

CHAPTER : I

MATERIALIST THEORY AND POSITIVISM

GEORGE WILHELM FRIERICH HEGEL (1770 - 1831)

Hegel is one of the greatest thinkers of the modern world whose philosophical system influenced the development of existentialism, Marxism, Positivism and analytical philosophy. He was born at Stuttgart in the suburbs of Berlin (Germany). His father was a revenue officer. He learned the elements of Latin from his mother before he went to the grammar school. As a school boy he made a collection of extracts from classical authors, newspapers, treatises on morals and from the standard works of the period. He studied philosophy at Tubingen from where he took his Ph.D. in 1790. Thereafter he took to the theological course but was impatient of the orthodoxy of his teachers. He enjoyed reading Greek tragedies and the glories of the French Revolution. He became a tutor at Berne where he read Gibbon and Montesquieu. He was greatly stimulated by Kant and was highly immersed in the philosophy of religion. He was influenced by Spinoza. In 1801 he was appointed to a post at the University of Jena where he completed his first major work, 'The Phenomenology of Mind' in 1807. After the battle of Jena he met Napoleon whom he called 'world:soul on horseback'. He lost his teaching position and became an editor of a newspaper in Bavaria. He completed his second book 'the Science of Logic' during 1812 -16. He was then appointed to the chair of philosophy at Heidelberg where he published his Encyclopedia of Philosophy in 1817 in which he propounded his philosophical system comprising of logic, philosophy of nature and philosophy of the spirit. In 1812 he brought out his Philosophy of Right which made him a foremost figure in the realm of philosophy. He died in November 1831 during a cholera epidemic. His death precipitated the dissolution of his school into conflicting liberal and conservative factions.

Hegel is noted for his philosophy of history. It was he and not Karl Marx who first expounded in Phenomenology that the prime motive force of the historical process is human labour, or the practical activity of men in society. Hegel is the chief originator of 'process thought' which became the bedrock for the concept that historians and sociologists should look upon history not as a field governed by immutable 'laws' but as a process in which something fresh is created at every moment. This philosophy finds room for the efflorescence of the higher forms of culture. Hegel presupposes that the whole of history is a process through which mankind is making spiritual and moral progress. That is what the human mind has done in the course of its advance to self:knowledge. In other words, history has a plot, and the philosopher's task is to discover it. Many eminent historians have been unable to discern any plot, and have contented themselves with recording what has happened. A few others have found the key to history in the operation of natural laws of various kinds. Hegel's attitude is based on the faith that history is the carrying out of God's purpose, and that the advancement of

knowledge has reached the point where man can discern what that purpose is. The purpose in question is the gradual realization of human freedom.

Man has passed through several stages to reach the present level of culture. He was there at first in the natural life of savagery. Gradually he built up institutions and ultimately came to a state of law and order. The whole process was not an easy one, as the full price had to be paid at every stage for every step of progress. Man had to suffer force and violence, but there was no other way to make men law-abiding before they advanced far enough mentally to accept an orderly and rational life. This process cannot succeed all at once. Those who accept law become free but others may refuse to do so and will suffer. All men are free in essence, which was the concept so loudly pronounced by the revolutionaries in France. The task of civilized people is to frame institutions under which they could be free. Hegel was a realist in the sense that he maintained against Kant that to eliminate war was impossible. Each nation-state was an individual, sovereign in its own right, and so long as this position continued, war would also remain a constant source of friction. Disputes between sovereigns could be settled by violence alone. He agreed with Hobbes that pacts without the sword were but words. Hegel was not far wrong in holding this opinion, as the entire European history subsequent to him is replete with instances to support his point.

Hegel's system was to unify the opposites, spirit and nature, universal and particular, ideal and real. The combination of these two would result in a synthesis. He stood both for idealism and realism all at once. Hegel developed his dialectical system in which logic, nature and mind figured prominently. The dialectic means 'discussion'. In a discussion between two people a debate would arise in which both would seek the truth from the diametrically opposite points of view. Each party will ultimately understand better the other's point of view. Both may agree to reject their own views and accept a new and broader view which does justice to the subject. The original opposition has been reconciled in a higher synthesis. Imagine a dispute of two people each claiming that he is right, one demanding a higher amount for the settlement of the alleged debt and the other offering a lower amount. Ultimately a third person would wisely settle the dispute, not by accepting the figures of either, but suggesting a third figure in between. This is the basis of the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, anti:thesis and synthesis. Hegel believed that thinking always proceeded according to this pattern. It begins by laying down a positive thesis which is at once negative by its anti:thesis; then further thought produces the synthesis. Culture has come into existence by the interplay of these two forces. One is the positive aspect of growth which emerges in something new, and the other is the negative aspect of rejection which discards the old. We give up childish habits to acquire more mature conduct as we grow up but in old age childish tastes are again revived to some extent. The challenges of life are negative aspects and responses become positive steps. The presence of this negative step or challenges is the clue to the development of all kinds. The power of the mind is infinite, but to produce something real and concrete the mind has to think of something definite.

Hegel's philosophy of history is a part of his analysis on the human mind. Man has consciousness which produces rational will. This rational will is at the root of human

institutions and human history. History is nothing but the embodiment or the objectification of the rational will, which also produces art, religion and philosophy. In bringing about these institutions man knows himself as spirit. This spirit is God which is absolute truth, and man is drawn to think in terms of his own essence. This essence is nothing but the thoughts expressed in 'logic'. In other words rationality and consciousness are something unique which partake of the nature of divinity. Thought is nothing but spirit, and spirit is nothing but pure activity. Human mind objectifies itself in its endeavour to find something identical with itself. The result of this activity is history. Hegel took seriously Plato's saying that a philosopher is 'the spectator of all time and all existence'. Since history is the drama of our existence, Hegel could not very well ignore history. His philosophy is to comprehend the entire universe. The system is grounded in faith, in the Christian religion, where God has been revealed as truth and as spirit. Man is spirit, and spirit can comprehend spirit. In other words, man can know God and he can know absolute truth. Hegel's system is a spiritual monism. Hegel applied his profound philosophy to man's experience. Adam and Eve were innocent in the Garden of Eden, but their fall was necessary if man was to attain moral goodness. It is in this logic that the interpretative aspect of historical phenomena is developed by Hegel. What makes the universe intelligible is to see it as the eternal cyclical process whereby the absolute spirit comes to knowledge of itself as spirit (1) through its own thinking; (2) through nature; (3) and through self-expression in history, art and philosophy.

Hegel's desire to unify world history was truly a scientific achievement. He endeavoured to explain history not by its own laws but by the weapons of philosophy and by means of such concepts as the struggle between freedom and bondage and the realization of the absolute spirit in history. Hegel's main attention was centered on the State. In a way he revived the Aristotelian or Hellenic conception of the State as the organized life of culture. He glorifies the national state and is cold towards the Kantian cosmopolitan ideal of perpetual peace founded on a world federation of republics. According to Hegel each national state is an absolute and war among them is inevitable. He says that war is even spiritually good. Since ethics is embodied in the State and there is no sovereign over all states they are in relation to each other in 'a state of nature' not subject to any genuine moral laws. They are not, for instance, obliged to keep their agreements. If things were to be carried to their logical extent, anarchy would be the only result. Therefore, Hegel gets out of the difficulty by suggesting that history is a court in which providence passes judgment and hence nations are warned accordingly. This makes history a theodicy. It agrees with Napoleon's dictum that God is on the side of the heaviest artillery. This point is explained by Hegel through logic and not theology. According to Hegel history completes itself in the Prussia of his day.

On religion Hegel has interesting remarks to make. He attempts to get rid of the multiplicity of diverse religions by arranging them in a dialectically progressive order which begins with magic and natural religion. He then takes up the religions of China, Egypt, Judea, India, Persia, (which he calls the religion of sublimity), Greece (the religion of beauty) and Rome (the religion of utility), and culminates in Christianity as the absolute religion. In this list he has forgotten Islam altogether. Hegel's idea of religion is that it is a continuous development, something historically coherent.

Hegel has expounded the idealistic theory which has attempted to reconcile the theological and rational view of history through his metaphysical concept of idealism. According to this theory, ideal is the final cause, not the material or formal or efficient cause, which is at the root of causation. The final cause is the high ideal a society fixes to achieve and that ideal determines all its conduct. Hegel brings religion into the picture for furnishing the ideal, and says that the entire human culture has been conditioned by the type of ideal each of the great religions has placed before its votaries. Judaism typifies duty, Confucianism stands for order, Islam for justice, Christianity for love, Buddhism for patience and Hinduism for tolerance. The pattern of culture evolved by each of the societies that professed these religions conformed to a great extent to the ideals they had fixed. Everything good and great these societies were able to achieve the ideal which was the motivating force. Their cultural became a farce the moment they departed from their ideal. Their ideal was their prime: symbol and the guiding spirit which had given them identity and individuality. This metaphysical thesis is true only to a limited extent. Ideals could never be attained. According to Hegel's own logic of dialectics, the force of one ideal produces a reaction and offers a negative response, which neutralizes the original ideal and something quite different, emerges disturbing the entire balance. Hence Hegel's theory of idealism to explain the cause and growth of culture is defeated by its own inherent contradictions.

