Civilisation and the Historical Process

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The Emergence of a Civilisation of a New Type

FROM THE EDITOR

Every generation is inclined to view its own period of history as exceptional, as marking a turning point. This is the natural view from within. Nonetheless there are grounds for viewing our age, and particularly the last quarter of the twentieth century, as a watershed in the development of human society.

The scientific and technological revolution has become all-embracing, affecting every sphere of social production, including the intellectual and cultural, in every country throughout the world. Space exploration, first begun by two great powers—the Soviet Union and the USA—is now becoming international in character and is increasingly regarded as an activity engaged in by mankind as a whole. The preservation of the ecological system that constitutes the natural environment of our planet requires the implementation of integrated scientific and practical programmes at international level. The development of the mass media has drawn all the peoples of the world into one cultural-informational process that cuts across the cultural and semiotic boundaries that once separated local civilisations. We witness the rediscovery of the traditions of former civilisations and cultures long forgotten or sunk into ruin, whose achievements then become part of international cultural exchange. The upsurge in social development has stimulated new countries and peoples to engage in creative cultural activity. The concept of man as the highest and absolute value is spreading through society and winning increasing acceptance. Such, in brief, are the basic characteristics of social development in the modern world, characteristics that point to the integrating processes now taking place in cultural development.

However, the socio-political reality of the modern world is such that these integrating cultural processes assume the form of confrontation between world civilisations. As a result, cultural development becomes one-sided, even distorted, threatening the very existence of mankind. Scientific and technological progress is used primarily for military-industrial purposes, to assist in the production of 'ultra-modern' means of mass annihilation. The arms race diverts the lion's share of mankind's material and intellectual resources into this grotesquely absurd activity, condemning the truly humane spheres of cultural activity to subsist on a starvation ration, and casting over them the ominous shadow of death.

Production based on extracting the maximum profit 'at any price' can lead only to the exhaustion of the Earth's natural resources. Transnational monopolies are exacerbating the problem of uneven economic and cultural development and provoking political tension in various 'flash points' around the world. 'Mass culture' destroys the values of traditional cultures, and this in turn leads to a defensive and isolationist reaction that may seek to revive even the most conservative spiritual systems.

The misuse of science breeds distrust of science, encourages the rebirth of religious views and provokes social pessimism and apocalyptic sentiments, all of which create a suitable environment for various kinds of political adventurism. Many people, particularly among the young, who had hoped to become directly involved in the cultural and historical process, felt that they had been deceived and adopted an asocial, counter-culture position. Nor is this surprising. Understanding the dialectic contradiction in the relationship between culture and contemporary civilisation requires a philosophical analysis of the existing situation and a definition of its objective causes, and therefore cannot be grasped at the level of everyday consciousness. In this respect the theme 'Philosophy and Culture' put forward for discussion at the 17th International Congress of Philosophy is particularly relevant. However, it must be pointed out that philosophy is not only called upon to examine and explain a given situation in cultural development, but also, and primarily, to recognise its share of the responsibility for finding a solution; for philosophy does not only explain the world but also, in defining and offering an axiological system. contributes. for good or ill. to subsequent change.

The problem of the relationship between civilisation and culture, has become a traditional domain of philosophical enquiry. It was first posed by the social philosophers of the Enlightenment, a period that saw the formation of bourgeois civilisation and the attendant social upheavals. Later. following the establishment and development of capitalism, bourgeois philosophers and sociologists turned their attention to more specific problems of socio-cultural activity. In contemporary bourgeois society the problem of civilisation has once more become the object of socio-philosophical investigation at the level of universal speculative concepts concerning the process of cultural and historical development and the prognosis of human destiny (Spengler. Toynbee. Sorokin. Suzuki. Collingwood). At the same time. micro-investigation of cultural structures and mechanisms, particularly in traditional societies. carried out within the framework of cultural anthropology and ethnography, and investigation of individual cultural segments and their organisational forms (social information. science. technology. political awareness. art, morality, religion. etc.) carried out at the level of the culturological sciences, have become widespread. However. these investigations lack a single philosophical-methodological basis, and are therefore incapable of grasping the process of cultural and historical development as a whole. In any case. the problem of the relationship between culture and civilisation is of minor interest at the level of micro-investigation.

Marx and Engels used the term 'civilisation' in accord with the accepted scientific and philosophical traditions of their day as a concrete empirical concept that made it possible to describe, evaluate

and classify various stages in the cultural and historical process. However, unlike their predecessors, they developed the concept of civilisation within the context of the theory of historical materialism, providing the concept with a single conceptual and theoretical content, and the related empirical theories of civilisation with a universal scientific meaning. At the same time, thanks to empirical research into various civilisations, the theory of historical materialism was enriched with data from comparative history, thus providing the socio-philosophical concepts with a value meaning which enables them to be used not only to determine the qualitative properties of the social process but also to evaluate and ideologically direct that process. This naturally demanded that the cognitive status of the concept 'civilisation' be rendered more precise in relation to other categories of historical materialism and related concepts used in certain social sciences.

