization of self or freedom is the main goal of man. Two factors namely necessity and alienation stand in the way of a person in achieving this condition. Here necessity refers to natural as well as physical constraints while alienation implies the dissociation of subject from the object. Though man wants to be a master of himself, most of the time he becomes a slave. Man fails to realize his own self and this is the chief reason of human alienation. But Marx has given a totally different outlook in his famous book Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (also known as the Manuscripts of 1844, or Paris Manuscripts). He denied Hegel's conception that failure to realize one's own self is the reason of alienation. Religious superstitions are also not a chief cause of human alienation. According to Marx, it is the work of man which leads to alienation. Division of labour leads to the loss of control of work process which ultimately leads to the loss of control over his product of labour which is dehumanization and depersonalization. The workers cannot buy the end product of their labour. The people who do not work only buy those products. You have already learnt that according to Marx, alienation refers to loss of control over labour. He did not believe that alienation is rooted in religion or mind. The origin of Marxian theory of alienation can be attributed to Feuerbach, Hegel and English Political Economy. Alienation is that process which makes the workers feel foreign to the products of his/ her own labour. Lack of control over work process also leads to alienation. The work process like the condition in which labourers work and how the work is organized and how it affects the labourers physically and mentally is under the control of the capitalist class. The workers cannot use their creativity in the work process which alienates them from the whole process.

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SAQ:

Do you think that the loss of control over labour is the only cause of alienation among the urban people? Explain. (20+ 40 words).

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According to Marx, there are four forms of alienated labour or four levels of alienation. These are as follows - Firstly, it is the alienation of the product from the labour. In this level, the worker is alienated from the product. The worker cannot decide what to produce and how to

produce. It is the capitalist class which directs the workers to produce different things. The product of the worker does not belong to the worker but someone else. The labourers are alienated from their own products as it is not owned by them but by the capitalists. They build houses, in which they can never live; they make cars which they can never buy. Secondly, worker is also alienated from the process of labour. The labourers cannot purchase the end product. Therefore they cannot feel attached to their products. They also do not feel any achievement in the product. While working in the production process they feel miserable instead of happy. Their work is not voluntary but compelled labour. The labourers cannot work to satisfy themselves. They work according to other's need. He cannot decide anything about his products and his work fail to give him satisfaction as a creative worker. He works like a machine under a monotonous environment. In the third level, the labourers feel alienated from fellow human beings. This is because everyone takes others as their competitors. They also feel that others are exploiting their labours and control the things they produce. Everyone wants to win at the cost of others. Friendly relations do not develop and they feel alienated from each other. In the final level, man feels alienated from his own human self. The ability to consciously shape the world around us makes us human. But capitalism does not give any chance for the development of this ability. The labour is forced labour. The worker cannot use his creative mind in the production of labour. Moreover, the worker works under a routine system and leads a monotonous life. There is no room left for the enjoyment of art, literature etc. which makes him equal to an animal. Hence he feels alienated from himself.

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Stop To Consider

Marx's Theory of Social Change

Reading of the previous sections has familiarized you with the Marxian concepts of class, class struggle and alienation. His concept of social change is related to his concept of class struggle. According to him, the struggle between the two classes brings about changes in the society. Marx explains his theory of social change with the help of two principles- the principle of dialectic materialism and the principle of historical materialism. The principle of dialectic materialism constructs the philosophical basis of his theory of social change. Rejecting Hegel's view that idea or consciousness is the essence of universe, Marx opines that matter is the essence of universe. The principle of historical materialism believes that the ownership of the

means of production and the mode of the means of production is the basis of social change. You have already learnt that Marx has given utmost importance to the economic factor in bringing about change in the society. Marx opines that the economic structure of the society is mainly responsible for social change. Again, the ways of controlling the production and distribution system also influence the social change. Introduction of new means of production leads to new situation and system ultimately bringing changes in the society. He is of the view that it is the economic factor which brings about every kind of changes whether social, economic, political, spiritual etc. in the society. There are always two aspects of a mode of production- the force of power of production and the relationship of the production. The ever changing things like machines, tools and labourers come under the first category. The second includes the super structure like moral, religious, political and constitutional relations. With the changes in the means of production, a new social structure is established and it eventually leads to social change. Marx also holds the view that revolution is another cause of social change. Each class tries to bring about some new changes which are bound to be resisted by the other class.

Space for Learners

1.5. Marxian Theory of State

According to Marx, there are two classes in the society have and the have nots. The haves created the state to exploit the have nots. Marx rejected the idea that state is a natural institution. Rather he opined that it is created by man. According to him, state is based on force and it is a product of class struggle. State, according to Marx is an organ of economically dominant class. This economically dominant class is minority and it rules the working class who are in a majority. He believed that state is an organized power of one class for oppressing another. He denounced the Hegelian view that state is march of god on earth. Rather he believed that state is a servant of the property owners.

State is not above society. Neither it can organize the society. It is also not equal to society. State is the product of society through the stages of historical development. In general, the state serves the interest of the economically dominant class. In certain circumstances, state rises above all the classes in the society.

According to Marx, the history of state can broadly be divided into 5 stages. They are the primitive communal system, the slave system, the feudal system, the capitalist system and the socialist system. The primitive communal stage is the earliest stage of social life. In this stage the instruments of labour were of very primitive nature. The tools were held in common ownership by the members of the society. Division of labour and exchange of product were the characteristics of this stage. In the later period private property appeared and this divided the society into masters and slaves. Then came the slave system. In this stage, the slaves were treated as the property of the masters. The slaves were dominated by the masters. The state protected the private property of the slave owners. The prisoners of war and bankrupted people were made slaves. Gradually, the large scale agriculture becomes the large mode of production and the feudal system replaced the slave system. In the feudal system land was the main mode of production. The land was owned by the feudal lords and the peasants worked on the land. Though the serfs were not private property of their masters yet they were bound to serve their masters. There were peasants risings in this stage. Finally this system had been replaced by the capitalist system. The capitalist system implies the advanced industrial stage where the means of production are owned by the capitalist class and the working class was dominated by the capitalist section. The capitalist state performs mainly four functions. These are repressive, ideological cultural, economic and international functions. The main function of a capitalist state is to repress the movement of the working class. The ideological cultural function discourages dissidence. Marx observes the increasing importance of state intervention in the system of capitalist production. Again the capitalist state performs the international function by advancement of national interests in relation to external affairs. After overthrowing the capitalist system through proletariat revolution, the socialist system comes into existence. In this stage, the bourgeoisie class is being suppressed and socialism has been established. After sometime the classes will get abolished and the state is left with only economic functions. In this stage, the state consolidates the power of the proletariat by smashing the bourgeoisie. The private property is being abolished and social ownership of means of production has been established during this stage. It also establishes socio economic and cultural activities. In the final stage, the state will wither away and a stateless and classless society will be established.

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Stop To Consider

Marxist Theory of Revolution

It has already been mentioned above that revolution is one of the factors which brings changes in the society. According to Marx, revolution is a social, economic, technological, political, legal and ideological phenomenon. His whole theory of revolution is based on his concept of materialistic interpretation of history. Marx opines that class struggle and revolution are the two major driving forces of history. Class struggle will definitely lead to revolution and revolution is necessary as the dominant class will not give up its socio- economic and political power through evolutionary methods. Hence, the oppressed class needs to throw it out forcibly through revolutionary means. Marx holds the view that only revolution can bring changes in the society. Marxian theory of revolution is basically a social revolution which is necessary to overthrow the socio- economic and political domination of the capitalist class in the society. It is a revolution by the majority as it involves the working class. He termed the proletariat revolution as social revolution because the proletariats are capable enough to represent the interest of the society as a whole. However, Marx opines that revolution cannot come on its own. The people will have to bring revolution for which a revolutionary consciousness among the people is very necessary. Marxian theory does not hold the view that history will bring revolution on its own without doing anything by the human beings. He is of the view that the oppressed proletarian class has to play a major role in bringing about revolution in the society. Marx is a revolutionary in the true sense of the term and he perceives revolution as a meaningful way to change the society. He holds the view that revolution not only brings political changes, but also changes the society as a whole. You should remember here that according to Marx, when class struggle becomes intensified it can bring revolution. According to him, capturing political power is the immediate aim of any revolution. Though he was not in favour of use of terror yet he did not completely rule out the possibility of using physical forces. He has expressed the view that if the capitalist class uses arms the proletariat will have to take up arms to counter attack. He also opines that in developed liberal democratic countries like Britain and USA peaceful transition of society is possible. Though the immediate aim of his revolution was to capture political power, the ultimate aim was to bring massive socio-economic changes in the society. The French revolution has greatly

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influenced Marx in forming his own opinion of revolution. This revolution has established the fact that changes in society come only through revolution. The major reason behind revolution is that the subject class desires to capture the state power from the ruling class through force. As a result of revolution the social, economic and political institutions which hinder the development of the deprived classes will be eliminated. According to Marx, the proletarian revolution is the revolution of majority against minority. This revolution does not aim at the winning of power for particular class for exploiting another class. The chief aim of this revolution is to end the system of exploitation itself. Marx believes that revolution will break out in most advanced nations like Britain, France or United States. But at the same time he does not deny the possibility of breaking off revolution in underdeveloped countries like Germany.

Marx considers state as necessary evil. He opines that state has limited authority. It is controlled by the capitalist class. State is created with the sole motive to protect the interest of the capitalist class. He further believes that only a stateless society can be a just society. According to his prophecy, state will wither away in due course of time and a classless and stateless society will be established. He believes that state does not represent the will of the general people. It is the instrument in the hands of the capitalist class. It mainly protects and expresses the will of the small minority that is the ruling class. According to him, the chief objective behind the maintenance of institutions like army, prison etc. by the state is the protection of rights and interest of the capitalist class. He opines that the state will wither away with the end of capitalism. Again he says that the capitalist class retains its power through the device of democracy. According to Marx, in a democratic state everyone does not get equal opportunity. In the name of democracy the ruling capitalist class enjoys their power. Therefore, it is the duty of the working class to carefully watch the institution of democracy so that the capitalist cannot misuse it.

Check Your Progress

1. What is dialectical materialism?
2. Define Marxian idea of class struggle.
3. Discuss the concept of alienation.
4. What are the four levels of alienation?

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5. Examine Marx's theory of social change.
6. Why did Marx consider state as necessary evil?
7. Examine Marxian idea of state.

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1.6. Summing Up

After reading this unit, now you are in a position to understand the ideas of Karl Marx. You have understood that Marx believes that historical development is caused by economic reasons. Dialectic materialism will establish a society perfectly organized for production where there will be no class division. This unit has also familiarised you with Marxian concept of alienation. Marx believes that Alienation is that process which makes the workers feel foreign to the products of his/ her own labour. After reading this unit you have also understood the Marxian idea of state. According to him, state is based on force and it is a product of class struggle. State, according to Marx is an organ of economically dominant class. In the next unit you are going to have some idea about Marxian concept of economic determinism, class struggle and surplus value.

1.7. References and Suggested Readings

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2. Mahajan, V. D, Political Theory (Principles of Political Science); S. Chand & Company Ltd; New Delhi; 2000 (Reprint)
3. Misra, K. K. and Asirvtham, Eddy, Political Theory ; S. Chand & Company Ltd; New Delhi; 2008 (Reprint)
4. Mukherjee, Subrata and Ramaswamy, Sushila, A History of Political Thought- Plato to Marx ; Prentice- Hall of India Private Limited; New Delhi; 1999

Links :

<http://struggle.net/mhf/alienation.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Marx

<http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj79/cox.htm>

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Unit 2

KARL MARX: ECONOMIC DETERMINISM, CLASS STRUGGLE, SURPLUS VALUE

Unit Structure :

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Economic determinism
- 2.4 Class-struggle
- 2.5 Surplus value
- 2.6 A Critical Appraisal
- 2.7 Summing Up
- 2.8 References and Suggested Readings:

2.1 Introduction

The philosophy of Marxism derives its name from Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-1893), a famous German economist and social philosopher of the nineteenth century and was one of the greatest critics in the Western intellectual tradition. In the previous unit you have already studied about Marxism. We know that Marxism, as an ideology, first appeared in the middle of the nineteenth century as a reaction to the oppressive conditions created by the capitalist system, resulted by the emergence of Liberalism in the seventeenth century as a philosophy of human freedom. Marxism can be defined as a set of political and economic principles founded by Karl Marx, his friend and comrade Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) and their supporters, in order to lay scientific foundation of socialism replacing utopian socialism for the analysis of the present status of world society and social problems, and determines the way to shape its future. The principles of Marxism came out in the form of Communist Manifesto (1848), a propaganda pamphlet in which Marx and Engels interpreted some of their ideas in collective form for the establishment of a classless and stateless society based on communism.

