

Chapter - II

CHAPTER -II

BASIC TENETS OF MARXIST ETHICS - EMERGENCE OF A NEW HUMANITARIAN MORALITY

Vaiṣṇava Sahajiyās declare to the world abroad :

*“Śuna he mānuṣ bhāi |
Savār upare mānuṣ Satya
Tāhār upare nāi ||”*

(“Listen, O brother men-man is the truth above all truths, — there is nothing above that.”)

This song, ascribed to a renowned Vaiṣṇava poet, Chandidās, tells us that all truth underlying the universe as a whole is contained in man. But here divinity is attributed to man — the realisation of the true nature of man as Kṛṣṇa and that of woman as Rādhā, as the enjoyer (Rasa) and the enjoyed (the object of Rasa, i.e. Rati). The Absolute Reality divides Itself into two, the enjoyer and the enjoyed, the Rasa and the Rati; as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Reality enjoys the eternal love which is superme and purest of all love. When man and woman can realise their true nature as Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā between them, their love transcends all the categories of sensuality. Love is then not human but becomes love divine and 'sahaja' (natural) is the realisation of such an eternal, divine love.

The Bāuls of Bengal have no images, temples, scriptures and Ceremonials, These wandering village singers who beg alms from door to door declare in their songs the divinity of man and express for him an

intense, profound feeling of love. They are not sophisticated men; they live a life of simplicity in the remote rural villages but their songs move our inner spirit, inner depths of our hearts. Their religion is not about the God or a cosmic force but about the God of human personality.

“Humanity is the essence of divinity, - and man becomes God in the strength of his love; man is the highest in the world, for it is only he revels in supreme love. The religion of the Vaiṣṇava Sahajiyās was thus a religion of humanity. The Sahajiyās have no god or God other than man. Even Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are never regarded as deities to be worshipped, - they represent principles to be realised in humanity. Humanity itself is thus viewed from a sublime perspective.”²

(Dr. Sashibhusan Dasgupta, 'Obscure Religious Cults', p 136).

This attitude is depicted in the Sahajiyā song ;

Mānuṣ dever Sār I
Yār prem jagate Pracār II
Jagater Śreṣṭha mānuṣ Yāre bali I
Prem-Prīti-rase mānuṣ Kare Keli II³
 (Sj. S. Song No.27).

(Humanity is the essence of the divinity. It is through love man becomes God. Man who revels in supreme love is the highest in the world.)

or

“Mānuṣ dhara mānuṣ dhara
Deva haite mānuṣ baḍa I”⁴
 (Sadunāth : 'Guru Satya')

(Not God, but man, is the highest truth. One can attain divinity only through man.)

The same tone and spirit we have in Swāmi Vivekānanda when he wrote :

“Man is the highest temple of God, and worship of God through man is therefore the highest ...”⁵

(Swāmi Vivekānanda, Brahmavādin, Dec I, 1897).

One day Tagore Chanced to hear a song from a beggar belonging to the Bāul sect of Bengal — it was simple and was alive with an emotional sincerity. Through his song he (the beggar) worships the 'ideal man', the man of the heart.

*“Temple and mosques obstruct thy path,
and I fail to hear thy call or to move,
When teachers and priest angrily crowd round me.”⁶
(Tāgore : The Religion of Man, Ch. VII. p 69)*

This love song of the mystic Bāul has deeply moved Tāgore. Tāgore himself is a Bāul of Bengal and he sings of an Infinite Supreme Being underlying the whole cosmic process of finite creation. Like the Bāuls of Bengal he does not follow any tradition of ceremony but only believes in love which is the paraśmaṇi (Magic stone) that transmutes by its touch 'greed into sacrifice' and for the sake of this love even gods long to become man. The man is both finite and infinite—the infinite and the finite have embraced each other in the personality of man and in the religion of man. There is an ideal unity and our world-process as a whole is moving towards that ideal end. The realization of the divinity in man is

the ideal realization of truth. It is Tāgore's faith that 'We can never go beyond man in all that we know and feel'. Man is the abode of 'ideal man', the infinite. His religion is the religion of man — this religion of man does not end in God but in man 'who dreamed of his own infinity and majestically worked for all time, defying danger and death'. The realization of the 'ideal man' in man, to overcome the barrier of separateness from the rest of existence, i.e. in the realization of the unity, oneness, 'advaitam' lies the real freedom. Man's sole aim is to achieve ideal perfection which is to be attained by the realization of our deeper relatedness with the Infinite Being. The world process is an eternal process of self-realization through self-manifestation of the Supreme Being. His conception of man and religion, though, may have some striking points of similarity with Hegelian and neo-Hegelian thoughts but his ideas are fundamentally based on the teachings of the upanishads. He was influenced to a great extent by the Vaiṣṇava love poets and Bāuls of Bengal and other mystic poets of Northern India. But this does not minimise his originality. Above all he is a poet, a poet-philosopher. His intuitional realization of the reality, developed in his songs, accompanied with subtle artistic expression, keeps us in a fix as to whether we should eulogise them as the masterpieces of art or as the best expression of his religion of love experiences.

What is unique in man is the development of his consciousness which gradually deepens and widens the realization of the immortal being, the perfect, the eternal. There is divinity in man which is humanity.

*"Mānuṣ gosāmi birāj Kare,
Kyān cinline Sāmānya Jñāne re l"*
(The song is ascribed to Fakircānd).

(In man resides the Lord, why hast thou not Known Him with thy common sense ?')

or as *Lālan Fakir* sings :

"*rūper ghare atal rūp bihāre*

Ceye dekh nā tāre I"⁸

(Changeless beauty resides within this house of the man - it is to be realized there.)

Tagore urges that the individual must express him in disinterested works, in science and philosophy, in literature and arts, in service and worship. Mukti or liberation lies in the realization of the unity of two selves in their realization of oneness. It is only through love that we can have the direct communion with the Divine. It does not soar heavenward, rather it is realized even in this mundane existence amidst the various bondages of life.

"Asamkhyā vandhan - Mājhe Mahānandamay,

Labhiva Muktir Swād I"⁹

(From the poem - 'Mukti' - 'Naivedya Kāvya' - Tagore)

In mukti or liberation we go to the 'City wonderful', the anirvachaniya, the ineffable, the supreme unity of the many in 'One'. One can remain in the world carrying on one's daily vocation, yet one can attain the state of liberation - it is freedom from isolation of self, from the isolation of things. The liberated man enters the realm of the light and knows what freedom really is.

We are alienated from the world of truth when we confine ourselves in the realm of the finite and give undue emphasis upon 'me' and 'mine' and when we allow ourselves of being tossed about 'by the tidal waves of pleasure and pain.' We must have a constant urge to go beyond the world of appearances in which facts as facts are alien to us 'like the mere sounds of foreign music.' It is only through the realization of the ideal unity we enter into the unlimited domain of freedom and we become unalienated. Disunion constitutes alienation and this is overcome in the realization of the ideal unity between man and the 'ideal man'. The unalienated man sings :

*"To him who sinks into the deep, nothing
remains unattained."¹⁰*

(Tagore-The Religion of Man, P 115).

Let us now turn to Marx's concept of man in the following sequel.

Marx was **not** at all interested in the question of divinity as the essence of man; he would dismiss it as a mere religious speculation. His main task was to change the world in which men are enslaved. According to him **everything** about the individual person is determined by the material conditions of his life. Man has an essentially social nature- the real nature of man is the totality of social relations.

The mute **pangs** of the lowly humanity, the injustice of the powerful, the sufferings of the vast majority of men, exploitation of man by man in the name of religion, the cry of the proletariat and the triumph of the bourgeoisie, the **inequity** of the social machine, crashing of the innocent

hearts, the sternly acute problems of the grossly real life-these are the things by which Marx was deeply moved. As a matter of fact, rarely have we seen any one sink so deep in the unfathomable depths of his heart and come out with priceless gems of love and sympathy for the whole of suffering humanity.

"The marxian system," says E. Kamenka, ".....begins with a 'philosophy of man'. It proclaims man to be the pre-supposition and the end of all philosophy, all science and all human activity; for Marx man is the subject in terms of which these latter are to be understood and judged."¹¹(E. Kamenka, *Marxism and Ethics*, Ch.II, P. 15).

Marx was inspired by a young Hegelian, Ludwig Feuerbach, who had declared that God was merely a projection of desires that man found himself powerless to realise and thus that man was the true subject and God the predicate. In the "*Essence of Christianity*" Feuerbach added :

*"There is no other essence which man can think of, dream, imagine, feel, believe in, wish for, love and adore as the 'absolute,' than the essence of human nature itself,"*¹²

(Ludwig Feuerbach, "*Essence of Christianity*," trans, by Marian Evans, New York, 1959, P 270).

Marx applies this Feuerbachianism to his ethical philosophy and makes man the subject, the hero of his moral drama which can not be staged without man as 'Hamlet' cannot be staged with the prince of Denmark left out. Man is at the central point round which moves everything. Those things which enslave man, alienate him, make him means to an end are the main targets of his criticism. For Feuerbach as well as for Marx, man is the sole and absolute standard in terms of which all else to

be judged. And thus Marxism becomes the philosophy of man. As long as man remains sectional, class-bound, dependent on circumstances and economic conditions over which he has no control, he is not truly human and free in the real sense of the term. He cannot be the subject of ethics in the truest sense of the term as long as he is alienated, he is forced to act by the compelling circumstances, he is a prey to the system. His morality is not human morality for it is not a free expression of his humanity but simply his reactions to inhuman conditions of life which ignore his creative nature as a social being destined to become the master of himself and the universe. Truly free man need no rules imposed upon him from outside, no moral exhortations to do his duty—moral responsibility is the outcome of his true being.

“Marx’s condemnation of Capitalism”, Prof. Karl Popper remarks, “is fundamentally a moral condemnation. The system is condemned, for the cruel injustice inherent in it which is combined with full ‘formal’ justice and righteousness. The system is condemned, because by forcing the exploiter to enslave the exploited it robs both of their freedom He hated capitalism, not for its accumulation of wealth, but for its oligarchical character; he hated it because in this system wealth means political power in the sense of power over other men. Labour power is made a commodity; that means that men must sell themselves on the market. Marx hated the system because it resembled slavery.”¹³

(Karl Popper, *Open Society And Its Enemies*, Ch. 22, P 199)

Quoting the French Revolution constitution of 1793, Marx wrote;

“The right of man to freedom is not based on the union of man with man, but on the separation of man from man It leads man to see in

other men not the realisation but the limitation of his own freedom,¹⁴ (K.M.S.W. - P 53).

For him, "man is the world of man, the state, society; man is the highest being for man, that is, with the categorical imperative to overthrow all circumstances in which man is humiliated, enslaved, abandoned and despised". 15 (K.M.S.W. - P 69).

Thus Marxism is a doctrine of human freedom, man's emancipation from all evils along with a vision of the fully social man who makes his own social standard. This man, the social and the rational man, the creative man is the measure of all things.

