

## KARL MARX (1818 – 1883)

Karl Marx was born in Trier city of Germany in 1818. He attained higher education from Berlin University. During his time capitalism was at its peak and condition of laborers was pathetic. Karl Marx was critical of capitalist society and exposed working class exploitation.

### **Literary Contributions**

In 1844, he wrote a book, 'Economic and philosophic manuscripts.' In this book we are acquainted with idea of **young Marx**. In 1848, he wrote '**The Communist Manifesto**' in which he expressed his concern about working class exploitation and called for revolution to overthrow capitalism. Marx has called upon the working class of the world to unite. In 1867, he gave his theory '**Surplus value**' of labour in his book 'Das Kapital.' He criticized revised Marxism in his work 'Critique of Gotha programme' and expressed the need for '**dictatorship of proletariat**.'

### **Sources of Thought**

According to Laski, Marx found socialism in state of chaos and propounded **scientific socialism**.

- Marx's methodology is dialectical which he borrowed from Hegel. Dialectical method implies that matter undergoes evolution through process of **thesis and anti-thesis**. Marx was influenced by **French Revolution** and so he believed that any change can be brought by revolution. He wrote, 'The Civil War in France.' He also inspired by socialism of France.
- Marx's analysis of property is influenced from Proudhon's book 'The philosophy of poverty' in which he said that property theft. Marx wrote Poverty of Philosophy.
- Marx's theory of surplus value is his 'economic determinism' which states that value of anything is determined by **value of labour** involved in producing it. This theory was influenced by classical economic thinkers of **England**.

He modified classical economic thinking by combining his concept of **theory of surplus value** with his **subsistence theory**. He believed that labourers receive wage which is essential for their livelihood. They never receive value of their **working hours**. Surplus value is in fact appropriated by the capitalist class in form of surplus labour. It is for this reason he asked laborers to overthrow capitalism. He was the first thinker who made economic interpretation of history, and asked the working class i.e. proletariat to replace existing capitalist system. He made detailed and critical analysis of **capitalism**.

### **Scientific Socialism**

Utopian socialist try to obtain economic equality in society but their consideration is moral. They ruled out the conflict existence society. For them human life should be free from jealousy in equality and hatred. They thought that capitalist in the industrial society corrupted good human nature. Therefore, they were against the capitalism.

Marx wrote **communist manifesto** and said that **Robert Owen, St. Simon and Charles Fourier** were **utopian socialist**. They could not tell about systemic causes of exploitation and abolishing of disparity. Therefore it was utopia-

- Marx believes in economic interpretation of history.
- Economic interpretation implies **mode of production** and **relation of production**. Unlike Hegel's idealism, Marx's approach of analyzing Society on the basis of means of production can be considered as **empirical approach**. For e.g. production under feudalism was done with hands whereas under capitalist system production is done by machines.
- Marx analyzed capitalism of 19<sup>th</sup> century. He believed that working class is exploited by capitalist class in the form of surplus labour. According to Marx, the intrinsic flaw in a capitalist economy is due to concept of 'private property', and this gives an opportunity of communist revolution for establishing classless and stateless society.
- Marx exposed intrinsic flaw in capitalist mode of production. Since workers are denied of their 'value' of work which is appropriated by this capitalist, this creates a situation of excessive production but no buyers.
- Marx is scientific thinker because he analyzed history through economic interpretation. He predicted overthrowing of capitalism and establishment of communism after revolution. According to him, the major reason for class conflict is due to conflict between means of production and relation of production.
- Marx is a materialist and his concept of dialectical materialism he doesn't believe in any **divine power** and considers **religion as an opium** and obstacle in development of class consciousness.

## Utopian

- Marx determined communism as ultimate goal, which appears romantic then scientific.
- Marx's communism is a romantic idea. Stratification of society is unscientific and oversimplistic because neither capitalist nor feudal society is confined in two classes.
- His analysis of history into five stages is based on pre-conceived notion and thus unscientific. Therefore Karl Popper finds intrinsic flaw in his analysis.
- There are two dimensions of Marxist thought. **Scientific** as well as **moralistic**. Moralistic ideas of Marx are more important than his scientific thought. The central theme of Marx's thinking is to create egalitarian society which is free from any exploitation.

## Dialectical materialism

Dialectical refers to the method of development or progress. Materialism denotes that matter is the basic element of universe. Development of Society and History is based on his dialectical method. Since Marx is materialist therefore, says that religion is an opium. He never believes in change through democratic means. He said that the basic element of universe is matter but it cannot be understood through physics. Society and history is always in stage of movement. It is not static hence dialectical method is suitable for study history and society.