Among the major contributions that Marx and Engels made to the field of political philosophy, Economic Determinism, Class Struggle and Theory of Surplus Value play very important role. These ideas can be discussed as follows:

2.2 Objectives:

The ideas of Marx influenced on all aspects of human endeavour, which entirely changed the methodology of studying history and society by developing a theory of praxis that means unity of thought and action. After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Discuss Marx's idea of economic determinism
- Explain his theory of class struggle
- Examine Marx's idea of surplus value

2.3 Economic determinism:

Economic determinism is one of the important ideas of Karl Marx. A major assumption in Marxism is economic determinism that works as the ground for Marx to build rest of his theory. Economic determinism suggests that the primary human motivation is economic in its nature. It is a doctrine that all social, cultural, political and intellectual forms are determined by or result from such economic factors as the quality of natural resources, productive capability, technological development, or the distribution of wealth.

You should remember here that the idea of economic determinism is not unique to Marx as it was widely understood among the intellectual community. Karl Marx and Engels were strongly influenced by Ludwig Andreas von Feuerbach (1804-1872), a German Anthropologist and Philosopher, who freed Hegelianism from its idealist puzzlement and interpreted materialism in a more scientific way. Marx was convinced by Feuerbach that Hegelian notions like 'Absolute Spirit' or 'Spirit of the Age' were merely imaginary, and that the real motive forces in the history of a society are its material conditions, and the material meant for Marx that these forces are economic. Marx argues that the consciousness of men does not determine their existence, but their social existence determines their consciousness which is based on their economic circumstances. It can be said that economics plays an important role in determining and shaping social, political, intellectual and ethical behaviour and relationship among human beings.

Marx's economic determinism gives a concrete social and political meaning to his idea of dialectical materialism. In this connection Marx uses the metaphor of base-superstructure, according to which, in every society, politics, religion, and spiritual life are determined by the mode of production

Space for Learners

of material life. According to Marx, all the societies are composed of two basic parts: the base and the superstructure. The base is the foundation of the society that consists of the mode of production, while superstructure is the external build up, is represented by its legal and political structure, religion, morals, social practices, literature, art and culture etc. According to the theory of economic determinism by Marx, the foundation of society, known as base is material where motive forces are economic in nature.

Again, mode of production has two components: forces of production and relations of production. Forces of production are dynamic in nature and have an inherent tendency of development to reach a perfect society. Forces of production can again be divided into two components according to Marxian perspective: means of production consisting of tools and equipment and labour power that consists of human knowledge and skills etc. Correspondence between both these two components, men and women constantly try for better ways of production in a particular society that determines the kind of economic system the society enjoys.

On the other hand, relations of production are determined by the affiliation between human beings in the society and the means of production that gives rise to a pattern of ownership emerging two contending classes haves and have-nots. The owners of means of production, considered as haves enjoy the most beneficial position in the economy and thus become members of the most influential social group- the ruling class. In contrary to it, the have-nots consist of that group of people who have to give their labour for the sake of the benefits of the ruling class. The foundation of society, i.e. the base determines the nature of society's superstructure which is composed of all non-material institutions in the society, and each is arranged in a way that suits the ruling class to continue their dominance.

Thus, the changes in mode of production or economic bases of society bring about changes in consciousness and the nature of contending classes. Marx's materialism referred not only to matter, but also to economic and social relations and envisaged for a humane and decent society free of exploitation, domination and oppression. According to Marx, social revolution is the only way to bring changes both in forces of production and relations of production that will help to replace the old social formation of capitalism by new social formation of a classless society.

Here, you should remember that Marx identified five stages of economic development known to history that comes under his explanation of the idea of historical materialism as empirical basis of Marxism representing dialectical

Space for Learners

materialism as its philosophical basis. These five stages are-

- Primitive Communism
- Ancient stage or Slavery
- Feudalism
- Capitalism
- Communism.

In his analysis of these five stages, economic determinism plays a key role where economic base works as a determining factor of changes of the superstructure in the form of different stages of history to explain the law of human development. Influenced by German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel's (1770-1831) method of dialectics, Marx applied it in the context of his analysis of dialectical materialism. Marx was different from Hegel in application of the idea of thesis (idea), antithesis (opposite idea) and synthesis (nearer to truth) as he applied it to explain the development of society on its economic basis whereas Hegel used it to explain the evolution of history on the basis of ideas. This method Marx used to show the transition of society from Primitive to the establishment of Communism through an economic interpretation of the various phenomena of history.

According to Marx, production is the most important of all the human activities and the form and structure of society is determined by the condition of production. The inability of the society to produce required production gives rise to tension and stresses among the members of the society. In all the stages of development, the class which controls the forces of production controls the rest of the superstructure. This domination of one class over others naturally gives rise to tensions and strains that makes people to search for a better society. Marx believes that the progress of society from one stage to another stage is not a result of chance, but a result of the law of history. To describe this law, Marx used Hegelian dialectical method, moulding it into his own shape of dialectical materialism. He considered the existing society to be the thesis, whereas the opposite forces come as antithesis that resulted to a new formation called synthesis. In each stage, each dominant class develops its opposite and as a result of clash between these two opposites, the new ruling class emerged. In Marxian view, primitive communism is an Asiatic stage where there was the absence of private ownership of production and resources; hence there was no class-contradiction. But as a result of changing mode of production since ancient times with the beginning of household-based small-scale production, the outer structure of the society also changed and class domination appeared

Space for Learners

between master and slave. A social transformation came up caused by the emergence of private property. The next stage, based on large-scale agricultural-based production represents another transformation of the society in the name of feudal society caused by the rise of feudalism as the synthesis resulted by social revolutions which also come up as a thesis towards the path of establishment of capitalism. In modern times, as the mode of production, large-scale machine-based production evolved and capitalist society emerged where the capitalist and the proletariat stand face to face against each other. As a result of clash between these two classes, classless society will be developed with the establishment of Communism at its end as Marx believed.

From the above interpretation of historical development, it is clear that Marx offers the theory of materialistic interpretation of history on the basis of economic determinism. The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less transformed which shows a close linkage between the social relations and productive forces.

SAQ:

Do you support the Marxiiian Idea that the mode of production of material life determines the social political and intellectuial lives? (80 words).

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2.4 Class-Struggle:

Marxian concept of class struggle or class conflict is an integral part of his explanation of historical materialism. Marx expressed the idea of human liberation distinctively from political emancipation that aims to bring out the collective, generic character of human life in real sense, so that society would have to assume a collective character to match with the life of the state. This would be possible if individuals were freed from religion and private property. The proletariat, by being the universal class in chains as Marx urged them to be united, would liberate itself and human society.

It can be understood from Marxian interpretation of historical materialism that the relations of production in reality were class relations. Class

Space for Learners

antagonisms were crucial to the workings of all societies, hence Marx asserted in *Communist Manifesto* (1848) that, “the history of all hitherto existing society is a history of class struggles” and society is divided into two hostile groups, i.e. haves and have-nots. Here, Marxian meaning of history is about all written history. In *Communist Manifesto* Marx writes: “*Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.*” With the development of forces of production, one mode of production is replaced by another, but conflict between existing classes or newly appeared social classes continues to exist with a changing nature of struggle even in modern bourgeois society. Except the primitive communist stage, all historical ages have been characterised by the antagonism between the dominant and dependent classes or the haves and the have-nots. This antagonism is caused by class contradictions; it is the result of exploitation by the property owning class of the property less class. In the slavery system, they were the masters and the slaves, in feudalism, the feudal lords and the peasants and in capitalism, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The masters, the feudal lords and the bourgeois are the owners of the means of production as the elite groups whose numbers are less, but with more power. However, it is the slaves, the peasants and the proletariat, consists majority of numbers, who carry out production, but their produce is taken away by their exploiters and in return, they are given just minimum for their survival. By virtue of the ownership of the means of production, the property owning class exploits the property less class. This is the main source and cause of class struggle. The interests of the contending classes are irreconcilable. No compromise or reconciliation is possible between the contending classes. Marx opposed the idea of the middle-class historians that class struggle has ended with the rise of the bourgeoisie. In his letter to Josef Weydemeyer in 1852, he declared that class struggle would not be a permanent feature of society, but were needed by the historical development of production. Class struggle would end with the destruction of capitalism, establishment of communism and a classless society. The inherent contradictions of contending classes of every epoch can be resolved only through the annihilation of the exploiting classes with the help of socialist revolution.

Marx and Engels had full faith in revolutionary potential of the proletariat and their ability to overthrow capitalism. But it was necessary for the

Space for Learners

proletariat to understand the actual reality behind “false consciousness” that the bourgeoisie had adopted as their ideology. For Marx, bourgeoisie ideology played a pivotal role in controlling the oppressed. They depicted the existing order as embedded in forces that were beyond human control. But Marx believed it to be instituted by certain sections of people for their own benefit. Ideas explained how the existing order benefitted everyone in society was not real and the depiction was to promote the interests of the dominant economic class and protect class privileges. Ideology, along with economic determinism and class struggle, provided strategic guide to the working class in its efforts to bring about final emancipation of mankind without any class division and exploitation in the society through social revolution. It would place all means of social production under social ownership, make work compulsory for everyone, and develop forces of production to their full potential that will pave the way for the establishment of Communism and will mark the end of class struggle.

Stop to Consider:

Marxist Classification of the Stages of Development of Social Class According to Marx-

- Primitive communism- in this stage there is no private property.
- Slavery- in which one class owns and exploits the members of another
- Feudalism- Here the landowners exploit the mass peasants.
- Capitalism- where the owners of means of production exploit the workers of the industries.
- Socialism- This stage comes when the industrial workers revolt against the capitalist class.

2.5 Surplus value:

According to Engels, the theory of surplus value is Marx’s most important discovery that represents economic basis of Marxist critique of capitalism. Marx was influenced by David Ricardo (1772-1823), an English classical economist and introduced the theory of surplus value as an extension of his labour theory of value to explain the reasons behind class struggle in the society. It validates how the capitalist mode of production involves the exploitation of working class. Labour is the chief determinant of value for Marx. To quote Marx, “*The value of each commodity is determined by the quantity of labour expended on and material used in it, by the working time necessary, under given social conditions for its*

Space for Learners

production". In simple words, value is a quantity which is inherent in a thing or commodity which is entirely due to labour. There are four elements of production- land, labour, capital and organization among which labour is the sole creator. Other three elements can be reproduced only what is put to them, otherwise these elements are useless. But labour is the only variable element that produces value in society.

Marx observed that capitalist held a monopoly not only on the means of production- resources, factories and machinery, but also tries to gain profit from the manufactured product. Ordinary people must work to survive, but due to capitalists control over the means of production, the workers must sell their labour at whatever price the capitalist will pay. Hence, the workers are enslaved to their masters who pay minimum wages, regardless of their labour to produce value. Marx opined that the amount of labour embodied in a commodity should be calculated right from the beginning of production including- labour employed in producing raw material, in processing the raw material, in mobilizing the sources of energy used and in constructing the machinery and building etc. The actual value of a commodity is the inclusion of all these aspects.

It is necessary to distinguish between value and price of a commodity to understand the theory of surplus value. Price is the monetary expression of value which may be described as natural price. Besides natural price of the commodity, there is the market price which fluctuates depending on the condition of demand and supply. There is an uneven relationship existing between natural price and market price most of the times where market price is usually higher than the other. If a wage is paid to the wage-labourers in proportion to the amount of value created by a labourer, then there is no exploitation. But this is not the case in capitalism where free market economy sustains. Labour is unique in the sense that it creates more value than is required for its maintenance. The difference between the value created by the worker and the value paid to the worker, as wages, constitute the surplus value and the profit of the capitalist. For example, if a worker has created a value of Rs. 30,000 in a month and has been paid Rs. 15,000 as wages, then the remaining Rs. 15,000 will be considered as surplus value that will go to the capitalists as profit. But this surplus will not be counted as a value of the labourers they paid through their works. Thus, the worker always creates more value than he is actually paid. This surplus value created by the worker is the profit of the bourgeois, which has been defended by the classical economist, because it leads to capital progress, which is invested further in new industries and enterprises and leads to growth and prosperity.

