

The logo of the University of Delhi is a circular emblem. It features a central figure of an elephant, a traditional symbol of wisdom and strength. The elephant is surrounded by a decorative border. The text "UNIVERSITY OF DELHI" is written in English around the top inner edge of the circle, and "विश्वविद्यालय दिल्ली" is written in Hindi around the bottom inner edge. There are also four star-like symbols positioned around the inner circle.

Paper: Theories of International Relations and World History

Lesson: Marxist Approaches on International Relations

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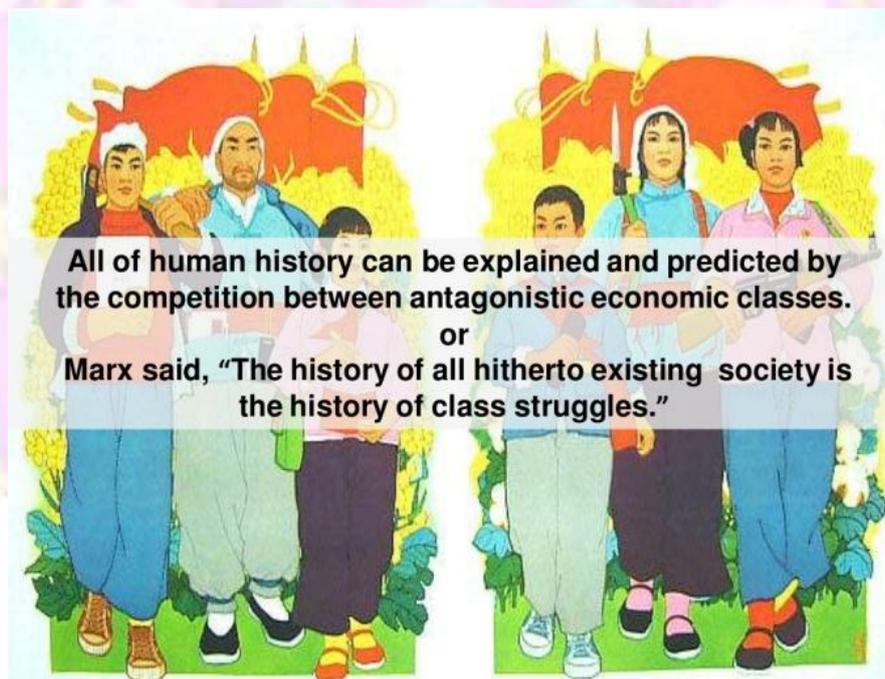
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Introduction

The Marxist perspective is one of the most important and a lively approach to the study of International Politics which is different from traditional theories of international relations such as realism and neo-realism in manner; that it does not support to maintain status-quo in the international system. Rather, it attempts to bring the radical change in the prevailing social and political order. Furthermore, it has been emerged as a very powerful and dominant form of social theory and has both critical and emancipator intent or aspiration. It simply means that being a critical social theory, it not only focuses to unfold the laws and peculiarities of capitalist globalization in terms of global inequalities, class conflicts, spheres of power and production exploitation, alienation and estrangement but also to replace them with a form of universal cooperation and emancipation which would promote freedom and peace for all. Marxism as an important theory of international relations(IR), offers an alternative understanding of 'International Relations', particularly of the realist theorization of international relations. Marxism as it is well known is based on the philosophical, economic and political work of Karl Marx.



Source: <http://image.slidesharecdn.com/karlmarxandmarxism1-130912232725-phpapp02/95/karl-marx-and-marxism-19-638.jpg?cb=1379028796>

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Marxism as a body of theory has also provided us thoughtful insights of International relations by linking it with the analysis of capitalism as an economic system. From its inception, capitalism had an inextricable link with colonialism, domination and Institute of Lifelong Learning, University of Delhi

imperialism therefore, for the purpose of criticizing capitalism and its effect on human lives, Marxists and neo Marxists have developed sophisticated conceptual tools and methods to understand social reality.

“Marx wrote that philosophers had only interpreted the world whereas the real point was to change it” (Marx 1977b:158).The Marxist approach to international politics focuses on totality to understand international system. Its main objective is to bring a radical change in the working of international system which is obsessed from war, terrorism, poverty and other kinds of human problems.

The Marxist approach to International Politics can be understood through the writings of Marxist scholars which are reflected in the World system theory and Dependency theory. But the purpose of this lesson is not limited to engage only with the classical Marxist writings, rather to deal with the new developments within the Marxism also which are known as neo-Marxism and critical theory. Furthermore, this lesson has also try to show the relevance of Marxism despite the various criticism which are levelled against it.

Basic Assumptions of Marxist Approach to International Relations

1. Economic or materialistic determination provides a tool/lens to understand international relations.
2. Economic issues in the society constitute the base in the Marxist political philosophy; every other aspect, such as politics, culture, education or religion, remains at the super-structural level, dependent on economic factors (the base).



