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Keywords

Adam Smith, Karl Marx, human development concepts

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO ADAM SMITH AND KARL MARX

by Ratan Lal Basu

Introduction

Among Western great thinkers, Adam Smith and Karl Marx have their specific views regarding human development in the true sense of the term (Basu 2005, 2005a). Smith's views in this regard have been expounded in his book, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, first published in 1759, seventeen years before the publication of his well-known *Wealth of Nations*. Smith divided human sentiments into two distinct categories, viz. nobler and baser sentiments. According to him baser sentiments are at the root of both material progress and the miseries and injustice associated with it. These sentiments become the dominant force in the high tide of material progress. Although he could not suggest any practicable solution of this trade-off between material progress and human development, he indicated clearly that human development should consist in inculcating the nobler human sentiments and restraining the baser ones.

Concepts of human development according to the Marxian world outlook has its roots in Marx's early work, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript*, and later developed in his major works, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) (jointly with F. Engels), *Thesis on Feuerbach*, *Poverty of Philosophy* and various writings of Engels. According to Marx, degeneration of human values is a direct consequence of material progress (the apex of which is full-fledged capitalism) and the solution also lies in material progress (post-capitalistic). He identified six major factors (viz. private property, exchange, division of labour, competition, family and the State), which are responsible for poverty, inequality, exploitation and all other forms of degeneration of human values that accompany material progress. True human development is a process (to begin from the stage of Socialism brought about by overthrowing the capitalistic state by proletarian revolution) that leads to Communism where the above five factors wither away. This article will elaborate the views of these two great thinkers on human development.

SMITHIAN VIEWS

The Smithian concept of human development comes from an empirical foundation – rather than the more speculative Marxist formulations - and bears the imprint of a distinctive Scottish philosophical school, which also includes Adam Smith's contemporaries such as David Hume, George Turnbull, Thomas Reid, and Adam Ferguson. Smith, however, is a class by himself by dint of his coherent and holistic approach. Smith clearly pinpoints how some basic human sentiments, existing in human mind in embryonic form, assume distinctive forms with the high tide of material progress. These basic sentiments, however, are not being created by material progress. Material progress simply makes them increasingly poignant and palpable and they assume their most conspicuous form at the stage of commercial or capitalistic development.

According to Adam Smith human sentiments or affections may be divided into two major categories: Selfish Sentiments and Benevolent Sentiments. To quote:

The great division of our affections is into the selfish and the benevolent (Smith 1759, VII.III.4).

As regards the sentiments belonging to the selfish category, Smith argues that they are the root forces bringing about our spectacular material progress and, at the same time, are the basic causes of all injustice, exploitation and other forms of degeneration of our moral and ethical values:

It is this which first prompted them to cultivate the ground, to build houses, to found cities and commonwealths, and to invent and improve all the sciences and arts which ennoble and embellish human life, which have entirely changed the whole face of the globe, have turned the rude forests of nature into agreeable and fertile plains, and made the trackless and barren ocean a new fund of subsistence and the great highroad of communication to the different nations of the earth (ibid. IV.I.10);

However, at the same time, this ". . . is the cause of all the tumult and bustle, all the rapine and injustice which avarice and ambition have introduced into this world" (ibid. I.III.23).

Smith also explains why material achievement in the form of economic power is conceived as the best server of an individual's self interest in spite of all personal hazards associated with it. He detects a propensity to praise and idolize the successful and rich, irrespective of the immorality by which their fame and fortune might have been gained. Moreover, people tend to have a drive for acquiring these assets themselves:

This disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition, though necessary both to establish and to maintain the distinction of ranks and the order of society, is, at the same time, the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments. That wealth and greatness are often regarded with the respect and admiration which are due only to wisdom and virtue; and that the contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often most unjustly bestowed upon poverty and weakness, has been the complaint of moralists in all ages (ibid. I.III.28)

