

Politics and the Struggle for Power: The Roles of the State and Hegemony

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Abstract

This paper discusses the roles of the state and hegemony in politics, the struggle for power and elections. And that is because, all around the world today, elections are conducted to allow the mass of the people to participate in the political process so as to grant legitimacy to democracy as a process of governance. However, the critical roles of the state and hegemony in peaceful elections are taken for granted by so many people, while many other people are not aware that without the state and hegemony, the state being the institution to construct the hegemonic order that will formalize power, peaceful elections will be elusive and therefore the struggle for power (politics) will be chaotic as the exercise will be difficult to coordinate. Thus, how does the state and hegemony become relevant to the struggle for power, elections and politics? This is the explanatory attempt that is provided by this paper.

Keywords: State, Hegemony, Politics, Power, Elections, Democracy

Introduction

All around the world today, elections are conducted in and by many countries, to allow for mass participation by the people in politics and also to allow interested citizens to struggle for power, so that the people can elect their leaders. However, quite a number of people are not aware that elections with broad mass participation are rather new. They are new because they originated with democratic government, which, according to (Shively, 2008), means that elections came along at the end of the eighteen century.

There is a link between the development of capitalism and mass participation of citizens in the political process (democracy), which makes elections to be meaningful and relevant to democracy. Thus, elections were invented, according to (Shively, 2008), to make democracy possible. In addition, the modern state relies on democracy for legitimation, thereby branding government, an institution of the state, as one by the people and for the people. This is also why elections are used in building support for the system.

Historically, therefore, democracy emerged not because the dominant class (ruling class), encouraged the development of democracy because of their desire to improve the life of the general people nor for human rights and political rights to flourish, democracy developed in a given historical setting by responding to the struggle for power in an economic and social order that was undergoing transformation. (Laxar, 2009). And that was because, in Western Europe at about the seventeen century, a new capitalist society found itself in conflict with the established social and political structure in which an aristocratic land-owning class reaped the fruits of peasant labour. (Laxar, 2009). However, it should be recalled that the feudal society rested on two social classes, i.e the aristocratic landowners and the serfs. Thus, as capitalism was emerging, merchants and other wealthy city-dwellers, together with those small groups that are engaged in small production began to challenge the political authority of the aristocracy, because they wanted a place in the system of state power. In a nutshell, as the modern state is the creation of capitalism, so democracy (elections) rose along with capitalism. (Laxar, 2009).

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From the foregoing, the way democracy, modern politics and the struggle for power emerged, with elections as critical elements, the roles of the state and hegemony are not apparent. Thus, the critical roles of the state and hegemony (ruling class ideas/culture by consensus), in the historical development of democracy and elections are often taken for granted or not realized at all.

It is against this background that this paper discusses the roles of the state and hegemony in the struggle for power (politics). Thus, the paper begins by exploring some conceptual notes on power and politics, after which it discusses politics and the struggle for power. Thereafter, the paper discusses hegemony and the state as they are both related and are critical to politics and power. Finally, the paper concludes by discussing the nature and character of the state and their implications on elections (the struggle for power)

Power and Politics; Some Conceptual Notes

Power is so central to the study of politics that everything about politics or its scientific study, political science, is about power. Hague & Harrop, 2010 describe power as the currency of politics because without power, they argue, a government would be as useless as a car without an engine. And that is because the key political resource that enables rulers both to serve and to exploit their subjects is power. Consequently, the centrality of power to politics makes quite a number of authors to define politics in terms of power. For example, Hay (cited in Hague and Harrop, 2010) says that politics is concerned with the distribution, exercise and consequences of power. Those who study politics and political science are very much concerned with the flow of power around a government and the flow of power between state institutions.