In short the Hegelian philosophy of history created a stir in the entire 19th century. Some of his basic ideas are very noteworthy indeed. His 'process thought' is almost the sheet anchor of positivism in which the idea of progress was mooted that something fresh is created every moment. This process set the people thinking to discover the chain of ideas how they are closely linked one with the other, and how their action and reaction produce a new development. The key: note of his philosophy lies in his dialectics, the application of which to problems of history brought about extraordinary results. It was a surgical knife in the skilful hands of Karl Marx who used it to cut all those parts of body: politic which he thought unhealthy and retain only that - the materialist part - which he regarded as the motivating force for human activity. Hegel's philosophy of history emerged as a product of his larger analysis of the human mind, in which the rational will plays a very vital part. History is nothing but the objectification of this will, which is the spirit, the bedrock of all human activity and the fountain source of all history. The linkage he has shown from thought: process to history is surely brilliant - rationality is consciousness; consciousness results in thought; thought is impulsive spirit; spirit is pure activity; and pure activity (of unique type) is history. The metaphysical abstractions in the explanations of these processes make Hegel's philosophy a theodicy, but he has used pure reason and logic to substantiate his point. Hegel reached the Himalayan peak of fame for a time for his remarkable ideas, but such was the torrent of ideas in the nineteenth century that his philosophy too could not remain unruffled in the turbulent waves of more forceful theories. But all those theories, whether Marxism, Positivism, Historicism, or Existentialism, all found the material from the Hegelian shop.

KARL MARX (1818 - 1883)

Karl Marx, the thinker and prophet, the scientist and moralist, is undoubtedly the most controversial German philosopher of history, who brought about a radical change in the history of socialist thinking. He was born on 5th May 1818 of Jewish parents in Trier in Prussian Rhineland, and in 1824 the whole family was baptized as Protestants. Marx was so precocious from his childhood that his father, a lawyer, called him a 'demonic genius'. He had a passionate love for poetry and philosophy. He studied history and philosophy and received his doctorate in philosophy from the University of Jena in 1841. He was greatly influenced by the works of Hegel, who left a permanent imprint on him. In 1842 he became editor of a paper, but it did not provide him with a stable source of income, for which he depended on his friend, Friedrich Engels, the son of a wealthy cotton manufacturer. In 1843 Marx left Germany and except for a period in Cologne in 1848 - 49 he lived all his life in exile abroad. He was in Paris from 1843 to 1845, in Brussels from 1845 to 1848 and finally in London. In 1845 he renounced his Prussian citizenship and despite his efforts failed to secure British citizenship by naturalization. In 1847 Marx wrote his 'Poverty of Philosophy' in reply to Proudhon's book 'Philosophy of Poverty'. It was in this work that Marx developed the fundamental proposition of his economic interpretation of history. His Communist Manifesto of 1848 is the most celebrated work which contains a summary of his whole social philosophy. It appeared at a psychological period when the whole of Europe was at ferment because of the revolutions that took place in 1848. Marx spent his life in utter poverty and escaped starvation only because of the generosity of his friend, Engels. Despite poverty and illness, Marx was a prolific writer. His most famous book was 'Das Capital', in which he developed the theory of the capitalist system and its dynamism, with emphasis on its self-destructive tendencies.

Marxism is a philosophy of history impregnated by an elaborate economic theory. It implies that history is governed by laws which the human mind can recognize or determine. Therefore the first principle of Marxism is determinism, which is as solid and concrete as 'the granite foundation'. Its nature is objective historical necessity which is at the root of every causation. This is the foundation on which Marxism has built the socialist creed in contrast to the theological and metaphysical ideas of the past. With historical necessity as the basis of determination, Marx proceeded to his economic interpretation of history. He says that history is governed by certain laws. The first of these laws is to determine the direction of the historical process. We may recall that it was Hegel who had first conceived of 'process thought' which invited us to look upon history as governed not by any immutable laws but as a process in which something fresh is created at every moment. This idea is pursued further but for an entirely different purpose. Marx emphasized that economic developments are basic to social change. Ideas and institutions, law and politics and even religion and art are greatly affected by economic factors. In an ever growing industrial set-up, only the community at large will be able to provide the organizational framework of production. In other words the means of production must be nationalized.

Secondly, Marxism does not deny the influence of ideas on history, but merely states that they are not independent agents, but only intermediary links. The greatest philosopher or thinker or scientist is not above monetary pressures. Religious devotion, patriotism and all other idealistic feelings are themselves the product of economic conditions. It cannot be denied that technological progress is the cause of some very important aspects of cultural and institutional development. To a great extent the Renaissance was the product of improved shipping, increased trade, improved crafts, new discoveries, new trade routes and perfection of all sorts of tools. But the Marxists have failed to recognize that there was a new intellectual and spiritual effort.

Thirdly, Marx believed that important historical progress is achieved through an all-out conflict between an old and a new principle of social organization. This idea is related to the Hegelian concept of dialectics, where a discussion is involved between thesis and antithesis to produce synthesis. Marx applied this dialectics to his theory as well and says that progress is the result of the tension between the old and the new principle of social organization. If the tension is reduced prematurely through limited reforms, progress will be retarded. According to Marx it is futile to impose higher taxation to meet the labour demands, for in that case the incentive of the entrepreneur will be destroyed. Since true reform, which does not destroy the present system but gradually transforms it, is ruled out, revolution become necessary. The suffering and the sacrifices of the labour class would be the price the society has to pay to have essential progress.

Fourthly, Marx believed that there was always a clash of interest among social groups which he called class struggle. This conflict of interests is often seen in antagonistic political creeds. He calls this class struggle as the great motivating power of history. There is close connection between the class struggle and the dialectic philosophy. There has always been in history such a struggle, between feudalism and the serfdom, capitalism and trade unions and so on. There is a perpetual war between two groups. Democracy is no answer to this struggle. Progress will always be the result of a victory of the new class over its oppressors and the struggle will go on until the last vestiges of the old order disappear. In the struggle of the workers against the capitalists, this repression will result in the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' during the interval of transition from capitalism to fully communism.

Fifthly, Marx has defined value in his own way and says that value is labour crystallized. The value of a commodity depends on the amount of labour time necessary for its production. Labour power is the only power that can produce a value greater than its own, because a worker can work more hours than necessary to keep him alive. The production of this 'surplus labour' is 'surplus value'.

Thus Marx has contributed very radical ideas in several sectors of human life. The originality of his thought lies in his immense efforts to synthesis the entire legacy of social knowledge since Aristotle. His purpose was to achieve a better understanding of the conditions of human development and his answer for such a development was a communist society based on rational planning, cooperative production and equality of distribution, which was all possible if private property, were to be abolished and the

means of production nationalized. Liberation from all forms of political and bureaucratic hierarchy was absolutely necessary. During his time he was confronted with this dual commitment, between scholarly understanding and political action. He repudiated Hegelian and post-Hegelian speculative philosophy, and developed a humanist ethics based on sociological approach to historical phenomena. He drew freely from French materialism and British empiricism, and came out with a mature sociological conception of human societies. He made much of the 'alienation' concept in which the 'dead labour' (capital) dominates 'living labour' (the worker). Communist Manifesto boldly declared, 'what the bourgeoisie produces, above all, are its own grave diggers', and gave the clarion call, 'Working men of all countries, unite'! It should be remembered that Marxism was a response to the economic and social hardships accompanying the growth of industrial capitalism. Marxism may be described as a synthesis of radicalism, optimism and a commitment to science. It is radical in criticizing the contemporary social and political institutions. It is optimistic in expecting a thorough change which would be the victory of the workers. It is committed to science because it has faith in technological advancement which would help social forces to achieve a better standard of life.

Marxism regards history as the development of man's effort to master the forces of nature, and hence of production. History is the succession of changes in social systems and also the development of human relations geared to productive activity. History is progress because man's ability to produce continually increases. Many a time this progress is checked by oppressive social organizations which seemed to be beyond human control. Inevitably society divides into classes and a struggle starts between the ruling class and the labour class, who are really the producers. Those who are propertyless are forced to work as the labour class. Marx thought that there would be no democracy as long as there are inequalities and special interests. From a promoter of progress the ruling class turns into a useless parasite, a dead shell, but making would not spare them for long. A revolution takes place in which they are all destroyed. Leadership is given to the class which is most advanced in production. According to Marx, mankind has gone through three or four major modes of production namely ancient slave society, feudalism and capitalism. Capitalism represented the peak of human development in production. It had amassed unprecedented wealth which was not spent for the well-being of man, but was productive of more misery and chaos to man. Capitalism had reduced man to the position of a commodity, whose labour power; talent and personality are for sale in the free market.