**This moves in a spiral pattern.
The base is generally dominant.**

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Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/63/Base-superstructure_Dialectic.png/300px-Base-superstructure_Dialectic.png

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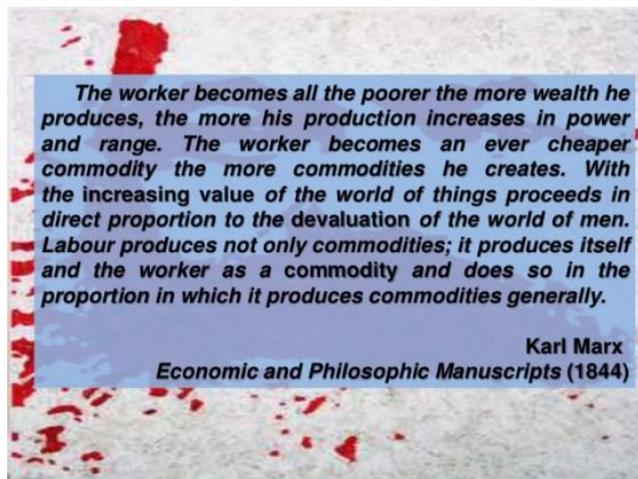
3. Historical determination provides a guideline to understand international relations.
4. The centrality of the concept of class and class struggle is evident in international relations.
5. Classes are mainly economic groupings of people based on their relation to the production process in the society. Thus, those who own the means of production belong to one class, and those who do not belong to another class.
6. The economically dominant class whom Marx described as 'bourgeoisie class' is in almost every society concerned social and political power and exploited the poor.

Value Addition: Know it more

Marxism and International Relations

The Marxist approach to the study of the international relations is a significant theoretical vantage point to understand not only the practice of imperialism and the character of capitalism but also its impact on the developing and less-developed world from the perspective of global south. Furthermore, it provide a staunch critique of the mainstream theories of international relations on the grounds of their unquestioned assumption of the primacy of states as key actor in the world order and maintaining status-quo in the international system by providing legitimacy to the pre-exist social and political structure of domination, exploitation, exclusion and marginalization.

7. In the capitalist society class division and exploitation of one class by another reached its peak
8. Excessive production and profit motive of the capitalists led to severe exploitation of the proletariat in the capitalist society. Unable to bear with such extreme form of exploitation, the proletariat in consolidates as a class on the basis of economic, political and ideological similarities, and wages a class struggle against the capitalists. In this class struggle, the proletariat wins and establishes, gradually, the socialist society which is free of classes and class division.



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9. The state was created by the bourgeoisie/owning class to safeguard/protect and fulfil its interests and to oppress the proletariat/ non-owning class through different mechanisms, such as the police, military and bureaucracy. Therefore the state, in Marxist view, served the interest of owning class and became a tool for oppression and domination. When class division ends in the socialist society, the state will have no role to play in the society, and therefore, will 'wither away'.

10 .The capitalist states seek economic exploitation and political subjugation of the weaker states.

11. Wars erupt as a result of the clash between capitalist nations themselves in their bid to establish colonies. The First World War (1914-1918) is a glaring example in this context.

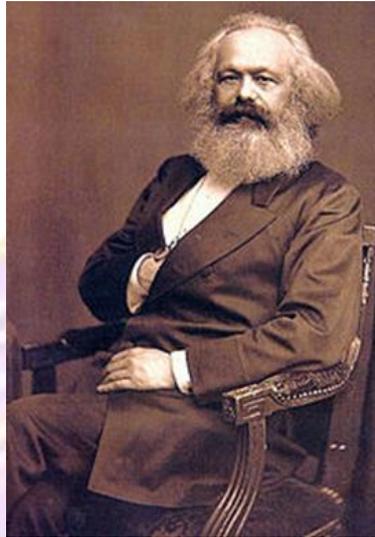
12. Proletariats all over the world are exploited, and therefore share common interests. They are not bound by national borders or national interests, because their agony everywhere in the world is the same-they are exploited to the tilt by the capitalists. The proletarian revolution is therefore, international character.

13. Lasting Peace can only be established after the world revolution, as it would signify the collapse of imperialism and ushering in of a classless and stateless society.

14. With the establishment of class-less socialist societies in every part of the world, new international relations based on equality of all people could be built.

15. For bearing about such changes in IR, the proletariat must rise above national identities and national interests, because they have no state to serve their causes.

Karl Marx



Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d4/Karl_Marx_001.jpg

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Value Addition: Did you know

Understanding Karl Marx

Karl Marx was the nineteenth century German philosopher and economist who seek to bring a major change in the structure of the international system and believed in materialistic conception of history. Through his intellectual understanding, he provides a critique of economic liberalism in many ways. He rejects the liberal view of economy as a positive-sum game which benefits all and governs by its own laws. For him economy is a factor which is responsible for human exploitation and class inequality. Marx believed in zero-sum argument of international relations which means the progress of bourgeoisie is based on the exploitation of proletariat class. For him politics and economics are closely related to each other. He puts economics first and politics second therefore, for him economics as a tool of politics. Furthermore, he does not see states as an autonomous actor; rather they are driven by ruling class interests

V.I. Lenin (1870-1924)



Source:

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Value Addition: Did you know

Understanding V. I. Lenin

Lenin was the founder of modern communism. He created the Bolshevik Party (later the Communist Party) as an instrument of revolution and as the effective bearer of the state power in Russia. By the age of twenty-four Lenin had established himself as the spokesman of the most prominent group of Marxists in Russia. In his famous work *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism* Lenin concluded that capitalism had by the turn of the century, fundamentally changed in character. It typically exported capital rather than manufactured goods and was consequently obliged to commit huge administrative, military and naval resources to protecting its investments (imperialism).