The concept of power is not easy to define, and that is because any definition of power tangentially touches other concepts like influence, authority and legitimacy. However, we shall not be engaged in the clarification of power, or its distinctions, such its connections to other concepts or its structure and elements, all that shall not detain us here. Indeed, that power is the ground norm of political science is an understatement. Gauba, (2003), opines that it is power, its nature, basis, processes, scope and results in society that political science is primarily concerned. To (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950) political science is not only concerned with the shaping and sharing of power, its' *raison d'être* is science of power. Again, power denotes the capacity of an individual or group of individual, to modify the conduct of other individual or groups in the manner which he desires. Power embodies the process of affecting the policies of others with severe sanctions for disobedience. Here, the weight of power is the degree of participation in the making of decisions, the scope encompassing values that are shaped and controlled and the domain of power consists of the persons over whom power is exercised. Friedrich, (1963) says that power is the capacity of an individual or groups of individuals to modify the conduct of others in the manner desires by the individual or the manner the groups' desire. This assertion is also in tandem with the position of (Johari, 1989), who contends that power is the production of intended effects. Power is therefore a possession and, one must possess it in order to be able to carry out some functions. Thus, by the possession of power we mean the capacity to regulate or direct the behaviour of persons or things. And that is why it is argued that power is used to produce certain desired effects. (MacIver, 1965)

Again, (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950), argue that the concept of power is easily discernible in a situation where A has power over B to the extent that A can get B to do something that he (B) would not otherwise do. Consequently, power, in this case, presupposes some level of interactions or relationships between the parties in a conflictual situation. According to (MacIver, 1965), power is the capacity in any relationship to command the service or compliance of others. The ubiquity of power makes the concept to be a complex one which is why (Stokefeld, 2005) says that power is one of the most complex concepts in the social sciences. Foucault, (cited in Stokefeld, 2005) argues that power is not only rested in political institutions such as the state and its institutions or in collective subjects such as the social sciences but it is also dispersed in political and social relations or networks.

Politics on the other hand, is about power and therefore power is the main issue in politics. This is so because politics is about organizing the people and their relationships to others, (Painter, 1995), in the same society and those in other societies. This is precisely because the management of any society is carried out by a complex network or rules, about the regulations, monitoring, management and the direction of peoples' daily lives. (Painter, 1995). Thus, Aristotle observes that man is by nature a political animal, that is, whenever two or more people are interacting with one another they are invariably involved in a political relationship. And that is because men unconsciously engage in politics as they try to define their positions in society and as they struggle for scarce resources.

Therefore, the necessity of politics arises from the social nature of human beings and that is because human beings live in groups that must reach collective decisions about relating to others, about using recourses and about planning for the future. (Hague and Harrop, 2010). Consequently, there are institutions in society that stand for power and authority and whenever these institutions are not in existence in any society, there will be some difficulty in classifying such a society as a genuine society or as a healthy political community, because such institutions make decisions that affect the lives of all, for the orderliness of the society. (Sabine and Thorson, 1973:5-6). Consequently no aspect of human life, in modern times, is free from state intervention. So, you may or may not be interested in politics, but politics is interested in you. Laski, (1973) says that the study of politics concerns itself with the life of man in relation to organized states.

Pollock, (cited in Agarwal, 2004) has divided politics into two parts: the theoretical politics and applied politics. Theoretical politics deals with the origin, nature and development of the state and it involves the principles of political science. Applied politics on the other hand, is about the actual working of the government. In other words, practical politics is about the state in action. (Agarwal, 2000). Thus, Weber argues that politics is the operation of the state and its institutions that involve the struggling to share power or struggling to share the distribution of power among individuals and groups in society.

Asirvatham and Misra, (2008), argue that the study of politics today can be defined as the study of the structure of power in the political system which is at various levels of cultural, economic and political development. And to (Hoffman and Graham, 2009) we need to find an idea that underpins the concepts of state, politics, justice, citizenship, liberty and democracy and the idea is power. Perhaps what makes institutions meaningful is the idea of power. How strong or weak an institution is a function of the amount of power it is able to wield. So, we talk of the powers of the president, the prime minister, the legislature or the power of the police.

The place and role of power in politics is unambiguous. For example, Lasswell and Kaplan say that politics is “who gets what when and how” and Easton says that politics is the “authoritative allocation of values”. Thus, with these two definitions, power is needed to decide who gets what, when and how and power is also needed to authoritatively allocate resources. So, power becomes a means to an end for which power is sought (Mahajan, 2008). In other words if you want to take part in the authoritative allocation of resources, you need to first possess the power to do so. Consequently, in any society, domestic politics is characterised by many competing individuals and groups, all struggling to capture power because they all struggle to take decisions that affect the lives of others. Thus, no society or even organisation, whatever may its nature be, can perform its duties or achieve its objectives without power. (Das, 2009)

