

Class Struggle

“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (Karl Marx, 1848). Consider Marx's views in the light of industrial and agricultural developments in Britain from 1760 to 1830.

Introduction

While things such as the Glorious Revolution, the French Revolution and the American Revolution are important to historians, The Industrial Revolution is more important to sociologists and economists since it was a major factor in the development of new socioeconomic and cultural changes in the 18th and 19th centuries (Pacey, 1990). It started in Britain and depending on the speed of knowledge transfer in that age and time, it soon spread throughout the world in some shape or the other. Within a few decades, the socioeconomic system that was based on manual labour was to be replaced by a culture which was dominated by industry and manufactured goods (O'Brien, 1982).

This situation created a middle class i.e. a bourgeoisie class as main party in whose interest was to gain power over the working proletariat. The conditions also brought to the forefront the idea of class struggle as the foundation of history and the story of human struggle. These ideas were expounded upon in The Communist Manifesto which was first published in 1848 and was written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Fundamentally, the book deals with the program of the communist party as well as the purposes of its foundation.

The book recommends a course of action which should be employed to bring about a revolution from the proletariats against the bourgeoisie. The aim of this revolution would be to overthrow a capitalist system which exploits workers and controls the means of production. The eventual aim of the revolution and of the party itself is to create a society that remains classless. Even though the book was written more than a hundred years ago, it still remains relevant today since the class struggle and the negative effects of capitalism remain present. However, its relevance from 1760 to 1830 is even more important since those were the times that capitalism came to be the shape it can be seen now.

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