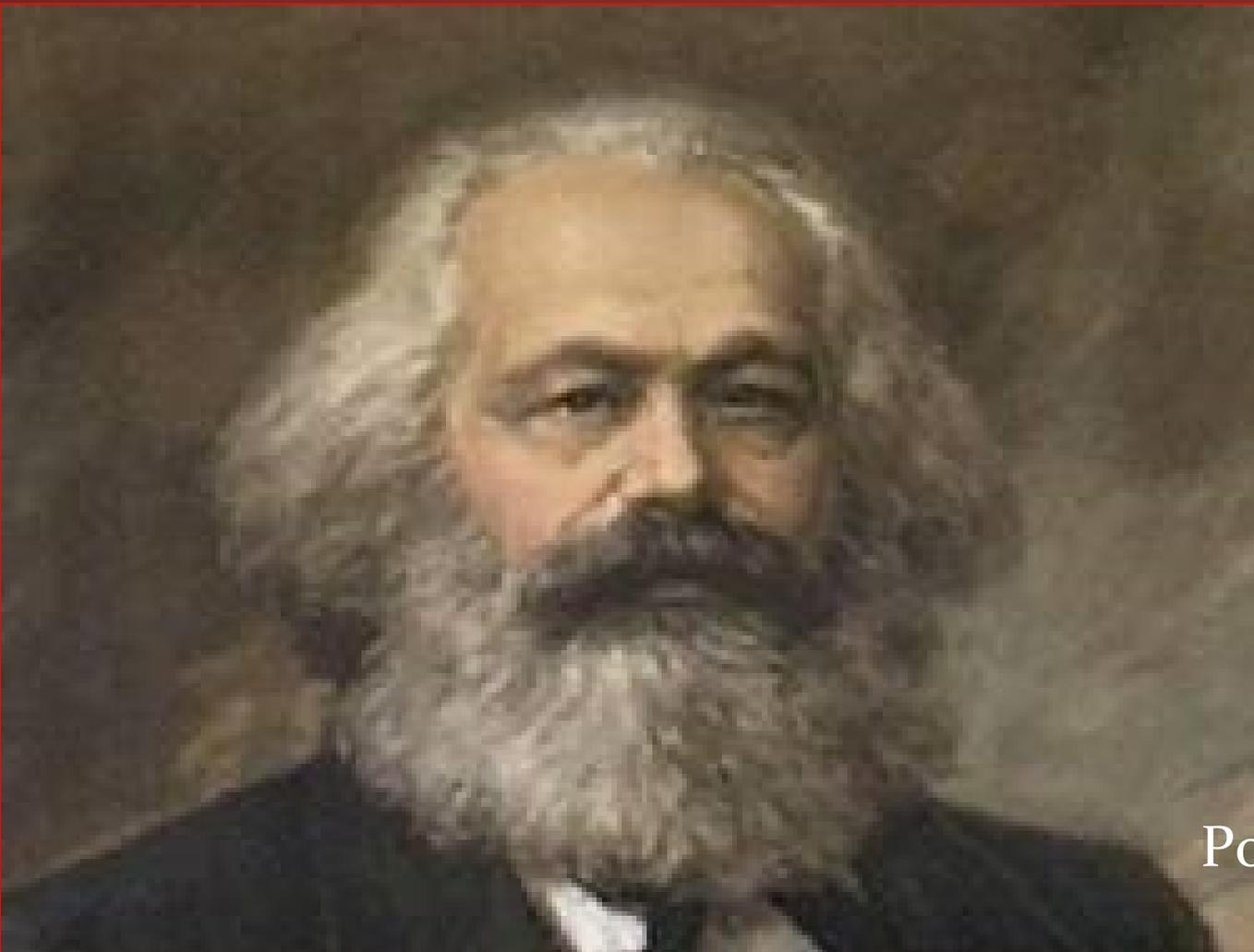


KARL MARX(1818-1883)



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Introduction:

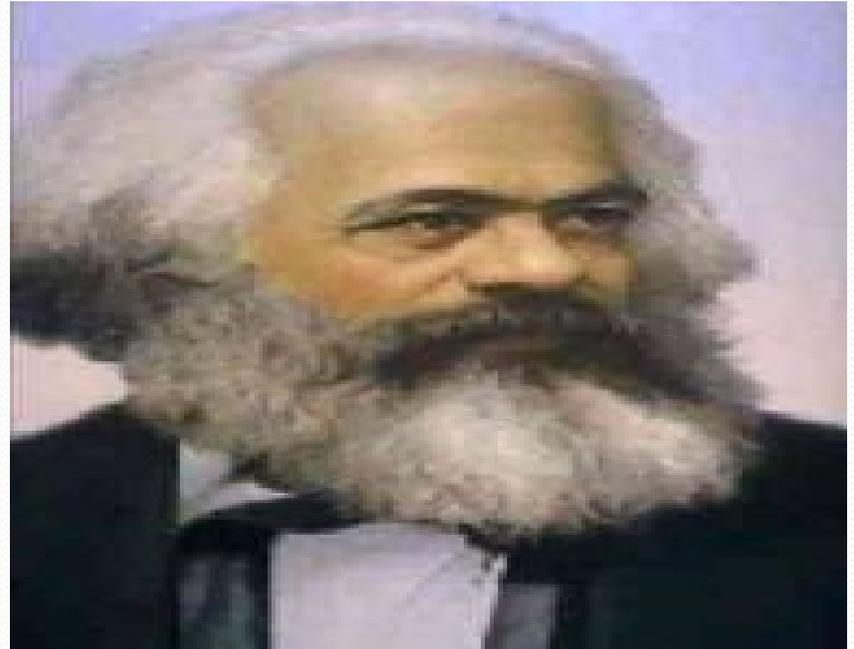
- He was the Father of Scientific socialism.
- He was a Political Economist and also a social revolutionary.
- He edited and published a paper called Rhenish Gazette.
- At Paris with the association of Fredrick Engels published the work “The Communist Manifesto”.
- He wrote “Das Capital” (1867), “The Poverty of Philosophy” 1847, “The Critique of political Economy” 1859, “The Value, Price and Property” 1865, “The Civil War in France” 1870.

1. His Ideas on Capitalism:

- His ideas on capitalism were found in his book Capital.
- He wrote more on Capitalism than on Socialism.
(Coker)
- The aim of his writings was to know the cause of economic injustice.
- Finally he found out that the root of all evil is the private ownership of the means of production.
- He has laid down the following principles of Capitalism -

a. Capitalism has the seeds of its own destruction:

- Communism was the inevitable end to the process of evolution began with feudalism and passing through capitalism and socialism.



b. Capitalism and Capitalist:

- It refers to an economic system where there is a private ownership of means of production and distribution.
- Marx used the term Bourgeois to the class of capitalist who are the owners of the means of production.
- In a capitalistic mode of production labour itself became a commodity for sale.
- Those who sell their labour power are proletarians.
- The person who buy labour power, own the land and technology is a capitalist.
- The proletarians outnumber the capitalists.

c. Surplus Value the Foundation of Capitalism:

- To Marx, the labour was the sole source of value.
- The value of anything is determined by the labour and time spent on producing it.
- Factors other than labour are insignificant in determining the value.
- To him, the value of the commodity is equal to the actual wage paid to the labour plus the capitalists profit.
- Therefore the surplus value is equal to the value of the commodity minus the actual wage paid to the labour.

Surplus value.....

