

Chapter 26: What is History?

History can be defined in three ways. In fact there are three branches of history closely linked with each other.

I. History is that branch of knowledge which deals with the past events and the conditions connected with the people of the past as distinguished from the present day conditions and circumstances. All events which relate to the existing time, that is the time when they are recorded, are called the events of the day, are judged, reported, and recorded by daily newspapers. But as soon as its time passes, every event becomes a part of history. So in this sense history means that branch of knowledge which deals with the past events and occurrences and give an account of the past people. Biographies, narratives of the conquests and the stories of the eminent people as compiled by all nations come under this category.

In this sense history means, firstly, the knowledge of the individual matters and the events concerning the individuals, not of general laws, and rules of mutual relations. Secondly, it is a transmitted science. Thirdly, it is a knowledge of 'being', not that of 'becoming'. Fourthly, it is related to the past, not to the present. We in our terminology call this sort of history 'transmitted history'.

II. In another sense history signifies that branch of knowledge which deals with the rules and the traditions which governed the life of the peoples in the past. These rules and traditions are deduced from the study and the analysis of the past events. The subject of the transmitted history and the questions with which it deals, namely the past events and occurrences, serve as the preliminaries of this branch of history. In fact the past events, for the purpose of history in this sense, can be compared to the material which a physicist collects in his laboratory for his study, analysis and experiment in order to find out its characteristics and properties and to discover general laws concerning it. The job of a historian in this second sense is to discover the nature of historical events and to find out their causative relations in order to be able to deduce some general rules applicable to all similar events of the past and the present. We call this branch of history 'scientific history'.

Though the past events are the subject of study in scientific history, the general rules which are drawn

from these events do not exclusively belong to the past. They are equally applicable to the present and the future as well. This aspect of scientific history makes it very useful to man as a source of knowledge and helps him control his future.

The difference between the work of a research scholar of scientific history and a natural scientist is that the subject of study of a natural scientist is the material which actually exists at present and hence his entire study and analysis are physical and experimental; whereas the material which is studied by a historian, though existed in the past, is extinct now. Only some information about it and some documents connected with it are at the disposal of the historian. As far as his findings are concerned, he can be compared to a judge of a court of justice pronouncing his judgement on the basis of documentary evidence, not in the basis of the evidence of eye-witnesses. As such the analysis of a historian though logical and rational is not physical. He carries out his analysis in his mental laboratory with the instruments of reasoning and inference. In this respect the job of a historian is like that of a philosopher rather than like that of a natural scientist.

Like transmitted history scientific history also relates to the past, not to the present. It is the knowledge of 'being' not of 'becoming'. But unlike transmitted history it is general, not particular, and it is rational not merely transmitted.

Scientific history, in fact, is a branch of sociology. It is sociology of the past societies. The contemporary societies and the past societies both form the subject of study of sociology. But if we confine our sociology to the study of contemporary societies, scientific history and sociology, become two different branches of knowledge, though still closely related to each other and dependent upon each other.

III. The word, history in its third sense is used to denote philosophy of history, that is the knowledge of the development of society from one stage to another and the knowledge of the laws governing these changes. In other words, it is the science of 'becoming' of societies, not of their 'being' only.

Here the reader may ask whether it is possible that societies should have the two qualities of 'being' and 'becoming' and that 'being' be the subject of one branch of science, named scientific history and 'becoming' be the subject of another branch of science named philosophy of history, while we know that it is not possible to combine these two qualities, for 'being' indicates rest and 'becoming' indicates movement. Societies can have only one of these two qualities. The picture we form of societies can depict either 'being' or 'becoming'.

The respected reader may pose this point in a better and more comprehensive form and say: The picture we form of the world and of society as a part of the world, can on the whole be either a static or a dynamic. If it is static, it can have the quality of 'being', not that of 'becoming'; and if it is dynamic, it will have the quality of 'becoming', not that of 'being'. We find that on this very basis there exists a clear division of philosophical schools. One system of philosophy believes in 'being' and the other in 'becoming'. The school which believes in 'being' maintains that 'being' and 'non-being' cannot exist

together for they are contradictory and the simultaneous existence of contradictories is impossible. If there is 'being', 'non-being' does not exist, and if there is 'non-being' 'being' does not exist. In each particular case either of these two must be chosen. As the world and society being existent, obviously have the quality of 'being', naturally they are governed by stillness or motionlessness. In contrast to this view, the school which believes in 'becoming', maintains that 'being' and 'non-being' can exist at the same time, for the idea of 'becoming' implies motion, which means nothing but that a thing is and at the same time it is not.

The philosophy of 'being' and the philosophy of 'becoming' reflect two completely opposite outlooks on existence. One has to choose either of these two philosophies. If we choose the first one, we must presume that societies have the quality of 'being' only not that of 'becoming'. On the contrary if we choose the second philosophy, then we must presume that societies have the quality of 'becoming' and not that of 'being'. This means that either we have scientific history in the above mentioned sense and do not have philosophy of history or we have philosophy of history and do not have scientific history.

The answer to this question is that this view about existence and non-existence, about stillness and motion, and about the principle of the impossibility of the simultaneous existence of contradictories, is purely a figment of Western idea. This way of thinking is actually due to ignorance of many vital questions concerning existence, especially its fundamentality and some other relevant matters.

Firstly, to say that 'being' is tantamount to stillness, or in other words that stillness means 'being' and motion' means a combination of 'being' and 'non-being' that is a combination of two contradictories, is a grave error, in which some philosophical schools of the West have fallen.

Secondly, the question under discussion has nothing to do with the above mentioned philosophical question. What has been brought out here is that society like any other living being has two types of laws. The first type is that which governs species within the framework of its class, and the second is that which becomes applicable to it with its evolution and transformation to another species. We call the first type the laws of 'being' and the second type the laws of 'becoming'.

Incidentally some sociologists have taken due notice of this point. Auguste Comte is one of them. Reymond Aron says: "Statics and dynamics are two basic categories of Auguste Comte's sociology . . . Statics consists essentially in examining, in analyzing what Comte calls the social consensus (social unanimity). A society is comparable to a living organism. It is impossible to study the functioning of an organ without placing it in the context of living creature. By the same token it is impossible to study politics of the state without placing them in the context of the society at a given moment.... As for dynamics at the outset it consists merely of the description of the successive stages through which human societies pass". (Raymond Aron, *Main Currents in Sociological Thought, vol. I. pp. 85, 86*)

If we take into consideration every species of living beings, from mammals, reptiles and birds to all others, we find that there are special laws which relate to each class. So long as the members of a

particular species continue to belong to it, they are governed by its special laws, such as the laws relating to the embryonic stages of an animal, its health and sickness, its mode of nutrition, its mode of reproduction, its way of rearing its young ones, its instincts, its migration or its mating habits.

According to the theory of the development and evolution of species, in addition to the special laws peculiar to every species and operating within the fabric of its own class, there exist a number of other laws which relate to the process of the evolution of the lower species to the higher species. These laws have assumed a philosophical form and are sometimes called the philosophy of evolution instead of biological laws.

By virtue of its being a living thing, society also has two kinds of laws: biological laws and evolutionary laws. There are some laws of societies which relate to their social life and the origin and decline of their cultures. They govern all societies in all stages of their development. We call these laws the laws of 'being'. There are other laws which relate to the development of societies from one stage to another and from one system to another. They are known as the laws of 'becoming'. When we later discuss both these kinds of laws, the difference between them will become clear.

Thus history in the third sense is the study of the evolution of societies from one stage to another. It is not merely the knowledge of their living conditions at any particular stage or all stages. Not to confuse it with the questions, we call scientific history, we have named this knowledge the philosophy of history. As most people do not differentiate between the questions of non-evolutionary movements dealt with by scientific history, and the question of evolutionary movements of history dealt with by philosophy of history, confusion crops up and leads to misunderstanding.

Like scientific history, philosophy of history is also general, not particular and is rational, not transmitted. But unlike scientific history it is the knowledge of 'being', not of 'becoming'. Moreover, unlike scientific history, the questions with which it deals are not considered to be historical because they relate to the past events alone. They are considered to be so because they represent a process which began in the past, though it still continues and will be drawn to the future. Time is one of the dimensions of these question, not merely the period of their duration.

The knowledge of history in all these three senses is useful. Even transmitted history, that is the knowledge of the conditions and the events connected with the life of the individuals can be useful, inspiring, instructive and constructive. Of course the usefulness of transmitted history depends on the persons whose life account it is, and on the points which are drawn from their life. Man by virtue of the law of imitation is influenced by the behaviour, conduct, habits and customs of his companions and contemporaries. Just as he learns manners and rules of behaviour from the actual life of his contemporaries and sometimes like Luqman learns politeness from the rude and goodness from the wicked, by virtue of this very law he is benefitted by the account of the people of the past also. History like movies turn the past into the present. That is why the Holy Qur'an mentions useful points from the life of those persons who are fit to be a model for others. About the Holy Prophet it says: ***"Surely in the***

Messenger of Allah you have a good example. (Surah al-Ahzab, 33:21)

About Prophet Ibrahim it says: ***"There is a good example for you to follow Ibrahim and those who are with him."*** (Surah al-Mumtahinah, 60:5)

When the Holy Qur'an mentions any individual as a pattern or a paragon of perfection, it does not take into consideration their worldly personality. It refers to their human and moral personality only. The Holy Qur'an describes as a sage even a black slave, who is not a king, nor has he the reputation of being a philosopher, nor is he a wealthy person. He is only a clear-sighted slave. The Holy Qur'an makes his name synonymous with sagacity. The believer of the tribe of Fir'awn and the believer of al-Yasin also belong to this category.

In this book we have discussed society and history from the viewpoint of the Islamic conception of the world. Here our attention is confined to scientific history and the philosophy of history, for only these two fit in within the framework of world conception. For this reason we propose to discuss these two subjects a little further. We now begin with scientific history.

Scientific History

Let us recall that, as we pointed out earlier, scientific history is based on the idea that independently of individuals, society has its own personality and primary importance. Should it be presumed that society has no independent personality, nothing will be left except the individuals and the laws governing them, and consequently scientific history, which is the knowledge of the rules and the norms governing societies will become meaningless. History can have laws only if it has an independent nature and it can have an independent nature only if society also has a nature. In connection with scientific history the following questions are to be examined:

(i) As mentioned earlier, scientific history is based on transmitted history, which may be called the material to be analyzed in the laboratory of scientific history. Therefore, first of all it must be ascertained whether transmitted history is reliable. If it is not reliable, any investigation into the laws governing societies would be absurd and meaningless.

(ii) But if it is admitted that transmitted history is reliable and that society has a nature and a personality independent of the individuals, then it will be possible to deduce laws and general rules from historical events provided it is also admitted that the law of causation is operative in the domain of human affairs, that is the matters which are subject to human will and choice, and that such matters include historical events.

Otherwise, historical events cannot be considered to be subject to any rule or regulation which may be generalized. So the vital question is whether history is governed by the law of causation, and if it is, how man should use his will and choice?

(iii) Is the nature of history materialistic? Is it mainly governed by a material force, all spiritual forces being subsidiary to this main force, or is the case other way round, the main force by which history is governed being spiritual, and the nature of history being idealistic? Or, as a third alternative, is the nature of history multilateral, and it is governed by two or more material and spiritual forces, operating in a more or less harmonious or sometimes conflicting system?

I. Reliability or Unreliability of Transmitted History

There are some people who hold a very poor opinion about transmitted history. They are of the view that all reporters of historical events on account of their selfish interests, or their national and religious bias or because of their social associations and attachments, have more or less distorted and falsified almost all descriptions of historical events, and brought history into a form of their own liking. Even those who regarded it as immoral to forge and alter history intentionally, exercised selection in the narration of events and invariably reported only that which was not inconsistent with their own objectives and ideas.

Though they did not add anything of their own while narrating events, they refrained from reporting that which was contrary to their feelings and beliefs. By making selections of their own liking, they shaped history as they liked. An event or a personality can be objectively studied and properly analysed only when complete relevant material is placed at the disposal of the researcher. If only a part of it is shown to him and another part is concealed, the result will obviously be a one-sided and defective picture.

These pessimists have the same opinion about transmitted history as some pessimistic jurists have about the hadith and religious traditions. The attitude of these jurists has been termed 'closing the door of knowledge'. The critics of transmitted history can also be described as obstructionists. Someone of them has sarcastically remarked that history is an account of the events which never took place, compiled by someone who did not witness them. A journalist is reported to have said: "Facts are sacred, but one has freedom of faith". There are others who are not so pessimistic, but still prefer to accept the philosophy of scepticism.

