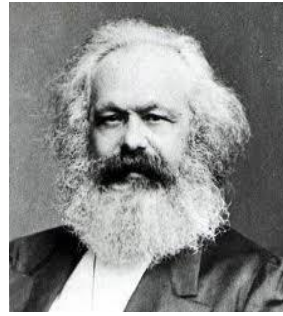


KARL MARX



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4.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit primarily deals with the central ideas of Karl Marx. He is critically acclaimed to be a conflict theorist and by reading his theories we would come to know how conflicting elements inherent in a society bring change. His major theories include-

- Dialectical Materialism
- Genesis and growth of capitalism
- Theory of alienation
- Theory of class struggle

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Karl Heinrich Marx (5 May 1818-14 March 1883) was a German philosopher, economist, sociologist, historian, journalist and revolutionary socialist. Marx's theories about society, economics and politics (collectively known as Marxism) hold that human societies progress through class struggle- a conflict between an ownership class that controls the production and a dispossessed labour class that provides the labour for production. He called capitalism 'the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie' believing it to be run by the wealthy classes for their own benefit, and he predicted that capitalism produced internal tensions which would lead to its self destruction and replacement by a new system- socialism. He argued that class antagonisms under capitalism between the bourgeoisie and proletariat would eventuate in the working class' conquest of political power in the form of a dictatorship of the proletariat and eventually establish a classless society, socialism or communism, a society would be governed by a free association of producers. Along with believing in the inevitability of socialism and communism, Marx actively fought for their implementation, arguing that social theorists and underprivileged people alike should carry out organised revolutionary action to topple capitalism and bring about socio-economic change.

Marx has been described as one of the most influential figures in human history.

Revolutionary socialist governments espousing Marxist concepts took power in a variety of countries in the 20th century, leading to the formation of such socialist states as the Soviet Union in 1922 and the People's Republic of China in 1949. Many labour unions and workers' parties worldwide are influenced

by Marxism, while various theoretical variants, such as Leninism, Stalinism, Trotskyism, and Maoism, were developed from them. Marx is typically cited, with Émile Durkheim and Max Weber, as one of the three principal architects of modern social science.

4.2 Early Life and Works

Karl Marx was born on May 5, 1818 in Trier, a small city situated in the southern part of the German Rhineland. He grew up in a middle class Jewish household, which had converted to Protestantism to escape the social difficulty suffered by Jews in German society. Marx's father played an important role in his life and acted both as a friend and as an advisor. In 1835, at the age of 17, Marx entered the University of Bonn as a law student and shortly thereafter left Bonn for the University of Berlin. It was in Berlin that Marx first read the works of George Hegel whose theoretical writings influenced him throughout his life.

In April of 1841, Marx received his doctorate and published his first work in 1842 in a popular journal called *Deutsche Jahrbucher*. In 1843 Marx moved to Cologne where he studied the works of Ludwig Feuerbach, and during this period his writings were shaped by his criticism of Hegel and Hegel's dominance in German philosophy. In the same year, Marx produced two major writings related to the criticism of Hegel's conception of the state, entitled *A Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* and *On the Jewish Question*. Immediately following these critiques, he began to develop an outline of a theory of history and economic life, which later became one of his most important theoretical contributions.

By May of 1844, Marx drafted some notes related to classical economics and alienated labour entitled *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, which became one of his most famous writings. Later, this led him to the formal study of political economy and economic history. Marx became more involved in economic questions and this began an open criticism of society and eventually a more intense focus on economic problems. In 1845, in collaboration with Engels, published a work entitled *The Holy Family* attacking the Young Hegelians for their philosophic view of society and history. Later, they collaborated a work entitled *The German Ideology* which laid out the conditions for the break with German philosophy and outlined what later became the materialist theory of history, one of Marx's important contributions.

In 1848, Marx and Engels published *The Communist Manifesto*, which had an enormous impact on the workers' movement throughout Europe. Marx formed his lifelong interest in the social conditions of the industrial worker, and by 1859 he had sketched an outline of a work called *A Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*. Over the next ten years, Marx devoted himself to writing and preparing his most famous work entitled *Capital*, which was published in 1867. In the following years, Marx wrote two more volumes of *Capital* and, eighteen years later, he died in London at the age of 65 in 1883.

4.3 DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Philosophy is divided into two camps- idealists and materialists. Many great thinkers of the past were idealists, notably Plato and Hegel. This school of thought looks upon nature and history as a reflection of ideas or spirit. The theory that men and women and every material thing were created by a divine spirit is

a basic concept of idealism. These philosophers believe that ideas govern the development of the material world. History is explained as a history of thought. People's actions are seen as resulting from abstract thoughts, and not from their material needs. Hegel went one step further, being a consistent idealist, and turned thoughts into an independent "Idea" existing outside of the brain and independent of the material world. The later was merely a reflection of this idea.

The Materialist thinkers on the other hand, have maintained that the material world is real and that nature or matter is primary. The mind or ideas are a product of the brain. The brain, and therefore ideas, arose at a certain stage in the development of living matter. The basic corner-stones of Materialism are as follows:

- a. The material world, known to us by our senses and explored by science, is real. The development of the world is due to its own natural laws, without any recourse to the supernatural.
- b. There is only one world, the material one. Thought is a product of matter (the brain) without which there can be no separate ideas. Therefore, minds or ideas cannot exist in isolation apart from matter. General ideas are only reflections of the material world. "To me," wrote Marx, "the idea is nothing else than the material world reflected in the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." And further, "Social being determines consciousness".

The Idealists conceive of consciousness, of thought, as something external, and opposed to matter, to nature. This opposition is something entirely false and artificial. There is a close correlation between the laws of thought and the laws of nature, because the former follow and reflect the latter. Thought cannot derive its categories from itself, but only from the external world. Even the most seemingly abstract thoughts are in fact derived from the observation of the material world. Even an apparently abstract science like pure mathematics has, in the last analysis, been derived from material reality, and is not spun from the brain.

According to Lenin, "this is materialism: matter acting on our sense organs produces sensation. Sensations depend upon the brain, nerves, retina, etc., i.e., matter is primary.

Sensation, thought, consciousness are the supreme product of matter". People are a part of nature, who develops their ideas in interaction with the rest of the world. Mental processes are real enough, but they are not something absolute, outside nature. They should be studied in their material and social circumstances in which they arise. According to Marx, "morality, religion, metaphysics, all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence. They have no history, no development, but men, developing their material intercourses, alter along with this their real existence their thinking and the product of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."

4.3.1 The Origins of Materialism

According to Engels, seventeenth century onwards, England is home to modern capitalism. At this time, the old feudal aristocracy and monarchy were being challenged by the newly emerged middle classes. The

rising bourgeoisie challenged the old ideas and divine concepts that the old order was based upon. Parallel with the rise of the middle classes went on the great revival of science; astronomy, mechanics, physics, anatomy and physiology. And the bourgeoisie for the development of its industrial production required a science which ascertained the physical properties of natural objects and the modes of action of the forces of Nature. Until then, science was under the control of the church.

It was at this time that Francis Bacon (1561-1626) developed his revolutionary ideas of materialism. According to him the senses were infallible and the source of all knowledge. All science was based upon experience, and consisted in subjecting the data to a rational method of investigation; induction, analysis, comparison, observation and experiment. It was, however, left to Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) to continue and develop Bacon's materialism into a system. He realized that ideas and concepts were only a reflection of the material world, and that "it is impossible to separate thought from matter that thinks". Later, the English thinker John Locke (1632-1704) provided proof of this materialism.

The materialist school of philosophy passed from England to France, to be taken up and developed further by Rene Descartes (1596-1650) and his followers. These French materialists did not limit themselves to criticisms of religion, but extended them to all institutions and ideas.

The defect, however, of this materialism from Bacon onwards was its rigid, mechanical interpretation of Nature. The English school of materialist philosophy flourished in the 18th century, when the discoveries of Isaac Newton made "mechanics" the most advanced and important science. A criticism was made of the mechanical approach of the materialists. A German philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), made the first breakthrough in the old mechanistic ways with his discovery that the Earth and the solar system had come into being, and had not existed eternally. The same also applies to geography, geology, plants and animals. This revolutionary idea of Kant was comprehensively developed by another brilliant German thinker, George Hegel (1770-1831). Hegel was a philosophical idealist, believing that the world could be explained as a manifestation or reflection of a "Universal Mind" or "Idea", i.e., some form of God.

Hegel looked upon the world not as an active participant in society and human history, but as a philosopher, contemplating events from afar. He set himself up as a measuring rod of the world, interpreting history according to his prejudices as the history of thought, the world as the world of ideas, an Ideal World. Thus for Hegel, problems and contradictions were posed not in real terms but in terms of thought, and could therefore find their solution only in terms of thought. Instead of contradictions in society being solved by the actions of men and women, by the class struggle, they instead find their solution in the philosopher's head, in the Absolute Idea.

Hegel recognized the errors and shortcomings of the old mechanistic outlook. He also pointed out the inadequacies of formal logic and set about the creation of a new world outlook which could explain the contradictions of change and movement.

Although Hegel rediscovered and analysed the laws of motion and change, his idealism placed everything on its head. It was the struggle and criticism of the Young Hegelians, led by Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872), which tried to correct and place philosophy back on its feet. Yet even Feuerbach was not able to fully purge Hegelianism of its idealist outlook. This work was left to Marx and Engels, who were able to rescue the dialectical method from its mystical shell. Hegelian dialectics were fused with modern materialism to produce the revolutionary understanding of dialectical materialism.

