

MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

An introductory Notes

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I. What is Philosophy?

Marxist philosophy is an important part of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Marxist philosophy is called Dialectical and Historical Materialism. Marx and Engels formulated Dialectical and historical materialism. Lenin and Mao interpreted it in an excellent manner. They creatively developed it. Marxist philosophy is practice oriented and revolutionary in nature. The objective of changing the world in a revolutionary manner and the purpose of showing the way to the necessary practice to achieve that objective are inherent in it. Marxist philosophy is the world outlook of proletarian party. It is also the method to comprehend phenomenon. It unfolds the historical task of the proletariat, building classless society by providing its own world outlook. To fulfill that historical task, Marxist philosophy provides the scientific basis for the revolutionary theory of the proletariat.

The development of philosophy is an integral part of development of society. In the three thousand yearlong history of philosophy, dialectical materialism is the highest phase of development in philosophy. So it should be understood that Marxist philosophy is the result of entire social and intellectual development of mankind as a whole.

What is philosophy? What subject it discusses? There are differences of opinion among the philosophers in this matter. Along with the development of the society and natural sciences and social sciences, the subject matter of philosophy too changed. Philosophy as a science took shape in slave society. Philosophy in those days encompassed knowledge about man himself and world around him. Frequently we see that philosophers of those times used to be natural scientists and the social scientists as well. When sciences and social sciences are in the rudimentary stage, this was quite unavoidable. This situation helped to generalise the knowledge of natural and social sciences. On the other hand it led to the wrong understanding that philosophy is the science that embraced all the knowledge of the sciences and it is superior to all sciences.

As the natural sciences and social sciences have developed in the long process of development of social production, the divisions between

philosophy and other sciences has become clearer. Nevertheless, the understanding that philosophy is superior to all other sciences and embodies the knowledge of all sciences continued. All the pre-Marxian philosophers held such understanding. Marx and Engels opposed such a counter posing of philosophy and placing it above and superior to the rest of all sciences.

They defined philosophy as the science, which deals with the most general laws of development of nature, of human society and of human thought.

This definition of Marxists reveals the organic and dialectical relation of philosophy with natural sciences and social sciences. By providing philosophical insight through the most general laws to different sciences, philosophy contributes to their development. At the same time, the development of these particular sciences enriches philosophy.

The Fundamental Question in Philosophy: Two World Outlooks

Man is an integral part of the objective world (Nature and Society). This world is materialistic. The human being is a thinking being, a conscious being. Man's consciousness is spiritual. Man's sensation, emotions and thoughts comprise the spiritual world.

As we said earlier there is no consensus among philosophers on the question of what is philosophy. But, all the main issues of discussion of the innumerable philosophical currents, schools and systems revolve around one basic question: What is the relation between man's spiritual world and the material world embracing him? This is the most fundamental question in philosophy.

“The great fundamental question in philosophy, especially of recent philosophy, is regarding the question of relation between being and consciousness.” (Ludwig Fuerbach, p 16)

This question comprises two aspects:

1. Which is primary - being or consciousness?
2. Is there identity between being and consciousness? In other words is the world knowable?

Being or consciousness - Which is primary?

Being or conscience, matter or idea, which is primary? Which depends on the other? Which is the product of the other?

“The answers which the philosophers gave to these question split them into two greet camps. Those who asserted the primacy of the spirit to nature and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other.... comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism.” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, MESW, Progress, 1975, p. 597)

“Whether nature, matter, the physical, the external word should be taken as primary, and consciousness, mind, sensation (experience – as the widespread terminology of our time has it), the psychical, etc., should be regarded as secondary – that is the root question which in fact continues to divide the philosophers into two great camps.” (Lenin, Empirio Criticism, p. 315)

Thus the two diametrically opposite world outlooks, Idealism and Materialism arise from the fundamental question of philosophy.

Idealism

Whatever may be the form it assumes, idealism holds that the material world arises out of and exist due to the consciousness or idea that exists outside and independent of the material world. The idealist philosophers described the idea or consciousness that is the cause of existence for the material world as “Soul” or “Absolute Idea” or “*Brahman*”. Idealism lays the basis for the religious faith that God or a supernatural power created and running this world, by upholding that the idea or consciousness alone is the reason for existence of matter or material world. That is why idealism in any form has close relation with religion and Fideism.¹

Important forms of Idealism: Idealism is mainly of two types:1.Objective idealism, 2. Subjective idealism.

Objective idealism: Objective idealism holds that, the consciousness which is said to be the ultimate cause of the existence of matter or material world, is not the human consciousness, but it is the

consciousness belongs to other world - 'Absolute Soul' (*Paramatma*), or 'Absolute Idea' or 'Universal Cause' which is beyond human being, human consciousness and the material world.

All schools of our Vedanta philosophy are of objective idealist trend. They consider *Brahman* or *Parabrahman* as the ultimate cause of the world. They describe the Brahman as an undifferentiated (*nirguna*) and extra corporeal embodiment of knowledge i.e. pure consciousness.

Objective idealism provides justification for the existence of classes and class oppression by showing the external consciousness, which is said to exist outside the material world as the cause of both nature and society. Hence the way to the liberation from the class oppression and exploitation does not lie in the society and in this world. The objective idealism in the form of religious preaching and beliefs holds sway over oppressed masses. They create the belief in masses, that the real cause of their miserable state is not either based on the private property or the class relations but it is determined by the divine force existing outside the society and the world.

Objective idealism that directly provides the basis to religion and religious beliefs has been the main form of idealism. Most of the idealist philosophers, from Plato (427-327 B.C.) to Hegel (1770-1831) and Neo-Hegelians adhered to this trend.

Subjective idealism: Subjective idealism holds that the material world does not have any existence except only in human sensations and thoughts. George Bishop Berkeley (1685-1753) David Hume (1711 - 1776), Earnest Mach (1838 -1916) are some of the representatives of this trend. If one adheres consistently to this trend, it leads him to Solipsism,² the logical culmination of subjective idealism, which holds that world is nothing but the individual's own consciousness.

So, all subjective idealists, ultimately, will incline towards objective idealism to some extent. The founder of subjective idealism - Bishop Berkeley, tried to wipeout the concept of matter from philosophy. He said that external world is nothing but a bundle of human sensations. But, he had to come to the conclusion that it was God who would initiate the sensations. Thus, having started in subjective idealism, Berkeley had taken the stand of objective idealism

The modern bourgeois philosophical trends, such as existentialism, pragmatism and neo-positivism, which claim to depend on modern sciences, though are subjective. These idealist trends will end up in objective idealism in different levels and serve as props of religion and religious ideas.

“Among varieties of idealism, there may be thousands of peculiar shades it is possible to add a thousand and first shade. To the author of this (shade)... its difference from the (rest) ... will seem to be very important. From the point of materialism, however the distinctions are totally unimportant.” (Lenin)

Idealism negates the real existence of the material world. It tries to make people believe that the existence of classes, class exploitation, the wretched conditions of the working masses, the luxurious life of the exploiting classes - all are nothing but “unreal” and illusion. The “reality” is soul (*Atman*), (*Paramatma* i.e. *Brahman*) and they alone really exist and the knowledge about them only is the real knowledge. Idealism becomes philosophical basis for religion. All religions advocate that one should forget about the mundane world and contemplate the other world. The liberation paths such as *mukti*, *nirvana*, *samadhi* that are advocated by religions are in essence nothing but “death”. Religion tries to create the illusion that those desires which are-not fulfilled in this world will be achieved in the other world. The ruling classes utilize religion and idealist philosophy as powerful weapons to perpetuate the class exploitation.

Materialism

Materialism says that the material world or nature exists outside and is independent of consciousness or spiritual realm. In opposition to Idealism, materialism says that consciousness depends on the material world. It says that consciousness is the product of matter. This material world has been in existence, without any necessity of a creator. Materialism stands in opposition to religion and religious beliefs.

Materialism took three forms in its historical development: 1. Spontaneous Materialism or Ancient materialism (BC 7th – 1st centuries), 2. Mechanistic Materialism (AD 17th - 18th centuries), 3. Dialectical and historical materialism or scientific materialism.

Both materialism and idealism accepts that there is one ultimate cause of the whole world. So both of these trends are monist trends despite of the difference that materialism considers the cause as the matter whereas idealism considers it as the pure consciousness.

Is there identity between thinking and being?

Before comprehending more about different trends in idealism and materialism let us see the second aspect the of fundamental question in philosophy

Can human thinking or consciousness exactly reflect the material world? There are two answers to this question. Most of the philosophers say that consciousness can correctly reflect the material world or matter. This means that the world is knowable.

But some philosophers say that human consciousness cannot reflect the reality of the material world. They say that world is unknowable. Agnostics are those who argue that the world is unknowable or reality of the material world is beyond the comprehension of human consciousness. Regarding this aspect Engels said:

“But the question of the relation of thinking and being has yet another aspect. In what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world itself? Is our thinking capable of knowing the real world? Are we able to produce a correct reflection to reality in our ideas and notions of the real world? In philosophical language this question is called the question of the identity of thinking and being and the overwhelming majority of philosophers answers it affirmatively. In addition there is a set of different philosophers – those who challenge the possibility of any knowledge, or at least of an exhaustive knowledge, of the world.” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p.18)

The Agnosticism first appeared in the form of Skepticism,³ in ancient Greek Philosophy took its formal shape with Kant and Hume. The modern subjective idealists - the neo-positivists and existentialists - resort to Agnosticism by arguing that there are limits to sciences in understanding nature and human society and their objective laws Agnosticism says that the world is unknowable, and it tries to conceal the ways and means of rooting out the class exploitation and oppression and thus serves the exploiting classes interests

Epistemology or theory of knowledge is that branch of philosophy, which deals with the issue that whether consciousness can comprehend the objective reality. Whereas Ontology discusses the first aspect of the fundamental question of philosophy

Dualism

Depending upon the answer to the fundamental question, the two possible answers lead to the two broad philosophical trends. But some philosophers held that both the matter and idea are primary and have separate and independent existence. These are called Dualists. By separating the matter and idea, dualism leads to idealism only. The 17th century French philosopher and scientist Descartes (1596 -1650) was a dualist. He held that matter and consciousness exist separately. He held that God is responsible for the existence of matter and consciousness. In the history of philosophy, dualism did not develop much. Its contribution to philosophical development is also not significant.

Question concerning method: Two philosophical methods

For any science, there will be a method of study and enquiry. Following that method the particular science proceeds to observe and study the subject matter in a systematic manner. Without following a correct and definite method no problem of science or any problem concerning practice could be solved. Then what is meant by method? In the process of acquiring knowledge or in the practical activity the correct means of achieving the aim or task is called method.

The means to achieve the tasks, the totality of methods and laws of theoretical study, the practical activity together is called method (which particular method the science follows, depends upon the nature of the subject matter. So, different sciences follow different methods of study and enquiry)

As concerning the fundamental question of philosophy, there are two diametrically opposite views. Concerning ‘method’ also there are two opposite trends: 1. Metaphysics,⁵ 2. Dialectics.

Metaphysics

This method does not recognize the unity of the material world.

According to its nature is changeless and motionless. It also refuses to admit qualitative changes and development.

The metaphysical method entered philosophy during 17th and 18th centuries when capitalism and sciences as well were in their primary stage of development. In 19th century it spread widely. Metaphysics in social sciences nakedly reveals its class character and stands by the side of propertied classes openly.

The metaphysical method rejects to recognise the inter connection between apparently separate phenomena, especially social phenomena. Consequently it reduces the issues related to the entire society into individual, separate, sectional and group issues alone. This metaphysical method obscures the necessity of the unified struggle of masses who exist as different classes and sections. By advocating masses to wage separate and individual struggles to solve their 'own' problems, as separate classes, sections and groups, actually it serves exploiters and oppressors of the masses only. In practice this method prevents the unification and unified struggles of the oppressed masses against exploitation and oppression and against the class system. Thus the metaphysical method is the philosophical method that protects the interests of the propertied classes in particular the interests of the bourgeoisie.

More than that this method doesn't recognise the motion and development of the world, particularly of society. Especially it rejects the development that always proceeds through the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes. Thus it provides the philosophical basis to the social evolutionism that interprets social development as a gradual process that proceeds through the quantitative growth but not through the sudden qualitative changes and revolutions. Thus it tries to perpetuate class rule and exploitation by denying the social development through social revolutions, the only way of real social development in class society. Hence the metaphysical method is always protects the ruling propertied class rule. In fact it born out of the necessity of the development of capitalism and grew with the development of bourgeoisie.

The metaphysical method by denying motion, change and development, it supports the status quo. Though the bourgeoisie does

not accept, just as feudalism gave birth to the bourgeoisie who came from feudalism's womb, capitalism will have to inevitably give way to socialism. For them capitalism itself is "the end of the history". There is nothing beyond capitalism

Dialectics

Dialectics comes from the Greek word *dialego* that means 'to discourse', 'to debate'. In philosophy 'dialectics' is the exactly opposite to the metaphysical philosophical method. Dialectics upholds the unity of nature that means the interconnections between various phenomenon in the nature. It views the material world as in perpetual motion, mutable and developing. It conceives development of the world as the result of the struggle of opposites, the process of old being passed away and new coming into being and the progress from lower level to higher level. Dialectics in the process of its development as a scientific method, took three forms in the course of history. They are:

1. Spontaneous dialectics of Ancient Materialists.
2. Dialectics of German idealists of 18th - 19th century.
3. Materialist dialectics or Marxist dialectics.

What kind of Philosophy is Marxist philosophy?

Like all the philosophies Marxist philosophy also expounds the relation between matter and consciousness and being and thinking. But Marxist philosophy basing on the foundations of sciences arrives at scientific answer to this question. Dialectical Materialism is not only the highest development of materialism, but that is only the consistent and scientific materialism.

Materialism and dialectics are living and inseparable parts of Marxist philosophy. Marxist Philosophy studies not only nature, but also society and human thought with dialectical materialist outlook. It studies the laws of motion, change and development of nature, of society and of human thought. Therefore Marxist Philosophy is a comprehensive philosophy comprising Dialectical materialism and historical materialism as living components with a dialectical relation is the specificity of Marxist philosophy. "*Philosophers have only interpreted this world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it*" said

Marx. Marx thus emphasised the revolutionary nature of Marxist philosophy. Marxist philosophy not only expounds the most generalised laws that explain the development of the material world and resolves the fundamental question of philosophy but also reveals the necessary means to change the world in a revolutionary way. “*While the proletariat is A Marxist philosophy’s material weapon, proletariat’s spiritual weapon is Marxist Philosophy.*” (Marx)

There is no philosophy whatsoever which does not belong to a particular class likewise. Marxism is also partisan, but the only difference being Marxism avowedly declares so. While majority of the philosophies before Marxist philosophy represented the interests of propertied classes, dialectical materialism is the world outlook of the proletarian class. It represents the fundamental interests of working class. It shows the way to all working class to liberate from economic and spiritual slavery.

Marxist philosophy alone can provide scientific world outlook. Most of the pre-Marxian philosophies represented the interests of propertied classes. Because of this reason, these philosophies distorted the objective reality while interpreting it. Proletariat is a propertyless class. It achieves liberation by abolition of private property. To liberate itself, the proletarian interests demand understanding of the world in a scientific way. So, Marxist philosophy while being partisan to the proletarian class, it provides a scientific outlook.

II. History of Philosophy is the History of Struggle Between Idealism and Materialism

Dialectical and Historical Materialism is a philosophy, which inherited all the theoretical and scientific achievements of its preceding generations. So it is necessary to study how materialism and dialectical method developed along with the progress of society and development of sciences. The study of history of philosophy shows the intimate relation of the development of philosophy with social practice.

Engels said: *“Theoretical thinking is an innate quality only as regards natural capacity. This natural capacity must be developed, improved, and for its improvement there is as yet no other means than the study of previous philosophy.”* (Dialectics of Nature, pp. 42-3)

The three thousand long years history of philosophy is the history of struggle between idealism and materialism. Philosophical thinking has started in primitive communist society. Since then the two trends - idealism and materialism have been in existence. Magical ideas and idealism came from ignorance and fear from natural forces. But at the same time, the primitive man realised that the material world was an objective reality. As a result, even spontaneously, materialist ideas were formed, though they were naïve. So we can say that the seeds of materialist outlook were sown in primitive society itself.

In slave society, arose the division between mental and manual labour. Thereafter idealist and materialist outlooks developed to a certain extent. The propertied classes that divorced from labour and production started regarding them as ignoble. Thus started the purely intellectual activities without having any relation with social practice. Thinking without practice naturally lead to the creation of consciousness without matter.

“From this moment onwards consciousness can really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it really represent something without repressing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and proceed to the formation of ‘pure’ theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc.” (Lenin, Empirio-Criticism, p.45)

With the beginning of class society, idealism and religion became necessary for the ruling classes to perpetuate the class rule. Since then till today idealism has generally played a reactionary role. Religion whose basis is idealism always stood as an obstacle to the progress of science.

Materialism always stood as the outlook of progressive forces and classes. The struggle between the progressive forces and the reactionary forces in society has been reflecting quite often in the struggle between materialism and idealism. So far the history of philosophy progressed as a part and parcel of the historical development of class society for which the motive force is the class struggle. Through the struggle between materialism and idealism, the reflection of class struggle in the philosophical front, philosophy developed. Philosophy developed as a social science in slave society. Philosophy's development began during BC 7-1 centuries mainly in India, China and Greece.

Ancient Indian Philosophy

Philosophy developed as a social science in Slave society. From the inception of history of philosophy, there had been two trends - materialism and idealism. Between 7 - 1 B.C. philosophy developed in India, China and Greece.

We do not know anything concretely and precisely about the development of philosophical ideas during the period of Indus valley civilization. But basing on the importance that had been given to various Gods in their religious rituals, we can say that their religion and religious ideas developed from the magic of primitive agricultural tribes. Aryans entered India as pastoral tribes. The *Karma Kanda* performed in *Yagna* and other rituals were also of magic. But, in line with the position of women in pastoral tribes, in Aryan magic women were put in much inferior position when compared with that of agricultural tribes. In the later periods, when the class society got established and growing, we can still see the traces of magic of Aryans and non-Aryans in various darshanas.

Indian philosophy started to blossom between 7th-5th centuries B.C. It was the transition period between decay of primitive communist society and emergence of new class society. That was the period when

old philosophical ideas and beliefs were challenged. Jain and Buddhist philosophies emerged during that period challenging Vedic religion. During 5th– 4th centuries B.C. *Sutras* and *Darsanas* (philosophical schools) appeared. Indian philosophy developed in a multi-faced way.

The *Yagnas* and other *Karma kanda* (rituals) became a serious obstacle to the emerging needs of new agricultural society. Yagna became the symbol of hegemony of Brahminical class. In that period Jain and Buddhist philosophies which advocated *ahimsa* (non-violence) were popular because these ideas would help development of cattle breeding and spread of agrarian society. They challenged the authority of Vedas and hegemony of Brahminism. On the other hand the Kshatriya class tried for supremacy over Brahminical class. Buddhist philosophy represented these interests of new society. It got the approval of Kshatriyas and vasyas.

On the other hand, those who accepted the authority of Vedas also rejected the ‘*Karma*’ path (the rituals like *Yagna* and *yaga*), and various schools which advocated ‘*Jnana*’ path emerged and claimed their source in *Upanishads*. By rejecting karma marg these schools also represented the interests of the new society. Broadly speaking, Indian darshanas could be categorised into two:

Darshanas which accept the authority of Vedas

1. Purva Mimamsa or Mimamsa
2. Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta
3. Sankhya
4. Nyaya
5. Vaisesika
6. Yoga

Darshanas which do not accept authority Veda’s

1. Buddhism
2. Jainism
3. Lokayata

Purva Mimamsa

During 200 B.C. – 200A.D. Jaimini compiled *Mimamsa sutras*. Around 400B.C. Sabara wrote Sabara Vyakhyana basing on these Sutras.

◆ This darshana rejected the existence of God. *Srishti, Sthiti, Layas* are not true. There is no evidence regarding the existence of God.

◆ They have seen Vedic Gods from a different angle. Havis (offerings) in the yagnas is not received by the gods. The sounds of mantras themselves are form of gods. Rituals will lead to results because of natural forces only. So the yagnas and karma kanda were part of “technique of magic.” The Vedic rituals were adopted by them from the point of view of the technique of magic but not from religious point of view.

◆ Mimamsa philosophical school showed the signs of primitive magic and elements of materialism. It had supported the *Yagna* and other *Karma kanda*. This school could not reflect the interests of new society. Hence this school could not spread extensively. In medieval times Prabhakara and Kumarila, tried to justify this primitive magic. They had opposed philosophically the *Advaita* idealism, which became dominant trend in the medieval times. They sharply attacked Sankara’s *Mayavada*. They refuted Nayayika’s attempt to prove the existence of God. Nayayikas argued: As the conscious potter is responsible for the pot, God is the creator of this world.” Kumarila replied: “If God is Omnipotent he must have produced each and everything in this world. If he were to be creator of each and every thing, then potter is not creator of the pot. If potter were to be the real creator of pot then God is not omnipotent and is not the creator of God”. But while attacking *Mayavada* of *Advaita Vedantins*, they adopted a friendly attitude towards Nayayikas. Kumarila said that the ‘*Yoga Samadhi*’ advocated by Sankara’s-*Advaita* (which became popular in medieval times) is an illusion. Pallavas Vishnu Kundins, Chalakyas adopted Mimamsa philosophy. The Mimamsakars fought the *Mayavada* from the standpoint of primitive magic.

Vedanta or Uttara Mimamsa

Vedanta philosophy came into existence by taking Idealist philosophical aspects from *Upanishads* and further interpreting

Upanishads. Badarayana (BC 200) is said to be responsible for Brahma sutras which are the main source of this philosophy. Brahma sutras had many interpretations. The Gaudapada's interpretation, (AD –8th century) became basis not only for the Advaita's variety of idealism, but also for Indian idealism of later day in general. After Gaudapada's Bhashya, Sankara's Bhashya acquired great popularity. It reflected the interests of ruling classes in feudal stage.

◆ Vedanta philosophy unlike Purva Mimamsa took *Jnana* path. It did not reject totally *Yagna* and *Karma kanda* like Buddhists and Jainas. Overall it reflected to some extent the needs of the new agrarian society. Like Plato's objective idealism Vedanta Darshana completely got separated from practice and showed clearly the parasitic class nature. It belittled practice (labour).

◆ Gaudapada in his 'Mandukya Karika' proposed 'Mayavada' or 'Jaganmidhyavad'. This idealist trend, which does not accept the existence of the world even nominally, had become most popular with the ruling classes in Middle Ages and turned into a most reactionary philosophical outlook.

◆ Brahman is true and *Atman* (soul) is true. *Moksha* (freedom) is nothing but the realization of *Atman* or *Brahman*. Philosophically speaking, since it does not recognise anything except Brahman as real, this idealism cannot accept religious beliefs or the gods of religion. But from the pragmatic point of view it accepts god and thus religion.

◆ Since it considers that there is no existence except *Brahman* (the embodiment of *Jnana* or Pure consciousness), this school is called Advaita or monism (which means there does not exist two - consciousness and matter, only one exists i.e. Brahman or pure consciousness).

Broadly speaking, this Vedanta tradition has not become popular when class society had begun to take roots. During that period Buddhism had been challenging Vedic thought and religion. Vedanta and idealism did not reach the stage of domination. In that period the darshanas, which did not accept the authority of Vedas, the Sankhya and the Nyaya-Vaisesika darshanas with strong materialist traditions also developed. These schools adopted the materialist aspects of Upanishads and

developed them philosophically.

Sankhya

The Sankhya was the strong materialist darshan developed from the materialist current in Upanishads. Kapila (6th – 5th centuries B.C.) is said to have compiled Sankhya philosophy. But Sankhya texts are not available now. At present the source of Sankhya is from those who opposed Sankhya philosophy. In feudal age, Sankara wrote Brahma sutras in which he condemned the rest of the darshanas in 43 sutras where as he spared 64 for refuting Sankhya alone. He said that, the refutation of Sankhya is amounts to the refutaion of all other darshanas.

- ◆ Sankhya philosophy begins with the question - which is prime cause of this world? It rejects omniscient Iswar and Brahman completely.

- ◆ Without going into mysticism or speculations, they took up rational methods.

- ◆ They subscribed to the causal theory which is called Satkarya vada or Mahatkaryavada (evolutionism). For each effect there is a cause. As we know the cause from effect, we have to investigate the cause of this world.

- ◆ World is basically material. So the cause of this world is material. Chief cause is nature (prakriti). So theirs is the “prakriti pradhanavada”. The “Prime” or “nature” is material.

- ◆ Primordial nature was in microscopic stage in the beginning. That was Avyakta stage. We can only speculate that. The concept of primordial nature is related to the materialist explanation of matter.

- ◆ This Avyakta is the mixture of three physical elements. Sattva (jnana aspect), Rajah (motion), Tamah (inertia).

- ◆ Replication of Tamas (mass) Rajah (energy) is the reason for diversity of material world. Thus Sankhya with its consistent materialism condemned idealism. It tried to explain the world with materialist outlook. But in later periods, Yagnas and karmakanda is introduced. At the fag end of this period, the concept of Purusa was introduced. As Chinese Taoism is changed into idealism, there were attempts to change Sankhya into idealism. That was why the concept of ‘purusa’ became contradictory.

Prakriti and Purusa are from time immemorial. The world is created when these two combined. World is real. Attaining liberation is man's aim. Liberation is achieved through wisdom. These are the new concepts introduced after the introduction of Purusa into Sankhya. This version of Sankhya adopts a dualistic standpoint with regard to the fundamental question of philosophy.

Sakteya, Lavalisa, Kapalika and Kashmira Saivam, etc. sects of Saiva religion adopted this dualism. Saivam said purusa means Siva and all men are animals. That is why Siva is called Pasupati. The worldly desires and emotions chain the men with this material world. We got liberation with the worshipping of Pasupati

Yoga

Patanjali compiled the yoga sutras. The yoga sutras never rose to the level of a darshan. So it is better to consider yoga as some ancient practices aimed at achieving some super natural powers. Though it was said that the source of yoga was Upanishads, it is evident that yoga practices were existed from the time of Indus valley civilization. These practices are akin to the primitive technique of magic. Early yoga practitioners considered the forces they wanted to get into control exist in the physically existing human body and in the material world itself. So they concentrated on studying the properties of material world and human body in particular. And in the process the yoga contributed to the development of sciences. The ancient yoga scientists studied human anatomy and chemistry. In later days these practices degenerated into hathavada, rasavada and tantricism. In fact, various darshanas and even Buddhism and Jainism contained and discussed the yoga practices. In Vedanta the yoga considered as the means to get rid of the maya i.e. the illusion that the world is in existence and to attain Brahman the pure consciousness.

Patanjali on the basis of Purusa Sankhya compiled the yoga sutras. And thus the yoga sutras compiled are similar to the Purusa Sankhya.

◆ The difference between Sankhya and Yoga is that Iswar was replaced in place of Purusa. That was why, Sankhya was called "Atheist Sankhya" and Yoga was called "Theist Sankhya."

◆ Yoga means freeing oneself from bonds. Yoga is the control of

consciousness through making body and soul undergo rigorous exercises by following yoga's method. The 'Samadhi' concept in yoga entered into Vedanta and Buddhist philosophies.

◆ Yoga has materialist traditions and got influenced from Buddhists and Jaina traditions. Not only that, they penetrated into those philosophies too. In later stage, mysticism dominated this school.

Nyaya-Vaisesika darshanas

Gautama (BC 3rd century) was said to be the founder of Nyaya and Kanada is said to be the founder of Vaisesika. These two darshanas had strong elements of materialism and stood firmly against the later day dominant idealist stand of rejecting the reality of the material world. Like Lokayata, the consistent materialist darshana of ancient India, these darshanas too accepted the real existence of the world. And they tried to device means to understand that reality. From the beginning these two darshanas closely related and later over a period of time they merged to form single darshana Nyaya-Vaisesika. This later day Nyaya-Vaisesika clearly theistic and accepted the atman, but continued the materialist tradition in its epistemology and logic.

Nyaya

◆ Despite of the acceptance of the idealist concepts such as atman the Nyaya did not accept the existence of Brahman (god).

◆ Epistemology is an important component of Nyaya school. They concentrated on the sources of knowledge. They recognised four such sources: 1. Pratyaksha Pramana (perception); 2. Anumana Pramana (inferences); 3. Upamana Pramana (comparison); 4. Sabda Pramana (Veda pramana).

◆ The Nyayiks were the creators of Indian formal logic.

Nyaya philosophers like Vatsyayana, Udyotkara, Viswanatha supported atheism, but later philosophers Vachaspati, Udayana and Vardhamana introduced idealism into -Nyaya philosophy. They used epistemology and the pramanasastra to prove the existence of God.

Vaisesika

◆ Vaisesika is closely linked to the natural sciences.

◆ According to Vaisisikas there are two worlds: Sensory and extra sensory. As regards to the sensory world, theirs is materialistic outlook.

◆ Vaisesikas proposed atomic theory. They say that sensory world is made up of earth, water, light and air. These primordial elements are made up of atoms. The atoms are indivisible and immutable. The atoms are motionless. As atoms lack self- motion, they explained the combination and dissociation of atoms occur because of external causes only, that is due to apparent reasons only. But the ultimate cause for the motion is not apparent. This ultimate cause is only natural but not of any divine character. The atomic theory of Kanada is essentially materialistic. The main weakness of the atomoism of vaisesikas is their conception of inert atom. It proved to be the main concession to idealism and on that basis the creator, the God, the external force entered and made the Nyaya-Vaisesika theistic. Whereas its counter part in Greek philosophy overcame this weakness by attributing motion to atoms remained atheistic.

Jaina philosophy

Jaina philosophy, though it rejected the authority of Vedas and denied the God's existence and had elements of materialism, but basically it remained as idealism. Mahavir was the last preachers among Jainas and he was a contemporary of Buddha (599 –527 B.C.)

◆ The mass that is basis for existence of matter is permanent. The characters and quality change. For example, the earth (mud) is permanent but it will change into pot.

◆ Permanence is as true as change is.

◆ Jainas accepted soul and Karma. Like an oily body attracts dust, Karma is attached to Atma,

◆ Plants, animals, birds and all five primordial elements (pancha bhutas) have life forever. The microscopic matter changes into Karma and enters into living organisms karma will not get destroyed. In the 'non-living state' soul the soul gets liberated from Karma and reaches end of the Universe.

◆ In Jainas' philosophy we could see primitive faiths.

◆ Jainas say that practice of Yoga help liberation of soul.

◆ Though their principle of Ahimsa reflected the needs of then society, by taking it to its logic extremity, they denied the process of production itself. It became unfit for practice. Jainism confined only to the merchant class, who do not have any direct relation with production.

Buddhist philosophy

Buddhism expressed the needs of the then consolidating class society and the interests of the then expanding agriculture more profoundly. That was why Buddhism could gain popularity and patronage of the then rulers. Buddhism had materialist elements.

Gautama Buddha (BC 563-483) was the prince of Sakha gana. He was moved by the inhuman conditions in which the tribal society was disintegrating. The reminiscences of the past society kindled in him the ideas of equality and brotherhood. His concept of Ahimsa and condemnation of Vedic religion and its philosophical ideas were helpful for the kshatriyas who were then representing the developing productive forces. But the concepts of equality were confined only to the Buddhist disciples.

*Buddhism recognised the reality of external world. Every thing is formed after combination of elements.

*It recognised the change. Buddhism preached doctrine of impermanence. Nothing is permanent. Everything is momentary. It is also called theory of momentariness or anityavada.

*If one uses wisdom and sees how things come into being, we cannot say, “nothing exists.” When we see the destruction we cannot say, “it exists here.” Thus they accepted the unity of opposites. But this dialectical conception, though not scientific is different from that of idealist method of Vedantins.

*The Nyayikas said that matter is a combination of some primordial atoms. Buddhists did not accept such immutable primary substances. In fact these are no things at all in the world, everything is a process and property only.

* One important feature of Buddhist philosophy is “Anatmavada” They do not recognise any soul.

* Buddhist philosophy is atheistic, denied the existence of God.

* But they accented Karma, rebirth and Nirvana (liberation)

*Though Buddha took materialist standpoint regarding matter and its motion, avoided addressing the fundamental question matter or consciousness, which one of these two is primary? Thus he failed to reach the consistent materialism of Lokayatas.

As the class society took roots, Buddhist Philosophy gradually changed into an out and out idealistic Philosophy. The Mahayana sect changed Buddhism into a religion and Buddha into God. In the later stages, Nagarjuna (1st –2nd centuries A.D.) peddled Midhyavada of Vedanta as Buddhism. The Mahayana took directly the idealist outlook of upanishads. Thus we can say that, Mahayana Buddhism is nothing but the second stage of Vedanta or Advaita. In fact it was Nagarjuna who laid the foundation stone to Sankara's Mayavada, of course under the cloak of Buddhism.

- ◆ Mahayana adopted objective idealism as its outlook.

- ◆ It accepted Atma. Atma is Jyotirmay Swaroop a i.e. a form of a flame.

- ◆ It amended the Causal theory. The causality applies to only practical things but not to other worldly things. By saying this they revised the most progressive aspects of Buddhism.

- ◆ Nagarjuna said: If anything has cause, it is unreal. Matter is unreal. The world is unreal. The world is Sunya. Thus he founded the Sunyavada theory. Nagarjuna was nothing but Vedantin in the garb of Buddhism. Directly he took Midhyavada of Gaudapada and changed into Sunyavada.

There is one branch in the Mahayana, that is Vigyana vada. This took all the subjective idealist aspects of Upanishads and asserted that only mind is true. It negated all the valid sources of knowledge. They used their logic mainly to refute the reality of the external world.

Thus the Buddhism that originated as a challenge to the Vedas and their authority had transformed itself into naked idealism. The Mahayana became a stepping-stone for the next phase of development of Advaita Vedanta.

Lokayata

Lokayata darshana that rejected the authority of Vedas developed from the non-Aryan Asura outlook which was in existence before the arrival of Aryans. This is the most consistent materialist darshana that developed from the technique of magic of primitive agricultural tribes. It not only condemned the Vedic rituals, but it opposed the Brahminical class, and also Varna vyavastha, the first class society of India. From this tradition the ancient alchemy, anatomy and medical science developed. Lokayata magicians had the scientific knowledge of human anatomy hundreds of years before Charaka. Lokayatas challenged the then Varna vyavastha, which was the class society that was prevailing then. As a result they had to face the severe repression by the ruling classes.

- ◆ They considered this world as real, material and objective. Four material elements (maha bhootas) are the basis of everything in the world. The four elements, fire, earth, water and air. These four elements are spontaneously active due to the motion inherent to them.

- ◆ Only the existence of this world is true and there is no life after death. Thus they rejected the other world and rebirth in toto.

- ◆ There are no super natural divine powers. God is the creation of rich to deceive the poor. All the religious writings are nothing but the fantasies created by some selfish people.

- ◆ There is no soul as such which is independent of matter. The soul is nothing but the matter that can think.

- ◆ The roots of evil should be found in the injustice and cruelty in this world but not in the previous births. The theory of karma is a hoax.

- ◆ There is nothing in existence that is beyond the experience (i.e. god). The human beings could get real (direct) knowledge only through the sensations of their sense organs.

- ◆ But they failed to recognise the role of practice in the process of acquiring knowledge and the dialectical relationship between perceptual and rational knowledge.

The Lokayats targeted their attack on the brahminical religion and its rituals and against the class oppression in the form of Varna vyavastha.

Naturally they were hated and persecuted by the ruling classes. The ruling classes and brahminical religion in particular tried to eliminate the Lokayatavada. All the original texts of Lokayatas were destroyed. The Lokayata is available now only in the form of criticisms and abuses showered on it, but not in the form of texts.

In this way in India from ancient times the struggle between materialism and idealism continued. Here too the philosophy developed in the course of that struggle. Contrary to the claims of Hindutva and its votaries, there existed a strong materialist current in Indian philosophy. It is mainly the deception of imperialist and comprador intellectuals to describe East especially India as spiritual land and West as material. In fact from the beginning of Indian philosophy materialism existed along with its opposite idealism. In the ancient India, idealism never enjoyed monopoly though some are depicting the period as a golden era of Hindu idealism. It had been consistently challenged from both sides - Vedic and non-Vedic darshanas. In the later days even when Vedanta philosophy enjoyed the dominant position, the struggle continued but in disguise. Very often by nominally accepting the Veda pramana the materialist standpoints were elaborated and primacy of spirit over matter, the rejection of reality of the world and belittling the sensual knowledge were countered. So the contribution of materialism to the development of philosophy is in no way less in India.

Ancient Greek philosophy

In Ancient Greece, philosophy reached its heights. Slave society consolidated and city-states evolved at that time. Ancient materialism developed and it represented a democratic section of slave owners, traders and artisans.

The Milesian philosophers, who could be called as founders of Greek philosophy said that some material substance is the basis for the world. Thales (BC 605 -547) considered the elementary material thing was water, and Anaximenes (BC 588 - 525) thought it was air.

Commenting on this explanation of the elementary material of the external world, Engels said: *“Here is already the whole original spontaneous materialism which is at its beginning quite naturally regards the unity of the infinite diversity of natural phenomena,..and*

seeks it in something definitely corporeal.” (Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p.186)

Heraclitus who was later to these philosophers contributed stupendously to the materialistic world outlook. Fire was the elementary thing for him. Heraclitus argued: Every thing is in a state of flux and is ever changing and developing. According to Heraclitus, the world and every thing in it is in continuous motion and development. He was the first philosopher to conjecture that the struggle between opposing forces is the cause of development and the opposing forces will change one into another.

Heraclitus said that, *“This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made; but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an ever living fire, regularly becoming ignited and regularly becoming extinguished.”* Commenting on this Lenin said: *“This is a very good exposition of principles of dialectical materialism.”* (Lenin collected Works, Vol.38 p. 349)

Heraclitian philosophy played a significant role in developing dialectical outlook of the external world Marx and Engels gave due importance to the Heraclitian philosophy.

Heraclitus said that the struggle between the opposites is internal to all things: Everything continues because of strife and necessity *“All things and all properties change into their opposites. Hot becomes cold and cold as hot; wet becomes dry and dry as wet”*. Everything turn into its opposite.

The Greek materialist philosophers - Democritus, Anaxagorus, Leucippus, propounded the atomic theory. Among all, Democritus (BC 460 - 370) was most important philosopher. Lenin said that materialism started with Democritus.

◆ According to Democritus the atoms are the indivisible particles of matter. They are immutable, eternal and in continuous motion. Atoms are the primordial elements for the universe. Things form due to certain form of combination of atoms. It is due to the continuous motion of atoms every thing come into existence and ceases to be in existence.

◆ He discussed the relation between perceptual and conceptual knowledge. Sensory perception is the main source of cognition, but

yields no more than “dim” knowledge of things. Knowledge by reason - is “bright”, and a more subtle knowledge, which leads to cognition of the essence of the world.