In the book '*What Is History?*' Sir George Clark has been quoted to have said:

Knowledge of the past that has come down through one or more human minds, and has been processed by them, and therefore cannot consist of elemental and impersonal atoms which nothing can alter The exploration seems to be endless, and some impatient scholars take refuge in scepticism, or at least in the doctrine that, since all historical judgements involve persons and points of view, one is as good as another and there is no 'objective' historical truth. (*E. H. Carr, What is History? p. 8*)

The fact is that although it is not possible to trust blindly the reports of even the reliable transmitters, yet history contains a good number of such indisputable facts that they are as good as the principles of other sciences and which can easily be checked by any researcher. Secondly, a researcher can himself scrutinize the relevant details in order to ascertain the veracity of many reports and then draws his own

conclusions.

Today we find that the researchers have proved the unreliability of the reports of many events which were for centuries widely accepted as facts. The story that the books of the Alexandrian library were put to fire, appeared for the first time in the 7th century of Hijrah era – yes, in the 7th century – and gradually gained so much currency that it found its way into most of the books of history. But in the last century the researchers proved that this tale was totally baseless and an invention of some prejudiced Christians. It also happens that for sometime a truth remains concealed, but subsequently it becomes known to everybody. For these reasons one must not be totally pessimistic about historical reports.

II. Principle of Causation

Is history governed by the principle of causation? If it is, the occurrence of every event must be considered to be inevitable and unavoidable, and it must be conceded that a sort of compulsion rules over history. If it is so, then where does the principle of human freedom and volition stand? If historical events are really inevitable, then no individual can be accountable, and no individual deserves any appreciation and praise or any reproach and censure. If the principle of causation is not admitted to be operative, then there can be no universal laws, and if there are no universal laws, history can have no law or norm, for the laws are a subsidiary of generality and generality depends on the principle of causation.

That is the problem with which scientific history as well as philosophy of history are confronted. Some people who tend to believe in the principles of causation and generality, reject the principle of human freedom and volition in its true sense. What they accept in the name of freedom is not actually so. In contrast, some others accept the principle of freedom, but deny that history is subject to any definite law. Most sociologists hold that the principles of causation and freedom cannot exist together. They generally tend to accept causation and to reject freedom.

Hegel following the example of Marx, supports historical compulsion. From the view-point of Hegel and Marx freedom is nothing except consciousness of historical necessity. In the book, *'Marx and Marxism'* Engels has been quoted as having said: "Hegel was the first to state correctly the relation between freedom and necessity. To him freedom is the appreciation of necessity. Necessity is blind only in so far as it is not understood. Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws and in the possibility this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends. This holds good in relation both to the laws of external nature and those which govern the bodily and mental existence of men themselves".

After describing briefly that under special historical conditions man can and he should step forward in the direction determined by these conditions, the same book says:

"Identifying and understanding these given conditions, render human action more effective. Every act in

the opposite direction amounts to resisting and obstructing the historic course. To act in the direction determined by the historic course means moving within the course of history and participating in the process. But the question, as to what is meant by freedom, still remains to be answered. The Marxist school answers that freedom of the individual lies in his appreciation of the historical necessity, and the social movement towards which the whole course of history is directed".

It is evident that these statements do not solve any problem. The real question is whether man has the power to control the historical conditions. Is he able to give them a direction of his choice or to change their course?

If man is unable to direct the course of history or change it, then obviously for his survival and evolution he has no alternative but to follow the course of history. Otherwise he cannot survive. Now the question is whether man has any choice to follow or not to follow the course of history, and whether in view of the principle of the superiority of society to man and the theory that the conscience, feelings and sentiments of an individual are solely the product of social and historical conditions, especially the economic conditions, is there any scope left for man's freedom?

Further, what after all does the statement that freedom is the knowledge of necessity mean? Is a man who has been entrapped in a flood and knows fully well that in a short while he would be swept to the depth of the river or a man who has fallen from the top of a hill and knows that because of the force of the law of gravity in a few moments he will be smashed into pieces, free in being plunged into the river or falling on the side of the hill?

According to the theory of historical materialism, the social conditions put restrictions on man, give him direction, build his conscience and personality and determine his will and choice. In the face of the social conditions he is just like an empty receptacle and merely a bundle of raw material. When man is believed to be a product of his social conditions, not a producer of them, and it is alleged that from existing social conditions determine the subsequent lot of man, evidently it is not man who determines the future course of social conditions.

Obviously this kind of freedom can have no meaning at all. The fact is that human freedom cannot be imagined without accepting the theory of natural human disposition which means that in the process of basic and general movement of the world man has an additional dimension which forms the preliminary basis of his personality and which matures under the impact of external factors. This existential dimension gives man his human personality and enables him to dominate history and determine its course. We have already discussed this point earlier while discussing society under the heading, '*Determinism and Volition*' and shall explain it further while dealing with the role of the heroes under the heading, '*Dimensions of History*'.

Freedom of man is not incompatible with the law of causation nor with the universality of historical questions, nor with the fact that history is subject to certain laws. That man may choose a definite and

irreversible course in his social life out of his own free will means compulsion with volition and is different from blind compulsion swaying man and his will.

There is another difficulty about the universality of historical questions and their being subject to certain laws. The study of historical events shows that occasionally some minor and accidental events have changed the course of history. Of course accidental events, contrary to the notion of some uninformed persons, do not mean the events having no cause. They are only the events that are not brought about by a general and universal cause and hence have no general rule. Now it is evident that if it is admitted that the events having no general rule play an effective role in historical movements, history will be devoid of every law, rule, norm and definite course. But we know that accidental historical events have affected the course of history. They are proverbially known as Cleopatra's nose. Cleopatra was a famous queen of Egypt. The examples of minor and accidental events which have changed the course of history in the world are innumerable.

Edward Hallett Carr in his book, *What is History?* says: "The other source of the attack is the famous crux of Cleopatra's nose. This is the theory that history is, by and large, a chapter of accidents, a series of events determined by chance coincidences, and attributable only to the most casual causes. The result of the Battle of Actium was due not to the sort of causes commonly postulated by historians, but to Antony's infatuation with Cleopatra.

When Bajazet was deterred by an attack of gout from marching into central Europe, Gibbon observed that "an acrimonious honour falling on a single fibre of a man may prevent or suspend the misery of nations". When King Alexander of Greece died in the autumn of 1920 from the bite of a pet monkey, this accident touched off a train of events which led Sir Winston Churchill to remark that "a quarter of a million persons died of this monkey's bite". Or take again Trotsky's comment on the fever contracted while shooting ducks which put him out of action at a critical point of his quarrel with Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin in the autumn of 1923: "One can foresee a revolution or a war, but it is impossible to foresee the consequences of an autumn shooting – trip for wild ducks".

In the world of Islam the event of the defeat of Marwan bin Muhammad, the last Umayyad Caliph is a good example of the intervention of an accident in the destiny of history. In his last battle with the Abbasids he strongly felt the need of passing water. For that purpose he went aside to ease himself. By chance an enemy soldier passed by that place and seeing him alone, killed him. The report of his having been killed spread like wild fire among his soldiers and as they had not anticipated such an eventuality, they were so upset that they took to their heels. Thus the rule of the dynasty of Umayyad came to an end, and it was on this occasion that it was said: "A kingdom was swept away by urine".

After explaining that every accident is the outcome of a sequence of a cause and effect that annuls another sequence of a cause and effect and not a happening without any cause at all, Carr says: . . . "How can one discover in history a coherent sequence of cause and effect, how can we find any meaning in history, when our sequence is liable to be broken or deflected at any moment by some other,

and from our point of view, irrelevant sequence?"

The answer to this problem depends on the question whether society and history by nature have or have not a direction. If history by nature has a direction, the impact of minor incidents will be insignificant. In other words minor incidents may change the position of some pawns on the chess board of history, but they cannot affect the general course of history. At the most they can accelerate or slow down its course for a moment. But if history is devoid of nature, personality, and a course determined by that nature and personality, then it will have no definite course and no universal law, and will be totally unpredictable.

From our point of view, as we believe in the nature and personality of history and maintain that its nature and personality are the product of a combination of the personalities of human individuals and hence evolutionary, the accidental events do not harm to the universality and compulsion of history.

Montesquieu has beautifully described the role of accidents in history. We reproduce below a part of what he has said in this respect: . . . "If the outcome of a single battle, i.e. a particular cause, was the ruin of a state, there was a general cause which decreed that, that state was destined to perish through a single battle".

He also says: "It was not the affair of Poltava that ruined Charles. Had he not been destroyed at that place, he would have been in another. The casualties of the fortune are easily repaired; but who can be guarded against events that incessantly arise from the nature of things?"

III. Is History Materialistic in Nature?

What is the nature of history? Is the real nature of history cultural, political, economic, religious, or moral? Is it material, spiritual or a combination of the two? These are the most important questions concerning history. We cannot have a correct and sound understanding of history unless these questions are resolved.

It is evident that all the above mentioned material and spiritual factors have been and are effective in the texture of history. The question is which factor is of primary importance and determining nature? The question is which of these factors forms the real spirit of history and indicates its identity? Which of these factors can explain and interpret all other factors? Which of these factors forms the infrastructure of history and all other factors being its superstructure?

Generally speaking the informed people are of the opinion that history is a multi-motored machine in which all motors are independent of each other. What they mean is that history is multi-natured, not uni-natured. But the question is: if history is really multi-motored and multi-natured, what will happen to its evolutionary progress and advancement?

History cannot move along a definite evolutionary line if it is driven by several independent motors, each motor generating its own movement and driving history in a direction of its own choice, unless we

presume that the above-mentioned factors are mere instincts of history, which has a spirit transcending these instincts and it is that spirit which with the help of its various instincts drives history in a definite direction and forms its real identity. Anyhow, in this case history will be uni-natured, for its nature will be that which has been described as its spirit and not those factors which have been termed its instincts.

In our times a new theory has gained many supporters. It is known as historical materialism or dialectic materialism. Historical materialism means economic interpretation of history and economic and historical interpretation of man, but not human interpretation of economics or history. In other words, historical materialism means that history has material nature and dialectic existence. What is meant by material nature of history is that the basis of all historical movements and phenomena of a society is its economic organization which covers its material products and the forces, relations and the system of its production. According to this theory it is economic organization which gives shape and direction to all social and moral phenomena, including science, philosophy, ethics, religion, law and culture. With a change in the economic organization all these things undergo a corresponding change.

As for dialectic existence of history, that means that the evolutionary movements of history are caused by a series of dialectic contradictions, having a special interrelationship. A dialectic contradiction is different from non-dialectic contradiction for in the case of a dialectic contradiction, every phenomenon compulsorily nourishes within itself a negation of it, and as the result of this inner contradiction, develops to a higher stage which is a synthesis of the two earlier stages.

Thus historical materialism implies two ideas. Firstly that the nature of history is materialistic; secondly, its movements are dialectical movements. We propose to discuss in a subsequent chapter dealing with the development and evolution of history.

The theory of the materialistic nature of history is based on a series of certain principles which are either philosophical, psychological or sociological, and this theory in its turn, leads to a number of other theories, concerning ideological problems. In order to make this important point clear, especially in view of the fact that certain modern Muslim writers have claimed that though Islam does not accept philosophical materialism it does accept historical materialism, and have built their historical and social theories on this presumption, we feel that it is necessary to deal with this point in somewhat detail. For this purpose we propose first to discuss the two principles on which this theory is based and the results which ensue from them. Then we will study this theory from scientific as well as Islamic point of view.

Basic Principles of Historical Materialism

I. Priority of Matter over Spirit

Man has body as well as spirit. Human body is a subject of biological, medical, physiological and other studies, whereas his spirit and spiritual affairs are the subject of philosophical and psychological studies. Ideas, beliefs, feelings, tendencies, theories and ideologies are all psychological subjects. The principle

of the priority of matter over spirit means that psychological matters are not basic. They are only a series of material reflections emanating from actual matter and cast on the nerves and the brain.

The value of the psychological matters is limited to their being a link between man's inner material faculties and the outside world, are not to, be treated as a force separate from other material forces governing the existence of man. For the purpose of illustration, psychological matters may be compared to an automobile lamp. An automobile cannot move at night without a lamp. It proceeds only in the light of its lamp, But what brings an automobile into motion is its engine not its light.

If psychological matters, that is ideas, beliefs, theories and ideologies fall in line with the process of the material forces of history, they help history move forward. But they themselves cannot cause any motion, nor are they considered to be a force independent of other material forces. Basically, psychological matters are not a force. Hence it is not correct to say that they are a force, but have no material reality. The real forces which affect human existence, are only those forces which are known as material forces and which may be measured by material standards.