Again, there is a basic function performed by politics that clearly brings out the role and meaning of power. This is that politics is the resolution of conflicts. With this function of politics, power becomes critical for two reasons. First, the required institutions to be used in resolving the conflicts must be equipped with power. Second, for the resolution to be effective there is the need for the enforcing institutions to have adequate power to do so. Thus, the centrality of power to politics makes the concept to be so important that there is a special power, called political power, the power that forms the core element of politics; the power that makes politics perform its functions, which is why people fiercely struggle, and sometimes violently too, to capture it. Thus, power is a required possession, needed by a handful of men (those in government and other institutions of state) to take decisions that will be binding on all the population of the society.

Politics and the Struggle for Power

Thomas Hobbes gory picture of the state of nature gives us an insight into how the human society will be without some order. What Hobbes means is that social order is not natural but could result only from the external imposition of power. (Lavenda & Schultz, 2003). And that is precisely because man is naturally selfish and competitive and therefore can only live peacefully together only if they are compelled to do so by threat of force. (Lavenda & Schultz, 2003). It has been noted that social scientists have come up with some concepts that help guide, describe, and explain the orderly inter- dependence of human life in society. Such concepts include politics, power and institutions which are necessarily needed and used to provide for regularized pattern, with the objective of creating a stable social order. Anderson, (1997) says that politics deals with formulating the will of the state, with making value judgments, and with determining what government should or should not do. Politics is concerned with the allocation/distribution of the scarce resources of the state. How do the resources come about? What criteria are employed in and under what conditions do these alter?

For Heywood, (2007), politics is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live. Thus, the existence of rival opinions, different wants, competing needs and opposing interests are guaranteed by the rules under which people live. Politics is the exercise of power, the exercise of authority, the making of collective decision, the allocation of scarce resources, the practice of deception and manipulation, to mention but a few. Again, politics is about the state, institutions, government, political parties, elections, public policy, foreign policy, even war and peace. Indeed, politics is about the ways in which power relations affect human social/economic affairs. (Lavenda and Schultz, 2003). Thus, because people get organized in a formal political system, we take orderliness for granted, which is why we seldom realize that the impact of politics on our lives is much more than we can imagine. There cannot be politics without power, just like there cannot be power without politics. In other words, because of power, there is politics while the nature of politics defines the nature and even the character of power. This is why politics is often defined as the struggle for power or the exercise of power. (Heywood, 2007) So, power is an intrinsic value (everybody wants it) and politics is the competition for its acquisition and retention. (Hague and Harrop, 2000) According to (Turner, 2005) the standard theory is that power is the capacity for influence and that influence is based on the control of resources, valued or desired by others. In other words, few would deny that power is central to human affairs. Consequently, power appears to be a universal and indispensable feature of any social organisation that functions in all political and institutional life of man and indeed, in every social relationship (Turner, 2005). Thus, power is a critical issue in any organized form of human collectivity, in that, "every group, organisation or society must solve the problems of power to achieve its goals or risk failure, dysfunction or even extinction. (Turner, 2005, pp. 1). The struggle for power is therefore inevitable in any social organisation precisely because the capacity to influence others is based upon the influencing agent's control of resources that are desired or valued by the target. (Turner, 2005).