Space for Learners

For the Marxists, it is the exploitation of the workers, which has to be abolished. With the growth of capitalism and the rise in competition, the wages of the workers continue to fall and reach the stage of subsistence level. Workers are given only 'subsistence wage', i.e. required wages to meet the requirements of mere survival of the worker and his family, with the utilization of their labour to the maximum capacity. It is the minimum possible wage for the survival and perpetuation of the labour force that cannot be reduced anymore. Thus, cut throat competition in capitalism leads to deterioration of the proletariat and it intensifies class struggle and eventually leads to revolution.

2.6 A Critical Appraisal:

Marxism has been subjected to severe criticism. The Marxian theory of economic determinism is also not free from it. It is not only the economic factor, but other factors also that are equally important in bringing about social change. It is a two way process. Economic forces are not strong to influence polity, society, culture, religion, values, norms etc. The Marxian concept that base determines the superstructure itself was changed in the writings of neo-Marxist like Antonio Gramsci.

The class division of society into two classes, the haves and the have-nots is far from the reality. Society is very complex and is divided into numerous groups. Moreover, there exists a huge middle class. Marxian thinkers predicted that with the advancement of capitalism, the middle class would disappear and merge with the proletariat class. But this has not happened so far and there is no possibility of it ever happening. Infact, a reverse situation can be seen in the present world scenario.

Marx's assertion that labour only creates value has severely been criticized. Other elements of production are equally important with the element of labour. In modern time, skill, knowledge, organizational capacities are more important factors for the creation of wealth than the employment of labour. Karl Popper criticised Marx's doctrine of surplus value to be an abstract one.

Despite these criticisms, Marxism as an approach will continue to be used by scholars for social analysis and the exploited-oppressed people will continue to promote Marxist philosophy for their emancipation. It will always provide an alternative philosophy to liberalism with an effective check on the excesses of liberalism and will never become irrelevant.

Check Your Progress:

1. Examine the Marxian theory of Economic Determinism.
2. Do you think economic determinism is related to materialistic interpretation of history? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Explain the concept of Class-struggle.
4. What is the theory of Surplus Value?
5. Make a critical assessment of the tenets of Marxism.
6. Examine the relevance of Marxism in the present world.

Space for Learners

2.7 Summing Up

After reading this unit you are now in a position to explain Marxian idea of Economic Determinism. Economic determinism suggests that the primary human motivation is economic in its nature. Marx argues that the consciousness of men does not determine their existence, but their social existence determines their consciousness which is based on their economic circumstances. Hence, it can be said that economics plays an important role in determining and shaping social, political, intellectual and ethical behaviour and relationship among human beings. Another important contribution of Marx is his idea of Class struggle.

2.8 References and Suggested Readings:

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4. Sabine, G and Thorson, T.L. (1973), A History of Political Theory, Illinois: Dryden Press.

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Unit 3 :**V.I. Lenin : As a Marxist, Main Ideas**

Unit Structure :

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Objectives

3.3 Lenin as a supporter of Marxist ideas

3.4 Main Ideas of Lenin

3.5 Summing Up

3.6 References and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction

V. I. Lenin is a Russian Communist revolutionary. He was earlier named as Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov who later became popularized as Lenin. Though he was guided by revolutionary ideas, he himself was not a worker as assumed by Marx. Rather, he was a middle-class intelligentsia who was influenced by Marxian ideas in his youth. As a revolutionary Politician and political theorist, Lenin had experienced many ups and downs in his life. From the first two units of these block, you have got an idea about Marxian political ideas. Lenin may be regarded as a true and faithful disciple of Karl Marx who accepted and followed almost all the ideas of Marx. He was a founder and leader of Bolshevik Party of Russia. He made an effort to adapt Marxism to the conditions of Russia. One of his famous work is Imperialism, the Highest State of Capitalism. While putting forward his political views, Lenin has expressed different ideas. This unit will make an attempt to discuss some of those ideas put forwarded by Lenin. Moreover, it will also try to analyse Lenin as a follower of Marxist ideas.

3.2 Objectives:

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Critically examine Lenin as a Marxist
- Find out the differences in Marx's and Lenin's ideas
- Discuss Lenin's ideas on Religion
- Examine Lenin's ideas on Democracy
- Discuss Lenin's view on War

3.3 Lenin as a supporter of Marxist ideas

We have already learnt that Lenin was a follower of Marxist ideas. He supported the revolutionary aspect of Communism. However, he developed the revolutionary ideas of Marxism to adjust itself in the era of imperialism. Thus, Marxism continued through Lenin's ideas what is known as Leninism. It is said that Lenin further developed and enriched the three important components of Marxism, viz, philosophy, political economy and scientific communism. He did not believe in evolutionary ideas nor supported the view that transition from capitalism to communism could be brought by any evolutionary method.

Karl Marx believe that in capitalism there lies the seeds of destruction. However, Lenin was more concerned with Russia which was industrially backward. Since Basic ideas of Lenin's philosophy or political theory was taken from Marx, in the latter period this doctrine became popular as Marxism-Leninism. He reiterated the point that Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action.

Lenin Supported the Marxian philosophy of materialism. He is of the opinion that Marx did not stop at the materialism of the eighteenth century. Rather, he enriched it with the acquisition of German Classical Philosophy. Moreover, Lenin considered Marx's historical materialism as the biggest achievement of scientific thought. As a supporter of Marxian idea of historical materialism, Lenin believed that all the ideas, whether individual or social are the results of our reactions to material objects in our sense organs. Therefore, to analyse the social process correctly, first one has to understand the material forces which are mostly economic in nature. Lenin further added that, materialistic interpretation of history has removed many defects of earlier historical theories. One such defect pointed out by Lenin is that earlier, much emphasis was given on human motives of the historical activities and not the surroundings which resulted in such motives or actions.

Stop To Consider:

Life Sketch of Lenin:

V. I. Lenin was born on April 10, 1872 in Simbirsk town situated on the banks of Volga. From the early days he was influenced by Marxism and revolutionary spirit. Born in an educated and cultured family, Lenin was gifted with intelligence. At that time the People of Russia were under tyrannical Tsarist Rule. There were capitalist oppression and wide-spread poverty which created dissatisfactions among masses. The execution of

Space for Learners

Lenin's elder brother Alexander who influenced Lenin to a great extent served a severe blow to him. He then decided to dedicate his life to the cause of revolution only. He agitated against Russian Government. He was the leader of the revolutionary Marxist Party of Russia. Later, Lenin led the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and under his leadership the working Class of Russia finally became successful in 1917 after Bolshevik Revolution which is also known as October Revolution. Thus, Lenin showed to the world how Marxism Leninism can be put into practice. Lenin became the first head of the Soviet State. He was also the founder of Comintern(Communist International). Thus he implemented Marxian philosophy successfully and established a strong socialist state in Russia. However, after some time he started suffering from strokes and finally he died in 1924.

Stop to Consider:

Major works of Lenin:

1. Development of Capitalism In Russia published in 1899
2. Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism published in 1917
3. "Left Wing" Communism : An infantile Disorder published in 1920
4. The Rights of Nations to Self- Determination written in 1914
5. The State and Revolution published in 1917
6. The Three Sources and the three component parts of Marxism published in 1913
7. Materialism and Empirio-criticism published in 1909
8. One Step Forward- Two Steps Back published in 1904
9. Two Tactics of Social Democracy in Democratic Revolution written in 1905
10. What is to be Done? Published in 1902

Like Marx, Lenin also believed that all the changes in the human society are brought about by Material forces. But this is possible only when human beings become conscious about the necessity of the changes. Hence, Lenin has urged the people to be sure of the favourable situation for a change in the society. As mentioned earlier, Lenin went ahead while advocating revolutionary methods for bringing change in the society by saying that a successful proletarian revolution would not merely depend on the evolution, but it would be conducted and fought according to a calculated programme of action as indicated by Marx.

Space for Learners

As a follower of Marxism, Lenin also supported Marx's view on Theory of Class Struggle. In the previous units on Marx, we have already studied that In Communist Manifesto Marx has stated that, "history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." On that Lenin further stated that, "in any given society, the strivings of some of its members conflict with the strivings of others, that social life is full of contradictions, that history discloses a struggle within nations and societies as well as between nations and societies, and in addition, an alternation of periods of revolution and reaction, peace and war, stagnation and rapid progress or decline – are facts that are generally known."

Moreover Lenin fully supported Marxian idea of inevitability of transformation of capitalist society into socialist society. In the words of Lenin, the socialization of labour, which is advancing ever more rapidly in thousands of forms, and which has manifested itself very strikingly during the half-century that has elapsed since the death of Marx in the growth of large scale production, capitalist cartels, syndicates and trusts, as well as in the gigantic increase in the dimensions and power of financial capital, forms the chief material foundation for the inevitable coming of socialism. Thus, Marxian notion of withering away of the state in the process was fully supported by Lenin.

While discussing Lenin as a supporter of Marxist ideas, one must remember that both Marx and Lenin witnessed different environments. Lenin tried to adapt Marxism to the state of affairs in Russia. Moreover, as a realist he wanted to make Marxism more practicable and therefore advocated reformations in Marxism to adapt to the new development in Russia.

Now let us examine how Lenin deviates from the Marxian ideas.

3.4 Main Ideas of Lenin

Lenin's Political Ideas focused on the distinctive problems faced by Russian Marxists. He also dealt with post revolutionary situation.

Lenin on Democracy:

According to Lenin democracy expresses the rule of a definite class. While saying so he believes that –

- i). Democracy is a political means of struggle and it cannot resolve this struggle.
- ii). Democracy for one class means dictatorship for another

iii). Democracy cannot make everyone 'free'.

Lenin is of the view that Liberals support pure democracy to dupe the working classes. He did not believe in the modern concept of representative democracy and supported dictatorship of the proletariat. Democracy is based on the principle of gradual and peaceful transformations. On the otherhand, Lenin did not believe in peaceful means for bringing about the transition from capitalist to communism. He thus supported the violent means for achieving the goal of establishing socialist state. Lenin describes dictatorship of proletariat as :

“the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of crushing oppressors. . . An immense expansion of democracy, which, for the first time, becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich. . . and suppression by force i.e, exclusion from democracy, for the exploiters and oppressors of the people--this is the change which democracy undergoes during the transition from capitalism to communism. (Lenin, State and Revolution, 1917)

In Lenin’s work we can find two distinct conceptions of democracy. They are-----

- i). A revolutionary conception of democracy as a process through which the oppressed and exploited are more fully enabled to clarify their own aspirations, understand the obstacles standing in the way of these aspirations, and struggles for them.
- ii). A bureaucratic conception of democracy which acts as a means towards the ends determined by a leadership which usually limits or curtails the aspirations of the masses for broader democratic unity.

We must remember here that major contribution of Lenin towards the concept of democracy has been his revolutionary conception of democracy. While talking about democracy, his ideas revolves around ideas like – inner party democracy, democratic revolution etc.

SAQ:
Do you consider as a true follower of Marx?(80 words).
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Space for Learners

Lenin on Religion :

According to Marx, religion is “the soul of soulless conditions” or the “opium of the people”. Lenin agreed with Marx that religion is the opium of the people. According to Lenin, religion was an historical phenomenon, tied to the oppressive structures of human history such as feudalism and capitalism. Marx and Engels as well as Lenin believed that the state would wither away when socialism was established. Likewise, religion would wither away when it would not be required. In the words of Lenin, “the yoke of religion that weighs upon mankind is merely a product and reflection of the economic yoke within society.”

On the basis of Marx and Engels views Lenin also opined that religion has its roots in capitalist oppression. Therefore, for rooting out religion from the society, oppression in any form must be eliminated first. In his work, Attitude of the Workers’ Party to Religion, Lenin expressed the view that, “ No educational book can eradicate religion from the minds of masses who are crushed by capitalist hard labour, and who are at the mercy of the blind destructive forces of capitalism, until those masses themselves learn to fight this root of religion, fight the rule of capital in all its forms, in a united, organized, planned and conscious way.”