Thus psychological matters are not capable of initiating any movement or giving a direction to a movement. They are not regarded as a lever for the movement of society. Psychological values can support and direct material values, but they cannot become the source or the object of any social movement.

On this basis we should go deep while interpreting history and should not be deceived by the appearances. At some historical juncture it may appear that an idea, a doctrine or a belief has stirred society and driven it to an evolutionary stage, but on correct dissection of history we will find that beliefs or doctrines are not of primary importance. They are merely reflection of those material forces of society which stir society sometimes in the garb of doctrines and beliefs also. The material force which pushes history forward is, from technical point of view, the system of production and from human point of view the underprivileged and exploited classes of society.

Feuerbach, a well-known materialist philosopher, from whom Marx picked up many of his theories says: "What is a theory? What is a praxis? What is the difference between the two?" He himself answers this question as follows: "Everything which is confined to the mind is theoretical. Whatever moves the minds of many is practical necessity. It is action which unites many minds together and organizes the masses, and in this manner finds a place for itself in the world".

His disciple Marx writes: "It is obvious that the weapon of criticism cannot replace criticism of weapons. A material force can be crushed only by a material force".

Marx, who does not believe in the independence of nonmaterial forces, maintains that non-material forces can do no more than enhancing the value of material forces. He says that as soon as a theory or a doctrine is deeply rooted among the masses, it turns into a material force. The principle of superiority of matter to spirit and of the body to mind is one of the basic principles of philosophical materialism,

which holds that mental forces and spiritual and moral values are not basic.

In contrast to this principle there is another philosophical principle based on the fundamentality of spirit. According to this principle, it is not possible to explain and interpret all the real dimensions of existence through matter and material aspects. Spirit is a reality in the domain of man's existence and spiritual energy is independent of all material energies. Accordingly all psychological forces, that is intellectual, doctrinal, religious and sentimental forces are regarded as an independent factor inducing certain movements both on the level of the individual and society. It is possible to use these levers for the movement of history. In fact many movements of history have actually originated exclusively from these levers. Especially the human movements of lofty character, whether individual or social, spring direct from these forces, and that is how they acquire their nobility.

The psychological forces often bring the physical and material forces under their influences and give them direction not only on the level of voluntary activities, but even on the level of mechanical, chemical and biological activities also. The effectiveness of psychological suggestions in the treatment of physical diseases and the extraordinary effectiveness of hypnotic operations belong to this category and are undeniable.

The powers of knowledge and faith, especially the power of faith and more particularly where these two powers harmonize, are a great and useful force. They can play an extraordinary and dynamic role in pushing forward or changing the course of historical movements.

The prime importance of spirit and spiritual powers is one of the fundamental principles of philosophical realism.

II. Precedence of Material Needs to Spiritual Needs

Man, at least as far as his social existence is concerned, has two kinds of needs. His material needs include food, water, shelter, clothing, medicines and the like. His spiritual needs are education, knowledge, literature, art, philosophical ideas, faith, ideology, adoration, moral principles and such like things. Man always has both kinds of these needs. The only question is that of precedence.

Which kind of needs has precedence of the other, material or spiritual? Or are both of them of equal importance? The advocates of the fundamentality of material needs hold that material needs have a precedence not only in the sense that man attends to them before attending to his spiritual needs but also in the sense that his spiritual needs are a by-product of his material needs. Man has not been born with two kinds of needs, or two kinds of instincts. He has been born with only one kind of needs and one kind of instincts. The only thing is that his spiritual needs are his secondary needs, and in fact only a means of meeting his material needs in a better way.

That is why his spiritual needs in regard to their form, quality and nature are subservient to his material needs. In every age man's material needs have assumed a particular form and quality in accordance

with the development of the implements of production. His spiritual needs being a by-product of his material needs, naturally have a form, a quality and the characteristic in agreement with his material needs. As such there exist two kinds of precedence between material and spiritual needs, one pertaining to the existence of the needs and the other pertaining to their nature. Man's spiritual needs are a by-product of his material needs. They are also subordinate to his material needs in their form and other characteristics. In his book *Historical Materialism* P. Royan quotes Hymen Louis as having said as under in his book, *Philosophical Ideas*:

"Man's material course of existence led him to propound theories corresponding to the material needs of the time about his world, society, art, and morality; all intellectual manifestations are the resultant products of material conditions and the mode of production".

That is why every individual's way of thinking on scientific matters, his philosophical ideas, his taste, his aesthetic and artistic sense, his moral evaluation and his religious inclination follow his way of living and earning his livelihood. This principle when applied to an individual, is expressed thus: "Tell me what he eats, I shall tell you how he thinks". When this principle is applied to a society, it is said: "Tell me to what extent the implements of production have developed in that society and what kind of economic relations exist between its members, I shall tell you what ideology, what philosophy, what moral principles and what religious tenets are popular in it".

Directly contrary to this theory is the theory of the independence of spiritual needs. According to that theory, although in a human being material needs appear earlier from the point of view of time as is evident from the state of the infant who immediately after it is born, looks for milk and the breast of mother, yet gradually the spiritual needs which are latent in human nature unfold themselves and bloom in such a way that in his mature age man sacrifices his material needs for the sake of his spiritual needs.

In other words, for man his spiritual pleasures are basic as well as stronger than his material pleasures and material urges. This point has been magnificently discussed by Ibn Sina in his book, *al-Isharat*. The more a man receives human education and human training, the more his spiritual needs, his spiritual pleasures and finally his spiritual life overshadow his material needs, his material pleasures and his material life. In primitive societies of course material needs prevail upon spiritual needs, but as a society develops, spiritual needs attain greater importance. They secure the position of a human goal, whereas the material needs are reduced to that of mere means.

III. Precedence of Action to Thought

Man is a being who thinks, understands and acts. What is more important, his action or his thought? Which one of these two constitutes his essence? Does the dignity of man depend on his action or his thought? Which of these two makes him?

Historical materialism believes in the independence of action and its precedence to thought. It regards

action as fundamental and thought as subsidiary. On the other hand ancient logic and philosophy considered thought to be the key of thinking. According to the old system of logic thought was divided into perception and affirmation, and each of them was further divided into axiomatic and theoretical. According to that system of logic and philosophy the essence of human ego was regarded as a mere idea. The perfection and nobility of man consisted in his wisdom. A perfect man was equal to a man of wisdom.

But historical materialism is based on the principle that action is the key and the criterion of thought. The essence of man is his productive activity. Man is known by his activity which moulds him. Marx has said: "The entire world history is nothing but a creation of man through human labour".

Engels has said: "Man himself is a creation of action", for instead of brooding on natural hardships he exerts himself to conquer his external environment and in this way (through a revolutionary action against aggressive tyrants) he dashes forward and makes a society of his own choice".

The author of *Marx and Marxism* says: "Whereas in the philosophy of being (a philosophy that interprets the world in terms of 'being' as opposed to the philosophy of 'becoming', which interprets the world in terms of motion. Marxism belongs to the group of the philosophies of 'becoming') it was customary at first to set forth the ideas and the principles from which practical conclusions are derived; praxis (practical philosophy), on the other hand, regards action as the origin and basis of all thought. It replaces the faith in thought by the philosophy of power". In agreement with Hegel, it asserts: "The real being of man, in the first instance, is his own action". In this belief he joins the German thinker who reversed the famous phrase, "In the beginning there was the Word" – in which the Word signifies spirit, for it is through the word that the spirit expresses itself – and declared: "In the beginning there was the Act".

This theory is one of the principles of Marxist materialism and is known as practical philosophy. Marx picked it up from his materialist predecessor and preceptors, Feuerbach, and Hegel.

Entirely contrary to this principle is the philosophical principle of realism, which holds that thought and action influence each other reciprocally, though thought has precedence to action. According to this philosophy the essence of man is thought (essential knowledge of one's own existence). Man through his action and contact with the outside world acquires his informative material about the world. He cannot embark on any activity of knowing things unless his mind is enriched with this raw material. After collecting his material his mind uses the data provided by action in different ways such as generalization, deduction and demonstration.

Thus action paves the way for the acquisition of correct knowledge. Knowledge does not mean merely a simple reflection of external material on mind. Knowledge becomes available subsequent to this reflection through a mental process emanating from the immaterial substance of spirit. Thus action is the source of thought. But at the same time thought also is the source of action. Action is the criterion of thought and at the same time thought is the criterion of action. Anyhow, this is not a case of vicious

circle. It is nobility of his character, his knowledge, his faith, his dignity, his self-respect and his action that make a man a human being. Man accomplishes action and is himself produced by it. This is a distinguishing feature of man. No other being shares with him in this feature, which springs from his special Divine creation.

Anyhow, man performs action in the creative sense, whereas action makes man in the preparatory sense. Man actually creates his action, but action does not actually create man. Anyhow, action and its practice and repetition paves the way for the creation of man from within. In all cases in which the mutual relationship between two things is creative and imperative on one side and preparatory and potential on the other side, the creative and imperative side always has precedence.

In short man whose essence is a sort of knowledge (essential knowledge of one's own existence), has a reciprocal relation with action in the sense that man creates and develops action and action develops man. But in view of the fact that man is the creative and imperative cause of work whereas action is merely a preparatory and potential cause of man, man has precedence to action, not action to man.

IV. Precedence of Social Existence of Man to His Individual Existence

In other words, the principle of the precedence of man's sociology to his psychology.

From biological point of view, man is the most perfect of all animals. He is capable of making a particular kind of evolution and self-building called human evolution. He can enjoy a special personality formed by human dimensions. Under the impact of a series of experiences and learning, man acquires an intellectual, philosophical and scientific dimension, and under the impact of certain other factors he gets another dimension, called moral dimension. It is in this dimension that he creates values and moral 'musts' and 'must nots'. Similarly there are man's artistic and religious dimensions also. In his intellectual and philosophical dimension man discovers a number of principles and general laws which thenceforth form the basis of his thinking. Similarly in the course of his moral and social appreciation he gets at some absolute and semi-absolute values. All these human dimensions combined together constitute human existence.

Human dimensions are entirely the consequence of social factors. Man lacks all these dimensions when he is born. At the time of his birth he is merely a bundle of raw material capable of assuming any intellectual or emotional shape, his final shape depending on the factors which influence him later. In the beginning he is like an empty vessel which is to be filled from outside. He is like a blank magnetic tape on which any sound can be recorded and which plays back whatever is recorded on it. In short, it is external social factors called social work which build man's personality and convert him from a thing to a person. Man in himself is only a 'thing' and only under the impact of social factors, becomes a 'person'.

In his book , *Historical Materialism* P. Royan reproduces what Plekhanov has said in his book, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*. He says: "The characteristics of a social system are determined by

the current level of development of the means of production of society. It means that when the stage of development of the means of production is determined, the characteristics of the social order and the psychology (of the people) related to it, and all the other corresponding relations within the system, on the one hand, and the ideas and the pace of progress, on the other, are also (of their own accord) determined".

In the same book, it is further stated that: "When psychology, through the means of production, is determined, ideology too, which is deeply rooted in the psychology of the people, is also consequently determined. But as the ideology at a particular historical stage is the product of social requirements, and as it always continues to protect the interests of the ruling class, it necessarily strengthens and perfects the existing social structure. Hence the social structure in class-societies, which comes into existence for protecting the ruling class and propagating its ideology, is in reality. the result of the social order and its requirements, and, in the last analysis, is the product of the character of the modes and the means of production.

For instance, the church and the mosque are for preaching of the religious beliefs, which in all the religions are based upon the faith in the final judgement or resurrection. The belief in resurrection is the logical outcome of the particular social order that is based upon the division of society into classes, which in its turn is the product of a particular stage of development of the means of production. Hence, belief in resurrection is the product of the means of production (at a particular stage of social development)".

In contrast to this principle there is another anthropological principle which is based upon the view that the foundation of human personality, is the basis of man's thinking and higher tendencies, and is itself inherent in his creation. It is true that contrary to Plato's well-known theory, man does not come to the world with a ready-made personality, but still he receives the basic features of his personality from his creation, not from society. If we wish to use philosophical terms, we may say that the main ingredients of the human dimensions, whether religious, moral, philosophical, artistic, technical or amorous, are the form and the distinctive features of man's species and his rational soul which are formed simultaneously with the factors of creation.

