

Examrace

Karl Marx – Part 4: Western Political Thought: Important Topics and Doctrine of Class Conflict

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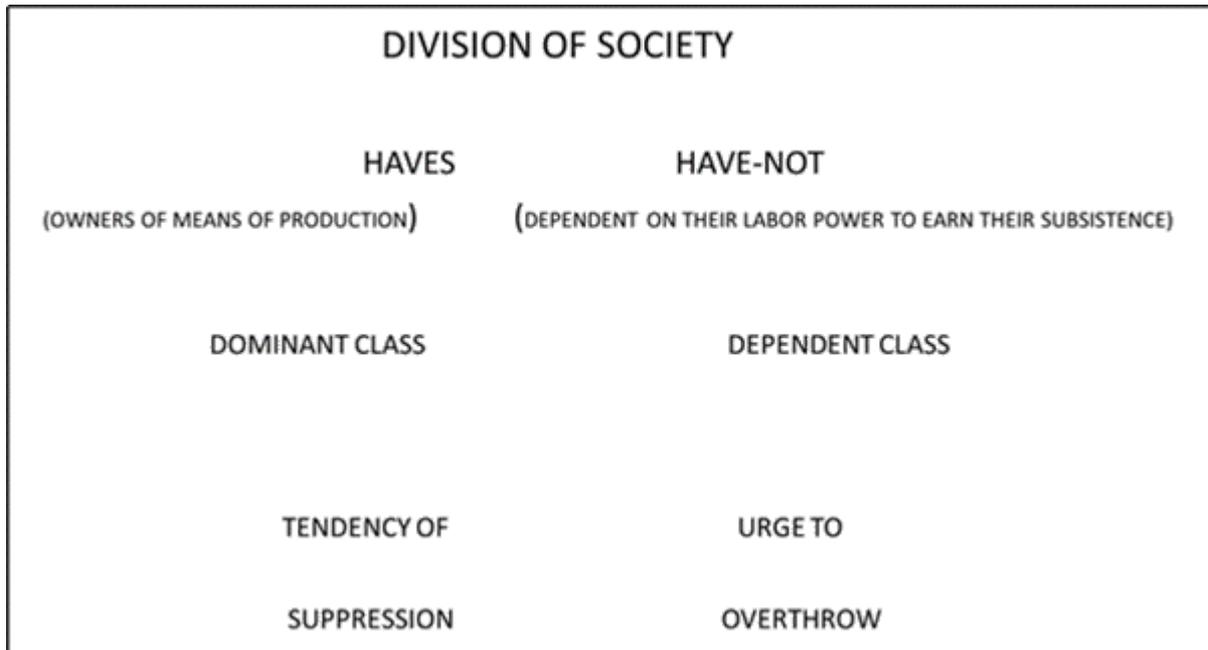
Important Topics

- Brief and general introduction
- Dialectical Materialism
- Historical Materialism
- Theory of revolution
- Doctrine of class conflict
- Concept of surplus value
- Role of private property
- Criticism
- MCQs

Doctrine of Class Conflict

- Class conflict or class struggle is an integral part of historical mechanism.
- The opening sentence of communist manifesto reads:
- “The history of all hitherto society is history of class struggle”.
- Communist manifesto deals with the period beginning with the division of society into antagonistic classes since the emergence of private property.
- So, the communist manifesto proceeds.
- “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.”

Genesis of Class Conflict



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- With development of the forces of production, one mode of production is replaced by other, but class conflict reappears under the new social formation.
- Thus, the ancient slave owning society was marked by the conflict between the master and slave; medieval feudal society by the class conflict between lord and serf, ;and the modern capitalists society by the class conflict between the bourgeoisie (capitalists) and the proletariat(workers).

Status of the class conflict in modern capitalists society is described in the communists manifesto as under:

- “The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.”
- Class conflict in modern capitalist society has appeared in more crystallized form so Communist Manifesto declares:
- “Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — bourgeoisie and proletariat.”
- Marx and Engels hoped that this conflict had entered the decisive phase.
- They had full faith in revolutionary potential of the proletariat, i.e. Their capability to overthrow the capitalism and established socialists society with social ownership of means of production.so they observed:

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- “Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the race of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product”.

The proletarian revolution would be different from all previous revolutions of history:

- “All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air”.
- According to them this revolution would bring the final emancipation of mankind because there is no class left below the proletariat which could be subjected to exploitation when the proletariat comes to power.
- It would place all means of social production under social ownership.
- Make work compulsory for everyone and develop the forces of production to their full potential.
- This will pave the way for the emergence of classless society which will mark the end of class conflict.

Marxian Account of the History of Class Conflict

HISTORICAL EPOCH	PREVAILING MODE OF PRODUCTION	CAUSE OF CLASS DIVISION	SOCIAL
ANCIENT TIMES	HOUSEHOLD BASED SMALL SCALE PRODUCTION	EMERGENCE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY	SLAVE SOCIETY
MEDIEVAL TIMES	LARGE SCALE AGRICULTURE BASED PRODUCTION	RISE OF FEUDALISM	FEUDAL
MODERN TIMES	LARGE SCALE MACHINE BASED PRODUCTION	RISE OF CAPITALISM	CAPITALISM
FUTURE- I	-DO-	SOCIALIST REVOLUTION	SOCIALISM
FUTURE - II	-DO-	NO CLASS DIVISION	COMMUNISM

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MCQs

1. What according to Marx is the cause of class division in modern times?

1. Socialism
2. Capitalism
3. Feudalism
4. Communism

Ans. B. Capitalism

2. According to Marx the proletariat revolution is ?

1. Forced revolution
2. Dependent revolution
3. Self-conscious revolution
4. Classified revolution.

Ans. C. Self-conscious revolution

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#Class Conflict /Class Struggle

#Dominant / Dependent Class

#Capitalism

#Feudalism

#Socialism/Communism

#Genesis of Class Conflict

#Marxian Account of The History of Class Conflict

-Mayank

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