

Class Struggle: Who Wins?

Pavel B. Ivanov

Troitsk Institute for Innovation and Fusion Research (TRINITY)[†]

E-mail: *unism@narod.ru*

Written: 16 February 1996

Abstract

The Marxist theory of class struggle is critically revised on the basis of its own logic, dialectical materialism. The differences in the understanding of class struggle in Marxism and Leninism are discussed. The conception of the dictatorship of proletariat is found to be logically inconsistent, and an alternative is suggested. The hierarchical nature of human activity is considered as a source of the universal non-uniformity of social development, which is reflected in the essentially diverse organisation of any society, as well as in the development of subjectivity in general.

Introduction

The conception of class struggle is the pivot of the social theory of Marxism. Consequently, any extension of Marxism would require analysis of classes. The collapse of the socialist experiment in the USSR indicates that the Marxist approach should have some inherent inconsistencies, and therefore needs a critical revision. The natural starting point would be the Marxist theory of class struggle.

There are two possible ways of criticising. One may either reject something without too much consideration, or try to find the faults of the theory following its intrinsic logic. Unfortunately, Marxism was mostly criticised in the first way, and many of its valuable discoveries were lost. In this article, I try to find the weak places in the Marxist understanding of class struggle, using the own logic of Marxism, dialectical materialism. I do not discuss the validity of materialistic philosophy, or regard the possibilities of implementing the theoretical conclusions in the actual life.

For more logical purity, I consider the theory of class struggle as it appears in the works of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin). No other interpretations have been involved. Since I analyse the general ideas only, I intentionally avoid complete citations. However, the references are given where my description of Marxist views is textually (and stylistically) close to the originals. The references to the Collected Works of K. Marx and F. Engels are given by the second Russian edition. The references to the Complete Works of V. I. Lenin are given by the fifth Russian edition.

The original conception

Karl Marx was not the first to discover the class structure of the capitalist society. He just related the class structure of society to the specific phases of economical development, and suggested that the class struggle in the capitalist society would lead to the elimination of classes as such [1].

In a few words, the Marxist understanding of class struggle may be stated as follows.

[†] The author is no longer affiliate to TRINITY

Capitalism is one of the antagonistic economical formations. This means that, among all the social groups that can be observed in a capitalist society, there are two main classes, which represent the essence of the capitalist economy, the opposition of the capital and the labour. The class of capitalists owns the means of production, while the working class has to sell its productive power to get the ability to work and to gain the means of existence, thus becoming proletariat.

The main classes of the capitalist society are "logically" opposite, and they cannot co-exist otherwise than in the state of the permanent struggle. In this struggle, the proletarians represent the interests of all the oppressed and exploited masses, while the bourgeoisie consolidates all the anti-revolutionary forces.

Finally, the class struggle should end with the complete victory of the working class, which would seize the political power in a socialist revolution. The transition from the capitalist economical formation to the new, communist society will require the temporary dictatorship of the proletariat, when the attempts of capitalist restoration will be suppressed using any means, not excluding the severe repressions.

In the course of the communist reorganisation of economy, the society will become more uniform, and the class differences will gradually disappear.

The Marxist understanding of classes is essentially related to economy. The existence of a definite social group completely depends on the existence of a definite field of human activity, which is relatively separated from other activities due to the historically established division of labour. This means that any economy based on the division of labour will necessarily manifest some social non-uniformity, and finally a class structure. Economical development implies the development of the division of labour, and the stages of this development correspond to the distinct economical formations. Thus, the feudal economy grows from the division of labour different from that characteristic of the ancient economy, and capitalism is characterised by the universal division of labour, when any kind of activity may become a separate profession. One may suggest that the primitive economy was mostly syncretic, and no classes would exist in the primitive society. The antagonistic formations should then be considered as a dialectical negation of the primitive society, and the negation of negation should restore the classless state, at a higher level. This formal conclusion supports the idea of communism as a necessary stage of human development coming to replace capitalism.

