

SOCI 301/321

Foundations of Social Thought

Session 9 – KARL MARX (cont'd)

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Session Overview

Overview

- This session concludes Marx's ideas, discussing and exploring about the nature and functioning of society

•Goals and Objectives

At the end of the session, you should be able to:

- identify and explain his leading ideas and views about the nature of society and human behaviour
- compare and contrast his ideas and views with the earlier founders you have studied
- apply his ideas and theories to understand society, aspects of it and human behavior

Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:

- Review of the Communist Manifesto
- Class conflict
- Historical materialism
- Primitive Communal Society
- Slave-Ownning society
- Feudal Society
- Capitalist Society
- Socialist Society
- Communist Society and many more

Reading List

- ALLAN K. (2005) *EXPLORATIONS IN CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: SEEING THE SOCIAL WORLD*, LONDON: PIN FORGE PRESS
- ASHLEY D. AND D. M. ORENSTEIN (2001) *SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: THE CLASSICAL STATEMENTS*, BOSTON: ALLYN AND BACON.
- DZORGBO, D-B. S. (2013) *SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: CLASSICAL IDEAS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT*, ACCRA: WOELI PUBLISHING SERVICES
- DZORGBO D-B. S. (2009) *SOCIOLOGY: FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL THOUGHT*: LEGON-ACCRA: CENTER FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA.
- RITZER G. (2008) *SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY*, BOSTON: MCGRAW HILL
- RITZER G. & DOUGLAS J. GOODMAN, (2004) *CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY*, BOSTON: MCGRAW HILL

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

Don't do

- Review of the Communist Manifesto

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses... this distinctive feature; it has simplified the class antagonism. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat—from the Manifesto of the Communist Party (1848)

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

;Dont'd?

Marxist basic concepts include

- Class conflict
- Historical materialism
- Primitive Communal Society
- Slave-Owning society
- Feudal Society
- Capitalist Society
- Socialist Society
- Communist Society

- The Capitalist System of Production (the features)
- Socialist System of Production (the features)
- The place of the Bourgeoisie (owners of the means of production)
- Proletariat in the capitalist system of production (they do not own means of production but has their labour power to offer the bourgeoisie)

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

Don't do

- The contradictions of the capitalist society
- Surplus Value, Use value, Exchange value
- Alienation and alienated labour—*what then...is alienation of labour?*
- First, the fact that labour is external to the worker, i.e. it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work and his work feels outside himself. He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home. His labour therefore is not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it (Marx, 1850/1964:72).

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

;Don't d?

- Commodification of human relations
- Fetishism and thingification of commodities
- False consciousness and class consciousness
- Class-in-itself and class-for-itself and many more

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

;Don't d?

- Superstructure and Substructure
- Relations of production (in the substructure)
- Forces of production (in the substructure)
- Marx and the law in capitalist society

- Marx and the position of the state in capitalist society—*“an executive committee for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie”*
- Marx and knowledge production in capitalist society

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

;Don't d?

- The state as ideological apparatus in capitalist society
- Marx and Religion
- Religion as opium of the masses, the proletariat/poor
- Marx and economic determinism

Marx: Basic Ideas and Concepts

Don't do

- Marx and social inequality and social stratification
- The relevance of Marx in contemporary times