Marxism Summarized

Marxism as a school of thought is an economically deterministic approach to IR which focuses only on class relationships. For Marxist scholars the international system is highly stratified and dominated by international capitalist system. According to Marxist approach the Social classes, transnational elites; multinational corporations are the key actors of world politics. For them state is an agent of bourgeoisie and a means of exploitation of proletariat. They viewed structure of international system as conflictual which is based on zero-sum game therefore; the ultimate goal is class-interest and to bring the radical change instead of maintaining status-quo as realist scholars claimed.

Value Addition: Did you know

Marxist view on various categories

Level of analysis: Classical Marxists emphasizing on domestic system and takes the state as a level of analysis whereas contemporary or neo-Marxists focuses on the relations of rich and poor countries and thus takes the global system as a level of analysis.

World View: Marxists have an optimistic view about the change and transformation in the world system. For them history is evolving as a reflection of changing economic forces and relations that are creating the conditions for the world revolution by the proletariat. Marxists believed that as the interests of bourgeoisie and proletariat class are based on conflicts thus, war which is a result of class conflict is inevitable. They can be eliminated by the end of capitalism and the introduction of a classless society. Politics should enhance equality. Key actors are economic classes.

Human Nature: For Marxists human nature is benign and perfectible only under socialism but they also believed that as long as capitalism remains, greed and

selfishness dominate behaviour of humans.

Change: Unlike realist and neo-realist scholars, Marxists scholars do not believe in maintaining status-quo in the international system. For them the features of global politics are mutable and history is evolving and moving in a positive direction.

Cooperation: Believed that as the interests of socialist and capitalist states are not same thus, cooperation is impossible. Lenin and Stalin believed that war between socialist and capitalist countries was "inevitable".

National Interest: State serves the interests of the dominant economic class in society and defines the national interest accordingly. Bourgeois states define the national interest in terms of economic imperialism and dominance over the "periphery" of poor states.

Security: Emphasized on human and social security which involves economic equality and the fulfilment of basic material needs rather than on military security.

Relative Versus absolute Gain: Focus on relative gains of socialists compared to capitalists.

Source: Mansbach, Richard W. and Taylor, Kirsten L. (2012), "Introduction to Global Politics", London: Rutledge, pp.27-30.

World System Theory and Dependency Theory

In the Marxist orientation the World System theory was developed to analyse the post-colonial international order. The roots of the world system theory can be traced to the writings of Lenin. In his monumental work, "**Imperialism-The Highest Stage of Capitalism**", Lenin contended that imperialism created a two-tier structure within the capitalist world economy. He identified the dominant structure as the 'core' and the less-developed structure as the 'periphery'. The world system theory was further developed by Wallerstein who provided powerful insights into the working of the world capitalist economy. Wallerstein in his seminal work "**Modern world System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century (1974)**", represents the powerful exposition of the modern world system theory. Tracing the emergence of capitalism in the sixteenth century Europe, he examines its evolution into a world capitalist system that contains Core, Periphery and Semi-Periphery in terms of wealth accumulation and economic development. In the post-colonial international and the vast impoverished of less developed region of 'third world' constitute the 'Periphery' which has been providing raw materials such as minerals and timber to support the core's order, historically the rich industrial regions constitute the 'core' which are engaged in activities like banking, manufacturing, technologically advanced agriculture, ship building and others economic expansion. Throughout

centuries, the core exploited the periphery and accumulated wealth that helped the core regions to build their industrial infrastructure. The core regions mostly manufactured the goods by using capital which these regions have accumulated in plenty. The peripheral regions mostly supply raw materials and cheap labour to the core, but are neglected by the core as far as capital flow to the periphery is concerned.

Emmanuel Wallerstein



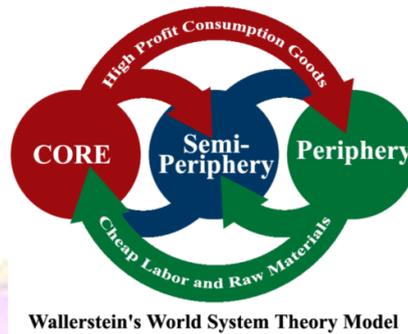
Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/47/Immanuel_Wallerstein.2008.jpg/200px-Immanuel_Wallerstein.2008.jpg

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In the world system theory, there is also a notion of 'semi-periphery' which involved a mix of production activities, some associated with core areas and others with peripheral areas. It is an area where some industrial bases have been built, manufacturing of goods has commenced on a moderate scale, and some accumulation of wealth has taken place; but compared to the advanced core regions they are minimal. It also serves as an outlet for investment when wages in core economies become too high. But the semi-periphery is economically more developed than the periphery. For instance, Singapore and Taiwan may be considered as semi-periphery as compared to Bhutan which could be treated as peripheral states in the present world system. A semi-periphery is somewhere between the core and the periphery.