The early stages of human development went all the way from the primitive hordes to the highly organised tribal communities. The late phases of this development, preceding the state organisation (civilisation), may be considered a separate economical formation, the primitive communal system. At this stage, the division of labour was not developed enough to bring forth the opposition of classes. However, the first traces of slavery could already be found in the communal system. The tribes within a tribe union were rarely equal, and the stronger tribes subdued their weaker neighbours, thus transforming the external opposition of independent tribes into the opposition of different groups within the same society. The origin of class antagonism might, to some extent, be attributed to this primary violence.

Many activities might be shared by all the members of a primitive commune, or transferred from one social group to another in a regular way. Also, the difference in the economical position did not necessarily imply significant social differences, and the relation between some distinct social groups seemed to be partnership rather than opposition. As the mass of the oppressed social groups grew,

their social position became much less mobile, and their relations with those controlling the economical situation acquired the features of a social prescription, and finally the law. Thus codified social and economical positions of the different social groups made them classes, and the form of the dominance of one class over another was the state.

Three economical formations are usually distinguished in the history of civilisation. The ancient formation was based on slavery, and a labourer belonged to the slave-owner along with the conditions and means of production. The feudal society replaced slave possession with bondage, and a serf could own the means of production, though the land still belonged to the landlord, with all the people working on it. However, the own household made a serf equal to a feudal in that they both were proprietors, albeit at most different levels.

The third of the three antagonistical formations, capitalism, is characterised with much more equality between different people, so that any one of them may own anything, remaining personally free. The relation of possession becomes universal, regulating all the areas of social life. This means that the more one owns, the more possibilities one has to own more, and to oppress those who do not have much. The class differences grow enormously, and the class of wage labourers deprived of any property at all has no other alternative as to fight with the class of capitalists, the bourgeoisie, until the inequality of possessions will be eliminated.

So, the history of civilisation was the history of class struggle [2]. Each antagonistic economical formation assumes its own opposition of the two main classes, as well as a wide spectrum of accessory classes, which oscillate between the main classes, temporarily supporting either one or another. Class struggle is the mechanism of social development, since it reflects the principal contradiction of the economy based on the division of labour, the discord between the process of production and the distribution of the products. Class struggle is held at the economical, political and ideological levels, and finally resolves in a social revolution, which breaks the forms of economical and social organisation that became inadequate at the current level of technological development, replacing them with the new progressive forms.

Since the capitalist economy assumes the highest possible level of the division of labour, it should be the last antagonistic formation, and the next stage in the social development should make any activity allowed for every person, and thus replace the division of labour with the distribution of labour. The struggle for the individual life will come to an end. And then the humanity will eventually distinguish itself from the animal world and pass from the feral conditions of existence to the conditions human indeed. This will be the jump of humanity from the reign of necessity to the reign of freedom [3].

However, the possibility of such social transformation is closely linked to a rather high level technological development, when the difference between the industrial and agricultural labour, as well as between the physical and intellectual labour, becomes negligible. This technological stage implies a highly developed co-operation, up to the essential integrity of economy on the world scale. That is why communism cannot be confined in a single country, or a group of countries, and should necessarily involve the whole world into its orbit. Meanwhile, the relations between different countries reflect the general trends in the class struggle, and are related to the social processes inside each country [4]. The main classes of the capitalist society are never bound to nationality, and the international capital stands against the international proletariat. This requires the elimination of capitalism all over the world, with the joint efforts of the workers of all countries.

Marxism and Leninism

As capitalism acquired the international dominance, its "classical" phase came to an end, and the new stage of capitalist development began, which V. I. Lenin called *imperialism*. The major Lenin's contribution into the Marxist social theory was the idea of the internal development of economical formations through an objectively necessary sequence of sub-formations. This conception differs from the notes of K. Marx and F. Engels on the two stages of the communist formation, or the three stages in the development of the primitive humanity. The original Marxism focused on the integral formations within some super-formation. Thus, slavery, feudalism and capitalism were treated as the historical forms of the same antagonistic formation, in contrast with the communist formation as a whole, or with the primitive societies in general. Lenin's approach added one more level of hierarchy, and, logically, one can consider sub-formations in the ancient or feudal formation, analogous to the stages of capitalism.