4.3.2 Dialectics

According to Engels, “Dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought.” The dialectical method of thinking already had a long existence before Marx and Engels developed it scientifically as a means of understanding the evolution of human society. The ancient Greeks produced some great dialectical thinkers, including Plato, Zenon and Aristotle. As early as 500 B.C., Heraclitus advanced the idea that “everything is and is not, for everything is in flux, is constantly changing, constantly coming into being and passing away”. And further, “all things flow, all change. It is impossible to enter twice into one and the same stream”. This statement already contains the fundamental conception of dialectics that everything in nature is in a constant state of change, and that this change unfolds through a series of contradictions. According to Engels, “For dialectical philosophy nothing is final, absolute, and sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything: nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher. And dialectical philosophy is nothing more than the mere reflection of this process in the thinking brain.”

The dialectic may be provisionally defined as theory of opposites. Dialectical materialism maintains that source of development of nature and society is ingrained within it and the force that helps in the process of development is never an extraneous factor but very much indigenous in character. The source of change tends to be internal contradiction or struggle between opposites which generates force and attributes for social development.

4.3.3 Hegel's Dialectics

The old dialectical method of reasoning, which had fallen into disuse from medieval times on, was revived in the early 19th century by the great German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel, (1770-1831). Hegel produced the first really comprehensive analysis of the laws of dialectics, which served as a basis upon which Marx and Engels later developed their theory of dialectical materialism.

Hegel combined the two strands of dialectic, i.e., the idea of dialectic as reason and as process. In broad sense, he used the notion of dialectics as a logical process and more narrowly he traced it as the generator or motor of the logical process. Hegel maintained that God or the Absolute comes to self-knowledge through human knowledge. In other words, the categories of human thought are equal to objective forms of being and logic is at the same time the theory about the nature of being. Further, Hegel proposed that

dialectics can be conceived more narrowly as grasping of opposites in their unity. Hegel saw it as a process which brings out what is implicit. In this way, each development is a product of a previous less developed phase. In a way new development is a fulfilment of the previous state. Thus there is always a hidden tension between a form and its process of becoming a new form. Hegel interpreted history as progress in the consciousness of freedom.

Marx was initially influenced by Hegel's philosophy but later on he criticised it due to its idealist nature and propounded his own dialectical materialism. Marx criticised Hegel for deducing the laws of dialectics from consciousness instead of material existence. On this point Marx said that to get a scientifically sound dialectical method one will have to totally invert the logic of Hegelian dialectics. This is what Marx did in his dialectical materialism, where in contradistinction to Hegel, he said it is the matter which is supreme and determinant of consciousness and idea and not vice-versa.

In providing his ideas on dialectical theory, Marx was sometimes adored and sometimes condemned to have turned Hegel upside down. Hegel's dialectic is labelled as dialectic idealism while Marx' dialectic was tagged as dialectical materialism.

4.3.4 Law of Dialectics

Dialectical materialism, evolved by Marx, is diametrically opposite to Hegelian dialectics. It seeks to explain everything in terms of contradictions of matter. Dialectical materialism provides abstract laws for natural and social change. Contrary to metaphysics, it believes that in Nature, things are interconnected, interrelated and determined by each other. It considers

Nature as an integral whole. Dialectical materialism declares that the law of reality is the law of change. There is constant transformation in inorganic nature and human world. There is nothing eternally static. These transformations are not gradual but there is a violent, revolutionary shift. Some of the postulates of dialectical materialism are-

- a.** All phenomena of nature are parts of integrated whole.
- b.** Nature is in a state of continuous movement and change.
- c.** The development process is product of quantitative achievement which stimulates abrupt changes in the society.
- d.** Inherent elements of human society are so well integrated that changes in one brings effect in others.

Marx's dialectical materialism, thus, holds that history is the series of stages based on particular modes of production and characterised by particular type of economic organisation. Because of inherent contradiction, each stage contains within itself the causes of its own destruction. Marx says that in the society economic organisations are determined by modes of production giving birth to relation of production and dialectical stage being the opposite of each other in course of time produces three stages namely:

- a.** Thesis

b. Antithesis

c. Synthesis

The first stage (thesis) cannot continue for a very long time. It is bound to be opposed by its antithesis and the interaction between thesis and antithesis gives birth to third stage (synthesis). It again provides a platform for thesis. To Marx, material world is very much governed by this rule. The dialectical theory, provided by Marx, is governed by certain universal determinism of the society which themselves are governed by certain laws discussed below: -

4.3.4.1 The Law of Unity of Opposites

The law of unity of opposites forms the core of dialectics. This law reveals the sources, the real causes of the eternal motion and development of the material world. It states that there are internal sides, tendencies, forces of an object or phenomena, which are mutually exclusive but at the same time presuppose each other. The inseparable interconnections of these opposite tendencies or contradictions are responsible for the unity of opposites. This contradictoriness of objects and phenomena of the world is of a general, universal nature.

There is no object or phenomenon in the world which could not be divided into opposites. These opposites coexist and one is inconceivable without the other. However, these opposites cannot coexist peacefully in one object: the contradictory, mutually exclusive character of opposites necessarily causes a struggle between them. The old and the new, the emergent and the obsolete must come into conflict. Here it is important to note that the unity of opposites is a necessary condition of the conflict, because it takes place only where opposite sides exist in one object or phenomenon. It is the contradiction, the conflict of opposites that is the main source of development of matter and consciousness. Development is the struggle of these opposites. Here, more often than not one opposite or tendency of the two tries to maintain the status quo and the other counterpart tries to radically change the status quo. This conflict leads to a new situation, object, phenomenon or stage or development, when the mature conditions come into existence after several **quantitative changes**. This radical change is the **qualitative** change. This is how one can find the logical interconnections between these three laws of dialectical materialism.

Each movement takes its source from internal contradictions, so that the emergence of new contradictions gives rise to a new form of movement, while their disappearance gives place to another form of movement for which other contradictions are responsible. The opposites can never become balanced completely. The unity, the equal effect of opposites, is temporary and relative, whereas their conflict is eternal.

4.3.4.2 The Law of Negation of Negations

The term 'negation' was introduced in philosophy by Hegel but with an idealist meaning. Hegel believed that the negation was present in the development of the idea, of thought. Marx criticised Hegel and gave a materialistic interpretation of negation. He showed that negation is an integral part of development of

reality itself. Marx wrote, “In no sphere can one undergo a development without negating one’s previous mode of existence.”

For example, the development of the earth’s crust has undergone a number of geological eras, each new era, arising on the basis of the preceding one, represents a certain negation of the old. In animal world also, each new species of animal, arising on the basis of the old, at the same time represents its negation. The history of society also consists of a chain of negations of the old social order by the new: as Raymond Aron (1965) puts it, capitalism is the negation of feudal society, and socialism would be the negation of capitalism i.e. **negation of negation**. In the realm of knowledge and science also, each new scientific theory negates the old theories, for example, Bohn’s theory of atom negated

Dalton’s molecular theory or Darwin’s theory negated earlier speculations about human evolution.

Negation is not something introduced into an object or phenomenon from outside, but is the result of the object’s or phenomenon’s own, internal development. Objects and phenomena develop on the basis of their own inherent, internal contradictions: they themselves create the conditions for their destruction, for the change into a new, higher quality. Negation is the overcoming of the old through internal contradictions, a result of self-development, self-movement of objects and phenomena. Thus, socialism comes to take the place of capitalism because it resolves the internal contradictions of the capitalist system. Dialectical negation, therefore, consists of the fact that something of a stage which is negated is lost, something becomes part of the new, negating stages (although in a modified form), and something entirely new is added. Thus, recognition of continuity, the connection of the new and the old in development is a feature of the Marxist understanding of negation. But we must bear in mind that the new never takes over the old completely, as it is. It takes from the old only certain elements or aspects. This too, it does not absorb mechanically, but assimilates and transforms them in conformity with its own nature.

For example, after throwing off the colonial yoke, in India we started building a new nation. In this process, we tried to do away with all the vestiges of oppression and the institutions that blocked national development. However, we did retain the educational, legal and bureaucratic structures along with the modern infrastructure of transportation and telecommunication.

Due to these reasons, the succession of developmental stages is progressive. Although no stage is ever completely repeated, some features of earlier stages necessarily recur, although in a different form, at later stages. In this way, the old is destroyed and the new arises. This is only one of the stages of development, not to end, because development does not stop here. Anything new does not remain new forever. While developing, it prepares the prerequisites for the rise of something newer and more progressive. When these prerequisites and conditions ripen, negation again occurs. This is a negation of the negation, that is the negation of that which itself previously overcame the old: this is replacement of the new by something newer. The result of this second negation is again negated, overcome, and so on till infinity. Development

thus appears as a countless number of successive negations, as an endless replacement or overcoming of old by the new.

4.3.4.3 The Law of Transition from Quantity to Quality

In nature, everything is in a state of continuous movement and change. Certain things are arising or coming into existence whereas certain things are developing, and/or decaying and certain things are dying or going out of existence at a given time. This means a state of continuous flux. As said earlier, Marx believed that law of reality is the law of change. Now the question arises regarding the nature of change. What kind of change is this? This law responds to this particular question. According to this law, process of change is not simple or gradual but it is a product of quantitative advances which result in abstract qualitative changes at a particular moment when mature conditions are present. There is never repetition of occurrences. This change is always from lower to higher, simpler to complex, homogeneous to heterogeneous levels of reality.

The appearance or the birth of the new and the death or disappearance of the old can be considered as qualitative changes, philosophically as well as logically. Whereas all other changes, whereby different parts or aspects of an object become rearranged increase or diminish (while the object retains its identity), could be considered as quantitative changes. Hence the dialectical level or law of transition from quantity to quality and vice-versa is that continuous quantitative changes, upon attaining measure, cause abrupt qualitative changes, which in their turn determine the character of the further continuous quantitative changes. To explain and simplify it further, one could say that the qualitative changes may be of two forms: (i) something did not exist, but now it does, and (ii) something existed but now it does not. Quantitative changes, on the other hand, are infinitely diverse, e.g., larger-smaller, more/ less, more often more seldom, faster-slower, warmer-colder, lighter-heavier, worse-better, poorer-riches, and so on.