The concept of man as the subject occupies a central position in the philosophy of Kant. In this '*Critique of Pure Reason*' Kant has shown that to be knowledge the raw materials coming to us direct from the outer world must be worked up, modelled, subsumed under the categories of understanding in the process of being Knowledge. Objects i.e., raw materials must conform the general laws which our understanding prescribes. His fundamental contribution to philosophy lies in the fact that he stresses the activity of the experiencing subject. The human mind is not passive but active — it acts as a law-giver to nature. The laws of thought apply to the world that we know, i.e., the world of phenomena. We know only the phenomenal world which our thought itself has constructed. Even the concept of God was merely one of the regulative ideas of pure reason. In the '*Practical Reason*' he argued that morality presupposes a pure rational will and when we act in accordance with the law as our will prescribes we are no longer bound up within the phenomenal world, we are in direct touch with the noumenal world. We

are emancipated, free; we are no longer under the domination of the phenomenal world, its law of cause and effect or of necessity by which the operations of reason are constrained. We are free and act freely. This will is self-determined, it is not subjected to any laws whatsoever and there is nothing in the world which can be regarded as good without qualification, except the good will' to treat humanity in every case as an end and never as a means.

Marx saw in Kant a revolutionary as representing the French Revolution in respect of ideas. But, later on, he found in Hegel the solution of the problem of the gap between the ideal and the real and he wrote :

"I left behind the idealism which, by the way, I had nourished with that of Kant and Fichte, and come to seek the idea in the real itself"¹⁶ (K.M.S.W. - P9).

This position he arrived at because he attached himself more closely with his radical young Hegelian friends who considered religion as essentially irrational. Marx echoed this sentiment as he wrote :

*"Philosophy makes no secret of it. Prometheus' confession, 'in a word, I detest all the gods', is its own confession, its own slogan against all gods in heaven and earth who do not recognise man's self-consciousness as the highest divinity,"*¹⁷

(K.M.S.W. - P 12).

"Like Prometheus", he wrote, "who stole fire from heaven and began to

build houses and settle on the earth so philosophy which has evolved so as to impinge on the world, turns itself against the world that it finds, so now with the Hegelian Philosophy."¹⁸

And he explains that the philosopher has to go beyond Hegel by employing Hegel's essential principles. In a further note he attacks the proofs of the existence of God as empty tautologies. In reality, Marx goes on to say, these proofs are nothing but the proofs for the existence of an essentially human self-consciousness and logical explications of it."¹⁹ (Karl Marx, Early text, ed. D. McLellan, P 18).

Marx adumbrates the theory of alienation which occupies a central position in the evaluation of Marxian Ethics. Alienation occurs when man falls into servitude to and dependence upon his own powers the institutions and good he has himself created. Alienation is not metaphysical, nor religious but is social and economic. Under the Capitalist system labour is something external and alien to the labourer; he does not work for himself but for the capitalist who owns the product as private property. It may be overcome when man makes all his activities free, gives vent to his inner nature free expression and attains full satisfaction of his needs. Man is alienated from his species life, from other men through the competitive character of the economic system based on private property which forces everyman to live at some one else's expense and which divides man into classes with irreconcilable interestes. Man's creative power, products of his labour, his creations should serve to enrich his personality but with the increase of private property in a capitalist society they are separated, split off from man. They become independent of him and by acquiring an independent status and power they turn back upon man to dominate him

as his master. As the process goes on the man becomes alienated from himself-he becomes isolated, morally neutral, lonely and melancholic. Man is a species being and because of this he is a conscious being but alienated labour reverses this relationship, because man is a conscious being that he makes his life-activity, his essential being, a mere means to his existence. "In tearing away from man the object of his production, estranged labour tears from him his species-life, his real objectivity as a member of the species and transforms his advantage over animals into the dis-advantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken away from him."²⁰ (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 P 69). Consequently, man feels his freedom or at home only in his animal functions but in his human functions he is not free; he no longer feels himself to be anything but an animal. And, therefore, "What is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal".²¹

(Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, P 66).

Rabindranāth Tagore, the poet and dramatist, in his symbolic drama, 'Raktakarabī', adumbrates the phenomenon of alienation in a very subtle and suggestive way when Viśu tells Phāgulāl, another character of the drāmā, that he was a man when he was in his village, but now he becomes a number, simply a number, 69E. Viśu realises : "We are not treated as man here but only as number," He asks Phāgulāl : "What number are you?" Phāgulāl answers in the affirmative; he is also a number now, viz., 47 F and that number is imprinted in the back of his garment he wears. In this Yakṣhapuri (Puri or city of Yakṣha) man are not treated as man, they are treated simply as numbers. No free discussion or Criticism is allowed here everyone doubts everyone, everyone looks at others with

a doubtful glance; utter disbelief prevails everywhere. The king's trusted men known as 'Sardars', chiefs of men, are always watchful and are very competent enough to run the system. Even the king, the yakṣha, does not come out in open though his power is enormous. He separates himself from others and lives a very secluded life behind the Curtain. He is like a giant machine having unbelievable power and energy. But he fears what is open, the free expression of the genial current of the soul. Music he did not love. He loves money, the gold which makes black appear white and foul fair. He wants wealth, capital—his wants are never satisfied and in it he derives immense pleasure. He is a class by himself. He finds in his self-alienation the confirmation of his own enormous power, his own good. On the contrary, the working class, represented by visu and Phāgulāl, feels humiliated — it sees in it its powerlessness to do anything creative and feels the reality of an inhuman existence. In the midst of these Nandini is the ray of the light. She is the symbol of love, real happiness (Sahaja sukha) and sublime beauty. Her love for Ranjan is not trivial, worldly, sensual and transitory; but it is sublime and divine — it is of the nature of the scent of the lotus. It is the spirit calling to spirit. Her love for the beloved Ranjan is like sun-shine — it is full of vitality or p̄rāṇa. She knows no fear as she believes that even death in love is the most covetable death. Nandini's on-the-earth simplicity, her open-mindedness emphasises her unchallenged authority over others. Her power is nil but her authority is enormous and it comes of love. Her love is expressed in her every act and word — it is her very nature, her very being.

'Fetishism' is manifested in the worship of money, gold, in attributing to capital the power to increase of itself in a fanatical reverence towards

symbols of power and wealth. Its roots lie in alienation, in reducing man to the level of a thing or performer of the functions of things. Here in 'Raktakarabī', worship of 'Dhvajā' has been given a great importance by the king and his men who attributed to it a magical power to influence their life.

The king, like his workers, represents the same human self-alienation and in it he feels comfortable, proud and sees in it his might in accumulating wealth or treasures hidden in the womb of the mother earth. But Nandini's love has melted his heart; it has broken the long silence of his soul. He ultimately joins with Nandini in love and breaks his own system by himself. It is a war he fought against himself, against his self-alienation — it is a struggle of his own inner world and in this struggle what is triumphant is love, the love for the humanity. He is now free and emancipated in the company of all. Viśu and Phāgulāl are not alien to him. He is in himself once more. He now recognises himself as a universal, social being in whom the community of workers speaks and acts.

As Rādhākṛishnan puts it : "Mankind is meant to be a unit. Men are not separate like so many grains of sand. We are organically bound into a living unity, which only the spirit of love can energise If the perception of the unity of the human race is dulled, if the awareness of oneness of the moral law is weakened, our nature itself is degraded."²²

(S. Rādhākṛishnan-Religion and Society, P 81).

Marx's notion of alienation came most directly from Hegel. If bourgeois capitalism produces its own and specific antagonism, the antagonism has to be understood by Hegel's dialectical concept of self-

alienation in a new form. Marx's central criticism of Hegel was that alienation would not cease with the supposed abolition of the external world which, according to Marx, was a part of man's nature and what was vital was to establish the right relationship between man and his environment. In his early writings Marx discusses several types of alienation — from religious alienation to philosophical, political and finally economic alienation. Economic alienation Marx considers to be more vital and fundamental in as much as work was man's fundamental activity. "In Hegel", says Marx, "the appropriation of man's objectified and alienated faculties is thus firstly only an appropriation that occurs in the mind, in pure thought, i.e., in abstraction."²³ K.M.S.W., P -100) Marx applies the same analysis to political alienation - the state contains a description of human nature but at the same time deprives man of the opportunity of attaining it.

In the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 Marx applies the notion of alienation to Economics. In the section on 'alienated labour' he speaks of its four aspects :

(i) The worker is related to the product of his labour as to an alien object; the object he produces does not belong to him, rather it dominates him and in the long run increases his poverty. It stands over and above him, opposed to him with a power independent of the producer.

(ii) Secondly, the worker becomes alienated from himself in the very act of production as the worker does not regard his work as a part of his real life and he does not feel at home in it. It is an

activity directed against himself, that is independent of him and does not belong to him.

(iii) Thirdly, man's social essence is taken away from him in his work; alienated labour succeeds in alienating man from his species. Species - life turns into a mere means of sustaining the worker's individual existence and man is alienated from his fellow men.

(iv) Fourthly, man is alienated from nature which does not confront him as a field for the creative exercise of his powers, but as a source of difficulty and drudgery, as a limitation of his creative powers. Man is alienated from his own humane, creative nature.

These four types of alienation, as portrayed by Marx in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 are to be found in Rabindranath's drama, 'Rakta Karabi':

(i) The worker feels in his work outside himself; he does not feel content and happy-his labour is not voluntary but forced labour; it is external to his nature and consequently does not belong to his intrinsic nature.

(ii) The worker is alienated from himself-his work is turned against him, independent of him and does not belong to him.

(iii) Alienated labour makes man's species-life a means to his physical existence. It alienates from man his individual existence, as well as external nature and his spiritual aspect, his human aspect.

(iv) "What applies to a man's relation to his work, to the product of his labour and to himself, also holds of a man's relation to the other man..."

Here Marx has given a new dimension to the meaning of the central concept of alienation. The workers are no doubt alienated part of capitalist society, but Marx extends the phenomenon of alienation to be common to all the members of the society, Marx wrote :

"The propertied class and the class of the Proletariat represent the same human self - alienation. But the former feels comfortable and confirmed in this self-alienation, knowing that this alienation is its own power and possessing in it the semblance of a human existence. The latter feels itself ruined in this alienation and sees in it its impotence and the actuality of an inhuman existence".²⁴ (K.M.S.W., P134 - The Holy Family).

The same notion re-occurs in Capital, vol I, under the heading 'The Fetishism of commodities and the secret thereof'. Marx wrote :

"A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum-total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. This is the reason why the products of labour become commodities, social things whose qualities are at the same time perceptible and imperceptible by the senses ... This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour, so soon as they are produced as commodities

This Fetishism of Commodities has its origin in the peculiar social character of the labour that produces them."²⁵ (Karl Marx, Capital, Vol I, P 77).

In the chapter on "*Machinery and Modern Industry*" Marx makes contrast between the effects of alienated and unalienated modes of production on the development of human potentiality. Marx wrote :

"Modern industry, indeed, compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail-worker of to-day, crippled by lifelong repetition of one and the same trivial operation, and thus reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labours, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he performs, are but so many modes of giving free scope to this own natural and acquired powers."²⁶ (Capital, Vol., P 458).