The main line of argument of the world system theory is that the dependency situation of the developing countries and regional class division are the direct result of the capitalist nature of the world economy and economic exploitation by the advanced countries. Thus, for the protagonists of the World System theory, the present world

system is highly unequal because in this system the core dominates over the periphery by means of its economic strength.



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Andre Gunder Frank



Source: <http://www.rrojasdatabank.info/agfrank/personal.html>

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Value Addition: Did you know

Understanding Andre Gunder Frank

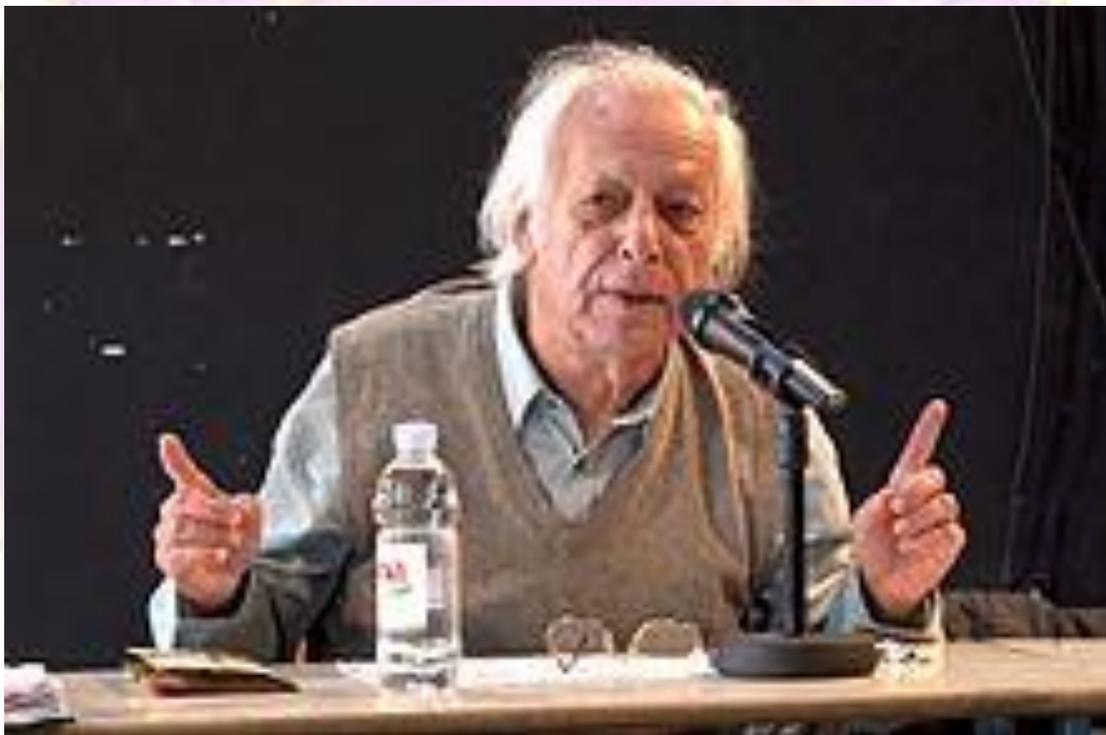
Andre Gunder Frank known specially for his major contribution of dependency theory. His work focused on Latin America, and his polemical writings were intent on demonstrating that Latin America's periods of growth and stagnation were predominantly shaped by its external relations.

Some International relation's scholars, influenced by Marxism, have developed the Dependency Theory to explain the plight of the third world countries. Some basic assumptions of the dependency theory come closer to World system theory, although these two theories are different in long run. Mostly developed by Latin American scholars like Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, the dependency theory put forward the argument that accumulation of capital in a third world country cannot sustain itself

internally. They provide instances from Latin American countries to show that a nation's own capital was not adequate enough for its overall economic development.

Although the world system theorists do not highlight the overall structural pattern of the world advanced by world system theory like core and periphery, they focus on the disadvantageous conditions of the peripheral states. For instance, the issue of economic development in a peripheral state is dependent on several conditions, some of which are internal, some external. Internal conditions include the class relationship within the society, the country's history, and the present political system. External conditions comprise the presence of a foreign capital, MNCs, and global economic and political preferences.

Samir Ameen on Center-Periphery



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Value Addition: Did you know

Understanding Samir Ameen

Samir Ameen in his seminal work "**Accumulation on a World Scale: A Critique of the Theory of Underdevelopment (1974)**" has also contributed to the theory of underdevelopment. In this work he argued that the industrialised and under-developed countries of the world are in relation with each other in such a manner where capitalism left no space for the development of means of production in the so called under-developed region of the world. Furthermore, he said that the countries of periphery

compete for development with the countries of core which results into the dysfunctionalities in the structure of world order as the countries of periphery are not capable to the activities of export and also for the sustain development in a long run.

Neo- Marxism and Critical Theory

Neo-Marxism is an extension to the classical Marxist approach of IR, which incorporates various developments in the second half of the twentieth century within the intellectual tradition of Marxism. The term neo-Marxism does not refer to a single theory or approach to world politics, but rather it is a combination of various schools of thought and approaches in 20th century such as world system theory and dependency theory, Gramscian idea of '**hegemony**' and critical theory which is rooted in the writings of Kant, Hegel and the influences of Marx.