In fact these quantitative changes occur continuously in every object of Nature and they reach to a limit determined by the nature of each process, after which a leap inevitably occurs. The limit beyond which continuous change is interrupted is described as measure philosophy. This leap is the qualitative change. To give a concrete example, Indian national movement for freedom was continuing for more than a century leading to continuous quantitative changes and when it reached its limit there was a leap at the midnight stroke of the clock on 15th August 1947. India was a free country. Independence from colonialism was the qualitative change. Similarly, the process of ageing in human being does not stop even for a fraction of a second. We keep getting older or in other words we keep undergoing quantitative changes and when we reach the limit prescribed by nature, we meet the qualitative change i.e. death. This example could also be applied to birth of an infant. Quantitative changes keep going on during gestation period right from the day of conception but the qualitative change occurs when the baby breaths air in this world i.e. when it is born.

Hence the dialectical level or law of transition from quantity to quality and vice-versa is that continuous quantitative changes, upon attaining measure, cause abrupt qualitative changes, which in their turn determine the character of the further continuous quantitative changes.

4.3.5 Application of the Laws of Dialectical Materialism

Karl Marx's materialist theory explains the development of human society through a series of economic stages in which individuals are compelled to produce in order to survive and the society is divided into a system of unequal social classes and unequal productive relations. After laying out the basic framework for the materialist theory of history, Marx turned his attention to obtain evidence that would confirm his thesis that the historical development of society tends to be economic in nature. To do this, Marx conceived of history in the form of different types of ownership over the means of production which he thought could be expressed in terms of four separate stages or epochs of social and historical development: primitive, ancient, feudal and capitalist. Each of the stages of historical development had three basic characteristics- a system of production and division of labour, different forms of property ownership, and a system of class relations that emerge from the ownership over the means of production, giving rise to the productive relations.

4.3.5.1 Primitive Society

This was the first, the simplest and the lowest form of mode of production. During the period of this form of mode of production, appearance of improved and also new implements, such as bows and arrows and learning to make a fire were examples of quantitative changes in terms of the laws of dialectical materialism. Even beginning of cultivation and herding were examples of similar type of changes. The extremely low level relations of production were based on cooperation and mutual help due to common, communal ownership of means of production. These relations were conditioned by the fact that people with their primitive tools could only collectively withstand the mighty forces of nature.

Even in primitive society the productive forces developed steadily. The tools were improved and skills were gradually accumulated. The most significant development was the transition to metal tools. With the growth of productivity, the communal structure of society started breaking into families. Private property arose and the family started becoming the owner of the means of production. Here the contradiction between the communal relations of production and the potential forms of exploiting classes led to the qualitative change i.e. transition into ancient mode of production. There was conflict of opposites within the system which led to the negation of primitive-communal system. Consequently, a new stage of slavery appeared. The slavery system can be described as the negation of primitive communal system.

4.3.5.2 Ancient Society

In this form of society, the primitive equality gave way to social inequality and emergence of slave-owning classes and slaves. The forces of production underwent further quantitative changes. In the slave-owning

society, the relations of production were based on the slaveowner's absolute ownership of both the means of production and the slaves themselves and their produce.

In this society, there existed the contradictions between slave-owners and slaves. When the mature conditions were reached the struggle of these contradictions led to the qualitative change i.e. the negation of slave-owning society by way of its transition into feudal society. The conflict of the opposites i.e. the slave-owners and slave culminated into violent slave revolts ultimately effecting the negation. We can say that the feudal system stands as an example of negation of negation. It means that feudal society can be seen as an example of negation of slave-owning society which itself is a negation of primitive communal society.

4.3.5.3 Feudal Society

Slavery system was the first stage where relations of production were based on domination and exploitation by the slave-owner class of the slave class. This was the stage, where the relations of production saw qualitatively fundamental differences compared to previous stage.

In feudal stage, the forces of production saw rapid quantitative change where for the first time inanimate sources of energy such as water and wind were tapped. The development of these productive forces was facilitated by the feudal relations of production. The feudal lords oppressed and exploited their serfs. However, towns began to emerge at this time. Trade, commerce and manufacture began to flourish. Many serfs ran away from the feudal estates to pursue a trade in the growing towns. The conflict of opposites within the feudal system namely, that of landless serfs against feudal lords, reached its maturity. The feudal system declined and its negation was the capitalist system.

4.3.5.4 Capitalist Society

Based on private capitalist ownership, the capitalist relations of production facilitated tremendous growth of the productive forces. With this growth of productive forces, capitalist relations of production ceased to correspond to forces of production in feudal system. The most significant contradiction of the capitalist mode of production is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist form of appropriation.

Production in capitalist society bears a strikingly pronounced social character. Many millions of workers are concentrated at large plants and take part in social production, while the fruits of their labour are appropriated by a small group of owners of the means of production. This is the basic economic contradiction of capitalism. This contradiction or conflict of opposites gives rise to economic crisis and unemployment, causes fierce class battles between the bourgeoisie (the capitalists) and the proletariat (the working class), in other words, quantitative changes. The working class would help bring about a socialist revolution. This revolution would, according to Marx abolish the capitalist production relations and usher in the new qualitative change i.e. the communist socio-economic formation.

The new communist socio-economic formation, as we have seen earlier, passes in its development through two phases, socialism and communism. Socialism does away with private ownership of the means of production. It establishes public ownership of means of production. In such a society the proletariat will jointly own means of production and distribute the produce according to the needs of people. This is the stage of dictatorship of proletariat, which will later on also do away with the state apparatus leading to a stateless society. This stage of the stateless society will be possible in communism, where the dialectic finally unfolds itself, ushering in a social system which would be free of any contradictions within classes. According to the laws of dialectics contradictions will remain as this is the basis of development. Under communism there will be contradiction between Human Being and Nature, as in Primitive-Communism. The basic difference now is that the level of technology will be higher and Nature will be exploited more efficiently.

4.3.6 Marx's Proposition

The dialectical materialism of Marx can be better understood when the conclusions are associated with it by the post-Marxian thinkers. The assumption is that Marxian thinkers insist upon the point that a phenomenon does not exist in isolation but depends upon other surrounding phenomena. To reveal the true nature of any phenomena, we must study the peripheral phenomena which exert their influence on all the phenomena under study because Marx insisted upon the material world. It became a necessity for the post-Marxian thinkers not to study the phenomena with isolation but with the integration of object. Even Marx himself insisted on economic organisation, yet tried to create a networking of this economic organisation with other set up either political, legal or religious institution that contribute for the functioning of society.

Secondly, a phenomenon must be studied, according to Marx, in its dynamic state i.e. in the process of its movement and development. The tradition of movement and development cannot be claimed as an original contribution of Marx because it was very much reflected in the writings of Comte, Durkheim and Weber. To Marx, every society is in a state of continuous flux and the flux affects all the component elements which undergoes change and should be studied in dynamic aspect but not the static state.

Thirdly, when any contradictory elements are marked in the social system, one has to look into its inter-connection with other phenomena. The question of contradiction does not arise when the phenomena is isolated and segregated. The contradiction arises when a particular matter reaches to its stages of development and gives way to a different stage i.e. the original stage along with the existing one to find out the difference in its development.

4.3.7 Critical Remarks

Irrespective of its optimistic stand, the dialectical materialism of Marx is not free from criticism. Though out and out it was supported by post-Marxist scholars, the anti-Marxists and non-Marxists found the inherent difficulties associated in the theory.

- a. The theory of dialectical materialism was never the original contribution of Marx. People like Heraclitus long gave back the idea that the society is an on-going process with a flow of events. Whereas the post-Marxist scholars glorified it as the original contribution of Marx.
- b. The non-Marxists viewed the theory of dialectical materialism as more and more temporary because development cannot be smooth as predicted by Marx. In many instances, development becomes sporadic and retarded. Secondly, Marx talked about only the indigenous factors of development, but development is also affected by extraneous factors. Thirdly, Marx talks of matter as a mechanism of change. But matter itself cannot change without being coupled with individual effort.
- c. Quantitative and qualitative change suggested by Marx from economic perspective has also been challenged. It cannot be suggested that there can be a balance between quality and quantity. When quantity increases, obviously quality decreases. Superior quality is possible when quantity is less.
- d. All societies move through dialectic phase, as suggested by Marx, but the archaic societies did not have witnessed such dialectical development such as India, which moved from feudalism to socialism directly.
- e. Marx suggested, development occurs due to inner contradictions and spontaneously. But without the interventions of individuals, institutional development cannot take place in the society. It is the political organisation that stimulates development and determines its course of action and, therefore, Marx seems to remain mum about the particular subject.

4.4 Capitalism

Marx wrote the first volume of *Capital* between 1855 and 1866 and published it in 1867.

‘Capital’ is a scholarly work grounded in the history of the nineteenth century. It gives a clear picture of the development of industrial capitalism in England in 19th century.

Capitalism is generally considered by scholars to be an economic system that includes private ownership of the means of production, creation of goods or services for profit or income, the accumulation of capital, competitive markets, voluntary exchange, and wage labour. The designation is applied to a variety of historical cases, which vary in time, geography, politics, and culture.

Economists, political economists and historians have taken different perspectives on the analysis of capitalism. Economists usually focus on the degree that government does not have control over markets (laissez-faire economics), and on property rights. Most political economists emphasize private property, power relations, wage labour, class and capitalism's as a unique historical formation. Capitalism is generally viewed as encouraging economic growth. The differing extents to which different markets are free, as well as the rules defining private property, are a matter of politics and policy, and many states have what are termed mixed economies. A number of political ideologies have emerged in support of various types of capitalism, the most prominent being economic liberalism.

The relationship between the state, its formal mechanisms, and capitalist societies has been debated in many fields of social and political theory, with active discussion since the 19th century. Hernando de Soto is a contemporary economist who has argued that an important characteristic of capitalism is the functioning state protection of property rights in a formal property system where ownership and transactions are clearly recorded.