The main contention of **the materialist conception of history** is that the development of the economic structure of society is a natural process, which appears to be the most dominant activity of man. Marx used the word 'materialist' to make a contrast with what is supernatural, metaphysical or speculative. It was in the sense of most real, concrete, fundamental and comprehensible. He believed that a general science of human society could be worked out only by describing and explaining society in empirical terms. At least the French and the English historians had taken up the themes of commerce, industry, trade, agriculture and social behaviour. Marx regarded industry and commerce as 'material' in contrast with religion and morals, and even in contrast with politics and law. Therefore, the materialist conception of history is intended to be a

naturalistic, empirical and scientific account of historical events, which takes industry and economics as basic factors.

Marx proceeded to criticize Hegel's ideas which described the development of the human mind as a process of externalizing its ideas in order to transform the material world and to 'humanize' it. According to Hegel the work of labor's hand does not stand in the way of history development, but human development itself takes place because of that labour. Hegel had used the word 'alienation' to indicate the work of externalizing ideas into the natural world. On the other hand Marx did not think that in a capitalist society the work of labour was instrumental in the development of the human mind. Labour itself had become a commodity to be bought and sold, and there were labour agents who did this job of labour supply. The worker himself was 'alienated', and his work resulted in the creation of a social system, that was hidden from him. The wage system and his struggle every time to upgrade it had degraded labour to the level of a machine.

'Estrangement' is another word used by Hegel that Marx took over in this context. True human dignity would be restored only when private property, competition, money and wages are all abolished through a communist social order. Marx says that a Communist society is the only 'solution to the riddle of history'. Marx agreed with Hegel that the human mind could develop only by the conquest of nature, but in the capitalist system the efforts of the workers, who are really responsible for the transforming of the natural world, are so much distorted that labour is completely out of the picture. This state of affairs would naturally not last long and hence in the metaphysical sense capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction. In his analysis of the social structure he called the productive forces as 'the material conditions of life'. The primary social activity is production, which always involves relations with other men, both in the work itself and in the distribution of the product. It is upon these relationships that the political, legal and ideological superstructures are built. To understand any aspect of society whether religious, moral, artistic, legal, political or social, we have to know the nature of its productive force and economic structure. The productive forces determine certain social structures into which men are forced to fit their activities.

The next step in Marxian analysis is property and power. The main power in a society belongs to those who own **means of production**. In a tribal society property is jointly owned, and hence power is diffused throughout the society and there is no dominant class. In a feudal society, the feudal lords are the ruling class who get what they want from the serfs and even from the rich merchants whose wealth is subordinated to the landed interests. The interests of the lords, the merchants and the serfs are not the same. In a capitalist society the owners of the means of production are those with capital or money who enjoy the fruit of the work of the labour class although their own labour is very marginal. All important social changes must originate in productive activities and the organization in which they take place. This is the central element of **the theory of historical materialism**. Historical materialism makes two main predictions. The first is that the capitalist system will break down as a result of its internal contradictions. The

second is that after a period of proletarian dictatorship it will be succeeded by a communist society.

No one has become as controversial in the world as Marx. His theory has attracted the most numerous and the most virulent critics. The argument of Marx is that men cannot engage themselves in art, politics, philosophy and religion without economic backing, but how they make their economic living does not determine their art, politics, philosophy and religion. If they are economically well off, it does not follow that they will surely contribute to art, politics, philosophy and religion. There is no correlation between the two. If food, shelter and clothing are so essential for human development and if all these are available in a jail, nobody would prefer to go there. **Secondly**, Marx himself had another argument suggesting that there is something obvious in the view that the productive forces determine history. Tool-making is what distinguishes man from other animals. But beavers and bees do this too, but their hives and dams do not suggest any improvement upon their device. Man is not the only animal that makes its means of life. What makes the difference is that man constantly improves his method of production but beavers and bees do not. It was the Hegelian view that men create their lives through labour. Technology is regarded as the concrete embodiment of the process by which nature is controlled and humanized. Marx and Engels lived during the industrial revolution when several inventions were affecting social life. They saw that a new society was coming up because of the steam engine, the railroad, and the cotton mills. They were so overwhelmed by its impact that they exaggerated the economic factors. Although important technological changes often change the mode of life, thought and law, it does not follow that society itself would be decisively altered as a result of the technological change. Toynbee goes to the extent of saying that the technological advance is more a sign of retardation than progress, for the basic values of life might undergo a change.

Thirdly, according to Marx development takes place as a result of the clash of opposites. The fundamental thesis of Marxist dialectics is that everything is in movement. The doctrine of the class struggle is regarded by Marxists as a vital feature of historical materialism. Changes in the means of production produce class struggle, which may result in social revolutions out of which new forms of life and thought are born. This is not true in every case, as we know that the French Revolution was not the product of any change in the means of production but because of social unrest. The revolution of 1688 in England and the Renaissance of the 19th century in India were not owing to any change in the economic structure but on account of other factors. The Meiji revolution of Japan is yet another example.

Fourthly, Marx appears to be highly influenced by Hegel; but Hegelian dialectics had quite the opposite effect on Marx. The most fundamental feature of the dialectical method as understood by Marx is its distrust of abstraction. This is also a Hegelian legacy, but whereas Hegel regarded the Absolute Spirit as the concrete reality, for Marx reality was the material world. Whatever Hegel touched was turned into spirit, and whatever Marx touched was turned into matter. Both are in the extreme, but truth is somewhere in between, and hence neither pure Hegelianism nor pure Marxism can fully explain the phenomena. Philosophers who talk of spirit and economists who talk of land,

labour and capital obscure the real basis of human life, and substitute abstract categories for the concrete realities of human association. Abstraction becomes mystification which blurs the vision and intoxicates so that nothing else is seen. Both Hegel and Marx seem to have been misled into the belief that what is true of a part is also true of the whole.

None can deny the influence of Marxian thought on modern society. Undoubtedly he introduced into the social sciences of his day a new method of inquiry, new concepts and a number of bold hypotheses to explain the rise and fall of human society. The entire 19th century was vastly affected in the realm of historical writing, political science and sociology. Marx was a visionary, a revolutionary, a Romanticist and a doctrinaire whose political creed abounded in contradiction with his scientific investigations. However, on the side of the scientific method he made two important contributions. One was the view that human societies are wholes or systems in which social groups, institutions, beliefs and doctrines are interrelated and have to be studied in their interrelations rather than treated in isolation, as in the conventional separate histories of politics, law, religion and thought. Thucydides had said this long ago in some other way, namely historical events are related one to the other in a systematic, rational and permanent manner. Secondly, Marx held the view of societies as inherently mutable systems, in which changes are produced largely by internal contradictions and conflicts, and these changes could be reduced to general statements and principles in order to explain their causes and consequences. In short Marx should be credited as the only person who performed the miraculous task of synthesizing in a critical way the entire legacy of social knowledge since Aristotle.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Theories that influence social change : Social change is a complicated process which is the result of various factors. These factors operate according to certain rules and regulations. These rules and regulations have certain directions. In fact there is one theory or the other which determines the social change, and its directions. That is why it is known as deterministic theory. **MacIver and Page** has explained it in the following words:

“By deterministic theory we mean here in a doctrine that regards human behaviour and changes in human behaviour as primarily to be explained by environmental, external or material conditions”.

Apart from the deterministic theory of social change, there are other theories of social change. Prominent amongst these theories are: **(A) Linear theory of social change** **(B) Cyclic theory of social change.** These various theories of social change have their various forms and various social thinkers have come out with their views in this regard. It would be worthwhile if all these theories of social change are discussed a bit in detail.

(A) Linear theory of social change : According to the advocates of this theory the changes that take place in the society are not repeated. Social thinkers who have contributed to this theory include :(1) Auguste Comte, (2) Herbert Spencer, (3) Hobhouse, and (4) Karl

Marx. Discussion of these social thinkers will make the various aspects of these theories a clearer.

1. August Comte and his views regarding social change : According to Auguste Comte, the human mind develops through three stages:(1)Theological State, (2) Meta Physical State, and (3) Positive State. In this respect Auguste Comte has remarked: "In the theological state, human mind, seeking the essential nature of beings the first and the final causes (origin and purpose) of all facts, in short absolute knowledge supposes all phenomena to be produced by immediate action of supernatural beings". After the theological state, comes the Metaphysical State which acts as a bridge between the theological and positivistic state. Like the state of mental development, Comte has divided the stages of material development into three categories :(1) Conquest, (2) Defense, and (3) Industry.

2. Herbert Spencer and his views regarding social change : There is element of evolution in every aspect of life. The society like the man passes through various stages of development and ultimately the full development of the society takes place.