There are two basic characteristics of politics which help to distinguish it from those concepts that claim affinity with it, such as authority and influence. First, politics has to do with decisions, the making of decisions for a group of people within a defined geographical area and the decisions must be binding on all the people within the groups. Second, there is the element of compliance with the decisions which makes it necessary for there to be the use of power by the group that is ensuring compliance. (Shirely, 2012). In other words, politics involves the exercise of power in making decisions and in ensuring compliance. In a nutshell, therefore, there are two things about politics which make power to be very critical. First, power is needed to make decisions and second, there is need to have power to ensure compliance with the decisions made. Thus, politics always involves the exercise of power by one person or persons over another person or persons, which makes power to be the ability of one person to control another person or to make one person to do what the first person wishes. (Shirely, 2012). Therefore, power has always been extremely critical in and to politics. And, for there to be peaceful co-existence and cordinal relationships between persons and groups and in particular to avoid the Hobbesian state of nature, society over the years had evolved institutions with the requisite powers that regularize the conduct of human beings. Consequently, the state has evolved as a set of institutions that are responsible for how a society is ruled. In other words, in every society, of any size, there is some form of organised government, as an institution of state, which has been developed, due to the need for an agency with the capacity to exercise overall and special control in society. (Hunt & Colander, 2008). This is particularly more so in modern capitalist society where the capitalist ruling class needs the state to protect capital and to ensure its growth in the interests of the capitalists. Thus, power and politics are organized by the state for the use of a few (the ruling class) to control and suppress the majority in society. In addition, power confers some advantages and privileges to those who have it and also because, ultimately, power serves as an instrument of domination, oppression and exploitation, and therefore, it is very valuable in any society. This is why (Hoffman & Graham, 2009), say that power involves dominating someone or some groups, and telling them what to do. Thus, since government is the institution of state that is equipped with the power to make policies that are ultimately in the interests of the dominant class and which are used in maintaining the domination and oppression of the dominated classes in society, the dominant class is always conscious of being in control of government, because of the valuable nature of power.

However, in spite of the seemingly oneness of the ruling class (dominant class), there are still competitions for power, and that is because, competitions still take place at two levels. First, there is intra- class competition between the ruling classes and second, there is inter-class competition between social classes. The struggle for power must, therefore, be guided by some conditions to make it peaceful. Consequently, the dominant class, being the class that is in-charge of the institutions for social control, always ensures that the competition (struggle) for power (politics) is peaceful.

But to be able to successfully perform this function, of making the competition for power to be peaceful, the dominant class must be united, cohesive with the same ideology to make them do so through the state. Thus, the dominant class needs to have hegemony in the society, the hegemony that will embody cohesion, domination, leadership and culture, while at the same time have the state in place as the institution that represents and articulates their interests. So, it is imperative that the dominant class must have hegemony in the society and must also ensure that there is hegemonic process. In other words, there must be a well defined process of ensuring the formalization of power and, in addition, there must be a state that represents dominant class interests as well as consolidating hegemony and its processes.

Politics and Power in Society; Of Hegemony and the State

The concept of hegemony according to (Storey; 2001) is used to suggest a society in which, despite oppression and exploitation, there is a high degree of consensus and a large measure of social stability. In other words, hegemony denotes a situation in a society in which subordinated groups and classes appear to actively support and subscribe to values, ideals, objectives, cultural and political meanings which bind them to and incorporate them into the prevailing structures of power (Storey, 2001). Thus, hegemony is understood as a cultural and ideological process that permeates society with bourgeois values and beliefs (Marsh and Stoker, 1995; Heywood, 2007).

To Marxism, two antagonistic classes – the haves and the have not, on the basis of their relationship to the means of production have always dominated any society, in so far as the owners of production are the dominant class and the rest as the dependent class through criminal exploitation. Thus, Gramsci's analysis of hegemony as a subtle strategy of domination in capitalist societies is useful to us here. Gramsci contends that the real source of strength of the ruling classes in the capitalist societies lie in their spiritual and cultural supremacy, focusing primarily on the structures of domination. Thus, private ownership of the means of production is a sine qua non for domination, but not really sufficient for complete domination in capitalism.

To Gramsci, the ruling class does not need to dominate the lower classes by force because they are in charge and they use all the institutions of socialization, such as schools, churches, family, to create a social hegemony (Sargent, 2009). In other words, whenever a class is able to institute hegemony, people will be socialized into viewing the world in the same way that those with hegemony (dominant class) view it. Again, being socialized to view the world the way the class with hegemony does, means that the view is accepted subconsciously as common sense or what is normal or that, which is part of everyday life (Sargent, 2009). Thus, hegemony creates a belief system which becomes part of the life of the people and there is no reality outside it. Consequently, people will accept the structure of society and the existing institutions with the consequent values as the natural order. And this imposition of hegemonic vision is done through a whole variety of super- structural institutions such as school, religion, and the media.

Hegemony, according to (Martinussen, 1997) is a position of relative power which ensures the realization of the essential interests of a particular class. What is important about hegemony is that the realization of the particular interests will not depend on the use of physical coercion. And the interest of the hegemonic class will be elevated to the position of national interest which will be recognized by other classes (Martinussen, 1997). In other words, hegemony stands for the ideological ascendancy of one class over others in the society.