After investigating, on the basis of a materialist understanding of history, the dialectic of culture and civilisation within the historical process, Marx and Engels were able to draw a number of methodologically important conclusions. They perceived in the development of society one single historical pattern based on the mode of material production. It is the conditions of social production which, in the final analysis, determine the development of culture as the means of the self-realisation of the individual members of society. The investigation into ancient society carried out by Lewis Morgan had already done much to confirm these general propositions of historical materialism, and on the basis of this and other research, Marx and Engels concluded that the rise of civilisation is historically determined by the social division of labour, commodity production and the need to control the redistribution of social wealth, the latter a function performed by the state by means of specialised institutions.

The rise of civilisation caused a revolution in the previously existing society. Sweeping tradition to one side, civilisation became a mode of the social organisation of culture operating in the conditions of a class society, so that the development of culture was subordinated to the interests of the economically dominant class, which were usually presented as those of society as a whole. However, from the very beginning this social organisation of culture was achieved by means of the exploitation of the working masses and other social estates and classes, who were denied the benefits of civilisation and cultural creativity. It is this that lies at the root of the contradictions between culture and civilisation.

The classics of Marxism-Leninism reveal the complex and dialectically-contradictory nature of the relationship between culture and the civilisation that gives rise to it and within which it develops. Marx turned to the art of Ancient Greece to illustrate this point, showing the link between this art form and the specifics of ancient civilisation as a type, while also emphasising that a similar attitude to nature and society was impossible in Ancient Egypt, and all the more so in bourgeois civilisation. At the same time he noted that cultural development is a universal phenomenon, and that cultural values retain their significance beyond the borders of the civilisation that created them, serving as the basis for further cultural development. This view is pursued further by Engels in his letters

attacking the vulgarisation of Marxism. Refuting the arguments of those who propounded a so-called 'proletarian culture', Lenin emphasised that communism could only be built by assimilating all the cultural achievements of mankind, including those (in the fields of science, technology and art) produced by capitalism.

In contrast to sentimental critics of civilisation, the proponents of the theory of the 'natural man' or those who prophesied the end of the world, Marx and Engels showed that the development of civilisation is progressive, if extremely contradictory in nature, and that the alienation of culture as a form of the realisation of civilisation is a temporary phenomenon. This then served as the basis of their evaluation of capitalism, the first civilisation in human history to be universal in nature and to take the contradiction between social wealth and the forms of its alienation to its extreme.

The abolition of capitalist alienation, including cultural alienation, in the course of the proletarian revolution and the building of socialism creates the prerequisite conditions for the formation of a new, communist civilisation. Lenin was the first to determine the specific features characterising the formation of communist civilisation and the development of socialist culture, and to lay down the general laws governing this process. Insofar as the development of socialist culture is a conscious, purposeful activity, a knowledge of the laws that govern it is combined with the planning and scientific organisation of its social forms. This synthesis of a scientific analysis of the objective laws of cultural development and the planned direction of its organisational forms in relation to the social development of socialist society as a whole is carried out in the USSR under the leadership of the Communist Party. The need to adopt a scientific approach to the social management of cultural development is underlined in the policy documents of the 26th Congress of the CPSU.

Today we approach the problem of the relationship between culture and civilisation guided by the methodology of Marxism-Leninism, the experience of world social development both past and present, and the results of research into specific problems of social and cultural development by the historical and culturological sciences in the USSR and abroad.

This present collection is the result of a philosophical investigation into various aspects of culture and civilisation and their interrelationship within the historical process.

The first section, 'Society and Its Classification', defines the initial methodological premises used in approaching the problem of classification, indicates the main stages in the development of the theory of civilisation in the Marxist classics, and provides an epistemological basis for both the classification and investigation of the socio-cultural process. It also correlates general philosophical concepts involving varying degrees of abstraction—society, culture, civilisation, socio-economic formation—with the concepts used in the applied culturological sciences, and explores their cognitive potential.

The second section, 'The Unity of the Historical Process', provides a materialist-philosophical explanation of social development viewed as a natural historical process, and reveals the objective basis of the unity of this process, which Marxism perceives in the material life of society, in the social mode of production. The authors of this

section have set themselves the task of elucidating the mechanism whereby the essence of cultural and historical development is expressed in various concrete forms during the process of social development, and of explaining regional variations in terms of secondary socio-historical factors. The second section then goes on to analyse the cultural creativity of the popular masses and define the criteria of socio-cultural progress.

The third section, 'Culture and Civilisation', seeks to identify the distinctive features characterising different spheres of cultural activity and to show how they are determined by the material conditions of life prevailing in one or other society belonging to a specific historical type. It also attempts to determine the causes, conditions and consequences of the discrepancy between the development of certain spheres of culture and the development of civilisation as a whole. At the same time, an analysis of certain spheres of cultural activity whose general pattern of development spreads beyond the boundaries of a given civilisation reveals the unity of the historical process and the progressive nature of cultural activity.

The fourth section, 'The Emergence of a Civilisation of a New Type', analyses contemporary socialist society as a stage in the formation of communist civilisation, and also examines contemporary bourgeois civilisation and the transitional civilisations of the countries of the 'third world', concluding that the socio-cultural development of mankind is leading objectively to the formation of a single, communist civilisation corresponding to the present level and nature of social production, and therefore capable of solving the contradictions of socio-cultural development in the modern world.