Imperialism as a definite historical phase is based on the global integrity of the world economy, with the international division of labour. The non-uniformity of global economical development places some countries into more favourable conditions, so that the relations between the countries replicate the class organisation of the capitalist society. Each country may represent some social force, depending on its place in the international division of labour. Groups of countries may form political blocks as long as they represent the common class interests. Economical sanctions, local conflicts, and even large-scale wars may essentially be a manifestation of class struggle.

The most evident form of the international class structure is colonialism. The exploitation of one country with another is very like the exploitation of one class with another, and the fight for national independence reminds the rebellions of the oppressed. One can easily observe that colonialism actually went through the stages analogous to all the three antagonistic formations, and the elimination of the explicit control of one country over another after the World War II resulted in the neo-colonialist relations between the countries, reproducing the typically capitalist combination of the formal freedom with the strong economical dependence.

The natural consequence of the non-uniform economical development is that the elements of different economical formations may be combined within the same society. This diversity of economy enormously complicates the social organisation, and requires much more effort to trace the streamline of class struggle in the variety of social conflicts. Accordingly, the formation of class consciousness becomes rather complicated, and the oppressed masses need a strong political guidance to prevent their deviation from the true way.

Here is an important difference between the original Marxism and Leninism. Marx and Engels spoke of the gradual growth of class consciousness in the proletarian mass, in parallel with the development of its economical weight. Proletariat comes to the communist ideas because it is bound to realise its historical mission as a creator of the new society. On the contrary, Lenin does not believe in the natural socialism of the working class. He writes that the spontaneous development of the working movement results in its submission to the bourgeois ideology, because the spontaneous working movement is trade-unionism, and trade-unionism means just the ideological enthrallment of the workers by the bourgeoisie. Therefore, the task of Social Democrats, is to fight the spontaneity, to draw the working movement away from its spontaneous bourgeois development to the ways of the revolutionary Social Democracy [5]. Lenin says that Social Democracy is the junction of the working movement with socialism; its task is not the passive attendance to the working movement at every

specific stage of it, but rather representing the interests of the movement as a whole, indicating the movement its final goal, its political tasks, defending its political and ideological independence. Detached from Social Democracy, the working movement degenerates and is sure to fall into the bourgeois ideology, the working class losing its political independence and becoming the follower of the other parties [6]. The worker is filled with "the weaknesses of capitalism", and much of the traditional psychology of the bourgeois society remains in him [7].

Such an attitude grew in the specific social conditions in the Russian Empire of those times. The country was mostly agrarian, with many survivals of the communal system. The fast industrial development was entangled in feudal forms. And, like in the early development of the European working class, proletariat, just beginning to stand out against the whole mass of the poor as a germ of a new class, incapable yet of an independent political action, seemed only an oppressed, suffering estate, which could at best be helped, being incapable to help itself, from outside, from above [8].

However, there also were the objective grounds for the new treatment of the relation between the working class and socialism. Lenin's attitude reflected the actual social processes on the edge of the XX century. Economy became more complex, and the working class lost its relative uniformity, characteristic of the early stage of capitalism. Marx and Engels could speak of a wage labourer, a capitalist, or a peasant as the representatives of the class, as far as the social conditions for the labourers, capitalists and peasants could be considered almost the same in any given society. With the end of the "classical" capitalism, and the birth of imperialism, the equality of social conditions utterly disappeared, and the non-uniformity of development became the general rule.

Here one may find one more principal difference of Leninism from Marxism. For Marx and Engels, classes were general *categories* rather than actual social groups. Any individual, or any social group, could *represent* some class, but this representation could never be complete, and the class evaluation of any actual social phenomenon implied both the demonstration of its class roots and the specification of its accessory aspects, its historical peculiarity. Thus, the capital is a social, rather than personal, force [9], and individuals form a class so far as they have to carry the common struggle against some other class [10]. The materialistic treatment was preserved, since classes were not considered abstract ideas existing before the individuals, but rather a combined result of the individual activities. However, in the course of historical development, the class itself becomes somewhat self-dependent, and the individuals find the conditions of their life pre-established: the class defines their life position, and their personal fate, subdues them [11].