Gramsci argues that the superstructure, in the Marxian base and super-structural model, is made of social institutions which perform different roles but which are aimed at constructing hegemony and maintaining it for the dominant (ruling) class. To Gramsci, the institutions at the super-structural level help in obtaining the spontaneous consent given by the great majority of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant class. Again, the consent derives, historically from the prestige which the dominant class enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production. (Youngman, 2000). And that is precisely because people's worldview arises from their position within the social relations of production and their everyday experience, particularly in the labour process (Giddens, Held, Hubert, Seymour and Thompson, 1995). Also, some of the institutions of the super-structural level constitute the organs of state which are the state coercive powers and which "legally" enforce discipline when consent fails (Giddens, et. al. 1995). Gramsci's idea of hegemony is to make us understand how the dominant class engineers the consent of the people to its rule.

Thus, hegemony signifies political leadership by consent and also how it is achieved by the diffusion of the dominant ideology through social institutions in society (Youngman, 2000). Again, the idea of hegemony refers to a

condition in which a dominant class does not merely rule a society but leads it through the exercise of moral and intellectual leadership (Storey, 2001). Hegemony implies a dominant group and a dominated group with the first group controlling the second group. Thus, there are three dimensions to the concept of hegemony, and these are, the intellectual, the moral, and the political. The intellectual and moral dimensions constitute leadership and consent respectfully, while the political stands for domination, subjugation, force and coercion (Arora, 2010). In other words, hegemony defines the nature of power in modern society and also attributes substantial role to the struggle that can be seen at the ideological, political and cultural levels, (Marsh and Stoker, 1995). In essence, hegemony is about power and the essence of power is for domination (Fadakinte, 2016). Thus, in times of crisis, when moral and intellectual leadership is not enough to secure continued authority, the processes of hegemony are replaced by the coercive powers of the state (Storey, 2001). It can then be argued, based on that same premise, that whenever hegemony is not well constructed in a society, the society then suffers from in-cohesion and instability. And that is precisely because the society will be devoid of a unifying culture and values that will bind the people.

The State

The idea of the state has long appeared in the writings of philosophers and social theorists that there are today numerous theories with regard to the idea of the state. In the ancient times, Plato says that the state is a system of relationships in which everyone does what he is capable of doing. This is the definition/meaning of the state, as far as Plato is concerned, which makes him to say that justice means everyman doing what he is trained to do. Aristotle describes the state as the union of families and villages showing a life of virtue and aiming at an end which consists of perfect and self-complete existence (Arora, 2010).

The church fathers, beginning with St. Augustine, describe the state as “an assemblage of reasonable beings, bound together by a common agreement on to the objects they desire”. And to Thomas Aquinas the state is an instrument that helps man attains salvation by providing him both his natural perfection and material necessities. To Marsilio of Padua, the state is necessary if peace is to reign, if cooperation among people is to be sought and if certain injurious to the health of the state are to be removed (Arora, 2010).

Aside from the ancient and medieval ideas of the state that are embodied in the aforementioned definitions, modern theorists have also given the state a description/definition that moves away from the previous ideas. Starting with Machiavelli through Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and to Burke, the state is described as focusing on the purposes it serves, that is, for what the state exists or for what it has been composed (Arora; 2010).

However, because the state appears differently to different people, as exemplified by the above narratives, we shall adopt, for this paper the Marxian concept of the state which regards the state as the political organization of the class domination in the economy, whose purpose is to safeguard the existing order, like a machine for the oppression of one class by another (Arora, 2010). And we are adopting the Marxian state because the state that we pay so much attention today is very recent. Some three hundred years ago, people did not see the state as we see it today. The modern state and its current meaning is rooted in Europe, when, in the early nineteenth century, Napoleon created a well organized and broad political entity with an active and efficient bureaucracy and army thereby creating and developing the modern state along with the coming of industry and of complicated commercial arrangements (Shively, 2012). Perhaps that was because in an economy, there is always the need to produce, and for that, the society will organize itself into various institutions, methods of work, systems of distributions and exchange.