Value Addition: Know it better

Marxism and Neo-Marxism

Marxism: It is based on economic determinism

Vs.

Neo-Marxism: It consider broad social and cultural influences that perpetuate oppression of working class and move on from domestic to global as a level of analysis when address the issues related with exploitation, domination and marginalization.

Basically, the theories originally designated as 'neo-' Marxist are "concerned in particular with culture and ideology and with the role of capitalist states' welfare institutions in retarding rather than advancing socialism" (Kolakowski, 1978).

Neo-Marxism as a school of thought began in an attempt to answer those questions which had not been addressed by the classical Marxist scholars. For the neo-Marxists scholars, class division under capitalist system is more important than other issues like sex/gender division, race and ethnicity. The neo-Marxist school of thought not simply based on economic determinism argument of classical Marxists scholars but also takes into account the political and cultural realm.

Antonio Gramsci was an Italian Marxist thinker of early twentieth century who had tried to explain "why it was that the working classes continued to support the capitalist system which seemed to have considerable impoverishment? Why the working class did not participate in revolution that might lead to overthrow of the regime which was exploitative? Why the capitalist system had become accepted by all as the best economic

system? Why it was difficult to bring the revolution in the western societies?" (Peter Sutch and Juanita Elias: 117).

Though Marx made a prediction that in order to establish the socialism the revolution will first occurred in the western society but the attempts were failed and the revolution was first occurred in the countries like Soviet Union which were economically backward in comparison to western countries. To explain all this, Gramsci introduced the concept of '*hegemony*'. Hegemony not only consists of a coercive element but also operates through consent therefore, "it is about the subtle forms of ideological control and manipulation perpetuated within what is called civil society (through things like educational system, churches and the media) that serve to shore up the repressive and exploitative structures that underpin capitalist society" (Peter Sutch and Juanita Elias: 117).

Gramsci argued that the countries of western and central Europe had taken the support of both, force and consent in order to maintain their position or hegemony in the international system. Gramsci argued that the early Marxists focused only on the use of force and the capabilities of the state but Gramsci suggest that the dominant class need to get the consent of the oppressed class also in order to maintain their position in world politics. According to Gramsci, hegemony is a tool through which the moral, political, cultural views and values are spread in a whole society and which are also accepted by the oppressed class as their own.

All this happened with the institutions of civil society which includes the mass media, educational institutions, churches and other non-governmental organisations. Thus, according to Gramsci the capitalist countries in the world exercised their hegemony in the cultural realm and influenced the thinking of oppressed class in a society by getting the consent of oppressed class through their institutions.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)



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Value Addition: Did you know

Understanding Gramsci

Gramsci was one of the most original and innovative revolutionary of the twentieth-century political theorist working within the Marxist tradition. His political writing covers an extremely wide range, including literature, drama, education, and the question of national language and other aspects of Italian national cultural life. He always located his work, broadly, in the Marxist schema, in which the 'economic base' ultimately determines, or sets the limiting conditions for politics, ideology and the state. He challenged the reductionist conception of the state as, exclusively, a 'class' state, an instrument of ruling class, coercion and domination. He rethought the state in terms of the balance between 'coercion' and 'consent'.



Source: <http://www.newleftreview.org/assets/images/0980105.gif>

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Gramsci and hegemony

Gramsci introduces the concept of hegemony, or ideological and moral leadership of society, to explain how the ruling-class maintains their dominance and influence over society.

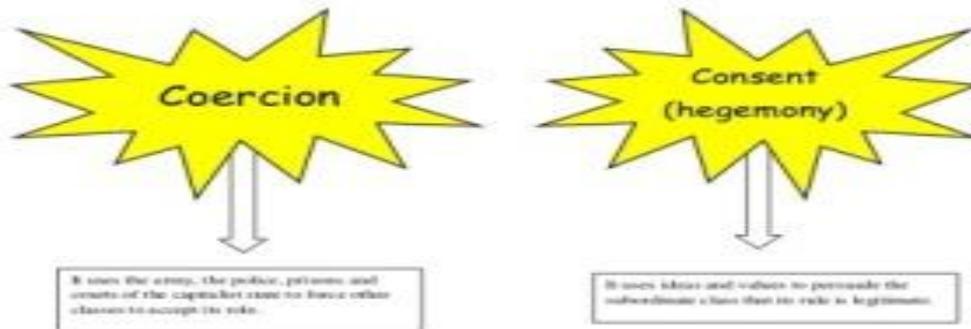
He argues that in order to overcome hegemony, the proletariat must develop its own 'counter-hegemony' to win leadership of society.

Gramsci

- First leader of the Italian Communist party, which led to his imprisonment and an inevitable death behind bars.
- Rejects economic determinism as an explanation of change; the transition from Capitalism to Communism will never come to pass simply through economic forces.
- He believes that it is the ideas that members of society have that will create change.
- He would be considered a humanistic Marxist, as he does not believe that it is about the laws of Capitalism, but focuses more on how Capitalism affects the individuals, and how they will react to it.