Depending on the personal capabilities of a man, society either tends him and brings him up or distorts him. In the beginning the existence of rational soul or intellectual faculty of man is only potential. It becomes actual gradually. From the viewpoint of his thinking, his tendencies and his material and spiritual leanings and sentiments man is like any other living being. In the beginning all his faculties exist potentially and then in the wake of certain basic developments gradually shoot up and grow. Man under the impact of external factors nurtures his natural personality and brings it to perfection or sometimes distorts it and turns it away from the normal course. This is the same principle which in Islamic sciences is described as the principle of *fitrat* (natural state) and is considered to be the most basic principle.

According to this principle man's psychology has precedence to his sociology. In fact man's sociology

depends on his psychology. According to the principle of nature, when a child is born, though he has neither perception nor conception, neither confirmation, nor human aptitudes, he comes to this world with human dimensions in addition to animal dimensions. It is these dimension which gradually form the basis of human thinking. Without them logical thinking would not be possible. It is these dimensions which bring high and noble tendencies into existence. It is these dimensions which are regarded as the real basis of human personality.

According to the theory of the precedence of man's sociology to his psychology, man is merely a receiving being and does not automatically move in any particular direction. He is a bundle of raw material. To him it makes no difference what shape is given to him. He is a blank tape, to which it is immaterial what sound is recorded on it. This raw material does not tend to any particular shape, nor can any shape be called its natural shape. This tape does not require the recording to any particular sound and it cannot be said that if any other sound will be recorded on it that sound would be inconsistent with the reality of the tape. As the raw material bears the same relationship to all shapes, this tape bears the same relationship to all sounds.

But according to the principle of the basicity of nature and the precedence of man's psychology to his sociology though man in the beginning lacks any actual perception and any actual tendency, yet from within himself he dynamically advances towards a series of primary judgements known as *a priori* or primary principles and towards a series of higher and sublime values which constitute the standards of his humanity. Following the entry from outside into his mind of a number of simple conceptions forming the basic material of thinking, these principles shoot up and grow into theoretical or practical affirmations and the latent tendencies become conspicuous.

In the present circumstances, man, for example, asserts that $2 \times 2 = 4$ and thinks that this rule is absolute and true in all times and all places. According to the first theory this judgement of his is the product of the special conditions of his environment. These special conditions have given him this rule, and his judgement is his reaction to the environmental conditions. In a different environment and under different conditions he could have thought differently. For example, he could have believed that $2 \times 2 = 26$.

But according to the second theory, what the environment gives to man is only the conception of 2,4,8,10 etc. As for the judgement that $2 \times 2 = 4$ or $5 \times 5 = 25$, that is something inseparable from the structure of human spirit, and cannot take any other form under any circumstances. Similarly the human desire to attain perfection is also an essential part of human spirit.

V. Precedence of Material Aspect of Society to Its Intellectual Aspect

Society has many sectors and consists of various organizations: economic, cultural , political, administrative, religious and judicial organization etc. From this viewpoint society is like a full-fledged building comprising the drawing-room, the bed room, the kitchen, toilet etc.

Among the social organizations there is one organization which is virtually the real foundation of the whole of society, for its whole structure stands on it. If it were to collapse, the whole building would collapse automatically. This is the economic structure of society, or in other words, all that relates to the material production of society including the production implements, economic resources, production relations etc.

Implements of production are the most basic section of the structure of society. They continuously change and develop, and each stage of their development leads to a particular kind of change in the production relations, making them different from what they were previously. Production relations include all the rules and regulations regarding the form of ownership and the contractual relations between man and the products in a society. Any compulsory change in these relations automatically leads to a change in all legal, intellectual, moral, religious, philosophical and scientific principles of man. In short it may be said: 'Economy is the foundation of society'.

In the book, '*Marx and Marxism*', Marx has been quoted as having said to the following effect in his book entitled Critique of Political Economy:

"In the social production of their life, men enter into specific relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life-process in general. It is not the consciousness of man that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness".

The same book quoting a letter of Marx says: "Assume a particular state of development in the productive facilities of man and you will get a corresponding form of commerce and consumption. Assume particular degrees of development of production, commerce, and consumption and you will have a corresponding organization of the family, or orders or of classes, in a word a corresponding civil society".

Peter explains the views of Marx as under:

"In this fashion Marx has compared the society to a building, the base and foundation of which are the economic institutions, whose superstructure (the building itself) is comprised of political, religious, and legal patterns, customs and norms. As in the case of a building, it depends upon the position of its base and foundation, the economic forms (relations of production) and technical modes are also dependent upon and associated with the modes of thinking, the political system and the customs, and each of them is subject to economic conditions".

The same book quotes from Lenin's book, Marx-Engels Marxism as having written in the *Capital*, vol. III as under: "The mode of production manifests itself in the human activity in relation to nature and,

following that, in social conditions and intellectual patterns resulting from them".

In the Preface to a *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Karl Marx says:

"My investigations led to the result that the legal relations as well as forms of the state are to be grasped neither from themselves nor from the so-called general development of the human mind, but rather have their roots in the material conditions of life... the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy".

Marx in his book, *Poverty of Philosophy* has written: "Social relations are closely bound up with productive forces. In acquiring new productive forces, men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you a society with the feudal lord; the steammill, a society with the industrial capitalist".

The theory of the precedence of the material arrangements of society to all other social systems is in keeping with the theory of the precedence of action to thought. In fact the two theories are identical with the only difference that the first theory is operative on individual level and the second on social level. In view of the fact that the supporters of this theory also hold that the sociology of man has precedence to his psychology, it may be said that the precedence of individual action to individual thought is a manifestation as well as a result of the precedence of material arrangement to all other social arrangements. On the contrary if we maintain that the psychology of man has precedence to his sociology, the precedence of the material arrangement of society would be the result of the precedence of individual action to individual thought.

The material arrangement of society which is described as the economic structure and economic basis also, consists of two parts, the first part being the implements of production which are the outcome of man's contact with nature, and the other part being the economic relations of the members of society in the field of the distribution of wealth. These relations are sometimes described as productive relations also. The implements of production and the productive relations put together are mostly described as the mode of production or the method of production. Incidentally it may be noted that these terms as used by the leaders of historical materialism are not free from ambiguity and their meanings have not been exactly defined. When they say that economy is the infrastructure and the material arrangement of society has precedence to all other arrangements, by economy they mean the complete production system, that is the implements of production as well as the productive relations.

Here there is a point to be noted well. As it is evident from what the leaders of historical materialism have said, the infrastructure of society in itself is a two-storied structure. Its real base and foundation is formed by the implements of production which in reality are the labour embodied. It is the embodied labour which necessitates the growth of special economic relations for the purpose of the distribution of wealth.

These relations reflect the degree of the development of the implements of production and in the beginning not only are in harmony with them, but also encourage their use and provide the best means of their proper utilization. They are just like a dress that fits the body of the implements of production. But the implements of production continue to develop, and with their development the harmony between the two parts of the productive machinery is upset. The productive and economic relations, that is the laws which were previously in harmony with the implements of production become too tight a dress for their developed form and become a barrier for their further progress.

Thus a contradiction arises between the two parts of the production machinery. At last new productive relations, corresponding to the new implements of production develop, and thus the infrastructure is totally changed. In the wake of its change the entire legal, philosophical, moral and religious superstructure also undergoes a corresponding change.

If we take into consideration the prime importance of embodied labour, that is the implements of production and pay attention to the fact that Marx is one of those sociologists who maintain that the sociology of man has precedence to his psychology and that man as such is a social being or, in his own words, is a "sui generis" being, we can determine the philosophical role of labour from the view-point of Marxism. It may be mentioned that the philosophical role of labour is the main point of Marxist philosophy. Nevertheless scant attention has been paid to it.

Marx thinks about human existence or work and working existence of man much in the same way as Descartes, Bergson and Jean Paul Sartre respectively thought about rational, continuous and revolting existence of man.

Descartes says: "I think; therefore I am". Bergson says: "I continue. therefore I am". Sartre says: "I revolt; therefore I am"; and Marx wants to say: "I work; therefore I am" .

By employing these diverse methods none of these philosophers intends to prove the existence of human ego in matters other than thinking, continuity and revolt. Some of them even do not believe in any existence of man not related to these matters. They only want to define inter alia the essence of humanity and the existential reality of man.

Incidentally Descartes wants to say: "My presence is equal to the presence of thought; eliminate thought and I am nothing". Bergson wants to say: " The existence of man is just the same as the existence of continuity and time." Sartre says: "The essence of humanity and the real existence of man lies in his spirit of revolt. If you take away this spirit from him, he will no longer be a man. " Marx also wants to say: "The entire and real existence of man is his work. Work is the essence of humanity. I am for I work, not in the sense that work is the proof of my existence, but in the sense that work is tantamount to my very existence. In reality work is my existence."

That is what Marx wants to point out when he says: "To a socialist the entire so called history of the world is nothing but man's creation through human labour;" or when he differentiates between man's

consciousness and his real existence and says: "It is not the consciousness of men, that determines their existence; on the contrary it is their social existence that determines their consciousness". He also says: "It is not their will on the basis of which people make decisions. The real basis is the individuals and their material and existential conditions".

Explaining the real individuals, he further says: "They really are not what they can imagine themselves to be. They are how they produce and make. In other words, they are how they act within definite material conditions and limits quite independently of their will. Engels says: "Economists say that labour is the source of all wealth. In fact labour for man is more than that. It is the basic condition of the existence of entire human life. At first sight it may be said that it is labour that has created man himself".

Marx and Engels have, in fact, took over this theory of the role of labour in the existence of man from the writings of Hegel, who for the first time said: "In the first instance man's real existence is his work".

From the above, two points are clear: (i) that from the point of view of Marxism, human existence of man is social, not individualistic, and (ii) that the existence of social man is his social work, that is his embodied labour, and his individual work like his individual feelings and every other social work, such as philosophy, ethics, art, religion etc. are a mere manifestation of his real existence and not his real existence itself.

Hence, man's real evolution is the evolution of his social action. As far as his intellectual, sentimental and emotional evolution or the evolution of the social system is concerned, it is a manifestation of the real evolution, not the real evolution itself. In fact the material evolution of society is the criterion of its immaterial evolution, just as work is the criterion of thought. The correctness or incorrectness of a thought should be measured by the standard of work and not by any intellectual or logical standard.

The criterion of the immaterial things is the evolution of the material things. If it is asked which philosophical, moral religious or artistic school is more progressive, no intellectual or logical standard can provide an answer to this question. The sole criterion by which the progressiveness of any school may be judged is to find out what conditions and which degree of social work, that is the development of the implements of production, have produced that school.

To us this way of thinking appears to be amazing, for we hold that the real existence of man is his ego, which is an immaterial substance, and that this ego is an off-shoot of the essential movements of nature, not a product of society. But a man like Marx who thinks in material terms only and does not believe in any immaterial substance, should interpret man and his reality from biological point of view and say that the essence of man is nothing but his physical structure, as was asserted by the past materialists like those of the 18th century.

Yet, Marx rejects this view and asserts that the essence of man materializes in society, not in nature. What materializes in nature is potential and not actual man. Apart from that, Marx should either consider thought to be the essence of humanity and regard action as its manifestation; or the other way round

consider action to be the essence of humanity and regard thought and ideas as its manifestation. Marx has to choose the second alternative, for he thinks in material terms only. He not only believes in the fundamentality of matter and denies the existence of any immaterial substance in the individual, but believes in the materiality of history also.

In fact, Marx is so engrossed in the philosophy of labour and holds such an idea of social labour that it may be said that according to his way of thinking men are not those who walk in the streets, think and choose, but the real men are the tools and the machines which, for example, run the factories. The men who speak, walk and think are only the images of the real men, not the men themselves. According to the idea that Marx holds of social labour and the implements of production, these things may be described as living beings which automatically, blindly and unaffected by the will of the 'image of man' (not man himself), grow and develop and bring the 'show men' despite their will and thinking power, under their control and pull these show-men behind them.

It may be said readily that what Marx has said about the supremacy and domination of social labour over man's consciousness and will, is the same thing as what the philosophers have said about man's unconscious physical activity, such as the activity of the digestive system, the heart, the liver etc. under the influence of a hidden will. According to these philosophers all desires, inclinations and all the functions of bodily systems which appear at the level of conscious mind, are in reality a network of natural needs. They are arranged by a secret psychical power and the conscious mind does not know where and how they occur. This psychical power appears to be similar to what Freud has termed unconscious mind which, according to him, dominates the conscious mind.

But actually what Marx asserts is different from what Freud or past philosophers have maintained. What they have said relates to a part of the conscious mind and the domination of a hidden mind over it. Further, what they speak of, is not a thing outside the existence of man, but what Marx says is outside of it. If the theory of Marx is correctly adjudged, it will be found extremely amazing from philosophical point of view.