Features of ancient materialism: The general features of ancient materialism, which arose as a strong current during the period BC 7th - 1st centuries in India, Greece and China, are as under:

- 1 Ancient materialism was spontaneous. In general these philosophical ideas were great speculations of great intellectuals made by direct observation of the world.
2. In spontaneous materialism the dialectics of objective reality is found in a rudimentary form.
3. Their conceptions were not based on scientific foundations. This was inevitable considering the state of development of science in that period.

Greek Idealism

In Greek philosophy, the pioneers of idealism are Pythagoras (BC 580 -500) and Socrates (BC 469 —399). Traces of dialectics can be seen in the mathematician and idealist philosopher - Pythagoras. Pythagoras and Socrates opposed democracy in Greece. Socrates was one of the chief exponents of objective idealism. He denied that we could know secrets of nature. His aim in acquiring knowledge was expressed by this statement: “Know your self”

Plato (BC 427 -347) is considered as the father of objective idealism. He was a bitter opponent of Democritus. In opposition to Democritus Plato argued that ideas are primary. The crux of his theory is that, the external world has no real existence. Since things are mutable so they are unreal. Ideas are immutable and hence real. He believed in soul and re-birth. According to Plato, we cannot acquire real knowledge through sense organs. They can cognise only temporary and momentous aspects, but can never comprehend the true knowledge.

Plato, the greatest of ancient Greek idealism, like Pythagoras and Socrates also opposed democracy. Aristotle (BC 384 -322) is said to have developed Greek philosophy to its peak. In contrast to Plato he admitted the existence of the material world. But to him matter is a

motionless and inert thing. He recognises the existence of God with the concepts - 'final cause' 'perfect form', arguing that the reason for the notion of the matter is an external one. Thus Aristotle oscillates between materialism and idealism. He solved many philosophical problems with a materialist outlook but as a whole he is an objective idealist.

Aristotle studied fundamental philosophical categories like essence, quality, quantity, causality, time and space. That was why Marx, Engels and Lenin gave lot of attention and value to the theories of Aristotle.

Philosophy in middle Ages

Hand in glove with feudal monarchy, religion dominated the whole intellectual scene in the medieval period. Idealism which denies the reality of the nature and society ruled the roost. During this period not only philosophy but all the sciences too became stagnant. The most of the philosophers stooped to the level of clergymen. Philosophy turned into scholasticism. This state of affairs continued till the beginnings of capitalism within the womb of feudal society.

In India with the emergence of feudalism idealism and brahminical religion attained supremacy. As happened almost every where in the world here too feudal ruling classes adopted fideism and idealism. Idealism with the patronage of feudal royalty thus got the dominance. Sankara's Advaita and Mayavada acquired powerful position as the philosophical outlook of feudal ruling class. The dominance is so complete that the nayyikas (the Nyaya and Vaisesika now merged) who took materialist stand point and rejected Sankaras's Advaita did so only in disguise by showing Veda pramana to their original and new arguments. They fought with Advaita idealism with the pretext of fighting idealism of Buddhists.

Sankara's Advaita: Sankara (788-820) a Malabar Brahman formulated his Midhyavada by adopting the Sunyavada of Nagarjuna. Idealism born out of the breaking up of the relationship between theory and practice. He made it clear that the theory and practice are incompatible. This school clearly reflected the interests of the leisurely ruling class.

- ◆ Brahman is the only truth; all rest i.e. the world is an illusion.

- ◆ Realization of Brahman is the attainment of moksha (freedom).
- ◆ Moksha is the attainment of gnana (knowledge of Brahman).
- ◆ Gnana is not the logical knowledge. The logical knowledge is of no use. Truth is the pure knowledge which is unknowable.
- ◆ Sankara nominally accepts knowledge of Sruti (Vedas) by saying that it has its use.
- ◆ He completely rejected reliability of the sensual knowledge and thus the sensations as a source of knowledge.
- ◆ With the help of the concepts of dream and illusionary knowledge he rejected the reality of the material world.
- ◆ Cause (Brahman) alone the truth; effect (the world) is untrue. This argumentation is called ‘*vivartavada*.’
- ◆ He called sensual knowledge as ‘*avidya*’. *Avidya* makes us believe some thing is in existence when it is actually not and something is not when it is actually in existence. He explained this with the help of famous illustration *rajju sarpa bhranthi* (seeing snake in a rope instead).

Nayyikas questioned this argumentation by posing the question that, if one can see a rope as a rope instead of snake then is it not evident that the rope is actually is and is it not the recognition of the reality of the rope? Meemamsakars countered the dream conception of Sankara. They argued that the things in dream do not actually exist but their knowledge is like remembrance of those things. By trying to explain the experience of dream as the remembrance of past when we are not in sound sleep.

In fact in the Vedanta tradition itself several philosophers fought against Sankara’s complete denial of the material world.

Ramanuja’s Visistadvaita: Ramanuja (11th century A.D.) propounded the Visistadvaita. Contrary to Sankara’s Advaita it accepts the real existence of the material world and it considers it as the manifestation of Brahman. Parabrahman contained two aspects: 1) Achith (the one without consciousness or matter), 2) Chith (the one with consciousness or Atman).

Madhva’s Dvaita: propounded the Dvaita. According to it,

Parbrahman, Atman and world eternally exist and they are independent. But Atman and world depend on Parabrahman. With this understanding he unequivocally condemned the Sanakaradvaita. But by saying that, the difference between contradictory aspects in a contradiction is permanent he supported the caste system and class divisions.

Bhaskara with his Bhedabhedavad, Nimbarka with the Dvaitadvaita, Vallabha with Suddadvaita and Chaithanya with his Achintya Bhedabhedavad rejected the Snakara's Midhyavad and recognised the reality of the existence of the material world. In the context of fighting with the deep rooted Sankaradvaita they paved the way for development of materialistic outlook and thus their philosophical efforts played a progressive role. More than that they prepared the philosophical ground for the Bhakti movement that emerged as a reformist movement in the last stage of feudalism.

Realism and Nominalism

In Europe too philosophy conceded fideism to rule the intellectual life in middle ages. That does not mean that materialist philosophy came to an end. The struggle between materialism and idealism continued, but in a scholastic manner. This strife was expressed in the polemic on the relation between the general concepts and particular objects i.e. universality and particularity.

Idealism as Realism maintained that universal concepts possess real existence and precede the existence of particular objects. Realism continued Plato's line in the solution to the problem of the relation between the concept and the objective world, between Universal and particular. Realism served as the philosophical basis of Catholicism. Prominent exponents of this trend were Anslem of Canterbury (1033 - 1109) and Thomas Aquinas (1225 -74).

Thus the main weakness in nominalism is its rejection of general concepts having a material basis and really reflecting the qualities of objectively existing things. Roscelin (1050 -1112), John Duns Scotus (1265 -1308), William of Occam. (1300 - 1350) were outstanding nominalists in between 11th and 14th centuries.

In our country too, in Middle Ages (Medieval period) a similar situation prevailed. The Sankara's Advaita had become a severe obstacle

to the progress of sciences. Buddhist and Jain religions were sidelined and Hinduism reigned in the ideological sphere. Philosophy was reduced to interpretations of the Vedic philosophy. Even the exponents of new philosophical propositions tried to attribute their ideas either to Upanishads or to ancient philosophies. The intellect of the ruling classes was just confined to the fabrication of fictions and fantasies regarding gods in the Puranas.

Yet, materialism did not come to an end. But, it was not a strong current then. Occasionally it was mixed up with magic, yoga and mysticism. But yet it continued in the oppressed masses locally in various forms. Vemana was an example of this.

Cultural renaissance and religious reform movements began in the middle of 15th century in Europe when the bourgeoisie was entering the historical scene.

Philosophy in 17th and 18th centuries

The rising bourgeoisie growing within the womb of feudalism had to fight against obscurantist reactionary ideas of the feudal classes. The class interests of the nascent bourgeoisie were inextricable with the progress of natural sciences. Religion, which emerged as a very strong feudal force by the end of middle ages had an all pervasive influence and monopoly on intellectual field had to be fought. This was of great importance to the bourgeoisie in those countries where capitalism arose; a revolution began in the fields of religion, philosophy and science as a precursor of Bourgeoisie democratic revolutions. Engels explained this:

“The bourgeoisie had to increase industrial production. Science which explains the physical nature, the dynamics of natural forces became necessary. Till then, science worked as a maidservant to religions. It did not transcend the limits of faith. To that extent it was not a science at all. At last science rose in revolt against religion. Without science bourgeoisie cannot survive. So bourgeoisie also supported the revolt.” (cited by Cleabic, A Brief history of philosophy.)

The Protestant revolts and Reformation started in the middle 16th century was the beginning for such a revolution. Engels said that, it was inevitable in the then prevailing conditions, the political revolution of bourgeoisie to disguise itself as religious struggle.

“The Middle ages had annexed all the politics, jurisprudence - to theology and made them sub-divisions of theology. In this way every social and political movement was compelled to assume a theological form, the sentiments of the masses were exclusively fed with religion; it was therefore necessary to give their interests a religious disguise in order to generate a great storm.” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p 56)

Nicolas Copernicus (1473 -1543), Giordano Bruno (1548 -1605), Galileo (1564-1642) and Francis Bacon (1561-1626) were some scientists who fought against religion, superstitions and stood for enquiry of truth. They laid the foundation of bourgeoisie materialism. Philosophy also developed basing on the progress of the sciences. The evolution of the bourgeoisie made an indelible impact on the development of philosophy.

English Philosophy

Francis Bacon was the first materialist philosopher in modern era. Marx described Bacon as the founder of the modern materialism. Bacon repudiated the entire idealism from ancient Greek to medieval one. He damned philosophy playing second fiddle to religion. On the fundamental question of philosophy, he took a consistent materialist stand.

The basis for true knowledge, he argued, was the perceptual knowledge. He said that, essential quality of matter was motion (he defined 19 types of motion), but he reduced all motion to mechanical motions. The method of understanding the world, propounded by him was metaphysical and mechanistic.

Thomas Hobbes (1588 -1679) developed the materialist outlook much more. He formulated universal principles of materialism on the basis of the achievements of mechanics and mathematics. He applied laws of mechanics to sciences, social sciences and theory of knowledge. He reduced all motion to mechanical motion. In spite of this weakness, in the development of philosophy, Hobbes’s mechanistic materialism was a step forward. Hobbes tried to bring philosophy nearer to sciences.

The bourgeois revolution succeeded in England by the second half of 17th century. But the bourgeoisie did not fight an uncompromising struggle. The revolution ended in 1689. The bourgeoisie compromised

with the feudal class. After usurping power and its consolidation as a ruling class, they did not have any necessity of materialist theories. English materialism surrendered to the subjective idealism of George Berkeley (1684 - 1753) and David Hume (1711 - 1776).

Capitalism first took roots in Holland. The Dutch Philosopher Benedict Spinoza (1632 -1688) upheld consistent materialism. His materialist outlook made the conception of God superfluous in nature. Nature is eternal in time, and infinite in space. Consciousness does not exist outside the matter. Consciousness like corporeality is also a property of matter. Spinoza, refuting Descartes' dualism, asserted that, nature develops according to its own laws and as it is the cause of its own existence nature needs nothing else for its existence.

The growth of philosophy and materialism was mainly linked up to the French revolution. Denis Didero (1713 - 1784), Paul Holbach (1723 - 1789), Claud Helvetius (1715 - 1771) developed materialism. The French materialism was a step advance in the history of materialism. But it could not shed metaphysical and mechanistic methods.

The limitations of metaphysical materialism of 17th and 18th centuries:

1. The Metaphysical method: The rise of Metaphysical materialism, which evolved on the basis of science, was an important turning point in the evolution of philosophy. But this metaphysical materialism disregarded the dialectics of ancient philosophy. How the metaphysical method inevitably grew and it led to incongruity, Engels explains:

“The analysis of nature into its individual parts, the division of the different natural processes and objects into definite classes, the study of the internal anatomy of organic bodies in their manifold forms; these were the fundamental conditions for the gigantic strides in our knowledge of nature that have been made during the last four hundred years. But this has bequeathed us the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, detached from the general context; of observing them not in their motion, but in their state of rest; not as essentially variable elements but as constant ones, not in their life, but in their death.

“...the metaphysical mode of thought, justifiable and even necessary as it is in a number of domains whose extent varies according to the nature of object, invariably bumps into a limit sooner, or later, beyond which it becomes one-sided, restricted, abstract, lost in insoluble contradictions, because in the presence of their existence it targets their coming into being and passing away; because in their state of rest it forgets their motion. It cannot see the wood for the trees!” (Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, MESW, p. 656)

2. Mechanistic method: Materialism, under the influence of mechanics, has reduced all motion into mechanical motion.

“The materialism of the last century was predominantly mechanical, because of all the natural sciences only mechanics, and indeed only the celestial and terrestrial mechanics of solid bodies - in short, the mechanics of gravity had then certain finality, chemistry existed only in its indistinct, phlogistic form. Biology was still in its swaddling clothes; plant and animal organisms had been investigated only in the rough and were explained by purely mechanical causes. This exclusive application of the standards of mechanics to processes of nature and in which the laws of mechanics are, it is true, likewise valid but are pushed on to the background by other, higher laws, constitutes one specific limitation of classical French materialism, a limitation which was inevitable at the time.” (Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 22)

3. Ahistorical understanding of nature: *“The second specific limitation of this materialism lay in its inability to apprehend the universe as a process, as matter engaged in uninterrupted historical development. This accorded with the contemporary level of natural science and with the metaphysical, that is anti-dialectical way of philosophising connected with it. Nature, it was known, was in eternal motion. But according to the view then current, this motion revolved likewise eternally, in a circle and therefore never shifted position; it produced the same results over and over again. This conception could not then be avoided.”* (Ibid, P.23)

4. Materialist theory not extended to study of human society: Their understanding with regard to society is not a materialistic one. They failed to understand that the social existence of human beings that cause their social consciousness. They saw the development of society

with an idealist outlook. They disregarded the role of people in the making of history. This limitation is inevitable as these philosophers represented the interests of the bourgeoisie.

The 19th century classical German philosophy

The Bourgeois philosophy reached its heights in 19th century. The special character of bourgeois democratic revolution and the German bourgeoisie can be noticed on the development of philosophy. While the metaphysical materialists of 18th and 19th centuries adopted the materialism of Greeks, classical German idealists fostered and advanced the dialectical method of the Greek philosophers. Ancient dialectics which was disregarded on account of metaphysical materialism again germinated and got enriched.

Immanuel Kant's Agnosticism

Immanuel Kant (1724 -1804) was the founder of German classical philosophy. Kant, held contradictory philosophical positions. Concerning science, his outlook was materialistic and he contributed to the growth of science. Kant along with Laplace formulated Nebular Cosmogenic hypothesis, according to which the planetary system arose and developed out of a prime nebula. This theory shook the foundations of religious ideology. Some of his philosophical positions are as under:

- ◆ Kant accepted the existence of the material world. Thus ontologically he was a materialist.

- ◆ Nature is in chaos and without any order whatsoever. Man through his thoughts (laws, principles, etc.) attributes order to the nature. By asserting this, he transformed the laws of material world into subjective ones.

- ◆ Regarding epistemology, he is agnostic. He described the world as a “thing-in-itself.” The reality of the external world cannot be denied but man can never know it. “Thing-in-itself” will not change and never turn into thing-for-us. At the same time Kant held that we cognise that world through our sense organs.

- ◆ The most important aspect of Kant's philosophy is dialectics. But the contradictions in the world are not natural but exist only in human thought. Moreover, these contradictions are above any resolution.

◆ Kant developed some fundamental philosophical categories, like cause and effect, necessity and freedom, possibility and reality. But these concepts are not images of the real world. But they are products of human thought only.

Hegel's Dialectical Idealism

Classical German philosophy reached its highest peak with the George Hegel's (1770-1814) dialectical idealism. Hegel criticised Kant's subjective idealism and agnosticism. Hegel's system of philosophy was built up with objective idealism. The material world is the creation of the 'Absolute idea' or the consciousness, which is external and independent of the material world. Hegel's philosophical system stood in support of religion and the then reactionary Prussian regime. But his dialectical method was revolutionary. Hegel held that nothing is permanent in the world; everything is transitory.

"The old method of investigation and thought, which Hegel calls 'metaphysical', which preferred to investigate things as given, as fixed, and stable, and the survivals of which still strongly haunt people's minds." (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p.42)

"The true significance and the revolutionary character of the Hegelian philosophy lay precisely in the fact that once and for all it dealt the death blow to the final validity of all products of human thought and activity." (Ibid, p.8)

But this unceasing change and development are really not in the material world, but these take place only as a result of change and development in the Absolute Idea. *"According to Hegel, dialectics is the self-development of the idea. The Absolute Idea not only exists - we know not where - from eternity, it is also the actual living soul of the whole existing world. It develops itself into itself through all the preliminary stages."* (Ibid. p.40)

These are three stages in the self-development of 'Absolute Idea.' In the first stage, the development of idea takes place in its own bosom, in the "element of pure thinking", i.e. logic, wherein the idea reveals its content in a system of associated and continuous logical categories. In the second one, development of the idea in the form of the "other being", that is, in the form nature, that is philosophy of nature. Nature does not

develop by itself. It is merely the external manifestation of the self-development of the logical categories that constitute its spiritual essence. In the final stage, Idea develops into thought and history i.e., philosophy of the spirit. At this stage the Absolute Idea withdraws within itself and conceives its content in the different forms of human reasoning and activity. Hegel held that his system completed the self-development of the Absolute Idea and, at the same time, its self-cognition.

“According to Hegel, therefore, the dialectical development apparent in nature and history, that is, the causal interconnection of the progressive movement from the lower to the higher which asserts itself through all zigzags and temporary retrogressions, is only a miserable copy of the self-movement of the idea going on from eternity, no one know where, but at all events independently of any thinking human brain.” (Ibid. p.49)

Hegel formulated the dialectical laws of development of nature and human consciousness that is according to him is nothing but the mere reflection of the development of the Absolute Idea. The importance of Hegel’s contribution has to be understood, in the context of widespread influence of metaphysical and mechanistic methods in 17th and 18th centuries.

“The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa; the law of interpenetration of opposites; the law of the negation of negation.

*All three are developed by Hegel in his idealist fashion as mere laws of **thought** ... The mistake lies in the fact that these laws are foisted on nature and history as laws of thought, and not deduced from them.”* (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, p.62)

Hegel could see the development of nature only in space, but not in time. Hegel’s philosophical system stood in support of religion and the reactionary regime. All the reactionary sections showed affinity to his philosophical system, whereas, the radicals gave importance to revolutionary dialectics. Marx and Engels were attracted to his revolutionary dialectics.

Feuerbach’s materialism

The highest form of pre-Marxian materialism is Feuerbach’s

materialism. Ludwig Feuerbach (1804 - 1872) condemned Hegel's idealism sharply and on the two aspects of the fundamental question of philosophy, he subscribed to the materialist outlook. All the left Hegelians including Marx and Engels were attracted to Feuerbach's materialism.

At a time when Hegelian philosophical system and his idealism deep rooted and widespread in the world of philosophy, Feuerbach's materialism arose like an explosion. Feuerbach's critique began as criticism against the Hegel's idealist outlook on the human essence, and his reduction of human essence to subjective consciousness and transformed into a total condemnation of idealism later. With the onslaught of Feuerbach's materialism, the foundations of Hegel's philosophical system began to quake. The left-wing Hegelians, among whom, chiefly Marx and Engels, had gravitated towards Hegelian dialectics and at once became materialists. The sharp criticism by Feuerbach led to the development of philosophy and to the shaping of dialectical materialism. With this a beginning was laid for the placing of Hegelian dialectics on scientific foundations. But Feuerbach could not forge ahead. Feuerbach stopped there itself, because while refuting Hegelian idealism, he repudiated Hegelian dialectics too:

Feuerbach made crystal clear the nexus between religion and idealism. The basic content of Feuerbach's philosophy was the proclamation and defence of materialism. Anthropologism was a characteristic feature of Feuerbach's materialism. Human essence and human being's place in the world were placed in the foreground. But Feuerbach did not pursue a consistently materialist line on this question because he took human being as an abstract individual, as a purely biological being.

In epistemology, Feuerbach recognised the importance of perceptual knowledge. But he did not deny the importance of abstract thinking in cognition. He mentioned the social character of knowledge and consciousness. Feuerbach remained idealist as far as his understanding of history is concerned. His idealism was evident in the study of religion and morality. He regarded religion as the alienation and objectification of human traits which are ascribed to a supernatural substance. Man as it were, is doubled and views his own essence in

God. Thus religion is man's "unconscious self-consciousness." He by no means wants to abolish religion. He wants to perfect it. Philosophy itself must be absorbed into religion, Feuerbach said.

Though Feuerbach rejected Hegelian dialectics, he did not adopt the metaphysical method of the predecessor materialists. He understood the various forms of motion. But with regard to social development, like the metaphysical materialists, he adopted an idealist outlook

Nevertheless, Feuerbach's materialism gave a frontal blow to the Hegel's idealism and helped the formation of scientific world outlook.

Marxist Philosophy

Karl Marx (1818 - 83), Frederick Engels (1820 - 95) formulated dialectical and historical materialism. Marxist philosophy did not develop spontaneously. It was a sequel to the long-drawn historical development of human society, philosophy, natural, and social sciences.

The following aspects contributed in developing Dialectical and Historical Materialism by Marx and Engels: 1. Socio-economic conditions, 2. Growth of Natural sciences, 3. Contribution of philosophical development.

1. Socio-economic conditions: Capitalism gained victory over feudalism in many European countries by the middle of 19th century. In society there was a big cleavage, it was divided into two big classes - namely bourgeoisie and proletariat. Class antagonism was becoming acute. In the beginning, the class struggle was spontaneous. Slowly it became an organised struggle. The initial working class struggles around 1840 shook France, Germany and Britain. The proletariat needed to understand the laws of development of society scientifically and also they needed a scientific world outlook so as to change the society in a revolutionary way. This was a historical necessity. Marx and Engels ably shouldered this historical task. Thus Marxism and Materialist philosophy came into being as a product of historical necessity.

2. Growth of Natural Sciences: There is no doubt that the necessity of developing a scientific world outlook was behind the development of dialectical materialism. But growth of natural science up to a stage is also essential for developing a scientific world outlook.

Sciences grew with rapid speed in the 19th century. They developed to such an extent that Dialectical materialism could be vindicated with the help of sciences.

“In fact, while natural science up to the end of the last century was predominantly a collecting science, a science of completed things, in our century it is essentially an organised science, a science of the processes of the origin and development of these things and of the interconnections which bind all these natural processes into one great whole.” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, pp. 42-3)

Above all, there were three major discoveries, which had enabled the advancement of knowledge of the interconnection of natural processes in great strides. They were:

1) Law of conservation and transformation of energy, 2) Cell theory of living organisms, 3) Darwin’s evolutionary theory.

i) Law of Conservation and transformation of energy: According to this law of Physics, energy can be transformed from one form to another form and it can neither be created nor destroyed. Engels opined that this law is the most significant of all victories of sciences in the 19th century. Engels described this law as the expression of unity of the material world in terminology of physics. *“The Unity of all motion in nature is no longer a philosophical assertion, but a natural - scientific fact.”* (Dialectics of Nature, p. 19) Robert Mayer (Germany), James Joule (Britain), German Helmanov discovered this law in 19th century.

ii) Cell theory: The theory of organic cell concerning the bodies of the living organisms says that the material organic cell is the basic unit of all living organisms. The living cell is mutable too. This theory paved way for the study of development of living organism in correct perspective. Gorya Ninov (Russia), Verninc, (Czechoslovakia), Schleiden and Schwann (Germany) propounded this theory.

iii) Darwin’s theory of evolution: The evolutionary theory of living organisms by Charles Robert Darwin (1809 - 82), an English natural scientist, gave a death blow to the religious theories of creation and metaphysical outlook on nature. He proved beyond any doubt that the organic life is not the creation of God, but it is the result of evolution of living matter. Darwin proved that evolution of human beings became

possible as the organic matter was in the process of developing into more and more complex and higher form. Thus Darwin's theory enormously supported the conception of dialectical development.

"Thanks to these three great discoveries and the other immense advances in natural science, we have now arrived at the point where we can demonstrate not only the interconnections of these particular spheres in their totality, and so can present in an approximately systematic form a comprehensive view of the interconnectedness of nature with the facts provided by empirical natural science itself." (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p.44)

"In any case natural science has now advanced so far that it can no longer escape dialectical generalization." (Engels, Anti-Duhring, p.16)

To say in other words by first part of 19th century, the progress of sciences made possible this formulation and helped prove the laws of dialectical materialism

3. Development of philosophy: Apart from the victories in natural sciences, the triumphs in philosophical thought too played an important role in the development of Marxist world outlook. In the endeavour of shaping dialectical materialism, Marx and Engels studied the history of philosophy thoroughly and they absorbed every thing that was apt and useful to the advancement of scientific philosophical outlook. In fact, 19th century German classical philosophy, especially Hegel's and Feuerbach's philosophy, directly worked as a theoretical sources to Marxism. Thus Engels said, "Without German philosophy scientific socialism would never have come into being." They studied sciences thoroughly. Their participation in the class struggle gave an impetus to their new philosophical formulations. They discarded the idealist aspects in Feuerbach's materialism. They stood for consistent materialism on nature, society and human thought. On the other hand they repudiated the idealistic aspects in Hegelian dialectics and developed materialist dialectics.

Though Feuerbach had materialist foundations, he was chained by classical idealism. *"The real idealism of Feuerbach becomes evident as soon as we come to his philosophy of religion and ethics."* (Ludwig

Feuerbach, MESW, p.601)

Wrote Marx: *“To Hegel, the process of thinking, which, under the nature of ‘the Idea’, he even transforms into an independent subject, is the deminurgos (the creator, the maker) of the real world. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing, else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.”*

“Although in Hegel’s hands dialectics underwent a mystification, this does not obviate the fact that he was the first to expound the general forms of its movement in a comprehensive and fully conscious way. In Hegel’s writings dialectic stands on its head. You must turn it right way up again if you want to discover the rational kernel that is hidden away within the wrappings of mystification.” (Marx, Capital. I, p.29)

“The philosophy of Marxism is materialism. But Marx-did not stop at the materialism of the eighteenth century: he advanced philosophy. He enriched it with the acquisitions of German classical philosophy, especially of the Hegelian system, which in its turn led to the materialism of Feuerbach. The chief of these acquisitions is dialectics, i.e., the doctrine of development in its fullest and deepest form, free of one-sidedness, the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge, which provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter....Deepening and developing philosophical materialism, Marx completed it, extended its knowledge of nature to the knowledge of human society. Marx’s historical materialism was the greatest achievement of scientific thought. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned in the views on history and politics gave way to a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops - how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism.

“Just as man’s knowledge reflects nature (i.e., developing matter) which exists independently of him, so man’s social knowledge (i.e., his various views and doctrines -philosophical, religious, political and so forth) reflects the economic system of society. Political institutions are a superstructure on the economic foundation. We see, for example, that the various political forms of the modern European states serve to fortify the rule of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

“Marx’s philosophy is complete philosophical materialism, which has provided humanity, and especially the working class, with powerful instruments of knowledge.” (Lenin, Three sources and three components of Marxism, Marx -Engels Marxism, pp.69-70)

Contribution of Lenin and Mao to the development of Marxist philosophy

Marxist philosophy considers this world to be ever changing. It stands on the basis of the sciences. So Marxist philosophy also develops with the advancement of society and the sciences. By contributing scientific world outlook to those spheres of knowledge, Marxist philosophy contributes to social and natural sciences too. That means Marxist philosophy never becomes obsolete with the development of society and sciences. It never attempts to confine the development of society and sciences in to narrow philosophical frames. Marxist philosophy is a creative science. It will become a sharp weapon only if it continues to develop creatively. Marxism takes objective reality and social practice as the yardsticks for truth. It opposes all types of dogmas. So it has to enrich itself from time to time in accordance with the development of social life and the sciences. Not only that, it has to struggle against bourgeois philosophy and philosophical revisionism to protect this proletarian philosophy. This philosophy has to be advanced in this process. International communist movement did accomplish these twin tasks. Hence the enrichment of philosophy. Especially, the contribution of Lenin and Mao to the advancement of philosophy is most significant and fundamental.

Marxist Philosophy and Lenin

We know that Leninism is the Marxism of the imperialist era. It is the period wherein all the fundamental contradictions reached their peaks and world socialist revolution came on the agenda. Lenin led the world socialist revolution. He fought a pitched battle against the reactionary bourgeois philosophical tendencies and philosophical revisionism. In doing so, he protected, developed and took Marxist philosophy to a new higher stage. Almost all Lenin’s writings are living and practical examples of the dialectical materialist outlook. Lenin explained the fundamentals of Marxist philosophy as a part of his concrete political

and organisational effort. *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, written in 1908, stands as a milestone in the development of Marxist philosophy in the imperialist era. He unmasked the bourgeois philosophies like Machism, which are, in fact, philosophical versions of political opportunism. Lenin considered the struggle in the philosophical front as an immediate task. The criticisms made in this book, stand as a fundamental criticism of modern bourgeois philosophy. He saved Marxist philosophy by effectively refuting the theories of the empiricists, subjectivists and agnostics (See Appendix -1).

Concerning epistemology, Lenin excellently elucidated the theory of reflection. The theory of reflection, which was explained in the light of discovery of modern sciences, refutes completely all hues of subjectivist, objective idealist and all fideistic outlooks.

“Crisis in Physics” and Lenin: In the last part of 19th century and in the beginning of 20th century, there were great discoveries in natural sciences. With the discovery of Uranium and its radioactive character the understanding that atom was indivisible and immutable proved wrong. With the discovery of electron, the complex structure of the atom came to light. The relativity theory of Einstein and his special theory of relativity brought the relativity of time and space, and its mutual relation and also the relation between mass and energies. All this threw old physics into crisis. Lenin proved that the crisis in physics was due to the linking of specific characteristics of matter with the concept of matter, but matter did not vanish as a general concept or philosophical concept. The definition given by Lenin to matter irrefutably proved that the dialectical materialist outlook alone is scientific. In the light of modern discoveries, Lenin explained matter, time, space and relation between cause and effect and necessity.

As an able successor of Lenin, Stalin lead the struggle on the philosophical front effectively. He contributed significantly to the propagation of Marxist world outlook. He wielded Marxist philosophy as science of revolutionary practice and creatively applied Marxist philosophy to socialist construction and development of international communist movement.

Marxist philosophy and Mao

Mao, like Lenin, expounded Marxist philosophy with exceptional merit. His endeavour to shape Marxist philosophy so as to enable it to be a guide to world oppressed people is great. Mao's study of contradictions and his in-depth analysis in epistemological matters are most fundamental. Mao comprehensively touched all aspects of the law of contradiction, which is kernel to the dialectics. From many angles he made lucid analysis of the dialectical conception of development and change through the unity and struggle of the opposites. Mao proved the unity of laws of dialectics with the analysis of "contradictions." Mao's essay "On Contradictions" is a guide to all, those who want to study the contradiction in the material world. Mao's essay "How to solve contradictions among people" provides an essential outlook on the method of understanding and its resolutions of contradictions among people not only post revolutionary period hut even pre-revolutionary period.

In theory of knowledge, Mao's essay "On Practice" is a fundamental one. In this essay he not only explained the essence of theory of knowledge, but he made clearer the relation between the knowledge and social practice. He gave an excellent exposition of the two stages in the cognition and their dialectical relation.

His comment made during a speech in 1964 on the questions of philosophy that 'negation of negation does not exist at all' cannot be agreed to. His explanation of 'negation and affirmation' unequivocally refutes the metaphysical negation. If we see from that angle, his conception of negation and affirmation will only enrich the dialectical law of negation of negation, but will not repudiate.

III. Dialectical Materialism

“Dialectical Materialism is the world outlook of the Marxist-Leninist Party. Our philosophy is called Dialectical Materialism because its approach to the phenomena of nature, its method of studying and apprehending them, is dialectical, while its interpretation of the phenomena of nature, its conception of these phenomena, its theory, is materialistic.

Historical materialism is the extension of the principles of dialectical materialism to the study of social life, an application of the principles of dialectical materialism to the phenomena of the life of society, to the study of society and of its history.” (Stalin, Problems of Leninism, p.835)

Dialectical materialism and historical materialism are inseparable and living organs of Marxist philosophy. As a part of study of fundamentals of Marxist philosophy let us first consider the principles of dialectical materialism. In Marxist philosophy, philosophical materialism and materialist dialectics are in dialectical unity. Marxist philosophical materialism answers the fundamental question in philosophy and provides a scientific world outlook.

Marxist Philosophical Materialism

Idealism and religion always refuted the reality of the physical world (Nature and society). By repudiating the reality of the existence of the world, propertied classes tried to make the oppressed people believe that their miserable plight, and the root cause of it, the class exploitation and oppression and very existence of classes are all false.

Idealists argue that God or Universal Soul or Absolute Idea is the creator of this world. They further say that birth; development and demise of this world are at the whims and fancies of God. But Marxist philosophy says that the world is not dependent on either human or any other supernatural powers. Nature exists by itself. To its existence it does not need any creator. That means Marxist philosophy upholds the objectivity of the material world. It says that there was neither beginning, nor end to this world which is material. All things from atom to nebulae, from single cellular amoebae to all plants, animals, and human beings -

all living organisms are the multi-faceted forms of matter. In this infinite diversity of nature there is material unity.

Consciousness is the property of thinking matter i.e., brain, which is the highest development of matter. It totally rejects the idealist argument that matter is a product of consciousness. Man's consciousness can accurately reflect the material world. That means the world is knowable. On this basis, it enquires the process of human thought. This, in brief, is Marxist philosophical materialism.

Vindicating and explaining the principles of philosophy basing itself on the sciences is the hallmark of Marxist philosophy. Firmly grounded on the sciences, Marx and Engels explained matter, the various modes of existence of matter, motion, space and time philosophically. Let us first understand the relation between matter and consciousness, according to Marxist philosophy. Later we can study the method of materialistic dialectics and theory of dialectical materialism.

We know that the key question in philosophy is the relation between matter and consciousness and the two diametrically opposite philosophical outlooks are originating from the very question. As long as class society exists, the debate on this fundamental question ever lasts.

“The social origins of idealism and materialism lie in the social structure marked by class contradictions. The earliest appearance of idealism was the product of the ignorance and superstition of savage and primitive man. Then, with the development of the productive forces, and the ensuing development of scientific knowledge, it stands to reason that the idealism should decline and be replaced by materialism. And yet, from ancient times to the present, idealism not only has not declined, but on the contrary has developed and carried on a struggle for supremacy with materialism from which neither has emerged the victor. The reason lies in the division of society in classes. On the one hand, owing to its own interest the oppressing class must develop and reinforce its idealist doctrines. On the other hand, the oppressed classes, likewise in their own interest, must develop and reinforce their materialist doctrines. Both idealism and materialism are weapons in the class, struggle, and the struggle between idealism and materialism cannot disappear so long as classes continue to exist.” (Mao Selected Works,

Vo. VI, pp.220-221)

This struggle continues on two fronts. First - externally, it will be a theoretical battle on the exploiters' world outlook. Second - internally - it will be a struggle inside the party against non-proletarian ideology. The social basis and the extent of idealist outlook is so wide spread that there is always room for these trends to affect communists in the proletarian party too. That is precisely why the communists and proletarian parties should relentlessly endeavour to deepen their materialist understanding and to make their materialist outlook consistent and comprehensive. If they fail in this, then there is every possibility for idealism gets fortified in the party in such forms as subjective idealism, dogmatism, individualism, adventurism, etc. Neglecting the struggle against idealism and idealist deviations in the party is nothing but neglecting an important front in the class struggle.

What is matter?

Materialism says all things, living beings and processes are material. But then what is matter after all? Philosophers and scientists gave varied answers at different times. Ancient materialists thought matter was what they called primordial substances - water, fire, etc., but till the end of 19th century, physics thought that indivisible and infinitesimal atoms were the elementary constituents of matter.

Modern physics discovered that the atom is not indivisible but found thirty "elementary" particles such as quarks, etc., within an atom. Likewise, through atomic explosions, and radioactivity it was found that matter is being converted into energy and light. In this background, there arose many idealistic tendencies which argued that the concept matter is no more meaningful. Bishop Berkeley made philosophical acrobats to drive matter away from philosophy in the 18th century itself. Modern idealists too in the light of new truths declared that the concept of matter is meaningless and matter vanished away. Why idealism targeting philosophical conception of matter since ancient times?

Because, the concept of matter is the basis of materialism. Hence the elimination of matter as a philosophical concept is nothing but annihilation of materialism. Marx, Engels and after them Lenin strengthened and developed the philosophical concept of matter and

defined it in such a fashion that it can withstand any onslaught of idealism, and remain valid without getting outdated with any new scientific discovery.

The concept of matter

Matter is a very broad concept (to say exactly category) it has a most generalised meaning. It connotes neither individual things nor individual properties. That means it is not the individual things the matter indicates, but the most general and universal essence of all such things, right from the atoms up to nebulae, from amoebae to man.

So what is the general and universal essence which pervades all forms of matter?

1. The material world (nature or society), which reveals itself as an infinite diversity of things and processes exists independently and outside the realm of consciousness. That means the infinite things and processes are objective in nature.
2. The objective world acts upon five sensory organs and gets reflected in our consciousness. These twin aspects are the universal and general essence of the whole world. The concept of matter really means only this general essence of the material world.

So the category of matter should not be equated with any particular form of matter, with any form of existence of matter, with any particular properties of a particular matter. Marx and Engels repeatedly said this. We should not forget that matter is an abstraction of the general essence of the entire nature.

“Matter as such is a pure creation of thought and an abstraction we have to account for the qualitative differences of things, lumping them together as corporeally existing things under the concept matter. Hence matter as such, as distinct from definite existing pieces of matter, is not anything sensuously existing when natural science directs its efforts to seeking out uniform matter as such, to reducing qualitative differences to merely quantitative differences in combining identical smallest particles, it is doing the same thing as demanding to see fruit as such instead of cherries, pears, apples, or the mammal as such instead of

cats, dogs, sheep etc., gas as such, metal, stone, chemical compound as such, motion as such.” (Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 225)

Owing to the development of sciences in 20th century the hitherto understanding about matter and properties of matter did undergo a sea change. For ex: Previously science considered only three states of matter - solid, liquid and gaseous; but later research discovered plasma and Bose Einstein states. In the 19th century “atom was indivisible” but around thirty most “elementary” particles found so far. As the new knowledge gets revealed, Marxist philosophical understanding gets refined, its understanding on matter have been never become obsolete. The definition given by Lenin to matter, as a philosophic concept is the most scientific and correct.

“Matter is a philosophic category which refers to the objective reality given to man in his sensations, a reality which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations, but which exists independently of them.” (Materialism Empirio - Criticism, p.130)

Lenin’s insight into the concept of matter given in this definition has significance not only in the development of philosophy, but also in the development of sciences.