We desire both to be respectable and to be respected. We dread both to be contemptible and to be condemned. But, upon coming into the world, we soon find that wisdom and virtue are by no means the sole objects of respect; nor vice and folly, of contempt. We frequently see the respectful attentions of the world more strongly directed towards the rich and the great, than towards the wise and the virtuous. We see frequently the vices and follies of the powerful much less despised than the poverty and weakness of the innocent. To deserve, to acquire, and to enjoy the respect and admiration of mankind, are the great objects of ambition and emulation. Two different roads are presented to us, equally leading to the attainment of this so much desired object; the one, by the study of wisdom and the practice of virtue; the other, by the acquisition of wealth and greatness. Two different characters are presented to our emulation; the one, of proud ambition and ostentatious avidity. The other, of humble modesty and equitable justice. . . . They are the wise and the virtuous chiefly, a select, though, I am afraid, but a small party, who are the real and steady admirers of wisdom and virtue. The great mob of mankind are the admirers and worshippers, and, what may seem more extraordinary, most frequently the disinterested admirers and worshippers, of wealth and greatness. (Ibid. I.III.29)

In equal degrees of merit there is scarce any man who does not respect more the rich and the great, than the poor and the humble. With most men the presumption and vanity of the former are much more admired, than the real and solid merit of the latter. (Ibid. I.III.31)

Smith, however, only keeps his analysis confined to explaining how some basic designs in the human subconscious cause the drive towards acquisition of wealth and economic power, resulting in all the maladies associated with it, but also he seeks a way out of this undesirable situation. Through empirical observation, Smith discovers the countervailing forces, which have also been endowed by nature to the human thought process. Along with the inherent greed and drive towards acquiring opulence and power at any cost accentuated by the disposition to admire the rich by most people, nature also endows humans with benevolent sentiments, the disposition to do justice to others. And here lies the basic Smithian approach to human development. According to Adam Smith, human development lies in inculcating the benevolent sentiments and forming the general rules of morality from them so as to restrain the selfish sentiments.

Nature, however, has not left this weakness, which is of so much importance, altogether without a remedy; nor has she abandoned us entirely to the delusions of self-love. Our continual observations upon the conduct of others, insensibly lead us to form to ourselves certain general rules concerning

what is fit and proper either to be done or to be avoided. . . . Other actions, on the contrary, call forth our approbation, and we hear everybody around us express the same favourable opinion concerning them. Everybody is eager to honour and reward them. They excite all those sentiments for which we have by nature the strongest desire; the love, the gratitude, the admiration of mankind. We become ambitious of performing the like; and thus naturally lay down to ourselves a rule of another kind, that every opportunity of acting in this manner is carefully to be sought after (ibid. III.I.94).

It is thus that the general rules of morality are formed. They are ultimately founded upon experience of what, in particular instances, our moral faculties, our natural sense of merit and propriety, approve, or disapprove of. We do not originally approve or condemn particular actions; because, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconsistent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding from experience, that all actions of a certain kind, or circumstanced in a certain manner, are approved or disapproved of (Ibid. III.I.95).

When these general rules, indeed, have been formed, when they are universally acknowledged and established, by the concurring sentiments of mankind, we frequently appeal to them as to the standards of judgment, in debating concerning the degree of praise or blame that is due to certain actions of a complicated and dubious nature." (Ibid. III.I.98)

And according to Smith we could arrive at the condition of an ideal society through framing general rules of morality from isolated individual realizations and making them enforceable through the power of the State:

As the violation of justice is what men will never submit to from one another, the public magistrate is under the necessity of employing the power of the commonwealth to enforce the practice of this virtue (ibid. VII.IV.36).

And thus we are led to the belief of a future state, not only by the weaknesses, by the hopes and fears of human nature, but by the noblest and best principles which belong to it, by the love of virtue, and by the abhorrence of vice and injustice" (ibid. III.I.109)

But Smith never indulges in utopian or speculative concepts. Empirical observations revealed that with the opportunity of material progress (as opened up by capitalism), the benevolent sentiments were being swept away by selfish sentiments. The main problem lies with the power that actually controls the state machinery and thereby the laws enacted by the state. Smith did not fail to observe that most of the time state laws were enacted to serve the interests of businessmen, who were by no means moral: "From the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth too, the English legislature has been peculiarly attentive to the interests of commerce and manufactures." (Smith, 1977, Book 3, Ch 4, p.517).