The classical Lenin's definition of classes, which all the students in the former Soviet Union had to learn by heart, started with:

Classes are the large groups of people, differing by their position in a historically formed system of public production, by their relation (mostly codified) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and therefore by the ways of obtaining and the volume of the part of the national wealth they possess [12].

So, classes were treated as if they were actual communities, with a kind of "membership", when an individual may either belong to some class, or be entirely outside it. Class struggle then appeared the struggle of one part of the people against the other [13]. Such understanding was popular enough and well-suited for revolutionary propaganda among the poorly educated people. Still, it allowed an over-simplified approach, with the people sorted by the rigid criteria and prescribed the fixed social

positions, just like the feudal estates. In a significant degree, the downfall of socialism in the USSR might be due to the rigid estate structure grown from the feudal rudiments on the soil of the suppressed capitalism.

The discovery of the non-uniform nature of social and economical development in the imperialist stage of capitalism lead Lenin to the suggestion that the socialist revolution might first win in a single country, which could build the socialist society in the capitalist environment. The co-existence of the states with different social systems was put forward as a necessary stage in establishing communism all over the world. In particular, this means that some countries may represent the international working class, while other countries become the representatives of the international bourgeoisie.

This apparently disagrees with the ideas of Marx and Engels, which insisted that the socialist revolution might win only on the world scale, in many countries simultaneously. They argued that the integrity of the world economy could not embrace the two entirely different economical formations, capitalism and communism. The struggle between the two systems would lead to the military conflicts, and one of the fighting formations would perish. To some extent, the history of the USSR supports this conclusion.

The universal non-uniformity

Modern society manifests a great number of social groups, and many of them are rather stable. In principle, one may study social organisation from any angle, and describe the specific hierarchical structures observed in this way. Any such description will be valid, provided the criteria of classification are used consistently.

The problem is why some social structures could be considered more fundamental than the other, and why the difference in economical position may sometimes lead to social antagonism. Marxism postulates the decisive role of economy in the social development, which is associated with the philosophical materialism. The mode of production assumes a historically developed level of specialisation, and the social conservation of these economical differences leads to the opposition of classes.

The difficulty is that no society is known as far, which would be completely free from the division of labour, and no clear indications of the existence of such societies can be found in the primeval history. Of course, the division of labour in the tribal communities differs from that of the developed capitalism. Still, some groups of people usually do things that are forbidden to other groups, and vice versa. Mere physiological differences may lead to a complex social stratification.

There are activities that remain divided among different social groups from the earliest stages of human development up to the modern times. For example, there were few attempts to detach babies from their mothers, on a considerable scale. One could expect that such persistent division of labour should be somehow reflected in the social organisation.

It may be suggested that the "natural" division of labour, when the activity cannot be transferred to another group of people, does not lead to class antagonisms. In other words, one should be able to have something to be deprived of it. This suggestion has rather important implications. Thus, the non-uniformity of economical development becomes a *universal* law of human history, for any economical formations, including communism. Lenin's extension of the original Marxism appears to be the first step in this direction. Every economy implies the co-existence of quite different modes of production,

though only one of them may represent the essence of the current economical formation, and all the other modes of production are hierarchically ordered, depending on their "proximity" to the top of the hierarchy. Economical development means the growth of this hierarchy, the inclusion of the new elements, which results in a number of transitory processes of restructurisation. On the other side, the local conditions may make some elements of the hierarchy relatively more important, and the same economical basis may, due to the infinitely diverse empirical circumstances, natural conditions, racial relations, the external historical influences etc., manifest the infinite variations and gradations, which can only be understood through the analysis of these empirically given circumstances [14].