1. Lenin’s definition recognizing matter as an objective reality. Thus the changes in the knowledge of humans regarding the structure of matter cannot refute the concept of matter but widens our understanding of matter.
2. It is rejecting all idealist and religious philosophical doctrines by making it clear that matter is primary and it has the existence independent of consciousness.
3. By saying that the material world is reflecting in human mind, it is rejecting agnosticism completely. It provides stimulus to get deeper understanding of world in order to change it in a revolutionary way.

Motion as mode of existence of matter

The world is material. Any thing which exists is matter. Matter exists only in motion. The mode of existence of matter itself is motion. The existence of matter means the existence of matter in motion. Lenin

said that, “there is nothing else in this world except matter in motion.” (Empirio- Criticism) It is impossible to separate matter and motion. To view matter and motion separately is meaningless.

“Motion is the mode of existence of matter. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be. Matter without motion is just as inconceivable as motion without matter. Motion is therefore as uncreatable and indestructible as matter itself;” (Engels, Anti-During, P 74)

Motion does not merely mean change of place. It connotes all changes, evolution and development in the Universe.

“Motion is the most general sense conceived as the mode of existence, the inherent attribute of matter, comprehends all changes and processes occurring in the Universe, from mere change of place right up to thinking.” (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, P 69)

Motion is absolute and rest is relative

As matter is absolute, motion is also absolute. Matter changes from one form to another. Likewise motion also. Never is there matter that is at rest. So motion is absolute and continuous. Then how about rest? Is there no difference between non-living things, which are static, and the movement of animals? If we say that the feudalism existed for two thousand years, are we not saying that society in that period was static (unchanged)?

Absoluteness of motion does not mean that there is no state of rest at all. It is true that non-living things do not have self-motion like us. But we should not opine that they are completely inert. Those, which seem to be at rest in comparison with some other objects, are also in motion. How? Take for example, the stone. It is built up of atoms. Elementary particles like electrons in the atom are moving at the velocity of light. As the earth rotates round the Sun, all the things on this planet are moving with Earth’s speed. This motion may not be apparent.

Let us see motion from another angle. The seemingly changeless non-living things will also change. That is why there are so many changes in nature. For ex: Even the Himalayan mountains did not exist since the beginning of the earth. They were formed gradually over a period of time. There have been so many changes after that. The present location

of the various continents has not been the same. It underwent a lot of changes. They will continue to change. But the changes in living things occur in very long periods of time when compared to the life span of human beings and that is why many of the changes in nature are not apparent to us. Nothing in the universe escapes change, including the stars which include the sun and our earth.

Thus when we observe some things they seem to be static in comparison to other things. The two thousand year long feudalism seemed to be static, but we cannot conclude that there were no changes within that prolonged period. This staticness is relative and transitory. It is important to note that even in this static stage, there will be motion and change. It may not be overtly observable.

So, while motion is absolute, rest is relative. There is no absolute rest or inertia at all.

If we consider the relative rest state as inertia, it will lead to an incorrect philosophical understanding which repudiates change and development. In revolutionary practice it is as important to understand the absoluteness of motion as well as underscoring the importance of relative rest. Those who do not realise the absoluteness of motion of society will become status-quo-ists or pessimists. Those who do not comprehend the relativity of rest will become subjective. As a result of it the tasks they set become futile and plans met with failure. So both the absolute motion and relative rest should be understood thoroughly.

Forms of motion

The pre-Marxian materialists understood the universality of motion. But they failed to recognise the diversity of forms of motion. This failure led to a mechanistic understanding. There are innumerable forms of motion. Engels mentioned basic and important forms of motion as follows:

1. Mechanical form (The relative change of place of things)
2. Physical form (Heat, sound, Electromagnetic, molecular and atomic motion etc.)
3. Chemical form (Combination and dissociation of various elements)

4. Form of Life (Change in life and living beings in several forms)
5. Social form (Development in human society)

The different forms of motion of matter have mutual relation and are inseparable. In favorable conditions the mechanical motion can create heat, light, sound etc., physical forms of motion. Certain chemical processes in certain condition lead to the creation of organic matter. The higher-level forms of motion contain the lower level forms of motion also. For example, organic motion is pertaining to certain mechanical, physical and chemical forms of motion. But it is not possible to change the higher forms of motion into lower forms of motion. The higher form of motion has its own specific laws and specific properties different from those of lower forms of motion.

Upholding motion's absolute and universal character, while taking into consideration each specific character of each form of motion, the changeability from one form to another form, but non-changeability of higher form into lower forms is the crux of materialist dialectics with regard to motion.

Time and Space : Basic forms of the existence of matter

Space: All material things are extended in space. They occupy some place. Their position in relation to the other things is in certain relation. The concept of space denotes this universal character of material things.

Time: Everything has a definite period of existence. It is liable to change and development through some stages or states. As things are transitory, one thing replaces another after some period. Time expresses such sequence of phenomena as they replace one another. In this way things having time period, developing in stages and one thing occupying another's position in succession is called as time.

All things in existence occupy definite space and remain in some time frame. There is no such thing in existence without time and space. Therefore the matter in motion exists only in time and space.

“There is nothing in the world but, mater in motion, and matter cannot move except in space and time.” (Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, P.203)

Space and Time are basic forms of existence of matter in motion. These two categories are inseparable from matter in motion.

“The basic forms of all being are space and time, and existence out of time is just as gross an absurdity as existence out of space.” (Engels, Anti-During, p.)

General features of Time and Space

1. Objectivity: Time and space are objective in nature, like matter, time and space are objective reality. This is the materialist understanding with regard to these twin concepts. They exist outside the human consciousness. Religion and Idealism view time and space as creations of thought or consciousness. They are only basic forms of thought, according to idealists. But some materialists too consider that time and space are mere concepts which do not have existence except in human consciousness. Dialectical materialism holds that time and space are objective in nature. Lenin Says:

“Recongnising the existence of objective reality, that is, of matter in motion, independently of our mind materialism must also inevitably recognise the objective reality of space and time.” (Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, p. 202)

Classical mechanics recognised the objectivity of time and space. But their shortcoming was that they thought time and space are self-dependent and exist independently of matter in motion. They also held that they are absolute. But Albert Einstein (1879-1955), a German physicist propounded the theory of relativity. It revolutionised the old understanding of space and time of mechanists exploding the view that they are absolute. This theory proved beyond any doubt, the inseparable relationship between motion of matter and forms existence of matter i.e., time and space; the properties of matter time and space are relative as they depend upon its velocity. Einstein postulated that quantum time depends on the movement of a system. Special scales are also subject to change. The conclusions are in complete conformity with dialectical materialism. They enriched dialectical materialism.

2. Space and Time are permanent and infinite: Space and time are basic forms of existence. Like matter is permanent even space and time too. They have neither beginning nor an end.

3. Dimension: With regard to dimension there is difference between time and space. Space has three dimensions - length, breadth and height. Anything occupies some space and while doing so, it extends in three dimensions. Thereby things can move in three directions. But time is uni-dimensional. It follows from past to future only. This direction is irreversible. That is why it is impossible to revert to the past stages of a thing or society. The failure of all those who tried to revert to the past stages of society failed to do so due to this reason.

In practical activity, dialectical materialistic understanding of time and space has lot of significance. Revolutionary activity should be shaped in accordance with time and space. Revolutionary theory should be developed creatively taking time and space into consideration and we have to discard outdated aspects. Otherwise theory becomes dogma. When Lenin said, dialectical materialism is the “*concrete analysis of concrete conditions,*” – the understanding of concrete conditions of anything depends upon the study of the conditions in definite time and space frameworks. The theoretical and revolutionary practice of Lenin, Stalin and Mao, as true inheritors of Marx and Engels, stand as examples of such creativity.

Consciousness is the reflection of objective reality in the human thought

Human being is a thinking being. Human brain is the organ of thought. Thought is a living activity and a function of the brain. So the human consciousness is the property of that matter, brain. That does not mean that thoughts originate from the brain automatically. The material world is reflected in human consciousness. The external world gets reflected in our consciousness through sensations. The source for all thoughts is external world. The brain itself is matter, whose function is thinking. So matter is the source for thoughts or consciousness.

“It is impossible to imagine consciousness without matter. If sensation exists without matter, then thought exists without a brain- a brainless philosophy!” (Lenin, Empirio-criticism, p.39)

See how Lenin explained that matter is primary, “*Natural science positively asserts that the earth once existed in such a state that no man or any other creature existed or could have existed on it. Organic*

matter is later phenomenon, the fruit of a long evolution.” (Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, Pp. 75-76) *“Matter is primary...sensation, thought and consciousness are the highest products of matter.”* (Ibid. While saying that consciousness is the function of brain, which itself is the highest product of matter Engels said this:

“Our consciousness and thinking, however suprasensuous they may seem, are the product of a material, bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of mind, but mind itself is merely the highest product of matter, of course this is pure materialism.” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, p 21)

If matter is the source of consciousness, does it mean that consciousness itself is a form of matter? No! Considering consciousness as a form of matter equates the mind and matter, that is what the idealism stand for *“world and ideas about the world are one and the same thing.”* Lenin called them vulgar materialists who do not see the difference between matter and consciousness.

Can consciousness be considered as a property of matter as a whole? If yes, we can not find the difference between living and non-living matter. Especially it will amount to repudiating the uniqueness of the human brain - which is the highest product of matter and is a highly developed structure.

Criticizing Dietzgen⁴ who favoured broadening of the concept of matter to embrace the human thought, Lenin stated this: *“If such an inclusion is made, the epistemological contrast between mind and matter, idealism and materialism, a contrast upon which Dietzgen himself insists, losses all meaning”* (Empirio-criticism, p.p. 244-45)

The theory of Reflection:

Consciousness is the highest form of reflection

What do we mean when we say that the objective reality gets reflected in our consciousness? Is this reflection a characteristic of human beings, or of living matter? What does this ‘reflection’ really mean?

Things reflect in water. We leave our footprints on the ground as we walk. The environment is reflected in the rusting of iron. In this manner, all things in the physical world are reflected in each other and these reflections are of various forms. Thus these impressions that an

object casts on others or the changes that are caused are called reflections. *“It is logical to say that all matter has a property called reflection which is basically similar to sensory perception.”* (Ibid.)

In living beings reflection is in complex forms. Due to these reflections branches grow towards sunlight, the roots towards the earth. These reflections are very important for living organisms for their life processes: Reflection is an important aspect for organisms in their relationship with the environment. It plays a key role for organisms in their adaptation to the environment and to restructure themselves by rejecting that which is harmful, accepting that which is useful.

In the process of evolution of life it became possible to higher organisms, which had developed sensory organs and nervous system, to reflect the environment in a multifaceted way and to behave in accordance with the environment. The highly developed animals, despite of reflecting the environment, act upon the environment and change it too. As a result of recurrence of same reflections, to some animals it became possible to prepare for such occurrences in advance in expectance of them. Many types of insects through recognising the change of pressure in the environment can grasp that it is going to rain; prepare to face it in advance and look for shelter. Organisms acquire these instincts by birth naturally. Several natural reflexes together form as instincts. Instincts play a crucial role in the behaviour of an organism.

Organism acquires unconditioned reflexes hereditarily. They represent the stable and permanent relations and connections of an organism with its environment. Organism, apart from these unconditioned reflexes acquires some other reflexes within its lifetime, in the process of its own relations and connections with the environment. These reflexes are called as conditioned reflexes. These conditioned reflexes play an important role especially in the higher animals in their relations and connections with the environment and in remoulding of their life according to their environment. The research work of Pavlov, a great Russian scientist, brought these conditioned reflexes into light. Pavlov experimented with a dog by ringing a bell just before serving it food. After some time, even without serving food just by hearing the sound of bell the dog used to salivate. Salivating by seeing food is an unconditioned reflex. But here, as the sound of bell became a symbol

of food, with the mere ringing of bell itself the dog salivated. This reflex is not unconditioned reflex. This is a conditioned reflex, acquired by the dog in the process of its relations with its environment.

But, these conditioned reflexes are like unconditioned reflexes neither hereditary nor permanent. If the habit of ringing bell before serving food gave up, after some time this reflex ceases. So the unconditioned reflexes are the reflexes that an organism acquire through its temporary relations and connections with its environment. When the conditions caused to the formation of such reflexes changes they too cease.

In this way the body mechanism, which gets sensations through external stimuli is called as the First Signal System. The stimuli of things or processes create reflexes through this mechanism in the living beings. It means that things or processes by acting on the sense organs of animal through its nervous system create sensations in it. (Ex. With the sound of bell the dog salivating) Animals know this type of signals only.

As far as these signals and sensations are concerned human being is equal to other higher animals. But humans learned to generalise and conceptualise these sensory perceptions, i.e. they developed abstract thinking. Abstract thinking is always expressed only through language. Human thinking is possible only through language. In this sense only human being is the thinking organism. Consciousness means, only human consciousness.

Words are the signals, which denote objects and processes in an abstract manner. Words are always linked up with objects and processes. Words are the signals to the first signals caused by external stimuli. The body mechanism that stimulates the reflexes with words and conversations in humans is called the second signal system. Human beings alone have the second signal system.

The first signal system always related with particular things or processes. Whereas the words and language that stand as the signals to first signals indicate the things in abstract manner. Words and language formed by grasping the general characteristics of things and generalising them. Abstract thinking is the specific characteristic of human beings alone.

Labour : Consciousness and Language

In the transition of humans from animal stage to that of a social human beings labour played a key role. Human consciousness has always been social. Human being who naturally acquires instinctual animal mentality, developed into a conscious being through social life only. In the process of labour man learnt to generalise, man had to generalise about objects and processes and to communicate the ideas thus formed while performing collective labour. Thus language became a necessity.

“Language is as old as consciousness. Language is real and practical consciousness which exists for others as well. Language, like consciousness, emerges only because of necessity and need to interact and have relations with other human beings.” (Marx - Engels Selected Works V, p.43-44)

Like consciousness language is also developed socially. Through language words and conversations human ideas and opinions take a physical form. Language that does not have a relation with consciousness is meaningless. In fact there is no such language. Language and consciousness have a mutual relationship and have developed along with the historical development of society.

“Consciousness is nothing but conscious existence, existence of human beings means their actual life – process.” (German Ideology)

So far we have seen that matter is the basis for consciousness and its development. Then, can consciousness affect matter? Yes, if consciousness correctly reflects matter, it can act as a guide for human efforts to change society and matter. In that sense we can say that consciousness can influence, change and create matter. For example, by understanding the cause of thunderbolt human beings invented the device to protect themselves from its destructive effects.

The proletariat by formulating Marxism created its theoretical weapon and guide to social revolution. When we are saying that, *“When revolutionary theory grips the masses it becomes a material force,”* it implies that we are recognizing the active role of consciousness. It means dialectical materialism does not reject the active role of consciousness

Marxist Dialectics

Philosophical materialism, materialist dialectics are the two sides of Marxist philosophy. They are inseparably intertwined with each other. While philosophical materialism provides the basis for materialist world outlook, materialist dialectics is the method for its world outlook. Therefore materialist dialectics is the method of observing and understanding of nature and society.

What is Marxist dialectics?

Engels in one context defined it as the science of interconnection between things in the world. *“The general nature of dialectics to be developed as the science of interconnections, in contrast to metaphysics.”* (Engels, Dialectics of Nature p. 62)

In another context, he defined dialectics like this: *“In fact dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought.”* (Engels, Anti-Duhring, p. 180)

Is it proper to define dialectics in two different ways? Dialectical materialism tries to understand the world as it is. In nature and human society there is unity among innumerable phenomena, which appear as isolated things and processes. They are interconnected and are in motion because of mutual interaction, influences and interface of action and reaction. These two definitions of Engels express the two sides of fundamental nature of the world. So there is no contradiction between these two definitions. What does this indicate? Dialectics, is the general science of laws of motion and development of matter (nature & society) which is objectively real and having interconnections. Marxist dialectics is materialist. It does not foist laws on nature. It discovers the objective laws operating in the objective world. Therefore, Marxian dialectics considers dialectical thought as the reflection of objective dialectics in nature.

“Dialectics, so called objective dialectics, prevails through out nature. The so called subjective dialectics, dialectical thought, is only the reflection of the motion..., asserts itself every where in nature.” (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, p. 211)

“...there could be no question of superimposing the laws of dialectics on nature but of discovering them in it and developing them from it.” (Engels, Anti-Duhring, p.13)

Therefore subjective dialectics or dialectical thought is nothing but the reflection of objective dialectics. Dialectical thought and objective thought are similar in their essence. That means the fundamental laws and categories of objective dialectics will be the dialectical laws and categories concerning being and thought.

“This indicates that how much the laws of objective dialectics apply to the motion of nature and human society, they apply to motion in thought too.” (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, p.139)

So, the most general laws of motion and development are same for nature, society and human thought. Lenin asserted that the logic/Marxist philosophy and theory of knowledge is materialist dialectics only. He said dialectics is the “soul” of Marxism. Mentioning importance of materialist dialectics, he described its role in providing a basis to basics of sciences.

“The application of materialist dialectics to the elaboration of all politics, economics from its foundation, to history, natural science, philosophy and the policy and tactics of the working class - that is what interested Marx and Engels above all. In such applying they made new and fundamental contributions. This is the wonderful progress they made in the history of revolutionary thinking.” (Lenin)

There was historical justification to the development of the metaphysical method during 17th and 18th centuries. That method to a certain extent contributed to the growth of sciences. The development of sciences during the 19th and 20th centuries proved the incorrectness of metaphysical method.

“And in fact, while natural science up to the end of the last century was predominantly a collecting science, a science of finished things, in our century it is essentially a systematising science, a science of the processes, of the origin and development of these things and of the interconnection which binds all these natural processes into one great whole.” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, MESW, p.610)

“The new physics, having found new kinds of matter and new forms

of its motion, raised the old philosophical questions because of the collapse of the old physical concepts.” (Lenin, Empirio-criticism, p.279)

“... dialectical materialism insists on the approximate, relative character of every scientific theory of the structure of matter and its properties; it insists on the absence of absolute boundaries in nature, on the transformation of moving matter from one state into another, that from our point of view is apparently irreconcilable with it, and so forth.” (Ibid, p.261)

“Modern physics is in travail; it is giving birth to dialectical materialism.” (Ibid, p.313)

“Today, when one needs to comprehend the results of natural scientific investigation only dialectically, that is, in the sense of their own interconnection, in order to arrive at a “system of nature” sufficient for our time; when the dialectical character of their interconnection is forcing itself against their will even into the metaphysically-trained minds of the natural scientists ... ” (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, MESW, p.611)

Then, why the metaphysical method is so deep rooted everywhere, especially in the investigation of social issues?

“In its rational form it is a scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors, because it includes in its comprehension and affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, of its inevitable breaking up; because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence; because it lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary.” (Marx, Capital, Vol. I. p.29)

So, bourgeoisie will not only follow that metaphysical method, but also continue to pour venom on materialist dialectics. Till a classless society is established, the struggle with metaphysical method has to be continued. Various reformist trends are like feminism and Dalitism etc, demand separate solutions to the different social problems. They tried to counter pose their movements with social revolution. In that process, knowingly or unknowingly they will take side with the ruling classes.

Dialectics is the science of interconnections. It is also the science of the general laws of motion and development of the world that exists as a unity through its interconnections. Before studying the laws of dialectics, let us see the two aspects - viz., dialectics as science of interconnections and dialectics as a theory of motion and development. These two aspects should be considered as basic principles of dialectics.

Dialectics as Science of Interconnections

This world consists of innumerable things and processes, and they are quite diverse. These things and processes which have separate entity, in fact are not completely independent of one another. We can see this in our daily life. Take the example of a peasant. All his productive activities are closely connected with changes in monsoon, variations in atmosphere and the nature of soil, etc. In what circumstances which crops had to be grown, the peasant is well aware of. Without understanding the interconnection of seemingly separate things and process - we cannot do cultivation. Not just cultivation, we cannot pursue any practical activity

According to dialectics mutual relations are universal. Interconnection comprises of the interaction of action and reaction. Owing to this interaction of action and reaction, things or processes influence one another. Changes are caused through this interaction.

“In the fact that these bodies are interconnected is already included that they react on one another, and it is precisely this mutual reaction which constitutes motion.” (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, P 70)

Interconnection, interdependence, interaction are ubiquitous. The world is in existence means nothing but the existence of things and processes with the most diversified interconnections between them. Since this world is in perpetual change, these relations will also change. The metaphysical method does not recognise the interconnections, interdependence between things and processes. It considers them separately. Hence Engels commented, *“Metaphysicians see only trees and not woods.”*

Atom is formed because of the specific relation among elementary particles. Likewise, molecule is formed because of the relation among the atoms. Sun and its planets have such an interconnection. The living

organism maintains continuous interconnections with its environment and only hence will be able to continue its living process. Production is nothing but the continuous relations and connections human beings have with nature and the actions and reactions between the former and later. In that production process, people have mutual relations. There is interconnection between man's consciousness and the social conditions in which he lives. This gives a vivid picture of a gigantic chain of interconnections in the nature.

Dialectics studies these interconnections. Does it study each and every interconnection? No! It studies only the most general interconnections prevalent in nature, society and human thought. **The laws of dialectics and the philosophical categories are nothing but the reflections of these most general interconnections.**

Dialectics as Science of laws of development of material world

“Contrary to metaphysics, dialectics argues like thus: Nature is not in a state of rest and immobility, not in stagnation and immutability but a state of continuous movement and change, of renewal and development, where something is always arising and developing and something always disintegrating and dying away. Hence while considering the phenomenon from dialectical point of view, we must study not only from the stand point of their interconnection and interdependence, but also from the stand point of their movement, their change, their development, their coming into being and going out of being.”

“Engels said: ‘All nature, from the smallest thing to the biggest, from a grain of sand to the sun, from the protozoa to man, is in a constant state of coming into being and going out of being, is in a constant flux, in a ceaseless state of movement and change’ (Dialectics of Nature).”
(Stalin, Dialectical and historical materialism.)

In our day to day experience, we observe that matter is eternally in motion, and continuously changes. Some changes relate to place and quantities and some changes pertain to internal structure and properties of things or processes. Some changes are progressive whereas some are regressive. If we see in toto, nature, society and human thought advance

towards development. Science and our life experience prove this.

Metaphysics understands development as quantitative growth only. It considers development as a linear and smooth process.

“Two fundamental conceptions of development (evolution) are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition, and development as a unity of opposites (the division of the one into mutually exclusive opposites and the irreciprocal correlation)

“In the first conception of movement, self movement, its impelling force, its source and its motive still remain in the shadow (or that source becomes god or subject). In these conception chief attention is directed precisely towards knowledge of the source of ‘self’ – movement.

“The first conception is dead, poor and dry; the second is vital.”
(Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.38, P.316)

Development, according to Marxist dialectics, means motion or change that takes a thing or process from lower level to higher level, from simple to complex structures. In the process of development there will be irreversible changes in the internal structure of that thing. New properties and characteristics accrue to the thing.

Development is never a smooth and straightforward advance. It is a complicated movement of advance and retreat. Ultimately the world is moving in the direction of development, which means that with the motion of advance and retreat.

Social development too does not travel in a straight line. The struggle between progressives, revolutionaries on one hand and on the other, reactionaries, counter-revolutionaries will take the zigzag path of victory-defeat-victory. The history of democratic revolutions and socialist revolutions proves this. In the hundred years battle between feudals and the bourgeoisie, there were many ups and downs for the bourgeoisie till finally it could usurp the power. It is important to note that in any social revolutionary transformation only progressive forces become victorious ultimately. The transformation from capitalism to communism will also be prolonged. It will also traverse the same path of victory - defeat - victory.

Dialectics emphasizes development. There is no scope for

revivalism. Previous stages which pass away in the history cannot be revived. Then how about restoration of capitalism in Russia and China? Is this not a revival of previous stages? No! Why? Because socialism is only a transitory stage between capitalism and communism. By itself it is not a new stage of social development. During the whole period there will be a struggle between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces. The material basis for capitalist relations continues in socialism. That is why capitalist restoration is possible during this period. But in Russia or China feudalism cannot be revived. Restoration of capitalism in Russia and China is not tantamount to revival of capitalism. Restoration of capitalism in the socialist period is a definitely temporary setback and retreat. But only a temporary one.

“An exact representation of the universe, of its evolution and that of mankind, and of the reflection of this evolution in minds of men can therefore only be obtained by the method of dialectics with its constant regard to the general actions and reactions of becoming and ceasing to be, of progressive or retrogressive changes.” (Engels, Anti-Duhring, p.28)

“... The systems historically evolved are the stages from lower to the higher levels in human society in the infinite process of evolution.” (Marx - Engels, Selected Works, P.339)

To say in other words, development is due to the struggle between opposites (Law of contradiction explains this).

This process of development from one stage to another stage will take the form of a leap (The law of transformation from quantitative change to qualitative changes will explain this).

Development takes place in a spiral way. While traversing through each stage of development, it reaches a higher stage. After completing one circle, the spiral not only reaches a higher stage, but widens also. In the higher stages of development some characteristics of the lower stages again recur. The law of Negation of negation explains it.

The old passes away and new comes into being- in this process development occurs. This process goes on into infinity. Negation of old and emergence of new results in development, no one can stop this. The new one is progressive and invincible, but in the inception, it is

still weak. At times it will be indiscernible too. The old appears, as it was, invincible. But as time passes, it will have to deteriorate. The new gains strength and develops.

It is true that at present, the reactionary ruling classes are comparatively stronger than the revolutionary forces. But the former, which became obstacles to social development are in the process of decay. They are anachronistic. Whereas the revolutionary forces and the oppressed people under the leadership of proletariat though weak at the moment, are progressive, new and growing day by day. The weak at present will become stronger tomorrow whereas the seemingly stronger ruling classes will be overthrown and the success of revolution is quite inevitable. It is the result of dynamics of social development.

In revolutionary practice, the dialectical concept of development is a key one. In the development of revolutionary movement, one has to understand the different stages, and formulate correct tactics with regards to those stages. It will be a key aspect to the success of revolution.

“It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or communism in general you must be able to at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link the order of the links, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple.”
(Lenin, Collected Works Vol.27, p.274)

Laws of Dialectics

We have seen that dialectics means theory of interconnections and development. The interconnection, and development in the material world are expressed in the form of basic laws of dialectics. The general and necessary objective relation regarding essence between things or phenomenon is called law. *“Law is a relation of essences or relation between essences,”* The laws the Marxist philosophy studies are most general in nature. They apply to all things and phenomena in the world.

The basic laws of dialectics are three:

1. The law of unity of opposites or law of contradiction
2. The transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa

3. Negation of negation

Among these three, the law of contradiction is the most basic one and the other two laws are in fact intrinsic to it. Mao in his famous work “On Contradiction” elucidated these three laws in their organic unity under the analysis of contradictions. While accepting the most basic nature of the law of contradiction and its organic relationship with the other two laws we prefer to study the three laws separately to facilitate the beginners to follow easily.

Law of contradiction

The contradiction internal to all things and processes is the reason for all motion and development of all things and processes in the world. Lenin said that law of contradiction is the essence of dialectics.

“..Dialectics holds that internal contradictions are inherent in all things, and phenomena of nature, for they all have their negative and positive sides, a past and a future, something dying away and something developing; and that the struggle between these opposites, the struggle between the old and the new, between that which is disappearing and that which is developing, constitutes the internal content of the process of development, the internal content of the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes...” (Stalin, Dialectical and Historical materialism)

But then what is contradiction? What does the law of contradiction say? If we see the world carefully, everything which appears as one, in fact is the combination of two opposites. Protons and electrons of atom, inhalation and exhalation in the process of respiration, contraction and expansion in the heart beat (two opposite processes in blood circulation); cell division and destruction in the metabolic process, motion and rest in the movement, repulsion and attraction between planets; good and evil among individuals; the classes in societies - landlords - peasants; workers and capitalists; imperialism and colonies; war and peace; two lines in party; criticism and self-criticism; and so forth. This way we can observe the opposites in any thing and any process. *“One divides into two.” “Nothing (which exist) is indivisible.”*

The two opposites are quite contradictory to each other. One opposes the other. They will be struggling to “interpenetrate” (change

their places). At the same time, these two opposites co-exist in a thing or process. Not merely that, the existence of one depends upon the existence of the other, but the opposites do not exist separately. The unity and at the same time opposition between the opposites is called contradiction.

The law of contradiction says that the primary reason for all motion and development in things and processes is the internal contradiction and the struggle and unity are reason for development and motion.

“Dialectics is the teaching which shows how opposites can be and how they happen to be (how they become) identical - under what conditions they are identical, transforming themselves into one another, - why the human mind should take these opposites not as dead, rigid, but as living, conditional, mobile, transforming themselves into one another.” (Lenin, cited in On Contradiction, MSW, p.118)

This world is replete with contradictions. How should we study the innumerable diversified contradictions? Mao formulated a scientific method. Following the method, we have to study these aspects:

1. Unity and struggle between opposites.
2. Internal and external contradictions.
3. Universality and particularity of contradiction
4. Principal contradiction
5. Principal aspect of contradiction
6. Place of antagonism in contradiction.

1. Unity and struggle between two opposites

What is meant by unity between opposites in a contradiction? What is struggle? Which decides the process of development - unity or struggle?

How do the opposites which oppose each other, which negate each other be possible to be in unity(or identical)? In which circumstances it is possible? In fact what does the unity between the opposite really mean?

The unity of opposites

The unity of opposites indicates two aspects.

1. The two opposing aspects in an entity or a process co-exist. Co-exist does not mean only living together. It means, that one's existence is conditional on the other. That is the essence of co-existence. It means one is interdependent on the other for mutual existence. The existence of one aspect means the existence of the other. If one aspect disappears, the other aspect cannot exist independently.

Take respiration, it has two opposite processes of inhalation and exhalation. The unity between inhalation and exhalation is in the fact that if one process is stopped, the other process also comes to an end. Take a magnet. It has two poles - North and south. Cut it into half. The two halves again will have North and south. It means as long as it remains as a magnet it has two poles - North and south. Remove North pole by demagnetic process, you don't have south pole too. It won't remain as a magnet at all. Similarly take capital and wage labour. In capitalist mode of production, both are opposites. But capitalists' existence is dependent upon wage labour and the wage labourers too depend on capitalists as they don't have any other means than selling their own labour power. We cannot keep one thing and abolish another. When capitalist mode of production is abolished, you will be abolishing both the opposing aspects - capital and wage labour.

2. In specific conditions, the opposite aspects change into one another. One interpenetrates into another. This is the second aspect of unity of opposites.

In the respiratory process, the exhalation and inhalation are in constant change. This incessant change of positions is the specific character of respiration. In a living organism, life and death are in unity. Dead cells are being replaced by living cells is a constant process. Living cells after some time becoming dead is part of metabolism. In a war, war and peace change their places. In certain conditions peace comes into dominant positions, when it is advantage to warring factions. After some time, peace again break into war.

Is it true in case of classes? Yes, absolutely. Take capitalist society and its principal classes capitalists and workers, the two opposites of capitalist production relations. Here too the opposites change their places, but over a long period when compared to the incessant transformation of one into other that takes place in the entities like respiration and

heartbeat. With the success of socialist revolution the working class till then ruled by capitalist class transforms itself into ruling class and vice versa. The tendency of the opposites to interpenetrate continues till the end of those two classes, i.e. the abolition of classes. That is why class struggle is the key in socialism also. The restoration of capitalism in Russia and china is nothing but the transformation of opposites one into the other and the two classes changed their positions as rulers and ruled. That is why Mao warned us about the danger of restoration through out the period of socialism. We will discuss this inter penetration more in detail later.

Thus, **the unity or identity of opposites means the coexistence of the opposites in an entity, in such a way that they are interdependent for their very existence itself and in certain condition they could transform one into another.** Let us see how Mao explained the identity (unity) of opposites:

“...each of the two aspects of every contradiction in the process of development of a thing finds the presupposition of its existence in the other aspect and both aspects coexist in an entity; second, each of the two contradictory aspects, according to given conditions, tends to transform itself into the other. This is what is meant by identity.

“The reason is that a contradictory aspect cannot exist in isolation. Without the other aspect which is opposed to it, each aspect loses the condition of its existence. Just imagine, can any of the aspects of contradictory things or of contradictory concepts in the human mind exist independently? Without life, there would be no death, without death, there would also be no life. Without “above”, there would be no “below”; without “below”, there would also be no “above”. Without misfortune, there would be no good fortune; without good fortune, there would also be no misfortune. Without facility, there would be no difficulty; without difficulty, there would also be no facility. Without landlords, there would be no tenant-peasant; without tenant-peasants, there would also be no landlords. Without the bourgeoisie, there would be no proletariat; without a proletariat, there would also be no bourgeoisie. Without imperialist oppression of the nations, there would be no colonies and semi-colonies; without colonies and semi-colonies, there would also be no imperialist oppression of the nations. All opposite

elements are like this: because of certain conditions, they are on the one hand opposed to each other and on the other hand they are interconnected, inter-penetrating, interpermeating and interdependent, this character is called identity. All contradictory aspects, because of certain conditions, are characterised by non-identity, hence they are spoken of as contradictory. But they are also characterised by identity, hence they are interconnected. When Lenin says that dialectics studies 'how is referring to such a state of affairs. How can they be identical?' Because of the condition of mutual sustenance of each other's existence. This is the first meaning of identity.

"But is it enough to say merely that the contradictory aspects mutually sustain each other's existence, that is, there is identity between them and consequently they can coexist in any entity? No, it is not enough. The matter does not end with the interdependence of the two contradictory aspects for their existence; what is more important is the transformation of the contradictory things into each other. That is to say, each of the two contradictory aspects within a thing, because of certain conditions, tends to transform itself into the other, to transfer itself to the opposite position. This is the second meaning of the identity of contradiction.

"All contradictory things are interconnected, and they not only coexist in an entity under certain conditions, but also transform themselves into each other under certain conditions this is the whole meaning of the identity of contradictions." (Ibid, pp.118-121)

Struggle between the opposites

when there are two opposing aspects in an entity, it means there is a struggle between these two. What does this struggle mean?

It means not only they oppose each other, they try to interpenetrate into each other, they refute and attempt to negate each other. Because of this struggle only, the two opposing aspects influence each other. They will change. The reason for motion and development is due to the struggle of opposites in the things.

The interests of capitalists and workers are opposite to each other. The increase in profits of the capitalist implies the increased extraction of surplus value from the worker. If there is betterment in working

conditions or increase in salary, it amounts to decrease in the plunder of surplus value to the capitalist. It is only as a result of the struggle between these two classes, the proletariat, now the ruled will become the ruling class and capitalist who is the ruling class at present will become the ruled.

Every contradiction i.e. the pair of opposites always exists in a concrete form. That means they co-exist in a specific-entity. So each contradiction, pair of opposites in each contradiction will be particular. Depending upon nature of things and processes, contradictions differ. So the nature of the opposites, the type of unity and struggle between them, vary for different things. Not only that different contradictions are solved through different methods. The unity and struggle between capitalist and proletariat and the unity and struggle between two lines in the party will be in different forms. The methods of solution of these contradictions also take different forms.

Unity is relative - Struggle absolute

It is only due to the struggle between two opposites, one transforms into another. In respiration and blood circulation, the change of opposites into one another is quick. But as regards to production relations the change of positions will not occur rapidly. It takes relatively longer period. In between the time of actual transformation of one into another, the opposites or opposite processes in an entity show constancy. Depending upon the nature of entity, the constancy may be momentary or of some long duration. That means the opposites in a contradiction show relative constancy.

The position of opposites in the contradiction is only relatively constant. When they are in relative constancy, is there no struggle in it? Never! Since the existence of the particular contradiction, there will be struggle within it. Every moment, that struggle continues till the end of the particular contradiction.

“ The Unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, just as development and motion are absolute. ’ (Lenin, vol.38, p.358)

“What does this passage mean?

“All processes have a beginning and an end; all processes

transform themselves into their opposites. The stability of all processes is relative, but the mutability manifested in the transformation of one process into another is absolute.” (Ibid. p.123)

The unity between the opposites will be in some specific conditions, what are those conditions? When the struggle between the opposites in the stage of quantitative changes these opposites will be in unity and co-exist in the entity and thus shows relative constancy. In the stage of qualitative changes, the relative stability gets disturbed. Again the unity between the opposites will be restored on a new basis and the opposites show again the relative stability. The struggle continues not only in the stage of qualitative changes when the unity between the opposites disturbed but also in the stage of quantitative changes when there is relative stability. Ultimately the contradiction is solved in the process of negation of each other.

“The movement of all things assumes two forms: the form of relative rest and the form of conspicuous change. Both forms of movement are caused by the struggle of the two contradictory factors contained in a thing itself. When the movement of a thing assumes the first form, it only undergoes a quantitative but not a qualitative change and consequently appears in a state of seeming rest. When the movement of a thing assumes the second form it has already reached a certain culminating point of the quantitative change of the first form, caused the dissolution of the entity, produced a qualitative change, and consequently appears as conspicuous change. Such unity, solidarity, amalgamation, harmony, balance, stalemate, deadlock, rest, stability, equilibrium, coagulation, attraction, as we see in daily life, are all the appearances of things in the state of quantitative change. On the other hand, the dissolution of the entity, the breakdown of such solidarity, amalgamation, harmony, balance, stalemate, deadlock, rest, stability, equilibrium, coagulation and attraction, and the change into their opposite states, are all the appearances of things in the state of qualitative change during the transformation of one process into another. Things are always transforming themselves from the first into the second form, while the struggle within the contradictions exists in both forms and reaches its solution through the second form. We say therefore that the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and

relative, while the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute.”

“When we said above that because there is identity between two opposite things, the two can coexist in an entity and can also be transformed into each other, we were referring to conditionality, that is to say, under certain conditions contradictory things can be united and can also be transformed into each other, but without such conditions, they cannot become contradictory, cannot coexist, and cannot transform themselves into one another. It is because the identity of contradiction.”
(Ibid, pp.123-24)

In the areas where strong anti-feudal struggles are going on over a long period, in some villages it can be marked that sometimes the oppressed peasantry got an upper hand and in some times the feudal forces regained their domination. During the course of a long drawn battle this happens many times. This is nothing but the pair of opposites transforming one into other. This process occurs many times within the framework of feudal system. That means within the feudal system the co-existence or the unity of feudals and peasants is disturbed sometimes and restored some times. This disturbance and restoration of unity is the result of the struggle between the opposites i.e. class struggle only. When ever there takes place the transformation of one into another the unity establishes of course on a new basis.

Let us see how the dialectics operates regarding the difference and of opinions and two line struggle. After 1917 February Revolution, Lenin advocated that utilising the present revolutionary situation plans had to be drawn to make success the socialist revolution. Lenin’s thesis in the beginning was only in minority. Only after brief period, it become a majority opinion. How did it come about? The struggle between two lines was held in the form of discussions, consultations, polemics and conventions. After the success of October revolution, Lenin’s understanding proved to be right and the contradiction was resolved. The unity is between two lines restored on the basis of Democratic Centralism. (Minority will implement the majority line) But struggle between two line did not cease immediately. On the criterion of practice when a line is proved to be correct, then struggle between two lines will cease. Meanwhile unity again gets disturbed. In the discussions,

especially in plenums and congresses this unity gets disturbed. Again it will be established on the new basis. But the struggle will continue from the inception of two lines to the cessation of the lines. That is why the struggle between the opposite is absolute, unity; relative and temporary. In the unity of opposites itself there is struggle and the struggle itself is the reason for change and development of a thing.

