RUNNING HEAD : NEO-MARXISM THEORY

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 Abstract

Different scholars have come with different thesis and theories airing out the causes of economic underdevelopment and unequal distribution of wealth among states but I will explain more in depth using the Marxist systematic theory over basis in unit\_level attributes just .

While the notions of development and underdevelopment is most commonly discussed in an economic context, the process of development ecompasses a broad range of factors, social, political, ethnicity, geography, etc, distinct to the environment in question. It should be understood that development is relative in nature, as countries in the Third World are only considered “underdeveloped” in comparison to the industrialized nations of world.More importantly, the concept of underdevelopment, especially as it pertains to the former colonies of imperialist nations, inherently implies a relationship of economic exploitation imposed from the imperialist nation onto lesser developed nations. Through these systems of economic exploitation, the consequences of underdevelopment are perpetuated, very often producing a host of corresponding societal ills that further impede efforts towards reform.

Here then ,I'll first discuss why I personally believe the unit-level attributes is highly biased among different nations and thus doesn't really contribute to the unequal distribution of wealth.

Decolonization Theory

.With the political independence only representing the initial step of many in the following decades. The relationships between the former European colonizers and underdeveloped states would continue through the reforms of bilateral, imperialist favored policies and influence over the former colonial subjects with multilateral, reciprocally beneficial relationships.

.Colonial Capitalism,” or Neo-Colonialism also developed in the Post-Colonial decades contains elements from both Dependence and Decolonization theories but is more deeply rooted in Africa’s. The focus of this theory surrounds the “prolonged crisis,” as seen in cases from as extreme the Biafran War in Nigeria, internal war crimes committed in Uganda, genocide in Rwanda, and continued instability and violence today the Congo and several other Central and West African nations.

.Unlike the development economic development from feudalism in Western Europe, the systems of capitalism in Africa were introduced under the context of European imperialism and colonialism.Post-colonial theory contended that genuine economic independence could not be fully achieved, as their economies are structurally flawed by the forces of imperialism and colonialism.

.The primary economic activity was agriculture and the development of iron tools was particularly important in the generation of advanced tactic for dealing with their particular geographical specialties. Because of this focus landowners were particularly educated about the fine details of the terrain, down the specifics about the soil. This allowed for a diverse economy that provided for the community in a systematic and effective way.

.Though there was not as much development in terms of a scientific approach to agricultural production, the goals of sustenance made for little pressure to produce more crops than they needed.

The Effect on The Nation's Economy

.After the detrimental European contact of the Slave trade, which robbed Africa of millions of people, the colonization period of the 19th and 20th centuries cemented a legacy of economic exploitation in Africa, which many countries are still reeling from today.

.The aim of colonialism [was] to exploit the physical, human, and economic resources of an area to benefit the colonizing nation. European powers pursued this goal by encouraging the development of a commodity based trading system, a cash crop agriculture system, and by building a trade network linking the total economic output of a region to the demands of the colonizing state.

The linking of the total economic output of a region to its colonizing state often resulted in mono-crop economies. Countries like Egypt, Sudan, Mali, and the Congo were responsible for the production of raw goods such as: cotton, peanuts, coffee, and rubber. These were then transported to the European nations in charge of the respective countries. Due to the nature of the relationship between colonizer and colonized, these Western powers wanted to pay as little as possible for the goods that were being produced, essentially skewing individual countries economies to simply meet their population’s demands overseas.

.The ramifications of this for the African populations were that: food shortages and starvation became commonplace, and various other crops were not able to be in rotation, as mono-crop economies are extremely detrimental to the soil as nutrients are constantly being extracted, and never replenished.

 Discussion

Despite knowing the unit-level attributes ,the challenges facing the underdeveloped nations , I'm still yet undecided of the multiple solutions that are at our disposal to curb or lead our nations to our peak potential.

But with the Marxist theory , I continue to view a critical approach that wants to always question the mainstream policy-driven approaches to IR theory and a classical approach via the philosophical and sociological tradition .In fact, Marxism is the only theoretical perspective in International Relations that is named after a person. Of the range of great thinkers available to us, Marx may not automatically qualify as being the most ‘internationalist’.But as of me ,he is.

.Most of Marx work was not primarily concerned with the formation of states or even the interactions between them. What connected their interests to IR was the industrial revolution, as this event was ultimately what Marx was witnessing and trying to understand. He, with Engels, developed a revolutionary approach and outlined a set of concepts that transcended national differences while also providing practical advice on how to build a transnational movement of people.

.Marxist concepts are all connected by the common goal to contribute to what they perceive as the greater good of humankind and its environment

. Combining these tasks leads to arguably the most important contribution Marxism offers to IR: that the capitalist mode of production and the modern sovereign states system (that emerged roughly at the same time) are not natural or inevitable events. They are interdependent products of particular historical conditions and social relations.

The work of Marxists is to map and retrace those conditions and social relations and to figure out how the capitalist mode of production and the sovereign states system emerged – as two sides of the same coin, as different coins or maybe as different currencies.

Debates on the degree of interdependence between these two major historical phenomena may be ongoing, but Marxism’s achievement in IR has been to stop us from thinking about them separately. Marxism also advises that concepts are not just meant to help us understand the world – they should also help us change it.

EXPLAINING MARXISM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

.I will start with Marx’s main theory for the development of capitalism: historical materialism

Historical materialism asserts that human beings , together with their relations with each other and their environment are determined by the material conditions in which they can survive and reproduce,therefore, Marxism asserts that material conditions can be changed by the actions of human beings as well as by events .

- Think of climate change for example, which depends on physical phenomena as well as human behaviour. In other words, these material conditions are historical, they change over space and time. But they are also always dependent on and often hampered by the processes and ideas that preceded them, as the past weighs on the present.

