



SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE & PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION
M.A POLITICAL SCIENCE II SEM
POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: MORDAN POLITICAL
THOUGHT, THEORY & CONTEMPORARY
IDEOLOGIES(201)

TOPIC NAME-LENINISM



Introduction

- **Leninism** is a political theory about how the revolutionary communist party should be organized. It says it should be a dictatorship of the proletariat (the working class holds the power). It is considered one of the first steps towards socialism (where the workers own the factories, etc.).^[1] It is one part of Marxism–Leninism, which emphasizes the transition from capitalism to socialism.

Ideas

- Democratic Centralism, also known as the idea of the vanguard party. Like other communists, Lenin wanted to see a socialist revolution led by the working class. But he thought the workers needed strong leadership in the form of a Revolutionary Party based on Democratic Centralism. Lenin wanted Communist political parties in every country to lead the revolution. He thought the vanguard party would need to have strong discipline, or it would fail.
- The idea that capitalism is the cause of imperialism (empire-building). He thought that imperialism was the "highest stage" of capitalism.

What did Lenin say about socialism?

- **Leninism** is a political theory developed by Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin that proposes the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, led by a revolutionary vanguard party, as the political prelude to the establishment of socialism. The function of the Leninist vanguard party is to provide the working classes with the political consciousness (education and organisation) and revolutionary leadership necessary to depose capitalism in the Russian Empire (1721–1917).^[1] Leninist revolutionary leadership is based upon *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) identifying the communist party as "the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country; that section which pushes forward all others." As the vanguard party, the Bolsheviks viewed history through the theoretical framework of dialectical materialism, which sanctioned political commitment to the successful overthrow of capitalism, and then to instituting socialism; and, as the revolutionary national government, to realize the socio-economic transition by all means

What did Lenin say about socialism?

- In the aftermath of the October Revolution (1917), Leninism was the dominant version of Marxism in Russia and the basis of soviet democracy, the rule of directly elected soviets. In establishing the socialist mode of production in Bolshevik Russia — with the Decree on Land (1917), War Communism(1918–1921), and the New Economic Plan (1921–1928) — the revolutionary régime suppressed most political opposition, including Marxists who opposed Lenin's actions, the anarchists and the Mensheviks, factions of the Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.^[3] The Russian Civil War (1917–1922), which included the seventeen-army Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War (1917–1925), and left-wing uprisings against the Bolsheviks (1918–1924) were the external and internal wars which transformed Bolshevik Russia into the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), the core republic of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics(USSR).^[4]
- As revolutionary praxis, Leninism originally was neither a proper philosophy nor a discrete political theory. Leninism comprises politico-economic developments of orthodox Marxism and Lenin's interpretations of Marxism, which function as a pragmatic synthesis for practical application to the actual conditions (political, social, economic) of the feudal agrarian society of Imperial Russia in the early 20th century.^[1] As a political-science term, Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution entered common usage at the fifth congress of the Communist International (1924), when Grigory Zinoviev applied the term *Leninism* to denote "vanguard-party revolution."^[5]

How did Lenin use Marxism

- The philosophy of **Marxism–Leninism** originated as the pro-active, political praxis of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in realising political change in Tsarist Russia. ... **Leninism** allowed the Bolshevik party to assume command of the October Revolution in 1917

Principles of Leninism

Leninism, principles expounded by Vladimir I. Lenin, who was the preeminent figure in the Russian Revolution of 1917. Whether Leninist concepts represented a contribution to or a corruption of Marxist thought has been debated, but their influence on the subsequent development of communism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere has been of fundamental importance.

In the *Communist Manifesto* (1848), Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels defined communists as “the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others.” This conception was fundamental to Leninist thought. Lenin saw the Communist Party as a highly committed intellectual elite who (1) had a scientific understanding of history and society in the light of Marxist principles, (2) were committed to ending capitalism and instituting socialism in its place, (3) were bent on forcing through this transition after having achieved political power, and (4) were committed to attaining this power by any means possible, including violence and revolution if necessary. Lenin’s emphasis upon action by a small, deeply committed group stemmed both from the need for efficiency and discretion in the revolutionary movement and from an authoritarian bent that was present in all of his political thought. The authoritarian aspect of Leninism appeared also in its insistence upon the need for a “proletarian dictatorship” following the seizure of power, a dictatorship that in practice was exercised not by the workers but by the leaders of the Communist Party.

Principles

- At the root of Leninist authoritarianism was a distrust of spontaneity, a conviction that historical events, if left to themselves, would not bring the desired outcome—*i.e.*, the coming into being of a socialist society. Lenin was not at all convinced, for instance, that the workers would inevitably acquire the proper revolutionary and class consciousness of the communist elite; he was instead afraid that they would be content with the gains in living and working conditions obtained through trade-union activity. In this, Leninism differed from traditional Marxism, which predicted that material conditions would suffice to make workers conscious of the need for revolution. For Lenin, then, the communist elite—the “workers’ vanguard”—was more than a catalytic agent that precipitated events along their inevitable course; it was an indispensable element
- Just as Leninism was pragmatic in its choice of means to achieve political power, it was also opportunistic in the policies it adopted and the compromises it made to maintain its hold on power. A good example of this is Lenin’s own New Economic Policy(1921–28), which temporarily restored the market economy and some private enterprise in the Soviet Union after the disastrous economic results of War Communism (1918–21)