Marx's concept of dialectical materialism represents **philosophical basis** of Marxism. Marx is a materialistic thinker. Marx borrowed dialectical method from **Hegel** but he says that '**idea**' is not a **substance of development** but '**matter**.' Matter includes forces of production, '**matter**' undergoes through dialectical process because of inherent contradiction until highest stage of development comes into existence. Dialectical development believe in contradiction therefore capitalism is a thesis, dictatorship of proletariat is antithesis and communism is synthesis. Marxist materialism is different from **Hobbes**. Hobbes argued that motion comes from **outside in the matter**. But Marx said that **motion is inherent** in the matter. Matter implies economics factors which pushes the progress of history and society.

Contrary to idealism, which regards the world as embodiment of an absolute idea, Marx materialism holds that the world is by very nature 'material.' The world develops in accordance to laws of movement of matter. Contrary to 'idea' which asserts that only our mind really exists, the Marxist materialistic philosophy holds that 'matter' is an objective reality existing outside and independent of our mind. For Marx, the key idea is not **history of philosophy** but **history of economic production**.

### Features:

- That synthesis as negation of negation.
- According to Marx, the process of dialectical materialism undergoes three of processes of **thesis**, anti-thesis and **synthesis**.
- Synthesis combines better element of both thesis and anti-thesis. Base of development comes from contradiction. Every object produces opposite thing. It is known as antithesis.
- Dialectical materialism denotes that God or any divine power is not driving the development of history. Material factors determine the development. Sabine also said that democracy is not mechanism of development in Marx.

### Criticism

Basic assumption of Marx is that motion lies in the matter. Matter moves automatically, then how matter will not move in the communist society. There is **inherent contradiction** in Marx's thought he says matter is under **constant motion** which makes society and history move forward. He believes that communism will be perfect community which means matter will **no longer move forward**.

### ASIATIC MODE OF PRODUCTION

Marx says that motion lies in matter. History and society develop through the forces of production which is material. But ironically this method of development it only applied for European societies. It is not applicable for Asiatic Societies. Marx said Asiatic societies are static however European societies are moving forward. He said that Colonialism will push forward Asiatic society towards capitalist societies. Colonialism is external force for bringing about movement in Asiatic society. Therefore, Marxian analysis of Marxian analysis is Eurocentric. Dr. Ambedkar, Ram Manohar Lohiya rejected the Marxian analysis of Indian society. Although Lenin did not accept the idea of Asiatic society of Marx. Lenin said that colonialism will never

brought about capitalism in Asiatic society. Colonialism is exploitative for the Asiatic society and it is harming the communist revolution in Europe too.

### Criticism of Feurbach

- Marx says that the materialism of Feurbach is **contemplative**. Feurbach says that idea and matter are separate. He says that material life determines everything. He speaks like a scholar of physics who believes in the primacy of matter. On the other hand Marx analyses materialism with the help of historical and social conditions. Marx says that relation between matter and **consciousness is dialectical**.
- Consciousness is embodied in human life. Human beings are different from the **animals because the life** of human being is given by the consciousness. It is not only **sensual activity** like animal. Consciousness and ideas of human being is reflected through **human activity**. For Marx values are equal important apart from the material world. Therefore, materialism of Marx is unique which synthesises consciousness. Human beings are natural and they are dependant on nature for fulfilment of physical needs. But they are also able to control nature. Because of their consciousness they created a **new artificial world**. It is result of human consciousness. Therefore relation between matter and **material life** and consciousness **is not causal like Feurbach**.

### Historical materialism-

Modern liberal thinking neglected the importance of tradition and history, culture traditions and community. Marx undertook **economic interpretation** of history. **Hegel** was **first western** scholar who tried to study state and government through history. Marx was the first scholar who tried to study **economic history**. It is known as historical materialism. He analyzed capitalist mode of production exposed its shortcomings.

Marx has applied principle of dialectical materialism to understand historical materialism. Unlike dialectical materialism, which represents philosophical basis of Marxism, historical materialism represents its scientific basis.

In order to understand Marx's concept of historical materialism, we first need to analyze **mode of production**. There are two components of production: (a) **mode of production** (tool, equipment) (b) **relation of production** which involves relation between class conflict between mode of production and relation of production shapes the history. This is why Marx observed **"the history of all existing society is history of class struggle"**.