3.Hobhouse and his views regarding social change : Hob house was influenced by Comte and Spencer but differs from them in the sense that he did not recognize the processes of evolution as the complete process or a process of independent by itself. According to him, with the development of human mind change in moral values also take place. In his book 'Morals in Evolutions' he has said that the developing sense of morality is an attempt to provide proper direction to the stage of development.

4. Karl Marx and his theory of social change : Karl Marx has come forward with a very important theory of social change which is known as "theory of economic determinism". He has put forward his theory of dialectical materialism, economic interpretation of history and so on. In this respect he has himself remarked: "The mode of production in material life determines the general character on social, political and spiritual process of life". According to the Liner Theory of social change, it advocates the direction of change. This forces and elements of change are material as well as non:material.

(B) Cyclic Theory of social change : Advocates of this theory are of the view that social changes in the society take place in a cyclic manner which means the changes that have taken place today are repeated after one stage or the other. **Spengler, Toynbee, Pareto, Sorokin** are the main exponents of this theory in order to have a clear idea about the cyclic theory of social change. It would be proper if the views of all the advocates of this theory are discussed a bit in detail.

(1) Oswald Spengler and his cyclic theory of social change : Oswald Spengler in his famous work the 'Decline of the best' has written that the social changes instead of taking place in a particular direction take place in a cyclic manner. He has said that the soul of the culture is inherent in a particular age and like the growth of an individual into various stages and that infancy, childhood, adolescence, old age etc., the culture also passes through various stages and changes after every stage. The progress of the society is the civilization. He has said that the culture declines and action comes up in a cyclic order. This theory of Spengler has been bitterly criticized by various social thinkers

although he has described it the most scientific theory. The social thinkers have described the theory of cyclic order of social change as a theory of passed on false analogy.

(2) Arnold Toynbee's cyclic theory of social change : **Arnold Toynbee** has interpreted history in his own manner. According to his persons interpretation, every age has certain challenges and a group of which is in minority is prepared to respond to that challenger as a result of this responsive challenge, the intellectual thinkers, which Toynbee has described as creative minority, bring about the progress of the culture. According to Toynbee in the present age, the thinkers are busy in preparing themselves to face the challenge of the third World War. Toynbee has said that these intellectuals who are known as creative minority have certain Godly qualities. According to Toynbee the struggle between good and bad always goes on in the society and as a result of this struggle, the society and the culture progresses.

(3) Pareto's cyclic theory of social change : **wilfredo Pareto** is an important advocate of the cyclic theory of social change. He has tried to explain the social change on the basis of cyclic changes in the society. According to Pareto, there is direction in every society and due to which the society is normally divided into two groups :(a) Social elite and (b) the lower class.

Members of social elite because of their qualities and abilities are placed at high position, while people of the lower class are placed at a lower status. The position of the social elite is not static. It changes and people who acquire those qualities enter the class of the elite. On the other hand, those members of the social elite who lose their qualities come down to the lower status. Though the members of the elite try to check the entry of others into their class, while those who acquire these qualities try to enter in that class. Bogardus has clarified this theory of Pareto in the following words:

"The theory of elite is that in every society there are people who possess any mark degree of the qualities of intelligence, characters, skill, capacity, of whatever kind that there are two classes of elite with the two groups are disjunctive at any given time and that there is a up and down circulation of the elite". Pareto's theory of residues - Pareto's theory of residues says that social change is caused by two residues viz. one, residues of combination and two, residues of persistent aggregates.

Every member of the society possesses both these residues. The first category of residues i.e. residues to combination are meant for the fulfillment immediate needs of an individual while the residues of the persistence of aggregates lay stress on idealism and values. They make the individual idealistic and considerate about values. Both these types of residues are responsible for change in the social set up or social order. In other words these residues are responsible for social change. An aspect of the residues of social change - According to Pareto the cycle of social change which is caused by residues has three aspects:

(1) Political aspect, (2) Economic aspect, and (3) Ideological aspect.

Political aspect : Pareto's cyclic theory of social change acts according to Pareto, changes in the political set up takes place when the Govt. is run by the people who have more of residues persistence of aggregates. They are more concerned about ideals and values and

try to achieve them. Pareto has sometime called them lions. When these lions forces and forget about the importance of the values, they de:generate these lions into foxes and the people of the lower class who have more of the residues of combination take advantage of the situation and capture power, then again these foxes are replaced by lions. Thus the cyclic of a change passes on from lions to the foxes:

2) Economic aspect of the Pareto's cyclic theory of social change : According to Pareto, from economic point of view, every society has two groups; Speculators who have a indefinite income. This income sometime goes down while on other occasions it goes very high. The second group from economic point of view is society called 'Rentiers' who have fixed income. In the first group i.e. the group of speculators has more residues of combination and the second group i.e. the group of rentiers has more of the residues of the persistence aggregate. Sometimes it is the group of speculators that dominates the society but sometimes it is rentiers who dominate it. Speculators have leaders, businessmen, inventors etc. While the rentiers consist of idealist, thinkers, etc. The need is that both these groups should combine and work together so that the development of the society may take place.

(3) Ideological aspect of the Pareto's cyclic theory of social change : In the world ideology also changes take place. Sometimes people have faith in certain ideas and sometimes they have faith in these ideas. Sometimes conservatives dominate society, while on other occasion; it is the progressives who dominate the society. The dominance of one group is sometimes replaced by the other group and this brings a change in ideology. According to Pareto, there are two groups in every society: (1) the social elite or the aristocracy and the other one lower group. Both these groups go on any one group may go into the other. In this cyclic change from one group to the other, people take to wrong methods also. According to Pareto the cyclic change which means sometimes dominance to one group while on the other dominance of the other group goes on.

(4) Pirim Sorokin's cyclic theory of social change : Sorokin has also propounded the theory of socio:cultural dynamics of change in a cycle manner. He has said that every society passes through the following stages and the cycle of change from one stage to the other takes place in a cyclic manner. According to Sorokin every society passes through the following three stages of culture:

(1) Sensate culture, (2) Ideational culture, and (3) Idealistic culture.

(1) Sensate culture : In this type of culture, every thing is material or that can be seen through senses is accepted final. In this stage of culture, the faith in God spiritualism and higher values goes down. Outlook of the members of the society is materialistic and they are only interested in changing the material structure of the society.

(2) Ideational culture : This is the stage of culture from which faith pre:dominates. In this culture stage people have faith in eternal values, God Soul etc. They believe in changing the society not through material means but by spiritual methods.

(3) Idealistic culture : A state midway is between sensate and ideational stage of culture. In this type of culture both the things are found. At one end, people are interested in

gains, fulfillment of their selfish ends on the other they are also prepared to make sacrifices for fulfilling the needs of others.

According to Sorokin, in every stage of culture, a point is reached when certain changes take place on account of inherent conditions.

A type of the theories of Sorokin is cyclic theory of social change : Socio:cultural Cyclic theory of social change of Sorokin may be categorized under the following three heads:

- (1) Externalist or environmental theory of social change,
- (2) Integral theory of social change.
- (3) The immanent theory of social change.

It would be worthwhile if all these theories of social change are studied in detail.

(1) **Externalist or environmental theory of social change** : According to this theory of socio:cultural change, the causes of changes are inherent in the external atmosphere and not in the order itself. In this context it has to be borned in mind that Sorokin has said, more external factors bring about social change if the elements of change are not present in the social order of the order itself. Sorokin does not agree with the behaviorists who say that every stimulus has a response and the whole process is the result of stimulus and response. He says that unless the potentiality of change is inherent in the system or the object itself, the change can not take place. According to this theory he does not give importance to the external factors of social change.

(2) **Integral theory of social change** : This theory that integrates both the external and internal factors. According to Sorokin, although both external and internal factors of social change are important but it is internal potentialities of change that are more important.

(3) **The immanent theory of social change** : According to Sorokin if all the external conditions are static or they are not present even then, because of internal factors, the change takes place. In fact social organization is a continuous or going process or concerned. That is why the changes take place because of internal factors. External or environmental factors may also be important but they only act as supplementary. In this respect Sorokin has himself pointed out: "My answer is in favour of the numbers of immanent change of each socio:cultural system supported by externalistic number, within certain conditions and limits." Sorokin has made a study of the civilization and culture and its various aspects such a Art, Philosophy, Politics, Economic Structure of the last 2500 years and has come out with the conclusion changes that have taken place are the result of internal factors. His main points in this respect are:

1. Every social structure or culture is responsible for its own destiny : According to Sorokin we have already seen that there are certain factors that are responsible for social change and these factors are inherent in the social structure itself. These factors frame the destiny of the society.

2. Social change is limited : Social change is limited which means that it changes to extent, the potentialities are present in the structure itself. There is no limitless change.

3. There is a swing or rhythm of change : According to Sorokin the change after reaching a particular point gets exhaust and after that it takes a new turn. The change according to Sorokin Linear or it does not take place of a along a line. It fluctuates and changes.

4. Culture repeats themselves : Materialistic and idealistic cultures and continuation repeat themselves. They do not exhaust after one change.

