

The socio political theory of marxism philosophy essay



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The origin of, estrangement, or “ self-alienation” was religious in nature and later became metaphysical. The ideas prevailing in the society, where Marx developed his thought process were that, man is alienated from God due to man’s original sin; salvation is the process by which the self-alienation is overcome. For Hegel, the process of self-alienation is a progression toward fulfillment with the Absolute.” Hegel is best known for his view of history a result of the gradual development of consciousness, a progressive self-realization of spirit. Marx strongly felt that Hegel’s view of history failed to address the all-important and recurrent issue of class struggle. As a student, Marx was strongly influenced by Hegel’s philosophy. The concept of alienation is the continuation of Hegel’s concept of self realization which was put forward by Hegel which one needs to understand to find its relation with the concept of alienation put forward by Marx later on.

Self realization is not just recognizing human self but rather social self because all our ideas and sentiments come to us from society. Self realization is to give a coherent unity to one’s own life i. e. a dominant aim gives shape to life. Other independent interests are then integrated into one’s life by being brought into relation to this central concern. The concept of self realization realizes the need for identity. Human beings need to have a sense of existing as persons in their own right, with a life of their own and with aims and ideas of their own. The need for recognition by others is a major theme in Hegel’s philosophy. The consciousness as a distinct individual, as one whose actions make a difference in the world. The need for self expression through work also gives a sense of identity. One must strive for achievement, choosing activities which make full use of our faculties.

Certain kinds of life, like life on assembly line, working at screwing nuts on bolts, make it impossible for us to do that. Marx sees self realization through work and productivity. Work should be meaningful, creative and self expressive

Alienation as a conceptual legacy of Marx is derived from some of his early unpublished writings which have subsequently been published and received interest and acclaim. The early stage of Marx's thought was fraught with terminology inherited from Hegel and Feuerbach. The usage of the term alienation by Karl Marx is associated with the ideas of " estrangement " and " reification." The word " estrangement" is a socio psychological condition in which the individual has a feeling of distance or separateness from community and society. A person feels that he does not belong to the society. The term " reification," implies depersonalization, that the individual is treated as an object or thing and has, therefore, lost his identity.

Man is helpless before the social forces, the conditions of modern factory with the workers appearing as trapped animals. In modern industrial society, man is unhappy with himself due to lack of expression, and fewer opportunities for meaningful activities and leisure.

The theme of alienation in Marx's early writing, is basic to his sociology and his prescriptions for the good world. The early use of the term " alienation" is a legacy of Marx and Engels ' association with the first circle of the Young Hegelians and Feuerbachians; an association which they severed after coming to a consciousness of the struggle of the working man. The two senses appearing in this early writing include the idea of reification of labor

in product and idea of the self-alienation of the laborer as a man: The relationship of the worker to his own activity as something alien and not belonging to him, activity as suffering (passivity), strength as powerlessness, creation as emasculation, the personal physical and mental energy of the worker, his personal life, as an activity which is directed against himself, independent of him and not belonging to him.

In contrast with this early view of self-alienation, the use of the term in the later work shows significant differences. Marx seems to express his view of alienation as alienation of the individual's private labor from himself by means of a capitalist exchange system involving exchange value rather than the true value of human labor. In addition, man cannot see the reasonable and intelligible relations with his fellows and nature because the productive process renders him impotent - the productive process has mastery over man, instead of being controlled by him. Because man does not understand his relation to production, he views the object of his labor as a mere commodity.

The idea of alienation in later writings is not the "self alienation", but rather the idea of reification of labor manifested in the laborer's product. Thus it seems that there is a distinct difference between the early and later employment of the term in Marx.

A third characteristic of alienation - alienation of man "from the species life of the universal and free being that is man.