Principles

- In practice, Leninism's unrestrained pursuit of the socialist society resulted in the creation of a totalitarian state in the Soviet Union. If the conditions of Russia in its backward state of development did not lead to socialism naturally, then, after coming to power, the Bolsheviks would legislate socialism into existence and would exercise despotic control to break public resistance. Thus, every aspect of the Soviet Union's political, economic, cultural, and intellectual life came to be regulated by the Communist Party in a strict and regimented fashion that would tolerate no opposition. The building of the socialist society proceeded under a new autocracy of Communist Party officials and bureaucrats. Marxism and Leninism originally expected that, with the triumph of the proletariat, the state that Marx had defined as the organ of class rule would "wither away" because class conflicts would come to an end. Communist rule in the Soviet Union resulted instead in the vastly increased power of the state apparatus. Terror was applied without hesitation, humanitarian considerations and individual rights were disregarded, and the assumption of the class character of all intellectual and moral life led to a relativization of the standards of truth, ethics, and justice. Leninism thus created the first modern totalitarian state.

Political Thought

- Leninism supports the creation of a one-party state led by a communist party as a means to develop socialism and then communism. The political structure of the Marxist–Leninist state involves the rule of a communist vanguard party over a revolutionary socialist state that represents the will and rule of the proletariat. Through the policy of democratic centralism, the communist party is the supreme political institution of the Leninist state.
- In Leninism, elections are held for all positions within the legislative structure, municipal councils, national legislatures and presidencies. In most Marxist–Leninist states, this has taken the form of directly electing representatives to fill positions, although in some states such as People's Republic of China, the Republic of Cuba and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia this system also included indirect elections such as deputies being elected by deputies as the next lower level of government. Marxism–Leninism asserts that society is united upon common interests represented through the communist party and other institutions of the Marxist–Leninist state

Social thought

Leninism supports universal social welfare.[[]The Marxist–Leninist state provides for the national welfare with universal healthcare, free public education (academic, technical and professional) and the social benefits (childcare and continuing education) necessary to increase the productivity of the workers and the socialist economy to develop a communist society. As part of the planned economy, the Marxist–Leninist state is meant to develop the proletariat's universal education (academic and technical) and their class consciousness (political education) to facilitate their contextual understanding of the historical development of communism as presented in Marx's theory of history.

About women

Leninism supports the emancipation of women and ending the exploitation of women. Marxist–Leninist policy on family law has typically involved the elimination of the political power of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of private property and an education that teaches citizens to abide by a disciplined and self-fulfilling lifestyle dictated by the social norms of communism as a means to establish a new social order. The judicial reformation of family law eliminates patriarchy from the legal system. This facilitates the political emancipation of women from traditional social inferiority and economic exploitation. The reformation of civil law made marriage secular into a "free and voluntary union" between persons who are social-and-legal equals; facilitated divorce; legalised abortion, eliminated bastardy ("illegitimate children"); and voided the political power of the bourgeoisie and the private property-status of the means of production. The educational system imparts the social norms for a self-disciplined and self-fulfilling way of life, by which the socialist citizens establish the social order necessary for realising a communist society.^[104] With the advent of a classless society and the abolition of private property, society collectively assume many of the roles traditionally assigned to mothers and wives, with women becoming integrated into industrial work. This has been promoted by Marxism–Leninism as the means to achieve women's emancipation

Cultural Policy

Leninist cultural policy modernises social relations among citizens by eliminating the capitalist value system of traditionalist conservatism, by which Tsarism classified, divided and controlled people with stratified social classes without any socio-economic mobility. It focuses upon modernisation and distancing society from the past, the bourgeoisie and the old intelligentsia. The socio-cultural changes required for establishing a communist society are realised with education and agitprop (agitation and propaganda) which reinforce communal and communist values. The modernisation of educational and cultural policies eliminates the societal atomisation, including anomie and social alienation, caused by cultural backwardness. Marxism–Leninism develops the New Soviet man, an educated and cultured citizen possessed of a proletarian class consciousness who is oriented towards the social cohesion necessary for developing a communist society as opposed to the antithetic bourgeois individualist associated with social atomisation

Technology

- The Marxist–Leninist worldview is atheist, wherein all human activity results from human volition and not the will of supernatural beings (gods, goddesses and demons) who have direct agency in the public and private affairs of human society. The tenets of the Soviet Union's national policy of Marxist–Leninist atheism originated from the philosophies of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) and Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872) as well as that of Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924).
- As a basis of Marxism–Leninism, the philosophy of materialism (the physical universe exists independently of human consciousness) is applied as dialectical materialism (a philosophy of science and nature) to examine the socio-economic relations among people and things as parts of a dynamic, material world that is unlike the immaterial world of metaphysics. Soviet astrophysicist Vitaly Ginzburg said that ideologically the "Bolshevik communists were not merely atheists, but, according to Lenin's terminology, militant atheists" in excluding religion from the social mainstream, from education and from government.

Criticism

- Trotskyists claim that Marxism–Leninism led to the establishment of a degenerated workers' state. Others such as philosopher Eric Voegelin claim that Marxism–Leninism is in its core inherently oppressive, arguing that the "Marxian vision dictated the Stalinist outcome not because the communist utopia was inevitable but because it was impossible". Criticism like this has itself been criticised for philosophical determinism, i.e. that the negative events in the movement's history were predetermined by their convictions. Historian Robert Vincent Daniels argues that Marxism was used to "justify Stalinism, but it was no longer allowed to serve either as a policy directive or an explanation of reality" during Stalin's rule. In complete contrast, E. Van Ree argues that Stalin continued to be in "general agreement" with the classical works of Marxism until his death.

THANK YOU