The diversity of the capitalist economy has already been noticed in the earliest stages of capitalism. However, the founders of Marxism thought that it was just a temporary situation, and that the different modes of production were to be absorbed by the large-scale industry in the process of industrial concentration and collectivisation. Even V.I.Lenin, admitting the essentially non-uniform economical development of imperialism, saw the major task of the transition period, after the victory of socialist revolution, in overcoming the diversity of economy inherited from capitalism. The suggestion of the universal non-uniformity and the economical hierarchy makes the things look differently. The diversity of economy within every economical formation is the objective necessity, since no stage of development can be lost without any trace in the human culture, and once a scheme of activity has been discovered, it will be kept in the arsenal of social creativity for ever. It is this accumulation of experience that enormously enhances the humanity's ability to survive. Feudal economy is much more flexible than the ancient slavery, and the capitalist organisation makes the society even more stable. Therefore, the replacement of capitalism with some other economical and social system would require a general industrial crisis that could not be overcome in the formerly found ways. This conclusion extends the Marxist statement that social revolutions result from economical development: the internal development of economy in a relatively stable environment is not enough, and there should be some external pressure that makes the existence of the old social organisation impossible. This external factor acts as an objective force, though the drastic environmental changes may be caused by the human activity itself.

Since any economy may combine many modes of production, the process of one economical formation changing another becomes more smooth. There is no unbridgeable gulf between the two successive formations, and the sprouts of a new economical organisation are logically allowed to grow within the old society. However, if one believes that the communist formation implies no class antagonism, the different modes of production would co-exist within communism in an essentially different way than in the capitalist economy. This problem requires a special consideration. Here, I may only suggest that the solution lies in the partial transformation of the real activities into a kind of instructive games. For example, children may play the roles of extreme enemies in some game, remaining the friends in the real life; more of that, they *have* to be friends to play together.

The process of economical development may alter the character of a specific activity, so that the "natural" division of labour becomes the social discrimination. In the modern world, there are many examples of how the functions that seem purely physiological are detached from an individual and become independent of a particular realisation. Thus, woman's milk is not absolutely necessary for baby nutrition, and the process of impregnation does not require a sexual intercourse. Therefore, the division of labour in such activities is no longer a natural phenomenon, but rather a social establishment, which may come into contradiction with the general economical organisation and incite social antagonism.

The hierarchy of subjectivity

As it has already been noted, Marxism originally treated classes as general categories, rather than actual groups of people. However, the Marxist theory of class struggle implies that a class can also be a subject, with many features that are usually attributed to a person, including the class consciousness. But how can an abstract category be a subject of activity? Are there such things as class consciousness, class interests, or class will?

The problem has many aspects. Thus, one may consider the development of an individual subjectivity as a long historical process, which is somehow represented in the process of child's socialisation [15]. At the biological level, the physiological abilities of an individual are the only means of production, and no subjectivity can arise. Consciousness implies the social reflection, when individual activity is mediated by communication with other individuals. It is only after a long way of development that an individual becomes able to communicate with his or her self as if it were another person. Therefore, in the primitive societies, an individual was hardly separated from the community as a whole, and could not be a distinct subject of activity. The first conscious thought probably was the awareness of belonging to a definite community. Thus the collective subjectivity dominates at the stages of human development, and the universal division of labour characteristic of the capitalist society may be considered as an objective mechanism of the formation of a true individual consciousness, the last phase of the transition from the primitive horde to the human society proper.

Another aspect is the way of the summation of individual wills in the class will, and the independent actions of many individuals in the class action. I suppose, this effect can be explained quite materialistically. Thus, one may recall the concept of the residual force in the Newtonian mechanics. A material body may interact with many other bodies, and the effect of this interaction is equivalent to the interaction with some fictitious body, which does not exist for a side observer, while being quite real for the body it acts upon. Each real body then may be characterised with the contribution it makes into the residual force, and every body may contribute to different residual forces, as it is participating in many interactions. Physics knows many such *collective* phenomena, including phonons in solids, holes in semiconductors, solitons in hydrodynamics, autoionising states in atoms. For example, a positron may be treated as a hole in the electrodynamic vacuum, the absence of electron; however, the rest of the vacuum moves as if there were a material particle similar to electron, but with the opposite charge. This treatment may be extended to consider *all* physical events as collective effects. The distinction of the material and the ideal thus becomes relative, as it should be in a consistently dialectical approach.

Now, class struggle in the modern society may be thought of as a residual force causing the changes in the social development. Any relation between different social groups may contribute to this force with either positive or negative sign, and thus be evaluated from the class viewpoint. Consequently, each person's activity can be evaluated in a more realistic way, independently of the formal "membership" in one or another social group. The same holds for the social groups themselves.

