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Comprehension story 8

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow, using your own words wherever possible.

Living in a capitalist society, however, man is not truly free. He is an alienated being; he is not at home in his world. The idea of alienation when Max takes from Hegel and Feuerbach plays a fundamental role in the whole of his written work, starting with the writings of his youth and continuing through *Das Kapital*. The causes of alienation come to have an increasingly economic and social content. In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, the alienation of labour is seen to spring from the fact that the more the worker produces, the less he has to consume and the more value he creates, the more he devalues himself, because his product and his labour are estranged from him. The life of the worker depends on capital; that is, on things he has created but that are not his, so that instead of finding his rightful existence through his labour, he loses it in this world of things that are external to him: no work no pay. Under these conditions, labour denies the fullness of concrete man. The generic being (*Gattungswesen*) of man, nature as well as his intellectual faculties is transformed into a being which is alien to him, into "a means of his individual existence." Nature, his body, his spiritual essence become alien to him. "Man is made alien to man". When carried to its highest stage of development, private property becomes "the product of alienated labour ... the means by which labour alienates itself (and) the realization of this alienation." It is also at the same time "the tangible material expression of alienated human life." Though there is no evidence that Max ever disclaimed this anthropological analysis of alienated labour, starting with *Die Deutsche Ideologie* (1932: The Germany Ideology, 1938). The historical, social, and economic cause of the alienation of labour are given increasing

emphasis, especially in *Das Kapital*. Alienated labour is seen as consequences of market product, the division of labour, and the division of society into antagonistic classes.

As producers in society, men create goods only by their labour. These goods are exchangeable. Their value is average amount of social labour spent to produce them. The alienation of the worker takes on the full dimension in that system of market production in which part of the value of the goods produced by the worker is taken away from him and transformed into surplus value, which the capitalist privately appropriates. Market production also intensifies the alienation of labour by encouraging specialization, piecework, and the setting up of large enterprises. Thus the labour power of a worker is used along with that of others in a combination whose significance is ignorant of, both individually and socially. In thus losing their quality as human products, the products of labour become fetishes, that is, alien and oppressive realities to which both the man who possesses them privately and the man who is deprived of them submit themselves. In the market economy, this submission to things is obscured by the fact the exchange of goods is expressed in money.

This fundamental economic alienation is accompanied by secondary political and ideological alienations, which offer a distorted representation of and an illusory justification of a world in which the relations of men with one another are also distorted. The ideas that men form are closely bound up with their material activity and material relations. “The act of making representations, of thinking, the spiritual intercourse of men, seems to be the direct emanation of their material relations.” This is true of all human activity: political, intellectual or spiritual. “Men produce their representation and their idea, but it is as living men, men acting as they are determined by definite development of their powers of production.” Law, morality, metaphysics, and religion do not have a history of their own. “Men developing their material production modify together with their real existence their ways of thinking and the products of their ways of thinking” In other words, “ it is not consciousness which determines existence, it is existence which determines consciousness.”

In bourgeois, capitalism society, man is divided into citizen and economic men. This duality represents man's political alienation, which is further intensified by the functioning of bourgeoisie state. 65

Questions

- (a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage (02 marks)
- (b) What does the author mean by the following expressions
- (i) "... labour denies the fullness of concrete man." (line 14) (04 marks)
 - (ii) "' It is not consciousness which determines existence, it is existence which determines consciousness'"? (line 60-62) (04marks)
- (c) In not more than 100 words, summarize the status of working man in a capitalistic society (10marks)
- (d) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage, using you own words wherever possible
- (i) Alienated being (line 02) (02 marks)
 - (ii) tangible (line 21) (02 marks)
 - (iii) Antagonistic class (line 28) (02 marks)
 - (iv) appropriates (line 35) (02 marks)
 - (v) fetishes (line 41) (02 marks)
 - (vi) obscured (line 44) (02 marks)
 - (vii) illusory justification (line 49) (02 marks)
 - (viii) spiritual intercourse of men (line 52-53) (02 marks)
 - (ix) emanation (line 53) (02 marks)
 - (x) Duality. (line 65) (02 marks)
- (20 marks)

Spellings, Punctuation and Grammatical Expression (SPGE) (10 marks)

Suggests answers

(a) Suggest a suitable title for the passage (02 marks)

The alienated man

(b) What does the author mean by the following expressions

(iii) "... labour denies the fullness of concrete man." (line 14) (04 marks)

Labour denies man self-esteem

(iv) "' It is not consciousness which determines existence, it is existence which determines consciousness'"? (line 60-62)

(04marks)

it means 'life first' before self-actualization and not the vice versa

(c) In not more than 100 words, summarize the status of working man in a capitalistic society (10marks)

THE STATUS OF WORKING MAN IN A CAPITALISTIC SOCIETY

In a capitalistic society the value of man is centered on material possessions whose values drops with the level of production. It means that as human production increases his diminishes. Over emphasis on material possessions and market production of goods prevents a working man from appreciating his intrinsic value, thus, fails to attain self-actualization.

(d) Explain the meaning of the following words and phrases as used in the passage, using you own words wherever possible

(i) Alienated being (line 02) (02 marks)

Isolated person

(ii) tangible (line 21) (02 marks)

physical/solid

(iii) Antagonistic class (line 28) (02 marks)

Incompatibles groups

(iv) appropriates (line 35) (02 marks)

misappropriates /embezzles/steals

(v) fetishes (line 41) (02 marks)

magic objects

(vi) obscured (line 44) (02 marks)

hidden/masked/disguised

- | | | |
|--------|--|------------|
| (vii) | illusory justification (line 49)
false validation/unreal endorsement/ false authorization | (02 marks) |
| (viii) | spiritual intercourse of men (line 52-53)
divine interaction of men | (02 marks) |
| (ix) | emanation (line 53)
result/outcome/consequence | (02 marks) |
| (x) | Duality. (line 65)
division | (02 marks) |
| | | (20 marks) |

Spellings, Punctuation and Grammatical Expression (SPGE) (10 marks)

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Thanks

Dr. Bbosa Science