Similar to the three aspects of self-realization, when work is meaningful, creative, and self-expressive, it constitutes the organizing centre of a person's life, it gives the individual a sense of his or her own identity, recognized and confirmed by others, person realizes his potentials. Alienated labour lacks these qualities when it is simply the earning of a wage, with no intrinsic significance for the worker, an activity over which he has no say and into which he puts nothing of himself in an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production. Society is then divided into two main classes, those who own capital and therefore own the means of production, and those who own only their labour-power. For the latter, work must necessarily take the form of work for another, work for the capitalist, as a means of earning a wage. It is therefore alienated labour. Marx distinguishes four aspects of this alienation.

The worker is alienated from his product.

The product does not belong to him, and its particular qualities are of no concern for him. He could be producing absolutely anything so long as it provided him with a wage.

He is alienated from his own productive activity. He has no control over that activity, it is not the expression of his own ideas and projects, it is something imposed on him, which he is simply ordered to perform. The extreme case of

this is mechanized labour in the factory.

He is alienated from his species-being, that is, from those of his qualities, distinctively human. The human species is distinguished from other species. Human species have a capacity for free, conscious, and creative productive activity.

He is alienated from other human beings. Everyone is earning his own individual wage, so there is no concept of combine projects.

The quality of work is central to self-realization. The idea that one's work determines one's identity, and the stimulus to invest one's energies in that work, are so deeply embedded in our culture that no one could now find full satisfaction in a life which did not contain meaningful work.

To satisfy the need of meaningful work and to overcome the alienation of labour, Marx presents the idea of a fully human life by pursuing intensely absorbing activities to compensate for boring work. Self-realization through work can be made possible only by a radical change in the economic structure of society. Alienation is linked with the existence of private property in the means of production. ' If the product of labour does not belong to the worker but stands over against him as an alien power, this is only possible in that it belongs to another man apart from the worker. Consequently, work can lose its alienated character only when the means of production are brought under the ownership and control of the workers themselves. Only then can work be experienced by the workers as the fulfillment of their aspirations

Jala al-Din Rumi, was born in Balkh in present-day Afghanistan and moved in his youth to Konya (now in Turkey), where he died in 672/1273. 6 . He was a Sufi and a saint par excellence. Amufti , a qazi, a scholar of divine law. His verse included Qur'anic quotations. He composed about 65, 000 verses of breathtaking Persian poetry along with a number of short prose works. Rumi is considered as the greatest spiritual poet of history.

It is through Rückert that the famous philosopher Hegel became familiar with Rumi. Then, in his discourses on mysticism Hegel invoked and praised Rumi; and finally, in turn, these discourses reached Karl Marx. Marx's theory of commodity fetishism appears in the context of Rumi-imbued Hegelian mysticism. Rumi also influenced the development of Hegel's dialectics. Hegel addressed him as the " excellent Jalaluddin Rumi" in his Encyclopaedie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1827). Hegel mentioned Rumi at several places in his lectures and extensively in the section on the philosophy of mind in his Encyclopaedia. Hegel wrote about the relation between philosophy and religion. In this section, the main discussion focuses on pantheism, and Hegel talks about Rumi's way of unity of the soul with the One, and that unity is love, a spiritual unity.

These ideas on the nature of Mysticism inspired Karl Marx, who later gave a theory to uncover the mysticism of capital and capital accumulation in the capitalist social system. Hence, the mysticism of Rumi led to the development of Marx's theory on commodity fetishism, where Marx explained what he saw as the " mystical" character of commodities. Marx wrote, " A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, <https://assignbuster.com/the-socio-political-theory-of-marxism-philosophy-essay/>

abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties.” For Marx, the fetishism of commodities originated in the peculiar social character of the labor that produced them. His conception of their nature derived itself from Hegel’s definition of “ mystical,” and this definition, in turn, was Hegel’s reflection on Rumi’s poetry. It is indeed remarkable how far reaching the influence of Rumi can be, from inspiring a new genre of poetry to theories in political-economy.

Rumi manages to influence the ideas of philosophers half a millennium after he wrote his poems and still continues to dance amongst us to the tune of a divine flute for what seems like eternity. Jamee calls him the revealer of a Book, whose Masnavi is the Koran in Persian, and Hegel calls him the embodiment of excellence.