Further, Like Marx and Engels, Lenin too believed that there should be complete separation of Church from State. State should refrain from making any laws on religious beliefs. It should never support any particular religion. Hence, Religion should be banned in a socialist state. At the same time Lenin did not oppose recruiting workers to his Party on the basis of their religious faith unlike many supporters of socialism. He thought that there should not be any prejudice while including such people to the Revolutionary Party. In his words, “ we must not only admit workers who preserve their belief in God into the Social Democratic Party, but must deliberately set out to recruit them,.” He further stated that, “ we are absolutely opposed to giving the slightest offense to their religious convictions, but we recruit them in order to educate them in the spirit of our programme, and not in order to permit an active struggle against it.”

Thus, for Lenin, religion is a weapon of oppression of the masses by the exploiters. Therefore the party of the Proletariat should demand that the government should declare religion as a private matter.

For Lenin, war is very important for bringing about Proletariat revolution.

Space for Learners

Check Your Progress

1. List out the differences between the ideas of Marx and Lenin.
2. Examine Lenin's idea on Religion.
3. Discuss Lenin's idea of Democracy and War.

3.5 Summing Up

After reading this unit, you all are now in a position to discuss Lenin as a follower of Marxism. Reading of this unit has also helped you in learning Lenin's view on different issues like Democracy, Religion etc. Lenin has carried forward Marxian legacy and became successful in bringing it into practice in a less industrialized country like Russia. He has also contributed significantly towards Marxian philosophy by his writings. He had put forwarded his views on imperialism, state Revolution etc. which are considered important doctrine in the field of political philosophy. In the next unit of this Block we shall deal with these concepts of Lenin in detail.

3.6 Reference and Suggested Readings:

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2. Morrow John, History of Political Thought: A Thematic Introduction, MacMillan Press London, 1998.

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Space for Learners

Unit 4

V.I. LENIN: VIEWS ON IMPERIALISM, STATE AND REVOLUTION

Unit Structure :

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Objectives

4.3 Lenin on Imperialism

4.4 State and Revolution

4.5 Critical Appraisal

4.6 Summing Up

4.7 Reference and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870-1924), popularly known as Lenin was an eminent Russian Marxist. In the previous unit we have already discussed Lenin as a Marxist and some of his ideas. By now you have got the idea that he was a revolutionary who led the Bolshevik Party in the Russian Revolution (1917) and established the world's first socialist state that is the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR). Lenin was a faithful disciple of Marx who wanted to rescue the true revolutionary Marxism from its distortion by the opportunists and revisionists. He adapted Marxism with great skill according to the practical needs of the time and made Marxism applicable even in the less developed country in terms of industrialization. Lenin revised Marxism in the light of the latest developments of his time. Among his contributions, Lenin's view on Imperialism is a significant one which differs from Marxian concept and it establishes the uniqueness of his ideas.

4.2 Objectives:

Lenin is regarded as one of exponents in the development of Marxism in early twentieth century who contributed to Marxian political thought with his views on Role of the Party, Role of Ideology, State, Revolution, Views on Imperialism etc. After reading this unit you will be able to

- Explain Lenin's view on imperialism
- Discuss Lenin's idea on State and Revolution

4.3 Lenin on Imperialism:

Imperialism is the state policy, practice, or promotion of extending power and dominion, especially by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other territories and peoples. Through imperialism, an advanced nation uses its military, political or economic power to expand its rule and extend its control over backward, distant political communities for economic advantage, military security and international prestige as well as establishing its cultural domination over other nations. In *Imperialism: A Study* (1902), J.A. Hobson, an English economist and social scientist defined imperialism as a method of exploitation and a search for ‘captive market’.

In his notable work *Imperialism- the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), Lenin argued that imperialism was an economic necessity of the capitalist economy. With the growing capital accumulation of a capitalist country, it fails to find its profitable use within its own territory that forced to look abroad for lucrative ventures. Search for new spheres of investment, new markets, and new sources of raw materials are the three major driving forces according to Lenin that leads to imperialist expansion.

Lenin claimed that with the exploitation of the colonies, advanced industrial countries saved the middle classes and skilled workers from increasing miseries of capitalism as predicted by Marx. The people of colonial territories suffered exploitation and became genuine proletariat, whereas people of ruling power became capitalist. Marx and Engels had seen the advent of imperialism in industrially backward countries which paved the way for transition from feudalism to capitalism. Lenin condemned this trend of imperialism as it created exploitation of the poor nations by the rich nations. The nature of exploitation as Lenin depicted in his theory of imperialism became different, but the division of society into the exploiting and exploited class in a situation of class conflict remained same. The division of nations into oppressor and oppressed’ became visible at the age of imperialism.

Since Marx’s death, a new kind of capitalism developed. With the development of capitalism; firms became larger, units of industrial production grow bigger that resulted to monopoly capitalism with increasing confidences and associations. The financial needs were also growing along with their size to sustain these huge enterprises and corporations became increasingly dependent on banks for financing. Thus, banks became the master of capital which is used by capitalists and thus monopoly capitalism becomes finance capitalism as termed by Lenin. Finance capitalism created a new, much more exploitative stage than the previous condition of industrial capitalism.

Space for Learners

Under these new conditions, the owners of the means of production were bankers and financiers, not industrialists.

In the words of Lenin, “Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the domination of monopoly and finance capital has taken shape; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world by international trusts has begun; and in which the portion of all the territory of the earth by the great capitalist countries has been completed.” It shows that with expansion of imperialism, capitalism entered all over the world. But according to Lenin, this imperialism holds number of contradictions which shall ultimately lead to its destruction and bring about socialism. Capitalist exploitation of foreign lands, which Lenin called imperialist capitalism, a new form of colonialism; started late in the earnest of 1880s, eventually delayed the proletarian revolution. The proletarian revolution was submerged by the issue of independence from colonialism as the capitalist began to exploit the labour of the colonial people making their domestic workers to be their partners of exploitation and profit making. With no more colonies to subdue, the profit-hungry imperialist nations started conflict with each other for powers. Thus, imperialism, Lenin declared in 1916, is the final stage of capitalism that will ultimately lead to a conflict in which the capitalists will destroy each other.

Stop to Consider:

Lenin’s three fold consequences of monopoly finance capitalism:

- a) First, it results in the exploitation of colonial people;
- b) Second, it produces war between nations due to competition of markets; and
- c) Third, it brings about end of capitalism and emergence of new order with class war at its end.

For that, Lenin urged all the oppressed nations of the world to be united against the oppressor nations, and play the role of revolutionary proletariat against the oppressive, capitalist nations to overthrow this exploitation. This message of Lenin could not go beyond Russian Revolution (1917) at that time and the oppressed nations became gradually aware of their nature of exploitation by their imperial masters when they launch their struggle for independence individually against colonialism. As a result, it was only after the Second World War (1939-45) that the victims of imperialism began winning their independence one by one. Lenin’s attitude toward imperialism became a source of inspiration for all the progressive thinkers and activists

Space for Learners

of the world who sought to identify and eliminate all aspects as well as indirect forms of imperialism.

4.4 State and Revolution:

In the above section we have discussed Lenin's view on Imperialism. Now let us discuss some other important ideas of Lenin like State and Revolution which he discussed elaborately in his book *The State and Revolution* (1917). In that book Lenin described the role of the state in society, the necessity of proletarian revolution, and the theoretic inadequacies of social democracy in achieving revolution to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. Like Marx, Lenin also considered state to be a capitalist organization used by the capitalists to exploit the workers and peasants where he was inclusive about the peasants unlike Marx.

Now, you should know that for Lenin, "the State is a special organisation of force: it is an organisation of violence for the suppression of some class." As the capitalists were able to acquire vast majority in the legislatures it could not be expected of them that they would give justice to common people. Lenin condemned the recent increase of bureaucratic and military influences of his time even in parliamentary democracy and said, "to decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament – this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics".

The State and Revolution describes the inherent nature of the State as a tool for class oppression. It is a creation born of a social class's desire to control the other social classes of its society when political and economic disputes cannot be resolved in an amicable way. Whether a dictatorship or a democracy, the State remains the social-control means of the ruling class. Capitalists exploit the state to control the means of production and distribution and create monopoly conditions so that they may be able to exploit the workers. Even in a democratic capitalist republic, the ruling class never surrender political power and tries to maintain it via the "behind-the-scenes" control of universal suffrage — an excellent trick that maintains the idealistic concepts of "freedom and democracy". Lenin, therefore, advised for the abolition of state where communist revolution is the sole way for such remedy. He also urged for the replacement of the existing judicial institutions as these were created by the capitalists to promote their interests.

Unlike the Anarchists proposal of immediate abolition of state, Lenin proposed

Space for Learners

for a proper way where the proletariat can be prepared to crush the bourgeoisie resistance through the mechanism of the state. For him, immediate abolition of state may lead to appearance of a new state and hence the fulfilment of the goals of socialist revolution would not be possible. Therefore, Lenin took the model of Paris Commune, a revolutionary government that seized power in Paris in 1871, and envisaged that the proletariat would establish a communal state through the dictatorship of the proletariat, then gradually suppress the rebel bourgeoisie, in achieving the withering away of the state as its institutions begin to “lose their political character”.

It is important to remember here that Lenin declared that it is the task of revolution to crush the state and to bring about communism. Revolution would be started initially from the countries which did not possess healthy democratic traditions. He believed that socialism could not be brought about through parliamentary methods and the workers had to adopt revolutionary methods to capture power and bring about necessary transformation of the existing economic and social institutions.

SAQ:

Why Lenin views imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism? (60 words).

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According to Lenin, revolution was impossible without a national crisis affecting both the exploited and the exploiters class. For this purpose, the majority of workers who are conscious and politically active should be convinced of the need of revolution and be prepared to sacrifice their life. The government should face a crisis with their growing consciousness and that active role of the workers would draw the backward masses to become their parting overthrowing the existing system. Although for a period under communism, "there remains for a time not only bourgeois right but even the bourgeois State without the bourgeoisie". Lenin believed that after a successful proletarian revolution the state had not only begun to wither, but was in an advanced condition of decay.

The majority of workers, who are conscious and politically active, constitute Lenin's party system. They are the best, most conscious, most devoted and far-sighted workers who act as the vanguard of the proletariat class. Lenin

Space for Learners

emphasized the role of the party not only before the revolution to arouse revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, but also after the revolution to annihilate the capitalist state and establish dictatorship of the proletariat. This party organization which is vital for Lenin to overthrow the existing capitalist system was termed as Communist Party. He insisted that the party should consist of secretly organized professional revolutionaries only having the knowledge of tactics of revolution. In Lenin's view, a great preponderance of party members was necessary who could play a decisive role at decisive time and moment taking the advantages of enemy while they were scattered and weak. Once revolution had been started, Lenin favoured for collective control over the means of production and distribution with quick action that were under private means of production so that wasteful energies in completion could be utilised for constructive purposes.

Thus, revolution leads to the abolition of existing structure of the state and is replaced by a transitory stage of dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin had converted the dictatorship of the proletariat to dictatorship over the proletariat by the Communist Party that ultimately paved the way towards establishment of a communist society.

4.5 Critical Appraisal:

Lenin's theory of imperialism have been criticised as philosophically vague and historically wrong. His assumption of monopoly finance capitalism is not true as we can see in case of Great Britain as the largest empire. Profit motive and financial interest is not the only factor to restore war as other factors like- lust for power, influence of decisions etc. equally play important role. Lenin's view that the possession of empire alone leads to improvement of standards or the workers is also not acceptable. With the deficiencies and contradictions in Lenin's theory of imperialism, C.L. Wayper said, "Lenin's imperialism, in fact, in so far as it is a defence of Marxism, is both dishonest and untrue; in so far as it is true, it is not a defence but an effective renunciation of the teachings of his master."

Lenin's theory of state and revolution is also not free from criticism. State cannot be always exploitative in nature as Marxists believes. Sometimes state performs welfare activities too as explained by the positive liberals. Lenin assigned a pre-eminent position to the party to lead the revolution and wanted the people to render full obedience to it which is not logical. Though he mentioned the party members would be professional revolutionaries, he was least bothered whether the professional revolutionaries were proletarian origin or not. In this condition, the expectation of Lenin for

the devotion of them for the proletariat and the obedience of the proletariat towards the revolutionaries remained questionable. Apart from this, dictatorship of the party as favoured by Lenin again may lead to another kind of oppression in the society instead of abolition of existing state mechanism and establishment of communism.