Criticism of Sorokin's theory of socio:culture cyclic order of social change : Sorokin's theory of social change was very much recognized by a group of thinkers while it was criticized by a large number of thinkers like Sapier etc. Critics of Sorokin say that socio:cultural change is quantitative in statistics or relative and is not factual. They have said that Sorokin has tried to prepare frame work of culture know as "Materialistic or Sensual and Idealistic or extract.

Sorokin's theory of social change is more subjective and valuational than objective and scientific : According to Sorokin, the materialistic culture is not at all good while idealistic culture is extremely good. He has further said that as a result of integration of these two cultures and integral culture shall be borned which shall by really helpful for the society. This type of concept of Sorokin is not scientific. It is more Utopian.

Sorokin does not believe in the progress of the society : Sorokin says that t he society does not progress while modern thinkers are of the view that it is constantly changing. Karl Marx says that dialectical materialism is responsible for the progress and development of the society. He further says that society after reaching a particular point starts decaying while modern thinkers are of the view that the world and the society are continually changing.

Not based on historical facts : Sorokin's of cyclic change is not at all based on historical facts. It is like historical imagination to historical poetry. His ideas are more like the ideas of Christian thinkers. It seems that what St. Augustine said in the mediaeval ages has been repeated by Sorokin in the 20th century.

Sorokin's theory is based on morality than scientific facts : Critics of Sorokin's point out that he firstly build his theory than realizes it. He quotes history only to start his predominate theory. This is not the correct process. In this respect Hans Spellers views are very pertinent: "Sorokin's basic philosophy may be regarded as modern Vulgarization of Christian thinking."

Various thinkers have come out with various theories in regard to the social change. These is inevitable and every society changes. Theories are only attempt to explain this fundamental process.

KARL MARX AND HIS THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Basis of the theory of social change and economic determinism: According to Karl Marx all social institutions are governed by the mode production. It is the economic factors that result into changes in social institutions and social factors. As a result of material forces to the economic factors, development in techniques and modes of production takes place. All this leads to establishment of new economic relationship.

Normally the social institutions do not accept these changes and so struggle leads to a new social order which replaces the other social order. In simple phraseology it may be said that as a result of changes in the modes of production new classes come into being and these new classes create new situations and new history. That is why Karl Marx has said that: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of classes struggle.

Karl Marx concept of social change is based of the fact that mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual process to life. He has in his book 'Critic of political Economy asserted: "The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached continued to serve as the leading thread in my studies, may be briefly summed up as follows: In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructure ad to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain change if the development the material forces of production to what is but a legal expression for the same thing with the property relating within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into the fetters. Then come the period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundations the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations the distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science and the legal political religious, aesthetic of philosophic in short ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and it pit. Just as our opinion of an individual is not based ion what he thinkers of himself so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own explained form the contradictions of material life? From the existing conflict between the social forces of production and the relations of production."

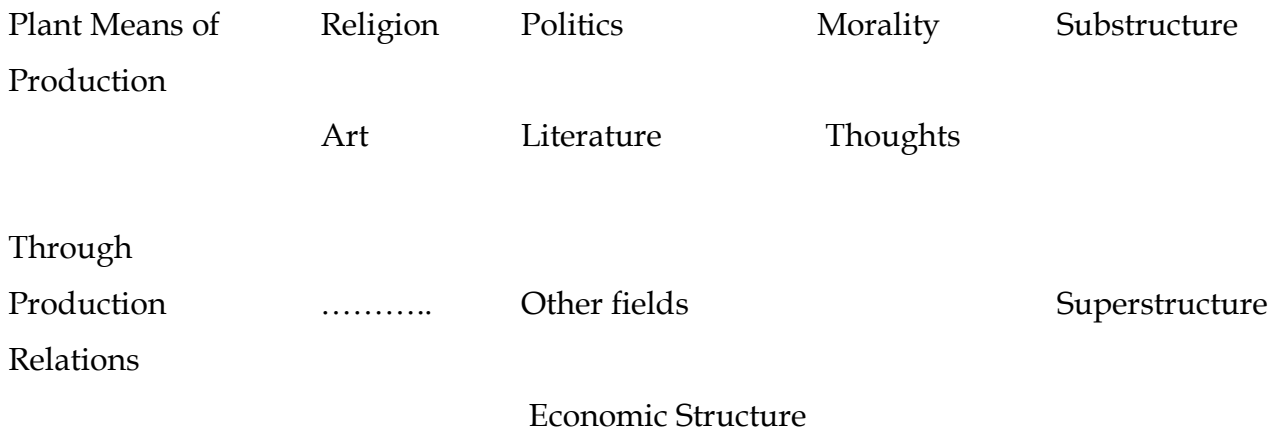
Economic Structure is the variable factors of social change :

According to Karl Max it is the economic factor which is based on mode of production and is responsible for culture, social and spiritual institutions. This economic relation Marx has himself said: "In acquiring new productive forces may change in social relations. The hand mill gives you society with the feudal lords the steam mill's society with the industrial capitalists."Karl Marx's theory of social change is based on the material interpretation of history class struggle can economic determinism According to Karl Marx theory of social change is based on the material interpretation of history class struggle and economic determinism. According to Karl Marx the economic factor or economic determinism is mainly responsible for social change.

Basis of social changes : According to Karl Marx the mode of production has two aspects: (a) the force of the power of production, and (b) relationship of the production.

Forces of production include machines, tools, laborers, techniques, etc. This is an ever: changing force and changes according to the needs and the situation. Production relationship determines the normal, religious, political and constitutional relations. According to Marx the moral, religious, constitutional and other factors that get influenced by force of production which is called 'superstructure' are currently called 'substructure'. It may be explained with the help of the following diagram.

'Social change of Marx' at a glance



Social change is the spontaneous result of social structure. Once the means of production change, the relations are established, a new social structure is established. As a result of this, a spontaneous social change takes place. In other words it means that development of the society in a particular direction leads to a particular change. Karl Marx has accepted that the seeds of the social change or new social order are present in the old social order or the existing social order.

Role of revolution in social change : According to Karl Marx, social change takes place as a result of revolution. Karl Marx does not rule out a bloody revolution for social change. According to Marx, once a change in the mode of production takes place, new production relations are established leading to social changes as a result of which political power undergoes certain changes. He has said that as the new social class tries to bring about the social change, the exploiters try to stop it by the use of forces of the State. However, social change takes place as a result of revolution. This revolution can be bloodless also as envisaged by Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave. According to these thinkers revolution is the maximum of evolution in the shortest possible time. It does not mean that new relations can be established or new social orders can be established without any difficulty or change, but the fact remains that social change does not take place easily. It is resisted by the forces 'status:quo' and those who want to maintain the institution of the exploiters.

Change under definite circumstances : Social change or revolution takes place under definite circumstances. No social structure is done away with unless it has assumed fullest development and its allied forces have assumed fullest possible development and a definite stage. In other words, it means that unless objective conditions are fulfilled a

revolution or social change does not take place. Capitalism can be overthrown when the proletariats have become extremely prepared for it. It means that there should be poverty, workers should be properly organized, they should be politically conscience ad there things are there the death nail of the capitalist private property sound and expropriations are expropriated.

No doubt material and economic actors are responsible for social change but new things and principles are also responsible for it. They create new conditions and fresh objectives and material conditions. These are responsible for sowing the seeds of revolution. In other words, it means that social change is spontaneous development which takes place under definite circumstances. It is the definite outcome of the struggle between the forces of 'status:quo' and change the force of exploitation and force of emancipation of exploiters. Furies of status - quo try to stop change by using the State Machine and the force. But it can not be stopped. It is caused as a result of blood revolution and also sometimes through peaceful means or in a democratic manner.

1. Critical evaluation of Karl Marx's theory of social change based on economic determinism : Those who have criticized Karl Marx's theory of social change based on economic determinism say that it is not possible to explain the social change on the basis of economic factors. The social order is quite complicated and various factors are linked with it. In this respect they cite the example of the 1942 revolution when people tried to change the political control of the Britishers and the 15th August, 1947 when India became free without any bloodshed.

2. Simply economic needs are not the sole governing factors : According to the critics of Karl Marx's theory of social change are based on economic determinism, and all the social events are not governed by the economic factors alone. Sometimes there are they who are interested other than the economy that determines the activities of man. In this respect they say that people take part in religious and cultural activities and other activities are not governed by an economic factor. They say that even Marx Weber has recognized importance of religion in determining the human behaviour. They also say that sex needs also could influence human behaviour.

3. Critics of Karl Max's theory of social change say that this theory is not practical, because it does not say as to what are those factors which bring about changes in social forces. They also say that it is not a scientific principle because there is no consistence of cause and effect relationship. There are various contradictory situations in making social situations.