2. Internal and External contradictions

Contradiction is universal. We know nothing exists in isolation. Every thing exists only with many interconnections with its environment or with the other things. What it indicates? In the innumerable contradictions existing in the world some of which are internal and some others are external i.e. some contradictions related to the very content of the thing or process in question and some are related to its connections with other things or processes. For the change and development of a thing both the internal and external contradictions contribute. But in that process the role played by these two sets of contradictions is different. Thus in the study of contradictions first we have to distinguish the internal and external contradictions.

“In every thing there exists contradiction, which is only the cause of motion and development...”

“...the contradictariness within a thing is the basic cause of its development, while the relationship of a thing with other things - their interconnection and interaction - is a secondary cause.” (Ibid, p.88)

Why is it so? Internal contradictions are linked up with content and essence of the thing. That is why they play a key role in the change and development of that thing.

“According to the viewpoint of materialist dialectics, changes in nature are chiefly due to the development of the internal contradictions in nature. Changes in society are chiefly due to the development of the internal contradictions in society, namely, the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between the classes, and the contradiction between the old and the new; it is the development of these contradictions that impels society forward and starts the process of the suppression of the old society by a new one.” (Ibid, p.89)

It is true that the support of Socialist Russia helped the Chinese revolution. But it was not a decisive factor. The internal contradictions of Chinese society were the key factors. It is same in the case of our revolution too. Revolution in other countries can help us in advancing our revolution but can never be a decisive factor. The sharpening and resolution of contradictions in our society is the main thing.

Likewise, the restoration of capitalism in all socialist countries, no doubt, is a disadvantageous factor, but it can never be a decisive factor. If any body thinks that he or she is alone responsible for building a mass movement or struggle, it is nothing but considering the external contradiction as the decisive factor and relegating the internal contradictions - the class contradictions into secondary position. But this does not mean that the leadership or individuals play no role in the mass movements or class struggle. They do play but only a secondary role.

Nevertheless, at times external contradiction plays a decisive role. We should keep this in mind. During Second World War period the East European countries were liberated by Russian Red Army. In this case, the external contradiction played a decisive role. This was a special situation.

The division of internal and external contradictions is relative. The external contradiction can become internal. Before England's occupation of our country, the contradiction between India and England was of external nature. After India became a colony to it, it became the principal internal contradiction. Till today, the Imperialism, being a fundamental internal contradiction has been directing and influencing the course of development of our society.

3. Universality and particularity of contradiction

This Universe is a bundle of contradictions. Any thing which exists is existing with contradictions. Any thing which is in motion, has motion because of contradiction. What is the most general nature or universality of the infinitely diverse world of material things and processes? What relation the universality or the most general nature of the innumerable contradictions in the world has with the peculiarities or particularity of those individually existing contradictions? Before discussing this aspect, let us understand the concepts of universality and

particularity.

Universality and Particularity: Only by observing particular objects, we make generalizations and we form abstract ideas. In fact there are no two things which are perfectly homogeneous. But a group of similar objects do have similar characteristics. The concept 'proletariat' does not reveal the individual character of nationality, caste, gender, etc. The feature that the worker is devoid of any means of production, and is constrained to sell his labour power is reflected in this generalisation. So the general essence of all workers constitute the universality. The other specificities of particular worker do not enter in to the universality. Hence, even though the particularity is always constitutes a part of universality but never it represents itself fully in the universality. But yet on the basis of this universality or general features we make generalizations such as animals, plants, capitalists, workers, metals, gases etc. thus generalized properties and characters of the particular thing are considered as universal.

“Thus on the one hand particularity is the source of universality and on the other hand it becomes a part of Universality.” (LCW, 31, p.359.)

As we said earlier, by generalising or abstracting the workers who actually exist concretely as a particular nationality, gender, etc. we arrive at the general notion or concept of 'proletariat.' This concept is nothing but the combination of universal characteristics of workers of all countries, such as labourers having no means of production, living by selling their labour power, etc., i.e. the universality of all workers. So without the existence of concrete individual workers there is no such generalisation like proletariat. So without the existence of concretely existing particular things there is no universality.

“Particularity exists only in relation with which it leads to universality. Universality exists in particularity and through particularity only.”

“Every individual is (in one way or another) a universal. Every universal is (a fragment, or an aspect, or the essence of) an individual. Every universal only approximately embraces all the individual objects. Every individual enters incompletely into the universal.” (Lenin

vol. 38, p.363)

Universality and particularity are relative. Universality and particularity get inter changed, depending upon the group of things we are taking into consideration to study the universality. The boundaries of universality vary in accordance with the group we are taking into consideration. Take 'human beings.' The concept represents universal character of human beings without any reference to nation, religion, caste, class or gender, i.e. it ignores all particularities of human beings. In this universality i.e. human beings, the exploiting class and the exploited constitute as particulars. But if you take only exploiters as the universality, then capitalists, big bureaucrats, landlords, money-lenders, etc., constitute the particulars. So we have to consider these categories only relatively. With this general understanding let us study the universality and particularity of contradiction.

Universality of Contradiction:

Contradiction exists in every thing and in every process. Thus it is universal. This is the first aspect of the universality of contradiction.

“Lenin explained the Universality:

In Mathematics: +, -; differential and Integral

In Mechanics: Action, reaction

In Physics: Positive, negative electricity

In Chemistry: Combination and dissociation of molecules

In society: Class struggle” (MSW, p.92-93)

Apart from the recognition of the universal existence of contradiction, another aspect has to be borne in mind. The contradictions will exist in a process from the beginning to the end of the process. Throughout the process, there will be unity and struggle. Neither the contradictions arise abruptly in the middle of a process. Nor they could be interpolated from outside. Without the completion of the process, the contradiction could never disappear. These two aspects constitute the universality of the contradictions.

“What is the emergence of a new process? It is this: when the old unity and its constituent opposites yields to a new unity with its constituent opposites, whereupon a new process emerges in place of the

old. The old process is completed and the new emerges. As the new process in its turn contains a new contradiction, the history of the development of its own contradiction begins.” (Ibid.p. 94)

“The universality or absoluteness of contradiction has a two-fold meaning. One is that contradiction exists in the process of development of all things and the other is that in the process of development of each thing a movement of opposites exists from beginning to end.” (Ibid.p. 91)

The ruling classes argue that the revolutionaries are creating class contradictions. This is meaningless. Class struggle exists because of the objective existence of classes. Whether a revolutionary party exists or not, the class contradiction and class struggle exist till the contradiction disappear. In fact the revolutionary party itself born out of class contradiction.

Particularity of Contradiction:

The universality of contradiction depends upon its particularity. Only through studying the particular contradictions, we can reach universality. The universality exists in fact in particularity only. Universality does not reflect the particular completely. It reflects only the general essence of the particular.

“As the particular is connected with the universal, as not only the particularity of contradiction but also the universality of contradiction is inherent in everything, and as universality resides in particularity, so, when we study a certain object, we ought to try to discover both of these aspects and their inter-connection, to discover both particularity; and universality within the object as well as their interconnection, and to discover the interconnection of this object and the many objects outside it.” (Ibid., p.108)

The particularity of contradiction has to be studied at different levels. Because of the particularity all the sciences are studied seperately. Particulaar branch of science studies contradictions belonging to a particular phenomenon The two main branches of biology – Zoology, Botany - study animals and plants respectively, whereas biology study general features of organic matter. Zoology got further divided depending upon the particularity of the study like - cytology, physiology,

anatomy, embryology, etc. All these branches do have the general essence of biology having their own particular essences.

In a proletarian party different organisational levels from cell to central committee deal various particularities of the basic contradictions in our society. The dialectical relationship between higher and lower committees, lower committees and cells has to be maintained in a live manner. This relationship reflects the dialectical relation between universal and particular. The lower committees, organisers and cells are in touch with concrete contradictions directly. Those contradictions comprise the general essence, as well as particular essence. The higher committee depending upon the experience of lower committees should generalise the contradiction (i.e generalising the particular experiences). This universal experience and understanding will help as guidance to lower committees.

On the basis of this guidance lower committees will have a deeper understanding of the particularity of the contradiction. They can deal more effectively with those contradictions. If there is failure in exchanges and learning of experiences from lower to higher committees or in, reaching from particularity to universality, leading committees become ornamental and dogmatism prevails. If the party has to lead the revolutionary movement successfully, the leading committees should understand the organic and dialectical relationship between particularity and universality. In accordance with it, it should maintain the organic relationship between lower and higher committees. The essence of the principle “*from the masses to the masses*” also expresses the same relationship.

As long as we don't comprehend the universality of contradiction, we cannot understand the general laws of motion and development. If we don't study the particularity we cannot know the particular essence that makes a thing different from other things; we cannot find the specific cause and particular basis of the motion and development of the object; we cannot differentiate things or various branches of science.

We have to study the particularity of contradiction from another angle also. Since everything is in motion and change, we have to study the contradictions in a particular thing not in a static but in a dynamic

way. We have to study the contradiction in their motion and development. We have to study those particularities which the contradictory aspects exhibit in the different stages of evolution of the object. Our present understanding about a contradiction even if it is correct today, may become obsolete in the future, because no thing, process or contradiction remains as the same without any changes.

Capitalism in the 20th century entered the stage of imperialism. Lenin studied those special characteristics of this imperialist stage. The leaders of second international failed to study and recognise those particularities and became dogmatists. By entering into the stage of imperialism, did the capitalism lose its general characteristics (essence)? No, without losing the essence (surplus value, competition, anarchy, crises), it acquired some special characteristics. While studying these particularity Lenin could make generalisation that now the revolution could break at weak links, and that it is possible that socialism could be victorious in one country. So in order that we do not become dogmatists, we have to study the particularities of various stages in the development of a contradiction.

How in some parts of a country guerilla zones established? It is not due to the subjective aspirations of the parties leading the agrarian revolution, but because of the intensification of class struggle in those particular areas. But in other areas the class struggle yet not reached to such a point and thus the guerilla zones are not formed. In those particular area even particular organisational forms also developed.

“In the movement of opposites in the whole process of development of a thing, we must notice not only the special features of the interconnections and conditions of its various aspects but also the special features of every stage in the process of development.” (Ibid., p.102)

The particularity of a contradiction in every stage of evolution has to be studied. The study of particularity of contradiction at each stage means the study of salient characteristics of the twin contradictory aspects at that particular stage.

Lenin while analyzing imperialism just did not confine only to the changes that occurred in the capitalist class. He also studied the changes in the working class movement too. He analysed the split in the work-

ing class movement and found the economic basis for revisionism and opportunism.

In the areas where the guerilla zones were established, qualitative changes occurred not only with regard to people but with reactionary forces also. While there were qualitative changes occurred in the revolutionary consciousness of and organisational strength of the masses, on the other side reactionary forces lost the mass base, lost the hold over political power at the village level, had to resort cruel and fascist rule to continue in the power. Thus studying the contradiction in each stage means studying the motion and change of two contradictory aspects.

“To study the particularities of the contradictions at every stage in the process of development of a thing, we must not only observe them in their interconnection and their totality, but must consider each aspect of the contradictions at each stage of its development.” (Ibid. p.104)

Another aspect of the particularity of the contradiction is the method of resolution of the contradiction. The particularity is revealed through the particular way of resolving of the contradiction. The method of resolution of contradiction does not depend upon our subjective wishes. It depends upon the nature of the contradiction.

“Qualitatively different contradictions can only be solved by qualitatively different methods. For example: the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is solved by the method of socialist revolution; the contradiction between the great masses of the people and the feudal system is solved by the method of democratic revolution; the contradiction between colonies and imperialism is solved by the method of national revolutionary war; the contradiction between the working class and the peasantry in socialist society is solved by the method of collectivisation and mechanisation of agriculture; the contradiction within the Communist Party is solved by the method of criticism and self-criticism; the contradiction between society and nature is solved by the method of developing the productive forces. Processes change, old processes and old contradictions disappear, new processes and new contradictions emerge, and the methods of solving contradictions differ accordingly. There is a basic difference between the contradictions solved by the February Revolution and the October Revolution in Russia, as well as between the methods used to solve them. The use of

different methods to solve different contradictions is a principle which Marxist-Leninists must strictly observe. The doctrinaires do not observe this principle: they do not understand the differences between the various revolutionary situations, and consequently do not understand that different methods should be used to solve different contradictions; on the contrary, they uniformly adopt a formula which they fancy to be unalterable and inflexibly apply it everywhere, a procedure which can only bring setbacks to the revolution or make a great mess of what could have been done well.” (Ibid, p.98-99)

The three aspects - the principal contradiction, the principal aspect of contradiction and antagonism - reveal different sides of particularity of contradiction.

4. Principal contradiction

The complex things and processes contain many contradictions. All these contradictions have mutual relations and have mutual dependence and at the same time influence each other and as a whole determine the motion, change and development of those things and processes. But the question is that will all the contradictions have equal importance in the determination of the course of development of that particular thing or process? No, at any given time one among them acts as the principal one and plays a key role in determining the development of the thing.

“In the process of development of a complex thing, many contradictions exist; among these, one is necessarily the principal contradiction whose existence and development determine or influence the existence and development of other contradictions.” (Ibid, p.110)

In our country the contradiction between feudalism and broad masses is the principal contradiction. Apart from this there are contradictions between - working class and capitalist class, imperialism and people, comprador bureaucrat capital and broad masses, and contradictions among ruling classes; also there are contradictions between men and women, towns and countryside; intellectual labour to physical labour; higher and lower castes; apart from these there are many other contradictions. But the principal contradiction determinably influences other contradiction. The resolution of the other contradictions depends

upon the resolution of principal contradiction.

“Thus if in any process a number of contradictions exist, only one of them is the principal contradiction playing the leading and decisive role while the rest occupy a secondary or sub-ordinate position. So in studying any process - if it is a complicated process in which more than two contradictions exist - we must do our utmost to discover its principal contradiction. Once the principal contradiction is grasped, any problem can be readily solved.” (Ibid, p.111)

Does this mean that if the principal contradiction is resolved, the other contradictions are also get resolved automatically? Communist parties are endeavouring to change the society in a revolutionary way. Are they to deal with the principal contradiction only? Can they ignore other contradictions? Not at all. Recognising the key role of the principal contradiction does not mean that we should ignore other contradictions and their role in the change and development of the object. When there are several contradictions in a thing, separating the principal contradictions does not mean that it exists alone without any link with other contradictions.

When it is stated that feudalism is the principal contradiction, it does not mean that if people root out feudalism, other contradictions will vanish. For ex: the contradiction between feudal culture and people’s culture will not vanish immediately after the victory of new democratic revolution. But without removing the base of feudalism, uprooting feudal culture is not possible. Not only that, the struggle against feudal culture also cannot be carried on alone. In fields of education, culture, in women’s front and with regard to caste - they have to work in all these fields now. All these efforts to solve other contradictions should be in co-ordination with the work to resolve the principal contradiction. Then only the principal contradiction is resolved. Thus the recognition of the principal contradiction does not necessarily mean neglecting the other contradictions.

Reformists often falsely allege that communists do not take care of other contradictions in the name of dealing with the principal contradiction. They preach with metaphysical understanding that contradictions in various things have to be solved independently. All those who subscribe to the view that women’s movement, cast movements and

student movements should be built up independent of politics, reject the decisive role of principal contradiction. Some of them consciously and others unconsciously thus become hurdle to the resolution of the contradiction which they are interested in solving. All philosophical, ethical and literary theories, which reject the principal contradiction in the name of pluralism are denying the determining role of principle contradiction hinders the social transformation.

In our country before transfer of power, the principal contradiction was between British imperialism and people of India. The contradiction between feudalism and broad masses was also existing then as a secondary one. But after the transfer of power, the principal contradiction became secondary one. The secondary contradiction i.e. contradiction between feudalism and broad masses became the principal contradiction. What does this indicate? It is clear that in the development of a thing, in its different stages there will be different principal contradictions.

Correctly identifying the principal contradiction is very crucial in an effort to change a thing. A mistake in this regard will certainly make us go astray in our efforts to change a thing or process. If a communist party fails in identifying the principal contradiction in its country, then its practice gropes in a wrong direction and it fails to play its vanguard role. Even it may drag it into the mire of revisionism. It is equally applicable in cases of movement or struggle in an area or in a particular field. In the course of development of any mass movement the leadership at different levels should be able to recognise the principle contradiction at each and every stage and accordingly it should formulate its central task and appropriate tactics at every stage.

In the passages given below Mao illustratively shown how the principle contradiction changed in accordance with the different stages of the revolution:

“When imperialism launches a war of aggression against such a country, all its various classes, except for some traitors, can temporarily unite in a national war against imperialism. At such a time, the contradiction between imperialism and the country concerned becomes the principal contradiction, while all the contradictions among the various classes within the country (including what was the principal con-

tradition, between the feudal system and the great masses of the people) are temporarily relegated to a secondary and subordinate position. So it was in China in the Opium War of 1840, the sino-Japanese War of 1894 and the Yi Ho Tuan War of 1900, and so it is now in the present Sino-Japanese War.

“But in another situation, the contradictions change position. When imperialism carries on its oppression not by war, but by milder means - political, economic and cultural-the ruling classes in semi-colonial countries capitulate to imperialism, and the two form an alliance for the joint oppression of the masses of the people. At such a time, the masses often resort to civil war against the alliance of imperialism and the feudal classes, while imperialism often employs indirect methods rather than direct action in helping the reactionaries in the semi-colonial countries to oppress the people, and thus the internal contradictions become particularly sharp. This is what happened in China in the Revolutionary War of 1911, the Revolutionary War of 1924-27, and the ten years of Agrarian Revolutionary War after 1927....

“When a revolutionary civil war develops to the point of threatening the very existence of imperialism and its running dogs, the domestic reactionaries, imperialism often adopts other methods in order to maintain its rule; it either tries to split the revolutionary front from within or sends armed forces to help the domestic reactionaries directly. At such a time, foreign imperialism and domestic reaction stand quite openly at one pole while the masses of the people stand at the other pole, thus forming the principal contradiction which determines or influences the development of the other contradictions. The assistance given by various capitalist countries to the Russian reactionaries after the October Revolution is an example of armed intervention. Chiang Kai-shek’s betrayal in 1927 is an example of splitting the revolutionary front.”

“But whatever happens, there is no doubt at all that at every stage in the process of development, there is only one principal contradiction which plays the leading role.” (Ibid., pp. 110-111)

5. Principal aspect of contradiction

So far we have seen how only one contradiction stands as princi-

pal one at any stage of the development of an object or society even though it contained so many contradiction at a time. Now let us see another aspect of particularity of the contradiction. Will the two opposites in a contradiction equally contribute to the process of change of a thing? Or will one among them be of decisive importance and prominence? The usual situation is that the two opposites will be of an unequal nature. One of the two will be prominent or dominating one. The prominent one will be dominating the other aspect. The principal aspect influences the course of change or development of a thing or a process. But, the second aspect, though relatively weak endeavours to become dominant one. But the dominant aspect tries to suppress the second to prevent it from taking its place. The secondary aspect, naturally struggles to overcome the suppression. That means that among them while under the apparent stability found in things there is always a struggle by the secondary aspect which attempts to disturb the balance or stability, the principle aspect tries to maintain its superior and dominant position. . In this way the two opposites are always in motion. They will be changing too. So when the balance of strength tilts, the hitherto weak aspect gains strength and displaces the principal aspect to occupy its place. Then we say, that opposites have changed their place, that the contradictory aspect has turned into its opposite.

What does this indicate? Among the two opposites in a contradiction, that aspect will be principal which continues to dictate change and development. But no single aspect will ever be in such a dominant position permanently. Depending upon the balance of forces, the non-principal one can become a principal one. As it turns out to be principal one, it begins to play the dominant role in the process of change.

“In any contradiction, the development of the contradictory aspects is uneven. Sometimes there seems to be a balance of forces, but that is only a temporary and relative state; the basic state is unevenness. Of the two contradictory aspects, one must be the principal and the other secondary. The principal aspect is that which plays the leading role in the contradiction. The quality of a thing is mainly determined by the principal aspect of the contradiction that has taken the dominant position.”

“But this state is not a fixed one; the principal and the non-princi-

pal aspects of a contradiction transform themselves into each other and the quality of a thing changes accordingly. In a certain process or at a certain stage in the development of a contradiction, the principal aspect is A and the non-principal is B; at another stage of development or in another process of development, the roles are reversed - a change determined by the extent of the increase or decrease in the strength with which each of the two aspects struggles against the other in the development of a things.” (Ibid, pp.112-13)

The efforts of the revolutionary forces to make success of revolution underlies the endeavour to make the suppressed aspect transform itself into its opposite i.e. the principal aspect. The fascist repression let loose on the revolutionary movements by the ruling classes world over is to maintain their principal position as it is. With the success of the revolution, revolutionary masses will become the principal aspect. But even before the complete success of the revolution, revolutionary people witness that in some regions and in many villages, there are changes in the balance of power, and mutual change in the respective positions.

The restoration of capitalism in Russia and China means that the proletariat was displaced from the principal position. As long as the contradictory aspect exists, this struggle goes on. Till the achievement of communism, the danger of capitalist restoration will always be there.

“Thus the quality of a thing is mainly determined by the principal aspect of the contradiction that has won the dominant position. When the principal aspect of the contradiction which has won the dominant position undergoes a change, the quality of a thing changes accordingly.” (Ibid, p.113)

At times the contradictory aspects will be, though temporarily, in a state of equilibrium. The strength of these forces will be in an equal measure. But this status will be quite a transient one. If this becomes permanent, there is no scope for change nor for development.

In war and class struggle this sort of temporary equilibrium, stalemate frequently occurs. Among the two contradictory forces whoever first secures additional strength will gain the upper-hand. Before October revolution a stalemate occurred like this. Bolsheviks concentrated

all its forces beforehand and got the upper-hand. Had the insurrection been late by one or two days, revolution could have suffered defeat. That is why the proletarian party always has to evaluate both the strength of revolutionary forces and reactionary forces. By identifying this temporary and momentary equilibriums or the nodal points where the quantity is transforming into quality it has to concentrate all its forces to secure the upper hand and defeat its enemy. If it fails to do so in time its opposite may gain strength and begin a ruthless suppression. The proletarian parties have number of experience both politically and militarily in this respect.

6. The place of antagonism in the contradiction

If we see contradictions in social life, in some instances the struggle between opposites is antagonistic. This type of contradictions are called antagonistic contradictions. The antagonistic contradictions which arise in a given social system, can not be solved in that very social system. Only through class struggle and social revolution which abolishes the old social systems can they be resolved.

“Antagonism is only a form of struggle within a contradiction but not its universal form; we cannot impose the formula everywhere.” (Ibid. p.125)

“We see two types of social contradictions. The one between ourselves and the enemy and contradiction among people. These two are entirely different in character. The contradiction between us and the enemies is one of antagonistic nature. Whereas the contradiction among people and among working class are non-antagonistic one. Among the contradiction between the exploiters and exploited, there is antagonistic aspect and there is non-antagonistic aspect too.” (Mao)

The classes and sections which are favourable and contribute to the social transformation and development of the society constitute the masses or people and the forces opposing it are called the enemies. If we are able to distinguish these two it will become easier to understand the role of antagonism and the way to deal with it.

Antagonistic contradiction and non-antagonistic contradiction are quite different by nature. So the methods of resolution of these contradictions are also different. The contradiction between people and reac-

tionaries is an antagonistic one. It will be solved only in the form by overthrowing or suppression of others. There are contradictions among people too. But they are of non-antagonistic in nature. Since they are oppressed by reactionary classes people have strong unity and fraternity among them. So the contradictions among them are solved through discussion, consultations and in a give and take manner. This is because their common interests are much stronger than the conflicting interests. Does that mean that every time such contradictions are solved in a friendly manner? No! If not properly solved in time, a non-antagonistic contradiction will become an antagonistic contradiction. We can see many such incidents in our daily life. The different methods of resolution regarding antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions were explained by Mao thus:

“The people’s democratic dictatorship uses two methods. Towards the enemy, it uses the method of dictatorship, that is, for as long period of time as is necessary it does not permit them to take part in political activity and compels them to obey the law of the People’s government to engage in labour and, through such labour, be transformed into new men. Towards the people, on the contrary, it uses the method of democracy and not of compulsion, that is, it must necessarily let them take part in political activity and does not compel them to do this or that but uses the method of democracy to educate and persuade.” (Mao Selected Works, Vol, V, p.392)

By discriminating between non-antagonistic and antagonistic contradictions and only by dealing with them in different methods a communist party will be able to unite the oppressed masses. The ruling classes always try to turn contradictions among people into antagonistic contradictions. Why? Because foiling the formation of a common front of masses against their oppressors is always useful for the maintenance of the class rule. We witnessed the communal frenzy that had been raised in the Babri Masjid issue by the ruling class and how the contradiction was turned into an antagonistic one.

Thus the communists, while dealing with the contradictions among the people, should be doubly careful. The problems that crop up among people should be understood from proletarian outlook. We must try to solve the problems with that orientation that people’s unity is of para-

mount importance. Communists should strive to master the art of distinguishing the antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions and solve them accordingly to forge a strong front against the feudal and imperialist forces by uniting the masses. Otherwise, contrary to their wishes the non-antagonistic contradictions among people turn into antagonistic and impede the advancement of the revolution.

In certain circumstances, an antagonistic contradiction may turn into a non-antagonistic contradiction. During the anti-Japanese united front period, friendship with Komintang became possible. But this condition was only a temporary one. Ultimately the contradiction between communists and komintang resolved in an antagonistic method.

During the peoples' war period of Second World War, then CPI and many European parties failed recognise the fact that the the non-antagonistic form of expression of the contradiction with imperialist allied forces at that time was temporary and thus lost the initiative in the post-war revolutionary upsurge. So one should not forget that the the unity or friendship between the antagonistic classes, when it became possible lasts temporarily the final resolution of which takes place only as an antagonistic contradiction.

In some special circumstances, an antagonistic contradiction can be solved through a non-antagonistic method. During the socialist revolution period in China, the means of production in the hands of national bourgeoisie could be socialised in a friendly manner. But this could become possible when the proletariat had the political power in its hands.

What about the contradictions within a proletarian party? All the contradictions which are reflected as the differences of opinion and different lines are fundamentally non-antagonistic contradictions. Through criticism and self-criticism; through democratic centralism; recognising practice as the yard stick of truth generally these contradictions get resolved.

But in some instances when the individuals or groups did not conform to these practices, the contradiction may become antagonistic and will be solved in that manner.

“Within the Party, opposition and struggle between different ideas occur constantly; they reflect in the Party the class contradictions and

the contradictions between the old and the new things in society. If in the Party there were neither contradictions nor ideological struggles to solve them, the Party's life would come to an end.” (MSW, p.93)

The law of transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes

Now it is clear to us that the cause of change or development of thing is the struggle between two opposites. But how does this development or change occur? What is the method? The law of transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes explains this.

Let us understand the concepts quality and quantity. In this world there are innumerable things that exist. They are quite diversified. That means they have different qualities. What is this quality at all? Every thing has some properties. What is a metal? It is the summation of certain properties. A solid substance, which has the properties such as malleability, conductivity, shining etc., called as a metal. Thus the quality is the set of properties expresses the essence of a thing. Gold is a metal. It means that it has some properties, which are exclusive to some substances considered as metals and thus it can be considered as metal. Therefore quality means the summation of those characteristics, which reveals the characteristic and particularity of a thing.

Every thing has a definite quality. If this particular quality changes, which means, that the thing itself has changed. If water loses its liquid character, it will be no more water. It may be vapour or ice. In this new stage, it will have new properties i.e., new quality. As long as it is in the same stage or state it's quality does not change. Thus the quality is relatively stable.

Apart from quality, every thing has definite quantity too. First of all what is quantity? The concept quantity indicates size, volume, intensity and level of development of the properties that constitute the internal essence of a thing. The quantity – size, weight, volume, temperature, etc., – generally measured numerically. Some quantities like the development of productive forces could not be measured numerically but yet we can notice the growth or reduction.

Quality and quantity reveal two sides of a thing. Quality always exists in some quantity. But there is an important difference we should take notice of it. The existence of a thing closely related with its quality but it is not so closely related with its quantity. So whenever quantitative changes occur, there will not be changes in the quality or existence of the thing. The thing can continue to change quantitatively while being in the same state or stage. But after the quantitative changes reached a certain stage it inevitably lead to the change in the quality and the existence of the thing. This we call transformation of quantity into quality. Thus the development, which is essentially a qualitative change, occurs in the process of transformation of quantity into quality.

Water solidifies at 0^oc and vapourises at 100^oc. The changes in the temperature of water from 0^oc to 100^oc would not alter the liquid state or quality of water. Only at 100^oc water begins to vapourise. What does this mean? Between 0^oc - 100^oc water will be in liquid state only. That means it is relatively stable. If it crosses, the limit, there will be a qualitative change. Or in other words, the unity between quantity and quality is disturbed. In the new stage, there will be unity between quality and quantity on a new basis.

“In the process of development, those who are hitherto just quantitative differences, if crosses a limit, they will become qualitative changes.” (Marx, Capital,I, p.309.)

“In nature, ...qualitative changes can only occur by the quantitative addition or quantitative subtraction of matter or motion.” (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, p.63)

“Hence it is impossible to alter the quality of a body without quantitative alteration of body concerned.” (Ibid.)

Here is simple and classic example given by Hegel. Two oxygen atoms form O₂ where three atoms of oxygen make O₃ (Ozone) which is qualitatively different from Oxygen (O₂). Fever if crosses the limit, it becomes fatal. The quantitative development of productive forces lead to a stage which paves way for the change in production relations. If a party member's mistakes add up to a point or the limit, he will be expelled from the party. The quantitative changes in a mass movement at a certain point lead to changes in the organizational structure of the movement

itself.

The quantitative changes occur at relatively slower pace and take place over a long period and they may not be noticeable. Where as, qualitative changes occur speedily, suddenly and quite noticeably. The qualitative changes occur by leaps. This leads to the qualitative change in the existence of the thing. Though all the qualitative leaps are not necessarily lead to development, development took place only through this qualitative leap. Thus in the process of development of a thing or society these qualitative changes play a crucial role. The reformists, generally ignores this fact and make futile attempts to change the basic nature or quality of the society through peaceful, quantitative growth and reform but not through the qualitative change and revolution. So the recognition of the role of qualitative changes in the process of development is a demarkating line between the revolution and reformism.

We should not consider the relation between quantity and quality as one sided, but as two sided and dialectical. It means we should recognise not only the transformation of quantity into quality but also the transformation of quality into quantity. Because, a qualitative change in its turn, affects the thing quantitatively too.

The quantitative limit at which the quantity transforms into quality is called as the “nodal point.” The recognition of these nodal points has great importance, especially in the process of social revolution. The proletarian party should be able to recognise such points before hand and prepare itself and masses for the change. Otherwise it loses the initiative and instead of playing the vanguard role it may tail behind the movement driven by spontaneity.

The Law of Negation of Negation

The law of negation of negation, reveals the relation between two consecutive stages of development and the relation between old and new. It indicates the general trend and direction of development. Negation means new entering in the place of old. Emergence of news negating old does not mean that the new one has suddenly appeared out of blue. The new emerges out of old and old got negated in that process of emergence of new.

The process of development, whether it is of nature, society or thought process, always takes place in the course of negation of negation. Negation comprises in the internal struggle between the opposites in a thing. The progressive aspect of the contradiction defeats the reactionary one and becomes stronger. This is what negation is.

We see everywhere the development through negation of negation. Engels explained the law through the germination of a barley seed. In favourable conditions the seed germinates. The germination of seed implies the disappearance of the seed that is the negation of seed. The plant grows and produces ears. Then the plant dies. Then it is negated. The second negation, we call negation of negation. These two negations are two stages of the development of seed. Negation does not mean simply dying away. It means reaching a new stage, while reaching it leaving the old form and taking a new form. The grain and eggs we consume disappears but not negated. The seed which gives into plant and the egg in the transformation of chick are being negated. This clearly says that the negation of negation is the law which explains the different stages in a transition.

A thing which reached a new stage through negation contains in it the conditions and basic factors necessary for the next negation. So a thing negated gets further negated. This is a perennial process. Development means the continuous negation of old and appearance of new. That is why the process of development is described as the negation of negation.

*“Any development, whatever its substance may be, can be represented as a series of different stages of development that are connected in such a way that one forms the **negation** of the other....In no sphere can one undergo a development without negating one’s previous mode of existence.”* (Marx, MECW Vol.6, p.317)

The negation of old does not mean that new wipes out everything old. The dialectical negation asserts that all the good, healthy, progressive aspects of the old are absorbed into the new. The socialist revolution will destroy all capitalist relations. At the same time, it absorbs the productive forces and the science and technology developed by capitalism and every thing valuable in the old society.

While a thing is negated, all the reactionary aspects of old are not wiped out at once. Along with progressive aspects, some old, reactionary aspects are also absorbed. Immediately after revolution, all the negative aspects of old do not disappear immediately. To get rid of the ideology of old society, traditions, habits and culture - cultural revolution becomes necessary.

The process of development will not go in a straight line. It goes on spiral way. Some characteristics repeat in higher stages.

In the example given above, it seems that after seed- plant-seed-cycle. We have come to the same first stage. The seed in its process of negation it reappears as seed (seed-plant-seed). But seed has not returned to the earlier stage. But it is not the case. The first negated was only one seed. But with the negation of the plant we have hundreds! Hence, the negation of negation, though it may appear as a circular motion but it is not so. It is also not that it has gone back to the earlier stage. But it will reach more developed and higher stage. This process of development is spiral in nature.

“A development that seemingly repeats the stages already passed, but repeats them otherwise, on a higher basis.... ” (LCW 2, p.54)

In the seed - plant - seed example, we have seen that in the process of negation of negation the seed has re-appeared but many times higher in quantitatively. But if we take evolutionary process into consideration, plants and animals acquire qualitative features too.

The primitive communism on the basis common ownership got negated and class society based on private property came into existence. The class society based upon private property is going to be negated and modern communism based on common property ownership will appear. This classless society resembles the primitive communism but the repetition occurs at a very high level. In this stage human beings will be able to take their fate into their own hands.

So the dialectics doesn't consider the development neither as the cyclical repetition nor as a linear movement as metaphysics and metaphysical materialism do. Dialectical materialism recognises the dialectical relationship between old and new and continuity in the process of development of nature and society which proceeds through the

negation of negation.

The law of negation of negation is the most general law of development. The concrete form in which the actual negation of negation takes place depends upon the nature of the thing or society in consideration. Each thing, each process has its own specific course of development and evolution. Accordingly the process of negation of negation also will be particular to different processes. If we observe the examples seed - plant - seed, commune property - private property - commune property we have just perused, everything negates, in its specific way.

“.... the kind of negation . . . firstly by the general, and secondly, by the particular nature of process. . . Therefore, every kind of thing has its characteristic kind of way of being negated, of being negated in such a way that it gives raise to a development, and it is just the same with every kind of conception or idea.” (Engels, Anti-Duhring p.181)

Mao on negation of negation:

In his ‘Speech on questions of philosophy,’⁴ Mao said that there is no negation of negation but negation and affirmation.

“There is no such thing as the negation of negation. Affirmation, negation, affirmation, negation In the development of things, every link in the chain of events is both affirmation and negation. Slave – holding society negated primitive society, but with reference to feudal society it constituted, in turn, the affirmation. Feudal society constituted the negation in relation to slave holding society but it was in turn the affirmation with reference to capitalist society. Capitalist society was the negation in relation to feudal society, but it is in turn, the affirmation in relation to socialist society.” (SWM, IX, p.128)

In fact Mao is emphasizing the dialectical nature of negation. He is opposing the one sided and metaphysical method of understanding the concept of negation. When he said, “Every link in the process of development is affirmation as well as negation”, he is refuting the opportunity to interpret the concept in a metaphysical way. But it is not refuting the law of negation of negation as taught by Marx and Engels. What Engels said about the dialectical nature of negation, and the negation and affirmation as two sides of negation explained by Mao are

in essence same.

“Negation in dialectics does not mean simply saying no, or declaring that some thing does not exist, or destroying it any way one likes. I should not only negate, but also in turn the negation. I must therefore set up the first negation in such a way that the second remains or becomes possible every kind of thing has its characteristic kind of way of being negated, of being negated in such way that it gives rise to a development, and it is first the same with every kind of concept or idea.” (Anti Duhring, p. 180-181)

Engels explained how the historical development of philosophy took place in the process of negation of negation:

“The old materialism was therefore negated by idealism. But in the course of further development of philosophy idealism became untenable and was negated by modern materialism. This modern materialism, the negation of negation, is not the mere re-establishment of the old, but adds to the lasting foundations of this old materialism the whole intellectual content of two thousand years progress in philosophy and natural science, as well as in these two thousand years of history it self. Generally speaking, it is no longer philosophy at all, but a single world outlook which has to be verified and implemented, not in a science of sciences standing apart, but in the positive sciences. Philosophy is therefore “sublated” here, i.e., “both over-come and preserved,” overcome in its form, and preserved in its real content.” (Engels, Anti Duhring. p.176)

So we are of the view that the criticism of Mao on the law of negation of negation actually serve as an explanation and thus complement it rather than refute it.

Philosophical Categories of Dialectical Materialism

Till now we have seen the basic laws of dialectical materialism. Apart from them various philosophical categories also explain the interrelations and various sides of development of the material world. Now let us see those basic philosophical concepts.

What are philosophical categories? Categories meant by the basic

concepts of that particular science. Mass, energy etc. are the categories in physics. Commodity, value, capital are the categories in political economy. Already we have discussed some philosophical categories like matter, consciousness, contradiction, quantity, quality, negation, universal, particular etc.

The philosophical categories explain the consistent relations and similarities between the different aspects of the phenomena. That is why the Marxist philosophical categories are also called as non-basic laws of dialectics. The important philosophical categories are six. They are:

1. Particular and Universal
2. Content and Form
3. Essence and Appearance
4. Cause and Effect
5. Necessity and spontaneity
6. Possibility and reality

We have already discussed the categories particularity and universality while discussing contradictions. So let us discuss the rest.

Content and Form

The basic elements, aspects, processes, the interrelations between them which cause the existence of a particular thing, together form the content of that thing. This content determines the development of the thing and the changes in its form.

The structure of the content, and how different aspects of the content are inter-linked are known as form.

Content and form are the inseparable contradictory aspects of every thing and process in this world. *“The whole of organic nature is one continuous part of the identity or inseparability of form and content.”* (Engels, Dialectics of Nature, p.305)

We can see the unity between content and form even in social phenomena. While productive forces are the content of the mode of production, production relations are its form. In literature, the life

reflected as creative writing constitutes the content and the way in which life is depicted, i.e., language, style, description etc. constitute the form. While all the party members who are dedicated to achieve the goal of communism form the content of a proletarian party, the structures (cells, committees etc.), which consolidate, unite and co-ordinate them will constitute the form.