The relationship between democracy and capitalism is a contentious area in theory and popular political movements. The extension of universal adult male suffrage in 19th century Britain occurred along with the development of industrial capitalism, and democracy became widespread at the same time as capitalism, leading many theorists to posit a causal relationship between them—claiming each affects the other. However, in the 20th century, capitalism also accompanied a variety of political formations quite distinct from liberal democracies, including fascist regimes, absolute monarchies, and single-party states.

4.4.1 Defining Capitalism

Capitalism can be defined as a name for a type of economy which emerged during the period of social and industrial development in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It employs industry, commerce, labour and capital to produce commodities for purposes of consumption, the creation of wealth and the advancement of society. Its main aim is to employ workers for purposes of earning their livelihood and for creating wealth and prosperity in society. Capitalist economies emerged in the West from the ruins of feudal society whose economies were agrarian, and where agricultural production was a dominant way of life. Essential to the development of capitalism, therefore, is the transition from feudal to industrial society that began with the growing conflict between the rural economy of the countryside and the economy of the city leading to a separation between production and commerce. With the creation of private property, serfs and agricultural workers became detached from the land as a means of economic livelihood. As land began to be enclosed and the seizure of property became commonplace, serf labour were unable to meet their basic economic needs and were placed at the disposal of the new forces of production, making them a detached landless class who began to move to the emerging industrial centers to sell their labour in search of a livelihood. By this time, town economies had become dominant over the rural economies. In the light of these historical conditions, Marx defined capitalism as a system of social relations set in motion historically during the transition from feudal economies to the economies of industry.

4.4.2 Conditions for the growth of capitalism

While the political economists of the eighteenth century defined capitalism as a market system utilizing land, labour and capital to produce wealth, Marx believed that neither money nor labour or commodities alone were sufficient to define capitalism. Instead, he took the view that for a society to be capitalistic, money and commodities had to be transformed into a system of social relations which he thought could take place only when the following four historical conditions were met.

The first condition that needs to be met, according to Marx, is the forcible separation of the serf labourer from the means of production where they once earned their livelihoods in feudal agriculture. This process largely took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the class contentions of feudal society made capitalist production possible by expelling the worker from the land and by divorcing the worker from the ownership of the means of production. This led to the detached labourer who had nothing to sell but their own labour. As feudal land fell into private hands and was transformed into private property, a labouring class appears who bear all the burdens of society without enjoying any advantage. As the separation of the worker from the means of production became more complete, it became a formal expression of the industrial mode of production itself.

The second condition in capitalist development is that one part of the society owns the means of production. The process of division of labour divided the society into two unequal classes who then entered into the production process. As the means of production fell into private hands, the working class lost all the freedom and autonomy to employ the means of production. The means of production became the private property of a dominant class.

The third condition is the emergence of a system of exchange governing the buying and selling of commodities. A system of exchange refers to a process where commodities are exchanged for a money price. Marx observed that as soon as system of exchange emerged, there was a formal separation between production and commerce and between production and consumption.

Fourth, Marx identified the advent of capitalism with a process he called ‘primitive accumulation’. This is a process in which feudal land was coercively transformed into private property in which the agricultural labourer was coercively divorced from the means of production by the outright appropriation of land based on parliamentary approval.

4.4.3 Concept of Commodity

According to Marx, commodity is a thing whose qualities are capable of satisfying human needs. Examples of commodities are bread, shoes, clothing, gasoline etc. In addition to this, he said, a commodity can be looked at from two very different points of view: its use value and its exchange value.

4.4.3.1 Use value of a commodity

The value of a commodity may be defined as the particular quality of a commodity has to satisfy human material needs. The use value of a commodity, therefore, has several characteristics.

- a. It refers to the specific social functions a commodity performs in meeting human needs, and so, understood in this sense, use value is the ability of a commodity to render a particular service to an individual. For example, a coat provides warmth, bread diminishes hunger and gasoline facilitates transportation.

- b. A commodity has the ability to satisfy only one particular human need or function. For instance, the ability of a coat to render warmth cannot be rendered by another commodity such as bread or coal. The use value of a commodity fills only one particular need, a need which is not transferable to another commodity.
- c. A commodity serves directly as a means of existence, as something that sustains life.

Having defined use value as the particular quality a commodity has to satisfy a human need and to render a service to an individual, it becomes possible to describe feudal economies as societies where use value was largely predominant, and where use value was the major form of value. In feudal societies, everything that was produced was consumed directly, there was no distinction between production and consumption, and whatever was produced did not enter into the medium of exchange to sustain life. In a feudal economy, there was no buying and selling, no markets and no system of exchange. Since production in feudal economies was always predominantly for use, the prevailing form of value was therefore use value, or value in use.

4.4.3.2 Exchange Value of a Commodity

Exchange value only arises in developed economies, and therefore is found only in capitalism. One of the key characteristic of capitalism is that commodities are bought and sold and thus enter into a medium of exchange. It is, therefore, important to note that the system of exchange is historical and does not develop until capitalist society.

Exchange value refers to the ability of specific quantity of another commodity, such as one ton of rice, to be expressed in the value of a specific quantity of another commodity, say a quarter ton of coffee. Here, the value of a quarter ton of coffee is equivalent to the value of a quarter ton of rice. Exchange value, then, is not one commodity exchanging for another, nor one commodity being traded for other, but it is rather quantities of another commodity being expressed in terms of the value of quantities of another commodity, any commodity. In exchange, therefore, value comes to consist in the exchange relation between one commodity and another, as opposed to use value where the value consists in the human service rendered by the commodity.

Marx argued that when exchange value becomes dominant two things happen: first, all social relations between persons take the form of economic transactions in which their social relations are reduced to the utility of exchange alone. Second, Marx thought that when exchange value becomes the only determinant of value and comes to shape all social relations. Problems arise when human beings are considered to be 'valuable' only when they can sell their labour in exchange for a wage, and 'valueless' when they are unable to enter into the medium of exchange and sell their labour on the market for a wage. This is only possible in a society where all value is determined by the ability of things to enter into circulation with other articles of value. Marx believed that this was a major reversal of earlier systems of social relations

in which human beings were valuable in themselves independent of the value conferred by the medium of exchange.

4.4.4 Labour Theory of Value

Marx now turns his attention to the question of what makes a commodity valuable and this takes us directly into the labour theory of value. Prior to Marx's analysis, Adam Smith and David Ricardo had explained the labour theory of value and the theory essentially holds that the value of a commodity is created by labour and that value inheres in a commodity as a thing or substance by virtue of the labour applied to it. However, Marx took two additional steps beyond their work: first, he disagreed with the claim that labour only imparts exchange value to the commodity and that classical political economy had completely overlooked the question of how 'value is transformed into exchange value'. Second, he rejected the view that only one kind of labour is embodied in the commodity and insisted that there are two elements as the 'dual character' and it is precisely in this that his revision of the labour theory of value went beyond the political economy of Smith and Ricardo.

Marx began by putting forward two characteristics of labour: Useful Labour and Abstract Labour.

4.4.4.1 Useful Labour

In order to distinguish between useful and abstract labour, Marx compared two distinct type of commodities, ten yards of linen and one coat. He observed, the coat sells for twice what the linen sells for and, therefore, has twice the exchange value as the linen. Marx pointed out that both the linen and the coat have a use value, in that they satisfy distinct human needs, and that both the linen and the coat require a certain kind of productive activity to bring this utility into existence. This productive activity, said Marx, is determined by a distinct human aim, using a particular means and aiming for a particular result. This he calls 'useful labour' and it may be defined as the capacity of human labour to bring about 'usefulness' or 'utility' in a commodity and produce simple use values.

Marx said, it is absolutely essential to understand that useful labour is qualitatively different. If it were not, linen and coats could not meet in the market as commodities with different exchange values and confront each other as commodities. Marx reasons that since all commodities contain useful labour, use value cannot exist in commodities unless 'the useful labour contained in them is qualitatively different'. Useful labour creates use values. According to Marx, only in capitalist society do the products of useful labour take the form of commodities and only in this case are they subject to buying and selling in the system of exchange.

4.4.4.2 Abstract Labour

Here the question arises, what makes the value of the coat worth twice that of the linen? Coat and linen involves two distinct types of useful labour- tailoring and weaving. Tailoring and weaving are both expenditures of human energy, products of human brains, muscles, nerves, hands, etc. All useful labour shares in common the fact that it is a psychological expenditure of energy which can be measured in units

of labour time. The central shift from a qualitative framework in which labour is useful in that it creates use value or utility, to a quantitative framework in which labour is measured by an expenditure of energy quantified by time, yields what Marx called 'abstract labour'. From this point of view, tailoring and weaving are the quantitative expressions of what was a qualitative distinction in different kinds of useful labour. This is to say, weaving and tailoring are now considered quantitatively as an expenditure of labour time and human energy, rather than qualitatively as the creation of specific use values. In order then to make the transition from useful to abstract labour, an abstraction is made from all the specific qualities, skills and aims of useful labour. The abstraction focuses only on what is comparable in all productive labour which is nothing but an expenditure of energy-labour time.

This measurement is arrived at only in capitalist society, when useful labour is measured in terms of 'a temporal duration of labour time'. Therefore, the coat and the linen have the same use value and are same when considered in the light of qualitative criteria of useful labour. But when measured quantitatively in terms of the duration of labour time, the coat contains twice as much labour time as the linen. While from the standpoint of useful labour, the amount of labour contained in the linen and the coat are the same; from the standpoint of capitalist production, the coat is worth twice as much as the linen precisely because it has quantitatively more labour time in it. It is this abstract labour which has the characteristic of being equal in an expenditure of energy according to the capitalist, and it is abstract labour which forms the exchange value of commodities.