4. These critics say that a particular type of means of production gives birth to a particular type of economic situation is not invariably correct. Sometimes a particular type of industrial development or a particular stage of industrial development gives a different type of economic situation. There are various countries in the world that have different stages in industrial and technological development but they have the same capitalist society in spite of difference in the stages of industrialization.

5. They also say Marx has not clearly and categorically stated what he means be 'economic determinism' Sorokin has in this respect remarked: "It becomes a kind of bag

filled with geographic conditions, techniques and evolutionary science and by the whole conversion machinery of trade, commercial and distribution which involves judicial and political institutions and what not."

6. Social changes are not necessarily the result of revolution.

The critics are of the view that social changes are not necessarily the result of revolution and struggle. They sometimes result from revolution of economic and material welfare. According to Trade: "Since the beginning of history classes and armies could have struggled with one another endlessly and they could have created either geometry mechanism or chemistry without which it would be impossible for man to subdue nature and makes progress in industry and military area".

The theory of economic determinism and social change as propounded by Karl Marx in spite of its sound footing suffers from various weakness and drawbacks. Karl Marx himself and his friend Engels have tried to correct them. They have recognized the importance of religious, political and intellectual factors along with social factors, but they have no doubt, said that economic factor is the most important factor. Sorokin has in this respect very candidly remarked: "To hope of an extension of the most complex dynamics of social life and history through only one factors amounts to nothing but idiocy".

COMTEAN POSITIVIST LOGIC

French positivist philosopher, Comte's full name was Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Xavier Comte (1798-1857) He is the father of the basic social science of sociology. He was born at Montpellier on 19 January, 1798. He abandoned the Catholic faith at the age of 13. In 1814 he entered the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris which was the centre of political liberalism and of progressive thought in France. He became a professor of mathematics, and very soon came into contact with Saint:Simon the radical of the age who contributed much to the shaping of Comte's thoughts. In 1826 Comte started a course of lectures in Paris to expound his ideas as they were developed at this time. From 1832 to 1842 he was a teacher at the Ecole Polytechnique, but lost his job owing to his quarrel with the Director of the school. During the rest of his life he was supported by his numerous friends, one of whom was John Stuart Mill. Although self:centered and egocentric in life, Comte had a zeal for the welfare of humanity. He worked indefatigably to systematize his ideas into a plan for the betterment of humanity. He died in Paris on 5 September, 1857.

Comte was deeply influenced by Saint:Simon who contended that 'political phenomena are as capable of being grouped under laws as other phenomena.....the rule destination of philosophy and science must be social, and the true object of the thinker must be the interpretation and reorganization of society by means of the application of the methods of the positive sciences to the study of society'. Fourier sowed the seeds of the idea of social sciences, Saint:Simon nourished it with enthusiastic zeal and Comte reaped the fruit. Comte's purpose was the study and understanding of what he called 'social physics'. This term itself is very significant. The aim of positive philosophy was to

liberate history from the hold of theology and metaphysics, and to make history stand on its own base of historical laws. Comte wanted to introduce into the study of history the same scientific observations which prevail in chemistry, physics and physiology. In 1822 he published his first work 'A Plan for the Scientific Works Necessary to Reorganize Society' which roughly forecasts his intellectual career. This was the charter of the positive philosophy. It described the intellectual trends of the time and suggested the needed reforms in ideology and social planning. The first volume of his 'Course of Positive Philosophy' appeared in 1830 and the sixth and the final volume in 1842. He then proceeded to his still more ambitious project, 'System of Positive Polity', the first volume foreign which was published in 1851 and the fourth and final in 1854. This work contained his sociological theories as well as his plan for an ideal society.

Comte heavily drew from Aristotle, David Hume and Immanuel Kant for his conception of Positivism. The repudiation of Christianity and the installation of the Goddess of Reason by the French Revolution stimulated his ideas that the religious order should be secular in nature. Comte developed the ideas of historical determinism, the idea of progress and the law of the three stages - theological, metaphysical and scientific. The main contributions of Comte's positive philosophy fall into five parts; (1) the adoption of the positive or the scientific method to history, (2) the law of the three stages of intellectual development, (3) the classification of the sciences, (4) the conception of the philosophy of each of the sciences prior to sociology and (5) the synthesis of the system of positive philosophy. Of these parts the law of the three stages appears to be very important. Comte's positive philosophy emerged from his historical study of the progress of the human mind, which passed through three stages, namely theological, metaphysical and scientific. The progress of each stage was not only inevitable but also irreversible. In the theological stage man views everything as animated by a will and a life similar to his own. Man makes God in his own image. This stage has three sub:stages - animism, polytheism and monotheism. In animism each object is viewed as having its own will. Polytheism believes that many divine wills impose themselves on objects. Monotheism conceives of only one Supreme Will imposing itself on objects. In the second stage metaphysical thought substitutes abstractions for a personal will. Causes and forces replace desires, and one great entity Nature emerges as a potent factor. In the third positive stage, scientific ideas explain the phenomena. The study of laws is undertaken which take into account 'relations of successions and resemblance' as the true object of man's research. Each stage exhibits not only a particular form of mental development but also of material development. In the theological stage military life dominates, in the metaphysical stage the legal forms achieve dominance, and in the positive stage industrial growth gains primacy. All sciences depend for their growth on the previous sciences. There cannot be any effective physics without astronomy, or biology without chemistry.

Comte's classification of the sciences was based upon the hypothesis that the sciences must inevitably develop in the order of decreasing generality and increasing complexity. The several sciences in the order of their importance are mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology and sociology. Each of these sciences depends upon and draws from those which preceded it in the series. Sociology not only completes

the series but also reduces social facts to laws and synthesizes the whole of human knowledge, thus acting as a guide in the reconstruction of society. He laid the basis for social history through his emphasis on the social conditioning of human actions and motives. He greatly stimulated the search for possible laws and stages of historical development. His main philosophy centers on the idea 'nature becomes conscious of itself in man', and thus man sums up in himself all the laws of the world. One who has understood this subjective synthesis will also understand its objective synthesis. Comte calls the metaphysical stages a negative stage, whose importance lies in the destruction of the old conceptions. Thus intellectual development of mankind had necessarily to pass through ages of anarchism and revolutionary restlessness. The final stage is Positivism because a new order cannot be attained before the remains of the old system have been completely erased.

Comte thought that it would be possible to discover 'determined laws' which governed human society, as the world of nature is governed by physical laws. With regard to history Comte said 'The prevailing tendency to specialization in study would reduce history to a mere accumulation of unconnected delineations, in which all ideas of the true filiations of events would be lost amid the mass of confused descriptions. If the historical comparisons of the different periods of civilization are to have any scientific character, they must be referred to the general social evolution'. Comte and his disciples believed that an understanding of the laws of society would enable the state not only to control the direction of history but to predict the course of history. The aim of the Positivists in short was to discover a set of working hypotheses or laws for the interpretation of history. Positivists would do the same job to history as what Newton had done to physics. Their problem was 'what is the ultimate explanation of history, or more modestly what are the forces which determine human events and according to what laws do they act'? One of the most influential of Comte's ideas borrowed from science and applied to history and social sciences was the application of the word 'milieu'. It became a very flexible word. In the final analysis it means environment.

Positivism was a reaction to Romanticism. Positivism tells us that human knowledge cannot go beyond human experience and that any inquiry into historical phenomenon should be restricted to the scientific mode. It emphasized the fact that the purpose of historical study was to discover the motives and explain the processes of events through which they have passed. Such an inquiry would result in finding the rules governing the relations that exist among facts that are connected one with the other in a permanent order. This school regarded history as 'Social Physics'. It means the scientific aspect of historical events which could be reduced to a general principle. It held the view that the historical course is subject to a certain direction, and if this course were to be intelligently traced it should be possible to predict the future. Because of causal connection past events could be explained on the basis of which laws could be framed that would predict the future. But this prediction can never be done in respect of isolated events or unique personalities. Laws require general tendencies, a larger scheme of things, totality and the masses. The Positivists felt that the philosophies of history touched historical consciousness at three points, namely the integrity of historical events, the unity of the narration with the document and the imminence of development. These

are the three important stages which the Positivists brought out, and these three aspects were covered by three different types of thinkers, namely the historians, the philologists and the philosophers.

The historians were those who had a special disposition for the investigation of particular facts rather than theories, and a greater acquaintance with and in the practice of historical studies than with speculative literature. Their main job was to write history which was a reflective process and the re:enactment of the past experience in their own minds. This involved the utilization of every bit of relevant data, drawing or proper inferences, furnishing an intelligent analysis, and the exposition of these facts in a suitable style. All these operations indicate that history is different from philosophy, which historians relegated to the background, and undertook merely to reconstruct the past in such a way as to make it reflect reality. They did not believe in the dictum that history is philosophy teaching by examples. They believed that historical events are unique in their own way, and they should be studied not for the sake of framing any laws or theories but for merely knowing and understanding what the past was. The reality and not the value of the fact were held to be the province of the historian. History should not be a partisan propaganda but an objective and faithful record of the past which should reflect how things had really happened. Leopold Von Ranke is the expounder of this view and he is known as the father of modern history. He combated the intrusion of philosophy into history, especially Hegelian philosophy. He vehemently attacked the view that historical causality could be explained in terms of any single concept. He popularized the idea that it was not necessary for a historian to indulge in the speculative job of advancing theories. The job of a historian is merely to present all the facts in their correct perspective and leave the readers to draw their own conclusions. Ranke inaugurated the writing of a kind of history wherein national, religious, sectarian, and racial or any other type of prejudice would have no place, and history would come as nearly as possible to the concept of science, 'no less and no more'.