Concept of Hegemony

Gramsci sees the ruling-class maintaining its dominance over society in two different ways:



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During the last two decades of the twentieth century, some more reflective forms of theoretical enquiry have been noted in the field of international relations theory and critical theory is one of them which have its origins from the work of German theorists collectively known as Frankfurt School and originated with a critique of Marx. Critical international relations theory is one of the major developments within the Marxist tradition, which challenges the dominance of the realist school. Its major difference with the earlier Marxists is its larger philosophical concerns such as epistemology, ontology and normativity within international relations. Scholars such as **Richard Ashley, Robert W. Cox, Andrew Linklater, John Maclean, Mark Hoffman** and many others were engaged with these philosophical and normative questions about international relationships. These normative questions have been inspired by an interest in emancipation. Critical international relations theory hinges on emancipator politics of various hues extending from Karl Marx to **Jurgen Habermas** and seeking an inquiry into the possibilities of transforming international relations in order to eliminate unnecessary obstacles in achieving universal freedom and equality. Critical international relations theorists argue that international relations theory should be purposive in the

sense of providing answers to the numerous problems faced by the international community. Critical theory in the Marxist tradition seeks some form of emancipation from hierarchical power relations. Critical theorists argue that theories aspire not just to 'tell the truth' in a detached and dispassionate sort of way, but also that they necessarily serve some purpose or interest, whether intentionally or not.

These interests are normally of those people who are in power. In international relations theory, Robert W. Cox who distinguished between **traditional or classical and 'critical theory'**, calls traditional theories like Realism as 'problem-solving theories.' These theories are characterized by two features: positivist methodology and 'a tendency to legitimize prevailing social and political structures', which are largely unjust (Devetak, 2009:159). Positivism assumes that values and facts can be separated and subject and object can also be separated. Problem-solving theory, as Cox define, 'takes the world as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organised, as the given framework for action' (Cox, 1981:128). It does not question the present order, but has the effect of reifying it. Its aim is to make the existing order 'work smoothly by dealing effectively with particular sources of trouble' (Cox, 1981:129). Realism and neo-realism are clearly problem solving theories as they aim to work within the given system rather than against the prevailing international forces; thus, giving a stabilizing effect to the existing global structure of social and political relations. Apart from realism and neo-realism, neo-liberal institutionalism also participates in this problem-solving agenda.

The main problem with problem-solving theory is that though it claims to be value neutral, it is discretely 'value-bound by the virtue of the fact that it implicitly accepts the prevailing order as its own framework' (Cox, 1981:130).

Critical international theory, on the other hand, 'stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about' (Cox 1981:129). It starts from the belief that cognitive processes are subject to political interests/motives of those who are in power and so ought to be critically evaluated. International relations theory is like any other knowledge which is conditioned by social, cultural and ideological factors. As Richard Ashley says, 'knowledge is always constituted in reflection of interests' (Ashley, 1981:207). Critical international theory also rejects the positivist's distinction between fact and value, subject and object. Critical theory raises questions concerning the social construction of knowledge. Cox famously wrote that 'theory is always for someone and for some purpose' (Cox 1981:128, original emphasis).

Critical international theory adopts a more hermeneutic approach unlike realism, which is based on positivism and empiricism. It believes that social structures are inter-

subjective and are socially constructed. As Linklater is interested in how the state strategically adopts and modifies itself to include some and exclude others, similarly Cox also attempts to unearth the changing relationship between the state and civil society not just historically but also within the same period.

Critical international theory is not just interested in the state alone; it is also interested in other factors that shape international relations. Critical international theory takes the power-knowledge relationship at global level as an object of analysis and asks how that relationship which is based on configuration of power came about, what costs it brings with it and also about the conditions or prospects of change within it. Critical international theory is thus essentially a critique of the dogmatism, power-relationships and status-quo which it finds in traditional, positivist or rationalist theories of International Relations. This kind of an attack on dogmatism involves a simultaneous attack on traditional modes of thought which support and tend to justify the prevailing social and political conditions and ways of life. This (critical) approach implies an assertion that a new and fresh look at the existing reality opens the door for a new form of theorising as also to alternative forms of social and political life. Implicitly therefore, critical theory serves as an instrument for the questioning and delegitimisation of established power and privilege. It criticises and debunks theories that legitimise the prevailing order and affirms progressive alternatives that promote emancipation at the widest possible level.

Critical international theory has made a remarkable and major contribution to the discipline of international relations theory. It rejects the idea of the objective reality. Further, critical international theory compels us to rethink the record of the modern state and political communities. Traditional theories tend to take the state for granted, but critical international theory concerns itself with an analysis of the ways in which the boundaries of communities are formed, sustained, and transformed. Most importantly, the aim of critical international theory is to produce an alternative perspective of international relations which is not associated with the narrow dynamics such as state system rather it try to establish cosmopolitan arrangements that aims to promote freedom, equality, and justice across the globe.

Critical international theory by challenging the dominant modes of thinking about the nature of state and its central role opens up possibilities for imaging international politics in a more progressive, cosmopolitan way.

Critics of Marxism

Though Marxist approach to international relations has been a very intellectual and influential approach for understanding the events of world politics but despite of the contributions which this theory had made for the discipline of international relations, it has been also a subject to various criticisms levelled against to it by the scholars on numerous grounds.

