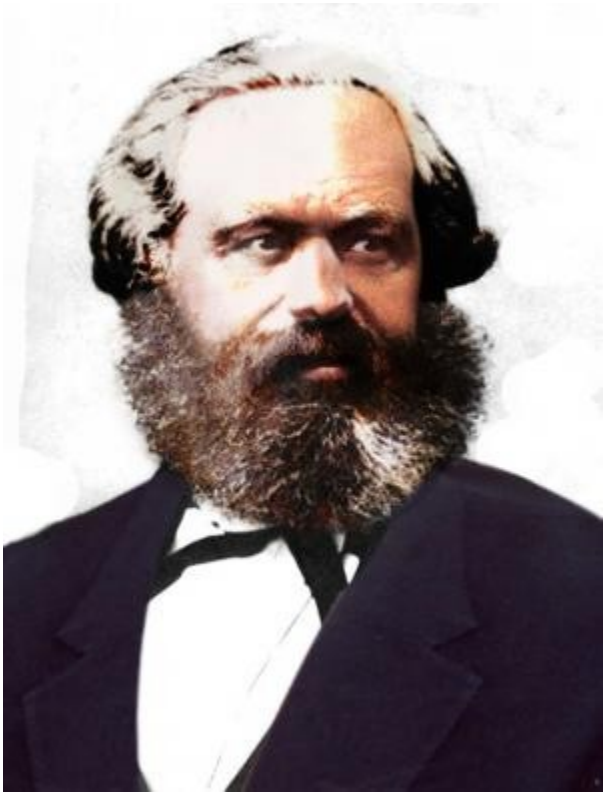
The Rise and Decline of Capitalism



Capitalism was progressive during its ascendance i.e. in its formative stage. During this phase all its necessary formations and reformations were progressive, even though it emerged having been drenched in blood and gore. Both the capitalist and working classes were sprouting, growing – evolving. All the productive forces – means of production, instruments of labour and labour power - were developing within the womb of the new born relations of production. Hence here the working class movements for formation/reformation were progressive simply because elimination of capitalist relations, which were just taking shapes, was out of the question, even though consciousness about its negation i.e. socialism, began to appear as working class ideas and interests alongside the ruling ideas and interests of the capitalist class. Both classes were involved in severing feudal relations of production and installing capitalist ones. This was the epoch of *bourgeois democratic revolution*.

For world socialist revolution to occur two interrelated conditions must mature – the *subjective* condition i.e. the revolutionary will and organization of the working class on a world scale and the *objective* condition i.e. a comprehensive material maturity of the productive forces for abundance. Until the end of the 19th century the revolutionary replacement of capitalism was impossible since these necessary conditions were not yet ripe.

However, by the beginning of the 20th century, the situation reversed. Capitalism entered into its era of *decadence*. Decadence – because, from then onwards, the revolutionary situation

(objective condition) remains ready but the revolution has not happened owing to immaturity of working class consciousness and organization (subjective condition).

Thus, humankind has reached the ‘era of social revolution’ but the revolution is yet to begin. Capitalism has gone into its phase of global crisis cycles and anarchy leading to world wars involving capital against capital, fomenting national prejudices and pitting workers against workers to slaughter one another, destroying productive forces on all contending sides and producing misery, poverty, waste, pollution and environment destruction. This is, however, not to say that capital has come to a dead halt. Capital’s nature of exploitation, appropriation and accumulation of surplus value continues as long as it exists.

Capital develops unevenly through concentration and centralization. And for that matter capital is still going on accumulating globally whereby one capital kills many giving rise to gigantic conglomerates. Accumulation is going through destruction and annihilation. This is reactionary. This is decadence

Productive forces have developed to the stage of both actual and potential abundance for all. But the working class consciousness and organization have remained subdued under the domination of capitalist ideas and interests – constantly and crushingly campaigned by all pervading 'right', 'left', 'centre' chronicles and ideologies. They comprise all various belligerent factions of capital. Although they use different names and slogans on their banners, they don’t have any scientific alternative to capital’s devastatingly continued reproduction. They are mere reformists of all various hues. We have experienced enough of such things. And enough is enough! They have given capitalism a century long anachronistic existence. Measures which were once very necessary and useful for maturation of the system have already more or less accomplished their tasks and grown old and outdated. The material productive forces of society have come into conflict with the existing relations of production. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations have turned into their fetters or, in other words, the productive forces have outgrown the production relations.

The history of the past hundred years has shown us that the reformist movements around the world have not only been futile, but also have increasingly grown reactionary by providing capitalism with a new lease of life by the entire capitalist media which has baffled the people as a whole. Moreover the leftists and the Leninists have further confused the workers and actually defended capitalism. Now we need a change – a radical change at the foundation of society – and more – a change of the base-structure-superstructure of society – lock, stock, and barrel.

The precise task of socialists today is to hasten the revolution by raising class consciousness through education and organization of the working class world-wide. The working class is not required to establish any eternal truth, or to realize any far-fetched ideal, but to set free the elements of the new society with which the old decadent capitalist society itself is pregnant. ‘… the proletariat can and must emancipate itself. But it cannot emancipate itself without abolishing the conditions of its own life. It cannot abolish the conditions of its own life without abolishing all the inhuman conditions of life of society today, which are summed up in its own situation.’ (Marx and Engels, The Holy Family, 1845, CW, Vol. 4, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1975, p. 37). And from the Communist Manifesto: ‘The proletarians cannot become masters of the

productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation.'

And remember Marx's famous pronouncement: 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it' (Theses on Feuerbach, 1845).

BINAY SARKAR

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