

UPSCprep Free Daily Answer Writing Initiative

Subject: Sociology

Questions

Q1. The dictatorship of the proletariat will strive to rectify the defective mode of production. In this context, discuss Marx's theory of class struggle. (20 Marks)

Q2. Compare and contrast the theories of 'alienation' and 'anomie' given by Marx and Durkheim, respectively. (20 Marks)

Model Structures

Q1. The dictatorship of the proletariat will strive to rectify the defective mode of production. In this context discuss Marx's theory of class struggle. (20 Marks)

Introduction

- According to Marx "history of hitherto existing society is history of class struggle", he also states that class struggle acts as an engine of history, i.e., conflict between two classes in every mode of production is the force behind historical developments.
- "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." — Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto.

Main Body

- Class:

- Class is a group of people who share common relations to FoP → As a result, there are two classes:
 1. Ownership class: Those who own and control the FoP. (Haves)
 2. Non-ownership class: Those who do not own the FoP. (Have nots)
- Class Struggle
 - According to Marx, conflict arises from the inherent contradictions within these social formations. In capitalist societies, for example, the means of production (factories, machinery, etc.) are owned by the capitalist class, while the majority of the population, the working class or proletariat, owns only their labor power. This unequal distribution of resources and power leads to antagonistic class relations.
 - The primary source of conflict in Marx's view is the class struggle, where the ruling class seeks to maintain its dominance and exploit the labor of the working class to accumulate wealth, while the working class strives to improve their living conditions and gain control over the means of production.
 - This struggle between classes is a natural consequence of the capitalist mode of production and its inherent drive for profit.
 - These conflicts are often intertwined with class struggle, as dominant social classes may use other forms of oppression to maintain their power and divide the working class.
 - Marx believed that these conflicts were not incidental or accidental but rather deeply ingrained in the very fabric of social formation. He saw social change as a result of these conflicts, with each stage of history giving rise to new modes of production and new forms of class struggle.
 - **Marx:** In advanced capitalist society everything is seen as a commodity (for eg: land of farmers) and bourgeoisie fix the price for everything (for eg: farmers produce) to maximize their profits
 - As predicted by Marx, capitalist forces with profit motive leads to pauperization of the proletariat i.e., they are forced to sell their produce and feel alienated
 - Hitherto unaware (CLASS IN ITSELF) will become aware of their rights. Collective consciousness develops among the proletariat about their rights and

they are now aware of methods to express their demands such as peaceful protests, meeting with gov delegation etc (CLASS FOR ITSELF) .

- This transformation leads to conflict in society in various forms
- Social organisation based on private property → Haves and have nots → Pauperisation of have nots → objective opposition of interests (CLASS IN ITSELF) → Subjective awareness (CLASS FOR ITSELF) → Conflict → Class Struggle
- Various crises such as labour crisis, environmental crisis, etc can also be explained by class struggle theory. Ex: Anti sterlite protest against factories in Tamilnadu (against capitalistic tendency of environmental pollution), trade unions protest against privatization of railways etc.

However, Marx's theory was **criticised** on the following grounds:

1. Max Weber criticises Karl Marx for monocausal pluralism.
2. Pierre Bourdieu: Marx highlights only economic capital –social +cultural capital not emphasized.
3. Raymond Aron Argues that there is no distinction between socialism & capitalism. Both are speaking about mass production.

Ralph Daharendarf - rejects the homogenization theory of Marx and argues that conflict situations are not the same across the industry –working class homogenization cutting across industry – a rare phenomena.

Conclusion

- However, as predicted by Marx, class conflict does not lead to overthrow of the existing system, because other forces such as the government acts as an agent to stabilize the system by catering the needs of farmers in current protests.
 - Thus, as predicted by Weber, capitalism alters itself according to the situation and it is also limited by government interventions.
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Q2. Compare and contrast the theories of ‘alienation’ and ‘anomie’ given by Marx and Durkheim, respectively. (20 Marks)

Introduction

- Define both alienation and anomie

Main Body

- Similarities
 - Origin in modern industrial society and is the result of industrial society.
 - Both talk about individual relationships with society.
 - Both are concerned with getting distanced with society.
 - Subjective nature of quantity. One cannot measure the amount of alienation or anomie in any individual.
 - Both can be termed as pathological social facts.
 - Both Marx and Durkheim saw alienation and anomie as a radical attack on the dominant institutions and values of industrial societies.
- Differences

Alienation	Anomie
It is feeling of disenchantment or estrangement	State of normlessness
It occurs when labour is distanced from his work.	It occurs due to social change.
Alienation is not good for society.	It may sometimes lead to positive outcomes.
Marx talks about revolution as a solution to alienation.	Durkheim argues that the mere alteration of the social order would be sufficient.

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