The second groups of scholars were philologists. Their job was to make sure that the narrative was quite reflective of the facts contained in a document. They did not write history but supplied the right material for writing history. This activity was called 'erudite' scholarship. They undertook on a large scale the work of compiling the sources, editing the material, checking their authenticity, applying the canons of criticism to the document, and publishing this material with elaborate notes. They would compile volumes in which there would be nothing except what was contained in the texts 'torn from the contexts and repeated without being thought by the philologist narrator'. This activity was something like serving the historical dishes with raw commodities without cooking them in any way. The object was to collect every bit of useful data and edit them into comprehensive volumes. A few took up classical studies, others languages, literature, philosophy, political, economic, or social aspects. It was all philological study, which laid great stress on textual criticism; emendation and compilation. They were more scientific than the historian and more septic of philosophy than the historian. They were not interested either in critical analysis or interpretation of the dam or inquiry into the causes, conditions and processes of events or in the synthesizing of the material to draw any principle.

The third group is the philosophers, and yet they opposed the term philosophy of history. They chose other terms which were less open to suspicion and appeared to be more objective. They styled themselves as positivists, naturalists, sociologists, empiricists and critics. Their purpose was to achieve something different from what the philosophers of history had done. Since the latter had proceeded from the conception of the end, the former were determined to work with the conception of the cause. They would search out the cause of every fact and thus would concentrate more and more widely on the causes of the entire course of history. Others had attempted a dynamic of history, but they worked with a mechanic of history, and they called history 'a social physics'. A special science arose which was opposed to the philosophy of history in which naturalistic and positivistic tendencies became exalted in its own eyes namely sociology. Sociology classified facts of human origin and determined the laws of mutual dependence which regulated them furnishing the narratives of historians with the principles of explanation by means of these laws. Historians, on the other hand, diligently collected facts and offered them to sociology, that it might press the juice out of them. In other words sociology deducted laws from the material furnished by history. History and sociology stood to one another in the same relation as zoology and physiology, physics and mineralogy. They differed from the physical and natural sciences only by their great complexity. The introduction of mathematical calculation seemed to be the condition of progress for history as for all the sciences, physical and natural.

Apart from sociology, statistics came to the assistance of history in processing innumerable facts to a common degree of generality. The computer has become today a great tool to reduce data to our purpose. Since statistics acts as a factory of condensation, the synthesis invoked and outlined for history showed at a glance causes and facts which arose from the laws. The supporters of this school were Comte, Buckle, Taine, Lamprecht, Breysig and Bordeaux. Their contention is that true history is to be reconstructed by means of the naturalistic method, and that causal induction should be employed. There are many naturalistic conceptions like race, heredity, degeneration, imitation, influence, climate and other historical factors which should be taken into consideration.

Comte propounded his famous positivist philosophy which consisted in the law of the three stages, namely the theological stage, the meta:physical stage and the positive stage. In the first stage man resigned himself to the will of God, in the second, he used higher philosophy (metaphysics) to discover through reason the essence of the phenomenon, and in the third stage the mind abandoned the search for essence, and contented itself with the discovery of relationships that exists among phenomena. This concerned itself with the construction of science; Positivism reveals that there is decreasing generality and increasing complexity in history. In short the essence of positivist thought is that political phenomena are as capable of being grouped under laws as other phenomena, that the true destination of philosophy and science must be social, and that the true objective of an intellectual exercise is to reorganize society through the application of positive sciences to the study of society. The aim of positive philosophy is to liberate history from the hold of theology and metaphysics, and to introduce into the study of society the same scientific observation of the laws which prevail in physics,

chemistry and physiology. When the positive method is applied to history, the social facts become quite apparent. In 1822 Comte published his plan for the re:organization of society, (already noted) which became the charter of positivist philosophy. In this plan he rejected metaphysical idealities, and preferred the ground of observed realities by systematic subordination of imagination to observation. This was his technique to obtain 'determined laws' which governed human societies as the world of nature is ruled by physical laws. An understanding of the laws of society would enable the State not only to control the direction of history but also to predict the course of history. The aim of the Positivists was to discover a set of working hypothesis or laws for the interpretation of history, as Newton had done for physics.

Thus the historiography of the post:Romantic era falls into three categories of diplomatic, philological and positivist history. There was rivalry among these three branches. A diplomatic historian had contempt for erudition or the philological school. The Positivists looked down upon both the historian and the philologist. The diplomatic historian agreed with the Positivists that history was not a mere collection of data but at the same time he frowned upon the Positivist for his attempt to generalize events into laws. The net result was that all these three schools negated the unity of history with philosophy but in different degrees and ways. A strange situation arose in which history was not to be philosophical but at the same time could not deny philosophy.

Finally, a comparative study of Positivism and Romanticism appears to be interesting. Positivism made historical work less abstract and more plentiful. Romanticism had made it more imaginative and theoretical. Positivism took all facts into consideration, but Romanticism picked up only those that were sensational. Positivism stood for tracing the events in their evolutionary order. Romanticism jumped into the middle when the events were in their full bloom. Positivism worked with the causes as their means, Romanticism were to the end:product for its study. Positivism rejected individualism, but Romanticism made individuals the centre of attraction. Positivism talked of masses, races, societies and tendencies. Romanticism dwelled in ideal values, conceived of organic connections and studied ideas, the spirit, the concept of liberty and progress. Positivism insisted upon the interdependence of social factors and upon the unity of the real and attempted to fill up the gaps of the various histories by means of the history of civilization and of culture. Romanticism had overthrown instructive, moralizing and serviceable history, in its effort to make history a pure art. Positivism boasted that it made history a science, and end in itself, and like every other science gave it a set of laws. Romanticism enhanced the esteem of erudition, but Positivism tried to seek out the causes of history, the series of historical forces, the unity of the factors, and their dependence upon a supreme cause. In short both Romanticism and Positivism were mutually complementary, and the two together form an interesting phase of historical development. However, Positivism was an improvement to the extent that it took into account factors which had been neglected by Romanticism. For example, Positivism made much of the disposition called psychological, the interests called material, the facts of force and violence called revolutionary power, and the daily activities of necessity called economics. The Positivists attempted to discover in what way heterogeneity and historical diversity came into existence. Positivism was no doubt an advance in thought.

It is worth noting how these three schools of thought found an echo in some of the leading countries of Europe.

A few criticisms are leveled against Comte. J.S. Mill took serious objection to Comte's omission of psychology as a science. Secondly, Comte has not indicated how we can be sure that the positive stage is the final one. Since the human mind can only be known through experience, it is at least theoretically possible that another stage may be reached. Thirdly, the application of the positive method to human phenomena is not convincing, as the historical laws are quite different from those of natural or physical sciences. Fourthly, sociology of history is not the final science of humanity, for without ethics man will not have the final cause to motivate all his progressive and cultural activities. It is not certain that with the advance of natural sciences man's moral disposition would also improve. Some of his views are also questionable, for example that Protestantism was anti:scientific, and that Catholicism was a non:aggressive religion. Speaking of the Crusades he says that all great expeditions were defensive in nature. This is not borne out by historical facts.

Nevertheless, the influence of Comte on his age could hardly be exaggerated. He grasped the notion that knowledge in the various sciences is unified and related. His law of three stages offered us a new way of viewing the world that men at different stages of history have emphasized one way of ordering society more than another. But his greatest contribution is the establishment of a new science, sociology, which helps us to study the interrelations of men in society, and how these interrelations change in the course of history. His main and vital interest was the systematization of the social background of human history into one body of knowledge, in preparation of a practical approach to social reform based on a lasting order, the theoretical and moral aspects of which he adumbrated in his new science, sociology. Comte had considerable influence all over Europe on social reform movements. His religion of humanity not only encouraged reform tendencies but also stimulated secular religious movements such as humanism. His instance upon universal education aided the educational reformers. What we appreciate most in Comte is his ultimate purpose, namely the political reorganization of the society on rational basis. Believing that the evolution of the human mind proceeded according to definite laws he regarded it as his first task to isolate and demonstrate them by scientific processes assisted by historical verification. He indicated that in the positive stage the mind abandons the research for essence of the phenomena which is the feature of the metaphysical stage and concerns itself with the discovery of relationships among the phenomena. His second great general law that of decreasing generality and increasing complexity signifies that sciences could develop only in a particular order. Each science depended upon those preceding it for its positive content. Whatever the value of Comte's specific scheme for social reorganization, his treating of all social thought as an interrelated whole had a profound influence upon the subsequent development of the various social sciences. Historians felt the impulse of his work both because he demonstrated the methodological importance of history in the discovery of social laws, and because he emphasized the variety of phenomena into which it must penetrate.