Marx's concept historical materialism is **progressive** in nature where present stage of history is better than the previous one. For e.g. capitalism is better than feudalism. Although exploitation continues in every phase of history. Capitalism is the most advanced stage of history but exploitation becomes institutionalize. Marx's interpretation of history is **evolutionary**. Final phase history is communism. Thus it is **deterministic** too.

**1. Primitive communism:-** The first phase of historical development of society is primitive communism. At this stage, means of production was at primitive stage. Economic resources was controlled by **community**, there was no concept of economic inequality, **private property** and no need for state. Marx's concept of primitive communism was taken by Engels from Lewis Morgan's work '**Ancient Society**'.

2. **Slavery:-** Humans harnessed farming and domesticating techniques this stage, the concept of '**private property**' emerged **slaves** became means of production masters. In this phase prisoners of war were made **slaves** instead of being killed. This led to division of society into master and slave with emergence of class exploitation. State and government were established /state/government became an instrument of exploitation.
3. **Feudalism:** - At this stage, there were lord and peasant. Although 'master' of slavery system became 'Lord' in feudal system, exploitation continued with change in means of production. Land was owned by feuds, labouring was done by serfs and surplus was appropriated by the landlord. Land becomes means of production. The feudal chiefs were appointed by the kings who fulfilled his economic and security interest. Society became divided between haves (who owned means of production) and have not (who do not own means of production).
4. **Capitalism:** - Capital becomes new **means of production**. Capitalism led to emergence of new social class i.e. capitalist class (Bourgeois) and (the proletariat) working class. He believed that this transition was more progressive than the preceding one. Concept of **democracy, rights and liberty emerged** at this stage, but the exploitation of the working class continued. New means of Transportation and communication developed.

Marx believed that concept of liberty and democracy fulfills interest of capitalist class only. The development in mode of production under capitalist system benefited only capitalist class. Class consciousness will emerge in the capitalism.

5. **Communist society:** - Marx, argued communism will emerge after overthrowing capitalism by working class. Communist society will be stateless, classless, just and equal society.

People in communist society will work **according to their capacity** and receive according to need. Class and state automatically withers away. No need of religion and ideology in communist society.

Division of labour comes to an end. A person becomes engineers in morning. Same person can engage in hunting in evening. Entire community owns means of production. People in communist society will work according to their **capacity** and receiving according to **need**. With abolishing of private property, class and state automatically wither away. No need of religious and ideology in communist society. Human being no longer becomes a member of class. Human being becomes truly **social**. Thus communist society is democratic fraternity develops due to economic equality.

## **Class Struggle (Social Stratification)**

Class contraction cannot be solved democratically or peacefully. Marx believes that every stage of history society is divided into two classes, 'haves' and 'have not' for example, master and slave; patrician and Plebeian, lord and serf. This division of society into classes is known as principle of **social stratification**. His stratification of society is not based on any religious, caste, sex or nation-state considerations. Relation between class is full of conflict.

Under capitalist society, there is Proletariat class (who sell their labour to sustain their lives) and Bourgeois (owns means of production). According to Marx, any change can be brought about only through revolution. History moves through class struggle.

Reconciliation or Harmony is not possible between two classes. Relations between two classes are exploitative. Marx did not divide society in classes, but explained about class divided society. His objective is to put an end of class division in society.

## Revolution

Society was already divided in class but class consciousness emerges during capitalism. **Class consciousness** is essential for revolution. It is generated by **material** conditions of society. Urban-industrial society created by capitalism promotes class-consciousness. Marx admitted that seeds of **destruction** of capitalism **lies within itself**. Seed of destruction is proletariat or, working class. While living in urban centers they develop class-consciousness economic conditions of working class is same. Capitalism promotes more production, but consumption is less due to less purchasing power of proletariat. Workers are fired from job in absence of production.

Since most of the industries are set up in cities, there will be increase in consciousness of people in cities. And will unite them for common cause of over-throwing of capitalism. The development of new **means of communication** will generate awareness in other parts of the world. Because of further decline in demand. Factory are shut down workers come to know that, they are exploited everywhere. New means of transportation and communication spread the message among workers. Finally bring about revolution.

This revolution would bring final emancipation to mankind. It will bring proletariat class to power. All means of production will come under social ownership. This is why Marx urges **'all the workers to unite** as they have **nothing to lose but their chain**. (Communist manifesto)

## Economic Determinism

Nature of economy (**base**) determines nature of state, religion and ideology (superstructure). He never tried to analyze superstructure because it is determined by (base) of economy. It is comprised of **mode of production** and **relation of production**. Marx and Engels developed materialistic conception of history to explain the law of human development.