The alienation of the Divine Mind 'is now transformed into the alienation of man from himself. Alienation is the Key-concept of Marx's critique of civilization. The Capitalist system represents the apogee of thingification of man. In reality, man has become a commodity. Fetishism of commodities and man as a commodity - these are forms of alienation in the sphere of theoretical and practical reason. In the course of history man has lost his totality through division of labour. And ultimately the division of labour has transformed man into a cog of the wheel. The tools which man created himself, threaten man. In the chapter on 'The working Day' Marx describes in detail and depicts a picture of the physical and mental degradation forced on men, women and children by working long hours in unhealthy conditions. Marx's burning protest against these crimes,

especially the exploitation of women and children leading to incredible suffering, a life of desolation and misery which we can hardly imagine even in our day will secure for him a place among the liberators of mankind.

In proportion as capital accumulates the lot of the labourer must grow worse. The matter becomes more worse with the rise of money as a universal medium of exchange. Everything may be converted into money and money makes everything saleable. It enables man to separate himself not only his goods, the products of his work but even his capacity to work itself which he can now sell to another.

Marx wrote :

“Money lowers all the goods of mankind and transforms them into a commodity. Money is the universal, self-constituted value of all things. It has, therefore, robbed the whole world both the human world and nature, of its own peculiar value. Money is the essence of man’s work and existence, alienated from man, and this alien essence dominates him and he prays to it”.²⁷

(K.Marx, Early writings, trans and edited by T.B. Bottomore, P. 37).

In *Capital, Vol I*. Marx wrote :

“Just as every qualitative difference between commodities is extinguished in money, so money, on its side, like the radical leveller that it is, does away with all distinctions. But money itself is a commodity, an external object capable of becoming the private power of private property of any individual. Thus social power becomes the private power of private persons. The ancients therefore denounced money as subversive of the

economic and moral order of things."²⁸ (Capital, Vol., P. 132).

Shakespeare, in *Timon of Athens* depicts a picture how money does away with all distinctions.

"Gold ? yellow, glittering, precious gold ?

.....

.....

*Thus much of this will make black white,
foul fair,*

*Wrong right, base noble, old young, coward
valiant.*

.....

.....

This yellow slave

*will knit and break religions, bless th'
accus'd,*

*Make the hoar leprosy ador'd, place thieves
And give them title, knee, and approbation,
with senators on the bench. This is it*

*That makes the wappen'd widow wed
again —*

*..... come, damn'd
earth*

The common whore of mankind.....

.....^{'29}

(W. Shakespeare - *Timon of Athens*, Act IV, Scene III, Complete works, P 958).

As the division of labour, the use of money and the growth of private property increase, man's alienation becomes more acute and reaches its zenith in the modern capitalist society. Engels in '*Anti-Duhring*', discusses the question of the antithesis of town and country-side.

Feudalism enslaves the whole man but capitalism splits man's functions off from man and uses them to enslave him. In his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 Marx portrays vividly the notion of alienation which consists in the abstract study of economic man, legal man, ethical man etc. :

"The more the workers produces, the less he has to consume; the more values he creates, the more valueless, the more unworthy he becomes, the better formed his product, the more deformed becomes the worker; the more civilised his object, the more barbarous becomes the worker : the more powerful labour becomes, the more powerless becomes the worker; the more ingenious labour becomes, the less ingenious becomes the worker and the more he becomes nature's servant."³⁰ (K. Marx-Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, P 65).

Is there any solution to the problem of alienation ? Marx says, 'yes', it is in communism. But this is not 'crude communism', as Marx calls it, in which the domination of material property is so great that it wishes to destroy everything that cannot be possessed by everybody as private property. It wants to disregard talent in an arbitrary manner. It is the negation of all culture and civilization. The category of worker is not done away with, but extended to all men. This system advocates the idea of community of wives - in which a woman becomes a common property of all. Just as a woman, by marriage, enters into the life of a common prostitute, so the

entire world of wealth passes to a state of universal prostitution with the whole community; the labourers, like prostitutes, sell their labour in exchange of money. This approach to woman, to labour, to wealth, is the denial of the essence of man (i.e., the human essence), the natural relation between a man and a woman. The second type of communism either still wishes to conserve the state or at least is still obsessed by the notion of private property. And at the end of his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 Marx painted a picture of the communist society, the society of true and ultimate human freedom.

“Communism (is) the real appropriation of the essentially human by and for man; the complete and conscious return of man conserving all the riches of previous development for man himself as a social, i.e., human being. This communism..... is the genuine solution of the conflict between man and nature and between man and man - the true resolution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddl of history and knows itself to be this solution”³¹ (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, P 80).

Communism is, therefore, the complete return of man to himself as a social (i.e., human) being embracing the entire wealth of previous development.

In such a society, Marx believed, there would be no state, no criminals, no conflicts, no need for co-ercive rules.

Truly free man rising above the very conception of property will thus need no rules imposed from above, no moral exhortations to do

their duty, no authorities laying down what is to be done. If there be any duty, it is self-imposed fulfilling himself in social and Co-operative creation. It is the total cessation of all forms of alienation. Man becomes unalienated when society is truly human. In such a society each man will recognise himself as a universal, social being and it is through him the whole community speaks and acts.

In the pre-history of mankind moralities are sectional, class-bound, conflicting, dependent on economic interests, not truly ethical or human because man is still class-bound, dependent on economic conditions, not truly human and free. But with the establishment of truly human society man leaves behind the so-called moralities and enters upon a domain of morality truly human in tone, temper and spirit. He now becomes the ethical subject who judges himself by the self-imposed standards of his own emerging from his nature as a social being instead of being a moral object judged by external standard imposed upon him.

In capitalism money is the measure of all things and the adage goes: "money talks". If money constitutes the basic values of life, if 'making money' becomes the sole purpose of man's activity, if accumulation of wealth is regarded as the end of everything even by resorting to questionable means, then morality turns into narrow selfishness and assumes an epidemic of immorality. And the consequence is that alienation penetrates all layers of society and inflicts incredible suffering. Man becomes frustrated and moral relations among people are dehumanised. Men become as morally neutral and barren as relations of objects. As any object man is easily available for use in

exchange of money. His worth is measured most by the amount of services he can render by his usefulness. Moral relation produces and heightens the perception of human life as essentially lonely and isolated.

Moral alienation has different facets :

(i) It is the alienation of man from his ability to create moral values, and he ceases to be the subject of morality. The individual feels utterly helpless and therefore he is unable to realise what is to be done in actual life situations when moral conflict arises.

(ii) Morality does not stem from within, from man's self-awareences and from the sense of duty. It appears as purely external co-ercion.

(iii) The third is the alienation from the moral substance of the individual — a split into real and unreal. The socially significant values appear to be unreal while senseless wilfulness, sensuous cravings are perceived as real.

(iv) Fourthly, man becomes alienated from his fellow-beings; he is hopelessly unable to appreciate and understand other people's psychological and moral states and as a result an unbridgeable gap is created between a man and his fellow-beings. This alienation of man from man destroys neighbourly feeling and man is plunged into an abyss of loneliness. Alienation of individuals, man from man, assumes such a grotesque proportion and becomes so unbearably painful that the individual emerges as a 'morally deaf' individual insensible to genuine humane moral feelings.

Another manifestation of this phenomenon is the rapid growth of inhuman customs and morals. The social and moral climate is such that people wear a variety of masks displaying standards completely alien to their nature. Fetishism of commodity breeds in insatiable hunger for acquiring and using things. The individual with his conformist consciousness faces a grave crisis of moral ideals and values. He pursues wealth, power, success without regard for the means to attain them. What is valued most is the accumulation of wealth and not education and learning.

"But although '*Capital*', Karl Popper observes, "is, in fact, largely a treatise on social ethics, ethical ideas are never represented as such. They are expressed only by implication..."³² (Karl Popper, *Open Society and Its Enemies*, Ch.22, P 199).

Because the principles of humanity and decency are for Marx matters to be taken for granted, he attacks the moralists of his time. He attacks them because they are sycophants of Capitalism which Marx hated to be inhuman and immoral. He attacks the adherents of liberalism because they eulogise formal liberty which destroys freedom. Marx's love for freedom is not a mere faith but a fundamental conviction in the dignity of man as a free individual. His proclamation of man as the subject of morality obviously indicates the moral primacy of man. Man is not a commodity, he is a dignified, bonafide individual. In the sixth thesis on Feuerbach Marx says :

"The human essence is not an abstraction inhabiting the separate individual. In its actuality it is the ensemble of social relations."

"Man is born a member", says Radhakrishnan, "of some society. His life is a net-work of intimate relations, of attractions and repulsions, from which it is neither possible nor desirable that he should cut himself free. Aristotle says : 'He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a God or a beast'. He has no place in society. Social relationships increase the individual's power and opportunities, and widen his freedom."³³ (Religion and Society, p 72).

It is Marx's vision of the fully social man who has developed all his potentialities makes himself the aim and measure of all things — he adumbrates a theory of freedom, of man as the master of himself, of nature and of history. It is his tremendous concern with the dignity of man which makes his theory truly humanistic. Marx places man at the central point of the circle and his concept of the free man is the basis of his ethics, his philosophy and ultimately the whole of social science. "The presupposition", says E. Kamenka, "and the true end of ethics, of philosophy, of all human activities, is the free, truly human man. Man is potentially the only subject in a world of objects, and anything that turns him into an object, subordinates him to powers outside himself, is inhuman."³⁴ (E. Kamenka, Marxism and Ethics, P 11).

Marx's chief concern is with the whole man, the universal and social man, not with the abstract, self-alienated individual man. Man is de-humanised, self-degraded, enslaved when he is self-alienated from other men.

"Ethics, for Marx, then, was concerned with freedom, and freedom meant human self-determination; it meant that man was

governed by his own nature and its requirements, and by that alone. Man's nature consisted of a set of potentialities; freedom allowed him to go about the task of realising them to the full. It enabled him to subordinate nature and his environment to his will, to realise himself in work and in his intercourse with others instead of subordinating himself to demands confronting him as alien requirements, as limitations on his being and not as fulfilments of it."³⁵ (E. Kamanka, *Marxism and Ethics* P 12.)

It is unquestionably a fact that Marx's ethical concept is intimately connected with the problem of free will or the freedom of will. There are many aspects of environment we do not judge morally. We do not pass any moral judgement on the instinctive acts of tiny little creatures like ants and bees, on the movement of the stars and planets, clouds and rocks, avalanches and earthquakes. We regard earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods as tragic calamities of nature but we do not say that they are bad in the moral sense of the term as we say good or bad, right or wrong of a person doing an action. But even here there are certain exceptions. The man whose action has been absolutely determined by the external circumstances, the man who has been compelled to do an action on the point of a knife or revolver, the child who has not reached at the age of maturity or mentally handicapped, the insane person, the person who is drunk or carried out by his intense emotional excitements - these persons are not regarded as moral agents and we do not pass any moral judgments on the actions done by them. Thus there are some things we judge morally and others we do not judge. Why? Here we are concerned directly with the moral responsibility and which, in turn, implies freedom of will. It is a general assumption that without free will there can be no goodness whatsoever.

But what is an assumption to us is, to Kant, a necessary moral postulate. Kant advanced, supporting his view, the classic argument in his *Metaphysics of Morals* and *Critique of Practical Reason*.