Of course, the existence of a "non-zero" residual force assumes that the humanity is not in an equilibrium state, and that it develops in an objective way. The idea of the objective nature of the development of human society was the one of the basic principles in the Marxist treatment of history.

Continuing the mechanical analogies, I can suggest that a class is much like the centre of mass in a system of material bodies. The whole system moves as if it were a real body placed in the point of centre of mass. The interaction between any two systems of material bodies, if they are distant

enough, can generally be reduced to the force acting between their centres of mass. This analogy may be traced further, considering the deviations from the point interaction between the two systems as the internal strains within either of them. This accounts for the *splitting* of classes observed in the actual class struggle, the internal hierarchy of each class. The bourgeois differ, as well as proletarians. The very principles of the communist ideology have been formulated by the descendants from the class of bourgeoisie, and this became possible due to the strong interaction of classes causing the changes in their internal structure.

In terms of this mechanical analogy, the Marxist theory of class struggle reduces the problem of the description of a system of many interacting bodies to the problem of two bodies. Naturally, this reduction is only possible when the rest of interactions within the system can be treated as a minor correction. A special study should define the conditions of the applicability of such approach.

Assuming a definite class structure well formed, the relations between people, or social groups, may be divided into two separate groups. One of them includes the relations within a class, and the other includes the interclass relations. The internal relations define the hierarchy of the class, which may unfold itself in different hierarchical structures. Generally, there is a *core* of the class, a social group that most clearly represents the class interests and class consciousness. This is the top of hierarchy. The lower levels may be naturally ordered by their proximity to the core.

In the similar way, it is possible to consider a hierarchy of subjects, from individuals to the humanity as a whole. Therefore, the class organisation of the modern society may assume different forms, depending on the level of consideration. Thus, at the international level, countries may represent antagonistic classes. On the other side, the class hierarchies are reflected within every single person, and everyone could find both a bourgeois and a proletarian inside one's soul. The evident consequence is the possibility of internal personality conflicts induced by the class organisation of the society on a large scale.

Class struggle and class co-operation

The relations of a class with other classes depend on their economical positions. The classical Marxism usually speaks of two main classes (like bourgeoisie and proletarians in the capitalist society), and the wide spectrum of secondary classes, less important for the definition of the economical formation. The relation between the main classes is called the class struggle, and the other classes oscillate between the two main classes, supporting either one or another.

This picture reflects the principal trends in interclass relations and may be useful in developing the tactics of a communist party. However, it violates the logical basis of Marxism, dialectics. According to the dialectical logic, the two opposites constituting the principal internal contradiction of an object should be closely intertwined, penetrate each other, or, using Hegel's terms, be reflected in each other. They are the two sides of the whole, and they just cannot exist without each other. Therefore, the relations between the main classes of an antagonistical society cannot be limited to the class struggle only. The opposite classes *co-operate* in supporting the existing order of things, and their interests, although opposite, quite agree with the existing economical organisation. That is why the working movement in the relatively stable phases of capitalist development easily fits into the narrow limits of the bourgeois democracy, class struggle transforming into political games.

Thus, Lenin's remarks of the non-communist nature of the spontaneous working movement reflect an essential feature of the class society, rather than a local or temporary phenomenon. The own demands

of the working class never go beyond a single redistribution of the national wealth, and this is not a mere vestige of capitalism, the lack of class consciousness. It seems more likely that the working class is not that unaware of its true interests as it was thought of. A worker is no less adherent to the idea of property than a bourgeois, and if the workers behave in an "opportunistic" manner, they just do what they should do, since their ideology needs no communism at all.

This co-operation of the opposite classes can be illustrated by the analogous co-operation in competitive games. The chess players, or hockey teams, act within the same set of rules, though trying to bend the luck to each own side. Both sides would blame any cheating, or violation of the rules. The same phenomena can be observed in the psychological games, as described in the transactional analysis [16].

In the "mechanical" language, action equals counter-action, and the system of two interacting bodies does not change the state of its combined motion, as long as there is no other force, acting on the both sides. Applied to the social development, this means that the struggle of two antagonistical classes does not change the social organisation in general, and some other social force is required to break the balance and enhance the social progress. Of course, the formation of such force is impossible without a considerable technological progress, requiring the drastic changes in the organisation of labour.