Some of the more nuanced critics of Marxist approach to international relations are following:

1. Marxism as a theory of international relations rejects the realist and liberal views and focuses only upon the economic and material aspects (relationships and conflicts) thus; it is materialistic in its orientation and tends to overlook other forms of non-economic aspects of world politics. The Marxist approach tries to explain all realities of international politics as having some economic roots. But feminist scholars for instance argued that the roots of male-female conflicts in a society are not simply economic but patriarchal also.

2. The Marxist theory has under-emphasised the subjective interpretations and preferences of individuals when engaging with the social world which according to constructivists is made up of human ideas, beliefs and values. It might be possible that person's subjective interpretation of their world could be quite different from the general and objective views.

3. The Marxist school of thought has been criticised also on the grounds of over emphasizing on class as a category for analysing the events of world history and ignoring the position of women and their role in the society. Women are quite often neglected and marginalised in the Marxist theorising on world politics.

4. Critics have claimed that Marxist and neo-Marxist theories of international relations are unscientific in their methodology as these theories cannot be tested and possibly falsified. Even the Marx's prediction of classless and stateless society with the replacement of capitalism by communalism is a utopian idea which is "historically inevitable" thus, unscientific as capitalism has proven to be much more durable and flexible.

5. One major drawback of Marxist theory of international relations is that it tends to always examine the social and economic relationships in terms of having only conflictual base which means that it not give enough attention to the another aspect/side of human behaviour which is about cooperation thus, preoccupation with negativity. Apart from that it also shows undue concern about philosophical and theoretical problems.

6. Though classical Marxism produced a clear political vision while working against capitalist exploitation but the vision is very limited as giving too much emphasis on class and paradigm of production and failed to define freedom in relation to forms of oppression involved in state power or patriarchy, culture and morality thus, offered no clear vision of the social order which was required to secure freedom outside the sphere of production.

7. The Marxist approach to world politics has been criticised as being somewhat of a “left-wing” variety of Functionalism.

How Far Marxism is Relevant Today?

Marxist approach to International Relations has been criticised on various grounds but it is still a most coherent, ambitious, systematic and influential political philosophy or approach to the world politics as it has undergone to many substantial changes in the last few decades. We can take neo-Marxism as a starting point. Critical theory for instance, which is Marxist in its orientation based not only on the writings of Marx and Frederick Engels but also has roots in enlightenment period and writings of Kant and Hegel and move beyond the concerns of classical Marxist scholars and focuses upon the new range of questions such as politics of knowledge, culture, nature of authoritarianism, role of power in social structures and most important emancipation in contemporary world. Unlike classical Marxism, Critical theory not restricts itself to only explaining the realities of world politics but criticize them also in order to transform them by focusing upon on the paradigm of communication instead of paradigm of production and extends conventional Marxist analysis by considering axes of exclusion other than class and analyzing the variety of forces which shape human history.

In contrast to classical Marxism, critical theory offers an ideological critique of the present and provides an alternative path to change, freedom and human autonomy. Furthermore, Marxism has still a useful and important theory in order to understand the functioning of an autonomous state in the modern societies in a much better way.

Value Addition
Means of production: Land, capital, industry and entrepreneurship
Forces of production: Means of production+ a) labour and b) skill
Modes of production: Forces of production+ Relations of production

The applicability and relevance of Marxist approach could also be seen with regard to imperialism, neo-colonialism and current globalization trends as the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen. Apart from that it also help us to understand various of modes of production which includes a) slave, b) feudal, c) capitalist, d) socialist and the last is communal mode of production which is about class less and state less society.

Conclusion

Despite various criticisms levelled against Marxism and the disintegration of former Soviet Union, it is important to note down here that the ideas of Marx are still very relevant in the contemporary world as the various other Marxist scholar have interpreted the ideas of Marx to build their theory and philosophical background . The Marxist contribution to the theory of international relations can be understood in way that it has revealed the hidden dynamics of worldwide capitalism in which the major historical and world events occurred. Apart from that unlike the realist scholars who assume that the struggle for power and security determines the structure of world politics, Marxists scholars emphasized on production, property relations and class-conflicts as an important counter-weight to realist theories.

The crucial point about Marxist approach to international relations is that it does not believe in realist assumption of separation between domestic and international politics. The emphasis of Marxist approach is on classes which imply that domestic and economic attributes of societies shape the society's external relations with other states. Furthermore, there is still no good alternative available to the Marxist's interpretation of capitalism as the world system theory and dependency theory provides thoughtful and valuable insights to understand the under-development in the third world region.

Glossary

- **Capitalism:** Capitalism is an economic system which is based on competition, profit and wealth accumulation. This kind of economic system is driven by the market forces to govern the distribution of goods. Furthermore, in the capitalist system the means of production are in the hands of private ownership or concentrated in few hands which results into the exploitation of those whom Marx described as 'have not'.
- **Dependency:** In the so-called dependency theory of thinkers like Raul prebisch, Walter Rodney, Andre Gunder Frank, the Third World has been connected to the world economic division as "periphery" countries in the world system that is dominated by the "core" countries. Dependency theory, which comes closer to world system theory, suggests that due to historical reasons, the third world remains dependent on external foreign capital. This theory was developed to explain the plight of the third world countries.