4.4.5 Theory of Value

The value that a commodity has does not exist in the body of the commodity as a substance. Marx maintains that the exchange value of a commodity does not lie in it as a substance, but is rather a product of a social framework and thus lies hidden in what he calls the 'value form'. The origin of value lies not in the laws existing for the exchange of commodities or in the money price obtained for them in the market, but rather in the system of social relations.

4.4.5.1 Relative and Equivalent Form of Value

The value does not lie within the commodity itself and, thus, arises from, what Marx called, its 'relative form'. By the term 'relative', Marx means that the value of a commodity can only be arrived at in 'relation' to other commodities which are seen to have value. No commodity can have value in isolation, by itself. The value of any commodity must be expressed in relation to some other commodity. The value of linen is expressed in terms of the value of the coat. Hence, 'exchange value' emerges only when in capitalist production, the value of one commodity is brought into relation of exchange with another commodity.

Marx stated that value occurs when the relative and equivalent form of value confront each other. Value emerges only when two commodities enter into a comparison with respect to their relative and equivalent forms. The value of linen could not be determined until it is brought into comparison with the value of the coat. Here, the first commodity plays an active role and second commodity plays a passive role. The value

of the first commodity is represented as relative value. The second commodity fulfils the function of equivalent value.

4.4.6 Fetishism of Commodities

In order to trace the origin of the concept of value down to its social interconnections, Marx introduced the concept of 'commodity fetishism', and it is here that the exchange value of a commodity takes on a new meaning. Simply stated, a fetish can be defined as the display of unusual devotion towards a material thing or object in the belief that it has extraordinary abilities and powers. Historically, the term 'fetish' was first used to refer to any object which excites intense feelings of attachment and desire, which focuses or rivets attention to a single thing or object by assuming that the object has powers. The term first emerged in the nineteenth century in the description of totemic religions where certain practices were involved in settings objects apart from other objects because they were thought to have greater religious powers. The worshippers came to believe that they obtained their power from the object and that, because of this, the power of the totem flowed to them, but not the other way round.

The concept of 'commodity fetishism' was used by Marx to indicate the process whereby individuals assign extraordinary value and power to commodities which circulate in the system of exchange, and they come to believe that these commodities have powers to the extent that their relations with them resemble a tribal fetish. Marx used the term 'fetishism' to describe the tendency in capitalism for it to be possible that value appears to be a substance inherent in commodities, and to mark the point historically when we are inclined to assign extraordinary value and power to the things we produce and to find greater value in the relations we have with these objects, making them objects of extreme desire.

Marx believed that commodities are mysterious in nature and possess manifest power. However, this mysterious power does not arise from the use value of the commodity but from the exchange value. Marx argues, the mysterious nature of commodities occurs only in societies whose social relations mistakenly compel people to believe that the value of a commodity is, in fact, a part of its nature. When this happens, we form relations with objects we possess- computers, jewellery etc. - often surpass in intensity the relations we form with other human beings. Eventually, the social relations we form with things become so great that they begin to act as substitutes for social relations with others. Marx believed that once this had become established, all social relations in society are shaped by our social relation to things.

Marx further states, when commodities are believed to have value in and of themselves, we mistakenly assign powers to them which they do not have in reality and the powers we assign to them seem to excite powerful desires and passions in us. To understand this process, Marx looked at religion in tribal societies. In tribal societies, individuals assign magical powers to objects because they believed these powers grew out of the object themselves, and as such became fetish objects of religious devotion and desire. According to Marx, objects themselves do not possess any power, and he thought that the hidden source of this power was the individual's active relation to the object. This relation was shaped by the system of social relations

in which their beliefs were imbedded and with which they thus tend to form religious relations with objects. Marx thought that the same process takes place in capitalist societies in which individuals confer extraordinary powers and capacities to commodities, and the name he gives to this process is commodity fetishism. Marx believed that it is only at this stage in the history of social development that, as articles of exchange, the products of labour acquire a socially uniform objectivity as values. From this perspective, commodity fetishism is historically determined in that it arises only in societies to the extent that they create the desire to be owned and confer prestige on those who possess them. Possession of commodities becomes the sole aim and object of social life, and when individuals feel valuable only so long as their social relations are based on the possession of these commodities.

4.4.7 Theory of Surplus Value

To understand surplus value, we must understand the twin concept of necessary labour and surplus labour. Necessary labour refers to the time in the work day it takes for the worker to produce in wage the cost of his or her own maintenance. Marx reasoned that if the workday is eight hours, it takes approximately four hours of labour to produce the cost of maintaining the worker in food, fuel, rent and clothing. Surplus labour, on the other hand, refers to the part of the working day in which the worker creates during this part of the day belongs to the capitalist alone, not to the labourer.

Marx stated that the labourer is paid only for one part of the workday- four hours rather than eight hours. According to Marx, the first four hours is the cost of their wages since it is clear that with these wages workers are only able to maintain themselves in food, rent and clothing and never get beyond the point of making ends meet. The next four hours is the ‘unpaid part’ of the workday, and this constitutes the ‘surplus’ labour which produces the value for the capitalist but not the worker. In surplus labour, workers expend their labour, but this creates no value for them. Instead, they create surplus value which, for the capitalist has all the charms of something created out of nothing. This part of the working day Marx called ‘surplus labour time’ and to the labour expended during this time is ‘surplus value’.

Surplus value has four central attributes: (a) it is the value created by the surplus labour of the worker; (b) it is unpaid and therefore creates value for the capitalist but not for the worker; (c) it presents a deception since it claims to be paid labour; (d) it is the recognized form of overwork and thus goes to the heart of the exploitation of the worker in that the worker is not paid for the value that is created by their surplus labour.

4.4.8 Primitive Accumulation

Primitive accumulation is a concept used by Marx to understand the coercive forces that were at work during the period of accumulation when capitalism came into being. He thought that this accumulation was the original event leading to the development of capitalism, and he thought that the form of accumulation was primitive because it pinpointed the early crude stages by which capitalist production accumulates masses of labour in order to produce. Whereas Smith and Ricardo had largely thought that

this was a peaceful process, Marx argued that in fact it took the form of violent expropriation, conquest and private enrichment.

The process revealed a pattern of forced accumulation that had divorced the peasant serf from the means of subsistence and had separated them from the conditions of ownership over their own labour. Over the period, the means of production becomes the capital and the serf labourer had become a wage labourer.

According to Marx, the creation of free labour was essential to the development of capitalism, and he believed that the precise focal point for the emergence of the free labour was the battle of accumulation taking place between landholders on the one hand, and agricultural labourers on the other. This is a process which operates two transformations at the same time: first, the means of subsistence is transformed into private property which is subsequently turned into capital; and second, the serf labourer is divorced from the means of production and transformed into a wage labourer.

It was Marx's contention that in order for capitalism to be possible, labour must be free in the sense of being subject to buying and selling so that it can be purchased as a commodity on the market. But in order for this to take place two essential conditions must be met. First, the possessor of labour power must be in the condition of being divorced from the means of production, and as a result must necessarily be compelled to sell their labour in the market in order to live. Second, at the same time that the labourer is free to dispose of their labour for a wage, they must also be forced or compelled to sell their labour in order to live. This very precise condition of being able to freely dispose of their own labour on the market, and also be forced to sell it, is called 'free labour' and is fundamental to capitalism.

4.4.9 Division of Labour

The division of labour, Marx stated, developed throughout the period of the nineteenth century with the development and progress of manufacturing and industry. According to Marx, the division of labour led to a particular sort of cooperation which he called 'complex cooperation'. Complex cooperation occurred when the skills formerly embedded in the worker became a function of the process of the division of labour itself.

Marx makes a distinction between simple cooperation and complex cooperation. Simple cooperation may be defined as a situation of production in which one capitalist employs a number of craftsmen who all perform the same work, for example making carriages. Each craftsman makes the entire commodity from beginning to end and performs the series of operations necessary to produce the entire commodity. Complex cooperation, on the other hand, occurs when each individual performs operations which are disconnected and isolated from one another and carried on side by side. Each operation is assigned a separate craftsman and the commodity is produced by the combined action of the co-operators, but no single craftsman produces the commodity themselves. In this case, according to Marx, the commodity has gone from being a product of the individual craftsman to becoming the social product of the individual craftsman to becoming the social product of the union of craftsmen, each of whom performs only one

operation. The development of the division of labour, said Marx, presides over the breakdown of handicraft skills and the decomposition of handicrafts into different and partial operations. Labour as such becomes transformed into a 'lifelong partial function'.

4.4.10 Marxist Critique of Capitalism

Capitalism has been the subject of criticism from many perspectives during its history. Criticisms range from people who disagree with the principles of capitalism in its entirety, to those who disagree with particular outcomes of capitalism. Among those wishing to replace capitalism with a different method of production and social organization, a distinction can be made between those believing that capitalism can only be overcome with revolution (e.g., revolutionary socialism) and those believing that structural change can come slowly through political reforms to capitalism (e.g., classic social democracy).

Karl Marx saw capitalism as a progressive historical stage that would eventually stagnate due to internal contradictions and be followed by socialism. Marxists define capital as "a social, economic relation" between people (rather than between people and things). In this sense they seek to abolish capital. They believe that private ownership of the means of production enriches capitalists (owners of capital) at the expense of workers. In brief, they argue that the owners of the means of production exploit the workforce. In Karl Marx's view, the dynamic of capital would eventually impoverish the working class and thereby create the social conditions for a revolution. Private ownership over the means of production and distribution is seen as creating a dependence of non-owning classes on the ruling class, and ultimately as a source of restriction of human freedom.

Marxists have offered various related lines of argument claiming that capitalism is a contradiction-laden system characterized by recurring crises that have a tendency towards increasing severity. They have argued that this tendency of the system to unravel, combined with a socialization process that links workers in a worldwide market, create the objective conditions for revolutionary change. Capitalism is seen as just one stage in the evolution of the economic system.

