A Critique Of Marx's Capitalism By Weber And Dahrendorf

Capitalism has been a topic of controversy and criticism for several years from various perceptions during its history. Condemnations range from individuals who differ with the philosophies of capitalism in its entireness, to those who disagree with specific results of capitalism (Bonefeld and Kosmas 98). Among the people craving to substitute capitalism with a changed production technique and social organization, a discrepancy can be made for those that have a belief that capitalism can just overcome with a revolt (Laclau 167). For example, revolutionary socialism and those with an assurance that organizational change can be achieved gradually through political changes to capitalism, such as classic social democracy.

Karl Marx viewed capitalism as a liberal historical phase that would ultimately go stale because of internal inconsistencies and later be followed by socialism. According to Marxists, capital is a social, economic association between individuals instead of individuals and things. In this regard, they seek to eradicate money (Schwentker 496). They have a belief that private possession of the production means supplements capitalists (capital owners) at the cost of employees. Briefly, they claim that the production owners abuse the labor force. According to Karl Marx’s perspective, the vibrant capital would finally deprive the working class and, thus, generate the social settings for an insurgency (Laclau 170). Marx predicted that the ongoing exploitation of the proletariat underclass would create resentment and eventually a revolution against the bourgeoisie would occur. This in turn would lead to the overthrow of capitalism. Marx stated that the bourgeois society “is like the sorcerer, who no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells.” He then predicted that the defeat of capitalism would emerge a classless society where each person’s abilities will concur with his needs and wealth would be shared between all people.

Private possession over the ways of production and dissemination is considered as generating reliance of non-classes to the sovereign class, and eventually as a basis of the constraint of human liberty. Marx’s concepts produced a wealth fiction, much of which is polemical and political. Marxists have provided different related arguments demanding that capitalism is a paradox-laden structure branded by repetitive crises that have a propensity towards increasing brutality (Sczecinska-Musielak 120). They have disputed that this propensity of the structure to loosen in conjunction with a socialization procedure that associates employees in a global market, craft the objective circumstances for revolutionary conversion (Oakley 18). In this light, capitalism is considered as a single phase in the progression of the economic structure.

In an actual chronological sense, capitalism liberates employees to treat their workforce as their possession. However, this liberty is accompanied by a markedly capitalist type of restriction. In so far as the production means are under the management and ownership of the private proprietors, employees are forced to vend their workforce to affiliates of this possessing class (Lepie 146). This is to enable them to gain admittance to the production means, safeguard through their salaries the material provisions of existence as well as take part in publicly productive activities (Oakley 19). Marx had a belief that even though capitalism establishes the productive supremacies of human civilizations to archeologically extraordinary heights, it does this in means, which are also restricting, manipulative, and unconstitutional (Sczecinska-Musielak 125). In these essential means, capitalism is a different social structure, with prevalent

rigidities, political brawls, and prospective for change.

According to Marx's perspective, capital is the outcome of publicly productive activity and the making of value by the workforce. Considered as a thing, capital has no dynamic powers. But when considered as a social link, capital is vibrant just as an accretion of the past expended workforce power set moving by the newly accretion power (Sczecinska-Musielak 127). However, because capitalism is branded by private possession of the production means, as the possessor, the capitalist controls the production procedure and confiscates its commodities- the excess value generated by the workforce. According to Marx's comprehension of capitalist manipulation, the procedure and the merchandise of publicly controlled workforce are subordinated to private assets and assimilated into the build-up of capital (Schwentker 498). Over the years, capitalism has seen drastic changes, and the world has come to reality to agree to some of Marx's ideologies.

After the termination of the Cold War, the world entered an era faced with chronic unemployment, global inequality, weak economic growth, and climate crisis due to global warming. Economically, the phrase "secular stagnation" is diffusing, and during the global conference of capitalist elites, they claimed that the capitalist structure does not fit this world (Bonefeld and Kosmas 102). In the contemporary capitalist setting, however, it is not common for employers to utilize direct intimidating force as a crucial part of their extraction of the excess workforce. Instead, employees are forced to work, as well as give in to capitalist control of the work environment, which is often referred to as dull coercion of economic life by Marxists (Lepie 153). The direct interference of openly political power and unswervingly intimidating force surrounded by the capitalist work settings is the exclusion instead of the rule.

The capitalist investors' social powers are entrenched in personalized economic scope, comprehended as personal privileges attendant upon possession of individual assets. These powers are often made constitutionally unaccountable because of their understanding as aspects of private assets. Moreover, due to the government's reliance on private investors, the state is effectively forced to serve the long-standing interest of the capitalist class (Bonefeld and Kosmas 110). Therefore, failure to generate legislative requirements that are perceived by capitalists to be friendly to enterprises will lead to their slashing of investment amounts (Schwentker 509). The capitalists will instead send their investment profits to different settings favourable to them, leaving the government to administer an economic catastrophe, which would also be a political crisis for the ruling administration.