Marx calls his theory a discovery and compared it to the well-known biological theory of Darwin, who proved that the developments outside the will and consciousness of animals gradually and unconsciously bring about changes in their bodies over a long period. Marx also claims that some blind event (the real existence of man itself is a blind event) gradually and unconsciously brings about changes in man's social structure, that is in all those things which Marx calls superstructure and in many of those which he calls infrastructure, that is socioeconomic relations.

Marx says: "Darwin has called the attention of scientists towards the history of natural selection, the formation of organs in plants and animals corresponding to the means of production necessary for their survival. Isn't the history of generation and formation of organs producing the social human being, i.e. the material basis of all types of social organizations, worthy of such a treatment? ... Natural selection lays bare the modes of human action vis-a-vis nature; the mode of production lays bare man's material

existence, and as a result, the source of social relations, thought, and intellectual products that spring from it".

Hence, from what has been said it is clear that the theory of historical materialism is based on several other theories, some of them being psychological, some sociological and some others philosophical and anthropological.

Conclusions

From the theory of historical materialism we may draw a number of conclusions which affect the strategy and the shape of the social aims in a practical manner. It is not hypothetical or speculative theory having no effect on social behaviour. Now let us see what conclusions we may draw from it.

I. The first conclusion relates to ascertaining the identity of society and history. On the basis of the materiality of history the best and the most satisfactory way of analysing and understanding the historical and social events is the study of their economic basis. Without knowing this economic basis it is not possible to understand the historical phenomena accurately, for it has been presumed that the nature of all social changes is economic, though they may appear to be exclusively cultural religious or moral. In other words, all cultural, religious and moral developments are a reflection of the economic position of society and are caused by it.

The old philosophers were also of the view that the best and the most perfect way of knowing the identity of the things was to know the causes which produced them. Therefore if we admit that economic structure of society is the main cause of all social developments, then its socioeconomic analysis is the best way of understanding history. As a cause has precedence to its effect at the stage, of occurrence, similarly it also has precedence at the stage of knowing and proving. Hence economic situation is not only the cause of other developments but its knowledge helps in understanding them and proving their existence.

Discussing this point the book, *Revisionism from Marx to Mao* says: "For analysing social revolutions, one must not judge social conflicts in political, legal, or ideological terms; on the contrary, they are to be interpreted in terms of the contradiction between the productive forces and relations of production.

Marx has seriously warned us of the dangers of such a judgement, firstly because such a judgement is not realistic, for it replaces the cause, which economic changes and contradictions are, by the effect, i.e. political, legal, and ideological forms, which are the effects. Secondly, such an interpretation is superficial; as instead of probing deeply into the real causes, it only touches upon the surface, and what is apparent reality is considered to be sufficient for explanation. Thirdly, it is illusory; because the superstructures, which are on the whole ideological, are nothing but inaccurate images of the reality. Depending on inaccurate image instead of a realistic analysis of the problem under study, will no doubt leads us into confusion and error."

The same book, reproduces from another book containing the important writings of Marx and Engels as follows: "As in the case of an individual mere self-introspection does not help us to make any judgement, in the same way, during the period of disturbance and chaos, the ideas of that period should not be treated as helpful for judging its character."

Marx tries to negate the role of knowledge, thought and the tendency of innovation which are normally considered to be the basic factors of development. For example, Saint Simon, many of whose ideas have been adopted by Marx, in respect of the role of the tendency of innovation in development says: "Societies are governed by two moral forces which are equally strong and operate alternately. One is the force of habit or custom, and the other is inclination towards innovation and creativity. After some time customs necessarily become evil ... At such times, the need for something new begins to be felt. It is this need which really constitutes the revolutionary situation."

In respect of the role of beliefs and ideas in the development of societies Proudhon, another teacher of Marx says: "Political forms of nations have been the manifestations of their beliefs. Movement of the forms, their transformation and annihilation are the tests which reveal the value of the underlying ideas, through which an absolute and unchangeable reality is revealed to us gradually. But we see that all political institutions necessarily seek adjustment with the existing social conditions in order to be saved from inevitable death."

Despite all that his preceptors have said Marx asserts that every social change is above all a socio-economic necessity resulting from the polarization of the nature and the form of civic society, productive forces and social relations.

Marx wants to say that the instincts of innovation and belief and faith are not stimulating enough to bring about social changes. On the contrary it is socio-economic necessity that gives birth to the tendency of innovation or belief and faith.

If in the light of his view about the materiality of history, we analyse, for example, the Iranian - Greek wars, the Crusades, the Islamic conquests, the Renaissance of the West or the constitutional Revolution of Iran, it will be a mistake if we confine our study to the superficial forms of these events, which may be political, religious, or cultural, and adjudge the events on the basis of these forms. It will be equally wrong to judge them even by the feelings of the revolutionaries themselves who may have regarded their movement, as political, religious or moral. In order to arrive at a correct conclusion, we must pay attention to the real nature of these movements which is economic and material.

Even today the young contemporary Marxists try to interpret every historical movement by uttering a few sentences about the economic situation of the period concerned even if they have no knowledge of it.

II. The law that governs history is inexorable, unexceptionable and beyond the will of men. In previous chapters we discussed whether history is governed by some causative laws implying causative necessity. There we pointed out that some philosophers on the plea of accident and some on the plea

that man had a free choice, denied the supremacy of causative law and consequently the existence of causative necessity and the inexorable norms of society and history. But we proved that the theory of these philosophers was baseless, and that the law of causation and the causative necessity governed society and history as much as all other things.

At the same time we also proved that history being a unit endowed with real existence and having a special nature, was governed by a number of universal and compulsory laws. We termed this kind of compulsion as philosophical compulsion. This compulsion requires that the course of history should proceed according to some definite and compulsive laws.

As for the compulsion of history in which the Marxists believe and which is also described as economic compulsion, it is a special variety of philosophical necessity. This theory of compulsion of history is a mixture of two other theories. One of them is that of philosophical necessity which requires that no phenomenon comes into existence unless it is necessary and that every phenomenon becomes inevitable and unavoidable with the appearance of its causes. Conversely the existence of a phenomenon is impossible in the absence of its causes.

The other theory is that of the precedence of the material basis of society to all other determining factors of it. We have already explained this theory. The essential result of these theories is the theory of the material compulsion of history, which means that superstructure of society is bound to follow its understructure, that with a change in its understructure, its superstructure must also definitely change, and that without a change in its understructure no change is possible in its superstructure.

The Marxists claim that it is this principle which has rendered Marxist socialism scientific and gave it the form of a natural law, for according to this principle the implements of production, which are the most basic section of the economic structure of society continue to develop in accordance with certain natural laws in the same way as different species of plants and animals all over history have continued to develop gradually for millions of years and at particular junctures have transformed into new species. As the development and evolution of plants and animals has not been the result of the will or desire of anybody, same is the case with the development and evolution of the implements of production.

The implements of production in the course of their gradual development pass through several stages, and at every stage they bring about a compulsory and unavoidable change in all affairs of society. There is no possibility of any change in the social superstructure until and unless the implements of production reach a particular stage of their development. The efforts of those socialists and the advocates of a just order, who out of sheer emotionalism wish to socialize society and establish a just order without considering whether the development of the implements of production warrant such a change, are merely an exercise in futility. Karl Marx in his preface to the *Capital* says:

"The country that is more developed industrially only shows to the less developed the image of its own future. And even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of

its movement ultimately it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth pangs."

In the last part of his statement Marx mentions a point to which either attention has not been paid or very little attention has been paid. In fact he wants to answer an implied question. Somebody may say: The phased development of society in the wake of regular and phased development of nature is compulsory and inevitable only so long as man does not discover the course of natural laws. As soon as he understands these laws, nature comes under his control and he becomes master of it.

That is why it is said that so long as nature is not understood, it is master of man, but it becomes his servant in proportion to his understanding of it. Take the case of an epidemic disease. So long as it is not known what causes it and how it can be eradicated, it rules supreme over man's life. But as soon as these things are known as they have been today, incidence of the disease is checked and there are no more any fatal cases. Same is the case with flood, storm etc.

In his statement Marx wants to assert that the regular and phased movements of society are of dynamical character. In other words they are automatic and from within like the regular movements of the growth of plants and animals, not mechanical changes brought about by outside factors, as are all technical and industrial changes.

The eradication of pests by means of pesticides and the annihilation of disease germs by means of a medicine also belong to this category. In all those cases in which the discovery of a law of nature brings nature under man's control, the relation of the laws is mechanical. But in the case of dynamical and inner movement of the things the role of man's knowledge is nothing more than that man adapts himself to the course of the relevant laws and is benefited thereby. With the discovery of the laws regulating the growth and development of plants and animals including the growth of the foetus in the womb, man comes across a number of compulsory and inexorable laws to which he can do nothing but to submit.

Marx wants to say that social development of man which follows the development and evolution of the implements of production is a dynamical, inner and automatic self-development. Knowledge and consciousness cannot change it nor can they give it a form of their choice. Man is compelled to accept social development along a definite line and the stages through which it has to pass unquestioningly in the same way as he has to accept the development of a foetus along a definite line. He must put out of his head any idea of changing its course. Society cannot reach the final stage of its development without going through the middle stages, nor can it reach the final stage by any way other than the way fixed for it.

The Marxist view that the movement of social development is an automatic, unconscious, natural and compulsory movement, resembles the view held by Socrates about human mind and its natural creative capability. In his teachings Socrates used the method of objective questions. He believed that if graded

questions were put in a regular manner and with accurate knowledge of the working of human mind, the human mind would automatically move to answer those questions. Human mind was in no need of any instructions from outside. The mother of Socrates was a midwife. He used to say that he did with the minds exactly what his mother did with the women in parturition. It is not a midwife who causes the delivery of a child. Delivery is caused at the right moment by mother's nature. Still the services of a midwife are required to make it sure that nothing abnormal takes place, and no harm is done to the mother or the child.

Although from the view-point of Marxism, the discovery of the laws of sociology and history of philosophy can bring about no change in society, yet importance must be attached to these sciences. Scientific socialism is nothing but the discovery of the laws of sociology and history of philosophy. At least they help in doing away with whimsical socialism and wishful thinking about setting up a just order. Though dynamical laws can change nothing, yet they have one good point about them and that point is that their effect is predictable.

In the light of scientific sociology and scientific socialism the stage of the development of any society can be studied and its future can be foretold. It can be ascertained at what stage the baby of socialism is in the womb of a society and what can be exactly expected of it at each subsequent stage. Thus unnecessary and undue expectations can be avoided. As the immediate delivery of a four-month old foetus cannot be expected, similarly it is not possible that a society which is still at the feudal stage should suddenly be shifted to socialism.

Marxism tries to discover and describe the natural and dynamical stages of society and the compulsory laws of its development from one period to another.

From the view-point of Marxism on the whole societies have to pass through four stages to reach socialism. These stages are the periods of primitive socialism, slavery, capitalism and scientific socialism. Sometimes instead of four periods, five, six or seven periods are mentioned, for each of the periods of slave-holding, capitalism and socialism can be split into two periods.

III. Each historical period has its own distinguishing features and is different in its nature from other periods. From biological point of view when animals are transformed from one species into another species, they change their nature. The same is true of the historical periods. Each age has its own special laws and the laws of a previous or a subsequent age cannot be applied to it. Take the case of water. So long as it is water, the law peculiar to the liquids, apply to it, but as soon as it is changed into steam, it is no longer subject to those laws.

Then it becomes subject to the laws of gases. Similarly so long as a society is at the stage of feudalism, it is governed by one set of laws. But as soon as it passes that stage and reaches the stage of capitalism, it will be absurd to try to retain the laws of the period of feudalism. As such society cannot have any eternal and everlasting laws. According to historical materialism, which believes that economy

is the infrastructure of society, any claim to eternity on the part of any laws is totally unacceptable. This is one of those points of historical materialism which are inconsistent with religion, especially Islam which believes in an eternal code of law.

In the book, *Revisionism from Marx to Mao*, quotes from an appendix to the second edition of the *Capital*, the author says: "Every period of history has laws of its own... accordingly as life passes from one stage to another stage, it evolves and is governed by a new set of laws. Economic life, in the course of its historical development, brings forth a phenomenon that we come across in various branches of biology social organisms are distinguished from one another in the same way as animal and plant organisms are differentiated."