- The wage that is paid to the labour is equal to necessary value.
- But the exchange value of a commodity(price) includes surplus value that is taken away by the capitalist.
- This is the illegal income of the capitalists.
- More exploitation of the worker means more profit to the capitalists.
- To him, capital creates nothing but itself created by the labour.
- The worker does not receive a just share of the value that is created by his hard work.
- Thus surplus value shows the exploitative nature of capitalism.

d. Theory of Class-war:

- Every stage in history there was a war between classes. For example, the land owner exploited the workers.
- The principle of class struggle emerges from dialectical materialism & materialistic interpretation of history and the theory of surplus value.
- Marx believes that there is hat redness between classes - Freeman & Slaves, Patricians & Plebeians, Lord & Serf, Guild masters & Journeymen, in a word of oppressor and oppressed, ended fights resulting in the revolutionary reconstruction of the society or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

e. Law of concentration of Capital:

- To Marx, wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few people, resulting in the wide gap between rich & poor.
- The rich are owners of means of production and are able to multiply their capital.
- To him, poverty is the result of exploitation & not of scarcity.
- The law of concentration of capital is applicable not only to the capitalists but also to the landlords.
- As a result of cartels & monopolies the number of the capitalists decreases whereas the number of proletariat goes on increasing.
- Finally it will enable to overthrow the capitalists by the proletariats.

f. Dictatorship of the Proletariats:

- Proletariat means the landless people, whose means of livelihood entirely depends upon the sale of its labour.
- After the bloody revolution capitalists will be overthrown by the proletariat class – the capitalist class will be replaced by the socialist dictatorship of proletariat.
- All capitalist property will be seized and all means of production will be centralized.
- It is only a transitional stage and ultimately the state will disappear.

g. capitalistic mode of production:

- Capitalism is capable of tremendous growth because capitalism re- invests profits in new technologies.
- It constantly revolutionized the means of production.
- Over a period of time they invest more and more on technology and less and less in labour.
- Therefore the purchasing power of the labour will be reduced – the markets cannot be sustained – results in the collapse of the economy.
- The cycle of growth collapse – growth would result in the enrichment of the capitalist and impoverishment of the proletariats.

h. Internal contradiction of Capitalism:

- Marx says that capitalism is known for internal contradictions.
- Capitalism carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction.
- Increase in number of workers, class-consciousness among workers, recurring economic crisis, degradation of the workers and increase in their miseries are the factors that unites the working class against the capitalists finally results in the complete overthrow of capitalism.

2. KARL MARX ON REVOLUTION:

- Marx was a prophet of revolutionary creed.
- To him, history was the story of class wars and revolutions.
- The class struggle and revolutions were the driving forces of history.
- His ideas on revolutions are available in his works like “The Communist Manifesto” and “The Civil War in France”.

a. Meaning of Revolution:

- He considered revolution as a “Midwife” in the process of change to create new society.
- Marx also believed in the bloody revolution which is inevitable to overthrow the capitalist.

b. Reason for Revolution:

- He explains the reasons for revolution in his “Communist Manifesto”.
- Revolutions takes place because the owners of the means of production do not allow historical forces to have their normal course.
- Revolutions are inevitable under capitalism due to its exploitation of the working class.
- It was the reaction of the under privileged against their exploitation which caused the French revolution.

Reasons for Revolutions.....

- To Marx following are the reasons why revolutions takes place –
 1. Existence of Capitalism.
 2. Exploitation of the workers by capitalists.
 3. Value of labour being pocketed by the capitalist as profit.
 4. Wide gap and hat redness exist between classes.
 5. Concentration of capital in the hands of a few capitalists.

c. Objectives of revolution

- Is to bring about a classless society.
- But its immediate aim is to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat.

d. Agents of Revolution:

- Working class are the agents & promoters of revolutions, through their revolutionary consciousness.

e. Stages of Revolution:

- There are two distinct stages –
 1. Transitional stage – dominated by the dictatorship of the proletariats
 2. Final stage – establishment of a communistic society – a classless and a stateless society.

f. Proposals or Measures to be adopted by after the revolution:

1. Abolition of property in land.
 2. Nationalization of the means of communication and transport.
 3. Taking over by the state of credit and banking.
 4. Regulation of commerce.
 5. Abrogation of the rights of inheritance.
 6. Imposition of heavily progressive taxation.
 7. Prohibition of child labour in factories.
 8. Enforcement of equal liability of all to work.
- These measures to be followed by a gradual extension of public ownership in other fields of production.