RANKE'S POSITIVIST APPROACH

Leopold Von Ranke (21 December 1795 – 23 May 1886) was a German historian of the 19th century, considered one of the founders of modern source-based history. Ranke set the tone for much of later historical writing, introducing such ideas as reliance on primary sources (Empiricism), an emphasis on narrative history and especially international politics (aussempolitik). Ranke was born in Wiehe, Electorate of Saxony. He was educated partly at home and partly in the Gymnasium of Schulpforta. His early years engendered a life-long love of Ancient Greek and Latin and of the Lutheran Church. In 1814, Ranke entered the University of Leipzig, where his subjects were Classics and Lutheran Theology. At Leipzig, Ranke became an expert in philosophy and translation of the ancient authors into German. As a student, Ranke's favourite authors were Thucydides, Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Barthold Georg Niebuhr, Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Friedrich Schelling, and Friedrich Schlegel. Ranke showed little interest in the work of modern history because of his dissatisfaction with what he regarded as history books that were merely a collection of facts lumped together by modern historians. Between 1817:1825, Ranke worked as a Classics teacher at the Friedrichs Gymnasium in Frankfurt an der Oder. During this time, Ranke became interested in History in part because of his desire to be involved in the developing field of a more professionalized history and in part because of his desire to find the land of God in the workings of history.

Beginning with his first book in 1824, the *Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (History of the Latin and Teutonic peoples from 1494 to 1514), Ranke used an unusually wide variety of sources for a historian of the age, including "memoirs, diaries, personal and formal missives, government documents, diplomatic dispatches and first-hand accounts of eye-witnesses". In this sense he leaned on the traditions of Philology but emphasized mundane documents instead of old exotic literature.

Ranke began his book with the statement in the introduction that he would show the unity of the experiences of the "Teutonic" nations of Scandinavia, England and Germany and the "Latin" nations of Italy, Spain and France through the great respirations of the *volkerwanderung* (great migration), the Crusades and colonization that in Ranke's view bound all of the nations together to produce modern European civilization. Despite his opening statement, Ranke largely treated all of the nations under examination separately until the outbreak of the wars for the control of Italy starting in 1494. However, the book is best remembered for Ranke's comment that "To history has been assigned the office of judging the past, of instructing the present for the benefit of future ages. To such high offices this work does not aspire: It wants only to show what actually happened. Ranke's statement that history should embrace the principle of *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist* (literally, "how it actually has been") is taken by many historians as their guiding principle. There has been much debate over the precise meaning of this phrase. Some have argued that adhering to the principle of *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist* means that the historian should only document facts without offering any interpretation of these facts. Following George Iggers, Peter Novick has argued that Ranke, who was more a romantic and idealist than his American contemporaries understood meant

instead that the historian should discover the facts and find the essences behind them. Under this view, the word 'eigentlich' should be translated as 'essentially', the aim then being to "show what essentially happened". Ranke went on to write that the historian must seek the "Holy hieroglyph" that is God's hand in history, keeping an "eye for the universal" whilst taking "pleasure in the particular".

Following the success of *Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514*, Ranke was given a position in the University of Berlin. At the university, Ranke became deeply involved in the dispute between the followers of the legal professor Friedrich Carl von Savigny who emphasized the varieties of different periods of history and the followers of the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel who saw history as the unfolding of a universal story. Ranke supported Savigny and criticized the Hegelian view of history as being a one:size:fits:all approach. Also during his time in Berlin, Ranke became the first historian to utilize the forty:seven volumes that comprised the diplomatic archives of Venice from the 16th and 17th centuries. Ranke came to prefer dealing with primary sources as opposed to secondary sources during this time. Ranke later wrote "I see the time approaching when we shall base modern history no longer on the reports even of contemporary historians, except in:so:far as they were in the possession of personal and immediate knowledge of facts; and still less on work yet more remote from the source; but rather on the narratives of eyewitnesses, and on genuine and original documents".

Starting in 1831 at the behest of the Prussian government, Ranke founded and edited the *Historisch – Politische Zeitschrift* journal. Ranke, who was a conservative, used the journal to attack the ideas of Liberalism. In his 1833 article "The Great Powers" and his 1836 article "Dialogue on Politics" Ranke claimed that every state is given a special moral character from God and individuals should strive to best fulfill the "idea" of their state. Thus, in this way, Ranke urged his readers to stay loyal to the Prussian state and reject the ideas of the French Revolution, which Ranke claimed were meant for France, not Prussia. Between 1834:1836 Ranke produced the multi:volume *Die romischen Papste, ihre kircke und ihr Staatim sechzehnten und siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (*History of the Popes, their Church and the State in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*) As a Protestant, Ranke was barred from viewing the Vatican archives in Rome, but on the basis of private papers in Rome and Venice, Ranke was able to explain the history of Papacy in the 16th century. In his book, Ranke coined the term the Counter Reformation and offered colorful portrayals of Pope Paul IV, Ignatius of Loyola, and Pope Pius V. The Papacy denounced Ranke's book as an anti: Catholic while many Protestants denounced Ranke's book as too neutral. However, Ranke has been generally praised by historians for placing the situation of the Catholic Church in the context of the 16th century. In particular, the British Catholic historian Lord Acton defended Ranke's book as the most fair – minded balanced and objectives study ever written on the `16th century Papacy. Ranke followed this book up with multi:volume *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation* (*History of the Reformation in Germany*) in 1845:1847. Ranke used the ninety – six volumes from ambassadors at Imperial Diet in Frankfurt to explain the Reformation in Germany as the result of both politics and religion.

In 1841, Ranke was appointed Royal Historiographer to the Prussian Court. In 1849; Ranke published *Neun Bucher pressicher Geschichte* (*translated as Memoirs of the House*

of Brandenburg and History of Prussia, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) where Ranke examined the fortunes of the Hohenzollern family and states from the middle Ages to the reign of Frederick the Great. Many Prussian nationalists were offended by Ranke's portrayal of Prussia as a typical medium-sized German state rather than as a Great Power. In a series of lectures given to the future King Maximilian of Bavaria, Ranke argued that "every age is next to God ". By which Ranke meant that every period of history is unique and must be understood in its own context. He argued that God gazes over history in its totality and finds all periods equal. Ranke rejected the teleological approach to history where every period is inferior to the period that follows. Thus the middle Ages were not inferior to the Renaissance; only different. In Ranke's view, the historian had to understand a period on its own terms, and seek to find only the general ideas which animated every period of history. For Ranke, then, history was not to be an account of man's "progress" because, "After Plato, there can be no more Plato". For Ranke Christianity was morally most superior and could not be improved upon. Ultimately, "History is no criminal court "

In 1865 Ranke was ennobled, in 1882 appointed a Prussian Privy Councilor and 1885 he was given an honorary citizenship of Berlin. In 1884, he was appointed the first honorary member of the American Historical Association. After his retirement in 1871, Ranke continued to write on a variety of subjects relating to German history such as the French Revolutionary Wars, Albrecht von Wallenstein, Karl August von Hardenberg, and King Frederick William IV of Prussia. Starting in 1880, Ranke began a huge six volume work on World History, which began with ancient Egypt and the Israelites. By the time of Ranke's death in Berlin in 1886, aged 90, he had only reached the 12th century. Subsequently his assistants used his notes to take the series up to 1453.

Methodology and Criticism

At the core of his method, Ranke did not believe that general theories could cut across time and space. Instead, he made statements about the time using quotations from primary sources. He said, "My understanding of 'leading ideas' is simply that they are the dominant tendencies in each century. These tendencies however, can only be described; they can not, in the last resort, be summed up in a concept". Ranke objected to philosophy of history, particularly as practiced by Hegel, claiming that Hegel ignored the role of human agency in history, which was too essential to be "characterized through only one idea or one word" or "circumscribed by a concept". This lack of emphasis on unifying theories or themes led some to denigrate his "mindless empiricism". In the 19th century, Ranke's work was very popular and his ideas about historical practice gradually became dominant in western historiography. However, he had critics among his contemporaries, including Karl Marx, a former Hegelian who suggested that Ranke engaged in some of the practices he criticized in other historians.

Nevertheless, Ranke's general method remains standard practice in published histories. It was also dominant within academia and historiography until the 1960s, when it was challenged by historians such as E.H. Carr and Fernand Braudel. Carr opposed Ranke's ideas of empiricism as a naïve, boring and outmoded, saying that historians did not merely report facts – they choose which facts they use, Braudel's approach was based on the *histoire problemé*.