The content of everything will be displayed in some form. Form will always be around some content. There is no content without form or no form without content. But at the same time it should not be assumed that unity between content and form is unchangeable.

The content of a thing keep changing because of the relations with the external world and mutual action and reaction. But form tries to preserve the thing in the same condition. So there will be struggle between content and form. Resolution of the contradiction between content and form is an important cause of development of the thing. In this context Lenin said: *“The struggle of the content with form and conversely the throwing off the form, the transformation of content.”* (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 38, P.222)

We know that for the development of the productive forces (content), production relations (form) must be compatible and helpful. Production relations not compatible with the development of productive forces will become fetters to the development of the productive forces. By changing such production relations which become fetters, that means, only when productive forces take a new compatible form, that is by bringing new production relations into force, can progress take place.

It is of utmost importance to identify the relation between content and form, especially in revolutionary practice. In the process of social evolution and the development of revolutionary movement, new forms are to be taken up by leaving behind the old and outdated forms of struggle and organisation. Otherwise the old and outdated forms will become hurdles. Any form of struggle or organisation will not be dependent on our subjective wishes. A form is always related to a particular content. If the objective nature of the forms of struggle and organisation (which means, they are determined by the level of development of content) is ignored that will lead to either sticking to

the outdated forms of struggle and organisation or impetuosity in taking up particular forms of struggle and organisation which are higher than the level of development of the movement. Both are harmful for the development of the movement.

In the communist movement, we can witness a deviation in the form of neglecting the form by considering the content is all the more important. This is nothing but metaphysical understanding of the relation between content and form. An expression of such type of mistake in the revolutionary movement is belittling the importance of the organisation. Mass movements and struggles constitute the important content of the revolutionary movement but without organisational consolidation any mass movement or struggle will dissipate after some time. So a revolutionary party should give due importance to its organisational tasks. Otherwise it cannot lead revolution successfully even though it enjoys good mass base.

Content and form, both are relative in nature. The form in one context may transform into content in another context. In a particular mode of production, the productive forces will form the content and the production relations will be the form. These production relations only form the basis for the socio-economic system. That means, in relation to the socio-economic system, production relations are becoming a part of content. Likewise, a cell will be a part of a party's content. But the same cell forms the primary organisational unit of the party. So it should be understood that cell or committee on one hand will be a part of the content of the party and on the other hand will be one form of the party.

Essence and Appearance

The basic relations and internal laws, which together decide the stability of the mode of existence and development of a particular thing is known as its essence. Essence is the one which expresses the qualities of the thing, especially, the basis of the changing thing which lies deep inside, that is the most stable basic elements and relations of the thing. Essence decides the nature of a thing. It should be noted here that content and essence are not one and the same. The essence is that part of content, which constitute the basic and stable aspects of and the basis of the nature of a thing.

The totality of external characteristics and properties of a thing and its relations with other things is known as appearance. The phenomenon or appearance is nothing but the form of expression of the essence. Appearance will have a direct impact on the five organs of sense. Perception is only the knowledge related to appearance i.e. the first stage of knowledge.

Appearance does not totally encompass essence (form totally encompasses the content). Appearance is only the approximate expression of the essence. Marx said that, if we could have understood the essence by just appearance, all these branches of science would not be necessary. In capitalist system the relation between the labour power and capital is expressed and appears in the form of exchange between two equal values. This is appearance. This does not express the essence of the relation between labour power and capital. The exploitation of surplus in the form of exchange between two equal values is the essence of the relation between capital and labour power. Marx revealed this essence with the help of his theory of surplus value.

The essence of Parliamentary democracy is bourgeois dictatorship. But outwardly it appears as a system of government which functions according to the wishes of the people. By saying dictatorship of the proletariat it appears as a dictatorial system but in essence it is the real democracy of the oppressed masses. Some people, by taking the apparent aspects into account feel that in dictatorship of the proletariat there would be no freedom and liberty. Without recognising the bourgeois essence of the state in Russia, China, and Eastern Europe where capitalism was restored and bourgeois dictatorship was established under the garb of the dictatorship of the proletariat, some show them as examples for the dictatorship of the proletariat where people do not have any democratic rights.

Essence and appearance are the two opposite sides of the same thing. So, separating them is possible only in thought. These two change their places mutually.

“Here too we see a transition, a flow from the one to the other the essence appears; the appearance is essential.” (Lenin Collected Works, p.25)

Essence of a thing lies deep inside. It is not expressed on the surface of a thing. It hides behind the appearance. It cannot be perceived through the sensory organs. Essence can be recognised only through abstract thought. Our process of acquiring knowledge always starts from appearance and reaches the essence. If we don't understand the dialectical relation between essence and appearance, we will fail to recognise the dialectical relation between the perceptual knowledge and the logical knowledge. By reaching the logical knowledge from perceptual knowledge only, we can understand the essence of the thing,

Cause and Effect

Experience of life shows that, in this world any incident or change occurs only due to one or more causes. This relation of cause and effect, reveals the universal relation of one phenomenon or situation giving birth to another phenomenon or situation.

Which creates some phenomenon or situation is known as cause. The result of the working of cause is known as effect. For example, floods will come as a result of rains. All the water sources like wells, tanks, streams and rivers will overflow, here raining is the cause. Floods and the filling up of all the water sources are effects.

This relation of cause and effect is universal. There is no phenomenon thing which is above the relation of cause and effect. This relation is objective. In some specific circumstances specific cause will lead to a specific effect. On heating, iron can be stretched but it cannot be transformed into gold.

Effect following the cause is the major feature of the relation cause and effect. In time cause happens before the effect and the effects happens only after the occurrence of cause.

Is identifying one as cause and the other as effect among two things means that effect is just born out of cause and do not have any impact on cause? The answer is no. Cause and effect have a dialectical relation in which one influences the other. The superstructure (effect) comprising of political, moral, religious, cultural aspects which is the product of mode of production (cause), continuously have impact on the cause. Sometimes it can have a decisive impact too.

Cause and effect can mutually change their places. The cause in one situation can become-effect in some other situation. Effect can transform into cause. On the whole all the phenomena will have mutual relation by being cause on one hand and effect on the other hand.

Water in the wells, streams, rivers and seas because of sunlight evaporates, the evaporated water forms into clouds, these clouds after getting cooled rain and due to this raining the water again gets the water - like this all these changes occur in a chain reaction having universal relation. By observing cause and effect in a totality and not as isolated incidents, it will become clear that every cause can be an effect and every effect can be a cause. It appears to us that cooling of clouds is the cause for rain, if we look at it separately. But that cause is itself determined by another and thus it is an effect too.

“In like manner, we find that cause and effect are conceptions which only hold good in their application to the individual case as such; but as soon as we consider the individual case in its general connection with the universe as a whole, they merge, they dissolve in the concept of universal action and reaction in which causes and effects are constantly changing places, so that what is effect here and now will be cause there and then and vice versa.” (Engels, Anti Duhring, p.27)

For many phenomena, especially for complex phenomena, there will be many causes. But only internal causes, basic causes and principal causes will be decisive. (This aspect was discussed while discussing internal, external contradictions and principal contradiction.)

This relation between cause and effect is very simple and universal. But, this cannot express all relations which are contradictory, universal and real. It can express only a small part of it.

It is of utmost importance to understand the relation between the cause and the effect, in sciences and social practice. By investigating the causes for the harmful and destructive changes, it is possible to restrict their impact or even escape from them. (By discovering the causes for the diseases, it becomes possible to cure them and escape from the dangerous impact on us). Likewise by knowing the useful causes, we are benefited. (By discovering the useful causes to increase the yield of crops, we improve our production methods).

In both, nature and social aspects the relation between cause and effect are objective. In nature, the relation of cause and effect function blindly according to the laws of nature, aimlessly. But in the social aspects, the practice of human beings with a conscious aim shows impact on the relation between cause and effect. At the same time, it must be kept in mind that the impact of the consciously aimed attempt of human beings cannot negate the law governed objective nature of the cause and effect relation.

In the extensive network of the relations of cause and effect, necessity and chance are very important.

Necessity and Spontaneity

By deeply studying the relation of cause and effect, especially, the necessary nature of it, the concept of necessity was formed. Cause and effect relation denotes that in certain conditions certain phenomenon determines some other. Where as necessity shows how under some specific circumstances some specific relations or properties inevitably emerge. Why, 'Imperialism means war?' The capitalist countries in the era of imperialism use war as a means to come out of crisis and eventual downfall by expanding the market. This means that in the era of imperialism, wars are inevitably, essentially born out of the intensified basic contradictions (essence) in the capitalist system. Till the imperialism is there, wars are inevitable. That is why the relation of cause and effect between imperialism and war is a necessity.

Necessity arises out of the essence and internal nature of phenomenon or a thing. Spontaneity or chance need not occur like necessity. The cause for chance lies not in the thing but in the external causes.

Let us assume that in one particular area crops are destroyed because of hailstorm. This destruction of crops is a chance or spontaneous event but not a necessity relating to the crop. That means it did not arise because of the conditions related to cultivation or the internal conditions. It cannot be said that every year crops will definitely be destroyed in that manner. Can we concretely say which soldier will get killed in a war? If looked at from the angle of a soldier, individually, death is only a chance a spontaneous occurrence in a war. Necessity emerges out of the essence

as an inevitability (solution for the internal contradictions in a thing). But chance emerges out of the external conditions of a thing and it is not an essential change, pertaining to the evolution of that thing.

Destruction of crop due to hailstorm is a chance in relation to that area. But in relation to the particular laws of the atmospheric conditions of that area, hailstorm will occur there as a necessity! So, from the point of view of the principles of meteorology, it becomes a necessity. It is because the hailstorm arises from the internal causes of the atmospheric conditions. Whereas in relation to the crop, it was caused because of external causes.

In any war, soldiers' getting killed is an inevitable and necessary eventuality. Looked at from the angle of individual soldiers, it is a chance. Like wise, unemployment is a necessary eventuality of capitalist system. But which worker loses his job is a chance.

The above examples are making two things clear; one is the relative nature of the necessity and spontaneity, and the second is necessity coming into force only through chance or spontaneous events.

We can recognise the necessity only through the incidents of chance and understand it by observing them. Only by recognising the necessity hidden behind the spontaneity, we can hasten the social evolution. Today, only because of the intensification of the basic contradictions in the society, revolutionary situation is necessarily growing. But this revolutionary situation is gaining expression through spontaneous struggles arising in different areas assuming different forms.

For a thing, necessity is that which dictates the evolution of a thing, whereas chance incidents arise out of the conditions present external to the thing, but they will have an impact on the evolution of the thing. But, chance acts as a supplement to necessity.

Incidents of chance will remain as supplement to necessity. But only through incidents of chance necessity will come into force. It should be kept in mind that necessity and chance have a dialectical unity. Otherwise it leads to conclusions like everything is pre-determined, all the happenings in the world occur in a lawless and chaotic way and the reasons for this can not be found out etc. These two trends reject the conscious practice of human beings.

The recognition of necessity is not for its own sake but to mould practice in accordance with it and to bring in the desired change with conscious effort. Capitalism socialized production to such an extent that the negation of private property became inevitable and necessary. Mere recognition of this fact does not bring in communism automatically. The conscious efforts of the proletariat to bring in the social change are also necessary. To make this point clear Mao emphasized this aspect of conscious practice and said freedom is not the mere recognition of necessity but acting according to it too. (We will discuss the relation, freedom and necessity in historical materialism part.)

Possibility and Reality

The basic pre-conditions, causes and conditions needed for the emergence of a new thing, together known as possibility. This means, every thing which is in existence, is emerged out of possibility. A new thing means a developing thing. But it does not emerge suddenly. At first, specific conditions useful for it and the aspects needed for its birth are created. Later with the ripening, development of those conditions and aspects and through the operation of objective laws a new thing or phenomenon will emerge. These conditions which have existence in the old one and needed for the emergence of a new one are known as possibilities.

The development of capitalism itself ripened the conditions for the collective ownership of means of production. Hence, the capitalism which is old and in existence, itself contained the 'possibility' for the birth of communism which is new.

The category reality is in use both in its broader sense and also in the limited sense. In the broader sense, reality means every thing which exists in the objective world. In a limited sense, reality denotes, only the achieved and formed possibility. Here we are concerned with the later usage of the category.

Possibility transforming into reality is often, protracted and arduous. In nature, for the transformation of possibility into reality, only objective conditions are sufficient. In a forest, when the seeds fall at a place where suitable land, temperature, moisture etc., are present, transformation of those seeds into plants is possible. But in a social life along with the

objective conditions, human being's conscious attempt, that is, subjective conditions also play an important role in changing the possibility into reality. It is not possible for capitalism to transform itself into communism. Only through the conscious attempt of waging class struggle by the proletariat the possibility of communism can transform into reality.

That means, by identifying the possibilities and conscious effort, human beings can try to transform possible phenomena favourable to them into reality. Unfavourable and disastrous possibilities can be prevented from turning in to reality. So, the achieved and really formed possibility is reality.

Marxist dialectics recognise the difference between abstract and real possibilities. When all the suitable conditions are formed for the transformation of possibility into reality, then that possibility is known as real possibility. When a possibility exists in accordance with the laws of nature and society, but the conditions needed for the transformation of possibility into reality are not yet formed, then that possibility is known as abstract possibility.

The possibility of liberating all the colonies and countries from colonial exploitation is a real possibility and in fact that process is continuing today. Humanity attaining communism is an abstract possibility today. But this abstract possibility gets transformed into a real possibility with the victory of socialist revolution. So, the difference between the abstract possibility and real possibility is a relative one. In the process of development abstract possibility can change into real possibility. In fact, many abstract possibilities will be in the process of transforming into real possibilities.

In the process of everyday practice of changing the world, people identify the internal possibilities of the world and try to change it into reality.

Marxist Theory of Knowledge

The branch of philosophy, which discusses the aspect, whether there is unity between existence, the second side of the basic philosophical question and thought, is known as epistemology.

Theory of knowledge is the one which explains the general principles related to the development of the thought process of human beings. We have already discussed that the principles of objective dialectics and principles of dialectics of thought are one and the same. So the Marxist theory of knowledge analyses the development in human thought with a dialectical materialistic approach.

“In the theory of knowledge, as in every other branch of science, we must think dialectically, that is we must not regard our knowledge as readymade and unalterable, but must determine how knowledge emerges from ignorance, how incomplete, inexact knowledge becomes more complete and more exact.” (Lenin, Empirio Criticism, P. 111)

Subjective idealists like Berkeley, Hume and Machist think that, things do not have an existence except in the thoughts and feelings of human beings. Objective idealists think that the materialist world has its existence in the external consciousness, which is said to be above the materialist world. It means, all the idealists refuse to recognise the objective existence of this materialist world. Hence, in their view knowledge is purely subjective.

Marxist philosophy begins with the understanding that this materialist world does possess the objective existence. Materialist world or things exist independently outside human consciousness and feelings (perceptions).

“The objective reality is independent of consciousness and sensations and exists external to us.” (Lenin, Empirio Criticism, P.103)

This in the view of Marxists, knowledge is the objective world reflected in human thought. So it can be said that, the properties and laws of the material world reflected in human thought can be called as knowledge. Recognising the fact that the materialist world—things and processes in it as the sources of knowledge will be the basis for the Marxist theory of knowledge.

Marxist theory of knowledge recognises perceptions as the reflection of the material reality. We have already discussed in the third chapter, that reflection is a quality of all the things. But in the highly developed living beings this reflection assumes the form of perceptions.

The materialist world around the human being evocates, i.e., reflects the perceptions with the help of five sense organs. There is no doubt in saying, the objective world is the basic factor for perceptions. But Marxist theory of knowledge, understands this reflection and the perceptions differently from the previous materialists. In the view of the materialists before Marxism, perceptions meant the non-living reflection of the material world. The material world reflected in the human brain through perceptions is just the mirror image in their view. Against this one sided dogmatic understanding, Lenin explained perception as the result of the action and reaction between the individual who is getting the perceptions (subject), and the thing which is reflected (object). That means, the image formed in the individuals (subject) mind, do not solely depend on the properties of the object. It also depends on the screen on which the image is being formed (for example animals like fishes, tortoises and lizards cannot see light blue and dark blue. Honeybees cannot see red and orange colours. Likewise we can hear sounds in a certain frequency band only. We can see the light only within a certain wavelength. Dogs can perceive different smells than us. But in the process of evolution, the human organs (eye, nose, ear etc.) got adjusted, and have been coordinated in such a way that they give the best reflection of the objective reality.

Likewise, experience (repetition of perceptions) also, plays an important role in the formation of an image. For example, when we see our home from a distance, the image of the home reflected in our eyes will be very small. But the idea about the size of the home the picture formed in our mind about the home will be as big as the home.

That means, though what reflects in perceptions is nothing but the objective reality, the perceptions do contain a subjective aspect too. Because of this subjective part in perceptions, illusions and wrong images about the thing form in the human consciousness.

“The approach of the (human) mind to a particular thing, the taking of a copy (= a concept) of it is not a simple, immediate act, a dead mirroring, but one which is complex, split into two, zig zag like which includes the possibility of the flight of fantasy from life.” (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 38, p.370)

This subjective part of consciousness does not only have an aspect

of weakness, it also has a positive aspect. This subjective part makes it possible for the human consciousness and thinking to visualise the future with a scientific and realistic view. This subjective part is responsible for the creativity and the capacity for an artistic creation present in the human consciousness. In spite of all this, this does not reject the objectivity of perceptions. The objective world is the essence of perceptions. Objective reality alone determines the perceptions and mental images.

Already it has been stated that the theory of knowledge, which says, that the human thought cannot reflect or totally reflect the existence of materialist world, is known as agnosticism. Agnostics think that man cannot recognise the truth about the materialist world. Opposing to this, man can recognise the truth about the materialist world, will be the basis for the Marxist theory of knowledge.

Kant's idea, the 'thing-in-itself' is recognising the objective nature of the materialist world. Till this point, his view is materialistic. But Kant thinks that the thing-for-itself will remain like that forever. In this aspect he is an agnostic. Rejecting Kant's agnosticism, Engels says the thing-for-itself will not remain forever like that, but agnostic becomes gnostic and thing-in-itself transforms into the 'thing-for-us'. He says:

"If we are able to prove the correctness of our understanding of a natural process by making it serve our own purposes into the bargain, then it's all over with the kantian ungraspable "thing-in-itself." The chemical substances produced in the bodies of plants and animals remained such "things-in-themselves" until organic chemistry began to produce them one after another, whereupon the "thing-in-itself" became a thing-to-us, as for example, alizarin the colourous matter of madder, which we no longer trouble to grow in the madder roots in the field but produce much more cheaply and simply from coal tar." (Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, P.10)

While criticizing Russian Machists, Lenin explained this as follows:

"There is definitely no difference in principle between the phenomenon and the thing-in-itself, and there cannot be any such difference. The only difference is between what is known and what is not yet known. And philosophical inventions of specific boundaries

*between the one and the other, inventions to the effect that the thing-in-itself is 'beyond' phenomena (Kant). Or that we can and must fence ourselves off by some philosophical partition from the problems of a world which in one part or another is still unknown but which exists outside us (Hume) – all this is the sheerest nonsense, **Schrulle**, crotchet, fantasy.” (Lenin, Empirio-criticism, p.103)*

In the view of Marxist philosophy, the need and utility of the acquisition of knowledge relating to the world is social practice. That is why, in Marxist theory of knowledge, social practice is the key aspect. As opposed, to this, idealism and the materialists before Marx rejected the role of social practice in the process of acquiring knowledge. Marxism regards the conscious human attempt to change the nature and society, as practice. Hence, practice means, social production, class struggle and scientific experiment.

It has been already discussed that, in the process of doing labour and in the process of social practice alone, man transformed into a conscious living being and human consciousness developed. So when, if we say that, knowledge is a product of social practice, we must remember that it is primarily the product of the practice related to social production. The unique characteristic of Marxist theory of knowledge is, the recognition of the social nature of knowledge and its inseparable relation with practice.

Agnostics believe that, in fact, the knowledge we acquire through perceptions is only impressions created by the physical things, but not the things themselves and the properties of the things and we can never cognise them. Engels while saying, practice is the yardstick of knowledge says,

“It appears that it is undoubtedly difficult to defeat the argumentation. But before argument there is practice. The proof of the pudding lies in eating.” (Engels, Socialism: Utopian Scientific)

Two stages in the process of acquiring knowledge

The process of acquiring knowledge by human being passes through two stages. The first one is the stage of perceptual knowledge. The second one is the stage of logical knowledge. For all our knowledge perceptions by organs is the basis.

“Save through sensations, we can know nothing either of the forms of matter or of the forms of motion; sensations are evoked by the action of matter in motion upon our sense-organs.” (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.14, P.302)

In the process of practice, man first sees only phenomenon, separate aspects of things and their external relations. This is the perceptual stage of cognition. That means, the stage of perception and impression of knowledge. In this stage, all the specific things first act on the organs of knowledge evocate perceptions; create many impressions along with a broad image of their external relations. This is the first-stage in cognition. In this stage, man cannot formulate deep impressions.

From here onwards, in the continuation, of social practice, in the process of practice of man, the knowledge percepts, impressions and the causes for that recognition are repeated many times. Then in the human mind, a sudden leap will occur in the process of cognition. Ideas will form. These ideas grasp the essence of the things, the totality and the interconnections. There is difference between ideas and knowledge percepts, not only in quantity but also in quality. Going further, by testing and making judgments and by deriving some inferences, we can come to logical decisions. This is the second stage in cognition. This stage is an important stage in the whole process of knowing a thing. This is the stage of rational knowledge.

Reaching thought from perception means, step by step understanding the internal contradictions and laws of the real things and the interrelations between one process and the other. It means reaching logical knowledge is the main task of cognition.

This theory of the dialectical process of development of knowledge, which depends on practice, progressing towards deeper knowledge from superficial knowledge, was not formulated by anyone, before the emergence of Marxism. Marxism-Leninism believes that the two stages of the process of knowing, yet have their own properties, knowledge will be perceptual knowledge at the lower stage and changes into logical knowledge in the higher stage, but even both of these are stages in the single process of cognition. Perceptive and rational both these stager are qualitatively different. But these two are mutually dependent. They unite on the basis of practice.

“From living perception to abstract thought, and from this to practice, such is the dialectical path of the cognition of truth.” (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.38, p.171)

Perception can resolve the problem of only phenomenon or appearance. Theory alone can resolve the problem of essence. But the resolution of both these problems are inseparable from practice. If a person wants to know one thing, there is no other alternative than living in its atmosphere (Practice). Basically, the active task of knowledge lies in the leap from logical knowledge to practice.

Does the knowledge earned at the stage of logical knowledge conform to reality or not? Is it useful for social practice? What is the yardstick of this?

In the stage of perception or stage of logic we cannot find a solution for the problem whether there is conformity between the knowledge we acquire and the physical reality. But only when we direct the logical knowledge towards social practice and apply theory to practice, we can find a solution for this problem. As Lenin said *“In the theory of knowledge, the first and the primary most aspect is the view of life and view of practice.”* The theory which does not have any relation with revolutionary practice or do not transform into revolutionary practice will become aimless. Practice, which does not have any relation with theory, will grope in darkness.

In the process of practice to change the nature or world, it is not possible to attain ideas, theories, plans and programs of human beings, without any change. Because, human beings who desire to change the reality, are bound by many limitations. Apart from this, the development of the material conditions, the level of its expression also creates limitations. That is why many unexpected conditions arise in the process of practice. As a result, the ideas, theories, plans and programs already decided will change. It means, the ideas decided before will fail to reflect the reality. Either totally or partially they are wrong. In the process of rectifying these mistakes, one has to restart from the stage of perception and reach the logical knowledge. Then we get an opportunity to rectify the mistakes in the previous knowledge. Like this, by testing the knowledge in practice, our knowledge will get enriched.

Practice, knowledge; again practice, again knowledge the process is uninterruptedly repeated. With every circle, the essence of practice and knowledge will attain a higher stage. In case of mass line also the same process will continue.

“. . . take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are preserved in and carried through. And soon, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time.” (Mao, Selected Works, Vol.III, P.119)

Perceptual Knowledge and Logical Knowledge: Metaphysical Method

With the metaphysical method, which refuses to recognise the dialectical unity between the two stages in the process of acquiring knowledge, two problems arise. They are: 1. Between direct knowledge and indirect knowledge, which is primary? 2. Whether perceptual knowledge is a standard one or logical knowledge. These two questions arise because of the separation and counter position of the two stages in the process of acquiring knowledge.

Direct knowledge, indirect knowledge: The knowledge which is acquired through the person by direct self-experience is direct knowledge. If he receives the knowledge from others' direct self-experience it is indirect knowledge. A person's knowledge will include both, the direct and indirect knowledge. The subjectivist trend, which treats subjective experiences as standard, rejects the importance of indirect knowledge. The accumulated knowledge in the process of the development of human society is passed on to us as a legacy. Rejecting the indirect knowledge means, rejecting the results of the generations of development of the society and thought.

Empiricism and Rationalism: The Empiricist school of subjective idealism arises from the argument that the stage of perceptual knowledge

alone is important in the process of acquiring knowledge. Whereas, the Rationalist school of subjective idealism arises from the rejection of importance of sensations and experience and consideration of the logical stage of cognition alone important. Thus, it becomes crystal clear that, if the unity between the stages of perceptual knowledge and logical knowledge gets destroyed, it will lead to idealism.

Marxist understanding about truth

Truth means the human consciousness, which correctly reflected the reality of the thing and tested in practice. Though it arises in the human mind, truth is objective, but not subjective.

“To regard our sensations as images of the external world, to recognize objective truth, to hold the materialist theory of knowledge – These are all one and the same thing.” (Lenin, Empirio-criticism, p. 115)

Truth will always be objective. It is because, objective reality which is the basis for truth exists outside the human consciousness. Lenin stressed that human consciousness and the essence of thought is objective truth irrespective of the wishes of humans. The fact that how much do we know about the objective truth and the world around us, depends on the specific stage of social development and the technological development achieved by science at that particular time. But, we must keep in mind that, they can decide only to what extent our knowledge is comparable, but cannot reject the objective nature of the truth.

Absolute truth-Relative truth

The aspects, which cannot be proved wrong or at least partially wrong, and perfectly known, are called absolute truth. Aspects like, “the earth is spherical” and “class struggle is the motive force of society,” are absolute truths.

Relative truths are the aspects, which can be proved wrong or partially wrong, in future with the progress of science. Scientific truths express relative truths. It means, at that specific point of time, they cannot reveal the physical reality totally-and some of them can be rejected in future. In this angle, scientific truths are relative. But it should be kept in mind that the relative truth is a forward step in the direction of absolute

truth.

Can human consciousness express, the objective truth wholly, absolutely at one time? Since the world is never ending and uninterruptedly progressive, it is not possible to acquire total knowledge about the world at any specific stage of acquiring the knowledge. In this sense, the human knowledge can express only relative truth. But always the direction and aim of knowledge acquisition will be towards absolute truth.

Idealists fail to recognise the objective nature of the truth. Absolute truth means, the total and comprehensive knowledge of the objective truth. So rejecting the objective truth means rejecting the absolute truth.

“To be a materialist is to acknowledge objective truth, which is revealed to us by our sense-organs. To acknowledge objective truth, i.e., truth not dependent upon man or mankind is, in one way or another, to recognise absolute truth.” (Lenin, Empirio-criticism, p.117)

Lenin criticised absolute relativism, which recognises only the relative nature of truth and rejects the absolute nature of it. Marxist philosophy recognises the dialectical relation between the relative and absolute truths.

“Human thought then by its nature is capable of giving, and does give, absolute truth, which is compounded of a sum-total of relative truths. Each step in the development of science adds new grains to the sum of absolute truth, but the limits of the truth of each scientific proposition are relative, now expanding, now shrinking with the growth of knowledge.” (Lenin, Empirio-criticism, p.119)

The difference between relative and absolute truths is determined by how near or how far human knowledge is to reality.

In principle, it can be said that man can gain the absolute truth. This means, recognising that there are no limitations for the human capacity in acquiring knowledge.

But the knowledge of a specific person or generation will always be relative. It means, at one level it will have a difference with reality. It is impossible to know the absolute truth at a time. Knowing absolute

truth at a time means the process of acquiring knowledge is over. We must not forget that the world is unending and also the process of acquiring knowledge is unending. Depending on the development of society and progress of science, human knowledge becomes more close to the absolute truth every passing day. Knowledge is progressing in this process only.

IV. Historical Materialism

How did human society come into existence? How it is moving and developing? In which direction it is moving? Man has been in quest of answers to these questions from ancient time. From the ancient times, in all class based socio-economic systems the propertied classes alone ruled the intellectual activity. As a result, idealistic conception of society, development of society and history prevailed dominant till recently. The idealist conception of society and history manifested itself in diverse forms such as believing divine forces responsible for the existence and development of society, considering individual capabilities of heroes and great persons as the motive forces of history and viewing thoughts and ideas of great men as the cause of the progress of society.

Materialistic conception of history began with the advent of Marxism. Opposing the religious, idealistic and metaphysical materialistic views, Marx and Engels interpreted the entire history of human society from the standpoint of dialectical materialism. In this process, they formulated historical materialism as the science of general, basic laws that govern the development of society.

“...we live not only in nature but also in human society, and it too no less than nature has its historical development and its science, It was therefore a question of bringing the science of society, i.e. totality of the so-called historical and philosophical sciences, into harmony with the materialist base, and of reconstructing it on this base.”(Ludwig Fuerbach, p.25)

Historical materialism means, the dialectical materialism applied to human society and its development and history.

“Historical materialism is the extension of the principles of dialectical materialism to the study of social life, an application of the principles of dialectical materialism to the phenomena of the life of society, to the study of society and of its history.” (Stalin, Dialectical

and historical materialism, p.1.)

In contrast to other sciences, historical materialism studies the general characteristics, structure of society, the action and reaction between the various aspects of social life, general principles of society's development and motive forces. It studies these problems with dialectical materialist outlook. So, it studies aspects like, the relationship between the materialist and idealist aspects of social life, the relation between chance and conscious acts in the historical processes, relationship between the objective and subjective aspects, motive forces responsible for social change, essence of human beings and man's place in the world. Hence historical materialism is the philosophical science of society. It is an inseparable part of Marxist philosophy. It creates basis for all social sciences

Laws of nature and laws of development of Society

Historical materialism treats the human society as an inseparable part of nature. Hence all the most general laws of nature are applicable to human society too.

“...what is true of nature, is like wise true of the history of society in all its branches and of the totality of all sciences.... Here, therefore, just as in the realm of nature it was a question of doing away with these manufactured, artificial interconnections by finding the real ones – a task ultimately amounting to the discovery of general laws of motion...”
(Engels, Ludwig Fuerbach, p.44)

Just like the laws of dialectical materialism, the laws of historical materialism are also objective. Of course it doesn't mean there is no difference between them. The laws of nature blindly come into operation on themselves. Whereas the social laws come into operation only through the conscious activities of men aimed at concrete objectives. When we are saying that, the new production relations will come into existence in place of old obsolete relations of production, it doesn't mean they will come into operation on their own. Only through the conscious activities of men who stand as the classes representing the productive forces, the new production relations will come into existence.

By saying this, are we denying the objective nature of social laws?

No, not at all. The laws of society will come into operation only through the conscious activities of men, but not according to their will. In the primitive society the women who brought about the pairing marriage, never imagined that they are thus paving the way for the loss of mother right. The broad masses who stood as the motive forces of the bourgeoisie democratic revolution only thought of their liberation from the yoke of feudalism, but not able to foresee the victory of the revolution will shackle them with wage slavery. The capitalists increase production to maximize individual profits, but by doing so they unintentionally drag the economy into crises of over production.

Even though humans always carry on consciously determined activities, the social laws which come into operation amidst and as a result of those activities always remain independent of the will of the people who undertake those activities. Quite often they result in contrary to and in opposition to the will of them. Engels explained it in this way:

“In one point, however, the history of the development of society proves to be essentially different from that of nature. In nature- in so far as we ignore man’s reaction on nature – there are only blind, unconscious agencies acting on one another, out of whose interplay the general law comes into operation... in the history of society the actors are all endowed with consciousness, are men acting with deliberation or passion, working towards goals; nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim, but this distinction, important, as it is for historical investigation, particularly of specific epochs and events, cannot alter the fact that the course of history is governed by inner general laws. For here too, in spite of every individual’s consciously desired aims, superficially accident seems to prevail on the whole.... The conflicts of innumerable individual will and entirely analogous to that prevailing in the realms of unconscious nurture.... thus by and large historical events also appear to be governed by chance. But wherever accident superficially holds sway, it is always governed by hidden inner laws and it is only a matter of discovering these laws.” (Engels, Ludwig Fuerbach, FLP, Peking 1976,pp.45-46)

Social existence-Social consciousness

It is the social existence of human beings that decides their social consciousness. It is the basic principle of historical materialism. In a nutshell, this is the materialistic conception of history. This principle resolves the basic philosophical question of the human society.

In the process of production of their means of existence, men establish material relations between man and nature and among themselves. These material relations always remain independent of the humans and constitute the social existence.

Whereas the opinions, ideas, theories (political, legal, religious etc.), social psychology of classes, nationalities and other historical human groups together constitute social consciousness.

What is meant by, social existence deciding social consciousness? Social ideas or theories do not emerge spontaneously. Because, any class or group or individual exists, thinks and acts only in a particular socio-economic-historical setting. We cannot even imagine their existence or consciousness by disregarding the determining influence of those concrete conditions. New ideas and theories appear to be created in the minds of some individuals but they are not individual. Ultimately, their social existence is the one, which is the basis for these new ideas and theories. It is true that Marx and Engels created a new revolutionary theory, Marxism. But it should be noted that, Marxism emerged out of historical necessity and need of the struggle of proletariat in the concrete historical conditions in which proletariat emerged as a new motive force of history and struggling with capitalism, as the basic contradictions of capitalism are sharpening. It should be kept in mind that, the society already created the material basis for the emergence of Marxism. Hence, it is wrong to think that if Marx and Engels had born in the slave society they would have created Marxism then itself. The ideas theories etc., which appear to be of individuals, are ultimately determined by specific economic and historical conditions. Old materialists failed in recognizing this fact.

“The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life-process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.” (Marx, German Ide-

ology)

Necessity and Freedom

Unlike laws of nature, laws of society come into operation through the conscious activity of human beings who play active role. This fact does not reject the objective nature of the laws of society. Then, what is the relationship between the objective laws of nature and society, and the conscious activity of man? What is the role of man's conscious activity in the process of historical development? To say differently can man become master of his own fate? Can man become free? Or has he had to become slave to the natural laws? In brief, what is the relation between necessity and freedom?

The relation between freedom and necessity has been an age-old debating point. In these two categories, 'necessity' is a general philosophical category, whereas 'freedom' is a category of historical materialism. All the objective laws which govern the motion and development of nature and society and the consequences of those laws are all inevitable and of necessity. As all these laws are external and objective, human will or activities cannot influence them. If so, isn't man a helpless spectator before necessity? Isn't the man's conscious effort to achieve his chosen objectives a futile one? Isn't the recognition of necessity means adopting fatalism?

Recognition of necessity doesn't mean neither the negation of man's freedom nor the freedom of will. It is not belittling the role of conscious activities of man in social evolution. It is determinism that regards necessity as such and asks for the complete submission of man to necessity. The karma siddanta of Indian idealism also belongs to such determinism.

Contrary to this determinism, there is another tendency, which negates any external influence on or limitation to man's freedom and freedom of will. Existentialists in particular consider freedom exclusively individual. These two approaches place freedom and necessity one against the other and consider them incompatible.

The relationship between necessity and freedom is not one sided but dialectical. Historical materialism recognizes this dialectical relationship. It defines freedom, as the recognition of necessity and achiev-

ing desired objectives through acting in accordance with that necessity. Engels summarized the same as: *“freedom is the recognition of necessity.”*

Historical materialism studies and investigates the motive forces of history and its laws only to change society and nature so as to better the social life. That means the aim of moulding social practice through recognizing necessity is the intrinsic attribute of historical materialism. Man attains freedom to that extent he understands the laws of nature and society. Thus freedom is not the freedom from objective laws, man could act according to his arbitrary will.

“For until we know a law of nature it, existing and acting independently of and outside our mind, makes us slaves of “blind necessity”. But once we come to know this law, which acts (as Marx repeated a thousand times) independently of our will and our mind, we become the masters of nature. The mastery of nature manifested in human practice is a result of an objectively correct reflection within the human head of the phenomena and process of nature...” (Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-criticism, Progress Publishers, 1977.pp. 172-173)

Recognition of necessity does not mean simply recognition but practicing according to the necessity. Invention of fire, Engel said, liberated man even more profoundly than that of the invention of steam engine. The great freedom thus attained by mankind is not a result of mere invention of fire, but by using the invention to control and utilize a natural force.

“Freedom does not consist in an imaginary independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws and in the possibility which is then given of systematically making them work towards definite ends.” (Anti-Duhring, p.144)

The devastating natural phenomenon such as cyclonic storms, hurricanes, earth quacks and volcanic eruptions are essentially result from necessity. Can man prevent them? Freedom is neither the prevention of necessary phenomena, nor the ability to act at will against objective laws. By recognizing the necessity man can utilize the possibilities inherent in the necessary phenomenon either to hasten their favorable influences or to escape from or to limit their devastating effects. Man

can make conscious effort to limit or escape from the adverse effects of the destructive phenomena by understanding their necessity and recognizing them in advance. To that extent he achieves freedom.

Revolution is a class war. Even though, losses in this war are inevitable revolutionary party can limit the devastating effects of this war on revolutionary forces by recognizing the necessity i.e. by studying the laws of war. By doing this alone it can achieve upper hand over its enemies. True, people are invincible, but only when they recognize and act in accordance with necessity. The revolution will become victorious only when the proletarian party lead the masses in accordance with the objective laws of peoples war.

The technical precautions of revolutionaries are meant for limiting the necessary devastating effects of the repressive measures of reactionary state. Those are the result of the experiences of revolutionary struggles and wars of the revolutionary masses worldwide past and present. They were drawn from the recognition and understanding the objective laws of i.e. necessity of those struggles and wars. Revolutionaries, by recognizing this necessity and moulding their revolutionary practice accordingly can limit the effects of the offensive measures of reactionary forces. Ignoring the principles of peoples' war or the technical precautions is nothing but rejecting to act according to necessity. Through such a practice one cannot get freedom, but become a slave to necessity.

So, freedom or freedom of will is nothing but the capacity to make judgment on the basis of factual knowledge. *“Therefore the freer a man’s judgment is in relation to a definite question, the greater is the necessity with which the content of this judgment will be determined ... Freedom therefore consists in command over ourselves and over external nature, a command founded on knowledge of natural necessity; it is therefore necessarily a product of historical development.”* (Ibid, p.144)

Mankind achieved control over natural forces only through recognizing necessity and shaping their activities in accordance with it.