All these will be put in place in order to generate more and more surplus values, because, throughout history, there is always the effort by man, to generate more surpluses and also, there has always been the incidence of fighting over the appropriation of surplus so generated. (Arora, 2010). Consequently, for the appropriation of surplus values to take place in an economy, various institutions emerged, such as political and social institutions to make rules and regulations (laws). And thus, within a given country, today, the state is always the most powerful cluster of institutions, responsible for making, implementing, enforcing and adjudicating important policies. The state also asserts with considerable success, the right to issue rules, make laws and administrative regulations, all which are binding on the people within a country (Kessenman and Krieger, 2006). As a result, a special relationship emerged between the modern state and economic activities, in that, the emergent complex commercial and industrial activities needed an institution for proper coordination and for the appropriation of surplus.

Thus, the state emerged. The state emerged precisely for that. In addition, the state emerged because it was made necessary by the complex modern economy for two purposes. First, the state now represents politics in order to provide for the mediation of class struggle and second, the state represents power because people can now be more

easily controlled especially more so when a class has successfully constructed a hegemonic process (Shirley, 2010). It is against this background that the Marxian state is seen as a product of class society and therefore an instrument in the hands of those who control the economy and subsequently the society. Thus, the state is intricately tied to economic activities which are the reason why it emerged. Consequently, economic factor is a critical factor in the development of the state and also in our understanding of the history and dynamics of modern state.

It can therefore be argued that the state is not natural but it is a product of specific social processes and political struggles (Painter, 1995). To Giddens, modern state formation was the unintended consequences of intentional activities (Cited in Painter, 1995). And today, the state has become inevitable, precisely because, as a product of historical necessity, it has become a cluster of institutions that regulates the society. Consequently, because there cannot be a cohesive, articulate and functional state without class hegemony, a society therefore finds itself in a condition of flux if such a society does not have a cohesive dominant class with the necessary ideology to institute class hegemony in order to produce a state that will represent dominant class interests, through the maintenance of hegemonic process, especially the process of formalizing power.

Hegemony, the State and the Struggle for Power

Why are we focusing on hegemony and the state in the analysis of politics and the struggle for power? The connection between hegemony and the state with regards to the struggle for power may not be too obvious because the roles of the two in politics appear hidden or at best latent and therefore they are seldom seen as two critical factors in political competition (politics.) Consequently, because political competition (politics), is aimed at securing the legitimation of the domination for the purpose of presiding over the distribution of resources, the struggle for power can be volatile if agreed rules are not followed, or if citizens hold divergent values with no mediating mechanism.

How and what then makes citizens to agree on some given rules and what are the nature and character of the rule-making institution in society? Herein lays the connection between hegemony (citizens' consent and consensus to dominant class ideas and values) and the state (the institution that defines the political community) and the struggle for power. Thus, while rules are made by the state, hegemony ensures that there is consensus about the rules and so, people obey the rules. The need for hegemony in the struggle for power is therefore explained by the fact that hegemony focuses on the complex balance of class forces within society, which means that, it is only on exceptional circumstances will the oppressed effectively challenge ruling class authority (Swingewood, 1979). Consequently, the concept of revolutionary proletariat in the actual historical processes of social change as outlined by Marx is frustrated by hegemony, precisely because, with capitalism the dominant class is so powerful that the oppressed do not see the capitalists (capitalism) as their oppressors because with hegemony, the oppressed willingly submit to the existing conditions of things and sometimes defend such conditions and see no reasons to alter them. Thus, with hegemony, the oppressed become passive and too easily swayed by the ideas and values of the dominant class (Swingewood, 1979). And this is made possible by the fact that class consciousness and class actions are mediated through the dominant institutions (schools, religions, culture, ideas) and ideology of society all that are in firm control of the dominant class. In other words, the social authority of a particular dominant class represents a crucial mediating force in the development of class consciousness. Therefore, capitalism deploys hegemony which embodies domination at the superstructures of society and it is carried out within the economic and political structures of society by using institutions such as the family, religion, political parties, and the mass media, all that control the shaping and influencing human thoughts, including ideas, values and culture (Swingewood, 1979).