Normative Marxism advocates for a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism that would lead to socialism, before eventually transforming into communism after class antagonisms and the state cease to exist. Marxism influenced social democratic and labour parties as well as some moderate democratic socialists, who seek change through existing democratic channels instead of revolution, and believe that capitalism should be regulated rather than abolished.

4.5 ALIENATION

The term alienation first came into use during the nineteenth and twentieth century to describe a state of disruption and change taking place in the human labour process and system of social relations as a result of the development of modern society. It was first used as a philosophical concept in the nineteenth century by Georg Hegel, who employed the term to describe the struggle for self-realisation that took place in the wider historical world. Following Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach and Marx were among the first to give

systematic expression to the concept of alienation, and it is their work which constitutes the starting place for a full blown theory of alienation. Marx first outlined his theory of alienation in a work entitled “The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts”, which were written in 1844. To Marx, history of mankind is not only the history of class struggle but also increasing alienation of man from the society. When the society goes on changing, the economic needs of the people increases. The fulfilment of needs demands diversification of economic activity and alienation sources when there is any distinction in the existing relationship among the human beings. The relation between human being, according to Marx, is determined by two things- (a) forces of production, and (b) Relations of production.

Forces of production refers to techniques of production, while the relations of production refers to two types of relationships- (a) relationship between employee themselves, and (b) relationship between employer and employee. Alienation starts when the relation, particularly the vertical relation between the employee and the employer, comes to a saturation point.

Alienation refers to a state where the human relationship is under acute strain. It refers to a state where man gets strained from the process of production and there is a development of withdrawal symptom in individual. Particularly, Marx says, in a capitalist order man's own creation does not give adequate pleasure. When the product and process of production become unfavourable to him, there starts alienation.

Alienation is basically a problem of labourer class. To Marx, in the capitalist economic order, when the labour is dominated or governed by his or her own creation that gives birth to alienation. The products created by the labour class strengthen the capitalist class. Here, his own creation him as alien power. The labourer does not derive any pleasure from his creation, instead, he gets pain. The entire production process is away from the labourer. There is an objectification of his own creation. The subjective apprehension which provides the aesthetic approval to the producer does not exist anymore. In the capitalist order, quality is surpassed by quantity. The producer is no longer qualitatively conscious, but his competence is estimated in terms of quantity which gives him a strong set back and creates alienation in him. Here, the essence determines the existence question of survival of proletariat class. Survival itself depends on his essence. The better he sells, the better is his survival. The better is his labour power, the better he gets accommodated in the labour class in capitalist order.

In the capitalist order, an illusory relationship develops between the product and the producer, where the producer has absolutely no claim over the product. Though the producer is the key element or the master mind behind the product, it is completely appropriated by the capitalist class who dominate and determine the market. The surplus value is even appropriated by the capitalist class and the labour class is disappointed.

4.5.1 Causes of Alienation

The following are the causes of alienation:

Firstly, in the capitalist order, there is always over-specialisation because it is a mechanical order of production. The labourer becomes the cog of the machines. They cannot achieve any motive according to their own choice in the product. All these create labour super imposition on him. No longer is production the sweet will, desire and choice of the labourer and this creates alienation in him.

Secondly, division of labour, according to Marx, has a prominent role in generating alienation. It seems that when the process of production is diversified, there is division of labour among the labourers. Different labourers are allotted with different tasks and they repeatedly have to perform the same task from time to time. All these promote monotony and boredom in the labourers and frustration is manifested through alienation.

Thirdly, when there is division of labour, no producer has the absolute claim over the product and it has a combination of labour input of several labourers. Therefore, any appreciation for the product does not claim the talent for single producer and this dismisses the producer and creates alienation.

Fourthly, surplus value that is being created by the capitalist society also contributes for generating alienation. In the capitalist society, the surplus value is created by the capitalists by exploiting the labour force. The labour force resents it and gets alienated from the process of production. In simple language, the surplus value is created by the labourers through the labour power but appropriated by the capitalist class. This naturally frustrates the labour class because their sweat and blood sustain and strengthens the capitalists and they get alienated from production process.

Fifthly, the very management pattern of capitalist society also creates alienation. In the capitalist society, the producer class is the labourer but the labourer has no voice and choice in determining the amounts to be produced, the design to be developed or the capital to be invested. All the vital decisions are taken by the capitalists and the labourer mechanically contributes his labour, which creates alienation.

Lastly, the interpersonal relationships are totally absent in the capitalist order of production. The relationship between bourgeoisie and proletariats is a relationship of contradiction, which is very much formal in character. This formal contractual relationship immensely contributes for the process of alienation.

4.5.2 Aspects of Alienation

Alienation takes place from four different aspects-

i. From product ii. From process of production iii. From community iv. From one's own self

4.5.2.1 From Product

Alienation occurs from the object or product. He does not have any claim over the production, neither he controls nor monitors the product. He does not decide what he has to produce, how much he has to produce and how he has to market. So he does not develop any love or attachment for the product. In a very mechanical fashion, the labourer produces the product as if the product is outside his ability and mind and thus, alienation from product takes place.

4.5.2.2 From the Process of Production

Process refers to the routine network that takes while producing a product. In the entire process of production, the labourer considers himself as a cog in the process of production. The work seems to be very much mechanical for him because he does not invest any capital and does not decide any course of action. He is reduced to the status of a machine. As he loses his humanly quality, he gets alienated from the process of production.

4.5.2.3 From Community

The relationship in the community seems to be a mechanical type of relationship. The interpersonal touch is totally lost and it is more or less formal and contractual in character. There is a heavy competition and the relationship of labourer with employer is a relationship of antagonism and contradiction. The primary and face-to-face relationship vanishes and this generates frustration and alienation.

4.5.2.4 From One's Own Self

The labourer gets alienated from himself and the estrangement of oneself occurs when he loses the charm of survival. The aspiration and expectation of labourers are lost and the labourer leads a very mechanical life and he gets estranged and alienated from himself.

4.5.3 Post-Marxian Typology

The post-Marxian scholars have taken up this particular issue of alienation and they have interpreted that alienation takes place in the following situations-

4.5.3.1 Alienation from others

Capitalist economic order creates loneliness and creates dissatisfaction in the existing social relations. When the individual comes to distrust his fellowmen as well as the men around him, at that time he becomes alienated from others.

4.5.3.2 Alienation from process

Alienation from process is nothing but alienation from work and in the capitalist society there is absolute absence of job satisfaction and reinforcement. It leads to alienation from work.

4.5.3.3 Alienation from events and structures

This is maintained through powerlessness, distrust, apathy, incomprehensibility of the situations and the incompatibility of wants and choice.

4.5.3.4 Alienation from culture and society

It was later termed as 'deviance'. The labour class gets dissociated from popular culture and societal values. There is a rejection of behavioural norms, which is synonymous with anomie.

4.5.4 Seiman's Typology

Melvin Seiman termed alienation in terms of powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation and self-estrangement.

4.5.4.1 Powerlessness

The major symptom of labour in the capitalist societies is powerlessness. The feeling arises because of the phenomenon of absolute monopoly of the capitalist class over the means of production. In the capitalist economy, the survival of the labourer is tagged with selling capacity of labour power and at the same time corresponding demand for his labour power. In this economy, the labourer is enveloped with an assumption that though he is involved in production yet he remains out of it because the labourer neither has resources nor has a role in the decision making process, in designing of the product, in bargaining and marketing of the product. All these situations provide an impression to the labourer that he is a powerless producer and thus becomes the foundation for alienation.

4.5.4.2 Meaninglessness

In a capitalist economic order, there is always a complexity in social organisation. The rationality of the individual is lost because what determines the process of production is not within the purview of the labourer. The labourer becomes a stranger in his own society i.e. the production unit. This reduces his commitment to the process of production and brings alienation.

4.5.4.3 Normlessness

It refers to a condition where the established principles and needs become out dated for the fulfilment of certain desires. The existing needs are found to be instrumental to achieve the ends set up by the society. In the capitalism, the disequilibrium becomes more and more prominent in character because the means of the labour class i.e. their labour power proves to be insufficient to achieve the goals of the society, the material gain. This creates an imbalance between means and goals. The labourer starts resenting the existing means and thus gives birth to normless condition in the society, which again creates alienation.

4.5.4.4 Isolation

This refers to a condition where the individual is not taken as an integrated whole along with society and culture, rather finds himself as an isolated unit. There is a lack of adjustment between individual and society. Particularly, the individual feels the cultural ethos, prevalent in the society, are not favourable to him rather are exploitative and unfavourable to a great extent. Therefore, he starts confirming to these cultural ethos as norms of society and tries to bring reformation in them through a process of revolution. Revolution is the outcome of resentment which is shown against the existing cultural ethos. In between, the identification of the unfriendly, unfavourable cultural ethos takes place and due to revolution, isolation in labour class also takes place, which again becomes a reason for alienation.

4.5.4.5 Self-Estrangement

At this stage, the process of alienation finds a full-fledged manifestation, where the instinct of survival within the individual gradually decreases and his interest for existentialism is lost. Man becomes extremely pessimistic in character, where he finds no hope for the future. Therefore, at this stage, he tries

to renunciate his interest in the system of production and the process of output and this propels him to delink his relations with his fellow producers which gradually percolate to the social sphere. Then, finally, to the personal sphere. Estrangement has four level- (a) Psychological- here the labourer develops a psyche that he is an unwanted member in the labour process; (b) Economic- here, the labourer gets estranged both from the process and the product and this leads to alienation; (c) Social- here, the labourer gets isolated from fellow beings and the employer; (d) Individual- here, the labourer gets frustrated from himself.

Thus, in the capitalist society Marx says the movement is from absolute integration to isolation.