Marx believed that capitalist class creates state in order to maintain their hold on means of production. Under communism, there is common ownership over means of production, with stateless and classless society. He believed that division of society into two classes is due to emergence of concept of 'private property' under capitalist system. Capitalist class makes religion which distorts class consciousness. Religion is like an opium. People make an imagination of haven in order to forget then present misery in the society. Ideology is also utilized by the capitalist to sustain their exploitation. Marx says that ideology is false consciousness.

Liberty, rights and democracy is merely an ideology. Marx says that he is scientific and does not believe in ideology. Ideology is needed in class divided society. Marx rejected Hegelian idea that Consciousness Determine Social condition. 'Economic determinism' of Marx is known as **political economy**. He believed that social conditions determines and shapes consciousness. For Marx social conditions means economic to conditions. He believed that primary needs to human being are material or economic and they indulge in productive activities by fulfilling their economic needs.

Critics call Marx's **'Economic Determinism Theory'** as 'Economic Reductionism Theory.' Economic reduction means. Economy is the only factor which shapes society and state.

Economic determinism implies that, economy is a primary factor. Marx never neglected others factors. It is unjustified to say Marx as an **economic reductionist**. He is economic determinist.

**Capitalist state is an artificial institution, institution, class machines:-** State is neither an ‘**natural institution**’ or an ‘**ethical institution**’ or ‘**organic**’. He believed that state is an **artificial device** to fulfill interest of capitalist class at the cost of exploitation of the working class. Marx argued that in primitive communist stage, state did not exist as there was no concept of ‘private property.’ Thus, society was not divided into classes. Marx says that state in an **executive agency of Bourgeoisie**. For Marx, state is instrument of exploitation of Bourgeoisie class. He called state as an instrument of oppression and embodiment of injustice. Marx refuted Hegel, who projected state is the march of God on earth.

### **Dictatorship of Proletariat**

Earlier Marx predicted for arrival of communism after demise of capitalism. But due to experience of Paris commune. He admitted the importance of a transitional phase of history, namely dictatorship of proletariat. Dictatorship denotes existence of class in society.

Marx gave the concept of ‘**dictatorship of proletariat**’ represent proletariat rule or rule by working class. By analyzing the French Revolution, Marx came to conclusion that capitalist class is always antagonistic towards proletariat class. He believes that establishment of proletariat’s class rule is inevitable. Under ‘dictatorship of proletariat’, classless and stateless society will be established. People will work according to **their capacity** and they receive according to their **work**. State will perform the following functions for socializing means of production:-

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purpose.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralisation of credit in the hands of the state by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.
6. Centralisation of the means of transport in the hands of the State.
7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.
8. Equal liability of all to labour. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
9. Combination of agriculture and industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equitable distribution of the population over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children’s factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production.

### **MARXISM, SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM**

Marx said that Marxism is different from socialism democracy. Because, socialist were Advocating for democratic transition towards socialism. Marxism is also different from

anarchism. Dictatorship of proletariat is distinguishing feature of Marxism which lacks in anarchism.

In this book, '**Critique of Gotha programmes**' Marx has tried to distinguish **Marxism from socialism and anarchism**. Socialist advocated about **democratic transition** towards capitalism. Marx says that dictatorship is necessary in class divided society. **Anarchist** claims that they want to abolish state. Anarchist never accepted state for transitional phase too.

**Sabine** criticizes Marx. He argued that best part of Marx is visible, while he attacks over capitalism. He could not provide any **positive and solid solution**. He mentions only few lines, while describing dictatorship of proletariat and communism.

## Analysis of capitalism

Marx analyzed capitalism in his work '**Das Kapital**'. He attacked over capitalism as it leads to emergence of **commodity Fetishism**. **Commodity** implies exchange values. And **Fetishism** refers a sense of accomplishment without use of values. Slaves were considered as commodity. And labour power becomes commodity in the age of capitalism. Marx makes distinction between **use value and exchange value**. Every object has its own use value. Cloth is essential for its utility of human being. It is known as **use value**. But value which is **determined by market** is considered as **exchange value**. Capitalism always promote **exchange value**. It increases community Fetishism means commodity becomes valuable in itself, without its utility. Everyone wants get and more commodity. Love and Craze towards commodity becomes primary. It undermines human values. Machines and labour are two crucial factors for production. Capitalist gives **only subsistence** value to labourers than the actual value of their labours. Surplus value is appropriated by the Bourgeoisie.

