

Sos Political science & Public administration
M.A.Political Science II Sem
Political Philosophy:Mordan Political Thought,
Theory & contemporary Ideologies(201)
UNIT-IV

Topic Name-Utopian Socialism

What is utopian society?

- A **utopia** is an imagined community or society that possesses highly desirable or nearly perfect qualities for its citizens. The opposite of a utopia is a dystopia.
- Utopia focuses on equality in economics, government and justice, though by no means exclusively, with the method and structure of proposed implementation varying based on ideology. According to Lyman Tower Sargent Sargent argues that utopia's nature is inherently contradictory, because societies are not homogenous and have desires which conflict and therefore cannot simultaneously be satisfied.
- The term utopia was created from Greek by Sir Thomas More for his 1516 book Utopia, describing a fictional island society in the south Atlantic Ocean off the coast of South America

Who started utopian socialism?

- **Charles Fourier** was a French socialist who lived from 1772 until 1837 and is credited with being an early Utopian Socialist similar to **Robert Owen**. He wrote several works related to his socialist ideas which centered on his main idea for society: small communities based on cooperation

Definition of *utopian socialism*

- socialism based on a belief that social ownership of the means of production can be achieved by voluntary and peaceful surrender of their holdings by propertied groups

What is the goal of utopian societies?

- The aim of a **utopian society** is to promote the highest quality of living possible. The word '**utopia**' was coined by the English philosopher, Sir Thomas More, in his 1516 book, **Utopia**, which is about a fictional island community. Plato's Republic is sometimes considered a proposal for a **utopian society**.

What did utopian socialists believe?

- **Utopian socialists believe** that people of all classes can voluntarily adopt their plan for society if it is presented convincingly.

Development

- The term utopian socialism was introduced by Karl Marx in "For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything" in 1843 and then developed in *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848, although shortly before its publication Marx had already attacked the ideas of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in *Das Elend der Philosophie* (originally written in French, 1847). The term was used by later socialist thinkers to describe early socialist or quasi-socialist intellectuals who created hypothetical visions of egalitarian, communalist, meritocratic, or other notions of perfect societies without considering how these societies could be created or sustained.
- In *Das Elend der Philosophie*, English title *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Marx criticized the economic and philosophical arguments of Proudhon set forth in *The System of Economic Contradictions, or The Philosophy of Poverty*. Marx accused Proudhon of wanting to rise above the bourgeoisie. In the history of Marx's thought and Marxism, this work is pivotal in the distinction between the concepts of utopian socialism and what Marx and the Marxists claimed as scientific socialism.

Development

- Although utopian socialists shared few political, social, or economic perspectives, Marx and Engels argued that they shared certain intellectual characteristics. In *The Communist Manifesto*,^[6] Marx and Engels wrote: "The undeveloped state of the class struggle, as well as their own surroundings, causes Socialists of this kind to consider themselves far superior to all class antagonisms. They want to improve the condition of every member of society, even that of the most favored. Hence, they habitually appeal to society at large, without distinction of class; nay, by preference, to the ruling class. For how can people, when once they understand their system, fail to see it in the best possible plan of the best possible state of society? Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary, action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, and endeavor, by small experiments, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social Gospel".
- Marx and Engels used the term scientific socialism to describe the type of socialism they saw themselves developing. According to Engels, socialism was not "an accidental discovery of this or that ingenious brain, but the necessary outcome of the struggle between two historically developed classes – the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Its task was no longer to manufacture a system of society as perfect as possible, but to examine the historical-economic succession of events from which these classes and their antagonism had of necessity sprung, and to discover in the economic conditions thus created the means of ending the conflict".

Scientific method

- Critics have argued that utopian socialists who established experimental communities were in fact trying to apply the scientific method to human social organization and were therefore not utopian. For instance, Joshua Muravchik on the basis of Karl Popper's definition of science as "the practice of experimentation, of hypothesis and test" argued that "Owen and Fourier and their followers were the real 'scientific socialists.' They hit upon the idea of socialism, and they tested it by attempting to form socialist communities". Muravchik further argued that in contrast Marx made untestable predictions about the future and that Marx's view that socialism would be created by impersonal historical forces may lead one to conclude that it is unnecessary to strive for socialism because it will happen anyway.^[7]
- Since the mid-19th century, Marxism and Marxism–Leninism overtook utopian socialism in terms of intellectual development and number of adherents. At one time almost half the population of the world lived under regimes that claimed to be Marxist.^[8] Currents like Saint-Simonianism and Fourierism attracted the interest of numerous later authors but failed to compete with the now dominant Marxist, Proudhonist, or Leninist schools on a political level. It has been noted that they exerted a significant influence on the emergence of new religious movements such as spiritualism and occultism.^[9]

What are some rules for a utopian society?

- Every adult- mentally stable, free, and financially able male or female must give a certain amount of their wealth.
- There shall be no crime or violence in the society.
- Everyone will be treated equally regardless of race or religion. ...
- Everyone will have access to free education.
- Everyone must attend town meeting at least ones a month

What is utopian ideology

- **Utopia** focuses on equality in economics, government and justice, though by no means exclusively, with the method and structure of proposed implementation varying based on **ideology**. According to Lyman Tower Sargent, ...**Utopia** has an inherent contradictory nature here

What is the ideal utopian society?

- A **utopian society** is an **ideal society** that does not exist in reality. **Utopian societies** are often characterized by benevolent governments that ensure the safety and general welfare of its citizens. **Society** and its institutions treat all citizens equally and with dignity, and citizens live in safety without fear.

What are two examples of utopian societies?

- Brook Farm (1841-1846): The Transcendentalist Romance. Site of Brook Farm in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. ...
- Fruitlands (1843-1844): The Farm Without Farmers. ...
- New Harmony (1825-1829): The Boatload of Knowledge. ...
- Oneida (1848–1881): The Complex Marriage. ...
- The Shakers (1745-): The Simple Life.

The big contributors to Utopian Socialism

- Edward Bellamy.
- Tommaso Campanella.
- Etienne Cabet. Icarians.
- Victor Considérant.
- David Dale.
- Charles Fourier. North American Phalanx. The Phalanx.
- Henry George.
- Jean-Baptiste Godin

THANK YOU