From the above analysis, Adam Smith may appear somewhat pessimistic. But so far as human development is concerned, a clear idea of its meaning from Smithian standpoint is obtained. It is, however, a different question to predict the actual outcome of this approach. It is not at all utopian or unrealistic to hope that continuous endeavour towards human development in the Smithian sense would make common people more and more conscious of their power. This is likely to exert increasing pressure on the State (especially, in a democratic framework) to abide by the laws of morality rather than the interests of the well-to-do class. Here lies Adam Smith's extraordinary contribution to the concept of human development.

MARXIAN VIEWS

Human development in the Marxian schemata requires the overthrow of the existing capitalistic state through revolution by the proletarian labour class, and formation of a socialistic state under the dictatorship of the proletariat. This Socialist state is, however, a transitory mechanism to facilitate the process of gradual progress towards classless, stateless Communism. For Marx the degeneration of human values began with the emergence of private property (at a certain stage of development of

productive forces to enable production of surplus by the working majority to be appropriated by the property owner idle minority); and associated division of labour, exchange, competition, family and, above all, the State as the protector of property rights of the wealthy minority against the working majority. Several works of Marx and Engels elaborate the Marxian approach towards human development, focusing on issues such as private property, the division of labour and exchange, the family, competition, the role of the state, transition and class struggle.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

With private property being viewed as the basic problem, communists have sought to abolish it. The *Primeval Sin* (the downfall of Adam and Eve from the Eden of Primitive Communism) begins from the emergence of 'alienated' or 'estranged' labour (for details, see Marx 1974, pp. 61-74) which is both cause and consequence of private property. To quote:

True, it is as a result of the *movement of private property* that we have obtained the concept of *alienated labour (of alienated life)* in political economy. But on analysis of this concept it becomes clear that though private property appears to be the reason, the cause of alienated labour, it is rather its consequence (Marx 1974, p.72).

Only at the culmination of the development of private property does this, its secret, appear again, namely, that on the one hand it is the *product* of alienated labour, and that on the other it is the *means* by which labour alienates itself, *the realisation of this alienation* (ibid. p.72).

The corrupting influence of private property on every aspect of human living has been clearly stated by Marx:

Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only *ours* when we have it – when it exists for us as capital, or when it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc., – in short, when it is *used* by us. Although private property itself again conceives all these direct realisations of possession only as *means of life*, and the life which they serve as means is the *life of private property* – labour and conversion into capital.

In the place of *all* physical and mental senses there has therefore come the sheer estrangement of *all* these senses, the sense of having. The human being had to be reduced to this absolute poverty in order that he might yield his inner wealth to the outer world.

The transcendence of private property is therefore the complete *emancipation* of all human senses and qualities, but it is this emancipation precisely because these senses and attributes have become, subjectively and objectively, *human* (ibid. p. 94).

This condition leads to an increase of material objects but also leads to increased subjection and indeed impoverishment: -

Under private property their significance is reversed: every person speculates on creating a *new* need in another, so as to drive him to a fresh sacrifice, to place him in a new dependence and to seduce him into a new mode of *enjoyment* and therefore economic ruin. Each tries to establish over the other an *alien* power, so as thereby to find satisfaction of his own selfish need. The increase in the quantity of objects is therefore accompanied by an extension of the realm of the alien powers to which man is subjected, and every new product represents a new *potentiality* of mutual swindling and mutual plundering. Man becomes ever poorer as man, his need for *money* becomes ever greater if he wants to overpower hostile being. The power of his *money* declines in inverse proportion to the increase in the volume of production: that is, his neediness grows as the *power* of money increases (ibid. p. 101).

So the process of human development, according to Marx, calls for complete abolition of private property:

In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property (Marx and Engels 1975, p. 63).

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of the property that is changed. It loses its class character (ibid. p. 64).