According to Marx and Engels, one who owns economic power, holds political power. He is first thinker who has said that **economic factors determine politics**. He believes that **knowledge of forces of production** is more important than knowledge about state, religion and ideology. Marx believed that state is monopolized by bourgeoisie class. There is constant conflict between bourgeoisie class and proletariat class.

Marx believes that destruction of **capitalism is inevitable**. In capitalist system, there is competition among capitalist for sake of profit. **Monopolization of property** in the hands of few capitalists. And economic conditions of proletariat class become miserable. This leads to closure of industries and laying of labourers.

## Young Marx and old Marx

**McClelland** said that ideas of young Marx and old Marx are in continuity. **Althusser** disagreed with McClelland. Althusser said that real Marx is **adult marks** who is revolutionary, scientific materialistic and positivistic there is epistemological break between young Marx and old Marx.

- For young Marx, individual is more important than class and society.
- Freedom and democracy is more important.
- Marx is young Humanistic but old Marx is scientific.



- Young Marx discusses the psychological impact of capitalism.

## Alienation

Alienation means **losing freedom** when human being becomes **like object**. Alienation means when individuals or human beings are separated from society, productive activities and more over from control over himself. Marx said that in capitalist from of economy, human beings are alienated from the world, which is created and made by human beings. Idea of young Marx is drawn from **philosophic and Economic manuscript** (1844). Popularly known as **Paris Manuscripts**. He pointed out about uniqueness of human being. He said that **capacity to labour** is specific quality of Human being. They reflect their creativity though labour.

Human being enjoy, while **doing labour**. Human beings are different from animals. Animals do something only for fulfilling their physical need. Act of Humans is conscious. Human being never engaged in a work for fulfilling merely physical need. In capitalist economy labours are working for taking care of their bodily need. Workers lost enjoyment in their work. Work becomes compulsion. It creates alienation in human being.

## Stages of Alienation

1. **Production:** - It is based on division of labour, competition and compulsory labour. Alienation starts from productive forces itself. Role of individual workers minimised.
2. **Society:** - Capitalism creates atomistic society where individuals become self-centric fraternity lost due cut throat competition.
3. **Environment:** - Marx speaks like Rousseau and says that ‘Go back to nature’, which means human beings should live social life with enjoyment and creativity.
4. **Alienation from himself:-** The extreme form of alienation is alienation from himself. Where human being become like an object and behave like machine.

In young age, Marx described about alienation but he couldn't tell measures for ending alienation and these measures were propounded by Marx in his adult age. He believes that man wants to end his alienation he should get himself liberated not only from religion and God but also from-entire structure of alienation, i.e. capitalism, which according to him was real cause of alienation. Capitalism destroys individual's freedom and dehumanizes him. Marx defines **freedom as end of necessity**. Capitalism promotes compulsion. End of necessity refers, human being will choose the work according to their wish.

Marx further argued that, there are two types of world. Natural as well as social world social or artificial world is

created by labours. They are feeling alienation in world, which is created by themselves. Marx is **romantic** and **humanistic** in young age. He is more **subjective** and psychological in young age.

Young Marx	Adult Marx
1. Humanist	1. Scientific
2. Consciousness, Psychology	2. Economic determinist, Positivistic
3. Democracy	3. Dictatorship of Proletariat
4. Individual	4. Class

## Relevance

- a) Marx says forms of exploitation changes, but exploitation continues. Capitalism is under stress since 2008, economic recession. Anti-Globalization movement is becoming powerful.
- b) The ideas of young Marx written in 1844 'Paris manuscripts' is more humanitarian and democratic than merely scientific. Thus Marx humanist and democratic.
- c) The idea of **neo-Marxist** is more **democratic and humanitarian**. Neo- Marxist **Herbert's** Marcuse believes that women, students, minorities and deprived sections of society can also be included into **modern proletariat** class. Who too are victims of exploitation under capitalism.
- d) After disintegration of USSR, it was assumed that Marxism will become irrelevant. **Francis Fukuyama** in, his work the end of **history and The Last Man** said that Marxism came to an end after disintegration of USSR. It is wrong to believe that Marxism became irrelevant with disintegration of USSR. Communism ended because of Stalinism and not because of Marxism.
- e) In the age of globalization, Marxist thinkers exposed exploitation of developing countries by developed ones. Robert Cox said about ongoing exploitation under the veil of globalization.