The problem of free-will has gained immense importance as it has been associated with the problem of evil. To the Christian faith men, having been created by God, must have been originally good. He is innocent, honest, veracious, untouched by sins. But in exercising his free will Adam, the first man, disobeyed the commands of the God and fell from heaven to the troubled ocean of samsara (World). Adam committed the sin by transgressing God's will and evil came into the world through the gate-way of man's free will. God is veracious and perfect; He cannot deceive us. Evil is, therefore, man's own creation — the total responsibility lies with the man.

But the question crops up : Is there any freedom in the proper sense of the term ? or is man really free?

The fatalists' answer to this question is an outright denial of it. There is no freedom anywhere within and outside the world. Everything is determined by the forces of the universe. Our destiny is written in the stars and sealed; everywhere there is only an unbending necessity; we are utterly helpless and powerless to bring about any change in it; nor all our tears wash out a word of it. On this view, moral choice becomes an illusion. Thus fate is supposed to be all-powerful, the ultimate arbiter of everything including our own life in this mundane existence. Hence, no freedom, no moral choice, no responsibility.

The contrary view, in quite opposition to the above view, insists upon freedom. But the adherents of this view are not unanimous as to the

meaning that is to be attached to freedom. One group holds the view that man's will is free in the sense that it is uncaused, while the other group maintains that man's will is always determined not wholly by external forces or the forces of the universe as the fatalists claim it to be but by the man's character, by the forces that are inherent in his character. The individual here is in a sense free as he expresses in conduct such tendencies that are his own, that they follow from the bent of his nature as a rational being. Thus we have two main views (i) Indeterminism and (ii) Determinism.

The first view holds that freedom lies in a spontaneous and uncaused power to choose among given possibilities. But the determinists maintain that the freedom the individual enjoys in his own power to appreciate the innermost demands of his own nature. Freedom is not something as the indeterminists believe it to be, but it is self-determination, self-development, self-expression of our character.

In support of his thesis the indeterminist may argue that the individual, at the moment of choosing among given possibilities, feels that the act of choice is undetermined, that he could have acted differently from what had actually done, that the result of his choice might have been very easily different and he could have easily accepted the opposite alternative. This direct consciousness of freedom in the act of choosing, in the moment of taking decision is a fundamental basic fact upon which the indeterminists base their account of un-caused will or freedom of will. Attribution of praise or blame would have no meaning, would have no sense or justified unless we would assume free-will and consequently, attribution of responsibility would be wholly meaningless.

The determinists, however, hold that every act of choice is

conditioned or necessitated by our motives. A man's conduct is determined by the inner conditions of his character rather than by the outside circumstances and the neglect of this fact is the fundamental error of fatalism. Morality demands that our actions should issue or emerge from an integrated character or a permanent self. The indeterminists' account makes moral choice arbitrary, a product of arbitrary will or a choice of the particular moment. When a man is answerable for the choice he has made arbitrarily at a particular moment, he may say that he is hardly responsible for the results, because it is the product of the arbitrary will or choice of the moment. Thus the attribution of moral responsibility the determinists do not deny and what they deny is that the indeterminists make the attribution of moral responsibility a basal point in support of their thesis.

The fundamental assumption of science is that events are causally related. Every event has a cause. Nothing happens really by Chance and accident; Chance and accidents are aliases of ignorance. This assumption is true no doubt, but there is a long-drawn controversy as to the very nature of causality. Without entering into the debate we may say that it is a basal postulate of our reason and we may take it as a reasonable hypothesis. Is our human will free or does it escape the chains of cause and effect which prevail throughout nature? Human actions, including our will, obey this law-this is the familiar position almost with all determinists. The indeterminist flatly denies this.

The controversy between indeterminism and determinism has taken a new turn as to the problem of freedom of will by the discovery of the principle of uncertainty or the '*Heisenberg principle*' of indeterminacy

in the science of physics. This principle seems to contradict the law of causality according to which every event in nature is fully determined by the preceding events. But according to this principle the law of causation does not hold good in the world of micro-physics. The physicist can measure the electron's position and its velocity and there is no reason why he should not determine its path and its position at any desired moment. But this is not always the case. After repeated experiments he finds that the position of the particle cannot be determined in advance by any measurements. This is an added plus point in favour of indeterminism.

The significant point in favour of determinism lies in its insistence upon the role played by an individual's character and the element of truth that lies in indeterminism is that it insists that man is the master of his own destiny and he is not merely the helpless play-thing of his environment. If, with Kant, we could believe that "the exercise of the will brings with it a capacity for free activity, in virtue of which we can use our sensuous and intellectual knowledge as we please; it brings also a sense of emancipation both from the law of cause and effect which dominates the world of phenomena and from the necessity by which the operations of reason are constrained."³⁶ (C.E.M. Joad, Great Philosophers of the world; P 52) the argument against freedom of will would seem to have lost its force.

We are, therefore, driven to conclude with V.F. Lenzen³⁷ that the final interpretation of the principle of uncertainty depends upon one's own philosophical attitude, (V.F. Lenzen-Indeterminism and the concept of physical Reality, Journal-Phil., May, 25, 1933.)

In his doctoral thesis (1838-41) Marx compared the theories of Democritus and Epicurus on the movement of the atoms and he criticised Democritus' strict determinism and came out in favour of Epicurus' position of freedom of man's consciousness to change his surroundings.

In the Pre-Marxian Ethics the controversy on the problem of freedom of will assumes the form of a dilemma :

Either man's behaviour is conditioned by circumstances in which case the possibility of moral choice is an illusion or the individual is totally independent of objective circumstances and for this reason he is quite free.

These two extremes — moral fatalism and moral voluntarism — are a consequence of a metaphysical distinction between freedom and necessity in man's activity. Fatalistic view ignores the fact that the destiny of each individual is, to a great measure, dependent upon what the particular individual is and does in the face of changing situations in which new events are constantly happening. Fatalism provides us with an unsatisfactory view of man and his place in the world. Its deep-seated error lies in its unconditional denial to recognise the freedom of moral choice - the world and he as a cog within it are rigidly bound up by the iron laws of an unyielding necessity. On the contrary, moral voluntariness reduces the freedom of moral choice to subjectivist arbitrariness and on this view one can hardly be held responsible for the results.

Examining the different situations of moral choice, Marxist Ethics recognises that they stem from man's way of life and his place in the

system of social relations as well as from the system of moral values established through historically developed cultures. Throughout his life every individual is bound to arrive at a Cross-road between good and evil necessitating a moral decision. His objective circumstances, offer him a good number of alternative choices and he must decide on one over the others. The subject who does the moral choice may be either an individual, or a group or a collective or a class seeking to change a social or political system settling the question of its development on humanitarian lines. only a just social system, having no class antagonisms, is able to offer its responsible individual members fairly equal choice resting on the common good to be achieved. According to Marx man "is free not through the negative power to avoid this or that, but through the positive power to assert his true individuality."³⁸ (Karl Marx and F.Engels - The Holy Family, Collected works, vol. 4, 1975 P 131).

"Freedom of will", for Engels, "... means nothing but the capacity to make decisions with knowledge of the subject."³⁹ And Lenin's settlement of the problem is this :

"The idea of determinism, which postulates that human acts are necessitated and rejects the absurd tale about free will, in no way destroys man's reason or conscience, or appraisal of his actions. Quite the contrary, only the determinist view makes a strict and correct appraisal possible instead of attributing everything you please to free will",⁴⁰

From the above we may say that a good knowledge of the matter, though not always the scientific knowledge of the circumstances, is essential in making a moral choice. Secondly individual's freedom of choice means that he should display his ability to make a decision keeping

in view the moral substance of necessity, i.e., the individual, in making a decision, should guide himself by the standards and moral values recognised by the society as the goal to be attained through his action. That the individual has to make decision in conformity with the moral necessity does not at all mean that he should submit to the circumstances, as the apologists of the capitalist way of life argue, but, on the contrary, Marxist Ethics considers goal formation and the individual's responsibility for changing the situation itself a vitally important and fundamental aspect of the freedom of choice. When the revolutionary change is under the way in the world and the need for the individual to be active is urgently called for, the neutral stand failing to make a choice from fear of blundering and compromising a morally worthy goal proves reactionary. Refusal to make a choice, to wish to wash out one's own hands may prove crime against morality; for refusal to make a choice becomes itself a choice. Neutral behaviour can never be an ideal in a society where there is no social antagonism and sources of alienation are removed. Lenin's remarks to those who have failed to combat evils throw light on this problem :

“... where is the evidence that you fought correctly, skilfully ? Bureaucrats are smart fellows, many scoundrels among them are extremely cunning. You won't catch them with your bare hands. Did you fight correctly ? Did you encircle the 'enemy' according to all the rules of the art of war ?”⁴¹

“You gave up in despair, you did not fight, you did not exhaust all the means of fighting.”⁴²

Communist morality is the sum-total of all principles and standards

of conduct based on the ideals of the communist society. The objective criterion of communist morality is what contributes to the establishment of communist society and the realisation of the communist ideal. The following are the main principles of communist morality.

A. COLLECTIVISM

It is a principle of living and working together as a group or collective. It assumes a number of historical forms. The fundamental characteristic of the primitive group-life is that of collective responsibility. The feeling of solidarity is best shown in their joint struggle for existence and survival. Man is, by nature, a gregarious animal and the group-life is the following of his social nature. Apart from the group the individual is of little or no significance. But in the course of historical development the individual becomes more and more important. In the feudal society as well as in the capitalist society the individual assumes greater responsibilities in his own right as an individual and the solidarity to the group is loosened. Individualism becomes the keynote of the capitalist society. But with the coming of socialism it becomes a general principle of people's relations an essential feature of socialist way of life. It has its social basis in social ownership of the means of production and the absence of all exploitation of man by man and its political basis in the equality of all citizens. It presupposes such relations between society and the individual in which the development of society as a whole creates favourable conditions for the development of the individual and the latter, in its turn, is a condition for the progress of the whole of society.

Here we come across one of the key-tenets of the age-old ethical tradition, viz., the opposition of collectivism and individualism. It is

generally believed that they are irreconcilable as good and evil. According to some it has been maintained that society is a mere name given to a group of individuals who are alone are of real significance and whose interests are of great importance in a social order. According to this view, the individual is free, the absolute lord of his own person and possession and society is a collective of the people who make up its membership; society is there only to safe-guard the interest of the individual members. The contrary view holds that the collective or the society is such an entity existing independently of its individual members and thus it has a superior worth in the real sense of the term.

The two above views are diametrically opposed to each other and do not give us a true and just view of the relation between society and the individual. The sober and rational view is that society as something apart from the individuals is an abstract society, a pure fiction only. But it is no less a pure fiction to assume that the individual is absolutely free and subjected to no-body. The truth lies in between the two extremes; the society is for the individual and individual for society.

But how is the individual related to the society? Does the individual enjoy his freedom of thought in the society to which he belongs as one of its individual members?