IV. It was due to the development of the implements of production that private property came into being and society was divided into two classes of the exploiters and the exploited. From the dawn of history till today these two classes have been and still continue to be the main divisions of society. A conflict between them has always existed. Anyhow, this division does not mean that all groups of society are either exploiters or the exploited. Some of them may not belong to either of these two categories. What we mean to say is that these two are the categories effective in the destiny of society and form the chief divisions of it. All other groups of society follow one of these two main groups.

The author of the *Revisionism from Marx to Mao* writes:

"We find two different patterns of division of society according to classes and their conflicts; according to Marx and Engels: one is bipolar, and the other is multipolar. Definition of class also differs in both the patterns. In the first pattern it is an imaginary class, while in the other it is a real class. The rules regarding the divisions of classes are also different. Engels, in his preface to *The Peasants' War in Germany* tries to reconcile these two patterns by evolving a uniform standard for class division. He distinguishes various classes in society, and, within each class, he differentiates various subgroups. But according to his belief, there are only two classes who accomplish a definite historic mission: the bourgeois and the proletariat; because they form the really opposite poles of society."

As, according to the Marxist philosophy, it is impossible that the superstructure of society should go ahead of its infrastructure, similarly it is also impossible that the superstructure of society should remain intact when society, from the viewpoint of its infrastructure, that is its social and economic relations, is divided into two opposite classes of the exploiters and the exploited. In these circumstances social conscience is also divided into the conscience of the exploited and that of the exploiters and consequently two world conceptions, two ideologies, two moral systems and two kinds of philosophy appear. The social and economic position of each class inspires a separate way of thinking, a separate taste and adherence to separate ideas.

Neither of the two classes can have a conscience, a taste or a way of thinking which is not in keeping with its economic position. The religion and the government are the things which are controlled

exclusively by the class of the exploiters. These are the institutions which have been invented by this class with a view to perpetuate its control of the class exploited by it. As the class of the exploiters controls all the material resources of society, it imposes its culture including its religion on the exploited class. Thus the culture of the rulers, which includes their world conception, their ideology, their morality, their taste their feelings, and above all their religion, is the culture of the exploiters. As for the culture of the exploited it like themselves is always subdued and not allowed to grow and make progress. In German Ideology Marx has said: "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas; i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.

The class which has the means of material production at its disposal. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas, hence of the relations which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. In so far, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an historical epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range; hence among other things they rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of epoch."

A ruling and exploiting class as such is reactionary, conservative, and conventional. It looks to the past. Its culture which is the ruling culture and which it imposes on its subjects is also reactionary, conventional and looking towards the past. As for the exploited and the subjugated class, it is revolutionary, iconoclastic, future-looking and progressive. Its subdued culture is also revolutionary and unconventional. To be exploited is a prerequisite of being revolutionary. In other words only an exploited class is capable of bringing about a revolution.

After reproducing the above-quoted passage from the preface to *The war of German Peasants*, the author of the *Revisionism from Marx to Mao* says: A year after the publication of this prefatory note, (prefatory note to *The Peasants' War in Germany*) the Congress of the German Socialists has written in its Gotha Program that all classes form a reactionary front against the labour class. Marx severely criticized this statement. But if we are logical, we should admit the fact that since these miserable socialists could not possibly differentiate between his bipolar or multi-polar patterns after what Marx had written in the Manifesto. In the Manifesto (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*), Marx presents the class conflicts of those days as the war between the proletariat and the bourgeois. He writes: "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeois today, the proletariat alone is a revolutionary class."

Somewhere Marx has said that only the proletarian class fulfils all the conditions and has the characteristics necessary to become revolutionary. These conditions are as under:

- i. to be exploited by producers;
- ii. to be having no property (the peasants also have these two characteristics);

iii. to be organized, for which concentration at one place is necessary. (This characteristic applies to industrial workers only who work together in a factory etc. It does not exist in the case of the peasants who are always scattered in the various sectors of land.)

In respect of the second characteristic Marx has said: "A worker is free in two sense. He is free to sell his labour and he is not tied to any kind of property." In respect of the second characteristic Marx has said in his *Manifesto*: "Growth of industry has not only increased the number of the proletarians, but has also concentrated them in considerably large masses. The force of the proletarians is increasing and they are becoming aware of their power."

The above mentioned principle may be called the principle of conformity of the ideological basis with class and social basis. According to this principle every class produces only that kind of ideas, moral principles, philosophy, art, poetry and literature which conforms with its way of life, its means of living and its interests. This principle may also be called the principle of the conformity of the urge of thinking with the direction of thinking.

Every idea and doctrine and every moral or religious system that arises in a class, is always directed to the advantage of that class. No intellectual system arising in a particular class can be for the benefit of another class or for the good of the humanity at large. It is impossible that any idea or any system should have no class bias. Thinking can be humanistic and classless only if classes are abolished as the result of the development of implements of production. Only the negation of the contradiction of class basis can lead to the negation of the contradiction of ideological basis, and only the negation of the contradiction of intellectual drive can do away with the contradiction of intellectual orientation.

In some of his earlier works written in young age (*Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*) Marx lays more stress on the political aspect of the classes (rulership and subjection) than on their economic aspects (exploitation and the exploited). He says that the class struggle aims at freedom and liberation from bondage. He is of the opinion that there are two stages of this struggle. The first stage is partial and political, and the other stage is universal and human. Marx says that the proletarian revolution, which is the last stage of the revolution of the bondmen of history is a basic revolution in the sense that it is for the complete emancipation of man and the total abolition of the system of rulership and subjection in all its forms.

Explaining how a class in its social orientation can think of some thing that is far beyond its class position and how it can adopt an objective which is universal and humanistic as well as in conformity with the principles of historical materialism, Marx says: "As the bondage of this class is basic, revolution is also basic. It is injustice itself which has been imposed on it. That is why it seeks justice itself and endeavour for the liberation of mankind."

This is a poetic and not a scientific statement. What meant by saying that "injustice itself has been imposed?" Has the exploiting class been doing injustice for the sake of injustice and not for the sake of

exploitation and making gains, so that the proletarian class seeks justice itself? Furthermore, it is contrary to the conception of historical materialism and somewhat idealistic to suppose that the exploiting class has assumed its present attitude only during the capitalistic age.

As the principle of conformity of ideological basis with the class basis makes it necessary that there should be harmony between an ideology and the orientation which it causes, it makes it necessary that there should be harmony between the inclinations of an individual and the ideas of his class. In other words every individual is naturally inclined towards the ideas the school that arises from his own class and whose orientation is to the advantage of his class.

Anyhow, the view-point of Marxist logic, this principle is extremely useful for the purpose of understanding the nature of ideologies and the inclination of the social classes.

V. The fifth conclusion is that such superstructural matters as ideology, guidance, propagation and exhortation etc. play only a limited role in giving direction to society or to social classes. Usually it is understood that ideology, preaching, arguments, teaching, training, propagation and advice can change the conscience of man and mould it in any desired way. But it is true that conscience is an involuntary reflection of class position, then the conscience of every individual, every group and every class is invariably and exclusively shaped by the social and class position of that individual, group and class, and it would be only an idealistic conception of society and history to think that the superstructural matters such as mentioned above can be a source of any social change.

That is why it is said that intellectuality, as well as seeking reforms and staging revolutions have an aspect of autosuggestion. It is a sense of class deprivation, not any external factor such as teaching and training, that inspires people to seek reforms and to become revolutionaries. At least the real ground for these things is prepared by class position, and the role of ideology, guidance etc. is at the most confined to making the deprived class conscious of the class contradictions and its own position, or to turning a particular class into a class having a class consciousness.

Thus in a class-dominated society the only intellectual basis that moves a class to action is its awareness of its position and its realization that it is being exploited. In the class dominated societies in which men have been divided into the two categories of the exploiters and the exploited, and in which social conscience has been split into two types, such basic human values as justice and love of humanity can have no role. Of course when as a result of the development of the implements of production a proletarian government will be established, classes will vanish and man will return to his true humanity having no class frontiers.

Then his conscience will not be split by the system of private property and it will be possible that intellectual and human values reflecting the position of the development of the implements of production, play a definite role. From the view-point of historical periods, socialism is the superstructure of a particular age. It is not possible to introduce it at will in any age prior to it. (As some whimsical socialists

wanted to do.) Similarly in an age in which society is divided into two classes, it is not possible to impose the special consciousness of one class on the other class. At present common human consciousness does not exist.

Therefore in a class dominated society a general and universal ideology having no class orientation cannot exist. Every ideology which appears in a class dominated society must invariably have a tinge of a particular class. Even if we suppose that there can be a general ideology having no class characteristic, it is certain that such an ideology practically will play no role. As such the mission of the religions and at least of the guidance, the counsel and the preaching of equality and justice to mankind in their name is at least eccentric, if not fraudulent.

VI. Another conclusion which we may draw is that the revolutionary leaders always come of the exploited class. It has already been proved that only this class is mentally prepared to seek reforms and stage a revolution. The only factors which bring about this preparedness are exploitation and deprivation. At the most there may be a need of some superstructural factors to create consciousness of class contradictions. It is evident that the prominent individuals who create this awakening and self-consciousness in the exploited class should belong to this very class and have sympathy with its cause. They should be those members of this class who have already become self-conscious.

As it is impossible that as regards time the superstructural position of a society should precede its infrastructural position, and it is impossible that the level of the social thinking of a class, should be higher than its social position, it is also impossible that a leader should make any demands which reflect some thing above the actual aspirations of his class. As such it is impossible that any member of the exploiting class should rise against his own class for the sake of the exploited class.

The author of the *Revisionism from Marx to Mao* says: "Another original contribution of *The German Ideology* is analysis of class consciousness. Here Marx, contrary to his earlier works, regards class consciousness as the product of the class itself; it does not come from outside. The real consciousness is nothing but an ideology, because it is bound to give generalized form to the interests of a particular class. But does not exclude the fact that this consciousness, which is based upon the awareness of its own conditions, strengthens the interests of the class. In any case, the class cannot attain maturity without producing its specific class consciousness.

Marx's view affirms the division of labour within the working class itself, i.e. the intellectual work (the ideological work, leadership) and manual work. Some individuals become thinkers or ideologues of the class, while others rather passively accept and act upon the ideas and concepts provided for them."

The same book analysing the views of Marx expressed in his *Manifesto* and in his *Poverty of Philosophy* says: "In this way, awakening class consciousness and organizing it in the form of a 'class-for-itself' is the task of the proletariat and also the result of its self-fuelled economic battle. This upheaval is neither brought about by any intellectual theory which is alien to the workers' movement, nor by any political

party. Marx condemns Utopian socialists who despite their proletarian –inclination do not see the historical self–propulsion of the proletariat and their specific political movement . . . and try to replace with their fancies the gradual and self–motivated organization of the proletariat into a class."

This principle of self–development is of special importance in Marxist logic and may be regarded as a guiding principle with regard to knowing society, its social tendencies and the leanings of the individuals, especially of those who claim to be the leaders and reformers of society.

From the foregoing it is clear that Marx and Engels do not and cannot believe in an independent super–class of intellectuals. The principles of Marxism do not allow such a belief. If in some of his works Marx has expressed an opinion to the contrary, that may be on the occasions when he does not want to be a Marxist. We shall show later that such occasions are not rare. Now the question rises how Marx and Engels explain their own position as intellectuals in the light of the Marxist principles. Neither of them belongs to the proletarian class. They are the philosophers and not the workers. Nevertheless, they have originated the greatest workers theory.

The answer of Marx to this question is note–worthy. The author of the *Revisionism from Marx to Mao* says: "Marx has spoken little about the intellectuals. He apparently does not regard them as a special stratum of society, but a part of certain other classes, particularly the bourgeois. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx considers academics, journalists, university teachers, and lawyers as the part of the bourgeois class, like priests and army men. In the *Manifesto*, when he wants to mention the names of the theorists of the working class who by origin do not belong to it – like Engels and himself – he does not call them intellectuals, but regards them as 'groups of people from the ruling class. . . , who have embedded themselves amongst the proletariat,' and 'have brought many elements for the education and training of that class.'"

Marx does not explain how he and Engels slipped from the apogee of the ruling class and descended among the ruled, bringing with them valuable gifts for the education and training of this humble class described by the Qur'an as the "***downtrodden and the destitute***" (Vide Surah al Balad 90:17)

Really the good luck bestowed on Marx and Engels and through them on the down–trodden class of the proletariat never fell to the lot of Adam, the progenitor of the human race, who according to the religious traditions, descended from, the heaven to the earth! Adam did not bring with him any such gifts.