One may conclude that any class struggle has essentially economical nature. Political struggle is just the *form* of economical struggle, since no redistribution of the national wealth can be done on the purely economical basis. In the capitalist society, political struggle assumes the form of the bourgeois democracy, with its formal collision of political parties obeying the same rules, partially codified, but mostly adopted as a silent convention. The dialectical inference is that the synthesis of economical and political struggle may be considered as a separate kind of class struggle, which is easily identified with the third component of class struggle distinguished in Marxism, ideological struggle. However, the same dialectical logic says that neither of the two poles of a dialectical contradiction may represent their synthesis, the resolved contradiction.

What is ideological struggle? The inherent ideology of the working class (which Lenin called trade-unionism) is identical to the ideology of bourgeoisie, with the only change of sign. Both the bourgeois and proletarians cannot accept the idea of communism, and strongly object when it is put too bold. However, there is a difference. Bourgeoisie is much more resolute in opposing the communist ideology, while proletarians may block with communists in their common fight against the social dominance of the capital. Similarly, petty bourgeoisie may become an ally of communists, "seduced" by the possibility to avoid the economical pressure of the big capital. Here, ideological struggle is the controversy of different kinds of proprietary ideology, rather than the formation of the new world outlook.

Indeed, since the proletariat represents the same economical organisation as the bourgeoisie, its consciousness should be as restricted by the realities of the capitalist society. Why should proletarians have more developed ideas? Rather, the oppressed classes would be even farther from the progressive ideology than the ruling classes they oppose. All a proletarian can dream of is to get some property, and the maximum of proletarian's desires is to start one's own business, that is, to become a bourgeois. The only progressive feature in the proletarian consciousness is the objective hostility to capitalists, which makes the working class a force capable of breaking the existing social organisation. However, proletarians never want to change the economical organisation too.

Marx and Engels inferred the revolutionary nature of the working class from the assumption that proletarians are deprived of any property at all, and therefore cannot be infected with proprietary psychology. This was a mistake. Actually, the very idea of capitalism implies that a wage labourer enters the market as an owner of his or her productive power and creative abilities. A worker *sells* his or her time to a capitalist, albeit by the dumping price. Thus the relations between the labour and the capital never go beyond the trade, and the psychology of the working class is quite pragmatic: to give less, to get more. This is why the working class may be easily corrupted. In particular, if the living standards of the workers are much higher in some country than in the other countries, these workers will rather support the national bourgeoisie, and not the international proletariat. The recent example is the attitude of Russian working class to the anti-Communist reforms. As long as the worker's wage is several times higher than an average income, the bourgeois reformers may be sure of the workers' support.

Communism, socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat

Both Marxism and Leninism spoke about the necessity of a victorious socialist revolution, when the working class breaks the economical and social organisation of capitalism, starting the process of building the communist society. The transition period between the revolution and the final establishment of the communist economical formation was named the dictatorship of the proletariat, since the resistance of the bourgeoisie has to be resolutely suppressed by force during this period. However, the character of this violence is assumed to be different from the class oppression in the capitalist society. The new social system is to be built in the interests of the absolute majority of the population, while the capitalist state served the small group of capitalists to keep the majority of population in obeisance.

In the light of the considerations discussed in the previous sections, these statements do not look very convincing. Logically, the struggle of the two main classes of the capitalist society should resolve in the dominance of some other force, different from the both sides of conflict. This conclusion is supported by the history of class society. Thus, the elimination of slavery was not a victory of slaves in their fight with the slave-owners. The feudal economy eliminated the both main classes of the ancient civilisation, building its own class hierarchy. Similarly, the transition from the feudal society to capitalism has made both landlords and serfs the relics of the past, the new social groups coming to the power.

The replacement of one economical formation with another means the drastic change of social structure, rather than swapping the positions of classes within the same economy. When it comes to revolution, the economical and social premises of the new formation should already be mature enough for the structural changes to be successful. This implies the wide spreading of the progressive ideology, as well as the existence of a social group that might control the society's development in the new direction.