From the relationship of estranged labour to private property it follows further that the emancipation of society from private property, etc., from servitude, is expressed in the *political* form of the *emancipation of the workers*; not that *their* emancipation alone is at stake, but because the emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation – and it contains this, because the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the workers to production, and all relations of servitude are but modifications and consequences of this relation (Marx 1974, p.73)

In order to abolish the *idea* of private property, the *idea* of communism is quite sufficient. It takes *actual* communist action to abolish actual private property. History will lead to it; and this movement, which *in theory* we already know to be a self-transcending movement, will constitute in actual fact a very rough and protracted process. But we must regard it as a real advance to have at the outset gained a consciousness of the limited character as well as of the goal of this historical movement – and a consciousness which reaches out beyond it (ibid. pp. 108-09).

In fact, the abolition of private property is, doubtless, the shortest and most significant way to characterize the revolution in the whole social order which has been made necessary by the development of industry – and for this reason it is rightly advanced by communists as their main demand (Engels 1969, p. 89).

Division of labour, competition, exchange, family and all other corrupting elements of society, according to Marx, have originated from the *Primeval Sin*, viz. Private Property and Estranged Labour:

Just as we have derived the concept of *private property* from the concept of *estranged, alienated* labour by *analysis*, so we can develop every category of political economy with the help of these two factors; and we shall find again in each category, e.g., trade, competition, capital, money, only a *particular* and *developed expression* of these first elements (Marx 1974, p. 73).

This *material*, immediately *perceptible* private property is the material perceptible expression of *estranged human* life. Its movement – production and consumption – is the *perceptible* revelation of the movement of all production until now, i.e., the realisation of the reality of man. Religion, family, state, law, morality, science, art, etc., are only *particular* modes of production, and fall under its general law (ibid. p. 91).

DIVISION OF LABOUR AND EXCHANGE

Marx and Engels describe how division of labour and the exchange mechanism originate from private property:

But, slowly, division of labour crept into this process of production. It undermined the collective nature of production and appropriation, it made appropriation by individuals the largely prevailing rule, and thus gave rise to exchange between individuals... (Engels 1972, p. 171).

The *division of labour* is the economic expression of the *social character of labour* within the estrangement. Or, since *labour* is only an expression of human activity within alienation, of the manifestation of life as the alienation of life, the *division of labour*, too, is therefore nothing else but the *estranged, alienated* positing of human activity as a *real activity of the species* or as *activity of man as a species-being* (Marx 1974, p. 113).

The whole of modern political economy agrees, however, that division of labour and wealth of production, division of labour and accumulation of capital, mutually determine each other; just as it agrees that only private property which is *at liberty* to follow its own course can produce the most useful comprehensive division of labour (ibid. p. 116).

To assert that *division of labour* and *exchange* rest on *private property* is nothing but asserting that *labour* is the essence of private property – an assertion which the political economist cannot prove and which we wish to prove for him. Precisely in the fact that *division of labour* and *exchange* are aspects of

private property lies in the twofold proof, on the one hand that *human* life required *private property* for its realisation, and on the other hand that it now requires the supersession of private property (ibid. p. 117).

Marx and Engels describe clearly the adverse consequences of division of labour and exchange for the human society:

Whilst the division of labour raises the productive power of labour and increases the wealth and refinement of society, it impoverishes the worker and reduces him to a machine (ibid. p. 26-27).

Division of labour and exchange are the two *phenomena* which lead the political economist to boast of the social character of his science, while in the same breath he gives unconscious expression to the contradiction in his science – the motivation of society by unsocial, particular interests (ibid. p. 117).

What characterises the division of labour inside modern society is that it engenders specialised functions, specialists, and with them craft-idiocy (Marx 1966, p. 125).

So division of labour, which is one of the major causes of class division of society, is to be abolished:

The existence of classes originated in the division of labor, and the division of labor, as it has been known up to the present, will completely disappear (Engels 1969, p.93).

Education will enable young people quickly to familiarize themselves with the whole system of production and to pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations. It will, therefore, free them from the one-sided character which the present-day division of labor impresses upon every individual. Communist society will, in this way, make it possible for its members to put their comprehensively developed faculties to full use (ibid. p.94).

FAMILY

Marx considers family to be one of the evils generated from private property relations and evolved through various stages of economic advancement:

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution (Marx and Engels 1975, p. 68).

The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and naturally, can come to no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women (ibid. p. 70).

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial (ibid. p. 70).

