

Karl Marx's Theory of Alienation

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ABSTRACT

Alienation is characterized as alienated labour. The alienated labour in Karl Marx's Manuscripts refers to forced and involuntary labour in which the worker finds no purpose, no pleasure or contentment, no needs fulfilment, no independence or power, no mental growth or physical development. This is a state in which a person feels isolated, humiliated, unworthy, and insignificant. It is an operation that belongs to someone else and it is not random and it simply is a way of meeting the needs of physical life. It is a pure wage-earning practice in the political economy. According to Marx, here are four types of alienation of which Marx wrote as relating to the capitalist mode of production: the alienation of the worker from the products of his labour, the alienation felt in the course of production or labour, the alienation from the nature of our species or human existence, and finally the alienation of man from man or society (1844). This research paper will further look into this.

INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx was an economist, philosopher, writer, and social thinker who lived from 1818 to 1883. He is most well-known for his communist and capitalist ideologies. The work of Marx laid the groundwork for future leaders of communism such as Vladimir Lenin and Josef Stalin. Operating on the assumption that capitalism held the seeds of its destruction; its theories formed the basis of Marxism and served as communism's theoretical foundation. Almost everything Marx published was seen from the eyes of the rising worker.

Amongst his multiple theories was his theory of Alienation. The concept of 'alienation' has had a long tradition in the history of Western theology and philosophy (Oppolzer 1997).

The feeling of an outsider or feeling a sense of isolation, strangeness, or feeling of having no external connection is labeled as 'Alienation'. For Hegel and Feuerbach, alienation is primarily an intellectual phenomenon. It is the result of an inaccurate view of the universe. But this is a material and social process, for Karl Marx. He uses the word "Entfremdung," which he refers to as his "Alienation Theory," to describe the division or division of beings or objects that are or have been inherently together. In his early study, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Karl Marx examines alienation from a political, anthropological, and socio-cultural perspective. Through Karl Marx's philosophical view than economic; He explains how he is isolated, in the capitalist mode of production, from work or other workers. This definition of alienation in modern literature, political science, psychology, and sociology has become very popular. It is a sense of powerlessness, isolation, and meaninglessness experienced by human

beings and feelings of being oppressed. According to Marx, alienation is a symptom of the industrial age and capitalism. The worker can only see and be involved in the part of the work and has no control over the final product nor does he have any knowledge over it. This often explains the causes, location, and hostility effects between events and individuals or groups that are/were in proper harmony.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The objective of this paper is to look into the concept of “Alienation” by Karl Marx in the capitalistic society that we live in today and how it affects the individuals or the workers is the analysis and clarification of the idea of 'alienated labor' in the early works of Karl Marx, as well as the description of possible ways of overriding alienated labor.

HYPOTHESIS

Karl Marx's theory of Alienation suggests that workers get alienated from their species under capitalism, to the point that we cannot function according to our species-being, we are alienated from our existence. The capitalistic society does not profit the working class rather only the bourgeoisie class. It can be seen everywhere in the world how alienation as an experience and exploitation affect the mental health of the working class.

METHODOLOGY

This research paper uses investigative and descriptive methods to arrive at a close to the accurate formulated opinion of the hypothesis on research sources. It goes through various works and texts written by Karl Marx and also a variety of research projects done on Karl Marx by various other esteemed authors.

RESULTS

In Karl Marx's manuscript, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts 1844, he criticizes the national economy, particularly the German idealism, and the economic approaches by other philosophers. Marx bases his assessment on the historical situation of the capitalist modes of production and shows the principles and contradictions in the theories of national economics. In his first manuscript, Marx begins with an overview of the wage labor, capital, and basic pension production rules. Karl Marx analyzes the production of remuneration, resources, and basic pensions on the basis of the division of labor prescribed in the national economy, current private property, and the division of labor, resources, and land. Because of the capitalist orientation towards the rate of profit and capital accumulation, in the long run, only the two forms of capital remain wage labour and capital. As a result, society is disintegrating into two groups-owners and workers-who remain implacably hostile to each other. As the workers generate even greater wealth through continuous production, they also generate their own misery and become a commodity to be traded on the labor market. However, capital rises with increased production and accumulation, gravitating into monopoly structures. Karl Marx analyzes the relationship

between private ownership and alienated labor, coming to the conclusion that private ownership is:

"the product, the result, the necessary consequence of alienated labor" (Marx 1968).

"The national economy is based on the reality of private ownership. But it does not explain it." (Marx 1968)

In his manuscript, he further goes on to say the course and methods by which the capitalists were exploiting the working class. He also commented on how the capitalists follow these production models that favor them and cause the workers to be oppressed. Because of this oppression, the ruling classes and the working classes segregated themselves. He termed this practice as Alienation. It meant that working people put everything in their jobs, but got close to nothing in return and thus causing class division between them both. Alienation includes all aspects of life — religion, politics, economic and social relationships; but it specifically affects labour.

Marx differentiated amongst four different types of alienated labour:

Alienation from the product (Objectification)

By alienating workers from the products of their labor, the laborer produces for him an alien, objectified environment and is internally impoverished. To survive, the worker must create goods by the use of the property of others and thus recreate a worldly objectification in the form of goods and thus his own objectivity in the form of goods. Production is a permanent state for human existence and a permanent trait of human nature. But when a man makes an object through his own labour that object clashes with himself. The producer is ceasing to own his own thing. He continues to produce and the world of the objects produced surrounds him like an alien and hostile world. Just like primitive men alienated themselves through their hostile nature, modern humans alienated themselves through the object they create themselves.