Marx does not explain how a theory of the liberation of the proletariat can develop in the very core of the ruling class nor does he say whether this descent was a speciality of these two individuals or was possible in the case of others also. Now when it has been established that the doors of the heaven and the earth can be opened to each others, although in a very special case, it is not clear whether there is a possibility of decent only, or the members of the lower classes can ascend to the position of the heavenly region. Anyhow, if they do ascend, they have not any suitable gifts to carry with them.

Basically it is absurd to carry any gifts from the earth the heaven. But if one succeeds in ascending to

the heaven is not totally absorbed in the heavenly region, one is likely bring gifts on one's descent to the earth as Messrs. Marx and Engels did.

Criticism and Comments of Historical Materialism

As we have now explained the basis of the theory historical materialism and drawn certain conclusions from it, it is right time to make some comments on it.

Let us first make it clear that we do not propose to discuss critically the total views of Marx as expressed by him in all his works, nor do we intend to criticize Marxism as a whole. Here we propose to critically review only historical materialism, which is one of the fundamental principles of Marxism. Basically it is one thing to criticize the views of Marx or to criticize Marxism as a whole, and it is a different thing to criticize a particular principle of Marxism such as historical materialism.

A critical study of all the views of Marx as scattered in the numerous works compiled by him during the various periods of his life, shows many contradictions. Such a study has been undertaken by several individuals in the West. In Iran, as far as we know, the best book available on this subject is the *Revision of views from Marx to Mao*,¹ from which we have extensively quoted in this chapter.

The criticism of Marxism as a whole or any of its fundamental principles is unexceptionable even from the view point of the personality of Marx. The criticism of those principles, which are not considered to be final by Marx himself and about which he has expressed contradictory views, is also justified in those cases which are concomitant with the basic principles of Marxism and the contrary views expressed by Marx himself may be regarded as his deviation from Marxism. While dealing with historical materialism in this book, we have kept this principle in mind.

Here our criticism is based on the indisputable principles propounded by Marx, irrespective of the fact whether in his contradictory works and writings, he himself has or has not expressed any view to the contrary, for our main aim is to comment on historical materialism and not on the views of Marx.

It is an irony of history that in his philosophical, social and economic books Marx has more or, less supported the theory of historical materialism. But while analysing and interpreting the contemporary events he has paid little attention to the principles of this theory. Why so? Varied answers have been given to this question, and that is not a thing peculiar to this problem only. In many cases Marx has adopted a contradictory attitude, and has theoretically or practically deviated from Marxism. Therefore what is required is a general answer.

Some attribute this weakness to the immaturity of Marx during the early periods of his life. But this explanation is indefensible at least from the point of view of Marxism, for many of his theories, which are today regarded as the recognized principles of Marxism, are related to the periods of his youth or middle age, and many of his deviations, including some of his interpretations of the contemporary events, are

related to the last period of his life.

Some others attribute this contradiction to his double personality. They assert that on the one hand he was a philosopher, an ideologue and the founder of a school. Hence it was natural for him to regard the principles enunciated by him as firm and final and to use all the force at his disposal to reconcile between the actualities and his forethoughts. On the other hand Marx also had a learned personality and a scholarly spirit. This spirit compelled him to always submit to actualities and not to adhere to any definite principle.

Some others differentiate between Marx and Marxism. They claim that Marx and his ideas are only a stage of Marxism. Essentially Marxism is an evolutionary school, and hence there is nothing wrong if Marxism has gone ahead of Marx himself.

In other words, if the Marxism of Marx which is only an early stage of Marxism, is found to be defective, it is not fair to conclude that Marxism itself is faulty. Anyhow, these people do not explain what forms the main essence of communism. A school can be called evolutionary if all its preliminary principles are definite and firm. Only the subsidiary matters can be disputable. Otherwise there will be no difference between the abrogation of a theory and its evolution. If firm principles are not accepted as an essential condition of evolution, there is no reason why we should not begin with pre-Marx theorists and thinkers such as Hegel, Saint Simon, Proudhon or some other personality, should not call Hegelism or Proudhonism a school in the developing state, and regard Marxism as a stage of that school.

In our opinion the contradictions of Marx are due to the fact that he himself is a less Marxist than most of the other Marxists. It is said that once at a meeting of the Marxists, he defended a view contrary to his own earlier theory. His audience were very much upset. Marx said: " I am not as much a Marxist as you are". It is also said that during the last days of his life he declared that he was not a Marxist at all.

Marx did not agree with certain views of Marxism because he was too clever to be a hundred per cent Marxist. To be a standard Marxist requires more than a little gullibility. Historical materialism, which is now under discussion, is a part of Marxism. It has certain principles which lead to certain results to which neither Marx the scholar could subscribe nor Marx the philosopher and thinker could adhere to these principles and results. Now here are our comments on historical materialism.

i) Baselessness

The first objection is that this view is not more than mere 'theory' without any proof. A historio-philosophical theory should either be based on contemporary historical evidence and then extended to other periods or should be based on historical evidence of the past events and extended to the present and the future; or should have valid scientific, logical or philosophical arguments to prove it.

The theory of historical materialism does not follow any of the above methods. The events of the time of Marx and Engels cannot be explained by it; so much so that Engels himself has admitted that he and

Marx committed certain mistakes while dealing with the importance of economy in some of their books. But they could commit no such mistakes while analysing the contemporary events because at that time they were facing reality. Further, the events of the past thousands of years also do not support the theory of historical materialism in any way.

(ii) Revision of Views by Its Founders

As we have repeatedly mentioned, Marx calls the economic basis of society its infrastructure and other bases its superstructure. This expression is enough to show that other bases of society are subordinate to its economic basis and depend on it. Furthermore, many of the statements of Marx quoted by us earlier make it clear that according to him this dependence is one-sided. It is economic factors alone which influence all other social matters.

It is a fact that even if Marx had not specifically stated so, his views regarding the precedence of matter to spirit, precedence of material needs to spiritual needs, precedence of psychology to sociology and the precedence of work to thought would have led us to the same conclusion.

Anyhow, in many of his writings Marx has expressed a different opinion in regard to the basis of dialectic logic. This may be regarded as a sort of a change in his views and to some extent a deviation from the absolute materiality of history. The opinion to which we refer is his theory of reciprocal influence. On the basis of this theory the causative relation should not be considered to be unilateral. If A is the cause of B and influences it, in its turn B is also a cause of A and influences it. According to this principle there exists a sort of reciprocal dependence and influence among all parts of nature and all parts of society.

At present we are not concerned as to whether this dialectic principle in the form in which it has been advanced is correct or not. But we must say that, according to this principle, it is basically meaningless to speak of any precedence in the relationship between any two things whether they be matter and spirit, work and thought or economic basis of society and all other social institutions; for if each of the two things is dependent on the other and is essential for its existence, the question of precedence and being infrastructure does not arise.

In some of his statements Marx does not mention the influence of the infrastructure of society over its superstructure, but simply allots a role, whether essential or nonessential to the economic basis of society. Still in some other statements of his he speaks of the reciprocal influence of the infrastructure and the superstructure, but still maintains that the main and the final role is that of the infrastructure. While making a comparison between the two books of Marx, *The Capital* and *The Critique of Political Economy* the *Revisionism from Marx to Mao* says that in both of these books Marx describes economy as the determining factor. The book further says: "In spite of this, Marx, consciously or unconsciously, has added a new dimension to this definition by stating that superstructures, despite primacy of the base over infrastructure, can play an essential role in society."

The author further asks: What is the difference between the governing and determining role that is always performed by the economic infrastructures and this main role ascribed to the superstructures here? Even if the superstructures play the main role only occasionally, their role must be determining in those cases in which it is played. Not only that, but in those cases what we call the infrastructure should be the superstructure and what we call the superstructure should be the infrastructure.

In a letter written by him towards the end of his life to Joseph Bloch, Engels remarked as under: ". . . . According to the materialist conception of history, ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase.

The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure: political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas, also exercise their influence upon the course of historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary."

Strangely enough, if the theory that the economic factor alone is the determining factor is a hollow fiction, it is amazing that this proposition has been advanced by none other than Marx himself. Moreover, if it is true that the so called superstructural factors in many cases seriously determine the form of historical struggle, then the economic factors are not the only determining factors. As such it is out of place to say that economic movement necessarily makes its way through an endless mass of contradictions.

What is more amazing is that in this very letter Monsieur Engels puts the responsibility for this mistake or, in his own words, distortion, partly on himself and Marx. He says:

"Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that the younger people sometimes lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it. We had to emphasize the main principle vis-a-vis our adversaries, who denied it, and we had not always the time, the place or opportunity to allow the other elements involved in the interaction to come into light."

But some other interpret, that too much emphasis laid by Marx and Engels on the economic factors, in a way different from what Engels has stated. They say that this excessive stress was not directed against the opponents of this theory, but was meant to disarm those rivals who supported it.

In *The Critique of Political Economy* Marx has laid more stress on the role of economic factors than in any other works of his. We have already reproduced a well-known extract from the preface of this book. Describing the circumstances in which this book was written, the *Revisionism from Marx To Mao* says: "

Another cause of writing the *Critique of Political Economy*, was the publication of a book by Proudhon, *Manuel du speculateur a la Bourse*, and another book by Darimon, the follower of Proudhon. . . . When Marx saw that his rivals in the camp of Proudhon from one side, and the followers of Lassalle from the other side were relying upon the economic element in a reformatory (not revolutionary) way, he endeavoured to seize this weapon from their hands and used it for the purpose of revolution. This necessitated a rigidity suited to the purpose of popularizing his beliefs.

To meet the requirements of the special conditions of China and to justify the needs of his practical experience in leading the Chinese revolutionary movement, Mao so much changed the conceptions of historical materialism and the supreme importance of economy that nothing was left of them or of socialism based on historical materialism, except quibbling and play of words.

Under the heading, '*The Principal Contradiction and the Principal Aspect of Contradiction*', Mao in his treatise on "Contradiction" says: "The principal and the non-principal aspects of a contradiction transform themselves into each other and 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 aspect 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 struggle against the other in the development of a thing."

Some people think that this is not the case with certain contradictions. For example in the contradiction between productive forces and the relations of production, the productive forces are the principal aspect;. . . in the contradiction between the economic foundation and its superstructure, the economic foundation is the principal aspect and there is no change in their respective positions. This is the view of mechanistic materialism. True, the productive forces, practice, and the economic foundation generally manifest themselves in the principal and decisive roles; whoever denies this is not a materialist. But under certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory, and superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role; this must also be admitted.

When the productive forces cannot be developed unless the relations of production are changed, the change in the relations of production plays the principal and decisive role. As Lenin put it, without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. The creation and advocacy of the revolutionary theory plays the principal and decisive role. . . . When the superstructure (politics, culture and so on) hinders the development of economic foundation, political and cultural reforms become the principal and decisive' factors. By saying this, are we running counter to materialism? No. The reason is that while we recognize that in the development of history as a whole it is the material essence of things that determines spiritual things, and social existence that determines social consciousness, at the same time we also recognize and must recognize the reaction of spiritual things and social consciousness on social existence, and the reaction of superstructure on economic foundation. This is not running counter to materialism; this is precisely avoiding mechanistic materialism and firmly upholding dialectical

materialism."

Actually what Mao says goes totally against the theory of historical materialism; when he says: "At the time that production relations impede the growth and development of productive forces" , or says: " At the time that revolutionary movement is in need of a revolutionary theory" , or says: " If the superstructure hampers the growth and development of infrastructure" he mentions what always happens and must always happen. But according to the theory of historical materialism such situations should never arise, for according to it the development of productive forces compulsorily changes the production relations; revolutionary theory invariably emerges automatically; and the superstructure compulsorily changes under the impact of infrastructure.

Has not Marx in his preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* expressly said: " At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or what is but a legal expression for the same thing -- with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces, these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of economic foundation, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."

A change in the production relations prior to the development of the productive forces, the formation of a revolutionary theories prior to the automatic revolutionary insurgence and a change in the superstructure to pave the way for a corresponding change in the infrastructure, all this means the precedence Of thought to work, the precedence of spirit to matter and the importance and independence of political and intellectual basis of society as compared to its economic basis. Thus the idea of historical materialism is nullified.

Mao says that dialectic materialism would be violated, if it is hold that influence is only one-sided. That is true. But the problem is that scientific socialism is based on this very one-sided influence which is contrary to the dialectic principle of reciprocal dependence. Hence we have either to accept scientific socialism and to ignore dialectic logic or to accept dialectic logic and to ignore scientific socialism and historical materialism on which it is based.