According to Marx and Engels, family will perish automatically as soon as private property is abolished:

For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private (ibid. p. 71).

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital (ibid. p. 68).

It will transform the relations between the sexes into a purely private matter which concerns only the persons involved and into which society has no occasion to intervene. It can do this since it does away with private property and educates children on a communal basis, and in this way removes the two bases of traditional marriage – the dependence rooted in private property, of the women on the man,

and of the children on the parents (Engels 1969, p.94).

COMPETITION

The Marxian view holds that competition, another consequence of private property, has been the propelling force as well as the cause of disorder in bourgeois society:

Competition has penetrated all the relationships of our life and completed the reciprocal bondage in which men now hold themselves. Competition is the great mainspring which again and again jerks into activity our ageing and withering social order, or rather disorder; but with each new exertion it also saps a part of this order's waning strength [Marx 1974, p. 177 (Appendix)].

"It must be carefully noted that competition always becomes the more destructive for bourgeois *relations* in proportion as it urges on a feverish creation of new productive forces, that is, of the material conditions of a new society. In this respect at least, the bad side of competition would have its good points (Marx 1966, pp. 130-31).

Marx opines that competition and monopoly are but two sides of the same coin:

In practical life we find not only competition, monopoly and the antagonism between them, but also the synthesis of the two, which is not a formula, but a movement. Monopoly produces competition, competition produces monopoly. Monopolists are made from competition; competitors become monopolists. If the monopolists restrict their mutual competition by means of partial associations, competition increases among the workers; and the more the mass of the proletarians grow as against the monopolists of one nation, the more desperate competition becomes between the monopolists of different nations. The synthesis is of such a character that monopoly can only maintain itself by continually entering into the struggle of competition (*ibid.* p. 132).

Monopoly produces free competition, and the latter, in turn, produces monopoly. Therefore, both must fall, and these difficulties must be resolved through the transcendence of the principle which gives rise to them [Marx 1974, p. 177 (Appendix)].

Abolition of competition is one of the major tasks of the Communists. To quote:

It will, in other words, abolish competition and replace it with association. Moreover, since the management of industry by individuals necessarily implies private property, and since competition is in reality merely the manner and form in which the control of industry by private property owners expresses itself, it follows that private property cannot be separated from competition and the individual management of industry. Private property must, therefore, be abolished and in its place must come the common utilization of all instruments of production and the distribution of all products according to common agreement – in a word, what is called the communal ownership of goods (Engels 1969, p. 89).

THE STATE

According to Marxian view, the State is an institution developed solely to protect the interests of the exploiter minority against that of the exploited majority and to facilitate the process of exploitation:

"The state is, therefore, by no means a power forced on society from without; just as little is it "the reality of the ethical idea," "the image and reality of reason," as Hegel maintains. Rather, it is the product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it becomes necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society that would alleviate the conflict, and keep it within the bounds of "order"; and this power, arisen out of society, but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state (Engels 1972, p. 166).

Because the state arose from the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but because it arose, at the

same time, in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class, and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class (ibid. p. 168).

In most of the historical states, the rights of citizens are, besides, apportioned according to their wealth, thus directly expressing the fact that the state is an organization of the possessing class for its protection against the non-possessing class (ibid. p. 169).

Ultimately, with the end of class antagonism, the necessity of the State would vanish and so the State would also disappear:

The state, then, has not existed from all eternity. There have been societies that did without it, that had no idea of the state and state power. At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the split of society into classes, the state became a necessity owing to this split. We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes not only will have ceased to be a necessity, but will become a positive hindrance to production. They will fall as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage. Along with them the state will inevitably fall. Society, which will reorganize production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers, will put the whole machinery of state where it will then belong: into the museum of antiquities, by the side of the spinning-wheel and the bronze axe (ibid. p.170).

TRANSITION

Human society, according to Marx, would inevitably bring about Communism due to the inherent contradictions, but it may take a very long time. So this process of transition towards the ultimate goal is to be hastened by means of deliberate efforts. Capitalism has already generated the force, viz. the proletariat, which can play a crucial role in accelerating this pace by overthrowing the bourgeois State and establish a Socialistic State under the dictatorship of the proletariat, thereby paving the way towards Communism. The weapon of the proletariat is the same class struggle which has been the driving force of human history ever since the emergence of private property.