“The first men who separated themselves from the animal kingdom were in all essentials as unfree as the animals themselves, but

each step forward in civilization was a step towards freedom.” (Ibid.)

Mode of Production: The Material Basis of Social Life

Society means human life, which branched off from the evolution of nature and developing historically. Thus human beings are the most basic element of society. There is no society at all without human beings. Yet, we shall not consider society as just a mass of human beings. Society means a historically formed human community, inseparably tied with definite economic relations that establish in the process of material production along with corresponding social, political and cultural processes dependent on those relations.

Production is the most fundamental activity of all the human activities. Production of means of subsistence by man distinguishes him from the animals. The man, separated from animal stage, started making goods for his necessities by labouring over the nature using instruments of labour. Production began, when the ancient man learnt to make the instruments of labour. We call it as production, when a thing is made by labouring nature or objects of labour using instruments of labour with a definite aim of producing means of subsistence. Labour and production were begun when the ancient man learnt making stone tools (whatever primitive they were), the first instruments of labour. Labour made man a social being. More over, it played a key role in the development of his physical and mental powers. Therefore Engels said: *“In a sense labour created man.”*

Material dependence and relations with one another during the process of labour and production is inevitable. The human relations formed in the process of production are the basis for the formation of the society. It is from this base all non-economic aspects of society such as politics, culture, etc. originate. Thus these non-economic aspects of social life are called as super structure. The entire social structure consists of the base and the superstructure together called as socio-economic formation. The struggle of two opposites in the mode of production is itself the motive force of the process of development of human society, which is progressing through different historical stages.

Recognition of mode of production as the material base of social life is the important aspect of materialistic conception of his-

tory.

The human society developed through different stages from the first social system, i.e., primitive society to the present day's capitalist society. With the advent of new mode of production entire socio-economic formation reaches to a new and higher stage and thus all the stages in the history of the human society are different stages in the development of mode of production. Society developed in a process in which formation of new socio-economic formations in accordance with the establishment of new modes of production corresponding to the level of development of the society. So the history of the human society can be stated as the history of the modes of production. Then what acts as the motive force of the history of society?

The contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations, which are the two sides of the modes of production, is the motive force of human society. It is because of this struggle of the opposites, the society is progressing through different stages.

Productive forces: In a sense, production is the struggle of human being against the nature. Production, primarily is the effort to convert the natural resources into useful goods for daily use for human life. Whether the peasant growing crops, potter making the pot, workers weaving cloth, manufacturing rail engine or rocket, all these are the processes of converting the natural resources into useful goods for human beings. All the things and forces used by human being for producing goods are known as productive forces. Productive forces can be broadly divided into two, one is means of production and the second is the human labour. Labour means the the labourers who produce (peasants, workers and artisans).

Means of production: Material constituents of productive forces are means of production. Land, mines, forests, raw materials, ploughs, axes, looms, machines, all these material things are the means of production, useful for production. Among these, ploughs, axes, looms, machines are means of labour and land, mines, forests and raw materials are objects of labour.

Labourers with the help of these means of labour apply their labour power on the objects of labour. As a result objects of labour get

converted into necessary goods for the daily life. It means, labourers labour with the help of means of labour.

Labour and means of production, both are necessary to produce any article. Without any one of these it is impossible to produce any article. It means both the material and human aspects are necessary for production.

Production relations: Productive forces represent only one side of the mode of production. The relations that develop among the human beings during the process of production are known as production relations or economic relations. It is true that production is possible only with productive forces, but one should remember that without relations among the human beings who participate in the process of production, the productive forces couldn't function unitedly. In capitalist production, means of production and labour act together only due to the production relation, capitalists and labourers. Production comes to standstill whenever the relation breaks up due to lockouts, strikes, etc.

Productive forces always exist and function within a definite set of production relations. Particular production relations come into existence in accordance with the level of development of productive forces. Thus they form a unity in mode of production. Without this unity production is impossible. Besides this unity there is correspondence between productive forces and production relations. The production relations should correspond to the level of development of productive forces at that stage and contribute to their development.

Production relations determine the nature of mode of production. Change in the production relations means the total change in the mode of production, which forms the basis for that society. (Dissolution of the relation capitalist-worker means the dissolution of capitalist mode of production; dissolution of the relation landlord-peasant means dissolution of feudalism.) So it can be said that, history of human society is nothing but the history of production relations.

Productive forces and production relations: Two opposites in the mode of production

Between the productive forces and production relations apart from

unity, there is also struggle. These two are two opposites of mode of production. It is because of the struggle between these two opposites, the mode of production leaps to another stage and society progresses from one stage to another. Thus the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations can be said as the motive force for the society.

Among productive forces and productive relations the productive forces are always in motion. Continuous change and development is their character. In the productive forces, the means of labour in particular more active. With the arrival of new means of labour, the productive forces as a whole develop. Production relations are more stable than productive forces. They remain stable throughout a social stage. With the establishment of suitable production relations for a particular stage of development, they create favorable conditions for the development of the productive forces. As a result productive forces develop. But the production relations will remain constant throughout that stage. After a particular stage of development of the productive forces, the contradiction between productive forces and production relations will become acute. The same production relations, which helped the development of productive forces, will then become fetters. A situation will arise in which the productive forces cannot develop further or remain in the same framework of those production relations. As a result, in place of the old production relations, new production relations will develop which are in tune with the stage of development. The replacement of new production relations in place of the old will occur only through social revolution. It is because the social forces representing the old production relations will resist the change in the production relations. New productive forces have to destroy the old production relations by applying force and bring in new production relations. These new production relations will be in tune with the productive forces of that particular period and help them to develop. Even with the formation of new production relations, the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations will not come to an end. After some period these new production relations will become hurdles for the development of the productive forces. The society will again enter into the stage of social revolution. The revolution, which takes place at the level of economic base, the whole society will enter another new and higher

stagee. The superstructure will also totally get transformed.

“In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.”

“It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or - this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms - with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. In studying such transformations it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic - in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as one does not judge an individual by what he thinks about himself, so one cannot judge such a period of transformation by its consciousness, but, on the contrary, this consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the conflict existing between the social forces of production and the relations of production. ...Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production may be designated as epochs marking progress in the economic development of society.” (Marx, A contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, pp.20 -21)

Base - Superstructure

Production activities are the most primary aspects among the social activities of the human beings. But it is not the only thing. Non-economic social activities like political, religious, philosophical, liter-

ary, art and cultural fields are also very important in human life. They constitute the superstructure. Because basing on the economic basis of production, the superstructure arises with philosophical, political, justice, moral, religious, literary, art and cultural fields. The aspects of superstructure, not only originate from the economic base, but also help to save and strengthen the economic base from which it originates. But at the same time, we should not ignore the dialectical relation between the base and superstructure. By saying base determines the superstructure, it does not mean that aspects of superstructure do not have any role to play in the progress of the society. It should be noted that, aspects of superstructure and base, both influence each other and act and react continuously.

Some misinterpret Marxism by saying that, Marxism considers the mode of production as the sole determining factor that determines everything and that it rejects the active role of various components of superstructure. They criticise Marxism by naming it as “economic determinism”. Marxism is dead against the economic determinism. Historical materialism recognises the dialectical unity and mutual relation between the base and superstructure. Not only this, it also recognises the mutual unity and reaction among various components of the superstructure.

“According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Neither Marx nor I have ever asserted more than this. Therefore if somebody twits this into saying that the economic factor is the only determining one, he is transforming that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various components of the super-structure - political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases determine their form in particular. There is an interaction of all these elements.” (Marx - Engels Selected correspondence, p.75)

When the old production relations become fetters to the development of society (development of productive forces), the super structure built on the basis of that mode of production plays a reactionary role. The struggle to over through the obsolete production relations should

also aim at the overthrow of the obsolete superstructure. Along with the new production relations the new super structure also develops.

In the process of its historical development, society passed through various socio-economic formations. The transformation of socio-economic formation from lower level to higher level is always the developmental course of society. Society always develops towards a higher-level socio-economic formation.

Development of human society – a brief account

The progress of human society, from its inception i.e. from the separation of humans from animal state till today, took place in diverse forms and courses in different periods and different times. It is common to ruling class historians to describe the thousands of years of human progress, as a bunch of separate events and its course determined by the will and acts of great personalities or is predetermined by divinely forces like God. But with the advent of materialistic conception of history, the history of human society became a science. The dialectical materialistic conception of history revealed that, the objective laws, which are as accurate as those of natural sciences, govern the development of human society too.

It is the production of means of existence, the basic characteristic that separates man from animal and the mode of production and the human relations that formed in the process of production forms the basis of human society.

“The evolution of human society has gone far enough for us to identify three main stages, corresponding to successive advances in the mode of productions: pre-class society, class society, and the classless society of the future.” (George Thomson, cited by D.Chattopadhyaya, Religion and Society, p.21)

Let us see the process of development of human society, which proceeds in the process of development of new and decay and extinction of the old, and in the process of negation of old socio-economic formation and new taking its place. Casting history into preconceived ideological frameworks is alien to Marxism and in fact, quite contrary to the marxist methodology. Here we are trying to describe a broad and general picture of the development of human society. Marxism, in no

way denies the fact that human development took diverse ways in different times and different places with their own particularities and specificities. Contrary to that, it reveals the very essence of the historical development that hidden behind the diverse and seemingly independent events and the objective laws behind the course of history. On the basis of these laws it interprets the concrete historical evolution that takes place in different ways in different places and different times. And provides us the outlines of the society of the future - communism.

“With man we enter history”, “labour created man”

Through natural selection, human being became the highly developed living organism. Man, when he is still in the animal state as ape man, learned to labour and thus started the transformation of man as a social being. With the development of labour and production, man completely separated from animal.

“When after thousands of years of struggle the differentiation of hand from foot, and erect gait, were finally established, man became distinct from the ape and the basis was laid for the development of articulate speech and the mighty development of the brain that has since made the gulf between man and the ape an unbridgeable one. The specialisation of the hand—this implies the tool, and the tool implies specific human activity, the transforming reaction of man on nature, production.” (Engels, Dialectics of Nature)

Strictly speaking *“labour begins with the making of tools.”* The making of flint weapon, whatever crude it might have been, takes human beings too far from the stage of animal. The thousands of years of experience of social practice, labour and production and the resultant skill started to inherit hereditarily. *“...the hand is not only the organ of labour, it is also the product of labour.”* (Engels, The part played by labour, MESW, p. 355)

Along with the development of hand as an organ of labour, human body and intellect too developed. *“... the hand did not exist alone, it was only one member of an integral, highly complex organism, and what benefited the hand, benefited also the whole body it served.”*

“Mastery over nature began with the development of the hand, with labour,.... On the other hand, the development of labour necessar-

ily helped to bring the members of society closer together by increasing cases of mutual support and joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. In short, men in the making arrived at the point where they had something to say to each other. Necessity created the organ; the undeveloped larynx of the ape was slowly but surely transformed by modulation to produce constantly more developed modulation, and the organs of the mouth gradually learned to pronounce one articulate sound after another.”

“First labour, after it and then with it, speech—these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man,.... Just as the gradual development of speech is inevitably accompanied by a corresponding refinement of the organ of hearing, so the development of the brain as a whole is accompanied by a refinement of all the senses.

“The reaction on labour and speech of the development of the brain and its attendant senses, of the increasing clarity of consciousness, power of abstraction and of judgment, gave both labour and speech an ever-renewed impulse to further development. This development did not reach its conclusion when man finally became distinct from the ape, but on the whole made further powerful progress,.... This further development has been strongly urged forward, on the other, by a new element which came into play with the appearance of full-fledged man, namely, society.” (Ibid., p.355-57)

Primitive classless society

“According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a two fold character. On the one side, the production of the means of subsistence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species.” (Engels, Origin of family, P. 4)

On the basis of making labour and means of labour humans separated themselves from animal world more than two lakh years ago. But historians consider last 5-6 thousand years period, for which literary sources of historical evidences are available, as “history.” The long

historical period that precedes the “history” is described as “pre-history.” In the entire pre-history, spanned over two-lakh years, mankind lived without knowing classes or class exploitation and oppression.

Development of productive forces under the primitive communal production relations

The first socio-economic formation in the development of society is primitive society, that formed when humans are in the process of separating themselves from animal world. It is otherwise called as primitive communism. The humans who began production with making crude flint implements at first, started developing productive forces by improving means of labour. It is the primary stage of development of productive forces. The society at that time, in a sense, was nothing but a herd of humans with blood relations. At that time, the private property or the classes formed on its basis were not in existence; the collective co-operative production relations in which every one took part in production and had shared the produce, were prevalent. The production relations were totally in tune with the then existing primary stage of productive forces and helped them to develop. To preserve their existence and to develop, in the face of devastating mighty forces of nature the collective co-operative relations of production were essential to the primitive humans. In that primitive stage of the development of productive forces there was no surplus production. The means of subsistence produced by the labour power was not even enough for the labourer’s sustenance. So there was no scope for either surplus or exploiting surplus to lead an idle life.

With the making of club, spear like stone weapons game became a productive activity. But, till the invention of bow and arrow it didn’t become an important and regular source of food and gathering of fruits, nuts, roots etc., remained the main source.

Harnessing fire is a great revolutionary progress achieved by mankind. With this, humans achieved for the first time control over a natural force. It had a multifaceted influence over their subsequent evolution and development. In addition to this, began eating fish and other aquatic food and cooking. These developments not only influenced the development of body and mind of human beings, but also lead to the

expansion of man all over earth by migrating along the banks of rivers and coasts.

Thus the productive forces developed slowly in primitive society. With the invention of bow and arrow game became an important productive activity. The productivity of labour reached to a stage where the humans can store some products of their labour for future consumption. There appeared making of baskets, wooden utensils, etc. To some extent settled life also started to appear. Morgan⁵ named the period up to the invention and usage of bow and arrow in the primitive society as savagery and the subsequent period that starts with making of pots as barbarism. It can be said that, with the invention of bow and arrow primitive society started to come out of its infancy.

“Bow, string and arrow already constitute a very complex instrument, whose invention presupposes long, accumulated experience and sharpened intelligence and therefore knowledge of many other inventions as well.”

“The bow and arrow was for savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and fire-arms for civilization – the decisive weapon.” (Ibid. p.25)

Till barbarism that starts with pottery, the human development in all places followed same course. *“With the beginning of barbarism, however, we reach a stage when the difference in the natural endowments of the two hemispheres of the earth comes into play.”* (Ibid, p.26)

The characteristic feature of barbarism is the domestication and breeding of animals and cultivation of plants. Domestication and breeding of animals, apart from assuring regular source of food, provided milk and meat which contributed for the further development of humans. In the eastern hemisphere, where there are mammals adoptable to domestication, human development took place more rapidly. In favourable places pastoral tribes started to form. The cultivation of plants started for the fodder of cattle became main source of food.

Subsequently metals came into use. Smelting of iron started by the end of barbarism. Iron ploughshare made expansion of agriculture possible.

The higher stage of barbarism “*Begins with the smelting of iron ore and passes into civilization with the invention of alphabetic writing and its use for literary records.*” (Ibid, p.28)

We can describe the transition of barbarism to civilization as the transitory period of the primitive classless society into class society.

Family, clan and tribe

“*The social institutions under which the people of a particular historical epoch and a particular country live are conditioned by both kinds of production: by the stage of development of labour on the one hand and of the family on the other.*” (Ibid, p.4)

In the primitive communities family too undergone changes, blended with and parallel to the above said development of productive forces. But the stages in it are not so clearly marked. “*The development of the family takes a parallel course, but here the periods are not divided by such striking marks.*” (Ibid, p.23)

The humans, separated from animals first lived as herds. There were unregulated sexual relations in the beginning. Such relations were necessary to avoid the jealousy of the male that prevents the formation of herd, which is necessary for the existence of humans at that time. But the sexual relations among direct blood relatives weaken the race. Thus gradually in the course of development of the society, ban on marriage relations between blood relations came into operation. Before the full implementation of this ban, family transformed through three different stages. First formed the consanguine family that banned the sexual relations between parents and children. Then came the group marriage that completely banned internal marriage relations. In the group marriage, marriage relations within a group living together as a family were banned. This group as a whole enters into marriage relations with another group. With this, besides the sexual relations between parents and children, between sisters and brothers also completely banned. This group marriage lead to the formation of clan. Group marriages used to take place between various clans of same tribe (of same ancestors) and thus formed the clan-based tribe. The clan based tribes developed faster.

The group marriage lead to important changes in family and society.

Even when the group marriage was in practice, pairing of man and woman temporarily or over a long period was also practiced. Later it became a form of marriage and thus the pairing marriage came in to existence. Contrary to the monogamous family, the single pair is of voluntary union, the two had the right to dissolve the marriage.

“The pairing family is the form characteristic of barbarism, as group marriage is characteristic of savagery and monogamy of civilization.”

“In the single pair the group was already reduced to its final unit, its two-atom molecule: one man and one woman. Natural selection, with its progressive exclusions from, the marriage community, had accomplished its task; there was nothing more for it to do in this direction. Unless new, social forces came into play, there was no reason why a new form of family should arise from the single pair. But these new forces did come into play.” (Ibid, pp 60-61)

The development of productive forces lead to important changes in the organization of society. The society that was in the form of herd in the beginning acquired the form,clan. First division of labour took place between man and woman. Women who have to perform the important task of bearing and rearing children took up to the food gathering and domestic work; the men took up game and later cattle breeding. Children and old also took up gathering. This natural division of labour greatly contributed to the development of productive forces. Along with it, it paved the way for limiting the role of women in social production in later days. With this division of labour the position of women in society in no way denigrated, instead woman continued to play the central role as gathering continued to be the regular and main source of food at that stage.

In the clan, based on the collective production relations and equality, all members used to take decisions collectively and democratically. Closely related clans used to come together to work with the purposes like hunting big animals. In this way tribes formed on the basis of clan democracy and collective tribal property, production relations, common territory, language and culture developed. By the end of primitive

society, tribal confederations also formed.

Matriarchy:

As the activities of woman, gathering and domestic work were the main productive activities of humans, the role of mother in society was crucial in the earlier period of primitive society. Children naturally belonged to mother in the then existing clan relations. This is what we call “mother right”. The lineage was based on mother i.e. matrilineal. In fact, before pairing marriage came into existence humans knew mother only. Thus matriarchy in which mother plays the central role in the organization and day-to-day affairs of society naturally came in to existence.

With the development of productive forces in diverse ways, there appeared the personally used means of labour besides the collectively used. The private property existed in the form of personal tools etc., should remain in the clan itself, according to the then existing clan relations .

Later after pairing marriage came into existence man started recognizing his children, who stays with the mother in her clan. An urge in man to pass on the personal property acquired during his life time to his children developed. Till then his sisters’ children who were considered as the children of the clan used to inherit them. Thus pairing marriage together with the personal property of man made him stood against matriarchy and mother right.

Then came the first great social division of labour and pastoral tribes and agricultural tribes separated. At the end of primitive society, the second social division of labour between agriculture and cattle breeding and handicrafts occurred. All these developments limited the role of woman in the social production and thus the prominence and leading role of woman started to decline. However the main thrust to the transition to patriarchy was provided first by the personal wealth in the hands of men and later by the decisive factor the private property i.e. the means of production and slavery.

The emergence of private property and class society

On the whole by the end of primitive society, productive activities developed in diverse ways and the productive forces developed considerably. Society reached at the stage of producing surplus. Now living without labour became a possibility. While to take part in labour is the natural basic characteristic of human being, some people like clan leadership and magicians, distanced themselves from labour, the natural basic human characteristic, started living on others' labour. By the end of primitive society, the forces that could destroy the socio-economic formation itself germinated in its womb. At the same time another development took place. Earlier the defeated in the tribal wars used to be killed. Now with the increased labour productivity that can produce surplus, slavery became viable, possible and thus it was invented. Hence, the production relations – slave and slave owner started sprouting in the womb of primitive communist society.

Thus by the side of primitive communal property and primitive communal relations, the private property and the class relations based on the expropriation of others' labour originated in their embryonic form. In this way in the womb of primitive society, new social forces and production relations that could destroy the very basis of society started developing.

Primitive society was a society based on lineage and a social organization whose scope was narrow. Productive forces developed to the possible maximum extent within the scope of the primitive socio-economic formation. The communal production relations till then contributed for the development of productive forces started becoming fetters. By the end of primitive society, metals came into use. Further development of productive forces was possible only with the widespread usage of tools and implements made of metals, clearing vast expanses of forests to make them cultivable and developing irrigation facilities by diverting the course of rivers and developing metallurgy and thereby improving all tools and implements.

“It is clear that so long as human labour was still so little productive that it provided but a small surplus over and above the necessary means of subsistence, the increase in the productive forces, the extension of trade, the development of the state and of law, the founding of art and science, were possible only by means of an increased division

of labour, the necessary basis for which was the great division of labour between the masses providing simple manual labour and the few privileged persons directing labour, conducting trade and affairs of state, and, later on, occupying themselves with art and science. The simplest and most natural form of this division of labour was actually slavery.” (Anti-Duhring, P.232)

‘The privileged few’ gradually transformed into clan aristocracy. They started to appropriate the communal herds and other property. Gradually the number of slaves in society increased. Thus the basis laid for the advent of a new epoch of class society based on private ownership of means of production i.e. on private property. But in the actual process of disintegration of clan based communal property relations and production relations began with the transition to patriarchy and ended with the process of the establishment patriarchal family.

Transition to patriarchy:

Because of the division of labour within family and according to the social custom of the time that man was the owner of the cattle herds and later of the new instruments of labour the slaves. With this increasing wealth in his hand man overthrew mother right established the fathers right.

“With the man’s advent of actual supremacy in the house, the last barrier to his undivided rule had fallen. This undivided rule was confirmed and perpetuated by the overthrow of mother right, the introduction of father right, and the gradual transition of pairing marriage into monogamy.” (Engels, Origin of Family, P.196)

“The overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and mere instrument for the production of children.” (Ibid, P.65)

“The establishment of the exclusive supremacy of the man shows its effects first in the patriarchal family,…” (Ibid, p.65)

The new social organism in the form of patriarchal communal house hold, the woman along with slaves became the property of man.

As the communal property and relations reached inevitable down fall this new social organism proved to be a short lived one and single family based on monogamy appeared.

“It was the first form of family based not on natural but on economic conditions- on the victory of private property over primitive, naturally arisen communal property.” (Ibid, p.74)

“Monogamous marriage comes on the scene as the subjugation of the one sex by the other, as the proclamation of a conflict between the sexes unknown through out the whole previous prehistoric period....The first class antagonism that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male,.....monogamous marriage was a great historical step forward; nevertheless it opened the epoch that has lasted until today in which every step forward is also relatively a step backward in which prosperity and development for some is won through the misery and frustration of others.” (Ibid, p. 75)

“But this tore a breach in the old gentile order; the single family became a power, and rose threateningly against the gens.” (Engels, p.196)

The monogamous single family born out of patriarchal communal family is all essential patriarchal with the private property as its exclusive basis. And thus it remained till today as patriarchal institution of enslavement and oppression of woman in essence.

The private property and classes that germinated in the primitive society scripted its disintegration and society progressed towards the class society.

Class Society

“The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms in different epochs. But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, namely the exploitation of one part of the society by the other.” (Communist Manifesto, p.8)

The inhuman social system based on the exploitation of man by

man is still continuing today. The class society and its basis the private ownership of means of production took different historical forms in different epochs and different places. But whatever may be the form of class society its content always remains as the expropriation of labour and enslavement of the labourer.

“With slavery, which attained its fullest development under civilization, came the first great split of society into an exploiting and an exploited class. This split persisted during the whole civilized period. Slavery is the first form of exploitation, the form peculiar to the ancient world,; it is succeeded by serf-dom in the Middle Ages, and wage labour in modern times. These are the three great forms of servitude characteristic of the three great epochs of civilization; open, and in recent times disguised, slavery always accompanies them.” (P.213)

The class society took three historical forms: 1. Slavery, 2. Feudalism, and 3. Capitalism. In capitalism, the class society and its basis the private ownership of means of production reached the last stage and the material conditions for the abolition of private property and classes matured. The private property that came into existence by negating the primitive communal property is reached the stage of its own negation and it is bound to transform into modern communal property. The course of history is inexorably progressing towards the modern classless society – modern communism.

Slavery

The class society first assumed the form of slavery. In slavery the slave labourers had neither any means of production nor any human rights. Their fate is worse than that of cattle. The slave owners had every right over them to sell, to beat and even to kill. Such an inhuman relations were unheard of in the primitive society.

“The lowest interests-base greed, brutal sensuality, sordid avarice, selfish plunder of common possessions-usher in the new, civilized society, class society; the most outrageous means-theft, rape, deceit and treachery-undermine and topple the old, classless, gentile society.” (Ibid, P. 116)

State :To establish and maintain such an inhuman social system a

mighty force of oppression is necessary. So the state born out of the necessity of an oppressive mechanism to force free labourers in to slavery, to make them work for their masters and to suppress their dissent and resistance. Even though the state assumed different and diverse forms in different historical stages, it always remains as the means of class oppression and functions as oppressive mechanism. In slavery, state assumed forms like despotism, oligarchy, democracy and monarchy. But it always performed the task of perpetuating and consolidating the rule of slave owners. (We will deal state seperately later.)

In the transition of primitive classless society to class society religion played a crucial role. It perpetuated the class rule by making slave masses resign to their fate by showing the salvation in the other world. In the early stages of class society it even played a direct role in the accumulation of surplus into the hands of ruling classes.

Religion – the opium of people

With the emergence of class society, a new social institution – religion was born. In the long historical period of primitive communism mankind didn't know religion. They did know neither imagining a super natural non-material divine force nor surrendering before it considering themselves completely helpless. Even though they had some religious ideas they were primarily born of the primitive technique of magic. The primitive magic aimed at controlling natural forces, expressed their urge to acquire control over nature. Instead of praying the non-material divine forces – Gods to request what they want and seeking the non-existent otherworldly pleasures, primitive humans mimicked and dictated the natural forces what they desired of.

“Magic rests on the principle that by creating the illusion that you control reality you can actually control it. In its initial stages it is simply mimetic. You want rain, so you perform a dance in which you mimic the gathering clouds the thunderclap, and the falling shower. You enact in fantasy the fulfillment of the desired reality. In its later stages the mimetic act may be accompanied by a command, an imperative ‘Rain!’ But it is a command, not a request. This principle of collective compulsion corresponds to a stage of society at which the community

is still an undivided whole, supreme over each and all of its members, presenting a weak but united front against the hostile world of nature.” (George Thompson, cited in Religion and Society, P. 27)

Though unscientific the technique of primitive magic was basically materialistic as the human mind till then not “learned” to doubt the materiality or reality of the nature and its own social existence. The magic provided the primitive humans the confidence to face the mighty forces of nature and in that limited sense it helped them to conquer nature. Where as the religion makes the humans helpless before the divine force and creates belief in the non-existent other world and depicts the really existing world and society as an illusion or issues not worth bother about. Thus it saps the self-confidence of humans in their abilities and knowledge. It is the creation of ruling propertied classes to ideologically shackle the labouring masses who were forced into enslavement. State the physical force and the religion the spiritual were the two instruments became necessary to force free humans into slavery and maintain that servitude. So the ruling classes with the help of priests turned the primitive magic into religion.

“The technique of magic is developed by the ruling class as a means of consolidating their privileges by investing them with supernatural sanctions. In this way the working class, being ignorant of the true causes of its subjection, is reconciled to its lot. This is the genesis of religion. Religion is an outgrowth of magic of social reality. Just as magic expresses primitive man’s weakness in the face of nature, so religion express civilised man’s weakness in the face of society.” (Ibid, P. 47)

“The making of religion is a necessary concomitant to the making of the class society, just as with the withering away of class society religion also is going to wither away.” (D.Chattopadhyaya, Ibid., p. 25)

“Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.” (Marx cited in Religion and society, P. 20)

“The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of the vale of woe, the halo of which is religion.” (Marx cited in Religion and society, P. 20)

Slave labour was the basis of civilisation: The slavery is no doubt inhuman, but it was historically necessary. It contributed to the development of science, technology and culture and as a whole for the development of society. In this sense Engels said that, without slavery there is no civilization.

Slavery first developed in the river valleys of Nile, Tigris-Euphrates and Sindhu and civilization began. These early civilizations, blossomed in 3-2 millennium B.C., can be called as the immature and primary stage of slavery. In this stage the slavery was mainly in the form of patriarchic family. The production of slaves was mainly for the direct needs. By then the third division of labour took place and the real “social leaches” the trading class came in to existence. But it was still in its infancy because of the under development of commodity production, exchange and commodity for commodities - money. Peasantry and other small producers were not yet become bankrupt and pauperized. The form of communal property was still in existence to some extent. State took the form of despotism. Debt slavery was widespread. The development of productive forces was slow.

Later the productive force developed, exchange developed and coins were introduced and money relations increased. The independent small producers bankrupted and were increasingly thrown into debt slavery. Slave labour occupied predominant position in all spheres of production. The production of slaves transformed into commodity production. The slaves till then remained, as use-values now became exchange-values and profitable commodities. Slave trade became wide spread. This is the stage in which chattel slavery became predominant. After the abolition of debt slavery forced by the rebellions of common citizens, most of the pauperized citizens lacking means of livelihood fell to the level of lumpen proletariat. Amidst the pauperization of common citizens and cruel exploitation of slaves, the slave society developed

productive forces in a big way. Besides that, the society made great progress in the fields of science, culture, art and philosophy. Especially in Greece during 7-4 B.C. the cultural development was remarkable and philosophy reached its zenith. The slave labour is the basis of the development achieved by mankind in slavery, in material, spiritual and cultural spheres.

Slave society by its nature consists of serious class contradictions. The slaves continuously rebelled against their position as slaves. The class society from its inception progressed amidst fierce class struggles. Even the common citizens whose economic position deteriorated along with the development of slave society too rebelled against the slave owning aristocracy and state.

The slave states by making incessant wars expanded and increased their slave population by forcing free peoples into slavery. In that process they wrote their own downfall. The immensely increased number of slaves in society and their rebellions and the miserable plight of the common citizens lead to the internal decay. The slaves didn't make any effort to increase production or to improve production methods as they had no interest in the production. More than that they started destroying the means of labour. Society reached a stage, wherein agriculture and handicrafts could only be developed with the producers who took personal interest in production. Thus the slave relations became obsolete.

Just like the slave relations developed in the womb of primitive society, feudal relations started sprouting in the slave society. With the completely disinterested slave labourers agricultural productivity was very low. The slave owners themselves started introducing a new and profitable method of cultivation. Thus formed the 'colony' (in Roman empire) the germ of feudalism. Amidst the slave cultivated *latifundia* small plots were allotted first to destitute free peasants later to slaves too for individual farming. these peasants were called *coloni*. under this *colonatus* system slaves were provided with small plots of land and tools. From the harvest they had to pay a share to their master. The ranks of *coloni* gradually swelled with both slaves freed by their masters, and the wretched free peasantry. By 4th century A.D. the *colonus* became the central figure of the Roman empire. In fact by that time the status of *colonus* was much like serf. The *colonus* was allotted with a

plot of land with no right to leave it. He had to till the lord's land too. But the colonus system could not develop into feudal relations proper due to the unsurmountable barrier - the slave owning political system.

By the end of slavery the society was in deep crisis. The acute contradiction between the productive forces and production relations reflected in the series of slave rebellions that undermined the foundations of slave society. Giving freedom to slaves and transforming them into dependent serfs appeared more rewarding than that of keeping them as slaves.

With the aggravation of internal contradictions the slave society decayed internally and weekend by incessant rebellions of slaves in which the common citizens often joined, finally overthrown by the barbaric tribes. When the barbaric German and Slav tribes invaded Roman Empire not only slaves, *coloni* and the common citizens also stood against the slave state. On the ruins of mighty Roman Empire feudal states began to emerge.

In India social development after the decay of Sindhu civilization took a different course. Here the class society emerged as varna society, after the pastoral Aryan tribes took up agriculture and settled village life. The varna society was unique when compared to the slavery of Greece or Rome. Here the chattel slavery was not wide spread. The shudra varna, the lowest rung in the varna system entrusted with the task of labouring and producing goods necessary to the whole society. The essence of the varna society and the matured slavery of Europe was same. These two were the class societies formed on the basis of private ownership of means of production and class relations born out of primitive class society. Through the inhuman enslavement of labouring masses by applying savage force they concentrated labour on big scale and expanded agriculture and developed metallurgy. The specific and unique form of first form of Indian class society, the varna vyavastha was the creation of concrete historical conditions. Despite of the changes in the forms of the first class society established world over on the basis of private property, the essence is almost all the same - inhuman subjugation and enslavement of labourers and cruel exploitation of labour.

Feudalism

The revolutionary transformation from slavery to feudalism abolished the old and obsolete production relations, which became fetters for the further development of productive forces and paved the way for their development.

The slave got transformed into semi-slave under the feudal production relations. The semi-slave - peasant who owns some tools tills some land on his own. But along with the land he also belongs to the landlord. Though there is no buying and selling, the peasant's family also belongs to the landlord who owns the land. That means, the peasant will be tied to the land. The peasant has to give away a fixed share of the crop to the landlord. Apart from it he is bound to do bonded labour on the landlord's land. Feudalism is only another form of class society. Neither exploitation of labour nor the slavery of the workers is gone. Only the form of exploitation of labour has changed. Like in the slave production relations, the basis for landlord-peasant production relations is private property. Here the ownership of the means of production came under the landlords.

Even though the feudalism took diverse forms in different places and times the general essence of it is to the exploitation of peasant through feudal rent and various forms of free (bonded) labour (corvee). Apart from the ties with the land of the landlord, several non-economic ties, social moral, legal ties the peasant to landlord. Non-economic exploitation and coercion is an important characteristic of feudalism. In the feudal production that transformed slave into serf. The serf direct interest in production. Thus in feudalism the peasant individual farming provided the necessary impetus to the development of productive forces.

Feudalism transformed the slave into serf and brought about new property relations in place of old. The class society took a new form on the basis of feudal production relations.

In feudalism the state generally took the form of Monarchy when there was kingdom, and at times it took the form of a republic in which the representatives of feudals run the affairs of state. Naturally the feudal state served the interests of the feudal lords and served as an instrument for the oppression of peasantry, artisans and other labouring masses. The religion played a reactionary role in feudalism. Generally,

having close relations with the feudal state it served as an important prop to the despotic feudal rule. By the end of feudalism church itself emerged as a very big feudal lord by amassing huge lands of peasantry and directly exploited and plundered the peasant masses.

In feudalism quite often the society divided into various estates and the feudals formed the higher rung of the social ladder and enjoyed special privileges. Peasantry and other labouring masses constituent lower rungs of the social order and had virtually no rights.

In our country, after the fall of Maurya kingdom (in south after Sathavahanas), the transformation of varna society into feudalism started. The unique feature of Indian feudalism is that it has the self-sufficient village economy as its base. The varna division after the disintegration of varna society transformed itself into the caste division and expressed the feudal production relations. The caste system divided the feudal society into estates. It threw the labouring masses into the lowest social stratum and denigrated them. Besides this, the caste system provided ideological and cultural justification for the low and denigrating status of the masses. In this way the social strata of Indian feudalism in the form of caste system became stronger and more rigid than that of the western feudalism and thus it provided stronger form to the feudal production relations.

In the initial stages of feudalism development of agriculture got great impetus. The peasants as direct producers developed both agriculture and handicrafts. On the basis of this development cities again came into prominence. They developed as industrial and trading centers. Division of labour in handicrafts developed and the skills and productivity increased considerably. The division between countryside and cities further widened.

But the self-sufficient village economy remained as the basis of Indian feudalism. Unlike Europe the division of labour and relations of exchange between cities and countryside were not developed deeply. The isolation of countryside continued. True, handicrafts and trade developed in cities but they were mainly remained as political, military and administrative centers. Even though the manufactories came into existence by the end of feudalism the relations of exchange, commodi-

ties and money didn't penetrated significantly into the self-sufficient villages.

However, in general at the end of feudalism, the manufactories started growing, division of labour and simple cooperation extended and commodity production increased. The conditions for the highest development of commodity production and exchange that began on the basis of private property at the end of primitive society and the money relations of the later period started maturing. In the manufactories capitalist relations, which transformed labour power into commodity started sprouting. The modern industrial bourgeoisie and the proletariat germinated. The stage was set for the establishment of commodity economy in place of natural economy i.e. the production for exchange value and private profit in place of production for use value, and thereby capitalism in place of feudalism. Under the capitalist commodity production the social nature of production inexorably come to collusion with the very basis of commodity production the social division of labour based on private property. The contradiction in the commodity, social production and individual appropriation is going to reach its final resolution i.e. the abolition of commodity production and its basis individual property.

By the end of feudalism the development of productive forces came to standstill. Incessant wars, the luxurious life of kings, royals and feudal lords emptied the treasury and the burden of taxation became unbearable. On the other hand the landlord class severely intensified its exploitation and oppression of peasantry. Together with it, exchange and money relations and usury made peasantry bankrupt. Peasants started fleeing countryside leaving their lands and villages only to become wage earners in cities. But the laws were enacted to punish the peasants fleeing from villages. Thus peasantry faced a situation, between the devil and the deep sea. Church on its part blatantly started looting and exploiting the masses. Thus the agriculture started deteriorating.

The newly emerged bourgeoisie from the handicrafts and the rich trading class also disgruntled with the rapacious exploitation of the feudal ruling class. The feudal society as a whole fell into crisis. Naturally peasant revolts raged through out the world in this period. The wave like peasant revolts are the general characteristic of the last stage of

feudalism. Even the common people in cities too revolted in this period. Between B.C. 14-19 centuries peasant wars broke out throughout the world: in England Watt Tyler's rebellion in 14th century, in France Jacqueline in 14-15th centuries, in Bohemia the Hussite wars in 14-15th centuries, in Germany the peasant war of 16th century, in china the Taiping revolution in 19th century, in India the Sikh uprisings in 17-18th centuries and 1857-59 First war of independence, in Russia the uprisings of Bolotnikov and Raazinin in 17th century and Pugachov in 18th century, etc. These peasant revolts and unrest shook and undermined the feudal society. The time for the abolition of the obsolete feudal production relations approached. No obsolete ruling class ever gave up its power on its own. Naturally the feudal ruling classes also made futile attempts to suppress these peasant revolts and to withhold the falling social order feudalism.

In this situation the newly emerged bourgeoisie came out as the historical force to abolish the feudal production relations. The further development of productive forces was necessiated the development of industry. So the development of capitalist relations became a historical necessity. But the existing feudal production relations became hindrance of it. This contradiction expressed itself in three ways.

For the development of capitalist production free (liberated from the means of production) workers are necessary. But they (peasantry) were tied to land.

For the development of the industry, development in sciences was an utmost necessity. But the feudalism and religion were serious hurdles for the development of sciences

Severe restrictions and heavy taxation imposed by the small feudal states and the feudal lords everywhere became hindrance for the flourishing of the nascent bourgeoisie who sought an unrestricted and unified market.

These were the main demands of the bourgeois democratic revolution.