Despite the criticism Lenin faced, his theories of imperialism and state and revolution cannot be undermined. He brought Marxism up-to-date with the use of these theories and adapted with great skill according to the necessity of changing time in non-industrialised economies and to then prevailing peasant population. The relevance of the theory of imperialism cannot be denied in understanding contemporary structure of society based on free market economy; and the theory of state and revolution had also a far-reaching impact in other parts of the world that became visible through the working of Mao-Tse-Tung (1893-1977) in the situation of China.

Check Your Progress

1. Critically analyse Lenin's view on Imperialism.
2. Make a comparative study between Marx and Lenin.
3. Explain Lenin's interpretation of Marxist theory.
4. Discuss Lenin's view on state and revolution.
5. Evaluate Lenin as a Marxist.

4.6 Summing Up:

After reading this Unit and unit 3 of this block you have learnt that Lenin as a follower of Marxist ideas has tried to popularise Marxism in the world. He emphasised on the revolutionary spirit advocated by Marx and led the Bolshevik Party in Russian revolution in 1917. He became successful in establishing the world's first socialist state that is the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR). However, Lenin tried to make some changes in the ideas of Marxism to make it more relevant to the present societies. From this unit, you have learnt that Lenin differs on the idea of imperialism from Marx as the former argued that imperialism was an economic necessity of the capitalist economy. Lenin claimed that with the exploitation of the colonies, advanced industrial countries saved the middle classes and skilled workers from increasing miseries of capitalism as predicted by Marx. Reading of this unit has also helped you to understand that though the nature of exploitation as Lenin depicted in his theory of imperialism became different,

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but the division of society into the exploiting and exploited class in a situation of class conflict remained same. Thus, imperialism, Lenin declared in 1916, is the final stage of capitalism that will ultimately lead to a conflict in which the capitalists will destroy each other. For that, Lenin urged all the oppressed nations of the world to be united against the oppressor nations.

Another notable contribution of Lenin is his ideas of state and revolution. In that book Lenin described the role of the state in society, the necessity of proletarian revolution, and the theoretic inadequacies of social democracy in achieving revolution to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. Like Marx, Lenin also considered state to be a capitalist organization used by the capitalists to exploit the workers and peasants where he was inclusive about the peasants unlike Marx. Hence, Lenin, advised for the abolition of state where communist revolution is the sole way for such remedy.

Thus from this unit you have learnt that Lenin brought Marxism up-to-date and adapted with great skill according to the necessity of changing time in non-industrialised economies and to then prevailing peasant population.

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UNIT: 5**Antonio Gramsci- Hegemony**

Unit Structure :

- 5.1. Introduction
- 5.2. Objectives
- 5.3. Meaning of Hegemony
- 5.4. Marxism and Hegemony
- 5.5. Gramsci's concept of Hegemony
 - 5.5.1 Super structure
 - 5.5.2 Political Society or, State
 - 5.5.3 Civil Society
- 5.6. Cultural hegemony
 - 5.6.1 Cultural Hegemony According to Antonio Gramsci
 - 5.6.2 The Cultural Power of Ideology
 - 5.6.3 The Political Power of Common Sense
- 5.7 Summing Up
- 5.8 References and Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

Antonio Gramsci, an Italian communist leader and Marxist philosopher, is considered to be the most original political writer among the post Lenin generation of communists.. He was the founder of the Communist Party of Italy. His writings during his imprisonment by the fascist regime of Italy, known as Prison Notebooks are considered to be very important for all those who seek a more democratic, less dogmatic and open version of socialism. He saved Marxism from the criticism of crude economic determinism. He is considered as the Godfather of Cultural Marxism

Antonio Gramsci can considered as one of the most remarkable Marxist theorists in the previous century. The man's role in developing Western Marxism is undeniable. Specifically, Gramsci's main contribution to Marxism remains his concept of cultural Hegemony. The latter explains how the ruling class manages to dominate and rule over other classes. In this respect, unlike his Marxist predecessors, Gramsci insists on the role of ideology by which the dominant class maintains its rule and domination in society. For Gramsci,

instead of imposing its rule by means of force and coercion, the ruling class seeks to establish the consent of other classes to their rule. The greatest Marxist theorist after Karl Marx, whose life is dedicated for the freedom of the Italian people, is Antonio Gramsci. At the same time, he is a philosopher, a journalist, a politician and the first Italian Marxist. Amongst the leftist western thinkers, he's accredited to be a remarkable Marxist thinker

5.2 Objectives

This unit is planned and designed with a view to understand and have knowledge about Hegemony with special reference to Gramsci's concept of hegemony. By the end of this unit one shall be able to:

- Discuss about the concept of Hegemony.
- Analyze Gramsci's notion of Hegemony.
- Describe about Cultural hegemony.

5.3 Meaning of Hegemony:

The word Hegemony was originated from the Greek word 'hegemonía' which means Leadership and Rule. In ancient Greece the word hegemony was used to denote the political and military supremacy of one city-state over another. Hegemony, thus, is used in two contexts: firstly to mean supremacy and secondly to mean leadership with which unanimous support is incorporated. Hegemony is the power or dominance that one social group holds over others. This can refer to the "asymmetrical interdependence" of political-economic-cultural relations between and among nation-states (Straubhaar, 1991) or differences between and among social classes within a nation. Hegemony is "dominance and subordination in the field of relations structured by power" (Hall, 1985). But hegemony is more than social power itself; it is a method for gaining and maintaining power.

Hegemony is actually a cultural process by which one class dominates the other. Thus the dominators keep on practicing power and the ruled obey them. Simply it means to put something into the ear of the commoners and make them believe in it. According to Gramsci, hegemony is one kind of social authority; dominating people without using power or threatening the use of it. It is acquired through social institutions and people accept that somehow by being forced or willingly. Classical Marxist theory, of course, stresses economic position as the strongest predictor of social differences. Today, more than a century after Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote

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their treatises about capitalist exploitation of the working class, economic disparities still underlie and help reproduce social inequalities in industrialized societies.... Technological developments in the twentieth century, however, have made the manner of social domination much more complex than before. Social class differences in today's world are not determined solely or directly by economic factors. Ideological influence is crucial now in the exercise of social power.

The Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci-to whom the term hegemony is attributed- broadened materialist Marxist theory into the realm of ideology. Persecuted by his country's then fascist government (and writing from prison), Gramsci emphasized society's "super structure," its ideology-producing institutions, in struggles over meaning and power (1971; 1973; 1978; see also Boggs, 1976; Sass9on, 1980; and Simon, 1982). A shift in critical theory thus was made away from a preoccupation with capitalist society's "base" (its economic foundation) and towards its dominant dispensaries of ideas. Attention was given to the structuring of authority and dependence in symbolic environments that correspond to, but are not the same as, economically determined class-based structures and processes of industrial production. Such a theoretical turn seems a natural and necessary development in an era when communications technology is such a pervasive and potent ideological medium. According to Gramsci's theory of ideological hegemony, mass media are tools that ruling elites use to "perpetuate their power, wealth, and status [by popularizing] their own philosophy, culture and morality" (Boggs, 1976: 39). The mass media uniquely "introduce elements into individual consciousness that would not otherwise appear there, but will not be rejected by consciousness because they are so commonly shared in the cultural community" (Nordenstreng, 1977: 276). Owners and managers of media industries can produce and reproduce the content, inflections, and tones of ideas favorable to them far more easily than other social groups because they manage key socializing institutions, thereby guaranteeing that their points of view are constantly and attractively cast into the public arena.

Hegemony implies a willing agreement by people to be governed by principles, rules, and laws they believe operate in their best interests, even though in actual practice they may not. Social consent can be a more effective means of control than coercion or force. Again, Raymond Williams: "The idea of hegemony, in its wide sense, is ... especially important in societies [where] electoral politics and public opinion are significant factors, and in which social practice is seen to depend on consent to certain dominant

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ideas which in fact express the needs of a dominant class" (1976: 145). Thus, in the words of Colombian communication theorist Jesus Martin-Barbero, "one class exercises hegemony to the extent that the dominating class has interests which the subaltern classes recognize as being in some degree their interests too".

5.4 Marxism and Hegemony

To foster a better understanding of the Gramscian concept of hegemony, it is useful to highlight its link to earlier Marxist thought. Whereas the Marxists focus on the coercive practices of the ruling class and its tendency to exploit the proletariat by means of force, Gramsci emphasizes the role of ideology. In his opinion, before the ruling class resorts to direct force and coercion, it seeks to make its rule acceptable by all classes. This is what Gramsci calls "hegemony".

It is to be noted that Marx divides society into two major components: a base and a superstructure. The first is represented by the economic structure and the second by socializing mechanisms such as language, religion, education, law, ideology, mass media and the army. It needs to be emphasized here that Marx believes that the economic base of society is what determines its social, political and cultural environment.

According to Marx, since the ruling class owns and controls the means of production, it must equally control the means of intellectual and cultural production. Consequently, the ideas of the ruling class must be the most prevailing ideas in society. Gramsci rejects the Marxist claim that the power of the ruling class is limited to the economic base. For him, a social class becomes hegemonic not only by controlling the means of production and coercing other classes but rather by establishing their consent. In fact, consent is so important to Gramsci's theory of hegemony.

Stop To Consider

Critical Theory:

Critical theory is a school of thought which challenges dominant ways of exploring and explaining organizational phenomenon. It has its origins in the so-called 'Frankfurt School' and includes the work of scholars such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and JYrgen Habermas. The core of critical theory involves exposing existing modes of domination and oppression and offering alternative possibilities which emancipate those once excluded and silenced.

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5.5 Gramsci's Concept of Hegemony:

Hegemony signifies the control of the intellectual life of society by purely cultural means. According to Gramsci, the supremacy of a social class manifests itself in two different ways: Domination or coercion and Intellectual and moral leadership. The latter type of supremacy is Hegemony. Thus, hegemony is a supremacy acquired by consent rather than force. Whereas 'domination' is realized through the coercive machinery of the state; hegemony is mainly exercised through civil society.

Gramsci argues that a social class emerges as hegemonic not only by coercing others but rather by establishing consent among subordinate classes. In order to understand Gramsci and the concept of hegemony, one has to look briefly at the work of Karl Marx. Marxism viewed everything in life as determined by capital. (Williams, R. 1977). The flow of money affects our relations with other people and the world surrounding us. Marx stated that everything around us, our activities and way of life is determined by economic content. The class struggle was an important part of Marxism. Marx's work is highly influenced by economic reasoning. He divides this economic reasoning into two levels, being the base and superstructure. The base is composed by the material production, money, objects, the relations of production and the stage of development of productive forces. (Williams, R. 1977) The superstructure is where we find the political and ideological institutions, our social relations, set of ideas; our cultures, hopes, dreams and spirit. (Williams, R. 1977) Both the base and superstructure are shaped by capital. While one could say that Marx was primarily concerned with the base and economic issues, Gramsci's work seeks to focus on the superstructure and ideologies.

For Gramsci, the class struggle must always involve ideas and ideologies. (Ransome, P. 1992) Gramsci took the superstructure a step further when he divided it into institutions that were coercive and those that were not. The coercive ones, were basically the public institutions such as the government, police, armed forces and the legal system which he regarded as the state or political society and the non-coercive ones were the others such as the churches, the schools, trade unions, political parties, cultural associations, clubs and family, which he regarded as civil society. (Boggs, C. 1976) So for Gramsci, society was made up of the relations of production as well as the state or political society and civil society.

Here, Gramsci introduced a new concept which he called hegemony. Hegemony is a set of ideas by means of which dominant groups strive to secure the consent of subordinate groups to their leadership. (Ransome, P. 1992) It occurs when dominant classes in society maintain their dominance

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persuading the other classes of society to accept their moral, political and cultural values. This means that the majority in a population give consent to policies and ideologies implemented by those in power. Gramsci's "hegemony" refers to a process of moral and intellectual leadership through which dominated or subordinate classes of post-1870 industrial Western European nations consent to their own domination by ruling classes, as opposed to being simply forced or coerced into accepting inferior positions.

According to Gramsci, working class could only conquer by first imparting its world view and system of values to the other classes. As Croce had stated, people would leave religion only when the spiritual needs which used to be satisfied by religion, can be fulfilled by something else. Marxism should fulfill this need. For Gramsci, the dominant classes maintain their rule through the use of cultural institutions to establish the consent of the subaltern classes i.e. instead of using force and coercion, the ruling class develops a hegemonic culture through the use of ideology to manipulate other classes into accepting their status as subaltern. The latter explains how the ruling class manages to dominate and rule over other classes. In this respect, unlike his Marxist predecessors, Gramsci insists on the role of ideology by which the dominant class maintains its rule and domination in society. For Gramsci, instead of imposing its rule by means of force and coercion, the ruling class seeks to establish the consent of other classes to their rule.