.A Marxist would stress that IR is not just about states’ foreign policy or the behaviour of politicians, but more about survival or more broadly about life ,reproduction, technologies and labour.

Thus ,the separation between the political and economic, or public and private, is problematic because those categories hide the ways in which states and foreign policies are determined by the social relations and structures of the global economy .

 Put differently, Marxists argue that concepts such as International in IR are problematic because they make us believe in illusions or myths about the world.This ignores the endurance of regional inequalities and the structural and historical links between states, violence and the key actors of the global political economy.

The relations of dependency and groups required that we understand the world through broader units than states. These units helped to address the dilemma of why states all became capitalist, albeit in very unequal and different ways.

The core group of states e..g. in Western Europe and North America refers to democratic governments providing high wages and encouraging high levels of investment and welfare services. The semi- periphery states e.g. in Latin America are authoritarian governments that provide low wages and poor welfare services for their citizens. Periphery states e.g. sub-Saharan and Central Africa, South Asia refer to non- democratic governments where workers can mostly expect wages below subsistence levels and wher

The core is able to produce high-profit consumption goods for itself as well as for the semi-periphery and periphery markets because the periphery provides the cheap labour and raw materials to the core and semi-periphery necessary to make these high-profit consumption goods. Thus , although historically some states have changed their group e.g. from periphery to semi-periphery, capitalism always needs a peripheral region that provides the means for the core to sustain a high level of consumption and security. Thus, relations of dependency and inequality are essential to capitalism and cannot be significantly reduced.

.Another influential concept of hegemony is thought by some to be more useful today than the concept of imperialism. It emphasises two things. First, the domination of some groups of states) over other groups also depends on ideological factors.Capitalism is experienced in different ways historically and across the globe because people understand it and therefore agree to or resist it – in different ways.

Second, the relations of dependency and types of groups or states used to understand those relations are more varied and fluid than world systems theory. Therefore, capitalism dominates our social relations because it is reproduced through coercive and consensual means. The concept was used to explain why educated and organised workers in Western Europe did not ‘unite’ to ‘lose their chains’, as Marx and Engels had predicted.

For example, Singapore, Hong-Kong, South Korea and Taiwan were known as the Four Asian Tigers because of their rapid industrialisation and high growth rates from the 1960s to the 1990s. In these countries, a strong ruling elite consented to a specific type of financial economy – often called a ‘neoliberal’ model – which also took hold across the world to varying degrees as other states sought to emulate this ‘success’. However, vast inequalities and human rights violations are increasing across and within many societies despite the dominance of neoliberalism globally. This shows that although neoliberal hegemony is far from producing the success it originally projected, this perceived success remains one of the main drivers of capitalism because it convinces people

Discussion

A Marxist IR approach to migration shows the importance of historical materialism as an approach to IR. Marxists aspect of borders because they create relations of dependency and inequality between peoples by restricting and controlling their access to resources and labour

Marxists see borders as fixtures that unfairly determine relations of dependency and inequality – or in other words, who has the right to what. Second, we need to think of who decides who is a migrant and what that category entails.

Movement of peoples occurred long before capitalism, but capitalism shapes those movements in conjunction with the creation of borders and economic productivity. The process of enclosure at the beginning of capitalism led to people moving away from the land on which they hunted, gathered and grew food. The process involved landowners closing off or fencing common land so as to graze sheep and develop more intensive methods of agriculture. This gradually transformed social relations – the ways in which people could survive and reproduce. Without land to survive on, people had to start selling their ability to work ,what Marxists call labour power and often had to work far from their homes.

Although people move for a variety of reasons, one that is particularly familiar is the necessity to move to sell our labour. This can involve transferring from the countryside to an urban centre within a state or from one state to another. In other words, it is the same imperative to work that makes this move happen, whether one crosses an international border or not. In a capitalist system, it is hard to survive without working and working implies moving or being prepared to move. In other words, we are all in theory migrants.

Acknowledging this means that closing borders, which involves fixing peoples’ status as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ economic migrants, is based on two illusions revealed by Marxism and should therefore be questioned and reconsidered. The first is the distinction between domestic and international. Capitalism is an expanding international system and allows domestic borders only in so far as it can transcend them economically. The second illusion is the distinction between categories of people as real and fixed. Capitalism allows the elite to transcend borders economically but also allows the potential to close them politically. Thus, it allows certain people the most wealthy decide that others the least wealthy cannot try and change their situations.

The role of theories and knowledge more generally is to reveal what is real and what is an illusion. Historical materialism – the theory that drives Marxism – tries to apply this advice by grounding the understanding of international relations in the ways in which people have transformed the land, produced things on it and are ultimately dependent on its resources for shaping political institutions such as the state and international organisations. Marxism has made several inroads in the development of the discipline of IR by being intrinsically concerned with the ways in which people – and groups – interact and produce things across borders, as well as how they organise themselves through institutions to manage and contest the production and distribution of things across the world.

In other words, if a system is not as real and fixed as we first thought, because it has a particular and relatively short history in the broader course of humanity, then it becomes much easier for us to imagine the various ways it is challenged and how it could be transformed to a system that, Marxists hope, will better redistribute the wealth of the world.

Marx himself wrote that philosophy is often too concerned with interpreting the world, when the real point is to change it. Marxism as a theory of IR has certainly answered that call and, regardless of variations within the theory family, to be a Marxist always means to challenge one’s ideas about the world.

 **OBSERVATION**

In summary, Marxism is characterised by interdependence,which underpins the way in which all the previous concepts explored in this thesis relate to each other.

For Marxism, all concepts reflect social relations, but categories take on a life of their own and often hide those social relations.

 It is easy to overcomplicate or abuse this concept. However, it is a crucial starting point for understanding the world as a whole, rather than just its individual parts .

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