In the last stages of feudal society, the peasantry revolted in a big way against feudal exploitation. In such a situation bourgeoisie took an anti-feudal position and led the bourgeois democratic revolution. With

the victory of bourgeois democratic revolutions, the capitalist society came into existence.

Countries like China and India became colonies or semi-colonies to the Western countries that reached capitalism earlier. The colonial rule in these countries became a hurdle for the development of capitalism there. The colonial regimes used the feudal relations to prop up their rule and thus protected them. On the other hand the colonialism also hindered the development of independent and revolutionary national bourgeoisie. Thus, despite of the heroic struggles waged by peasantry and other masses in these countries the obsolete feudal relations continued for a long time due to the absence of revolutionary bourgeoisie which can lead them successfully in the revolution. The people of these countries suffered a lot due to the persistence of colonial and feudal relations. The modern industrial proletariat had to take up this task of overthrowing the feudal relations. Thus started the new democratic stage of revolution in these countries. The new democratic revolution overthrows the obsolete feudal relations and colonialism in these countries and paves the way to socialism without passing through the stage of capitalism.

Capitalism

Capitalism is the third and last historical form of class society in its historical development. The production relation – capitalist and worker is the basis of this socio-economic formation. Capitalist production is the production carried out by capitalist, the owner of the means of production by buying labour power of the worker who has no means of livelihood except to sell his labour power. The capitalist ownership and capitalist relations based on it dictates the social and economic life.

Class society means the enslavement of the labourer. While slavery made the labourer the slave, the feudalism made him serf- the half slave and now capitalism made him the wage slave. While in slavery the labourer was sold as commodity, in capitalism labourer himself sells his labour power every day just like any commodity in the market place. Unlike the small producers like peasants and artisans, the workers have no means of production. Not only that, even on the products of his own labour he has no right. His own labour and the product of that labour too become alien to him. The thing he made with his own labour alien-

ated from him and becomes a commodity and challenges him in the market to buy it to satisfy his need. In this respect the state of wage labourer is worse than that of the slave. The slave was assured of minimum means of sustenance, for the owner provides them, but the wage labourer has to sell his labour power to earn his bread.

In another respect also wage slavery is a unique one. Generally there is no need of coercion to make the labourer work, as he himself voluntarily offers his labour to avoid starvation. More over the wage slave thinks that in the form of wage he is receiving remuneration for the entire day's labour. But in fact, the value created by his day's labour is far greater than that of the wage he received for his days' labour. But the worker considers that wage paid for his day's labour. In this way the capitalist exploitation disguised under the wage relation. The exploitation of labour, hitherto direct and clear to the labourer, now for the first time disguised under the cloak of wage. The object of capitalist production is the expropriation of the surplus value.

The pre-condition for the wage slavery is the 'freedom' to labourer from the means of production. The bankrupted peasantry at the end of feudalism got that 'freedom' and became 'free' labourers- freed from means of production, to sell their labour power to capitalists. The capitalist just like his predecessor exploitative classes never hesitated to commit any heinous crime or to perpetuate cruel oppression to appropriate others wealth. In England after coming to power, by fencing the common lands and by transforming the cultivated lands into sheep farms, and by simply burning down the villages and chasing peasants to cities it made the peasantry 'free' and forged for them the shackles of wage slavery. Through competition and by force it bankrupted the small producers and even the small capitalists. The capitalist class started building its own society with the abolition of private property, of course of the laboring masses. It took the society to the stage where the abolition of the remaining private property- the capitalist property became inevitable and historical necessity.

Worship of wealth is the common characteristic of all the exploitative propertied classes. The capitalist is no exception to that. But the capitalist despite of worshipping the wealth, always employs it to produce more wealth by expropriating surplus value. The predecessors of

the capitalist exploiters used the surplus value for the luxuries but capitalist transforms it into productive capital to earn more surplus value. In this continuous process of accumulation of capital by capitalist, the society changed and developed unrecognizably. The development of productive forces in capitalism was very rapid and unprecedented in the history of mankind. And thus it reached its highest and last stage within three hundred years after its birth, which is very small in terms of social evolution.

The competition among individual capitalists and anarchy in the capitalist production as a whole are the unique characteristics of capitalism. In capitalism the individual production, carried under the blind competitive conditions, motivated by individual profit always creates a situation in which needs of society neglected and in some sectors production is in excess of demand and in some other scarcity. Unequilibrium between supply and demand generally exists in capitalism.

In the first stage of capitalism there were large number of small capitalists. In the process of competition big capital eliminated and appropriated the small and thus wealth and means of production concentrated in the hands of small number of big capitalists. And the process reached its zenith in the imperialist era and the monopoly capital emerged. The process of development of capitalism is that of concentration of wealth and appropriation of small producers and even small capitalists. Under the rule of capital great majority of the population became pauperized. Private ownership of means of production became a privilege of few. In this way the process of negation of private property actually started by capitalist himself, of course with the sole motive of increasing his one property. The concentrated capital and wealth made possible the modern large-scale industry and the large-sale production became a synonym of capitalist production. The large-scale industry on the other hand socialised the labour and production, a prerequisite of socialisation of means of production.

“To concentrate these scattered, limited means of production, to enlarge them, to turn them into the powerful levers of production of the present day was precisely the historic role of the capitalist mode of production and of its upholder, the bourgeoisie.” (p. 345)

The capitalist class fulfilled this historical task with great competence. The modern large-scale industry built by capitalist build the basis for its own appropriation, the socialization of means of production.

“...the bourgeoisie could not transform these limited means of production into mighty productive forces without at the same time transforming them from individual means of production into social means of production only workable by a collectivity of men.” (Ibid, p.345)

Along with the concentration of wealth in few hands, the socialization of means of production progressed. As a result the basic contradiction in capitalism, the contradiction between the private ownership of means of production and appropriation of product and the social nature of production, the basic contradiction of capitalism aggravated and started demanding its resolution.

“The more the new mode of production became dominant in all decisive fields of production and in all economically decisive countries, and the more it reduced individual production to an insignificant residue, the more glaring did the incompatibility of social production with capitalist appropriation necessarily become.” (Ibid, P. 348)

The capitalist class always tries to increase the surplus value and so pays only minimum possible wages. Thus the tendency of impoverishment of working class is inherent of capitalist production. Paradoxically the capitalists limit the purchasing capacity of the laboring masses on the one hand and increase the production of commodities for which the impoverished masses constitute the main consumers. In his urge to reduce the wage bill capitalist always tries to introduce machines which replace workers. In the hands of capitalist, the modern technology along with increasing labour productivity produces unemployed workers on large scale. Thus under capitalism immense development of productive forces instead of ensuring the lively hood to people makes the population “surplus.” Due to the excess supply of labour power- the commodity the price of it wages ‘naturally’ fall. Hence the workers outside the factories- the unemployed ensure the minimum subsistence wage to the workers in factories. So along with the advancement of capitalism the tendency of production to expand so rapidly as if there is no limit to it on the one hand and the increasing impoverishment of working class and thus the contraction of their purchasing capacity on the other. It is

an irreconcilable contradictory movement of capitalist production. So it is natural in capitalism, the plenty amidst scarcity and accumulated wealth at one pole and increasing misery and impoverishment of masses on the other.

“Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, bestialization, moral degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces its own product. (Marx, Capital, P.671) To expect any other distribution of the products from the capitalist mode of production is like expecting the electrodes of a battery not to decompose water, not to develop oxygen at the positive pole and hydrogen at the negative, so long as they are connected with the battery.” (p. 354)

In the anarchic conditions of production in which individual capitalists compete with the greed for individual profit, this will inevitably lead to “over production”- another unique product of capitalism. For the first time in human history the society facing a ridiculous situation, just because of the production of means of subsistence in plenty the masses suffer with want. Lack of sufficient purchasing capacity with masses to buy the commodities produced by the society is the cause of these crises. Capitalism always moves towards this direction.

“..... proves that it has become incapable of any longer governing the productive forces which have grown beyond its power; a class under whose leadership society is racing to ruin like a locomotive whose jammed safety-valve the driver is too weak to open. In other words, the reason is that both the productive forces engendered by the modern capitalist mode of production and the system of distribution of goods established by it have come into crying contradiction with that mode of production itself, so much so that if the whole of modern society is not to perish, a revolution in the mode of production and distribution must take place, a revolution which will put an end to all class distinctions.” (Anti-Duhring, p.200-201)

“Only the immense increase of the productive forces attained by large-scale industry has made it possible to distribute labour among all members of society without exception, and thus to limit the labour-time of each individual member to such an extent that all have enough free time left to take part in the general affairs of society, whether theo-

retical or practical. It is only now, therefore, that every ruling and exploiting class has become superfluous and indeed a hindrance to social development, and it is only now, too, that it will be inexorably abolished, however much it may be in possession of 'direct force.' ” (Anti Duhring, P.233)

In this way in capitalism again the contradiction between productive forces and production relations became acute and the bourgeoisie became an obsolete class and a drag on the society.

But, it is not possible to resolve this contradiction by replacing one form of private ownership with another and one type of exploitative class relations with another. Incompatible with the social nature of production the appropriation also should become social, i.e. the means of production should be socialized. In the process of resolving the crisis in the capitalist production the society enters into the stage of 'appropriating appropriators' and abolishing the class exploitation and oppression forever.

“The contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation became manifest as the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie.” (Ibid, p.349)

The capitalism itself created the historical force that can shoulder this historical task, the modern industrial proletariat. *“.... modern large-scale industry has on the one hand created a proletariat, a class which for the first time in history can demand the abolition, not of this or that particular class organization or of this or that particular class privilege but classes themselves....”*

Because, to achieve its liberation the working class needs the abolition of private ownership of means of production completely. Thus working class along with it, liberates all the labouring masses from the yoke of class exploitation and oppression.

In capitalism society reached the stage where the development of productive forces is not possible without the abolition of private property. The historical force to perform that task the proletariat also developed.

“To accomplish this world-emancipating act is the historical mis-

sion of the modern proletariat. To grasp the historical conditions of this act and therefore its very nature, and thus to bring the conditions and character of its own action to the consciousness of the class that is destined to act, the class that is now oppressed - this is the task of scientific socialism, the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement.” (p.369-70)

Marxism provided the scientific world outlook and revolutionary theory necessary for the proletariat to perform this historic task. The revolutionary theory is the scientific socialism and its vanguard is the party, which yields that weapon.

In the beginning of 20th century capitalism entered the monopoly stage from the stage of free trade, i.e. it reached its highest stage imperialism. Imperialism is the decadent capitalism. It aggravates all the basic contradiction in capitalism and brings the society into the stage of socialist revolution. And thus imperialism is the eve of socialist revolution.

The world proletariat that armed with Marxism-Leninism-Maoism overthrows the world capitalism through the armed socialist revolution and the “appropriators will be appropriated.” Working class completes the unfinished task of bourgeoisie the abolition of private property. Along with the capitalist property, it abolishes the private ownership of means of production completely. It negates the class society and ushers in the new modern communist classless society. For the first time, in October 1917 under the leadership of Lenin socialist revolution achieved victory in Russia. Under the leadership of the great proletarian leaders Lenin and Stalin there socialist construction continued. The revisionists who came to power after the death of Stalin restored capitalism in Russia.

In 1949 under the leadership of Mao the Chinese people successfully overthrew the big bourgeoisie landlord reactionary regime and completed the new democratic revolution. Then they started building socialism 1956 onwards. There too after the death of Mao the modern revisionists restored capitalism.

But these revolutions showed the path of victory of world socialist revolution and provided the rich experience in socialist construction.

Armed with these experiences the world proletariat is on the road to achieve final victory over capitalism and class society.

“The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim, because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient genies.” (Morgan, cited in Origin of Family, p. 216)

Into Modern Classless Society -Communism

In capitalist society, the contradictions arose from private property and class division of society reaches highest stage productive forces and the society cannot develop, unless and until the capitalist production relations get abolished and collective production relations come into force. That means private property and the contradictions arising from private property will end inevitably with the abolition of capitalist production relations. Attaining the communist society which is based on the mutual relations of the human race is also inevitable. The modern classless communist society will be very different from the primitive communist society. The common aspects of these two societies are the absence of private property, classes and exploitation and prevalence of mutually cooperative production relations.

Socialism: Socialism is the first stage of communist society. This is the stage in which capitalism transforms into communism and class society transforms into classless society. The social relations based on the social ownership of the means of production is the basis for this society. In this stage, the proletariat will achieve political power. It implements the dictatorship of the proletariat. It means, in socialism too there will be classes, but for the first time in history, the exploiting classes will face the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat in power should destroy the old bourgeois state. It cannot use the old state to serve its interests as happened earlier, because all the state machinery hitherto existed to serve the class rule and private property whereas proletarian state's chief task is to eliminate classes and end private prop-

erty. So the new proletarian state should wield proletarian dictatorship firmly till the transition to communism completes.

* Though mainly the means of production gets socialised, petty-production still continues small producers will be in large numbers. The process of bringing all of them into collective production is a protracted one. It should be remembered that only after all the means of production coming under the ownership of society, private property gets abolished.

* In socialist society, in which the capitalism perished as a mode of production, aspects of capitalism continue in various forms. The principle “each according to their ability and each according to their labour,” will come into force. Though the capitalist exploitation is no more, wages, a form of capitalism still continues. In the process of ending wage differences, there will be a conscious attempt to attain the communist principle, “each according to their ability and to each according to their need.” But one should remember that, this principle will come into force only when, the productive forces develop without any hindrance and there is a abundant increase in wealth.

* The contradiction between manual and mental labour be inherited by the socialist society. There must be a conscious effort to get rid of aspects like labour management methods inherited from capitalist production. This may be expressed in the form of class struggle also. To resolve this contradiction socialist society has to wage many cultural revolutions.

* The contradictions between the villages and towns, and agriculture and industry continue. To resolve this contradiction, the socialist government carries out planned development.

Even in the socialism, value, price and money continue. But the value will not remain a basic law, which determines production. It will be a measurement only. Price will not be determined by value or supply and demand. The proletarian state, itself will decide prices keeping the people’s necessities in view. There will not be any scope for inflation and crisis. Money will serve the purpose of exchange. By the time the society reaches the stage of communism even money will perish.

* The contradiction between man and woman that has arisen

because of private property will continue even in a socialist society. But in this stage woman will come out of the kitchen and become the partner in social production. Opportunities will be created for the all round development of women. A conscious effort will be made to create the material basis for establishing equality between men and women in all fields.

* Because of socialist production relations not completely developing and inheritance of contradiction from class society, even in the socialist society the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations continues at one or the other level. In the conscious making of history in communism by human beings, this contradiction will turn into a non-antagonistic one. In communism, the contradiction between humans and nature will be the motive force for the progress of society.

It should be noted that, the process of attaining communism from socialism comprises of class struggles. The struggle between two lines and cultural revolution will be the main forms of class struggle. So even in socialism, class struggle remains the motive force for history. It is class struggle only, which resolves the contradictions inherited (stated above) from the class society.

Only after the success of socialism either worldwide or in a major part of the world, and only after resolving the contradictions inherited from class society, will human society attain communism.

“The seizure of the means of production by society eliminates commodity production and with it the domination of the product over the producer. The anarchy within social production is replaced by consciously planned organisation. The struggle for individual existence comes to an end. It is only at this point that man finally separates in a certain sense from the animal kingdom and that he passes from animal conditions of existence to really human ones. The conditions of existence environing and hitherto dominating humanity now pass under the dominion and control of humanity, which now for the first time becomes the real conscious master of nature, because and in so far as it becomes master of its own social organisation. The laws of man’s own social activity, which have hitherto confronted him as extraneous laws of nature

dominating him, will then be applied by man with full knowledge and hence he is dominated by him. Man's own social organisation, which has hitherto confronted him as a process dictated by nature and history, now becomes a process resulting from his own voluntary action. The objective extraneous forces which have hitherto dominated history now are under the control of man himself. It is only from this point that man will himself make his own history fully consciously, it is only from this point that the social causes he sets in motion will preponderantly and ever increasingly have the effects he wills. It is humanity's leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom." (Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p.366-67)

Classes - Class Struggle - State

We have seen that, in the end of the primitive society, private ownership was established over the means of production and this private property as the base, society was divided into different classes. Since then with human society comprises of different classes having opposing class interests. The fact that, the human society is divided into classes and the class struggle between the different classes was recognised by many social scientists before Marx. But Marxism was the only one which recognised that the class struggle as the objective rule of the class society, behind the social turbulences like clashes and wars in history which apparently look like spontaneous events. In a class society the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations will reflect as the class contradiction. That is why, whenever revolutionary changes are needed in the production relations, through intense class struggles and social revolutions, new production relations will come into existence. So class struggle is the only motive force for history in a class society. Since the disintegration of the primitive society, the society is progressing only because of class struggle.

First of all what are classes? Let us see how they are different from other important social communities like class, tribe and nation?

Clan - Tribe

Clan and tribe are the most ancient social communities about which we discussed earlier also. Clan is the group of the close blood relatives. With the collective ownership of the means of production, the economy

was of the type in which the society had the collective right over the produce. 1) Clan's first man's (in the beginning first woman's) name, 2) common language, 3) common customs and traditions and 4) common religious beliefs and rituals are the important characters of a clan. Marriage between the male and female belonging to the same clan was prohibited. The decisions were made collectively by men and women of the clan. The elders elected in the clan would lead the daily affairs of the clan.

This social community, clan, was the most common form prevalent in the whole world during primitive society.

Some clans with close relations together formed the tribe. Apart from the close relation, speaking the same language and living in the same geographical territory were the common characteristics of a tribe. In the primitive communist society, these social communities, the clans and tribes played an important role in the evolution and progress of society. But in the end of primitive society, these clans and tribes became impediments for the further development of productive forces and thus clans and tribes started disintegrating.

Nation - Class

With the emergence and strengthening of private property, the primitive society in the basic form of clan and tribe started disintegrating. The private ownership on the means of production led to the formation of new social groupings and the linear division of the society into two. The society divided into two, the one which got control over the means of production, exploited the others labour and became a lavishly living leisurely class and the other is the labouring class which is subjected to the exploitation of labour and oppression. The clan and tribe relations dependent on blood relations and relations weakened and gradually got disintegrated. (Because of the unequal development, these social communities of clan and tribe still exist in many places in the world including among the tribes of our country). In the process of the establishment and extension of the class society, private property as the base, the tribal federations (groupings) got intermixed and the process of the formation of nations (in the slave society) has begun. The uniting force for the people of a nation was neither blood relations nor rela-

tions. The nations formed in the slave and feudal society was not stable. In the pre-capitalist societies the nations did not have the common characteristics of 1) same language 2) same geographical territory, and 3) same culture. They did not have the aspect of common economic life. It was only under the capitalist system the nations united to form the nations in the modern sense. Nation has emerged as the social community having the common economic life. In this sense, the formation of nations is linked with the capitalist system.

“A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common languages territory, economic life, and psychologically make-up manifested in a common culture.” (Stalin, Marxism and the National question, Stalin, Selected Works Vol. 1 1953 edn. P.307)

So in the Marxist literature, nation represents the social community, which is formed on the basis of common language, territory, economy and mentality.

But bourgeois social scientists frequently confuse race with nation. While the nation is a historically formed social community, race depends on the genetic characteristics (like skin colour, shape of the skull, hair etc.). Science says that there are three main races namely, 1) Negroid, 2) Caucasian, and 3) Mongoloid. But one thing should be kept in mind that the differences among these races will not make one race higher than the others. In the imperialist era, the bourgeoisie frequently provoke racial chauvinism to justify its colonial policy and to divert the people of that country from class struggles.

Both the nation and class were evolved in the process of the formation of the class society, with private property as the base. But nation is not a monolithic social community. Every nation is divided into classes. The bourgeoisie always tries to cover-up the class division present in the society being the common character of different classes i.e., nationality and nation continued the hegemony of the ruling classes. Every nation comprises of classes and. the later will not limit itself to the borders of nations. The capitalist system has created the international bourgeoisie and international working class. That is why today these classes have taken an international form. Whatever it may be, nations or classes are the result of the objective process of development

of history. So we must remember that they too evolutionary. The development of the productive forces which gave birth to nations and classes, also determines their evolution.

Lenin defined classes as follows:

“Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically, determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.” (Lenin Collected Works, Vo.29, p. 421)

What do we know from this? Class division is the direct expression of the mode of production. Because of the relations between the classes and the means of production and the role played by the classes in social labour and division of produce, one class exploits the other.

“Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.” (Ibid.)

Evolution of the classes is directly related to private property. With the disappearance of private ownership over the means of production and establishment of collective ownership it is certain that classes also will disappear. By not mentioning the fact that, the classes express production relations - class production relations, the bourgeois social scientists try to say that classes are naturally born and permanent. Clarifying that, classes are the direct expression of mode of production, the above said quotation by Lenin, made the inseparable relation between the mode of production, production relations and the classes, crystal clear. This also makes it clear that with the end of the private ownership over the means of production, which facilitates the exploitation of one class by the another, the classes too disappear.

Class structure in society:

“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class

struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.” (Manifesto of the Communist Party, pp.40-41)

Among the classes in the society some are basic where as some are not. The classes which form the basis for the existence of the prevalent mode of production are known as basic classes. Feudal lords and peasants are the basic classes in the feudal society. In the capitalist society bourgeoisie and the proletariat are such basic classes. Among these basic classes while one has the ownership on the means of production and become the exploiting class the second which is exploited. That means the contradictions between these classes will be antagonistic.

In a slave society, slaves and slave owners are the basic classes. We must remember that in slave society peasants and handicraftsmen were also present. Any social economic system cannot be totally homogeneous. Even in the highly developed capitalist societies besides the bourgeoisie, proletariat, the other non-basic classes like intellectuals, lumpen proletariat exist. So while we do class analysis of a particular society, we must study both the basic and non-basic classes and their inter-relation.

In a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society like ours class relations will be more complex. Mao's "The Class analysis in Chinese society" stands as the guidelines for the analysis of semi-colonial, semi-feudal societies. Today in our country, feudalism, bureaucratic comprador bourgeoisie which are hurdles for the development of the society are the targets of revolution. The proletariat, peasantry (agricultural workers, poor and middle peasantry), urban petty-bourgeoisie are the main forces of revolution. These are the basic classes in our society

The class composition of the society always relates to a particular historic period. With the change in the mode of production and socio-economic system, the position of the classes will change.

State : The tool of class hegemony

The bourgeois social scientists peddle the theories which expound that the state as something above classes and class interests come into existence with the consent of and for the protection of all the members of society. The ruling classes even tried and try to propagate that state formed with divine sanction. Quite often the masses under these influences believes the conception of state as something above class as reasonable and true. The Marxist theory of class struggle unmasked the fallacy of above class nature of state, especially of the modern state. It revealed that the essence of state in all of its forms it assumed in different historical stages, had been and is being the instrument class oppression and suppression and with the abolition of classes this instrument of class rule and oppression too will have to extinct.

“The state is a machine for the oppression of one class by another, a machine for holding in obedience to one class other, subordinated classes.” (Lenin Collected Works, Vol.29, P.480)

“History shows that the state as a special apparatus for coercing people more wherever and whenever there appeared a division of society into classes, that is, a division into groups of people some of which were permanently in a position to appropriate the labour of others, where some people exploited others.” (Engels, The origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, P.166)

Origin of state and its essence

History made it clear that the birth of state associated with the emergence of classes. In the primitive classless society there was no state at all. The organisation and conduct of the day-to-day affairs of the society were run with the consensus among all the members of society under the guidance of elders. With the division of society into classes the conflicting interests of opposite social classes began to clash. Such conflict had no place in the primitive classless society. With the emergence of the classes with contradictory interests state emerged as an instrument of oppression of one class by another. To enslave the people living in primitive society on the basis of true equality and brotherhood and to establish and maintain the production relations based on slavery, coercion and application of mighty savage force became a necessity and thus the state emerged to serve that purpose. State born as a

coercive force and continuing as such only.

“It is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it becomes necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society that would alleviate the conflict, and keep it within the bounds of “order”; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it is the state.” (Engels, *The origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p.166)

Thus emerged state established its control over the people on the basis of territory. Contrary to it, the organisation of people in the primitive society had been on the basis of blood relations. If we keep these things in our mind, we can easily recognise the method of organising citizens on the basis of territory came into force along with the class society itself.

The public power of primitive society, which was really of the people, by the people and for the people, with all the members of society organized as armed force became redundant and useless to class rule. So, as a special public power (the ruling class power) a mechanism to control the citizens – defense force came into existence. It is common with every state and it comprises of apart from the armed forces, jails, laws and other institutions, which the primitive society never heard of. Thus the essence of this special mechanism that emerged as the public power is in fact nothing but the power of the ruling class.

And then came the taxation to maintain this system of public power. The officials who were entrusted with wielding the public power and the powers of taxation became the organs seemingly existing above classes and class interests.

With the help of the state machinery, the ruling class in power strengthens its social system. It forcibly keeps its enemy classes in the frame work of a particular mode of production. So, in any exploitative society state cannot be other than the dictatorship of a single class or

group of classes. That is why the essence of a state depends on the nature of the class or classes which it represents.

State: It's different forms:

In the different periods of historic development of class society, state took many forms. It represented the interests of the ruling classes of those social periods.

Slave - owning state: *“In slave owning state Royal and aristocratic republic or Democratic republic was in existence. The forms of government were quite diverse. But with regard to their essence they are one and the same. There were no rights what so ever to slaves who were the oppressed class. They were not even considered as human beings.”*

Feudal state: *“When kingdoms were there these used to be one person rule. When it changed to republic, the selected representatives of feudal society were participating in the rule. This state represented the class divisions of minuscule of landlords who were owning the land and majority of the abroad masses of serfs.”*

Capitalist state: *“Capitalist state came into existence in the place of feudal Mate. Capitalist state declares freedom for all people as a slogan; it declares that it would express the interests of people as a whole it rejects that it is state of a particular class”* (Lenin, Selected Works Vol. I I, p. 649)

“The most democratic bourgeoisie republic also, cannot exist but as a oppressing organ of oppressed by the capital, as a tool of governance by capital, as a dictatorship of bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie democratic state promised government for majority, it declared as the government for majority. But it can never implement as long as there is individual ownership over the land and other means of production.” (Lenin, Selected Works Vol.10, .pp.35-36)

“The parliamentary Democratic Republic is the most complete and developed form of bourgeoisie state. In a democratic republic power lies in the hands of parliament. But the state, administration and other wings will be as it is. The standing army, police will be permanent and has always special privileges and its administration is always stand

over and above people". (Lenin Selected Works, Vol.6, p. 55)

We have seen above the general basic forms of the state with its exploitative nature. But we must recognise that, the state with a single class essence can display a variety in particular historic situations. Republic, constitutional monarchy, fascist state are the forms of the bourgeois state with the essence of bourgeois dictatorship.

Dictatorship of the proletariat:

Since classes and class struggles continue to exist in the first stage of communist society, i.e., socialism, the state machinery also does exist. But the proletariat which usurps power must destroy the bourgeois state machinery which protects the interests of the propertied classes. A new state machinery should be built with proletarian dictatorship as the essence. During the entire socialist period the proletariat must steadfastly implement its class dictatorship. The dethroned classes still exist and they make all efforts to come back into power. So, the socialist state cannot be other than proletarian dictatorship. Proletariat state will oppress its enemy classes by implementing dictatorship. On the other hand, it guarantees the democratic rights for the proletariat and the other oppressed masses. Since only under the dictatorship of the proletariat majority of the masses get democratic rights, it is a total democratic society for the masses.

Use of force on the enemy classes is only one side of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletariat under the dictatorship of the proletariat develops in such way that they can use state power to build socialism and pave the way for the transformation into communism. This is the second side of the dictatorship.

"The essence of proletarian dictatorship is not in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its chief feature is the organisation and discipline of the advanced contingent of the working people, of their vanguard; of their sole trader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, abolish the division of society into classes, make all members of society working people, and remove the basis for all exploitation of man by man." (Lenin Collected Works, Vol.29, P.388)

The specific form of the state with the dictatorship of proletariat as its essence will be determined by that particular country's specific his-

toric conditions.

Peoples democratic dictatorship:

Since the proletariat has to lead the democratic revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the form of state will be peoples democratic dictatorship. In the peoples democratic dictatorship, under the leadership of the proletariat, the revolutionary masses build the necessary base for building socialism and then it transforms into a dictatorship of the proletariat. About the peoples democratic dictatorship Mao said:

“Who are the people? At the present stage in China, they are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. These classes, led by the working class and the Communist Party, unite to form their own state and elect their own government; they enforce their dictatorship over the running days of imperialism- the land lord class and bureaucratic-bourgeoisie, as well as the representatives of those classes, the Kuomintang reactionaries and their accomplices – suppress them, allow them only to belittle themselves and not to be unruly in word or deed. If they speak or act in an unruly way, they will be promptly stopped and punished. Democracy is practiced within the ranks of the people, who enjoy the rights of freedom of speech, assembly, association and so on. The right to vote belongs only to the people, not to the reactionaries. The combination of these two aspects, democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, is the peoples democratic dictatorship.” (Mao, Selected Works, Vol, IV, pp. 417-418)

Ultimately, when the private property, and classes disappear and the society achieves communism, the material basis for the existence of the state will disappear.

“Society, which will reorganize production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers, will put the whole state machinery where it will then belong- into the museum of antiquities, by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze axe.” (Engels, Origin of Family, pp. 210)

Class struggle is the motive force

for the development of the society

The reactionary intellectuals who got shattered because of the struggle and resistance by the proletariat against exploitation, try to make us believe that class struggle is a hurdle for the progress and it deviates from the natural process of social development.

In reality, class struggle never stops the development of society, more over it acts as a motive force. Society developed only through social revolutions, the intense form of class struggle. The progress of the society from slave society to feudal society, from feudal society to capitalist society did not occur smoothly. It became possible only through intense class struggles. Only through social revolution, the outdated modes of production were replaced by new modes of production and productive forces developed.

The old ruling classes which try to retain the outdated production relations, have a massive state machinery on their side. With this, the old ruling classes constantly try to retain the old production relations. That is why social revolutions are always nothing but dethroning of one class by the other using armed force. All the theories of peaceful transformation are meant for rejecting class struggle in order to save the rule of the outdated ruling classes.

There are many types of revolutions in history. The bourgeois democratic revolutions of 17th -18th centuries, 1917 October Socialist revolution, the Chinese New Democratic revolution which became successful in 1949 are different social revolutions. All these represent different historical periods. The nature of social revolution will be decided by the phase of historical development of that particular society. The capitalist system came into force as a result of the bourgeois-revolution and socialism came into force as a result of socialist revolution,

It is evident that in these different social revolutions, different classes played the role of the motive forces. In the bourgeois revolutions of 17th -18th centuries, bourgeoisie, peasantry, urban masses and petty-bourgeoisie were the motive forces. In the 1917's October socialist revolution proletariat and the peasantry were the motive forces. In the imperialist era, the bourgeoisie, in itself caused harm to the revolution. That is why during the New democratic revolution in China the

proletariat, peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie became the motive forces. In our country also the same forces will be the motive forces of revolution.

We should not forget that the path of social revolution, will be armed and it demands sacrifices. We are already witnessing the great loss inflicted on humanity by wars, droughts, hunger, deaths, racial and communal conflicts, ecological degradation etc., caused by the still continuing existence of moribund capitalism of imperialist era. The hardships the people has to face due to the continuance of the old and outdated social system even though the revolutionary conditions are ripened for its overthrow, are less when compared with the sacrifices they have to make to succeed the social revolution. The labouring masses will never hesitate to make any sacrifices and wage class struggles, and continue social revolutions till the ultimate establishment of classless society. Thus the class struggle remains the motive force of history till the mankind reaches the classless society.

People are the Real Makers of History

The ruling classes and their intellectuals are continuously propagating that, only great men facilitate the progress of human society and people play a mute role in the making of history. They also say that people have the basic nature of silently accept all injustices and exploitation. Historic materialism rejects all forms of subjective trends about history. It firmly says that, historic necessity is mainly expressed by the masses and masses only play the decisive role in the development of the society. That means historic materialism regards people as the motive forces and makers of history.

People mean mainly the broad working people who keep the social production in motion, that means, all the wealth is created by the people and only they are the main reason behind the existence of the society. Society is existing because of the social production and development of the productive forces by millions of masses. Society is advancing and progressing because of this. So ignoring the role of the masses in making history means ignoring the history itself.

In making history, people's role is not just limited to production. People play an important role in the political life of society. People

alone are the decisive forces in politics relating to the progress of the society. Only people are the motive forces behind all the social revolutions that have occurred till today. Whoever may lead the revolution, whoever may come to power after revolution, we must recognise the fact, that any revolutionary struggle in which people were not the motive forces could not succeed.

The creative role of the people gets expression in revolutionary times. They themselves create new struggle forms, methods and organisational forms. Lenin said,

“Revolutions are festivals of the oppressed and the exploited At no other time are the mass of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order, as at a time of resolution.”
(Lenin Collected Works, Vol.9, p. 112)

Not only in revolutionary times, but also in the national liberation struggles, the just wars against foreign occupation, the people have played a marvelous role. Even during the “peaceful time” they valiantly fight against the policies of the ruling classes. They get back their rights by making the ruling classes kneel down before them. We must remember that all the democratic rights of present day were the result of the valiant struggles waged by the masses and the people are fighting every minute to retain them.

Is it not the greatness of great men for the new scientific discoveries and art and literary creation? Can those be created by ordinary people? Marxism does not negate the contribution of great men in science and culture. But it stresses that the material basis for the spiritual life of the human being will be laid down by the masses. Not only that, historical materialism reiterates that, the great art and literary creations of today are developed only on the folk art forms and the scientific achievements are developed from the thousands of years of social practice and experiences of people.

We should remember that, it is because of lack of opportunities ordinary masses can not become great artists or scientists. It is not the monopoly of the few propertied classes There are innumerable examples like Newton, Lincoln, Gorky, and Stalin who were part of the ordinary people but later emerged as great men because of opportunities.

But because of the monopoly of the propertied class which is having a monopoly over the material production and the intellectual life of the society, the creative talents of the masses are being scuttled.

Capitalist society which is said to be a system which encourages and respects the great intellectual and creative talents, in reality, unendingly scuttles the creative capabilities and talents of the broad masses.

Wasting such a valuable property of the society began with the emergence of the class society and the division between mental and manual labour. Socialist society which abolishes private property will create the material basis for the ultimate solution to solve this contradiction. Actually, in the process of bringing out the great talents from the masses and thoroughly utilising them, society will attain communism. All round development of the people will attain the highest stage only in communist society. Monopoly of a few over the intellectual field will ultimately disappear.

Historic materialism confirms that people liberate themselves by recognising the decisive power and creativity of the people in the making of history. It makes the people realise their own power and get rid of the illusions in saviors. As a result, it starts the process of people consciously creating history

The role of great people in history

By saying people only make history”, are we not negating the role of great people? Absolutely not. Historical materialism does not negate the role played by great people in the process of historical development.

“Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise a movement and lead it.” (Lenin Collected Works, Vol.4, P.370)

“Wise, experienced, knowledgeable political leaders” are a must for the success of revolution. That means we must recognise the activities of the great leaders as a historical necessity. But what is the basis for the powers of the historical persons who have helped society to

progress? A leader however mighty he may be, cannot influence and succeed unless he has the support of the broad masses.

Not only that a person, however talented and powerful he may be, cannot go against the objective rules and attain success. Actually, all the famous great people in history recognised the objective rules of the development before others. That means they can get the support of the broad masses only when, their subjective wishes, aims of struggle coincide with the rules of objective development and the historical necessities of that period. In this way people create their own leaders.

But the aspect will remain as the representative of a particular historical period during historical periods is purely coincidental.

“That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance. But if one eliminates him there is a demand for a substitute, this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found.” (Engels, letter to W.Borgius, Selected Works, P.102. FLPN, Beijing)

At the same time we need not assume that any person can play the role of a great person. To fulfil historic responsibility enough capabilities are required. Engels say that such persons can be found. Historical materialism on one side recognizes the role played by great people in the progress of the society and on the ideals and practice of the historic people and the role of the people which helped to bring out their capabilities and talents making them powerful. On the whole it must be noted that, the historic personalities are created by the historic conditions and people together that is why historical materialism says that the people, only people are the makers of history, this applies not only in the field of politics but also in literature and art.

Marxist philosophy : the revolutionary science and the powerful weapon in proletarian revolution

Marxism –Leninism and Maoism provided us the most comprehensive and scientific world outlook – Dialectical and Historical Materialism. It is the highest development of philosophy as a specialised social science so far. It negated old materialism of all hues that was essentially partial. Being consistent materialism both regarding nature

and society it completely rejects idealism of any form and subjective understanding of any aspect of reality. Thus it demands the proletariat in general and its party in particular to wage a relentless struggle against idealism and subjectivism.

The Materialist Dialectics is the most scientific method of cognition in any field of science, since it is the subjective reflection of objective dialectics operating everywhere in the universe. Thus it is the most dynamic, creative and revolutionary in its nature. The laws of materialist dialectics, unlike the pre-Marxian and non-Marxian philosophies don't try to fit the objective world into pre-conceived ideological moulds of philosophical systems, but reflect the complex motion and development of objective world.

The Historical Materialism the inalienable component of Marxist philosophy provides the philosophical basis to all social sciences. It dealt a deathblow to idealism in the field of social sciences with its recognition that it is the social existence that determines the social consciousness. The consistent historical outlook it adopted both regarding nature and society is the unique feature of Marxist philosophy. It rejects ahistorical outlook in all respects.

The Marxist theory of knowledge considers that the human capacity to understand the world is unlimited. The unique feature of it is its recognition of the decisive role of social practice in the process of acquiring knowledge and considering social practice as the touchstone of truth. It considers philosophy not as a pure ideological discourse but as a guide to practice.

Whether it is in nature or in society by recognizing the objective laws of objective reality and by moulding practice accordingly human being can control the phenomenon and thus attains freedom. The dialectical and historical materialism stands as a guide to recognise the necessity and mould the practice in accordance with it. Thus it is a practice-oriented science. Especially in the present epoch of revolutions, it stands as a revolutionary guide in solving the practical and theoretical problems that crop up in the course of social revolution at every twist and turn. Thus not only the revolutionary proletariat and the revolutionary activists but also all people interested in social revolution

should pay attention to study and master Marxist philosophy so as to wield it as a powerful weapon in the social revolution.

By recognizing and understanding the dialectical laws and motion behind the events happening in society, life, and practice and especially in the class struggle as a whole we can grasp the necessity and orient our practice accordingly. In the hands of revisionists philosophy lost its lifeblood of revolutionary practice and creative application, and reduced to mere parroting of dialectical principles. Thus the propagation of Marxist philosophy not as a philosophy of parroting but as a philosophy “to change the world in a revolutionary way” became an important task of the revolutionary proletariat.

By grasping itself and making the oppressed masses to grasp the revolutionary essence of Marxist philosophy alone the proletarian party could wield it as a powerful weapon of class struggle; it could defend and creatively develop the revolutionary essence of Marxist philosophy.