Gramsci did not agree with the notion put forward by Marx that the ruling class stayed in power solely because they had economic power. He thus introduced his own concept using ideology. Ideology is the shared ideas or beliefs which serve to justify the interests of dominant groups. (Boggs, C. 1976) Gramsci felt that ideological power kept the ruling class in power because it allowed them to brainwash and manipulate the rest of society. Gramsci insists that ideology has a material nature in the social lives of individuals, as ideologies are embedded incommunal modes of living and acting. (R. Simon, 1992) This means that ideologies are embodied in the social practices of individuals and in the institutions and organizations within which these social practices take place. Ideology provides people with the rules of practical conduct and moral behavior. Those who monopolize ideological power have authority over others.

From Gramsci's view, the bourgeoisie gained and maintained power due to economic domination and intellectual and moral leadership. One must not assume that this consent is always willing. Those in power may combine physical force or coercion with intellectual, moral and cultural persuasion. (Ransome, P. 1992) The dominant ideology is thus accepted, practiced and spread. According to Gramsci, hegemony never disappears but is constantly

changed. He describes two forms of social control. The first type is coercive control which is achieved through the use of direct force or threat of force. (Simon, R. 1992) The second type is consensual control which arises when individuals voluntarily adopt the world view of the dominant group. (Simon, R. 1992)

5.5.1. Super structure:

In explaining the context of Hegemony, Gramsci divided the social super structure into two sections. For example-

1. Political Society or, State
2. Civil Society

5.5.2 Political Society or, State

According to him, state is the defence of a fixed territory and the collective form of bureaucracy where bureaucrats, law, state fund, social security, army and educational institutions exist in a body. He also said that state is a machine of repression and persecution which constitutionally controls those groups of people who do not agree either actively or inactively (Yet, it is formed for the whole society). Whenever spontaneous support decreases and the fear of a crisis situation arises, a state as a machine of punishment and persecution is formed.

5.5.3 Civil Society

The main value of Gramsci's concept of civil society is intertwined with his theory of hegemony. Gramsci stated that in the complex web of relations, the ruling class manifests itself in two ways: domination (political leadership) and moral and intellectual leadership. Thus his conception of integral state embodies a synthesis of political society and civil society or that of coercion and consent. Gramsci says that within civil society, the dominant group exercises hegemony which is intellectual domination over the subordinate group or consensual control, whereas in political society, domination is exercised through state or juridical government or coercive control (Gramsci, A. 1971). In this sense, the state is not only the apparatus of government (coercion), but also the private apparatus of civil society (consent). So, both the concept of political and civil society becomes the aspects of the theory of the integral state (Texier, 979: 69). Thus, for Gramsci, civil society is best described not as the sphere of freedom but of hegemony. Hegemony, to be sure, depends on consent (as opposed to coercion), but consent is

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not the spontaneous outcome of "free choice"; consent is manufactured, albeit through extremely complex mediums, diverse institutions, and constantly changing processes. Gramsci hence arrives at the concept of hegemony through the detailed study of civil society, and, moreover, his descriptions of the complex interactions among individuals and institutions in civil society constitute a concrete, material exposition of the apparatuses and operations of hegemony.

Gramsci stated that the church, the unions, the broader civil society's unions with their multiple goals reproduce the ideological dominance of the bourgeois class and extract the consent of the workers to the capitalist manner of production. Thus it seems that in the game of ideological hegemony, the "intellectual and moral hegemony" (Georgiadou, 1996, p. 20) of the bourgeois class is better expressed via the consent that is extracted by the institutions of civil society.

According to him, Civil Societies are private institutions. These are other organizations in society those are neither related with economy or with any state department. For instance- religious institutions, medium of communication, films etc. He defined civil society as the international citizen. According to him, it is the sphere of Hegemonic leadership.

SAQ :

1. Discuss about the differences in Marxian and Gramsci's concept of Hegemony. (80 words)

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5.6 Cultural Hegemony:

Cultural hegemony refers to domination or rule maintained through ideological or cultural means. It is usually achieved through social institutions, which allow those in power to strongly influence the values, norms, ideas, expectations, world view, and behavior of the rest of society. In Marxist philosophy, cultural hegemony is the dominance of a culturally diverse society by the ruling class who manipulate the culture of that society, the beliefs and explanations, perceptions, values, and morals also that the world view of the ruling class becomes the accepted cultural norm. As the universal dominant ideology, the ruling class world view misrepresents the social, political, and

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economic status quo as natural, inevitable, and perpetual social conditions that benefit every social class, rather than as artificial social constructs that benefit only the ruling class.

Cultural hegemony functions by framing the world view of the ruling class, and the social and economic structures that embody it, as just, legitimate, and designed for the benefit of all, even though these structures may only benefit the ruling class. This kind of power is distinct from rule by force, as in a military dictatorship, because it allows the ruling class to exercise authority using the "peaceful" means of ideology and culture.

5.6.1. Cultural Hegemony According to Antonio Gramsci:

The Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci developed the concept of cultural hegemony out of Karl Marx's theory that the dominant ideology of society reflects the beliefs and interests of the ruling class. Gramsci argued that consent to the rule of the dominant group is achieved by the spread of ideologies, beliefs, assumptions, and values through social institutions such as schools, churches, courts, and the media, among others. These institutions do the work of socializing people into the norms, values, and beliefs of the dominant social group. As such, the group that controls these institutions controls the rest of society. Cultural hegemony is most strongly manifested when those ruled by the dominant group come to believe that the economic and social conditions of their society are natural and inevitable, rather than created by people with vested interest in particular social, economic, and political orders.

Gramsci developed the concept of cultural hegemony in an effort to explain why the worker-led revolution that Marx predicted in the previous century had not come to pass. Central to Marx's theory of capitalism was the belief that the destruction of this economic system was built into the system itself since capitalism is premised on the exploitation of the working class by the ruling class. Marx reasoned that workers could only take so much economic exploitation before they would rise up and overthrow the ruling class. However, this revolution did not happen on a mass scale.

In 1967, the German student movement leader Rudi Dutschke applied Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony with the phrase *The Long march through the Institutions* (*Marsch durch die Institutionen*) to identify the political war of position, a European Communist allusion to the Long March (1934–35) of the People's Liberation Army, by means of which the working-class intellectuals would produce the popular culture to replace the dominant ideology imposed by the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie.

Space for Learners

5.6.2 The Cultural Power of Ideology:

Gramsci realized that there was more to the dominance of capitalism than the class structure and its exploitation of workers. Marx had recognized the important role that ideology played in reproducing the economic system and the social structure that supported it, but Gramsci believed that Marx had not given enough credit to the power of ideology. In his essay “The Intellectuals,” written between 1929 and 1935, Gramsci described the power of ideology to reproduce the social structure through institutions such as religion and education. He argued that society's intellectuals, often viewed as detached observers of social life, are actually embedded in a privileged social class and enjoy great prestige. As such, they function as the “deputies” of the ruling class, teaching and encouraging people to follow the norms and rules established by the ruling class. Gramsci elaborated on the role the education system plays in the process of achieving rule by consent, or cultural hegemony, in his essay “On Education.”

5.6.3 The Political Power of Common Sense:

In “The Study of Philosophy,” Gramsci discussed the role of “common sense” dominant ideas about society and about our place in it in producing cultural hegemony. For example, the idea of “pulling oneself up by the bootstraps,” the idea that one can succeed economically if one just tries hard enough, is a form of “common sense” that has flourished under capitalism, and that serves to justify the system. In other words, if one believes that all it takes to succeed is hard work and dedication, then it follows that the system of capitalism and the social structure that is organized around it is just and valid. It also follows that those who have succeeded economically have earned their wealth in a just and fair manner and that those who struggle economically, in turn, deserve their impoverished state. This form of “common sense” fosters the belief that success and social mobility are strictly the responsibility of the individual, and in doing so obscures the real class, racial, and gender inequalities that are built into the capitalist system.

In sum, cultural hegemony is a result of socialization, our experiences with social institutions, and our exposure to cultural narratives and imagery, all of which reflect the beliefs and values of the ruling class.

Check Your Progress :

1. What do you mean by Hegemony? Explain Marxian concept of hegemony.
2. Discuss briefly Gramsci’s concept of hegemony.
3. What is cultural hegemony. Discuss.
4. Define civil society. Write a note of Gramsci’s concept of civil society.

Space for Learners

5.7 Summing Up :

Antonio Gramsci can be considered as one of the most remarkable Marxist theorists in the previous century. The man's role in developing Western Marxism is undeniable. Specifically, Gramsci's main contribution to Marxism remains his concept of cultural hegemony. Reading of this unit has helped you in understanding the meaning of hegemony and differences between Marxian and Gramsci's concept of hegemony. This unit has also helped you in learning the concept of cultural hegemony.

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UNIT 6

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR – PATRIARCHY

Unit Structure :

- 6.1. Introduction
- 6.2. Objectives
- 6.3. Notable Works of Simone de Beauvoir
 - 6.3.1. The Second Sex
 - 6.3.2. Pyrrhus et Cineas
 - 6.3.3. The Ethics of Ambiguity
- 6.4. Simone de Beauvoir on Patriarchy
- 6.5. Simone de Beauvoir on Feminism
- 6.6. Simone de Beauvoir on Freedom
- 6.7. Simone de Beauvoir on marriage
 - 6.7.1. Simone de Beauvoir on Intercourse and Pregnancy
 - 6.7.2. Simone de Beauvoir on Abortion and Children
- 6.8. Summing Up
- 6.9. References and Suggested Readings

6.1. Introduction

Simone Lucie Ernestine Marie Bertrand de Beauvoir was a French writer. She was an intellectual, existentialist philosopher, political activist, feminist and social theorist. She wrote many novels based on feminism. ‘She Came to Stay’ and ‘The Mandarins’ were her famous works. She had won the Prix Goncourt Award in the year 1954 for her novel ‘The Mandarins’ and Jerusalem Prize in the year 1975. Again in the year 1978, she won the Austrian State Prize for European Literature. She was famous for her open relationship with the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre. Her father was her source of encouragement who felt proud in the fact that Simone de Beauvoir thought like a man.

Here in this unit, you are going to be introduced with different ideas of Simone de Beauvoir. She wanted to abolish the myth of eternal feminine. She focused on the role of patriarchy in creating this notion of women. This unit shall also help you in understanding her concept about feminism. All her famous books deal with this topic. The Second Sex written by her is considered to be the bible of feminist movement. In this unit an attempt has been made to connect you to the concepts developed by Simone de Beauvoir.

6.2. Objectives

This unit is designed to help you understand the main ideas of Simone de Beauvoir who was a leading feminist. After reading this unit you will be able to

- Understand Simone de Beauvoir 's ideas described in her works
- Discuss her ideas about patriarchy
- Understand her concept of feminism
- Summarise Simone de Beauvoir 's idea of freedom
- Explain her concept of marriage, children etc.

6.3. Notable Works of Simone de Beauvoir

You have already learnt that Simone de Beauvoir was a feminist writer. Her works dealt with the issues vital for freedom and independence of women. Simone de Beauvoir liked to call herself an author rather than a philosopher. Here in this section, let us discuss her ideas and contribution through few of her books.

6.3.1. The Second Sex

The Second Sex, published in 1949 is considered to be a pioneer book in the field of feminism. The book Second Sex for the first time in history separated gender from gender conditioning. She had rightly quoted that you are not born a woman, you become one. Femininity as a concept is not innate but taught from infancy. She believed that women were equally capable of making life choices and taking responsibilities as woman. This novel is considered to be the bible of feminism. It was so controversial that the Vatican put it in the list of prohibited books.

In this book, Beauvoir referred to women as the Second Sex because they always seemed to be defined in relation to men.

This whole book is dedicated to the question what is a woman. Simone de Beauvoir felt that the society did not accuse a man for the way he thinks only because he is a man. A man can easily become a philosopher by virtue of being a man. But the society consider woman 's body as a hindrance in becoming a philosopher. In fact, by the question what is a woman, Simone de Beauvoir challenged the exclusion of women from philosophy.

