

Gramsci

Introduction of Gramsci as a thinker.

Real source of power is ideological not military.

Power.

Military
power of coercion

Ideological
Attraction

alliance. manufacturing consent

war of position war of manoeuvre

Power acts in an invisible manner.

O.P. Gautha,
concept of power.

Introduction of Gramsci as a thinker.

- He was an Italian communist
- Contemporary of Mussolini
- Mussolini had put him behind the bars. He remained in prison throughout his life.
- He is famous for his works which are now known as Prison Notebooks.
- The other important work of Gramsci is 'Modern Prince'

Sources of influence on Gramsci

- Karl Marx
- Lenin
- Benedetto Croce
- Machiavelli

Purpose of Gramsci's writings

Gramsci was involved in the communist movement & wanted the overthrow of fascist state & establishment of leadership of working classes. Hence he critically evaluated Marx's understanding of history & Marx's strategy of proletarian revolution.

Gram

Gramsci has given his own theory of revolution.

Gramsci is also known as 'father of Neo-Marxism'.

The 2 schools of neo-marxism

1. Critical school (Frankfurt school)
2. Structural school comes from the thoughts of Gramsci.

Modifications made by Gramsci in thoughts of Karl Marx.

- Marx's understanding of history

Marxian understanding of history which is known as historical materialism, may not be sufficient to understand history. Marx has gone for simplification of history. Marx's understanding is monocausal.

Marx has overlooked the role of other factors, like cultural or ideological in formation of history.

Gramsci has modified economic determinism of Karl Marx. He has taken ideas from Italian scholar Benedetto Croce, who gave importance to cultural factors. Gramsci has included the role of cultural & ideological factors along with economic factors in his theory of history.

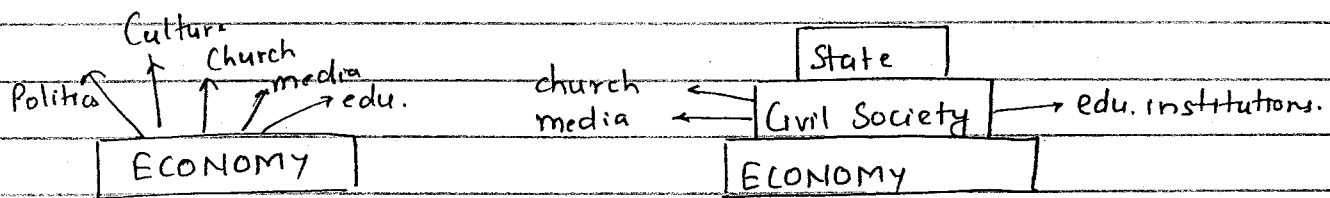
- Gramsci wanted to understand why Karl Marx is unable to explain the fact that socialist revolution did not take place in countries where capitalism was fully developed, ex. Britain & why socialist revolution took place in Russia which was primarily feudal & where capitalism was just emerging.

- Modification in Marx's concept of base & superstructure.

Marx's ~~view~~ model of base & superstructure

According to Karl Marx Economics is basic structure.

Politics, Culture, media, church, educational institutions are superstructure.



Marx.

Gramsci

- For Marx elements of superstructure are just the reflection of base. Hence they are of no significance.

The entire focus of Marx was on economic structure.

Gramsci under the influence of Croce has realised the significance of cultural & ideological factors.

Hence he modifies Marx's model. In Gramsci

Economy remains the basic structure but elements of superstructure are not overlooked as merely the reflection of the base. He realised their significance & considered them also as structures. For

for giving importance to the elements of superstructure he is known as 'Theoretician of Superstructure'.

- Gramsci has made change in strategy of revolution of Karl Marx.

Gramsci has added some new concepts in Marx's theory.

- Concept of hegemony
- Role of civil society
- Concept of historical class
- Concept of organic intellectuals
- Concept of opaque & transparent states
- War of position & war of manoeuvre (movement).

Gramsci's explanation of continuation of Capitalism
Capitalism is continuing not simply because capitalists have economic power but because capitalists also have ideological power.

In this context Gramsci has given the concept of Hegemony which is different from Marx's concept of power.

- For Marx, Power is with capitalist class.

The reason is they control economic structure.

+ For Gramsci, power is with capitalist class

The reason is they control economic structure as well as ideological structure.

- For Marx, power is exercised by state.

+ For Gramsci, power is exercised by state as well as institutions of Civil Society. For

For Gramsci, most of the time power is exercised by civil society & state power comes into exercise only in crisis situation or where power of civil society fails.

- For Marx, nature of power is coercive represented by police.

+ For Gramsci, nature of power is coercive represented by police but there are other ways also in which power is exercised. Mostly power is exercised

not by coercion rather by manufacturing consent. Power is not always concrete symbolised in police force. Power is also invisible. Power is also exercised by the institutions of civil society. However we do not realise the operation of this form of power on us.

This invisible power which can also be called as soft power impacts our mind. It shapes our preferences & choices. This power is not coercive, yet it establishes ideological domination.

Soft power creates power of attraction. This power Gramsci calls hegemony.

Difference between domination & hegemony

- The term domination is associated with Karl Marx, who calls capitalist class as the dominant class, because it owns the means of production. The term domination implies coercion. It symbolises hard power.
- Term hegemony associated with Gramsci represent leadership. The source of hegemony is ideological power. It is non coercive. Its function is to manufacture consent. It operates in an invisible manner.
- In Marx the location of domination is in economic structure.
- In Gramsci the location of hegemony is in civil society.

Civil society acts as a cushion or shock absorber for state. Civil society play the role for manufacturing consent. Countries where civil society is developed enjoys lot of powers. It is difficult to bring revolution in such countries. In such situations it is not possible

to understand the real nature of the state. Ex. Capitalist
Ex. Socialist revolution could not take place in
countries like Britain or USA.

Revolution comes in those countries Ex. Czarist Russia
because civil society didn't have power. The exploitative
nature of state was evident. He calls states where civil
society is powerful as opaque states, where civil society
is absent as transparent states.

Strategy of Revolution for working classes.

Aim of the revolution

To establish the leadership or hegemony of
working classes.

How they can gain leadership

They should learn from bourgeoisie class / Capitalist class.

Capitalist class have achieved hegemony by building
alliance with other classes or sections. Ex. Intellectual class,
media, church, etc.

Hence working class should also not go alone.

It should not be a struggle of only working classes.

They should also form an alliance with those who
may not be having identical interest but compatible interest.

Working class should make alliance with other
depressed classes or subaltern class.

Working class should also advance the interest
of other depressed classes & should have ability
to achieve their objectives also. This class coalition
is called as historical class by Gramsci.

He suggests to have a strategy to fight at 2 levels.

1. War of Position

It is more important. It takes longer time.

The purpose is to create counter hegemony. It is an attempt to control civil society. Here workers require the help of intellectual class. For workers Gramsci talks about the need of having "organic intellectuals".

Organic intellectuals means intellectuals belonging to subaltern section.

2. War of manoeuvre / movement

Once war of position is won, revolutionary classes can go for direct action to capture the state. Hegemony is not to be taken for granted. One has to continuously involve in manufacturing consent.