By the freedom of thought we mean generally that the individual has the right to express his own views including his conviction regardless of the views of others. This problem does not pose so serious in the primitive societies as the group enjoyed undisputed authority over every individual within the group. Every group has its own customs and traditions, its beliefs and convictions, its institutions and rituals, religious

practices and professions. The group has its way of thinking, and acting like that of an individual — and these ways of thinking and acting constitute what is called 'group-mind'. The group behaves in such a way as if one individual is behaving. The group thinks alike, feels alike, wills alike and acts alike. But by this 'group-mind' or the 'Collective mind' we do not mean any separate entity or any 'group-soul' over and above the individual minds constituting society but only the aspect of the individual mind that is common to them all and that consists in their common likes and dislikes, hopes and fears, beliefs and aspirations and the like. The 'group-mind' is only a collective name for individual minds so influenced, as distinct from the minds working in comparative freedom and isolation. William Mc-Dougall's famous book, *'A Introduction To Social Psychology'*, investigates our social behaviour in all its phases — it is particularly devoted to the study of the group-mind or the mind working in society.

With the advancement of civilization and culture the individual is emancipated from the unconditional subservience to the group mind and the consequence of such an emancipation gives rise to the conflict between the individual's way of thinking and the group-thinking. The Sophists in Greece, e.g., not only called in question most of the customs and traditions of their own day but also subjected them to severe and destructive criticism. The Renaissance and Reformation movements are also glaring examples of the same critical attitude towards the past. On the one hand, there is a tendency to maintain status quo, i.e., conservation of old traditions and on the other hand, a tendency to change the society, to modify its customs with a view to making a social advance towards higher goals. It is not the fact that only the individual tends to become critical against the existing

social order. A group or a class may be critical against the status quo or the existing state of things and an illustration of this may be found in the successful Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. It may be either an individual thinker, or a group or a minority against the majority and vice-versa.

There is a considerable amount of truth when the conservative urges that his beliefs have stood the test of time and traditions cannot be discarded simply on the ground that they are old traditions, for they constitute the very foundation of society.

The radicals, in opposition to the above view, may say that the test of time does not prove the traditions to be absolute and what is demanded that the traditions must meet the demands of new advancement of knowledge — they must be subjected to constant verification by the acquisition of new knowledge if social progress sought for. The compromise of this situation lies in it — the conservative must allow revision, if necessary, in the light of new thinking and scientific knowledge and the radical, on his side, must admit value of traditions unless and until new scientific knowledge forces its revision or rejection. The free and honest thinkers must be prepared to accept anything that stands the acid test of truth. He must be rational in his outlook, he must honour not only his own point of view but of others — a sanely critical attitude must be his guide instead of his individual caprice and prejudice. Then and then only we can build up an ideal society providing ample scope for such ideal members within it. In such a situation the statement 'society in the individual, individual in society' becomes meaningful. The individual and society are integrally related—they are two sides of the same social order and hence they cannot be treated as separate, distinct entities.

"There can be no conflict between the individual and the social. For both of these terms refer to pure abstractions. What do exist are conflicts between some individuals and some arrangements in social life; between groups and classes of individuals; between nation and races; between old traditions imbedded in institutions and new ways of thinking and acting which spring from those few individuals who depart from and who attack what is socially accepted."⁴³

Now the question arises : should we seek simply our own individual ends or the good of other individuals with no regard for the good of the individual?

To this question the answer is not unanimous. One group of thinkers hold that it is the duty of the individual to seek his own good. On the other side and in opposition to this view it has been held that moral duty of an individual is to seek the good of other individuals with no regard for his own. When we seek simply our own individual good or ends, this attitude is called 'Egoism', while 'Altruism' has been used to denote devotion to the ends of others — egoism stands for self-realisation and altruism for self sacrifice. Egoism points out the importance of the individual in the moral life, for it is a man that is an end in himself and not a community. But since an individual is a member of a society, his supreme end will be not simply the perfection of his own life or self-realisation or the realisation of what appeals to him as the most fundamental values, but also the perfection of the society to which he belongs.

The theory which identifies goodness with individual interests exclusively is open to question, because it fails to take into account of the society of selves of which each individual is a part; it forgets that the

interests and welfare of the individual are intrinsically bound up with the interests and welfare of the society. As A. D. Lindsay wrote :

"No one can really be an absolute individualist, any more than any one can be an absolute socialist. For the individual and society interact on one another and depend on one another"^{43A}

In his '*Data of Ethics*', Herbert Spencer has endeavoured to bring about a conciliation between these two views — he pointed out that either of these two attitudes, if carried to an extreme, is self-destructive. So what we should aim at is neither pure Egoism nor pure Altruism, but a harmonious blending of the two. We can realise our true self only by realising social ends-it is self-realisation for the sake of the whole.

A real individual always represents a definite community. We cannot think of any one who lives in society and yet he is absolutely independent of it. Egoism is not always narrow - it carries with it a social essence and in this it transcends the boundaries of the individual. History is marked by a kind of collective egoism. Marxists maintain that egoism should be conceived as having a multitude of forms (e.g. group egoism, class egoism, collective egoism, patriotic egoism etc.) and a historically determined substance. To understand the concrete historical nature of collectivism as a moral principle of socialism one should note three things :

- (i) That it is objectively determined;
- (ii) That it is a necessary form of advancement for the working class and its allies,

- (iii) That it determines the progress of morality in which hundreds of millions of wills constitute a single will.

Marxist collectivism is associated with communistic convictions and a communist society, says Lenin, is a society in which all things — the land, the factories—are owned in common and the people work in common. Communist morality endeavours for building an association in which the free development of each person is the condition of the free development of all. It is incompatible with greed, selfishness - it blends together the collectivist and the private interests in a harmonious whole, its fundamental principle being : 'one for all and all for one'. The main requirements resulting from the collectivism are :

- (i) Comradely mutual assistance ; (ii) social awareness and fulfilment of duties to society; (iii) combination of personal and social interests; (iv) equality in the collective; and (v) respect for the collective.

The principle of the collective does not involve the abolition of personalities of men; on the contrary, it is only in the collective that man finds ample scope for displaying his abilities to the fullest extent. It is to this kind of collectivism that Marx and Engels referred when they said.

“Only within the community has each individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; hence personal freedom becomes possible only within the community”.⁴⁴

In this collective the development of individuality and personality is of paramount importance as it helps to promote a socialist collectivist spirit and outlook. An ideal society only profits by the ideal members, by the presence of the greatest possible number of unique individuals.

Collectivism, not inspired by noble ideas, may assume a form of group-egoism, may result in fanaticism but it, when personal and social ideals are harmoniously blended together, provides a source of moral progress of both the individual and society directing them towards the perfect humaneness of mature communism.

B. INTERNATIONALISM :

In the historical development of society there have always been numerous groups, more or less sharply sundered from each other — each group being the supreme and sovereign authority in matters relating to its own affairs. At the primitive level the groups were small and very numerous and they were in constant clash with each other and as a result of this conflict the smaller groups were unable to maintain their separate existence and ultimately merged into larger groups. The larger groups gradually have grown into national states which assume the right to determine its internal organization, foreign policies and enjoy the right of the self-determination. The division of mankind into several isolated and sovereign groups gives rise to certain fundamental questions relating to the relation each group bears to others. The nationalist regards his group as having complete and final authority over its own matters and beyond it it owes no allegiance.

But the internationalist, on the contrary, holds that over and beyond the individual groups or nations, there always stands an ideal group of humanity of which all subordinate groups should owe their allegiance and contribute to the development of humanistic ideals. Our civilization has reached to such a crucial stage that the mutual understanding of the individual groups becomes a necessary condition

for further advancement. But if the ideal of internationalism is not put to practice, it is assumed that it would involve the destruction of individual groups and consequently it would jeopardise the feeling of patriotism and other related virtues that emerge from it. Is there any justification for such an assumption? The point is that internationalism does not necessarily involve the annihilation of national states, nor the destruction of virtues that spring from it. At present we can not shut our eyes to the fortunes or misfortunes, good or ill of other groups as we are vitally affected by these happenings. It has an important bearing - it makes us believe that only international understanding can save us from impending dangers caused by war between nations. It may be said that internationalist's ideal towards one general and all-inclusive society is the only way to dissolve all conflicts, mis-understandings, national egoism. But there are insurmountable difficulties in our way to goal. Difficulties are there no doubt, but that does not mean that these difficulties can not be overcome.

The communist morality demands that the workers, all toiling people of the world, irrespective of their caste and creed, beliefs and convictions, should come closer together. And internationalism is one of the basic principles of the ideology and policy of the working class. The workers should go beyond the boundaries of nations and express the international solidarity of the working people of different nations in their struggle against capitalism for their emancipation from all kinds of exploitation, for building socialism or communism. *The Manifesto of the communist party* illustrates the objective necessity of the unity of the workers of different countries in their struggle against capitalism and formulates the main idea of internationalism and proclaims its famous slogan; "*Workers of all countries Unite.*"

The principle of 'internationalism' means mutual support and co-operation of the working people of different countries in their struggle against international bourgeoisie, recognition of all nations and irreconcilability to any oppression of one nation by another. When conflict arises between national and inter-national point of views the communist morality advocates international point of view and national sacrifices. Lenin wrote :

"To be an inter-nationalist Social Democrat, one must not think only of one's own nation, but place above it the interests of all nations, their common liberty and equality.⁴⁵

Communist morality advocates that genuine friendship among nations should be realised practically. It sets definite moral standards for the emotional integration, character-traits and self-awareness of the individual to live up to international practices of the communist movement all over the world. Internationalism is an attitude to the world - it lays emphasis that people should be guided by the interests of the future international community and communist fraternity of the whole of mankind. It rejects the fake bourgeois and petty bourgeois patriotism but not patriotism in principle. Communist morality asserts socialist patriotism - it is inherently linked with internationalism. The struggle for the victory of socialism conducted in one or two individual countries forms a part of an international process that helps unite and emancipate the rest of the working people of the world.

C. HUMANISM :

The progress of human culture and civilization is associated, in a very significant way, with the humanistic system of views, humanistic ideals

and humanistic laws of behaviour. Our moral progress depends on the recognition and acceptance of humanism as a practical standard of social behaviour.

It is evident from the history of morals that one of the basic features of a tribe as a form of social organisation was the collective obligation to hold itself responsible for the avenging of any injury done to one of its members, to seek revenge or retribution — the principle being : 'A life for a life, an eye for an eye'. The members looked upon themselves as one living whole, a single animated mass of blood, flesh and bones. When the transition from the blood kinship (as the group of persons think of themselves as having descended from a common ancestor) to the territorial principle as the basis of social ties occurred, the narrow horizon of group mentality was broadened and the idea of humaneness and the equality of all people was developed. The Mahabharata says : "Do not deprive others of anything, do not wound others' feelings'; 'the vast universe is the holy temple of God,' a pure heart is the sacred place of pilgrimage, and truth eternal is the immortal scripture." The way to cross the troubled water of samsara is the observance of the humanitarian ideals.

The humanistic trend of morality reaches a state of acute crisis in a capitalist society because it is a society where relations among people become particularly inhuman and are based on class antagonisms and the oppression of man by man. The historical findings of bourgeois relations show that while declaring humanistic ideals, the bourgeoisie has not gone beyond mere philanthropy. In the capitalist society, humanism has degenerated into an appeal to help the poor and needy. The humanism of petty bourgeoisie is exhibited in offering crumbs to the man it has robbed. But philanthropy is not, in itself, bad — it has its own value. But it is bad

when it is used in a bad way. The bourgeoisie does not aim at a goal of substantially changing the situation of the un-privileged, they seek to alleviate suffering; they make philanthropy a means to confuse people morally and ideologically with a view to distracting them from the class struggle. What is more, they reduce it into a kind of business. In the capitalist world, the bourgeois exploiters, amidst the drumbeat of charitable projects gave back to the 'plundered victims the hundredth part of what belong to them' In this system millions of people are appropriated.