CLASS STRUGGLE

Civilization's driving force, in Marxian thought, is class struggle - the relentless war between the exploiters and the exploited. This class struggle would ultimately lead to overthrow of the bourgeois State by the proletariat, bringing about Socialism and ultimately Communism. Thus Marxian human development consists in generating class consciousness of the proletariat and hastening the pace of relentless class struggle by deliberate efforts of the Communist Party. To quote:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. (Marx & Engels 1975)

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes (Marx and Engels 1975, pp. 40-41).

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (ibid. p. 41).

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself" (ibid. p. 50).

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons – the modern working class – the proletarians (ibid. p. 51).

The proletariat is that class in society which lives entirely from the sale of its labor and does not draw

profit from any kind of capital; whose weal and woe, whose life and death, whose sole existence depends on the demand for labor – hence, on the changing state of business, on the vagaries of unbridled competition. The proletariat, or the class of proletarians, is, in a word, the working class of the 19th century (Engels 1969, p. 81).

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed – a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market (Marx and Engels 1975, p. 51).

So the first step is to organize the proletariat under the Communist Party and inspire them to overthrow the Bourgeois State and replace it by a Socialistic State under the advanced detachment of the proletariat. This aspect of the Communist Party is vividly explained in the following excerpt:

The party must be, first of all, the *advanced* detachment of the working class. The party must absorb all the best elements of the working class, their experience, their revolutionary spirit, their selfless devotion to the cause of the proletariat (Stalin 1970, p. 103).

The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialised means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property (Engels 1975, pp. 326-27).

The ultimate goal of Marxian human development is to achieve Communism. This was expected to take a long historical process. To this end the initial steps to be undertaken have been described in detail:

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organise itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all (Marx and Engels 1975, p. 76).

CONCLUSION

A comparison of Smithian and Marxian approaches to human development, as delineated above, clearly shows that the former was based on empirical observations of human behaviour and the latter on some pre-conceived ideas. Smith's ultimate goal was humanitarian and realistic, whereas Marx's ultimate goal was utopian. Adam Smith correctly identified the basic elements inherent in human nature (existing from the very emergence of humans as an intelligent species) which are both the driving force of material progress and at the same time the causes of social maladies (such as exploitation, poverty, inequality, and corruption) associated with material progress.

Various institutions that emerged in the course of material progress (such as wealth, private property, division of labour, exchange, competition, family, and the state) are themselves not responsible for the maladies accompanying them. It is only their misappropriation that causes such problems to arise. Adam Smith points out optimistically that along with the baser aspects of human behaviour, Nature has also endowed humans with some noble or benevolent characteristics. Unfortunately, in the high tide of material progress, the nobler aspects are being subdued by the baser ones. Smithian human development, therefore, lies in the inculcation of these nobler aspects so as to combine them into positive laws enforceable by the State as checks on the manifestations of the baser forces (such as greed, jealousy, and hatred) in the course of material progress. If this could be successfully accomplished, all the institutions – be they private property, family, exchange, or State - would turn

into desirable historical achievements of society.

Karl Marx, on the other hand, starts with some pre-conceived theories and utopian ideas and tries to mould everything to suit his theories. So he attributes all the maladies not to the baser aspects inherent in human nature, but to achievements and developments in course of historical progress of human society, for example, private property, family, exchange, and the state. This sort of dogmatic approach was a *sine qua non* for the existence of Marx as the ideological leader of the working class and initiator of a new history. Occasionally, however, Marx and Engels come down to the real causes of the maladies, for example:

The only wheels which political economy sets in motion are *greed* and the *war amongst the greedy* – *competition* (Marx 1974, p. 62).

General *envy* constituting itself as a power is the disguise in which *greed* re-establishes itself and satisfies itself, only in *another* way. The thought of every piece of private property as such is *at least* turned against *wealthier* private property in the form of envy and the urge to reduce things to a common level, so that this envy and urge even constitute the essence of competition (ibid. p. 88).