Furthermore, some level of citizens' consensus about rules and values is required to make them participate peacefully in a competition, especially, in a plural society where groups differ in terms of ideas, values and beliefs. This condition of relative consensus becomes a requirement because politics (political competition) is about power and the essence of power is for distribution of resources. The group consensus, is what is provided by hegemony which makes the people to identify their "good" with the "good" of the dominant class and which makes the values of the dominant class to be the values of all (Arora, 2010). The task of hegemony is therefore achieved through the exercise of political leadership by consent, carried out by the diffusion of the dominant ideology through social institutions. (Youngman, 2000).

What should be noted is that a system is sustained on the basis of certain factors such as values, tradition, ideas and culture? And what makes this possible, that is, what makes citizens share common values, ideas and culture is hegemony, a process by which a dominant class articulates its ideas which are embodied in interests, values and cultures that are defined by the dominant class as the interests of all in society. (Arora, 2010).

Therefore, the need for class hegemony, hegemonic process and the state in the struggle for power cannot be underplayed because, in the bid to acquire power in any context, according to (Oke, 2001) there must be certain minimal rules and procedures to follow. And this is because the concept of power itself is meaningful only in the nexus of a range of other concepts which jointly define politics, such as authority, institutions, policies and governance. Thus, power, being the goal of political competition, power seekers must obey some rules, even though the rules are defined by the ruling class, and also interpreted by the same class, however, failure to abide by the rules usually leads to crisis and chaos and sometimes bloodshed, (Oke, 2001), and these are possible outcomes of the struggle for power, in an environment where an in-cohesive dominant class is represented by a crisis ridden state and where there is no class, with the needed hegemony to provide a hegemonic process that will ensure the formalization of power.

For the modern state, it is relatively a recent institution in human history which evolved as societies moved from the pre-capitalist to the capitalist mode of production. (Hughes and Kroehler, 2002). Consequently, the modern state emerged in response to the needs of capitalism wherein the capitalists, being the dominating class, needs to control the dominated classes, because some tension exists in society between the dominating class and the dominated classes over the oppression and exploitation that are unleashed by capitalism and for which the state must wield power on behalf of the dominating class, to douse the tension and keep the dominated classes in check. In a way therefore, the state with hegemony, is but an instrument of power. Thus, the state, as the institution that represents dominant class interests emerged to assume dominant class power, since the emergence of capitalism, because, the dominant class needs the state to maintain order and protect the interests of capital.

Again, according to (Shively, 2008), to the extent that one believes that the state emerged because it was made necessary by the modern economic activities, industry and commerce, its emergence then represents politics and power because people could now be controlled more easily than before. This is made possible by the fact that the social institutions of society, responsible for the control and coercion of the citizens are now deployed by the state on behalf of those that control the economy. Thus, with capitalism, characterized by private property, the state of economic development, together with the division of society into antagonistic classes the need for the state became inevitable, in order to protect private property. In other words, the state became a necessity at a certain stage of economic development which created the cleavage of society into classes. Thus, with the help of the state, the dominant class is able to maintain their power over the economically weak classes and they are also able to maintain their domination in society. (Mahajan, 2014). Therefore, the dominant class continues to be served by the state, through the integration of other classes into the prevailing system, which is made possible by hegemony, through social institutions. And with hegemony, the oppressed do not realize that all the activities of the state are geared towards the protection of the interests of the dominant class, in so far as hegemony is used by the dominant class, through the state, to attain and maintain domination.

Conclusion

Thus far, it can be argued that in modern time, democracy is meaningful, in any society, to the extent that citizens are free to struggle for power and also there are regular elections which are organised because of the need to allow citizens equal opportunity to participate in the political process and make democracy a legitimate process of governance. Consequently, because of the valuable nature of power, as it confers some advantages and privileges to those who have it, the struggle for power will necessarily be intense. Therefore, for there to be peaceful elections and for the struggle for power to be well coordinated, and well managed, the state and hegemony are two inevitable requirements.

Thus, the state is today, as it will continue to remain, for as long as the capitalist mode of production prevails, an important institution for the dominating class in society. In other words, in the capitalist society that creates antagonistic classes, a society that thrives on individual and private laurels, a society in which private property reigns and a society where the property class enslaves and oppresses the property less classes, the dominant class needs to have hegemony, create hegemonic order and build the state that will protect property, control society and act on their behalf. (Arora, 2010). Consequently, for the struggle for power, particularly during elections, to be peaceful, especially, in a capitalist society, the state and hegemony become critical and inevitable

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