But socialism signifies a sharp break, a radical change in the relations among people. It breaks up with all class antagonisms and opens up a truly new, human epoch. By abolishing private ownership of the means of production, by demolishing all means of exploitation of man by man and mutual alienation of the people of society it introduces a new measure of humaneness into social relations. As Marx wrote:

"Communism is humanism mediated with itself through the supersession of private property."⁴⁶

Humanism is closely connected with socialism. Humanism is an empty drumbeat until it becomes a practical and objectively determined goal of social development. Communist morality lays stress upon human relations among people-relations based on brotherly feeling, co-operation, friendliness and honest performance of socially valuable duties and in it socialism reaches the highest humanitarian standards; here, in socialism all man are friends, comrades and brothers.

Let us enumerate some of the specific features of communist humanism :

(i) It is universal. It holds that all people are equal - they should be treated equally with respect and love and be given the necessary assistance as and when called for. It conveys deep respect for the working man and does not tolerate assaults on the dignity of the working man.

(ii) It is not only universal but also effectual. It is inherent in the ardent desire of an humanist to fight for man for his emancipation from all kinds of slavery and inhuman conditions. It encourages man for his free and harmonious development. It is against everything that warps man's life and it is for everything that promotes man's survival towards a socialist society.

(iii) Marxist humanist ethics has nothing to do with the advocacy of violence-force is justified only when it is unavoidable - it is not an end in itself-it is an 'instant' in the process against the exploiter system leading towards humanistic goals.

(iv) The Marxist humanist ethics has been gaining significance more and more when the world is on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe and the explosion of population has taken place in such a measure that it threatens our ecological system. Any nuclear war, in any part of the world, would cause great disaster to the humanity and in the face of such a possible danger, it becomes a categorical imperative to preserve our civilization. We feel the need to preserve our richest human values of life; the preservation of human values is more important than ever before.

(v) The communist humanism is realistic. It is based on the objective conditions of life and society. Its development has taken

place step by step — at first it emerges as a class morality of the proletariat having its own ethical standards such as class solidarity, unity of purpose, Collective awareness etc. and subsequently becomes the morality of the whole people in a socialist society and in the final form, the general human morality in communist society. Socialism represents only a milestone in the lengthy historical journey that will end in the complete triumph of humanism. In the communist formation of the society the humanistic essence is deepened and our humanism turns into a living, creative humanism.

Marx's humanism has strong and deep roots in the culture created by 'Renaissance', 'Reformation,' 'Reason' and 'Revolution' at the time of which humanism grew into a distinct ideological movement — a system of views based on the respect for the dignity and rights of man, his value as a personality, concern for his welfare, his all-round development and the creation of favourable conditions for social life. Some of the most prominent humanists of the Renaissance such as Petrarch, Dante, Leonardo da Vinci, Copernicus, Shakespeare, Francis Bacon and others helped to mould mundane views. Humanism reached its zenith in the works of the 18th century Enlighteners who put forward the slogans of 'equality', liberty and fraternity' and proclaimed men's right freely to develop their 'natural essence'. But the ideologists of humanism failed to grasp the actual vices of capitalism and its inhuman essence and were unable to discover effective ways and means for achieving a truly human society. The socialist humanism of Marx is fundamentally different from the previous ideologies or humanistic ideas as it postulated liberation of the poor and oppressed, especially the liberation of the working class from social injustice and

dehumanisation and the building of communism as an essential condition for the all-round and harmonious development of personality of all men in a just society. Marx was very critical of the official christianity which gave a hypocritical defence of Capitalist exploitation. Here Marx may be compared with Martin Luther whose challenge to Roman Church brought about a counter-reformation in his enemy's camp which led to the revaluation of ethical standards. Marx's concern that began with Luther gained strength with French Revolution helped to form the basis of most progressive ethical humanist agitation and reform since the revolutions of 1848. Marx's attempt to elevate man to a dignified position with its ethical rigour, with its emphasis on deeds has a tremendous influence upon the intelligentsia. The industrial revolution has clearly affected economic relations so completely that it calls for a world society with a world economy. Marx's call for communism to the world challenges existing evils prevalent in the society, offers a clear and definite programme for action and professes to provide us with an ethical, moral reformation accompanied with a social message with which all idealists are in agreement.

To understand Marxian ethical theory we must determine its place in the debate between two major philosophical schools - materialism and idealism. These two trends of thought are sharply divided as to the questions : (i) What is the source of morality ? (ii) Is moral ideal attainable?

The materialist philosophers in their very zeal to make ethics an empirical science developed empirical doctrines. Their very attempt was to remove the veil of mysticism from ethics and make ethics emancipated from the shackles of metaphysics and consequently they refused to grant morality a divine status over and above this empirical existence depending on the will or commands of the God. Moral standards and ideals, they

assert, are rooted in the everyday facts of man's life and their ways of living in a society. The idealist theories, on the other hand, perceived the source of morality in subjective or objective spirit and most of these theories associated it with the idea of God. Lenin wrote :

“..... instead of basing ethics on the commandments of morality, on the Commandments of God, they based it on idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's Commandments”^{46A}. And every time, morality appeared to occupy a place outside and prior to the individual's empirical existence.

Another battleground where the two trends of thought clash concerns their attitude towards the moral ideal. The materialists have generally adopted an optimistic stand hoping that man can attain the moral end in his existence in this world and it is something practically attainable. The idealists take a contrary view that it is beyond an ordinary person's reach — it is beautiful and attractive but man can never attain such moral heights in his existence in this life.

The empirical ethics is the ethics of benefits and goals and its fundamental goal is to change the position of man in this world; while, on the contrary, the idealistic ethics is concerned mainly with motive or inner orientations of the individual man and aims at changing his attitude towards the life of the world. As the right action is defined as one which is in consonance with the attitude or motive of the doer —it is an attitude theory; and when an action is defined in terms of its pleasant consequences, it is a consequence theory. The empirical ethics is Epicurean and Eudaemonistic while idealist ethics is stoical and moralistic. The empirical ethics is consequential, for here in it moral values are judged only on the

results and practical consequences having any regard to motives or attitudes of the individual man. On the contrary, the idealistic ethics lays emphasis on motives, inner orientations of the individual.

Further, materialism considers the universe as grounded on matter and idealists in mind. Materialism holds that matter is real and mind is an epi-phenomenon of matter. In opposition to the above view, the idealists put emphasis on mind and hold that mind is prior to matter-mind is real and matter is just an appearance.

The above two views seem to be radically and diametrically opposed to each other. If either one is true, the other must be false and people are generally inclined to believe that one of the alternatives is true. Recent studies in physics, especially the discovery of Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy in the science of physics, and recent studies in psychology have changed our notions of matter and mind and the opposition has become much softened.

Karl Marx, in his Ph. D. Thesis on "*Difference Between Democritean and Epicurean philosophy of Nature*" drew radical conclusions as against Hegel's philosophy, because of his conciliatory tendencies, conservative political conclusions, his emphasis on speculative principles rather than actual social relations. Hegel explains the real facts of life by the 'Idea' but Marx explains the formation of ideas from the objective materialistic view of society and history. His knowledge of the real economic developments and the philosophy of Feuerbach plays an important role in the process of his switching on to the materialistic position. Further, his study of political economy, socialism and history has changed his world outlook and revolutionised his ideas. He is well-aware

of the historic role of the proletariat and the bourgeois and consequently of the social revolution and need of uniting the working class movement with scientific world-outlook. His 'Theses on Feuerbach' are, as Engels puts it. "invaluable as the first document in which is deposited the brilliant germ of the new world outlook."⁴⁷

Marx and Engels drew up the famous '*The Manifesto of the communist Party*' in 1848 in which, on the basis of the results of their scientific research, outlines "a new world conception, consistent materialism which also embraces the realism of social life; dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development; the theory of the class struggle and the world-historic revolutionary role of the Proletariat — the creator of a new, communist society."⁴⁸

By substantiating a materialistic view of society and history Marxism has blasted the bastions of idealism and subjectivism in ethics. It bridges the antithesis between theory and practice by explaining their social and historical nature and proves scientifically that each type of morality is socially and historically conditioned. Marx and Engels provide us with a scientific exposition of the dialectics of the social conditioning of morality. They are against any attempt to describe morality from the anti-historical point of view. A materialist view of history "does not explain practice from the idea but explain the formation of ideas from material practice."⁴⁹

From the early ages of society's formation morality has undergone a long development under the impact of economic and social relations. In addition to human elements morality incorporates historically transient and class norms, principles and ideals. In a society split into classes morality is found to bear a class nature, reflecting as it does the class

struggle. Each class performs the function of a relatively independent norm-giving group—the common interests of the people constituting a class determine their common moral stand. “Every social stratum has its own way of life, its own habits and inclinations,”⁵⁰ wrote Lenin. Each class antagonistic socio-economic formation has its own structure, its principal classes—slaves and slave-holders, serfs and feudal lords, proletarians and bourgeois. The class struggle is the prime mover of social development in antagonistic societies. The interests, either progressive or conservative, are included in the morality of a class and determine its role in the social and historical process of mankind. The morality of the ruling class prevails in society—each ruling class seeks to present its interests as common to all classes to represent the morality it preaches as the sound one, to force it on other classes via all its ideological means at its disposal to attain the goal, their cherished end. The positions of the ruling exploiting class and the exploited class are poles apart—the exploited class develops its own morality as against the morality of the ruling class and consequently it emerges as a class morality of the proletariat which rises to the struggle for changing the society with the necessary and inevitable consequences of class struggle. The ruling class may try to camouflage its self-seeking interests but the working class has no need for moral hypocrisy, because it has a number of points common with the morality of all toiling classes and the conditions of its emancipation as a class are also the conditions of the entire society's, emancipation from exploitation and oppression of man by man. Thus with the assistance of morality, they establish genuinely human relations among people.

Marxist ethics recognises that morality has a universally human content which enters into a complicated dialectical interaction with its class

content. The components of universally human morality are :

(i) The components form the basic rules of any human community and these rules are adhered to by all classes and without which no social development takes place. Moral qualities like love, sympathy, friendliness, truthfulness etc. have always been appreciated in any social environment but, on the contrary, hypocrisy, lying (e.g., white lies, dramatic lies), rudeness, unfriendliness, indifference to others are always commonly censured. Because these are humanity's basic and fundamental needs which are essential to the very existence and well-being of the society.

(ii) Another universally human content of morality is what comprises some of the general psychological forms of moral sentiments. Members of different classes may differ in their likes and dislikes, in their feeling in any given circumstance but in their love for children, love for the country and pangs of conscience they are at heart one-their psychological form of inner emotions is similar.