With this constitution as its foundation civilization has accomplished things with which the old gentile society was totally unable to cope. But it accomplished them by playing on the most sordid instincts and passions of man, and by developing them at the expense of all his other faculties. Naked greed has been the moving spirit of civilization from the first day of its existence to the present time; wealth, more wealth and wealth again; wealth, not of society, but of this shabby individual was its sole and determining aim (Engels 1972, p. 173).

But these fleeting moments of digression into reality soon dissolve into the preaching of their invented doctrine. The Marxian weapon to overthrow the bourgeois State is the proletariat class, the labouring class forced down to the level of bare subsistence. To quote:

Eventually wages, which have already been reduced to a minimum, must be reduced yet further, to meet the new competition. This then necessarily leads to revolution (Marx 1974, p. 61).

It cannot be denied that the proletariat had a real existence in all the nascent capitalist countries during the time of Marx in the 19th century. But with technological advancement during the 20th century, the scenario changed radically. The size of the proletarian class, 'who had nothing to lose but chains', in the capitalist countries, gradually diminished thanks to technological progress. The relatively better paid labourers of the modern capitalist countries could hardly be inspired to raise arms against the capitalists, unlike their proletarian brethren a century ago. Moreover, class composition in the modern capitalist countries has become extremely complex with the swelling of various grades of the middle class. This has belied the Marxian conviction that under capitalism society would be polarized into two distinct classes: capitalists and labourers.

Because of his myopic vision and a pre-occupation with unsupported doctrines, Marx failed to grasp the world that was to be ushered in by capitalism. This meant that ultimately, in the real world, Marxism degenerated into Leninism and Maoism, aiming at overthrowing the State by organizing the poverty-stricken masses of the feudal and semi-feudal countries. Marx and Engels, however, had dubbed this sort of endeavour as utopian socialism. To quote:

To the crude conditions of capitalist production and the crude class conditions corresponded crude theories. The solution of the social problems, which as yet lay hidden in undeveloped economic conditions, the utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain.It was necessary, then, to discover a new and more perfect system of social order and to impose this upon society from without by propaganda, and, wherever it was possible, by the example of model experiments. These new social systems were foredoomed as utopian; the more completely they were worked out in detail, the more they could not avoid drifting off into pure fantasies (Engels 1975 p. 293).

The utopians, we saw, were utopians because they could be nothing else at a time when capitalist production was as yet so little developed (ibid. p. 303).

Marx claimed that his doctrine was not his invention, but had sprung from the concepts historically developed among the proletariat:

The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes (Marx and Engels *op. cit.* Ch. 2, p. 62).

It may be argued that the depth of knowledge and introspection required to grasp the essence of the Marxian world outlook can hardly be found among the wage-earning class. Thus it is simply a world outlook invented by the speculative faculty of a highly intelligent and well read middleclass intellectual like Karl Marx, who claimed it to be springing from the historical experience of the labouring class. This is not plausible.

Later Marxists were well aware of this and therefore felt the necessity of re-educating the labourers with Marxian theories. To quote:

The Party cannot be a real party if it limits itself to registering what the masses of the working class feel and think, if it drags at the tail of the spontaneous movement, if it is unable to overcome the inertia and the political indifference of the spontaneous movement, if it is unable to rise above the momentary interests of the proletariat, if it is unable to raise the masses to the level of understanding the class interests of the proletariat. The party must stand at the head of the working class; it must see farther than the working class; it must lead the proletariat, and not drag at the tail of the spontaneous movement (Stalin 1970, p. 103).

Examining more closely the ultimate goal of Marx, Communism, in such a stage of human history, there would be no private property, no family, no state, no competition, no division of labour, and no exchange. To quote:

The positive transcendence of *private property*, as the appropriation of *human life*, is therefore the positive transcendence of all estrangement – that is to say, the return of man from religion, family, state, etc., to his *human*, i.e., *social*, existence (Marx 1974, p. 91).

People would lose their individual identity in such a stage and exist only as part of the species, like the trees in a forest. It is just as well that Marxist thinking is no longer so fashionable among the world elites. It represents a deficit in human development. Adam Smith is the better contributor in this respect.

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