g. The Post- revolutionary stage:

- After the revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat will bring about social and economic justice.
- Then there will be no thesis, anti -thesis & class war.
- One man will not exploit another man and one class will not exploit another class.
- Thus the ground will be prepared for the disappearance of the state.

h. Marx's Approach to the study of revolution:

- In the modern times, the significant contributions were made by Marx in the field of the study of revolutions.
- His approach to the study of revolutions greatly influenced by French revolutions and industrial revolutions.
- Social progress would have to come about through violent struggle between classes.
- Only the proletariat could represent the interest of the society which is polarised.

i. The proletariat as a revolutionary class:

- It implies that the proletariat must become a class for itself by developing class consciousness which is essential for successful social revolution.
- In revolutionary activity, the changing of oneself coincides with the changing of circumstances.

j. Strategy and tactics of Revolution:

- Marx did not go into exact nature and strategy & tactics of the socialist revolution.
- He convinced of the primacy of the economic factors in determining the possibilities of revolution.
- A severe economic crisis caused by falling rate of profits could precipitate it.
- Marx was opposed to terror as a method to be used as it weakens the cause of revolution.
- To him, physical force was a perfectly acceptable revolutionary weapon.

k. International dimension of Revolution:

- Related to where the revolution would take place first.
- Lenin implemented the revolutionary theory in his own way in Russia.
- Likewise Mao did the same in China.
- In colonies the role that peasants play in the revolutions, he predicted.
- A working class organization is to produce international revolution, through developing proletarian parties in different nations.
- Many Marxist revolutionaries of 20th century have benefited from Marx's views on the causes, strategy and tactics of revolution, to make revolutions in their country.

3. Marx's Views on State:

- State is primarily an organ of class domination.
- State is an instrument of exploitation of the proletariat by the capitalists.
- Imperialism is the ultimate form of state power under capitalism.

a. The Nature of the State:

- The state is a territorial organization which allowed its subjects to exercise their public rights & duties, where ever they settled which was different from the organization of a primitive commune.
- In this state there was he establishment of public power which included an army, a police force, a system of prisons & courts.
- The ruing classes used it to keep the subject classes under its domination.
- In order to maintain this public power, contributions from citizens becomes necessary in the form of taxes.
- These were completely unknown in the primitive societies (communes).
- The state creates a body of officials who exercises public power & claim the rights to levy taxes.

b. State as a means of Exploitation:

- State is always at the hands of the dominant class in society.
- The economically dominant class are also became politically powerful and acquired the means of exploiting the subject classes.
- City- states in Greece, Roman empires were the examples where the slave owners exploited the slaves.
- The Feudal state was the organization of Aristocracy for exploiting the oppressed class of serfs.
- Modern state is also an instrument of exploitation of the proletariats by the capitalists who own the means of production.

c. Rights of Citizens Unequal:

- The rights of the citizens are determined according to their class positions in a state.
- It was so in Athens & Rome and so also in the feudal state.
- The political power was determined by the amount of the land that is owned.
- The early bourgeois state limited the right to vote on the basis of property qualifications.
- In a modern state wealth exercises its powers indirectly and effectively.

d. States may wither away in the future:

- The states have not existed from eternity and may wither away in the future.
- There were societies which had no conception of states or state powers.
- There was no need for a repressive institution like that of the state in an equal and a classless society.

e. State Organs are Parasites of Social power:

- The state is an empty ideal and creates an illusion that it belongs to the whole society.
- The state organs like Monarchy, Parliament, Bureaucracy were actually parasites on social power.
- Thus, Marx concludes that the state was essentially the negation of man.

f. The Ruling class and the state:

- He considered the state as a part of the society.
- He traced the origin of the state to the division of labour.
- The class domination theory of the state is summed up in the *Communist Manifesto*.
- In backward countries like India and China private property was not fully developed, due to which classes were not fully developed and the ruler appears to be the protector of all the people alike.
- The states created a bureaucracy which exploited the peasant masses through the exercise of public power of the coercive state machinery.

g. Bureaucracy & State:

- To Marx, the most important part of the modern state apparatus is the bureaucracy.
- The main function of the state in a capitalist society is the repression of the working class movement.
- For this purpose it requires the assistance of bureaucracy.
- All bourgeois states have strengthened their military & bureaucratic structures to a great extent.
- Thus, Marx believed that the state was an instrument of exploitation of the working classes.
- This state will continue during the transitional stage i.e. -the dictatorship of the proletariat – from capitalism to communism.
- When classes disappears – there would not be inequality and the state will also wither away and the governmental functions are transformed into simple administrative functions.

Evaluation of Marxian Ideas:

Criticisms:

1. **Capitalism has not been destroyed in the world:** He said that capitalism carries within it the seeds of its own destruction. In fact, capitalism has been strengthened rather than disappeared in many parts of the world.
2. **Ends cannot justify the means:** He justified revolutions and violent methods to be used to overthrow capitalism and to establish communism. However good the end may be it is not desirable to adopt violent and revolutionary methods as advocated by Marx. Moral means to be adopted to achieve good results.

Criticisms.....

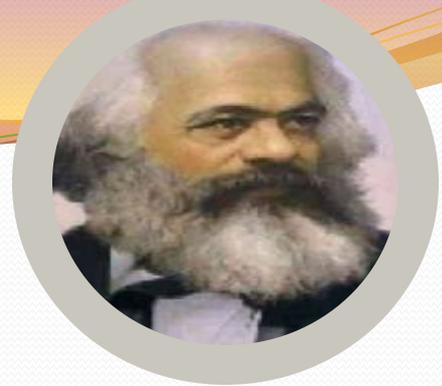
- 3. Concept of class war is wrong:** To him, all history is the history of class war between the “haves” and the “have - nots”. The concept of the class war is artificial. History has no evidence of establish a clear-cut division of only two classes in a society & any class wars. The concept of class war is to capture the minds of the workers than providing a true theory.
- 4. The theory of Surplus value is wrong:** It is a one sided and a wrong theory. As he gave undue importance to labour as the means of production, ignoring other means of production. He considered the capital as idle and has no share in the production is wrong. In fact the capitalist takes risk while undertaking production.

Criticisms.....

5. **Revolution is not inevitable:** It is not inevitable in any country. If workers and the capitalists understand each other's problem, revolutions can be avoided. In capitalist countries, the employees and the employers lived in harmony. Revolutions tend to break out in a poor agricultural country like Russia.
6. **Withering away of the State is wrong:** He says the state is not needed in an equal and classless society. But the experience in Russia and China shows that after the revolution, the state has become more powerful than before and there is no sign of any withering away of the state.

Criticisms.....

- 7. State is not Obstructive but useful and indispensable:**
It is wrong to say that the state is an oppressive and an instrument of exploitation. It is wrong to make such generalizations – may be there are examples of abuse authority by some in some societies. But we have enough examples to say that the state is a very useful to individuals to lead a good life.
- 8. Insult to religion:** He does a great insult to religion when he says that it is the opium of the people. In fact , religion is a very important & integral part of individual's life. Marx should have criticized those who are misusing religion and not religion itself. In fact religion brings order and discipline in the life of the people in society.



Merits:

1. It is the only theory that gives us clear and strong realization of the evils of capitalism.
 2. His ideas on the state indicates the negative role that the state plays in the life of the individual i.e. repression.
 3. The way he highlighted the dominance of bureaucracy is also to be appreciated.
 4. His ideas created a new awareness of the problem of workers which was completely neglected earlier.
 5. Marx left a message of hope for the oppressed humanity who were victims of a misery from which no release.
- “Marx must be regarded as one of the most important and most influential political philosopher who have ever lived”**
- Prof. Wayper.