Furthermore, what does Mao mean when he says that he admits that generally in the course of the development of history material essence of things determine spiritual things and social existence determines social consciousness. To admit that the main aspect of contradictions is subject to an occasional change, amounts to saying that sometimes the productive force determines the production relation and sometimes vice versa, i.e. the process is reversed. Sometimes a revolutionary creates a revolutionary theory and sometimes vice versa. Sometimes education, politics, religion, force etc. change the economic basis of society and sometimes the process is reversed. Therefore sometimes matter determines spirit and on some other occasion determines matter. Sometimes social existence determines social consciousness and sometimes social consciousness determines social existence.

In fact, what Mao has said about the change in the place of the main aspect of contradictions, is a Maoist theory which practically goes against the Marxist theory of historical materialism. It is not an interpretation of the Marxist theory as Mao claims. Mao has practically shown that like Marx himself he is also too clever to be always a Marxist. The Chinese Revolution led by Mao practically violated scientific socialism as well as historical materialism, and hence Marxism itself.

Under the leadership of Mao, China overthrew the old feudal system and set up a socialist regime instead of it, whereas according to scientific socialism and historical materialism a country passing through the stage of feudalism must pass over to the industrial and capitalistic stage first. It can step forward to socialism only when it has reached a high level of industrialization. As a foetus in the womb cannot reach a stage without passing through the earlier stage, similarly society cannot reach the final stage without passing through the earlier successive stage.

But Mao has shown practically that he is a midwife who can bring to this world a four-month old foetus in a healthy, perfect and flawless condition. He has shown that contrary to what Marx has said, a leader may ignore what scientific socialism teaches, totally change the production relations and industrialize a country by means of party teachings, political formations, a revolutionary theory, and social information. These are the same things which are called by Marx a kind of consciousness and superstructure and not a kind of existence and infrastructure. According to Marx they are not basic. Mao has shown that productive relations can be overturned and a country can be industrialized, ignoring the so-called scientific socialism for all practical purposes.

In another way also Mao exploded the Marxist theory of history. According to the Marxist theory and at least from the personal point of view of Marx, the peasant class fulfils only the first two conditions of being a revolutionary class. It is an exploited class and it holds no property. But it does not fulfil the third condition of being concentrated, having mutual cooperation and mutual understanding and being conscious of its power. For this reason the peasant class is not fit to initiate a revolution. At the most in a semi-agricultural and semi-industrial society the peasants may become the followers of the revolutionary proletariat.

Not only that, but from the point of view of Marx, the peasant class is basically mean and reactionary. It totally lacks every kind of revolutionary initiative. In a letter to Engels, on the revolution in Poland, Marx made this remark about the peasants: "The basically wretched and reactionary peasants should not be called upon to struggle." But Mao converted this very mean and reactionary class into a revolutionary class and with its help overthrew the old regime. According to Marx the peasants not only cannot lead a country to socialism, but they also can make no contribution in the shifting of a country from feudalism to capitalism.

It is the bourgeois class which brings about a social revolution at a historical moment. But Mao jumped directly from feudalism to socialism with the help of the so-called reactionary class of the peasants. Therefore it was appropriate that in order to make a distinction between Maoism and Marxism, Mao

should advance his own theory of a change in the place of the major aspect of contradictions. Anyhow, Mao himself does not speak of Maoism and he advances his views only as a learned interpretation of Marxism, historical materialism and scientific socialism.

Mao learnt from his distinguished predecessor, Lenin, the lesson that a Marxist when necessary should practically secede from Marxism. It was Lenin who before Mao brought about a revolution in Russia at the time when that country was semi-cultural and semi-industrial. It was Lenin who for the first time founded a socialist State.

Lenin did not expect that during his lifetime Czarist Russia would ever be fully industrialized and turned into such a capitalist country where the exploitation of workers might reach its final so that automatically a self-conscious and dynamical movement could bring about a total change. So he felt that it would be too late if he waited for the period of pregnancy to be completed before he undertook the job of midwifery. Hence he started with the superstructure and used party, politics, a revolutionary theory, a war and force in order to convert the semi-industrialized Russia of that day into the Soviet Socialist country of today.

Lenin practically proved the truth of the famous proverb that a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. He did not wait for the two birds of Marx and the automatic and dynamic readiness of the economic basis of the Russian society for insurrection. He fully exploited the one bird in hand and brought about a successful revolution by means of force, politics, party teachings and his own political insight.

(iii) Demolition of the Principle of Compulsory Harmony Between Infrastructure and Superstructure

According to the theory of historical materialism there should always be some sort of harmony between the infrastructure of a society and its superstructure, so that it may be possible to know the infrastructure by knowing the superstructure (by employing the deductive method, which provides semi-perfect knowledge) and to know the superstructure by knowing the infrastructure (by employing the inductive method, which provides perfect knowledge). If the infrastructure is changed, this harmony will naturally be destroyed, social equilibrium will be disturbed and such a crisis will begin that sooner or later it will ruin the superstructure. In contrast, so long as the infrastructure remains as it is, the superstructure will remain intact.

The contemporary historical events have proved the invalidity of the above proposition. Consequent to a number of political and social revolutions which accompanied the successive economic upheavals which occurred during the period from 1827 to 1847 Marx and Engels came to believe that social revolutions were an inevitable result of the economic crises. But according to the author of the *Revisionism from Marx to Mao*: "It is the irony of history that there has not been any economic crisis accompanied with a revolution in industrialized countries since 1848. In the very lifetime of Marx, before his death, four times forces of production rebelled against relations of production without bringing about any revolution ...

later, some economists like Joseph Schumpeter have gone to the extent of naming, these crises caused by technical innovation as 'gales of creative destruction, and as safety valves for reestablishing economic equilibrium and economic growth."

The countries like Britain, France, Germany and America have made stupendous industrial progress, They are at the zenith of capitalism. But contrary to the prediction of Marx that these countries would be the first to experience workers' revolution and would be converted into socialist countries, their so-called superstructure has gone under no change from political, legal or religious point of view. The child which Marx hoped to be born has completed nine months, has crossed not only nine but even ninety years, but still it has not seen the light of the day. Now no hope is left that this child will ever be born.

Of course there is no doubt that the present regimes in these countries will sooner or later be overthrown, but the awaited revolution of the workers will never come about and the Marxist theory of history will never prove correct. For that matter the regimes which are governing the so-called socialist countries of today will also be overthrown one day or other. Anyhow, it is certain that the future regimes in these countries will not be capitalistic.

We find that several countries in Eastern Europe, Asia and South America have reached the stage of socialism without passing through the phase of capitalism. Today there are countries which resemble each other from the point of view of their infrastructure, but still they differ widely as far as their superstructure is concerned. The two superpowers, that is America and Soviet Russia are the best example of this phenomenon. America and Japan have the same economic system, but their political, religious, moral, cultural and artistic systems different. On the other hand, there are countries whose political, religious and other superstructural systems are almost the same, but still their economic condition are totally similar. All this shows that the compulsory conformity of the superstructure of society with its infrastructure as conceived by historical materialism is merely a figment of imagination.

(iv) Nonconformity of the Basis of Class Ideology

As we have mentioned earlier, according to historical materialism superstructure of any period cannot go ahead of its infrastructure at all. As such the knowledge of every period is absolutely confined to that period. With the lapse of time it becomes old and obsolete, and is deposited in the archives of history. Ideas, philosophies, plans, predictions and religions, all are by-products of the special requirements of the age in which they appear and cannot be consistent with the requirements of any other age. But practically it has been proved otherwise. Not to say of creeds and religions, many philosophies, personalities, ideas and branches of knowledge appear to have been ahead of their times or their class. There are so many ideas which were produced by the material needs of a particular period, but though the times have since changed, the ideas still shine on the horizon of history.

It is amazing that in this case also Marx in some of his remarks has dissociated from Marxism. In his well-known book, the *German Ideology* he says: " Consciousness sometimes is seen to precede the

contemporary empirical relations, to the extent that it is possible to find the evidence for the conflicts of a later age in the writings of theoreticians of the preceding age."

(v) Independence of Cultural Development

According to historical materialism, like any other basis of society such as political, judicial and religious, its cultural and scientific basis also depends on its economic basis and cannot develop independently. Science develops only in the wake of the development of the implements of production and the development of the economic basis of society.

In fact, we know that implements of production, minus man, do not develop automatically. They develop as the result of man's contact with nature and his inquisitive efforts. Their growth and development is accompanied by man's own scientific and technical development. Now the question is which of these two things comes first; whether man first makes a discovery and then implements it to produce the relevant tools and instruments or first the tools come into existence and then man makes the relevant discovery? There is no doubt that the second alternative is correct.

It is obvious that scientific laws and technical principles are discovered in the course of man's inquisitive and experimental contact with nature. If man does not make an inquiry and does not undertake experiments, he cannot discover any scientific or natural law. There cannot be two opinions about that. The only question is whether after inquiry and experiment man first develops scientifically within himself and then creates technical implements or the case is the other way round? There is no doubt that the first alternative is correct.

Moreover, when the word, development is used in respect of man, it is used in its literal and real sense, but when it is used in respect of the technical and productive instruments and tools, it is used in its metaphorical sense. In its real sense development means evolution of a thing from a lower stage to a higher stage. But in the case of its use in its metaphorical sense, change is not in the stage of the same thing, but one thing disappears or is abolished and another thing takes its place.

When a child grows there is an actual development . But if a class teacher is changed and replaced by a better educated and more efficient teacher, of course there is a development in the teaching of the class, but this development is metaphorical only.

In the course of tool making the development of man is real. Man develops mentally in the actual sense. But the development of an industry, such as the development of motor industry which every year brings to the market an improved new model is only metaphorical, for in this case nothing has actually gone from a lower stage to a higher stage. The car of the last year has not been equipped in a better way but actually it has been discarded and replaced by other cars of better design and latest model.

In other words an imperfect unit has been cast away and replaced by a perfect unit. In this case the same unit has not shifted from a stage of imperfection to the stage of perfection. Obviously where there

is a real development and a metaphorical development at the same time, the real development will be primary and the metaphorical development subsidiary.

Furthermore, this is the position in respect of technology. As far as other sciences like medicine, psychology, sociology, philosophy, logic and mathematics are concerned, this kind of one-sided dependence cannot be confirmed. The development of sciences depends on the economic position as much as or even less than the economic position depends on the development of sciences. Criticizing Marxism K. Schmoller says: "No doubt, the material and economic conditions are essential for the attainment of higher culture, but to the same extent it is also undoubtedly true that intellectual and moral development follows an independent course."

If we overlook this one fault in the doctrine of the French philosopher, August Comte that he sums up man's humanity in his 'mind', which is only a part of his capabilities and only one half of his human spirit, August Comte's theory about social development is more valuable than that of Marx. August Comte asserts: " Social phenomena are subject to a strict determinism which operates in the form of an inevitable evolution of human societies – an evolution which is itself governed by the progress of the human mind."

(vi) Historical Materialism Is Self-contradictory

According to historical materialism every idea, every view, every philosophical or scientific theory and every moral system, being a manifestation of special material and economic conditions, depends on the fulfillment of its own particular conditions and has no absolute value. Every idea, every theory and every moral system loses its validity with the passage of its time and a change in the material and economic conditions which made it inevitable. With a change of circumstances every idea and every theory must be replaced by a new idea or a new theory.

Obviously this universal law must also apply to the theory of historical materialism, propounded by some philosophers and sociologists. In case it does not, that would mean that there are some exceptions to this law and that there are some philosophical and scientific laws which operate independently and are not subject to any economic infrastructure. And if it is admitted that this law applies to the theory of historical materialism as well, the validity of this theory would be confined to only a particular period, that is the period during which it appeared, and it will have no value during any previous or subsequent period. Thus in each case this theory stands quashed.

If historical materialism as a philosophical theory does not apply to itself, it is self-contradictory, and if it applies to itself as well as to other theories, its validity is confined to a limited period. The same objection may be raised against dialectic-materialism also, according to which the principles of dynamism and magnetism apply to every thing including the philosophical theories and scientific laws. We have dealt with this point in *The Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism, vol. I & II*. All this shows how baseless is the claim that this world is a spectacle of dialectic materialism and society is a spectacle of

historical materialism

The theory of historical materialism is amenable to other objections also, which we overlook for the present. It is really astonishing how such baseless and unscientific theory could become famous as a scientific theory ! Its reputation appears to be nothing but the outcome of a propaganda trick.

1. This book was first written in French and then translated into Persian by Dr Anwar Khomeh'i. He has exhibited profound wisdom in the treatment of the subject and praiseworthy capacity for evaluation and analysis of the problems involved. He himself has been once an ardent supporter and exponent of this school for many years.

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