(iii) The third is the positive contribution to the moral experience of mankind as a whole by the classes in the course of their struggle for existence. As a river is made up of innumerable streams so in a really human morality all individual accomplishments of morality of the progressive classes merge and become one with human morality in the course of historical development. It is above class-antagonisms, above all class distinctions and it has three vital goals to achieve :

- (a) to protect and preserve the precious heritage of mankind's moral culture;
- (b) to develop man's moral and psychological capacity for compassion, mutual understanding, to maintain humane relationships in society which allow a man to realise his dignity irrespective of social origin and social position;
- (c) to realise the really human standards and ideals of man's creative and harmonious development in the midst of the society of selves with a view to creating a new world outlook which is communist in nature.

The anti-Marxian ethical theories make us believe that the revolutionary movements of the working people are the source of moral chaos and degradation but in adhering to this view they fail to understand the part played by revolutionary morality in social development. It is not the manifestation of malicious vengeance, as it is supposed to be, but it encourages the people to better themselves with a new human understanding in their relations with other fellow beings. No social revolution can be successful without moral revolution in their inner worlds — it paves the way for man's moral and spiritual advancement. As Lenin puts it:

“Only struggle educates the exploited class, only struggle discloses to it the magnitude of its own power, widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will.”⁵¹

Revolution makes a man aware of his involvement in the great and grand cause of social progress. It is an event possessing a profound moral meaning.

Belief in the ideal and the just cause of the revolution gives rise to such moral qualities as courage, selflessness, initiative and endeavour in pursuing a goal. As the goal is one and the interests are also one, and as the working people are fighting for a common cause, revolution works as a cementing force to maintain the solidarity and integrity of character of the working people. The working people, as the revolution proceeds on, feel the necessity for mutual assistance, comradely feeling, unity of purpose and the moral upsurge becomes so powerful that it brings about a radical change in the self-consciousness of the working people. Revolutionary Marxist Ethics resolves all contradictions between the individual and the group, between the class and the society. The ethics of socialism seeks the ideal individual through the ideal society. The good of the whole must not be distinct or opposed to the good of its individual members. The ultimate good and supreme value the society aims at is the good of the individual members constituting the society — it lies in the harmonious development of personality of the individual. Marxist ethics enhances new and better relations among people—man is to man a friend, a brother. It is not only against all kinds of alienation of man from man but also against asceticism, cynicism, and helps to develop the principles of disinterestedness and readiness to help others. With the establishment of communism the realisation of social ideals in human behaviour becomes a mode of man's moral self-assertion. Thus Marxist Ethics overcomes all oppositions between absolutism and relativism, egoism and altruism, asceticism and Epicureanism, reason and passion, the contradictions that remained unsolved in the past. To build a communist society it is necessary for each and every member of the society to enhance personal moral responsibility, to combat all that is hostile to its ideals of truly humane

relations, to display revolutionary vigilance, to help accelerate economic and scientific progress and to seek moral improvement in interpersonal relations; the creative role of communist morality consists in the transformation of both society and man himself.

Marxist ethics is not pessimistic but optimistic in assessing man's moral and creative development. It genuinely believes that man can rise to new heights, find new inspiring values. Its assessments are realistic, based on objective facts. It is aware of that man may fall very low, may be degraded. Responsibility for moral improvement does not lie only with the society but also with the individual himself, for no such moral improvement will take place if he does not like pains to grow, if he does not self-criticize, if he alienates himself from society and maintains aloofness from everything.

Marxist ethics is dialectical in nature. Like morality each of its manifestations, each standard and virtue, is in perpetual motion passing from one qualitative state to another. It is emerging and developing and involves an actual historical process-this Marxian historical approach is not tantamount to relativism. There is a continuity in the evolution of morality. In spite of the qualitative diversity of its types its development emerges as an integral process. Thus the different types of morality are links of one chain, stages in the overall processes of historical development-its past, present and future.

Since morality is determined by the Character of qualitatively differing social relations at different levels of human existence, we have four main types of morality.

1. The first type embraces the natural relations within a clan or tribe or group found in the primitive social systems. The members belonging to the group, integrally bound together, thought only in terms of the good of the group. It is communistic in nature, owns property commonly. There is no class or classes and hence no class antagonisms. The group itself is a class and all interests of the individual members are merged into one Common interest, viz., the group-interest. Responsibility does not lie with the individual but with the group-it is collective responsibility which forms one of the fundamental characteristics of the group. The morality of the primitive group is classless, collective and communistic in nature.

2. The emergence of the private property has abruptly changed the whole situation. Division of man into privileged and non-privileged, antagonism between the 'have' and 'have nots' is deepened-classes are shaped and moral code representing the class interest emerges. With the advent of poverty a new cruel form of personal bondage, i.e. slavery of man becomes a reality-the prime mover of the social progress is now between the masters and their slaves. The master class is united by virtue of their social position and class interest and the slave class has been turned into a class of docile and dumb creatures whose sole concern being food and sleep only. It leads to humiliating submission of slaves to their masters. The morality of the master class is imperative upon the slaves and it is the duty of the slaves to obey unconditionally the order of their masters. This qualitatively different

social situation determines the essence of morality in a Slave-holding society.

3. In the third type, the feudal form of social bondage has been replaced by the material dependence between people. In place of feudal lords and serfs we have now bourgeoisie and proletariat whose conflicting interests have shaped the course of history. Individualism becomes the most general characteristic and essence of morality. The very principle of private enterprise establishes the individual as the focal point of social and economic activity. Bourgeois morality speaks of man's emancipation, broader scope for the development of individuality, respect for man and his dignity, equality of all individuals; but in actual practice, it does not concern with all these. Moral equality between the capitalist and the worker is an illusion, a hypocrisy — the former having the capital and exploiting the latter; the latter possessing no capital and exploited by the former; the former is flourishing and the latter is doomed to misfortune and deprivation. What is more, the bourgeois justice is a nick-name for injustice — what is pretended to be justice is no justice in the real sense of the term; it is a means which promotes exploiters' interest. Thus bourgeois morality assumes duality between theory and practice, word and deed and creates an ugly ditch, and unbridgeable gap between the Capitalist and the worker. The concepts of duty and honesty, employed by the bourgeois morality, are made to fit the bourgeois mode of production and way of life. Wealth becomes the universal social and moral value; money becomes the measure of all things - it gives dignity to man, determines man's social position and what

not. So money becomes the basic value of life and the sole end of a man's life lies in making money. And as a consequence, men are not regarded as ends in themselves but mere means for attaining the mainpulatd goals.

Man's worth is measured by his usefulness; as any object man is now available for use in exchange of money, Utter moral degradation penetrates all layers of society. Socially significant values appear to be unreal while individual whims and caprices are perceived as real. Man becomes alienated, isolated from other fellow-men and a feeling of cold-indifference prevails everywhere and man is plunged into an abyss of loneliness. Thus morality of the bourgeoisie makes man selfish, egoistic and morally indifferent hedonist. With the accumulation of money moral vices appear and enter into the scene — people indulge in gross sensual pleasures and wallow in filth like pigs.

4. The transition from Capitalism to Communism indicates a moral turning point in the relations among people. The communist morality signifies a break with the morality of class inequality and oppression of man by man and encourages humane incentives for the moral advancement of the individual as well as for the society. In the communist society, free development of the individuals is no longer a mere phrase, but is really existent. This new morality declares man the supreme value and makes man emancipated from all exploitation and inhuman conditions. No private property, no private enterprise — the individuals collectively own the means

of production and execute planned control over the progress of society. The communist morality is the indicator of moral progress in the society. But moral progress is not a progress in a straight line-it is an inherently contradictory process, occasionally ending in blind alleys. But the communists are convinced that if the development of morality is approached dialectically, the very dynamics of its contradictions reveal steady progress. As the contradiction and the struggle of opposites grow more and more, morality exerts an increasing impact on man's revolutionary ideals.

Another indication of the progress of morality is that morality is not confined to a limited sphere, it is involved in the life of the society as a whole. It reaches all corners, all spheres of life and activity-economic, political and social relations. Observation of socially valuable moral standards becomes necessary in all spheres-in the life of the individual as well as in the life of the society.

Another sign of moral progress is the richer informative aspect of morality. With the growing knowledge in all its branches, man is now capable of expressing his thoughts in consonance with his inner imperatives. He now realises that religious dogmas, prejudices, fanaticism are based on sheer ignorance. He now endeavours utmost to make morality free from all such pre-conceived notions and dogmas and bases morality on genuine objective informations from his life situations. Morality is not alien to him or imposed upon him from outside, it now becomes an integral part of his life. His inner world grows emotionally richer — conscious adherence to moral norms and an awareness of their application in each specific situation become a general condition of man's

moral behaviour. He is not only a conscious individual but also a conscious member of the society and this awareness enhances his moral responsibility. Moral problems are now solved with humanistic outlook, a more humane type of consciousness. Thus a qualitatively new stage of moral progress has begun with the emergence of a new type of man, a harmoniously developed socialist type of the individual. It indicates a major milestone on the road of humanity's moral advancement.

The transition from socialism to communism indicates more harmonious development of personality. The main objective of human activity is not the material wealth or personal gains but to promote social good — a life aimed at most fully developing the creative potential, original talents and abilities of each member of the society constituting the society of selves. It is at this stage of humanity's moral evolution that man becomes the supreme value, the goal of social and historical development.

Moral relations form a part of social relations. They are not the results or consequences of the individual's subjective choice and arbitrary decision-making; but they actually represent the objective social interest of the society consolidating stable behaviour models. Generally in a class society moral relations have a class character. In a society having different classes, moral codes differ as each class justifies its own interests and way of life. But in a classless society, Morality is not sectional, class-oriented but it is all-pervasive. It regulates moral relations among people in all layers and spheres of man's life and activity. An action, whether physical or mental, is moral when it conveys man's attitude to the system of values accepted by the society. E.g., a physical action, viz, jumping into the water, in itself,

is neither moral nor immoral, good or bad-but jumping into water with a view to saving a man's life is certainly a moral action as it conveys the attitude of the jumper to the value of human life accepted universally by the society and reflects his moral character of self-lessness, courage etc. Thus morality is for man a necessary compass which helps him to shape his behaviour and to find its bearings in the life of the society, the world of social values. It allows each man to make a right decision, to act in conformity with the humane ideals of life and the universally accepted system of values. The Marxist ethics encourages man not only to fight for emancipation and betterment of social conditions but also, side by side, for the betterment of his own inner world. His conscience demands that man should do good and resist evils and the sense of duty commands him to be honest and to become a responsible member of the society.

Moral relations may be both subjective and objective-subjective when they emerge from the dictates of duty and conscience; objective when they assume the form of material actions affecting the interests of other people. They do not lie outside the subject as properties of objects or actions as such nor they exist only in the subjective world of man. An action is moral or a behaviour has a moral quality only when it recognises the worth of another individual or a group or a social community. Thus moral relations are always socially significant relations among people. One of the fundamental functions of morality is communicative which incorporates a value attitude to the social environment. It is only through moral communications a man can enrich his life experiences by learning about moral searchings or other person's inner world-his motives, his goals, what he wants to do and what motivates him. A person who is unable to perceive the world around him in value-imperative light will lose

his social bearings. A work-injury and an injury inflicted by a bandit is identical from the medical point of view. But from the point of view of morality the wound inflicted by the bandit, i.e. the action done by the bandit is bad, not moral as it is done with a bad intention and, therefore, this action should be morally censured.