This book can be divided into two parts. The first part is known as Facts And Myths. The second part is known as Lived Experiences. The first part

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deals with the history of subjection of women. This part explains how the myths related to this subjection of women has perpetuated the inferior position of women. As mentioned above, this part focused on the two most important factor for emancipation of women. One is participation in the production process and second is freedom from reproductive slavery. The second part explains the experiences of women at different stages of life. This part analysed the attitudes adopted by women at different stages to deal with various situations. Simone de Beauvoir also reflected the new changes adopted by women which might help them with new opportunities. Simone de Beauvoir explains that infants cannot differentiate on the basis of sex. They perceive the world through their sense organs and not their sex organs. Gradually when they grow up, adults inculcate these differentiations into them. Tears of a girl is more indulged than a boy. While boys are expected to be independent, girls are taught to be dependent.

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Stop To Consider

The Other Writings of Simone de Beauvoir

- ‘She Came To Stay’ was Simone de Beauvoir’s first book. This book reflected the complexity of war in the individual relationships. It was written in the year 1943. She Came To Stay was a love triangle where she analysed the existence in relation to the other. She argued that women need to justify their existence by loving others rather than becoming a free soul. The novel She Came To Stay deals with concepts like freedom, dependence, sexuality etc. The book mainly explains the concept of existentialism that is finding the meaning of life and self through free will, choice, and personal responsibility.
- In 1945 her book ‘The Blood Of Others’ was released. This book deals with the agony of the central character as he had to deal with the responsibility he has and his individual relations.
- Simone de Beauvoir’s next book All Men Are Mortal was published in the year 1946. The central theme of this book was the concept of mortality and immortality. In this book the character, an actress found out that a mysterious and depressed man is immortal. After knowing this, she became obsessed with her own immortality.
- In 1954, The Mandarins which was the most famous novel of Simone de Beauvoir was published.
- Her first collection of short stories When Things Of The Spirit Come First was published in 1979. The stories in this book have clearly showed the hypocrisy of the French society. The intellectual or

religious absolutes veils the self-interest of the French upper class. In 1967 her second collection of short stories named *The Woman Destroyed* was published.

- Simone de Beauvoir had written only one play named *Who Shall Die?* This play deals with the topic who should be sacrificed for the benefit of the people. This play was influenced by the 14th century Italian towns when during severe starvation, the old, sick, weak, women and children were thrown out so that the strong man can live longer.

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6.3.2. Pyrrhus et Cineas

In the book *Pyrrhus et Cineas*, Simone de Beauvoir explained the relation between motives of action and the concern that why should we act at all. Simone was much associated with the concept of ethical responsibility towards own self. She defines that there is no god to guarantee our morality. Therefore, it is the duty of the individual existent to follow ethical action and create a bond among themselves. And for this we have to enjoy our freedom and at the same time encourage the freedom of our fellow human beings.

It is important to mention here that Simone de Beauvoir emphasised on the notion that the perfectness of a human being should be dependent on the project he/she takes and which sets up its own end as valuable rather than the approval or validation from others. She believed that all things or concept or notion which rejects or acts as a barrier to the enjoyment of human freedom, weaken the importance of individual existence. She defined that everyone should have the freedom to choose whom they want to be. She explained that relationships like slavery, mastery, tyranny, devotion etc. are all choices though it leads to inequality in the society. She believed that we cannot do anything for others. Everyone is responsible for their own acts. But we are morally obliged not to harm anyone. Simone de Beauvoir echoed the common existentialist theme that remaining silent or refuge to help others is also a kind of choice and an individual should get the freedom to make his/her own choices. But at the same time she also said that refuge to help or remaining silent implies not encouraging the freedom of others. This is against the ethical call. If we respect the freedom of others and encourage the freedom of others it will persist to the future generation. The other individual may ignore or conform to our encouragement. They will have the freedom to choose whether to ignore or conform to our encouragement. Hence we will have to carry our projects in risk and uncertainty.

Stop To Consider

The Autobiography

There are four volumes of Simone de Beauvoir's autobiography. The first volume named *Memoirs Of A Dutiful Daughter* deals with the relationship with her parents and friends. It also focuses on her life as a school going girl and her intellectual development. It reflects her critical analysis against her class and the position of women. The second volume is known as *The Prime Of Life* which was published in 1960. This volume explains her transition from student to adult and her role in war and peace. The third volume known as *The Force Of Circumstance* published in 1963 had two sub volumes namely, *After The War* and *Hard Times*. While the first part deals with the intellectual blossoming of post war Paris, the second part describes the issues like aging and death. The fourth volume, *All Said And Done*, published in 1972, clearly shows her commitment towards feminism.

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6.3.3. The Ethics Of Ambiguity

In this work Simone de Beauvoir explains that there is no predetermined standard of human value. She also opined that freedom is an internal thing which is crushed by the burden and responsibility of the external world. This responsibility and burden is not chosen by us but imposed on us by the society which is very tragic.

Freedom does not imply doing anything one wants. It means freedom to choose the goal of life. The goal varies from person to person. For one individual the goal might be writing a novel and at the same time for another individual the goal might be graduating from a university. But what matters is the freedom to choose their own goals without any external hindrances or pressure. The philosophy which accepts the freedom of each individual can be considered as ethical. She further believed that every individual though a separate entity, is in a bond with each other. Then only the idea can be carried further.

You should learn here that Simone de Beauvoir opined that a child while growing up acquires values which eventually effects their decisions in later life. But unfortunately these values are imposed and not chosen. Sometimes the situation acts as a barrier to the enjoyment of freedom. It is not always possible to surpass certain situations. This is because these situations are not chosen but imposed. And individuals are not even aware of the

alternatives. These situations are made the normal by the society. The individual is made to believe that whatever they are doing is assigned to them by nature. It is well known that we cannot revolt against the nature. Therefore, the oppressor take advantage of this and make the oppressed believe that nature has made them inferior.

Check Your Progress

1. The Second Sex was published in the year ____?
2. Why Simone de Beauvoir referred to woman as the second sex?
3. What was the central theme of Simone de Beauvoir's book She Came To Stay?
4. What was the name of the play written by Simone de Beauvoir?
5. What are the four volumes of Simone de Beauvoir's autobiography?

6.4. Simone de Beauvoir on Patriarchy

It has already been mentioned above that Simone focused on the role of patriarchy in creation of a woman. Simone de Beauvoir believed that the description or the creation of a woman is socially constructed and not biologically constructed. She was a radical departure from convention. She highlighted the problems inherent in patriarchy.

You should learn here that Simone de Beauvoir explained that women are compelled to accept a passive role in life. They are also compelled to take excessive care on their look. It needs mention here that the process of socialization helps in this. From a very early age, the primary agent of socialization like family imparts the values of feminine into a girl child. Girls are socialized in such a process that they feel more comfortable in adapting feminine identity. Right from the toy to role play to the colour of the dresses are associated with gender stereotypes. There is a watertight division between male breadwinner and female caregiver. It needs to be remembered here that according to the norms of the society while masculine implies superior, feminine implies inferior. It needs mention here that, in later phases of life, the secondary agent of socialization like media also contributes in reinforcing these values.

You should also learn here that Simone de Beauvoir wanted her women to be free to reject male stereotyping of beauty. She believed that this will bring equality between male and female. This equality will definitely challenge the patriarchal society. She explains that the patriarchal belief that women

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are abnormal stands as a barrier in achieving the true potential of women. It stands as a hindrance to female emancipation.

It needs mention here that Simone de Beauvoir was in favour of destructing patriarchal institutions like traditional nuclear family. She proposed a radical solution i.e. abolishing the unit of family. You should learn here that she favoured the principle of equality both in social as well as work life. She was of the opinion that patriarchy enslave women. Men get the most important posts and places by default. This is a contribution of patriarchy. Simone de Beauvoir believes that motherhood, child care, marriage etc. act as a hindrance towards the emancipation of women.

Stop To Consider

Patriarchy

Patriarchy in simple terms means domination of man over woman. In patriarchal social systems, man holds the primary position and enjoys the opportunities. The patriarchal ideas justify this domination of man over woman on the basis of inherent natural difference between man and woman. Literally patriarchy means the rule of the father. The feminists consider patriarchy as the major cause of women’s oppression. It is a system of maintaining status quo of power. Patriarchy is a structural force which influences the power relations. It distributes power unequally between man and woman. In a patriarchal society the feminine attributes are undervalued and considered to be inferior while the masculine attributes are given a superior position in the society.

SAQ

Do you think Indian society is a patriarchal society? Explain. (100 words)

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6.5. Simone de Beauvoir on Feminism

Feminism as an ideology deals with the equal rights of women. It has already been mentioned above that Simone de Beauvoir was a feminist writer. Her writings reflected the conditions of women of that era. Man has a historical

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definition in connection to human. While women had to assert their freedom and climb the ladder in the society, the man can simply take the elevator. Man is the savior while woman is the damsel in distress. It has also been mentioned above that she suggested ways for emancipation of women. You should learn here that Simone de Beauvoir studied multiple perspectives of women which includes biological, psychoanalytic, historical, literary, anthropological perspectives etc. She opined that none of these perspectives imply the inferiority of women. She has explained it with illustrations. If we take example of biology, we find that certain conditions are unique to women. These conditions include pregnancy, menstruation, menopause etc. Man does not experience it. These concepts are alien to man's body. But this no way proves that women are inferior to man just because she is associated with these concepts. It needs mention here that Simone de Beauvoir also explained the myths related to women. She believed that these myths regarding mother, virginity, menstruation etc. are instruments to trap the women in the name of ideal and hence denying the individual identity of women.

You should learn here that Simone de Beauvoir rejected the notion that one is born feminine. She was of the opinion that one is not born but becomes a woman. It has already been mentioned above that the society imposes the so called feminine traits on a girl child through the process of socialisation. Simone extensively studied the roles of mother, wife and prostitutes. She found that women are bound to do the monotonous works like having children, rearing them, doing the household chores rather than engaging themselves in creative works. Hence women have no freedom to choose their own action. They play a passive and alienated role.

It has already been mentioned above that Simone de Beauvoir wanted the women to be free to act according to her own will. She wanted all the women to take goals and projects of their own choice. She also opined that a woman should make herself able to take all the risks, uncertainties and dangers involved in fulfilling these projects and goals. She proposed several structural changes in the society which will pave the way for the emancipation of women. These changes include universal childcare, equal education, contraception, and legal abortion for women. She gave utmost importance to the fact that woman's economic freedom and independence from man are most important for emancipation of women. She also emphasised that marriage like any other choices should be chosen actively by both man and woman and it should not be imposed on.

It needs mention here that Simone de Beauvoir was of the view that women

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also deserve the same access to the opportunities, activities and projects. It makes her a second wave feminist. She also opined that the laws, customs and education should be altered and made to encourage the equality of women.

In the beginning, Simone de Beauvoir did not consider herself to be a feminist. She believed that socialist development and class struggle are needed to solve the problem of the society and not to women movement. But later on she realised that in socialist countries like USSR and China, the condition of women remained same despite their involvement in jobs and government positions in the society. Then Simone de Beauvoir realised that actual problem lies somewhere else. Eventually she started becoming a part of the feminist movement. She declared that women need to work to be independent. Not necessarily, work will solve the problem or work should be perfect. But Simone de Beauvoir considered work as the first condition to be independent. To be truly liberated, the women must overthrow the system of patriarchy itself.

She distinguished between prostitutes and hetaeras. She also described homosexuality and was in favour of it. She believed that women have homosexual feelings latent in them and therefore towards menopause they can feel attracted towards their homosexual partners.