In the present world, Marx's ideologies of capitalism have manifested themselves. The global market is dictated by the employers and private property owners who control a large section of society. Besides, this class makes up the ruling class, which controls the market and other levels of people, especially the employees (Laclau 178). The world governments are primarily depending on private investors compelling the regimes in the office to create political environments that are friendly to the investors' perception. Countries that have been hit by political imbalances have seen fewer investors and property owners, forcing them into economic catastrophes. As per the Marxists, the property owners compel workers to harsh work settings and usually intimidate them (Sczecinska-Musielak 127).

Max Weber's Critique of Capitalism as Opposed to Marx

Despite his interest in capitalism and socioeconomic development, Weber's defiance towards capitalism was more hesitant. As opposed to Karl Marx, he provided a difference between class and status (an individual's relation to the economy and a person's traditionally dogged responsibility). He proposed that the fight to attain status was also a significant element of civilization, and that class, as per Marxists, was not often the driving factor (Lepie 154). Weber's magnum opus, which opposed Marx's materialistic methodology, asserts that capitalism originated from the Europeans due to the reformation of the Protestants.

One of Weber's most recognized works is "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" where he expressed the role Protestantism played in the rise of capitalism. He was primarily interested in the Protestant ethic which is a belief system that emphasizes hard work, asceticism, and the denial of personal pleasure. It was associated with the sect known as Calvinism and the belief in predestination, the religious doctrine that a person's fate in the afterlife is predetermined (Ritzer and Stepnisky 36). This predetermined fate could not be changed, and wrong doings could not be reversed because they believed that only God is able to forgive any one and he wouldn't make his intentions known until the day of judgement.

According to Weber, Calvinists immersed their guilt through hard work. One of the ways for a person to discern if they were to be saved or damned was being successful in business. The Calvinists were deeply motivated to having more profitable and successful businesses. The business owners felt supported in their merciless pursuit of profits due to the fact that they felt it was their ethical obligation to behave in such a way. In turn, the business owners were provided with hardworking, conscientious workers who also wanted to be successful. The Calvinist owners did not have to burden themselves over the fact that they were successful while the people who worked for them hardly made enough. The prosperity of the successful business owners and the workers who comparatively made little was all preordained. If the workers were accepted to be saved, then they shall prosper economically as well. If they did not, then success would not come to them. All in all, this system was reassuring for those who acquired the wealth. Similarly, Marx argued that the bourgeoisie ruthlessly exploited the proletariat. The wealth of the upper class was dependent upon the work of the underclass. Among the Calvinists however, their beliefs about economic success added up to the Protestant ethic which then became the development of the spirit of capitalism. This idea system which ultimately led to the capitalist economic system, in the West, the motivation to be economically successful was not due to greed but by an ethical system that emphasized economic success (Ritzer and Stepnisky 38). The spirit of capitalism distanced the connection of individual ambition and made an ethical imperative. After all, it was the people's responsibility to work continuously to increase their wealth and economic prosperity. However, during his final assessment, Weber also considered capitalism to be irrational, as did Marx. He, however, did not view it as a futile economic structure, but due to its spiritual emptiness (Oakley 29). The system embellished with a sort of strictly forced sense of self-significance and would procure for the sake of purchase or status for the state.

Unlike Marx, Weber was not interested in economic catastrophe and has little compassion for the battles of the public. Besides, he does not question the colonial extension and perceives a profound discrepancy between the conditions of the official contemporary shrewdness. Moreover, his pessimistic examination of modernity is stricken by its refusal of delusions of development, which used to be influential in Europe at the start of the 20th century (Laclau 189). According to Weber, the capitalist economy is revealed as a functional need for human happiness, which is meaningless. However, Weber has a belief that this irrational structure has

its formidable shrewdness. Weber also considers the modern capitalist to have the spirit of rejection of the Faustian multi-dimensionality of humanity (Sczecinska-Musielak 134). He also asserts that capitalist prudence creates a more restricting and forced setting. He states that the contemporary capitalist economic order controls and determines the living style of all people born into it because of its use of technology and machines for production. This restriction is compared to a kind of jail where the structure of the prudent output encompasses people (Oakley 29).