The new ideology is born within the old economical formation; then it gradually penetrates the minds of many people, up to the moment when it becomes able to control their acts. Class struggle helps to mask the sprouts of new ideas before they gain strength, and fertilises the social soil, since many people seek for new solutions when they find no help in the past experience. This implicit formation of the ideological base for future change of social organisation may be called the true ideological struggle, and it can be much more dramatic than strikes, rebellions, or revolutions. Still, the

economical necessity supports the progressive ideas and revives them every time they perish in the ideological war.

The communist revolution will never bring the proletariat to the power. The transition from the capitalist economy to the non-class society should be directed by the people representing the communist ideas, which are alien both to the bourgeois and to proletarians. This implies much more severe dictatorship, than the mere dominance of proletarian interests would infer. Overcoming the bourgeois consciousness would require the internal ideological struggle within every person, and everyone would fight the proprietary psychology in everybody.

The only way to insure the ideological victory of communism is to place the people into economical environment hostile to any trace of the old modes of production. If some aspects of the economical or social life are regulated by the proprietary traditions, they will produce capitalism every hour. Therefore, the conception of the socialist stage of the communist formation, when the plan-regulated production would co-exist with the market relations in the sphere of distribution, is utterly inadequate. Such co-existence would inevitably result in the restoration of capitalism, as it occurred in the former USSR.

One of the principal misconceptions in Marxism was that the transition from capitalism to the communist society would mean just the replacement of private possessions with the communal form of appropriation. Marx and Engels did not consider the elimination of any property at all, they thought that only the social character of the property would change, so that it would lose its class character [17]. Logically, no possessions of any kind should be present in the communist economy. And, according to the logic of historical materialism, the social force that could lead the society to communism should be associated with the means of production that could not be divorced from the people and made the property of anybody else. But is there anything that cannot be made a private property? Yes, there is. Let us consider an *idea*. The very essence of an idea is to penetrate the minds of many people, to become a common wealth. Ideas just cannot be detached from the people, and if you give somebody an idea of something, you will still have it yourself. If somebody tries to forbid an idea, it will inevitably appear in some other place, as soon as its time came. So, if the ideas will somehow become the actual creative force, they will break the capitalist economical order and demand a new social organisation. However, the possibility of such social transformation is closely related to a very high level of technological development, when the organisation of labour will permit any person to contribute to the total industrial outcome without a direct co-operation with other people.

References

1. K. Marx, "Letter to Weidemeier", *Collected Works*, v.28, p.427.
2. K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifest of the communist party", *Collected Works*, v.4, p.424.
3. F. Engels, "Anti-During", *Collected Works*, v.20, pp.294–295.
4. K. Marx and F. Engels, "German ideology", *Collected Works*, v.3, p.20.
5. V. I. Lenin, "What to do?", *Complete Works*, v.6, p.40.
6. V. I. Lenin, "The urgent tasks of our movement", *Complete Works*, v.4, p.373.

-
7. V. I. Lenin, "The Report at the II All-Russian Congress of trade unions (Jan 20, 1919)", *Complete Works*, v.37, p.449.
 8. F. Engels, "Anti-During", *Collected Works*, v.20, p.269.
 9. K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifest of the communist party", *Collected Works*, v.4, p.439.
 10. K. Marx and F. Engels, "German Ideology", *Collected Works*, v.3, p.54.
 11. K. Marx and F. Engels, "German ideology", *Collected Works*, v.3, p.54.
 12. V. I. Lenin, "The great initiative", *Complete Works*, v.39, p.15.
 13. V. I. Lenin, "To the village poor", *Complete Works*, v.7, p.193.
 14. K. Marx, "The Capital. Vol. III", *Collected Works*, v.25 (part II), p.354.
 15. L. Vygotsky, *Thought and language* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986).
 16. Eric Berne, *Games people play* (N.Y.: Penguin, 1964).
 17. K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifest of the communist party", *Collected Works*, v.4, p.439.
-

<http://unism.pjwb.net/arc>

<http://unism.pjwb.org/arc>

<http://unism.narod.ru/arc>