SAQ

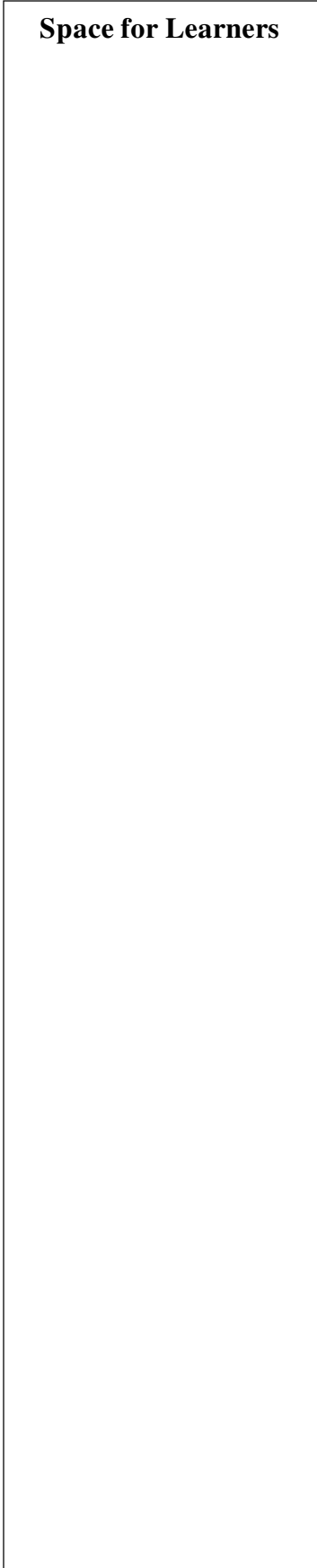
Do you think women are deprived of equal opportunities in the society?
Give reasons in favour of your answer. (70 words)

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6.6. Simone de Beauvoir on Freedom

It is important to mention here that the Christians believe that human beings are born with certain innate ideas. In contrary to this Christian belief, Simone de Beauvoir believed that human is born free. This freedom acts both in a positive as well as negative sense. Through her book 'The Second Sex' she wanted to make the women understand the value of their own freedom. The women feel like failures when they cannot meet the expectations of others. Rather than concentrating on what they want for themselves, they feel depressed for not becoming what others want them to be. Simone de

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Beauvoir wanted the characters in her novel to dream. She also conveyed the message that falling does not make a person a failure.

You should remember here that Simone de Beauvoir had arisen a vital question regarding the freedom of women. She asked if majority of women belong to the oppressed category, then why they don't revolt. The answer is that they are not even aware that they belong to the oppressed group. She opined that they are not even aware of their unfair situation.

Simone de Beauvoir has beautifully explained women's support towards their unfreedom. According to her, women play an active role in reinforcing her unfreedom. The main cause behind this is explained as the dependent situation of the women. Simone de Beauvoir was of the view that embracing and defending their position as sexual object also implies complicity towards unfreedom. Simone explained that women are conceived as others and therefore they are deprived of opportunities. Man is the subject and hence essential. Women are others and hence non essential. It needs mention here that Simone de Beauvoir described the story of changing attitude towards female body. She has beautifully explained how the society shapes this changing attitude. Simone de Beauvoir raised a vital question that the supposed disadvantages of female body is actually the disadvantage or not. She opined that the words like menstruation, pregnancy, menopause etc. have its own meaning. But the oppressive patriarchal society is using these terms in a negative sense. Therefore, these concepts are treated as burden. She believed that as a girl child grows she becomes flesh against her will and have to take the gazes. It leads to the belief that female body is something for which you should feel embarrassed. Female body gives you pain and hence it is awkward. The society will never let a girl forget her body. Everyone will direct a girl about her body posture which is a shameful aspect of this society. A girl can enjoy full freedom over her body in a natural environment only and not in a social environment. But this is not possible. Escaping to a natural world is not permitted always.

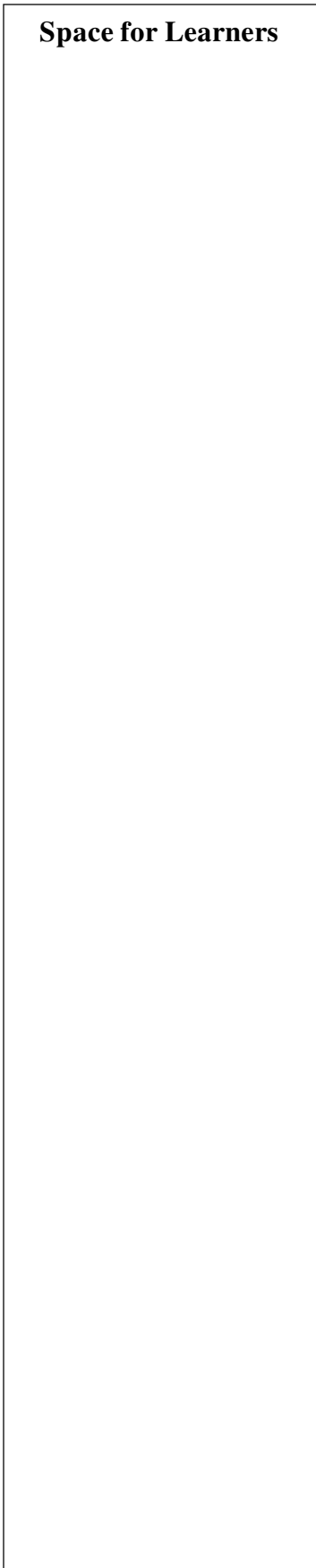
SAQ

Do you think women reinforce her unfreedom. Illustrate. (60 words)

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Simone de Beauvoir also pointed out the fact that humanity is male and

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women are not defined independently but in relation to man. She believed that women's condition can get better through two options. Participation in the production process and emancipation from the reproductive slavery. Motherhood makes a women engrossed and this helps the man to dominate her. Simone de Beauvoir has traced the growth of women's participation after industrial revolution. She also emphasized on the birth control methods and abortion. She rightly said that it is due to historical insignificance given to women which makes the women feel inferior. It has already been mentioned above that Simone de Beauvoir has beautifully explained the differences in the process of socialization of a boy and a girl. A boy is given the idea to become tough and the girls are forced to adopt the so called feminine attributes. She is taught to worship the superiority of man and given a romantic idea of sex. Simone de Beauvoir opines that women are at par with man. It is her situation which limits her activity to preparing food and arranging lodging. These are unpaid works and despite doing all the household chores she is forced to believe that she does nothing. Simone believed that women should fight their own specific struggles. Though it is true that being a woman can limit one's freedom only if that person chose it to be a limitation, yet Simone de Beauvoir thinks that some features of a situation may act as hindrance to freedom no matter how it had been chosen. She believed freedom needs space to move.

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Stop To Consider

Existentialism

The philosophy of existentialism analyses the existence of individual independent of any prior idea. According to this philosophy, individuals are responsible for his or her own act without having any prior knowledge of good or bad or right or wrong. This philosophy deals with human freedom. The followers of this philosophy believe that action, freedom and decision are the three ingredients fundamental to human existence.

6.7. Simone de Beauvoir on Marriage

You have already learnt that a woman was not given the freedom to take decisions. When a girl grows up her life is defined in terms of marriage and her relation with a man. Simone de Beauvoir explained that the society made a girl believe that the only means of support for a girl is marriage and it is the sole justification of her existence. Men were the sole breadwinners. And therefore, women were associated with the household works. This is

one of the reason why society encourage marriage. Moreover, marriage also gives children which is one of the important aspect of female life. The idea associated with the term marriage is that a woman is given to the husband by her father and the man is said to take a wife. The society expect the women to take the last name, religion, friends and family of the husband. And eventually according to Simone de Beauvoir, marriage becomes the career for women. In this career she provides services like sex, cleaning, cooking, giving birth to children, rearing the children, taking care of the household etc. In return she gets the financial support of her husband. This career was easily acceptable to man and woman. Woman finds this career easier than the few other jobs available for them. Moreover, this career pays them well. Simone de Beauvoir explained that women take marriage as a career as there were only few job opportunities available for women at that time. Also, those were not well paid jobs for women. Women are not considered as adult until they marry. Women were eager to get married soon as they can enjoy freedom, especially sexual freedom after marriage. During that time in France, adultery was socially acceptable. Women can take a lover after marriage but not before marriage. But men were allowed to taker lovers before marriage. Men were treated as adults as soon as they get their first job. So to become an adult, a man must get a job while a woman needs to get married. You must remember here that there was different definitions of adulthood and freedom for man and woman. A woman gets freedom from her parents after marriage but marriage gives her a new master i. e. her husband. The women are happy as they enjoy certain sexual freedom after marriage. She explains that the works of married woman are equal to refusing life. The dignity of a woman is associated with bed service and household service. She explains that women find disappointment after marriage and marriage almost destroys woman.

Stop To Consider

Aging

In her book *Coming Of Age*, Simonede Beauvoir dealt with the concept of aging. She studied the history of thousand years and also different nations and cultures to write this book. This book deals with the fact that our society holds the belief that the old must suffer and endure. Aging is associated with a negative term. Women are forced to use products that will give her strength to fight against time. Simonede Beauvoir in her autobiography explained that she became upset when she was aging as she was losing her looks. As a philosopher she felt that it was a value placed by the society.

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6.7.1. Simone de Beauvoir on Intercourse And Pregnancy

You have already learnt the concept of feminism, patriarchy and marriage as explained by Simone de Beauvoir. Now let us learn the concept of intercourse and pregnancy by Simone de Beauvoir .The concept of intercourse is equally traumatic for girls as it involves penetration and hence gives pain. Moreover, girls are not given any prior knowledge about intercourse compared to the boys. This is the cultural angle of society. The women are given a very romantic concept of sexual education. Therefore, when they face the reality, they get the shock. Biological facts are not traumatic. It is the lack of generosity in man’s behavior that is traumatic. The girls are socialized to romanticize sex. But on later stage, when she goes through it, she finds it painful to accept the penetration. Simone de Beauvoir opined that according to the society, satisfaction of both the spouses during intercourse is absolute absurdity. Simone de Beauvoir again believed that the concept of pregnancy is more positive in nature. As a woman becomes pregnant she is considered to be no more available for sexual services. It saves her from unwanted gazes which is a very positive aspect. Moreover, she carries a life inside her which is very enriching in itself. Pregnancy gives freedom to a woman as she is valued on her own terms. She is taken care of as she is giving birth to a new life.

SAQ

Do you think economic independence can elevate the condition of women? Discuss. (80 words)

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6.7.2. Simone de Beauvoir on Abortion And Children

Simone was not against motherhood though personally she avoided it. She was against the concept of forced motherhood or motherhood against the will of the mother to be. She supported legal abortion under the expert supervision of doctors. She refused the catholic belief that unborn souls do not go to heaven as they are not baptized. She clearly defines the issue of abortion as the issue of masculine sadism rather than an issue of morality. The sadomasochistic behavior among the girl child develops a guilt feeling among them.

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You should learn here that in the career of marriage the women get promoted when she becomes a mother. Simone de Beauvoir believed that the motherly instinct is not natural in a woman but coloured by a set of uncontrollable circumstances. The women from lower class did not have knowledge and access to birth control measures and children become financial burden on them. But sadly, a woman cannot choose whether she wants to be a mother or not. The mothers are embodiment of sacrifices and it is considered normal. If she has become a mother she is denied the individuality and the society impose responsibility on her.

Check Your Progress

1. Simone de Beauvoir was in favour of destructing patriarchal institutions. (write true or false)
2. Name the structural changes proposed by Simone de Beauvoir for emancipation of women.
3. Why pregnancy is a positive aspect according Simone de Beauvoir?
4. Write a note on Simone de Beauvoir's views on abortion.

6.8. Summing Up

After going through this unit, now you are in a position to discuss the ideas of Simone de Beauvoir. In this unit, you have learnt that Simone de Beauvoir was a French writer and philosopher. She is famously known for her feminist writings. You have also learnt that her book *The Second Sex* is considered to be the bible of feminism. This book revolves round the question who is a woman. It has also been discussed here in this unit that Simone de Beauvoir explained in her book *Pyrrhus et Cineas* the relation between motives of action and the concern why should we act at all. In her book *The Ethics Of Ambiguity*, she opined that there is no predetermined standard of human value. This unit has also familiarized you with various ideas of Simone de Beauvoir like patriarchy, feminism, freedom, marriage etc. She emphasized on the role of patriarchy in the creation of a woman. After reading this unit you have also learnt that Simone de Beauvoir rejected the notion that one is born feminine. She opined that one is not born but becomes a woman. You have also learnt that Simone de Beauvoir demanded for equal opportunity and access for women. It has also been explained in this unit that Simone de Beauvoir believed that human are born free. But women are socialized to accept their unfreedom as a norm of the society. She also opined that participation in the production process and emancipation from the

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reproductive slavery can make a women enjoy her freedom. You have also learnt that, according to Simone de Beauvoir, marriage is taken as a career by women. This unit has helped you in summarizing the ideas of Simone de Beauvoir.

6.9. References and Suggested Readings

Links :

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