4.5.5 Criticisms

1. Karl Popper hits upon the isolation concept of Marx. Marx says alienation leads to revolution, but Popper says when alienation is there strong isolation takes place in the labourer class, its integrity is lost, how to launch revolution?
2. According to Melvin Tumin, no capitalist society has ever come to a standstill position, as suggested by Marx. To Marx, due to alienation the process of production comes to a stagnant situation and becomes totally paralysed. But Tumin views that this can never be a situation in any capitalist society because of the availability of surplus labour. When the labourer class becomes alienated, they are replaced by surplus labour and it won't hamper the process of production.
3. The third criticism relates to alienation and anomie. Marx says alienation proceeds anomie, but on the other way round some sociologists like Merton and Durkheim says it is anomie which proceeds alienation because to them the capitalist class does not stick to its norm and at that moment normless condition takes place which signalises anomie and thus anomie is the precondition of alienation.

4.6 Theory of Class Struggle

Marx's theory of class struggle finds its ventilation in the simple statement, "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle". The philosophy of class struggle not only appears as the base upon which Marxian philosophy is erected but stands unique among all other contributions of Marx.

4.6.1 The Class Structure

The word 'class' originated from the Latin term 'classis' which refers to a group called to arms, a division of the people. In the rule of legendary Roman king, Servius Tullius (678-534 B.C.), the Roman society was divided into five classes or orders according to their wealth.

Subsequently, the word 'class' was applied to large groups of people into which human society came to be divided.

Marx recognised class as a unique feature of capitalist societies. This is one reason why he did not analyse the class structure and class relations in other forms of society.

Marx's sociology is, in fact, a sociology of the class struggle. This means one has to understand the Marxian concept of class in order to appreciate Marxian philosophy and thought. Marx has used the term social class throughout his works but explained it only in a fragmented form. The most clear passages on

the concept of class structure can be found in the third volume of his famous work, *Capital* (1894). Under the title of 'Social Classes' Marx distinguished three classes, related to the three sources of income: (a) owners of simple labour power or labourers whose main source of income is labour; (b) owners of capital or capitalists whose main source of income is profit or surplus value; and (c) landowners whose main source of income is ground rent. In this way the class structure of modern capitalist society is composed of three major classes viz., salaried labourers or workers, capitalists and landowners.

At a broader level, society could be divided into two major classes i.e. the 'haves' (owners of land and / or capital) often called as **bourgeoisie** and the 'have-nots' (those who own nothing but their own labour power), often called as proletariat. Marx has tried to even give a concrete definition of social class. According to him 'a social class occupies a fixed place in the process of production'.

4.6.2 Criteria for Determination of Class

A social class has two major criteria: (i) objective criteria (ii) subjective criteria.

i) **Objective Criteria:** People sharing the same relationship to the **means of production** comprise a class. Let us understand it through an example – all labourers have a similar relationship with the landowners. On the other hand, all the landowners, as a class, have a similar relationship with the land and labourers. In this way, labourers on one hand and landowners on the other hand could be seen as classes. However, for Marx, this relationship alone is not sufficient to determine the class. According to him it is not sufficient for class to be 'class in itself' but it should also be class for itself. What does this mean? By 'class in itself' he means the objective criteria of any social class. Obviously, Marx is not simply satisfied with objective criteria above. Hence he equally emphasises upon the other major criteria i.e., "Class for itself" or the subjective criteria. ii) **Subjective Criteria:** Any collectivity or human grouping with a similar relationship would make a category, not a class, if subjective criteria are not included. The members of any one class not only have similar consciousness but they also share a similar consciousness of the fact that they belong to the same class. This similar consciousness of a class serves as the basis for uniting its members for organising social action. Here this similar class consciousness towards acting together for their common interests is what Marx calls – "Class for itself".

In this way, these two criteria together determine a class and class structure in any given society.

4.6.3 Classification of Societies in History and Emergence of Classes

Marx differentiated stages of human history on the basis of their economic regimes or modes of production. He distinguished four major modes of production which he called the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the capitalist. He predicted that all social development will culminate into a stage called communism. Let us simplify this classification of societies or various stages of human history into (i) primitive-communal, (ii) slaveowning, (iii) feudal, (iv) capitalist and (v) communist stages.

i) The Primitive-communal System

The primitive-communal system was the first and the lowest form of organisation of people and it existed for thousands of years. Men and women started using primitive tools like sticks and stones for hunting and food-gathering. Gradually they improved these tools, and learned to make fire, cultivation and animal husbandry. In this system of very low level of **forces of production**, the **relations of production** were based on common ownership of the means of production. Therefore, these relations were based on mutual assistance and cooperation. These relations were conditioned by the fact that people with their primitive implements could only withstand the mighty forces of nature together, collectively.

In such a situation, exploitation of humans by humans did not exist because of two reasons. Firstly, the tools used (namely, means of production) were so simple that they could be reproduced by anyone. These were implements like spear, stick, bow and arrow etc. Hence no person or group of people had the monopoly of ownership over the tools. Secondly, production was at a low-scale. The people existed more or less on a subsistence level. Their production was just sufficient to meet the needs of the people provided everybody worked. Therefore, it was a situation of no master and no servant. All were equal.

Gradually with time, people started perfecting their tools, their craft of producing and surplus production started taking place. This led to private property and primitive equality gave way to social inequality. Thus the first antagonistic classes, slaves and slave owners, appeared.

This is how the development of the forces of production led to the replacement of primitive communal system by slavery.

ii) The Slave-owning Society

In the slave-owning society, primitive tools were perfected and bronze and iron tools replaced the stone and wooden implements. Large-scale agriculture, livestock raising, mining and handicrafts developed. The development of this type of forces of production also changed the relations of production. These relations were based on the slave owner's absolute ownership of both the means of production and the slave and everything they produced. The owner left the slaves only with the bare minimum necessities. In this system, the history of exploitation of humans by humans and the history of class struggle began. The development of productive forces went on and slavery became an impediment to the expansion of social production. Production demanded the constant improvement of implements, higher labour productivity, but the slaves had no interest in this as it would not improve their position. With the passage of time the class conflict between the classes of slave owners and the slaves became acute and it was manifested in slave revolts. These revolts, together with the raids from neighbouring tribes, undermined the foundations of slavery leading to a new stage i.e. feudal system.

iii) The Feudal Society

The progressive development of the productive forces continued under feudalism. People started using inanimate sources of energy, viz., water and wind, besides human labour. The crafts advanced further,

new implements and machines were invented and old ones were improved. The labour of crafts persons was specialised, raising productivity considerably. The development of forces of production led to emergence of feudal relations of production.

These relations were based on the feudal lords' ownership of the serfs or landless peasants. The production relations were relations of domination and subjection, exploitation of the serfs by the feudal lords. Nevertheless, these relations were more progressive than in slavery system, because they made the labourers interested, to some extent, in their labour. The peasants and the artisans could own the implements or small parts of land. These forces of production underwent changes due to new discoveries, increasing demands for consumption caused by population increase and discovery of new markets through colonialism. All this led to the need and growth of mass scale manufacture. This became possible due to advances in technology. This brought the unorganised labourers at one place i.e. the factory. This sparked off already sharpened class conflict leading to peasant revolution against landowners. The new system of production demanded free labourer whereas the serf was tied to the land, therefore, the new forces of production also changed the relations of production culminating into a change in the mode of production from feudalism to capitalism.

iv) Capitalism

Large-scale machine production is the specific feature of the productive forces of capitalism. Huge factories, plants and mines took the place of artisan workshops and manufacturers. Marx and Engels described the capitalist productive forces in the '*Manifesto of the Communist Party*'. "Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground". In a century or two, capitalism accomplished much more in developing the productive forces than had been achieved in all the preceding eras of human history. This vigorous growth of the forces of production was helped by the capitalist relations of production based on private capitalist ownership. Under capitalism, the produces, the **proletariat**, are legally free, being attached neither to the land nor to any particular factory. They are free in the sense that they can go to work for any capitalist, but they are not free from the bourgeois class as a whole. Possessing no means of production, they are compelled to sell their labour power and thereby come under the yoke of exploitation.

Due to this exploitation the relatively free labourers become conscious of their class interest and organise themselves into a working class movement. This working class movement intensified its struggle against the bourgeois class. It begins with bargaining for better wages and working conditions and culminates into an intensified class conflict, which is aimed at overthrowing the capitalist system. Marx said that the capitalist system symbolises the most acute form of inequality, exploitation and class antagonism. This paves the way for a socialist revolution which would lead to a new stage of society i.e. communism.

v) Communism

The word 'communism' originated in the mid-1830s, when it was used by members of the secret revolutionary parties in Paris. It referred to political movement of the working class in capitalist society. It also referred to the form of society which the working class would create as a result of its struggle.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, both terms, socialism and communism, were used interchangeably to describe the working class movement. Marx and Engels also used these terms in a similar fashion.

With the advent of the Third (Communist) International in 1917, the term communism was applied to a form of revolutionary programme for overthrowing capitalism. We can say that the term socialism began to be applied to a more peaceful and constitutional action of long-term changes, while communism referred to a revolutionary action, involving violent forms of changes.

Marx discussed communism as a form of society. In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) he wrote that 'Communism is the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation, and thus the real appropriation of human nature, through and for man'.

4.6.4 Infrastructure and Superstructure

According to Marx, every society has its infrastructure and superstructure. Social relations are defined in terms of material conditions which he calls infrastructure. The economic base of a society forms its infrastructure. Any changes in material conditions also imply corresponding changes in social relations. Forces and relations of production come in the category of infrastructure. Within the superstructure figure the legal, educational and political institutions as well as values, cultural ways of thinking, religion, ideologies and philosophies.