- **Development:** The mainstream discourse/idea of development is based on modernization and the Western idea of progress. The mainstream understanding of development is very problematic and it gives a rise to the idea of Post-development which has not only challenged the conventional notion of development but also rejects modernity. The post-development notion of development discourse is about making development more indigenous, localize and fragmented. Furthermore, it argues for moving away from state and including more number of non- state actors like NGOs.
- **Exploitation:** Exploitation is an umbrella term which is used to define the various other related ideas such as exclusion, marginalisation, disempowerment, injustice, isolation, deprivation, lack of power and creating situations of inadequate participation
- **Globalization:** Globalization is a process of interaction and integration of a whole world which is driven by international trade, investment and aided by information technology. It is also about the flows of ideas, capital, commodities, and people across the world. The focus, of the term, is not nations but the entire globe.
- **Third World:** The idea of 'third world' is used as a currency to describe the regions of the world particularly the Asia, Africa and Latin America which in compare to western developed countries are not very developed or advanced.
- **World-System Theory:** World system theory is Marxist in orientation and relies on a global level of analysis. It focuses its attention to the emergence of a hierarchical structure in the capitalist world economy over several centuries. In the world system theory, the class struggle is occurred between core (the developed and industrialised region of the world, particularly the northern hemisphere) and periphery (the under-developed and extraction region of the world).

Essay Type Questions

Question1. Discuss the hard core assumption/ dimensions of the Marxist approach to study of international relations and evaluate its contemporary relevance.

Question2. Compare and contrast the Marxist approach with Neo-Marxist approach of International Relations.

Question3. Explain the idea of hegemony and how far do you think that the idea of hegemony can help us to understand the dynamics of international politics?

Question4. Elucidate Immanuel Wallenstein's theory of World System and its limitations/ critiques.

Question5. How Marxist approaches changed our understanding of International Relations? Answer with reference to Marxist scholars of International Relations.

Question6. What were the deficiencies in classical Marxism with regard to international politics and how did later Marxist theorising seek to overcome these shortcomings?

Question7. Write a critical essay on the Marxist critique of the dominant theories of International Relations.

Question8. Critically examine the main arguments of Dependency theory of Marxist approach to the International relations.

Question9. What do you understand by the idea of Core, Semi-Periphery and Periphery propounded by the various scholars of Marxist School to understand development and under-development with special reference to the 'Third World'? Substantiate your answer with suitable examples.

Question10. Is dependency theory able to pose genuine challenges to mainstream conceptions of world politics? What were the reasons for their success /failure in doing so?

Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer

1. The Marxist conception of history is based on which of the following idea?

[A] Idealism

[B] Communism

[C] Materialism

[D] None of these

2. Who has written "Capitalism and Under-development in Latin America" in 1963?

[A] Andre Gunder Frank

[B] Immanuel Wallerstein

[C] Karl Marx

[D] Raul Prebisch

3. According to Marx the state as an organisation belongs to which of the following?

[A] Dialectical Materialism

[B] Superstructure

[C] Base

[D] Economic Development

Answers: 1-[C], 2-[A], 3-[B], 4-[B], 5-[D], 6-[B], 7-[C], 8-[D], 9-[A], 10-[D]



Suggested Readings

(A) Essential readings:

Wallerstein, I. (2000), "The Rise and Future Demise of World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis", in Michael Smith and Richard Little (eds), "Perspectives on World Politics", New York: Routledge, pp. 305-317.

Goldstein, J. and Pevehouse, J. (2007), "International Relations", New York: Pearson Longman, pp. 494-496; 500-503.

Hobden, S. and Jones, R. (2008), "Marxist Theories of International Relations" in J. Baylis and S. Smith (eds), "The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations", New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 142-149; 155-158.

(B) Additional Readings:

Anievas, Alex ed. (2009), "Marxism and World Politics", London: Routledge.

Davenport, Andrew, "Marxism in IR: Condemned to a Realist Fate?", *European Journal of International Relations* 19(1), 2013:27-48.

Callinicos, Alex, "Does Capitalism Need the State System", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 20(4), 2007:533-549.

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Rosenberg, Justin (2006), "Why Is There No International Historical Sociology?", *European Journal of International Relations* 12(3):307-340.

Modern History Sourcebook: Summary of Wallerstein on World System Theory, Available at <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/Wallerstein.asp>

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P. Viotti and M. Kauppi (2007), "International Relations and World Politics: Security, Economy, Identity", Pearson Education, pp. 40-85.

Vubalkova, Vendulka and Cruickshank, Albert "Marxism and International Relations", Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, pp.1-24, 205-248.

Wallerstein, I. (2004), "World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction". Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wallerstein, Immanuel (1974), "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16 (4): 387-415.

Wallerstein, Immanuel (1995) , "The Inter-State Structure of the Modern World System", in: Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (eds.), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.87-107.

Useful Web links

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAVGRol1OCE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN6LIMY2ApQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD3E0T0ik8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN6LIMY2ApQ&list=PLa3IFtz3Ass2dFu4GyCQ5xS7b0qTIXwE1>

Davenport, Andrew, "Marxism in IR: Condemned to a Realist fate?", *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (1), 2013:27-48.

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Frank , Andre Gunder 1966 "The Development of Underdevelopment", *Monthly Review*, 18 (4):17-31.

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