Moral relations change as social, material, economic conditions change, the old system of values gives place to a new system of values — old values crumble down and new values make their appearance in the scene affecting moral consciousness. When moral values clash making the individual undecided as to how to act, his preference must conform to the objectively established values in moral relations. Marxist ethics does not believe in coercion but on persuasion, self-education and mutual understanding. It advocates that the all-round development of the individual is a social need and collective foundations of moral relations pave the way for making life more humane.

Conscience, together with a sense of duty, makes man aware of his moral responsibility towards himself as well as towards others and the society at large. It is the vehicle of social morality in the inner life of the individual. The individual views his conscience as an inner voice of his own moral nature and he judges his behaviour as his own when he makes a moral choice. This is the view of the idealists who regard the phenomenon of conscience as purely an individual's own affair having no connection with the society. Marxist ethics, on the other hand, regards conscience as an attribute of man's social nature, a subjective expression of a certain social and historical imperative that it becomes the regulator of self-judgment. As Marx wrote :

"The conscience of a republican is different from that of a royalist, that of a property-owner is different from that of one who owns no property, that of a thinking person is different from that of one incapable of thought. The conscience of the privileged is precisely the privileged conscience"⁵²

Conscience acts as an integral mechanism organically fusing different and diverse elements of man's mental life—the sensual, the rational and the volitional. Marxist ethics takes a dialectical approach to the sensual and the rational elements in morality—it does not isolate the sensual from the rational and gives us a synoptic view. Lenin emphasises the significance of conscience as a regulator of behaviour guarding the principles of communist morality. A person who has dedicated himself to the ideals of communism cannot violate the dictates of conscience either by word or deed. He always remains truthful and honest with himself and with his comrades. However, it is not only the yardstick by which to measure the moral value of an action. It may be that a man may pursue an unsound line of behaviour, he may err in making a moral choice, here his conscience must be regulated by the moral standards set by society.

Awareness of duty is also a major moral and psychological mechanism of self-control. It implies preferring a certain set of values consciously choosing a system of standards and norms set by the society. Marxist ethics cannot take for granted Kant's rigoristic solution in which 'the duty must be done for duty's sake,' that it is a categorical imperative, unconditional obedience to the moral law—a right action is right and be same for every individual no matter what the tastes or inclinations or circumstances of the particular individual are. Marxist ethics holds that the duty pinpoints man's moral obligations not only to society but to the individual also; it advocates priority of public duty over and above narrowly

understood private interests.

Duty assumes a variety of forms, e.g., duty to the family, duty to the collective, duty to oneself, duty to society and so there arises a need to co-ordinate them. If the conflict of duties arises or is inevitable, moral consciousness has to find out some solution to the complicated question that arises in this connection. The solution may be either egoistic or altruistic, individualistic or socialistic, hedonistic or ascetic. Egoism advocates that the duty of the individual is to seek his own good. But this view ignores the fact that man, by nature, is social. There may be exceptional cases-the ascetic or saint may find his station and its duties away from the society but for a common man morality is a social business, our moral ideas develop only in association with other people and are being constantly modified by 'public climate of opinion'. On the contrary, in opposition to the above view, altruism holds that it is the moral duty of the individual to seek the good of others with no regard for his own. But, like absolute egoism, absolute altruism will lessen the general good. If a man neglects his own health in his eagerness to serve others, he may one day find himself unable to do things for other people. The natural life of a man is a social life-the man who always seeks his own good in utter disregard to the good of others is not really human. Socialist moral consciousness makes possible a harmonious co-existence of different forms of duties. It stresses, however higher types of duties lying in humaneness, collectivism and internationalness as well as duty to one's own station.

The concept of humanism has become the core of anti-communist attacks against Marxist ethics. Socialism as a social system makes the life of the individual more human. Socialist humanism represents only the

beginning of the lengthy historical journey towards the actualisation of humanistic ideals. It steers the colossal ship of the society against the natural currents and storms of history to the shore of living creative humanism. It is a long and arduous process - it is revealed gradually step by step as the society moves forward. The transition or turning of the society from inequality to equality, injustice to justice, hatred to love of fellow-beings cannot be possible in a moment or twinkling of an eye with the help of Aladdin's magic lamp but by conscientious display of duties. It is not denying the fact that moral attractiveness of the socialistic way of life has been increasing day by day. Humanist system of moral norms has acquired a greater social significance in the process of its development. The demand for humanism is the cry of the day. Socialist society is an important step towards realising the communist ideal and attaining real humanism. A communist society will provide objective social conditions for the all-round and harmonious development of man and create scope for each and everyman to develop his inner abilities in the best possible way. No one feels lonely, rather he feels that his work is necessary and most valuable to society and that he is a welcome member of the human community.

There have been a great number of attempts to depict communist morality as inhuman. In their polemic against Marxist ethics, the opponents of communism argue that the moral principle of collectivism undermines personal dignity of man as a man and deprives man of the right to freedom in making a moral choice. The fundamental error of Collectivism is to neglect the fact that men and women are individuals, that society exists for the all-round development of personality of the individual living in a society and this is not attained when the individual is sunk in a 'marching

crowd' in an indistinct group which takes no account of his freedom as an individual, placing the society above everything and as a result the progress of the society will be hampered to a great extent. Paul Tillich maintains that personal development is hampered by collectivism since it is supported by the power of the state and is substantiated rationally. Morality, Tillich holds, is the primitive tribal collectivism under which man loses his independence and regards himself as a subordinate part of something more general and loses the courage of to be himself. Tillich and his followers assert that the principle of collectivism can only be used to stimulate industrial growth but it fails to provide opportunities for each man's free development. The critics of Marxism accuse it of neglecting the role of the individual as the subject of morality. Marxian ethics, by its exclusive concentration on social sources of morality, makes man feel that he is 'an obedient tool in the hands of social will' which is entirely alien to his own wishes and initiative. The opponents of Marxism urge man to put up moral opposition to the external demands set by society or the state, to follow only the spontaneous urges of self-expression and the dictates of the inner moral voice.

The vital question with the Marxist is : can moral standards be derived from the individual's absolute subjective freedom of choice alone by passing or ignoring their social source?

"Not only is man a being who only attains his real nature in society, he is a being who has always lived in some form or other in society even if his earliest society was only that of the family group"⁵³

Man is dependent on society for a multitude of definite services which society provides him with. "It is not natural for a man to be alone,

and that some from of social unity is implied in his essential structure."⁵⁴

Even the existentialist thinkers could not deny the reality of the society. "No one can really be an absolute individualist, any more than any one can be an absolute socialist. For the individual and society interact on one another and depend on one another."⁵⁵

In antagonistic societies, Marx and Engels wrote, genuine collectivism had no place. Under the communist formation collectivism consists "in the necessary solidarity of the free development of all, and, finally, in the universal character of the activity of the individuals on the basis of the existing productive forces."⁵⁶

The principle of communist collectivism calls for profoundly humane inter-group and inter-personal relations and here lies the distinction between communist collectivism and historically earlier forms of collective existence. Communist collectivism regards comradeship and solidarity as the basis of the personality's free, all-round development and the attainment of moral ideal of communism. The dialectics of what actually exists and what should be innate in the communist movement demonstrates the humane foundation of its moral practices. Communist morality reflects society's interest in the individual's free and harmonious development. Collectivism is not only a standard for communist morality but also an objective property, a feature of the social relations of socialism. The individual builds up his own inner world not in isolation from other people but through real contacts with them. A job based on common values produces a feeling of moral and psychological unity and friendliness and enhances mutual understanding and creates a healthy moral atmosphere. However, the process may not always be smooth and free

from difficulties. The fanatics wearing the mask of collectivism may be totally indifferent and blind to individual distinctions and may level out their tastes and needs but all of which is alien to real socialism. This collectivism is called mock-collectivism-the distortions are due to human frailties, backwardness, want of cultural progress and absence of genuine moral education.

The loyalty to communist ideals is, the anti-communists believe, incompatible with humaneness. The opponents of Marxism describe the communist world-outlook as a soulless and dry sociological doctrine, pure and unadulterated political design that destroys man's moral potential and dignity. They maintain that according to Marxism. Leninism it is not the idea that serves man but man serves the idea and this leads to anti-humanism. And when the individual's conscience and thinking serve an idea, it may lead to mass cruelty, violence and persecution of the dissidents.

But this anti-communist thesis can hardly be estimated as sound
For :

- (i) Dedication to an advanced and humane ideal does not contradict individual kindness, compassion and responsiveness but promotes them. Loyalty to communist ideals in conjunction with the most advanced and humane ideals helps people evolve such traits as generosity, readiness to make sacrifices and even act heroically for the sake of others.
- (ii) Adherence to an idea (including moral convictions) is the basis on which man chooses goodness in its concreteness. The ideals of individual's moral life divorced from advanced social

values lose a great deal of their motivating force. Convictions and moral solidarity help man remain humane and kind even in the most tragic situations. Marxism does not preach fanaticism or moral automatism.

The opponents of communism assert that by subjugating the over-all social evolution to the attainment of the ultimate end, i.e., the communist ideal Marxism-Leninism sacrifices the present to the distant, vague phantom of the future. They describe the communist world-outlook as a sacrificial ideal of the future social order, an ideal that is the cunning enemy of the people's present happiness.

Against these accusations the Marxists assert that :

It is illegitimate to state that Marxism - Leninism views all the efforts and striving of generations of the past and present as a mere means to an end, a rung on the historical ladder. Marxism does not believe in Jesuitism when it holds that the end justifies the means in all cases, nor it believes in abstract humanism which holds that the means and the end are mutually independent but Marxist ethics holds that the thesis : 'the end determines the means' and the thesis 'the means determines the end' are mutually dependent and correlative, i.e., in a changed situation the goal may become the means and means may turn into the goal-a means is moral and expedient if it is sufficient and necessary for attaining a moral positive goal. Humanism, as a goal embodying man's freedom and happiness, determines the most humane means of attaining it.

In the development of morality, each stage is historically significant in its own right, each stage is a movement in which the values of the past, present and future enter into a dialectical interaction. Social progress is

the historical chain that links the past and the present and the present and future generations—a process during which moral values become more and more perfect. Each new stage of social progress to which mankind rises is very costly, often even costlier than was believed to be in the very beginning. To build a new society, to realise lofty ideals of humanism we have to combat insurmountable difficulties and this task can never be fulfilled without persistent endeavour and selflessness. In our way to goal the positive achievement is that in doing the job people rise to new heights of moral maturity, overcome their backwardness of which human frailties are capable of and become gradually the makers of their own future destiny. Genuine, real humanism arises in the course of this struggle and movement. The people must learn the lesson of perseverance and do utmost for the realisation of the new social order and by avoiding blind alleys in their way to goal they must find out the right road that leads to the path of exit and finally to the land of human values in a new social order.

Through this movement each generation of mankind develops and thus preserves for the future its ideals and values. Whenever a person is self-aware of the moral values he is after, the intensity and strenuousness of his effort will give him immense pleasure, profound satisfaction, a feeling a job well-done, of having overcome all difficulties.

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