Alienation from economic and own activity (Self-Alienation)

- This type of alienation alienates them from the act of production or the economy along with their own activities. In this type, a man starts to reject his own self and does not accept that this causes self-annihilation; Man is miserable, sad, and depressed. He cannot nourish or improve his mental energy or his physical strength. In addition, he mortifies his body and destroys his mind, sinks into a feeling of shame. In the economic sense, there are two forms. In the first form, a man describes the external essence of labor that is not part of human existence and does not contain spiritual or physical energy. This form of labor is fundamentally foreign to the worker and is not performed or confirmed during

periods of leisure. The worker sees himself as an 'outsider' or unrelated to his job or his development. When he is working, he is not at home and he is this "Forced Laborer". It is literally a way of fulfilling needs outside of him. The second form of economic activity alienation struggles with the separation from private ownership and wage labour. Since labor belongs to the proprietor rather than to the worker, the laborer's economic activity is abstract, decided by others, and not liberating.

Alienation from species-being (Man's separation from his species)

- To Marx, the human being is a social and working being, formed as a species-being representational. Human beings, unlike animals, behave not only for their own purposes but also for their own species. Labor is what sets man apart from lower animals. Animals always do labor, but they are specifically forced to do so. Man may produce only when he is free and his production conforms to the ordains of beauty and is commensurate with nature's rules. As labor develops into a way of self-preservation and food supply, the worker becomes alienated from their species and the lifestyle of the species becomes simply an instrument of an individual's existence.

Alienation from other People (individual from other individuals)

- This is directly related to the other forms, especially with the third. In the capitalist relations of production, not only are we alienated from the commodity and the production process, but provided that we are alienated from our human existence, it also means that we are alienated from ourselves and each other in turn. So the dimension of alienated labor deals with the fact that our social ties are alienated by themselves. Man feels isolated from his own species, relatives, and associates. This spreads from man to man, and even to society. For if a man feels conflict with or inside himself, then he is often in conflict with others.

The states of the workers are perhaps the most devastating, immediate effects for the worker. One very prominent theme in Marx's writings is that the worker is a commodity and is regarded as such because of exploitation by non-workers of other workers and because of the perceived position of the worker in production. The consequences of all this are that man is viewed and exploited as an object, that he is not regarded as a human being but only as property, as a necessary part of the economy, and that the needs of man and the ability to grow his own faculties are entirely ignored as unimportant for the system's objectives and with time, his position worsens even as a commodity.

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

According to Karl Marx's theory, all these types of alienation enumerated by Marx are of the same origin. In fact, all forms are different aspects of the self-alienation of man or his estrangement from his own "basic nature" In the end; this is responsible for the growth of all

social evils and antagonistic ties between the individuals and society. This paper has shown that Marxian alienation is a phenomenon that comprises many aspects and elements of significance that can be empirically defined in four main types of manifestations. Alienated labor is forced and external labor is something in which the worker finds no purpose, no pleasure or fulfillment, no needs fulfillment, no independence or power, no mental development or physical development. It is behavior that belongs to another, it is not random and it simply is a way of meeting the needs of physical life it can be seen how obvious it is in this system in which the worker trades his labor for wages, the worker is in great disadvantage. It becomes just a wage-earning activity.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that labor gives rise to private property. If the working class stops working for the bourgeois class, there won't be any alienation. This paper focused on describing the idea of alienated labor from Karl Marx's early works and tried to unravel the notion of alienation by explicitly applying it to his work. The individual, according to Marx, is a creature that acts in relation to its own species and to the human society. Under the environments of private ownership and exchange, the individual is alienated from his species-being and his fellows, whom he considers solely as a means to attain personal goals. Marx defines the human as an active natural being whose species freely proves its worth in the wilderness, is imaginative, and objectivists itself through productive labor and in the products of that labor. Under the conditions of private ownership, the species-being is the only channel for indirectly satisfying one's own needs.

PROBLEMS FACED

1. **Vast Array of Resources:** Due to the novelty of this topic, the amount of scholarly literature was vast and extensive. There were various sources and multiple publish to gather information from and there was no particular source to write this from
2. **Time-Consuming:** To pursue this research aim at length, more time, and ideally more reliable research would be required, than unreliable ones.
3. **Research Tools:** If research tools had been used, this project would have been far more extensive in terms of its research object, but the severity of the issue at hand is huge once, hence sequencing of groups would have been a challenging and tiresome task.
4. **Credibility:** Given the vast amount of information present, regarding this topic, the credibility of some sources were questionable as different sites offered different tampered information

INFERENCE

The aim of this paper was to analyze and explain the notion of 'alienated labour' in Karl Marx's early works. All the types of alienations enumerated by Marx are of the same origin, in the last study. In fact, all forms are different aspects of the self-alienation of man or his estrangement from his own "true nature" In the end; this is responsible for the growth of all social evils and antagonistic ties between the individuals and society. The self-alienated worker remains unaware of his possibilities which were traditionally established. The world cannot, therefore, profit from its individuals' enormous talent and limitless potentialities. The paper highlights the necessary aspects.

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