Dahrendorf's Theory

Dahrendorf is among the most persuasive theorists in the social world of the 21st century. His book Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society is regarded as his most influential work. Given this importance, his conflict hypothesis from the social diversity conception from which it is adopted provides a comprehensive perspective to learn from. Dahrendorf argues that capitalism has endured many changes since Marx and bases his arguments based on Marxism and systemic functionalism (Laclau 185). He believed that neither one of those theories could account for all of society. In Karl Marx's time, wealth was the determining factor in obtaining power and therefore this left no way for the poor to gain any power or increase their position in society. Ralf Dahrendorf did not see economic forces as the sole determinant of conflict. Instead, he saw unequal distribution of political power as a major source of conflict in society.

He had a belief that the present world in full of the social inequality problem and believes in two approaches to civilization, Rationalist and Utopian. Society needs the balance of values and solidity despite the existence of discord and disagreement. As per Dahrendorf, Marxists overlooked integration and consensus in the contemporary social systems. According to his class conflict theory, he suggests that a symbolic model of class conflict with power as the generic domination form in conjunction with a rigid structural society view is mandatory (Lepie 187). He developed his own theory about class conflict in a post-capitalist society. Unlike Marx, he believes wealth is not the sole determinant of one's power in society. In modern democratic capitalist societies economic developments, voting rights, and political parties have permitted people to gain social mobility. Post-capitalism is characterized by diverse class structure enmeshed by a fluid system of power relations. This new system involves much more inequality than Marx had originally figured. Class conflict in the new system is institutionalized in both the state and economy which means that class conflict has been adapted through unions, collective bargaining, the court system and legislative debate. A set class relationship which no longer are typical of class strife during Marx's time.

During the establishment of his hypothesis, Dahrendorf distinguished consensus hypothesis and formed a critical part in the full refection of civilization. Consensus hypothesis emphases on the integration value into the community, whereas, the conflict hypothesis emphases on the struggles of interest and the coercion holding the society intact regardless of these pressures (Bonefeld and Kosmas 112). He, however, had the belief that Marx's hypothesis could be updated to reflect contemporary civilization. He rejects Marx's two-class structure stating that it is too simplistic and primarily focuses on asset possession. This is because, in modern society, the rise of joint-stock corporations has made ownership unnecessary in reflecting the control of economic production. He asserts that possessions should be replaced with the exercise of authority as the criteria of forming class (Schwentker 508). A significant component to Dahrendorf's conflict theory is the idea of authority. He argues that authority resides not in

individuals but in positions. He was interested in the structures of these positions and also the conflicts among them. Dahrendorf believed that the formation of classes was the organization of common interests and people who are in positions of authority should control subordination because of the expectations of those who surround them. Those expectations are attached to positions not to individual people. Sanction can be brought into effect against those who fail to comply authority commands. Dahrendorf argued that society is composed of a number of units he called imperatively coordinated associations. An individual can reside a position of authority in one and a subordinate position in another. Marx believed that class formation was based on the ownership of private property but Dahrendorf it has always been based on authority.

Conclusion

Overall, the way capitalism Karl Marx imagined going during his time was not in the direction that was hoped. He believed the proletariat would triumph in a revolution to overthrow the bourgeoisie and socialism would then turn to communism. Marx had adopted communism which called for a revolution by the working-class would engage in praxis and destroy the capitalist world. Marx and Friedrich Engels developed their philosophy of communism and wrote The Communist Manifesto in January 1848. The ideas in The Communist Manifesto predicted imminent revolution in Europe. “The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite!” The goal was to stop the exploitation and alienations they were enduring under the upper-class. Karl Marx believed that converting to communism and communism itself is the social system that permits the expression of full human potential. Under communism, people would be freed from the desire to won things and would be able, with the help of technologies and organizations created in capitalism, to live up to their full potential (Ritzer and Stepnisky 23). Almost all of the regimes under communism failed or are moderately being transformed into more capitalistic societies. These regimes, like the Soviet Union, were associated with cruel and inhumane punishments. Marx himself would have been appalled and attacked a society like that for the inhumanity it had created. The matter of the fact is that what Marx wanted for a communist’s society is nothing like what was created. As the years passed, it was inevitable that the type of change Marx wanted proved short-sighted. Capitalism is alive and well and some argue that his theories might have ended up saving capitalism. Capitalist societies were convinced of a needed level of fairness but the income gap between them and workers continues to grow amounting in great inequality.

In conclusion, despite being a controversial topic, capitalism has been evolving since Karl Marx’s era to the present world. Various theorists have come up with updated views of capitalism but to an extent, have agreed to some of the opinions by Marx. For instance, Max Weber disagreed with Marx on specific backgrounds but later consented with Marx regarding capitalism. On the other hand, Dahrendorf came up with new perspectives regarding capitalism but basing his views on Marxism. He then suggested that Marxism can be modified and updated to fit the contemporary society perfectly as only a few clauses differ with modern society.