4.6.5 Class and Class Struggle

It is clear that according to Marx the mode of production or economic structure is the base or foundation of society. Any change in this **infrastructure** will cause fundamental changes in the **superstructure** and consequently in a society. The changes in the mode of production are essentially changes in the forces of production and relations of production. In primitive communal stage there was no surplus production and hence it had no inequality and exploitation caused by the private ownership of means of production. The means of production were common property of the community. With the development and improvements in the forces of production there was increased productivity. This caused private ownership of means of production and change in the relations of production. This marked the end of primitive-communal system and thus began the long history of inequality, exploitation and class conflict, coinciding with the emergence of slave-owning society.

In the slave-owning society the class conflict between the slave owners and slaves reached a peak causing a change in the mode of production from slavery to feudalistic mode of production. Marx has said that the

history of hitherto existing society is a history of class struggle. This means that the entire history of society is studded with different phases and periods of class struggle. This history of class struggle begins in the slave-owning society and continues through feudal society where this class struggle is between classes of the feudal lords and the landless agricultural labourers or serfs. Due to change in mode of production and class struggle a new stage of society i.e., capitalism replaces the age-old feudal system. In the capitalistic mode of production, the class antagonism acquires most acute dimensions. The working class movement begins to concretise and reaches its peak. Through a class conflict between the class of capitalists and the class of industrial labourers, the capitalist system is replaced by socialism. This violent change has been termed as revolution by Marx. This marks, according to Marx, the fifth stage of social development.

4.6.6 Class Struggle and Revolution

Marx said that the class antagonism and subsequently the class conflict in the capitalist system will usher in socialism in place of capitalism through a revolution. Here the question arises what is the basis of this antagonism? Marx's answer is that the contradiction between the forces and the relations of production is the basis of this antagonism. The bourgeoisie is constantly creating more powerful means of production. But the relations of production that is, apparently, both the relations of ownership and the distribution of income are not transferred at the same rate. The capitalist mode of production is capable to produce in bulk, but despite this mass production and increase in wealth, majority of the population suffers from poverty and misery. On the other hand, there are a few families who have so much wealth that one could not even count or imagine. These stark and wide disparities create some tiny islands of prosperity in a vast ocean of poverty and misery. The onus of this disparity lies on the unequal, exploitative relations of production which distribute the produce in an unequal manner. This contradiction, according to Marx, will eventually produce a revolutionary crisis. The proletariat, which constitutes and will increasingly constitute the vast majority of the population, will become a class, that is, a social entity aspiring for the seizure of power and transformation of social relations.

Marx asserted that the progress of society meant the succession of victories of one class over the other. He assigned his life to planning a victory for the proletariat. In a way, he became a commander, engaged in a campaign. With his solitary aim of defeating the enemy, Marx stressed on acquiring the knowledge of the history of society and the laws that regulate its organisation. His monumental work, *Das Kapital* (*Capital*, 1861-1879), provided an analysis in which Marx was not concerned with arguments for a class-war. He treated the necessity for such arguments as an unnecessary task. He had no love for emotionalism and humanitarianism and appeal to idealism etc. He conceived of the class conflict on every front and proposed the formation of a political party which would eventually gain victory and be the conquering class.

It was Marx who, for the first time ever, advanced the idea of conflict between classes. Saint Simon wrote about human history as the history of struggles between social classes. In the 1790s Babeuf, a French political agitator, spoke of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Weitling and Blanqui (Babeuf's disciple) developed Babeuf's ideas in the nineteenth century. The French State Socialists worked out the future position and importance of workers in industrial states. In fact, in the eighteenth century many thinkers advanced such doctrines. Marx did the admirable task of sifting all this material and constructed a new set of social analysis. His analysis of class struggle was a unique mix of simple basic principles with down-to-earth details.

According to Marx, the bottom rung of the social stratification is the proletariat. Below it there is no class and therefore emancipation of the proletariat will, in fact, be the emancipation of mankind. Marx accepts the right of the bourgeoisie to fight the final war. But for the proletariat the battle is for its very survival and it has to win.

The revolutions of the proletariat will differ in kind from all past revolutions. All the revolutions of the past were accomplished by minorities for the benefit of minorities. The revolution of the proletariat will be accomplished by the vast majority for the benefit of all. The proletarian revolution will, therefore, mark the end of classes and of the antagonistic character of capitalist society. This would mean that the private ownership of property will be abolished. The proletariat will jointly own means of production and distribute the produce according to the needs of the members of the society. This stage is called the stage of dictatorship of proletariat. This stage will later on convert into a stateless society where the communist system will finally be established in the society. This will also end all kinds of social classes and of all kinds of class conflicts for future. This will also mean de-alienation of the proletariat.

4.7 Critical Remarks on Marx

Following are criticisms that are commonly made.

- i) Too much emphasis is given to the economic factor in explaining social order and change. Culture seemed to be explained solely as derived from the economic "substructure". However, it has a degree of "autonomy"; for example, it is difficult to explain the advent of gay liberation in terms of productive or economic relations.
- ii) Even if you get rid of capitalism you might still have enormous problems of conflict and domination in society. State bureaucracies as well as capitalists can dominate.
- iii) Marx's theory of history is contradicted by the fact that industrialised countries have not moved closer to revolution. The recent revolutions have been in peasant societies, such as China. Capitalist societies seem to have become more secure from threat of revolution throughout the 20th century.
- iv) Anarchists say Marxists fail to grasp the unacceptable dangers in their readiness to take an authoritarian-centralist approach. Marxists are willing to use the authoritarian state to run society after

the revolution and to be ruthless in this. This is extremely dangerous; those in control can't be trusted and are very likely to become an entrenched dictatorship. (E.g., Stalinism.)

- v) Many if not all Anarchists would also reject Marx's theory of how capitalism can or will be replaced, which involves confronting capitalism, class conflict, seizing the state and taking power from the capitalist class, and destroying capitalism, a process which will probably involve violence. However, some anarchists believe the change could come via increasing awareness and disenchantment, the building of alternative communities based on anti-capitalist principles, and thus an increase in the numbers who want to abandon capitalism...especially given that its coming difficulties will probably increasingly reveal its inability to provide for all.
- vi) Marx (and most Marxists today) failed to take ecological sustainability into account. They are strong believers in industrial development and "progress", rising material "living standards" and economic growth. They think that capitalism is responsible for all problems and that when it has been eliminated we can release the previously restricted power of industry and eliminate waste to enrich everyone. In other words, Marxism has no concept of "limits to growth". Affluence and economic growth are regarded as desirable and possible. "Dark green" critics insist that a good, post-capitalist society cannot be a growth society, and it cannot have high per capita levels of resource consumption. Getting rid of capitalism is not enough; there is even bigger problem, set by the commitment to industrialism, growth and affluence. Marx could not have known that a time would come when we would run into a problem of over-consumption.

4.8 Let's Sum Up

We studied Marx's most philosophically profound contribution of dialectics and social change. There was an introduction to the concept of dialectics followed by the fundamental laws of dialectics and change. This was followed by a discussion of the application of the laws of dialectical materialism in the successive modes of production and consequent social change in society.

We also discussed how capitalism developed through the successive stages of primitive communism, ancient society and feudal society. We also learnt a number of propositions forwarded by Marx which had not only brought polarisation of classes, but also made the commodity assume utmost importance in human life.

we have discussed the concept of class and class conflict in the history of development of society as given by Karl Marx. He defined class in terms of people's relationship to the means of production and their class consciousness. In Marxian terms, the history of society, so far, is the history of class struggle. This means that ever since the social inequality and exploitation started in human history, that is, beginning from slavery system, society has been divided into mutually warring classes of Haves and Have not's. This

successive class conflict and change in mode of production has led to change in the stages of society from slavery to feudalistic and feudalistic to capitalistic system. The final social revolution would transform the capitalistic system into communist system where there would be no more classes, social inequality and class conflict. In other words, there will be dealienation of the proletariat.

4.9 Key Words

- i) **Bourgeoisie-** The class of capitalists who, in all developed countries, are now almost exclusively in possession of all the means of consumption and of all the raw materials and instruments (machines, factories necessary for their production (Engels in *Principles of Communism*, 1827).
- ii) **Capitalist Mode of Production-** Refers to a production system where the owners of means of production, capitalists, extract surplus labour from the proletariats in the form of profits.
- iii) **Capitalists -** The ruling class in capitalism who control the means of production.
- iv) **Class-** When people share the same relationship to the means of production and also share the similar consciousness regarding their common interest, they constitute a class.
- v) **Class-conflict-** When two classes having basic antagonism of class interests struggle or clash in order to safeguard their class interests then it is called class conflict.
- vi) **Class Consciousness-** Awareness of the objective class position vis-à-vis others and an awareness of its historic role in the transformation of society.
- vii) **Feudal Mode of Production-** Refers to a production system where the lords appropriate surplus labour from the serfs in the form of rent.
- viii) **Forces of Production-** Refers to the material technical aspect of production as well as the corresponding labour power and its competencies required in the production process.
- ix) **Infrastructure** According to Marx, the materialistic structure or economic structure is the foundation or base of society. In other words, it is also called the infrastructure. The superstructure of society rests on it. Infrastructure includes mode of production and hence forces of production and relations of production.
- x) **Mode of Production-** A mode of production is the relationship between the relations of production and the forces of production. Modes of production can be distinguished from one another by different relationships between the forces and relations of production. xi) **Proletariat-** These people are also known as 'Have-nots' and these are the people who do not own any means of production except their own labour power. Hence all the landless peasants or agricultural labourers in feudal societies and industrial workers in capitalist societies are the proletariat.
- xii) **Relations of Production-** Refer to social relationships that arise directly out of the process of production. These social relationships include the relationships between the owners and non-owners of the means of production. These relationships decide and even determine the control and the capacity to possess the product.
- xiii) **Revolution-** It is the sudden, total and radical change in society brought in by the matured conditions of class conflict.
- xiv) **Superstructure-** All social, political and cultural institutions of societies excepting economic institutions constitute the superstructure of a society.