In the ever-changing world it is necessary to creatively apply and develop Dialectical and Historical Materialism so as to understand the concrete phenomenon. As the true and worthy successors of Marx and Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao with their theoretical and practical efforts provided us with rich experiences which stand as beacon lights to illuminate our way in this regard. It is high time to uphold Marxism-Leninism-Maoism by accepting the heritage of those great teachers and beloved leaders of international proletariat and continuing their revolutionary traditions, of which wielding philosophy as a powerful weapon in class struggle is no less significant one, Let us try to master the revolutionary science, Marxist philosophy to wield it as a powerful weapon in class struggle.

A p e n d i x I

Materialism and Empirio-Criticism: Lenin's struggle against Modern bourgeois Philosophy

Lenin fought against the reactionary philosophical trends brought by the bourgeoisie in the early 20th century. Apart from effectively refuting the philosophical onslaught, which supposedly based on the then modern scientific discoveries, Lenin protected and strengthened fundamental Marxist philosophical aspects. He irrefutably expounded the truth that the modern victories of science proved that the only scientific world outlook is dialectical and historical materialist outlook.

Lenin in this effort creatively developed Marxist Philosophy. Till today his Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, written in 1909, remains as a sharpest weapon aimed against modern bourgeoisie reactionary trends.

The opportunism and revisionism, which rose in the early 20th century, naturally inclined towards those emerging bourgeoisie reactionary philosophical trends. The Second International neglected the attack of Idealism on Marxism in the philosophical front. Kautsky even proclaimed that there was no contradiction between Empirio-Criticism⁶ and Marxism.

The philosophical revisionism openly came up during the reactionary period in the wake of defeat of 1905 revolution. Many Social Democrats subscribed to Machism. They declared that they were creatively developing Marxism. Lenin immediately understood the political opportunism of this philosophical trend. He began a determined struggle against Russian Machists and its theoretical founders, Mach and Avenarius. He made crystal clear that the “new philosophy”, which is supposed to have overcome the partisanship, of materialism and idealism as claimed as the third way of philosophy, is nothing but rehash of old subjective idealism and agnosticism. They put forward their arguments to establish that Dialectical and Historical Materialism became obsolete. Those arguments are no more advanced ones than those of Berkeley and Hume who are the philosophical fore fathers of the Machists. Lenin's criticism on “Empirio-Criticism” is so comprehensive that even now it stands as

fundamental critique of current bourgeoisie philosophical trends. Lenin, unlike Plekhanov, who simply criticised these Machists as idealists and nothing more, did not confine to the criticism of these theories as idealist theories.

In the International Communist Movement Plekhanov alone fought theoretical battles against Machists. But he failed to understand the conditions for the rising of Machism. Keeping in view the crisis in modern Physics, which gave an immediate impetus to Machism, Lenin explained the modern scientific discoveries with dialectical materialist outlook. He proved through this that it was the old Physics, which faced crisis, but not the Dialectical Materialism. He recognized that the idealism is a weapon in the hands of ruling classes against the revolution. So he gave tremendous importance for the struggle in philosophical front. Lenin opined that this is another side to the fight against opportunism and revisionism.

In the reactionary period of 1907-10 "*Tsarism was victorious. All the revolutionary and opposition parties were smashed. Depression, demoralization, splits, discord, defection, and pornography took the place of politics. There was an ever greater drift towards philosophical idealism; mysticism became the garb of counter-revolutionary sentiments.*"² (Lenin Collected Works, Vol.31, p.27)

Many including some Social Democrats inclined towards idealism- especially of Machist Empirio-Criticism. Bolsheviks like Bogdanov, Bazarov, Lunacharsky and Mensheviks like Valintinov, Yesukevich, etc., were influenced by religio-idealist trends. They mixed up Marxism and Machism. In the name of revising the Marxism in accordance with changing times, they introduced Machism in place of philosophical theories of Marx and Engels. They circulated their Machist theories with brand names of Empirio-Criticism, Empirio-Monism (Bogdanov) and Empirio- Symbolism (Yushkevich). They continued to call themselves Marxists to cover up their revisionism and philosophical downfall. Lunacharsky went a step ahead and argued that it would be suitable and convenient to people if they tried to make socialism a religion. In that concrete situation, Lenin recognised that the philosophical struggle was the key link in the fight against opportunism. He began the polemics on Empirio-Criticism.

Empirio-Criticism recognises the experience only as the real. It rejects epistemology saying that it is abstract and beyond experience. This is a Positivist trend. This is described as second stage of Positivism (form of 19th century end). Earnest Mach (1838-1916) was the founder of Empirio-Criticism. Another well-known person in this trend was Richard Avenarius, a Swiss philosopher. The basis for all the opportunistic trends that arose in Russia was the Machism of Mach and Avenarius or Empirio-Criticism. Lenin therefore, exposed, these “new”, “modern” trends, which transcended the partisanship of philosophy claiming to be based on recent scientific discoveries, to be nothing but pure and simple idealism. Their philosophical basis being that of Subjective Idealism of Berkely⁷ and Agnosticism of Kant and Hume⁸ of 18th century.

Machists do not recognise the existence of objective world (things) beyond human consciousness or mind. Thing is only a “complex of sensations,” according to them. According to Mach who was a Physicist himself, the subject matter of Physics was the study of relations between the sensations with which the world is built of. Sensations are not the symbols of the things, Machists argue. But things themselves are psychic symbols of relatively stable confluence of sensations. Avenarius expressed in a different way. He recognises both the individual who is observing (subject) and observing object (the environment of the person). He calls them “self and “non self respectively. These are inseparable. Among these two, “self is primary. If there is no “self, there can not exist “non self. This is nothing but Machism in different version. Also this is reiteration of Bishop Berkeley in verbatim. Berkeley rejected the existence of external world beyond the human consciousness. He argued that we do not comprehend things but sensations, ideas and feelings only. Things are not real, Berkeley says. Objects are bundle of ideas or complex of sensations.

“Feeling is existence” this is a very important fundamental concept in Berkeley’s philosophy. If one consistently upholds Berkeley’s formulation, it will lead to Solipsism, which says “only sensations, no existence.” But the inseparable link between idealism and religion made at last Berkeley to adopt Objective Idealism. Things do not have existence external to individual. But in god’s mind things exists as totalities

of ideas. Then precisely had to negate his Subjective Idealism.

Mach also had reached similar conclusions. “World is summation? of sensations. So our knowledge only of sensations only”. When said so, he is recognising not only existence of “me” and “my sensation”’s but also existence of others too. He also agreed that others do exist independent of sensations. Thus Mach also could not be consistent in his Subjective Idealism. Mach supported his argument that world is nothing but sensations using “elements.” This world is made up of neutral elements. They are two types: 1. Physical elements and 2. Psychic elements. The “physical” are independent and do not depend on our nervous system. In the name of physical elements Mach brought forward untenable concept- “sensations independent of nervous system.” With this new terminology he proclaimed that he transcended both the materialism and idealism. Bogdanov⁹, basing on the neutral elements formulated his Empirio-Monism.

Mach’s guru David Hume took a skeptical attitude towards the source of sensation and perception. Hume contended that the source to our knowledge is unsolvable problem and unknowable forever. Reality is a flux of impressions only. He differs with Berkeley with regard to the source of these impressions. According to Berkeley it is god. According to Hume it is unknowable. Hume proposed that the aim of knowledge is not to comprehend the existence but to guide our practical activity. (Hume’s this Utilitarianism provided basis for Pragmatism.) Thus, though, Hume maintained difference of tone but as a disciple of Berkeley he clung to Subjective Idealism.

The Empirio critics adopted Kant’s idealism and skepticism. Machists criticise Kant for rejecting existence of physical world by subscribing to “things in themselves”. In Kant’s opinion, things are unknowable forever, by being “things in themselves”. Kant reached idealism through the agnosticism. Kant by accepting apriori knowledge he took subjective idealist position. Philosophical categories like ‘Time’ and ‘Space’, cause and effect do not reflect objective relations. They are apriori forms of knowledge. The empiricists took this idealism of Kant.

“The Machists, criticise Kant for being too much of a materialist while we criticise him for not being enough of a materialist. The Machists

criticise Kant from the right, we from the left.” (Lenin, MEC, P. 199)

The core of Berkeleyan Philosophy is to reject the existence of matter. He endeavoured his best to drive away the concept of matter from philosophy. There is nothing like matter; and it is a dangerous conception, Berkeley felt. “Cause” (the philosophical category), has become a sign or symbol for all ideas. To make ideas simple, he believed that “matter” should be driven away from philosophy. Hume also refuted the objectivity of philosophical categories cause and effect, substance (matter). Kant felt that laws, philosophical concepts as subjective and apriori.

Mach, following footsteps of Berkeley, Hume and Kant, says that the concepts like cause and effect, necessity etc., have been unnecessarily been introduced into the epistemology. For thrift in thinking these concepts have to be removed. Mach argues (Neo-positivists go a step ahead and reject the very subject matter of philosophy). Yushkevich¹⁰ developed his Empirio-symbolism basing on Mach’s assertion that concepts, matter, Time and Space do not reflect any objective reality, they are just symbols for complex of sensations. Lenin exposed Empirio-criticism its philosophical roots by equating it with subjective idealism of Berkeley & Hume. He proved that it is nothing but the same old one in new form covering up its mistakes.

Lenin established:

The epistemology of Machists is agnosticism. While doing so, he brilliantly expounded Marxist theory of knowledge. Especially he explained the Marxist theory of reflection on the basis of modern science.

He beyond doubt proved the active and decisive role of social practice in the acquisition of knowledge. He identified the relation of Machism with “physical” idealism¹¹. The collapse of old theories in physics as the proof for the relative character of knowledge. Without understanding it properly some physical scientists degraded into relativism¹². In the light of discoveries of modern physics, he explained physical categories like matter, time and space, causal relation, necessitates. He developed them also.

He exposed the social roots of Machism. He revealed the philosophical aspect of class struggle which was behind the arguments of

Empirio-criticism.

“Recent philosophy is as partisan as was philosophy two thousand years ago. The contending parties are essentially - although this is concealed by a pseudo-erudite quackery of new terms or by a weak-minded non-partisanship - materialism and idealism. The later is nearly a subtle refined form fideism.” (Lenin...P. 358)

The Materialism and Empirio-criticism remains as a fundamental critique and philosophical weapon of proletariat against the philosophy of modern bourgeoisie. Moreover, it reveals the importance of class struggle in the philosophical front.

A p e n d i x II

Main Trends in Modern bourgeois philosophy

Modern bourgeois philosophy is clearly manifesting the general crisis of capitalism. Today, in accordance with the reactionary political character of the bourgeoisie, its philosophy too became more reactionary. Once, the bourgeoisie developed on the basis of the advancement of sciences, which became possible due to the latter's fight against fideism and unshackling itself from it. Paradoxically, today's bourgeoisie either directly or indirectly adopting the very fideism as its main basis of its philosophical thinking and thus trying to shackle sciences with fideism. By alleging that scientific knowledge cannot grasp real truth or complete truth, it is endeavouring to enslave sciences to fideism. Today, for the advancement of sciences, the bourgeoisie and its philosophy became the chief obstacles. Subjectivism, agnosticism, skepticism and irrationalism form the main content of present day bourgeois philosophical thought. But the bourgeoisie in its futile attempt to make its philosophy "new" and "recent", the Machism weapon of the bourgeois in waging venomous philosophical fight against the dialectical and historical materialism in the art of deception. Innovating new philosophical dictum which is essentially eclectic and often trying to peddle it as the new philosophy which transcended both idealism and materialism.

The common feature of all the contemporary trends in bourgeoisie philosophy is that they are all out and out anti-Marxist. In the venomous philosophical fight it is waging against dialectical and historical materialism the art of deception is the main weapon of the bourgeoisie. The Marxist philosophy had made incisive, sharp and in-depth critique of all the shortcomings of old materialists -such as their unscientific ness, incomprehensiveness, one-sidedness, mechanistic character and dissociation from practice, etc., and by overcoming all those shortcomings and limitations dialectical materialism emerged as the scientific materialism. By conveniently ignoring this fact, bourgeois philosophers continue impute the shortcomings and limitations of old -ancient and metaphysical and mechanical materialism to Marxist philosophy and by repeating the same old rehash they make a quixotic

battle against Marxist philosophy.

They allege that Marxism is economic determinism that ignores the non-economic aspects in human life, especially the spiritual life. Marx, Engels and all the teachers of Marxism quite often made it clear that recognition of the ultimate determinant character of economic aspect does not mean neglecting the importance and influence of superstructure. Many a time they stressed that the recognition of the dialectical relation between base and superstructure is the specificity of Marxist philosophy and they averred that economic determinism is quite opposed to Marxism. But still, the bourgeoisie philosophers with their mulish adamancy continue to repeat the old cliches. They reject historical materialism and the decisive role of the mode of production with the pretext of giving paramount to individual, individualism and individual freedom. This is quite natural to the present day bourgeois philosopher who is reluctant to accept the fact that the degenerating decadent capitalist system itself the prime cause of the rottenness which is engulfing each and every sphere of the superstructure. How can he think otherwise at all?

Broadly speaking, present day bourgeoisie is more and more resorting to subjective idealism and fideism. Lenin, while fighting with Machists proved that all that empiricists are saying is nothing but the old subjective idealism and they are all the followers of Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. Lenin's critique of bourgeois philosophy still holds good. The objective idealists of today more and more adopting fideism. Let us briefly know the main and popular trends in bourgeois philosophy.

Neo-Thomism

Neo-Thomism is an important objective idealist trend of the modern bourgeoisie. It is the official philosophical doctrine of Catholic Church. In fact,

Neo-Thomism is the modern form of medieval Thomism. Thomas Aquinas (1225-'74), Dominican priest interpreted the ideas of Aristotle and Plato to the needs of Catholic Church. The main aspect of Thomism is compromising reason with faith. It argues that god's existence could be probed logically with reason. It considers God as the "prime cause" of being and "prime mover". In the disguised struggle that took place

between idealists and materialists in the medieval period, Aquinas stood in support of realists (idealists).

In the 19th century Thomism reincarnated as Neo-Thomism and duly recognized by Pope in 1879, as the only real Catholic philosophical doctrine. It is wide spread in countries with large number of Catholics like Italy, France, and Germany. USA and Latin American countries. Outstanding Neo-Thomists are Maritain of France, Raeymckere of Belgium, Lotze de Fires of West Germany.

Neo-Thomism from 1960s imbibing some aspects of modern idealism from Phenomenology¹³, Philosophical Anthropology¹⁴ etc., and trying to take modern form. Belgium became International center for Neo-Thomism.

The main features of Neo-Thomism

- ◆ It is anti- Marxist to the core.
- ◆ It is providing basis for Catholic religious teachings.
- ◆ It interpreted modern sciences from religious point of view.
- ◆ The spiritual, divine and “pure consciousness” is the supreme reality. The material world is secondary and derivative. Prime cause of being is God. For all the philosophical categories the “prime source?” is God.
- ◆ The super natural forces dictate the direction of historical process. Man in no way can influence it.
- ◆ The super natural powers also determine the individual human behavior.
- ◆ Their conception of the ideal society run by Church is the basis of their social science.

Neo-Hegelianism

An idealistic philosophical trend which arose in Britain and USA in the second half of the 19th century as a reaction to natural historical materialism and positivism and for the defense of religion and speculative philosophy. At the turn of the century Neo-Hegelianism assumed an anti-Marxist stance and spread in Italy and Holland, German Neo-Hegelianism, came to the fore on the eve of, and after, the I world war.

After the II world war Neo-Hegelianism spread in France, largely merging with existentialism, Neo-Hegelianism in general renounces dialectics or limits it's application to the sphere of consciousness, and irrationally interprets Hegel the spirit of philosophy of life. A solution of the problem of contradiction in Neo-Hegelianism varies from "reconciliation" to denial of any possibility of resolving contradictions. In sociology, Neo-Hegelianism utilizes the reactionary aspects of Hegelian philosophy of the spirit for justifying the imperialist state and also the fascist 'corporate state'¹⁵ as a means of reconciling classes in society. In 1930, a Neo-Hegelianism center was set up under the name of international Hegelian Union.

Neo-Positivism

Neo-Positivism is one of the main trends in the bourgeoisie philosophy of 20th century. In the beginning of 19th century August Comte has doctrinised this school. The Pragmatism is also a positivist trend. The first stage is Positivism and the Machism or Empirio-criticism is the second stage whereas Neo-Positivism is the third stage in the transition of positivism and it is the most popular trend of Positivism in 20th century in USA.

Common features of Positivism

- ◆ All Positivist trends are subjective idealist and Agnostic trends.
- ◆ Empiricism is their main essence.
- ◆ In the acquisition of knowledge they deny role for philosophy and theory. By saying that the ontological questions are extreme abstractions beyond our experience, they reject all the philosophical categories. They argue that philosophy should confine itself to the logical and linguistic questions.
- ◆ Sciences which gets direct experiences are alone provide knowledge. But these sciences could not give the knowledge about the objective world, but knowledge of experience. They describe the Positivism as one, which overcame the partisan nature and one-sidedness of materialism and idealism. They claim that this philosophy follows all the methods of modern science. They call it is "Positive philosophy."
- ◆ The advances in sciences especially in Physics overturned many

concepts of old physics. Old physics could not explain the phenomenon. Positivism grew from this failure, whose basis lay in the subjective idealism of Berkeley, and agnosticism of Hume and Kant. Lenin in his criticism of empiricism proved the philosophical roots of Positivism. He also revealed how these philosophical trends are related with Fideism

- ◆ Though it appears that positivism is giving paramountcy to the sciences, it asserts that sciences could reach only appearance but not essence.

Neo-Positivism

Neo-Positivism totally rejects the subject matter of the philosophy. According to them from our daily activity we arrive at scientific thinking. That knowledge we get is expressed through language. The task of philosophy is only to analyze the language and our direct experience. The objectivity of the truth and the relation between the being and knowing is out of the purview of philosophy.

- ◆ The extreme tendency of this Neo-Positivists-the Vienna Circle-advocated that philosophy should confine to only emotion and feelings of individual and thus turned into solipsism. They added science of logic to Positivism and made into Logical Positivism. According to them, the real scientific philosophy is that which analyses the scientific language logically. They describe their philosophy as Philosophy of Science.

- ◆ Neo-Positivists describing their school as scientific empiricism. They have good influence over scientific community. They are interpreting the contemporary scientific theories in idealist way, especially subjectivist fashion.

- ◆ USA is the center for them since 1930s. Since 1950s it is facing opposition from post-positivism, critical rationalism, etc. of western bourgeoisie philosophical trends.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism (Utilitarianism) started in USA since 1870s this is popular in western countries especially USA. The measurement for the value of knowledge is its utility but not its conformity to the objective world.

Anything is true if it could bring in the results. That means whichever policy or theory that brings success is justifiable however reactionary it may. This is exactly representing the interests of the American Bourgeoisie.

◆ Radical empiricism: According to William James, a psychologist of America, we should have a right to believe which is not rational or which cannot be proved. Matter and consciousness are two different forms of the same “experience”.

◆ John Davy (1859-1952) founded instrumentalism. The difference between subject and object, thinking and reality and ideal and material are of empirical nature only. Concepts, scientific laws, theories, etc. are instruments of: plan of action only. Davy’s philosophy totally centers on individualism and individual interests and is serving as basis for the present American educational system.

Existentialism

Existentialism is an irrational trend, which reflects the pessimistic thinking of bourgeois intellectuals in the period of social crisis which further deepened in the imperialist era. Though its roots lie in Kierkegaard and Husserl’s philosophical doctrines, in 1950s and 1960s of 20th century it gained currency in bourgeois intellectuals. Actually existentialism is not a well-defined trend. It consisted of various streams with shades of difference. Some of the Existentialists not even accept themselves as existentialist as such.

The existentialist use the term “existence” to denote, mainly the existence of human being. Many of them reject the idea of essence. Some of them either underrate the role of essence or separate existence from essence disregarding unity of the two. Even a section of existentialists declare that the essence of man is his existence as it is comprehended through his personal existence. Existence is also explained as the ‘concrete unique personality’. It is also maintained that there is no object without subject negating the concept that the object exists independently of subject and two are regarded as unity. The main object of this trend of philosophy is to solve the problem of individuality (personality) and to remove those which stand in the way of the development of personality, particularly during the period of social

crisis. For the purpose existentialists developed their ideology – existentialism on the basis of bourgeois philosophy.

Existentialism is the outgrowth of subjective idealism which denies the existence of the objective reality independent of the will and consciousness of the subject. It holds that the sum total of the subject's sensations, experiences, feelings and actions make up the world in which the subject lives and acts or at least believes that they are an integral, essential part of the world. This philosophical trend goes against the very concept of Dialectical Materialism.

According to Dialectical Materialism subject's activity is not arbitrary, it does not contradict the existence of the objective world and its laws independent of man's consciousness, moreover, it presupposes their existence. The subjective form of cognition does not make unnecessary its objective source and content. Further, the very forms of cognition reflect the most general characteristics of the objective world.

Kierkegaard (Danish religious philosopher,– 1813-1855) was the first philosopher who placed the existence of thing above their essence – existence precedes essence. Existentialists maintain that existence is the kernel of human “ego” which exists as a concrete unique personality. This cannot be objectified, and that is its one of the main characteristics of existence. Practically, in the form of external objects man can objectify his abilities, knowledge and know-how. Man can also analyse his psychic actions, his thinking and can objectify them theoretically. Existence, without its essence, cannot be objectified by man either practically or theoretically, cannot be cognized, and therefore is beyond his power. Whereas an understanding of all existing phenomena can be gained only from a unity of existence and essence. This existence of things cannot be reduced either to their inner essence, or to their being. If the essence, cause of things, is placed above existence, considering the existence as something base, accidental and short lived, then it would lead to wrong conclusion. But it is just as wrong to place the existence above their essence considering the essence either as non-existent or as something unfathomable and beyond human cognition and practice. In fact, essence is inconceivable without existence as in that case there is a realm of immobility, which has nothing in common with real life in nature and society. Existence is also inconceivable

without essence, as in that case, only the external the restless and the accidental are marked. Thus theory of existentialism directed both against rational understanding of man, according to which human essence lies in man's mind and against the Marxist understanding of human essence as a totality of social relations.

Modern existentialists were greatly influenced by German philosophers - Husserl (1859-1938) and Jaspers (1883-1969). Husserl introduced a school of thought which is known as phenomenology. This school of thought represents the subjective idealist principle which is intended to assert "there is no object without subject". This concept became one of the basis of the existentialists of the latter period. Jasper introduced his doctrine of 'border-line situation'. According to this doctrine, the being, which is beyond rational thinking, can be realized by man from his personal existence, directly from his own, of which in every day life he is not always aware of it. As it is the man's "inner being", only during the extreme emotive situations like death, pain, fear, remorse (border line situations) individual can recognize his existence and realize his being. In this situation the existentialists of the later period maintained, man realizes his 'freedom'. In their opinion, freedom means the striving of individual to mould himself through his own doing and actions without getting influenced by natural or social factors. With this individualistic approach they consider freedom as a personal aspect.

During the 1940s, '50's and '60s existentialism had its influence among a good numbers of intellectuals of many countries. Sartre, a French atheist existentialist was the leading proponent of this trend. His views were a peculiar combination of ideas of Kierkegaard, Husserl and others. Bringing from the main percept of existentialism – existence precedes essence – he formulated his "phenomenological ontology" on a radical anti-thesis of being and consciousness. The separation of being from consciousness leads to dualism. Sartre considered his concept as dialectical, but dialectics as a method for substantiating indeterminism. Dialectical materialism rejects the idealist conception of Being as something that exists before matter or independently of it, at the same time it also rejects the idealist attempts to make being a product of the act of consciousness. Dialectical Materialism considers Being as primary

and consciousness as secondary and interprets consciousness as something more than a passive reflection of being and considers that it influences Being as an active force. So Sartre's concept regarding the relation between Being and consciousness was not dialectical one. Freedom appeared to him as the essence of man's behaviour, the source of activity, and mode of his existence as he regarded it from the point of view of individual consciousness. This is pure subjectivism.

Regarding dialectical materialism Sartre expressed his difference with the Marxist theory of knowledge. He sought to complement Marxism on the basis of existentialist anthropology which regards all truly human traits and qualities as abstractions inherent in man general, i.e. without taking into consideration the historical forms of intercourse, in which activity of man takes place. This leads to idealist concept of history, as the social phenomena, which is resulted in from the purposeful activity of men, are only explained on the basis of the subjective psychological features of "natural individuals." He tried to take middle path between idealism and materialism. If his overall philosophy is taken into consideration, his views are philosophically contradictory and eclectic. Sartre totally supported national liberation movements. Opposed imperialist aggressions. In the age of imperialist era, he stood as a rare example of progressive bourgeois intellectual.

Post-Modernism

The Post Modernism/Post Structuralism emerged in a historical setup when both subjective and objective crisis of world imperialism particularly of the U.S.A. and Europe became acute. Another aspect of the world situation also helped it to spread its wings i.e. degeneration of the Soviet Union, set-back in world proletarian revolution and decline in working class movement throughout the world.

There are various shades of differences within the post-modernists. In spite of these differences Foucault, Derrida, Barthe, Leotard and others have agreement on one fundamental point which represents the essence of post-modernist ideology – that is, all of them maintain that it is not possible to have a total knowledge about the universe.

Post Modernists import new jargons to launch an attack against the basis of knowledge. They repeat the philosophical thought of

Nietsche and Heidegger. They are mainly followers of Nietsche whose view was that there are nothing like absolute and objective truth, cause and effect, values etc. Leotard shows that in the post-modern situation there is nothing like grand narrative and modernism has no place for its existence. Foucult declared the death of historical Man. As a whole the entire enlightenment of the Renaissance period came under their attack. Even rationalism – its validity has been opposed. They champion anarchy or no-prospect or no-progress and negate the dialectical progress. They put forward an idea of absurd world where there is nothing to measure for studying human history – its past and present. They do not recognize the role of reasoning power of judgment.

Post Modernists reject all categories even certain things like measurement through the conceptual tools like theoretical mathematics, thus take us in a chaotic condition. They even advocate to reject certain tools essential to know results like cause and effect which was discovered by man in the process of cognition and practical activities. So by rejecting cause and effect they express their non-acceptance to all scientific experiences so far, and oppose Marxist view that no phenomenon exists or can exist without cause, for everything has its cause. Causality is inherent in reality. Post Modernists maintain that it is not possible to study causes perfectly and the inherent laws of anything cannot be known by us. So, according to them, one should not think of recreating anything knowing its inherent laws. This leads us to accept a world dominated by results and uncertainty.

Post Modernists maintain that Post Modernism is the reaction of modernism. The reason of this reaction is that the very basis of modernism was Enlightenment e.g. rationalism, technological basis, using of concrete tools for the measurement production and knowledge, faith on universal absolute truth and simple progress. Both Foucult and Derrida opine that universe is indeterminable and it is fragmented into different parts. They do not accept the theory of universal truth and co-ordinated history. They not only oppose rationalism, they also oppose Marxism which based itself on rationalism and in the course of practice it further developed and formulated dialectical materialism, historical materialism.

Post Modernist ideology of discourse begins with a pre-determined

notion that truth has no existence independent of discourse. Then this ideology explains its position with the help of some peculiar terms. According to this ideology what is constructed on the basis of oral or written language is the text of the writer/speaker. The views of the writer/speaker are expressed in these texts. Through deconstruction of these texts opposite views can be developed. There are various types of discourses in a society. Religion, Nationality, Race, Family, Sex etc., the basis of any of these, different discourses can be formed. In every discourse there is a hegemonistic part. And every discourse contains the possibility of forming one or more than one opposite discourses. These opposite discourses are formed through deconstruction of hegemonistic discourse. This process of construction and de-construction of discourses concerning every important issue of the world continues. Post Modernists claim that there is no realistic final explanation of life. Like text, the reality, also cannot be understood and realized. It cannot be explored with the help of science, knowledge or theory. According to them, reality is a ceaseless current of all possible explanations. So Post Modernists do not put forward any objective truth or absolute truth. They advise to study Genealogy of discourse which describes the emergence and transformation of ideas related to social institutions and their activities. But this study cannot give any materialist or rationalist description of the world. Post Modernists think that there is no cause and effect relations among the various discourses. They oppose any such effort as that results in a master discourse which suppress other discourses. So if the history is viewed as the history of class struggle then the struggles in other discourses e.g. self-determination of nationalities, caste discrimination, male chauvinism, religious fundamentalism, etc. Not only that even they oppose any effort to unify these struggles and to establish interrelation among these struggles. Marxists do not ignore various identities of a person. But the basic identity of a person is his/her economic class and this identity ultimately determines the other identities of the person. According to Post Modernists this view leads to determinism. And struggle against the classes which wield power and suppress all sections of the people, should not be built up.

This is Post Modernist theory of knowledge. Following this theory Post Modernists try to understand human life. The study and explanation of the text is their basis to have such understanding. They ignore material

relevancy altogether. It is one form of idealism. It conceptualizes countless explanations which are in the air and have no relation with real man – historical man. They evade the question that what should be explained and what should not be and how those are to be determined considering class or sex based advantages and disadvantages. They consciously evade these questions as they do not want to confront the social reality.

There are shades of differences within the post Modernists regarding concept of power, and the very system. Foucault stated that “power-knowledge springs for political awareness of small things for the control and use of men for the purpose of administration.” Citing examples of past and present institutions e.g. school, hospitals, Military etc., he arrived at a conclusion that man is living in a chained condition. This domination cannot be eliminated, even, in the change of any established power. Every system is the embodiment of domination and there is no way out of this domination. Power does not rest with any body. Power has its expressions in all social relations and activities. He does not think that the power is concentrated in state. So to strike the relation of power does not mean to strike the state. He believed that there will be resistance against repression but those will be sporadic and at the local level. He does not favour the present stability. But the method, as it is suggested, leads to that only. Foucault held that it would be wrong to determine the method from above, it should be determined in the course of various activities, discussions and analysis. Derrida thinks that power tends to be corrupt; it tries to unify everything by force thus rejects differences. So he opposes power. The basic fact, according to him, is that the tortured remains because the entire system generates the tortured invariably. Whatever political system it may be, the final result is absence of freedom and presence of frustration. To solve this problem he gave a call for deconstruction to widen scope of freedom within this system. Other Post Modernists do not eager to strike the pillar of power. R. Rorty maintains that the system, what is there in the present bourgeois liberal society, is enough to control the danger. To them this system is ubiquitous like God. It cannot be traced in any particular position of this system. As a consequence of this idea one may deduce that this system somehow ceases to exist through its deconstruction. But post Modernists do not say anything about the counter text or deconstruction of

bourgeois state and civil society though they showed enough interest for deconstruction of socialist state.

In fact while Foucault maintained that in spite of change in the system domination cannot be eliminated, Derrida thinks that in all systems tortured remains. So to them there is no difference between Slave system and Feudal system and between Feudalism, Capitalism and Socialism. Moreover, Foucault presented power as all pervading one, but did not put forward any solution to the problem. He depicted a picture of horror, a picture of a monster with countless tentacles suppressing all people who are reduced to helplessness in perpetuity. Post Modernists do not have any notion of socio-historical progress. To them the progressive character of history is lost; it is ending in the sense of 'dying'; capitalism achieved final victory. There is no alternative system before the mankind. They think, it has already proved that the socialism is not an alternative to existing system. Frustration and pessimism engulf them. They cannot visualize any future. So to them history is aimless. It is nothing but petty bourgeois defeatism, pessimism and aimlessness that permeate in their sense of history. Post Modernists peddle this defeatist concept. And imperialist forces are gleefully championing this concept to serve their own class interest. A good number of frustrated petty bourgeois intellectuals, even a section of left intellectuals have been greatly influenced by this concept considering the set-back in socialist system as permanent one. So the concept, that there is contradiction within the system and this contradiction has the strength to destroy the authority, is going to be left. Instead they accept the Post Modernist concept, that to be inside means assisting the system and to be outside means inability of breaking the system. It is more than anarchism. In spite of all negative aspects, even negation of authority, anarchists had in their imagination a society – a self-regulated “natural society” without authority. Their main thrust was against the coercive machinery. But none of the Post Modernists even Foucault did not venture to attack the actual state, his attack was against abstract state which is non-existent. With this sense of history and concept of power they have been continuously explaining the universe, though they deny the possibility of explaining the same. It is but natural that their every explanation manifests this petty bourgeois pessimism. So when they state that there is no grand narrative, it means they do not know how to construct a grand narrative in this situation.

To be more concrete, they even do not venture to do so. This philosophy of frustration, in fact, accepts the existing system – a system of permanent human bondage. It opposes class struggles led by the party of the proletariat which unify all other fragmented struggle and direct those against this unjust system and its mentors for the liberation of human race.

Post Modernists only want to take part in the struggles based on issues of various section of the society. They think that these struggles develop through deconstruction of hegemonistic discourses. And Post Modernists like to play a conscious role in these struggles with the aim of extending the area of democracy. As the process of interchanging of hegemonistic discourses is a ceaseless one, these struggles will continue. They cannot say, where these will end.

Post Modernism, under the cover of gimmick “categories” preaches idealism. It is full of self-contradictory statements. It raises questions without putting forward any solution. It oppose rationalism, all positive results of human civilization and Marxism. It supports bourgeois state and its social system. It, in fact, serves imperialism and opposes revolutionary struggles. It tries to confound the people and takes them to a world without basis, without the need for change and in the end rejects the prospect of progress to a new society.

NOTES

1.Fideism: It is a philosophical doctrine, which subordinates the scientific knowledge to religion and religious beliefs. Fideists argue that sciences can provide only the knowledge of material world i.e. of the secondary and material causes. Religion alone can provide the knowledge of real causes or primary causes of existence – the super natural causes. Religion alone can explain the existence of universe and the real meaning of human life, they argue. They try to replace religious beliefs in place of scientific thinking. Various schools of modern bourgeois philosophy (existentialism, Neo-Thomism, etc.) are in fact adopting this fideism by arguing that the scientific knowledge has limitations.

2.Solipsism: It is a subjective idealist doctrine, according to which only the individual and individual's consciousness really exists and all other things in the material world including other people exists only in the mind of individual. This extreme way of rejecting the existence of objective reality belittles all human activity and reduces all sciences to nonsense. Hence the subjective idealists generally try to avoid themselves adopting this solipsist stance. But subjective idealism of any hue will certainly leads to solipsism, if one consistently adheres to it or stretches it to its logical end. The adherents of this doctrine generally accepts the divinely or super natural consciousness or god whose existence they consider real and independent.

3.Skepticism: This philosophical doctrine questions the possibility for acquiring knowledge pertaining to the objective reality. Generally in the periods when society is in transition to a new stage and the ideals of the old society were shattered but new ones still not rooted deep, skepticism spreads widely. When the ancient slave society was being decaying and in the last stages of feudalism philosophical skepticism played a positive role by questioning the old philosophical systems, dogmatic doctrines and beliefs and thus paved the way for the development of philosophy.

However it should be noted that consistent adherence to skepticism leads to agnosticism that rejects the very possibility of the knowing the world. Various philosophical doctrines of modern bourgeois

philosophy are stretching skepticism to its extreme, i.e. up to the agnostic stance and advocating most pessimistic and mystic theories.

4. This was the speech delivered by Mao on 18th August 1964 and it was never verified and made any changes by Mao.

5. Lewis H. Morgan (1818-81): American ethnologist, archaeologist and historian of primitive society. In 1877 he published his great work **Ancient Society** (Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery, through Barbarism to Civilization). With the publication of this book the myths and fictitious narrations of the life of pre-historical humans came to an end. Engels said that, Morgan *“in his own way had discovered afresh in America, the materialist conception of history discovered by Marx... it is Morgans great merit that he has discovered and reconstructed in its main lines this prehistoric basis of our written history,..”* (Origin of Family, pp.45)

6. Empirio-criticism: it is an ontological doctrine which considers sensuous experiences alone the source of knowledge. Bacon, Hobbs, Locke and others are among the materialist Empiricists over estimates the sensuous knowledge in the process of acquiring knowledge and belittles the importance of abstract thinking and theoretical thinking in the process of acquiring knowledge.

Berkeley, Hume, Mach, Avenarius are among the idealist empiricists. The idealist Empiricists reduce the objective reality into totality of perceptions or ideas and rejects the basis of experience – the material world. Empirio-criticism is an idealist empiricist doctrine.

7. George Berkely (1685-1753): Irish subjective idealist and fideist who attacked materialism vehemently and rejected all the then new discoveries of physics including law of gravity. From the middle of 19th century Berkely's subjective idealist doctrines had been revived and became main source of Empirio-criticism, Neo-positivism, pragmatism, etc. of modern bourgeois philosophy.

8. David Hume (1711-1776): An agnosticist, Scottish national and English philosopher, psychologist and historian. In his opinion the only objects of authentic knowledge are of mathematics. The Empirio-criticismists, pragmatists, existentialists adopted his theories.

9. Bogdanov (1873-1928): Russian philosopher, economist and

social democrat. Expelled from Bolshevik party in 1909. He considered Mach's division of experience into physical and psychic elements and considering them independent of each other is incorrect and opinioned that it should be explained as one (*monos*). According to his Empirio-monism every thing is nothing but "organized experience."

10. P.S.Yushkevich (1873-1943): Russian Machist, social democrat and Menshevik. According to him, the world is nothing but the totality of symbols of experience and the concepts such as truth, existence, essence, etc. are not the reflections of reality but symbols of experience. He considered philosophy not as a science but only a semi-artistic and semi-emotional outlook.

11. Physical idealism: Lenin called the subjective idealist doctrines that garbed with the discoveries of modern physics as physical idealism.

12. Relativism: This idealist relativist doctrine emphasizes the relative and objective nature of knowledge on the one hand and rejects the possibility of correct reflection of objective reality in human knowledge on the other. In the contemporary bourgeois philosophy this relativism manifesting itself as the rejection of objective laws and it is being used as a means of theoretical struggle against materialism.

13. Phenomenalism: It is a theory of knowledge based on the premise that sensations alone are the source knowledge. Moderate phenomenism recognises the existence of objects reflected in sensations. But it only leads to inconsistent materialism or agnosticism. Extreme phenomenism leads to subjective idealism, that considers world as the summation of ideas or sensations. Here we are stating about that extreme of phenomenism.

14. Philosophical anthropology: It is a branch of philosophy, which provides philosophical understanding about man. But here we are stating about the bourgeois philosophical anthropology. In the name of discovering human essence in the light of recent scientific advances, it actually arrives at the agnostic or skeptic conclusions to the effect that the real essence and nature of man is unknowable. In the name of applying scientific discoveries it actually adopts eclecticism. To be precise eclecticism is its analytical method.

15. Corporate state: in Italy and Germany after First World War fascist dictatorships established in the name of corporate state. The fascists tried to deceive people by describing the fascist dictatorship as the “class partnership” and “conciliation of interests.” They forced the entire population to organise into corporations of capitalists, workers, and employees. Thereby they abolished the working class organisations and all other mass organisations and enforced fascist dictatorship.