This collection may be described as a summary of the development of the Marxist-Leninist theory of civilisation, revealing its ability to identify and analyse the urgent problems of the modern world. At the same time, however, in view of its subject-matter and the latest empirical data, it is essentially investigative and in no way claims to provide an exhaustive examination of the problem.

Prepared by the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences for the 17th International Congress of Philosophy, this book contains contributions by philosophers already well-known for their research into the process of cultural and historical development, and also by specialists from applied branches of the humanities. In selecting the authors and compiling the material, the editors sought to provide a comprehensive review of the problem and also to acquaint the foreign reader with Soviet authors, with their fields of enquiry and individual style.

The book concludes with a short bibliography of the classics of Marxism-Leninism and works by Russian and Soviet researchers on the theory of civilisation and culture.

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Section I.

Society and Its Classification

Khachik Momjian

Society and Civilisation

What is meant by civilisation, its essence, its driving forces and its future development is a problem that poses itself with particular force at major turning points in history, when a new civilisation is taking shape and establishing itself, heralding a new stage in the history of world development. This has happened in the past, and it is happening today, as we witness the emergence and development of a radically new, communist civilisation.

The very concept 'civilisation', its determining factors, the characteristics distinguishing one civilisation from another and, more particularly, the question of the interrelationship between civilisation and socio-economic formations, is the subject of increasingly bitter debate and sharp exchanges. Heated debates are going on between those who support the theory of so-called 'local' civilisations, and those who support the theory of a continuous link between civilisations. Also of great importance is the question of the approach to be adopted in investigating civilisations, and more specifically the role of dialectics and the comparative-historical method.

It is this last question which will be discussed in the present article, with due account taken of analyses and conclusions contained in certain of the author's previous works.[1]

To begin with, it should be noted that the concept 'civilisation' has an extremely wide range of meanings, some of which are mutually exclusive. Without claiming to pro-

[1] *Момджян Х. Н.* Проблема методологии социологического исследования.— Социология и современность. Т. 1, М., Наука, 1977 (Kh. H. Momjian, 'The Problem of Methodology in Sociological Research'. In *Sociology Today*, Vol. 1, Nauka, Moscow, 1977).

vide an exhaustive or indisputable definition, we will describe civilisation as the historically-determined unity of material and spiritual culture. Perhaps it would bo more exact to say that civilisations are essentially socio-cultural complexes that take shape and exist at different times and in different regions of the ecumene and have their own specific technical, economic and cultural features. This definition, of course, also applies to contemporary civilisations.

Each civilisation functions as an integrated system of interacting structural elements. In the social organism, however, not all the interacting elements are equally important for the existence of the system. The link between the parts is not merely functional, but also genetic and causal, some phenomena within the social organism giving rise to and determining others. At the base of any civilisation, however, there lies some substantive, determining principle. This proposition is perfectly acceptable to proponents of the most varied theories of civilisation; the parting of the ways begins with the definition of this 'principle'. It is a well-known fact that many Western philosophers and sociologists seek this principle in the spiritual sphere. Thus at the base of his pluralist system of local civilisations, Arnold Toynbee locates some form of religions belief. Civilisations, he writes, find themselves in a position to fulfill their role if they create a new, higher religion.[1] Only too well aware of the depth of the crisis gripping bourgeois civilisation, Toynbee suggests that a renewed religions awareness would be able to rescue it from decay. The renowned American sociologist, Pitirim Sorokin, proposes the theory that social supersystems akin to the concept of civilisation are based on different world outlooks and corresponding types of cognition:

> 'In the beginning [of the socio-cultural world] was the Word [meaning]... And the Word [meaning] was made flesh and dwelt among us [acquired vehicules and agents].' If not in time, then on a logical plane the Word (meaning) is the first component of any cultural phenomenon; when it is made flesh (acquires veliicules and agents), it becomes a system of this empirical socio-cultural reality.[2]

[1] Arnold I. Toynbee, *A Study of History*. Abridgement of Volumes VII—X, Oxford University Press, London, 1957. p. 111.

[2] Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, Vol. IV, American Book Company, New York. 1941, p. 95.

The concept of the primacy of the spiritual, seen as the most important and determining factor in a given civilisation, has many other supporters among Western theoreticians. Typical in this respect is the interesting work by Louis Dumont entitled *Homo hierarchicus*. The author is justifiably critical of superficial, formal comparisons and parallels in literature investigating the question of civilisation, and also rejects research that is abstracted from the process of change and development. He strives to arrive at a meaningful analysis of civilisations, but, to put it mildly, complicates matters for himself by seeking the essential origin of civilisation in the ideological sphere which, in his point of view, cannot 'be explained by, or reduced to, other aspects of society'.[1]

Each civilisation undoubtedly has its own specific spiritual character which leaves an indelible mark upon its structural elements and upon the civilisation as a whole. The question is whether this spiritual character is really the *origin* of civilisation. The factual material used by Louis Dumont in his book would seem to suggest the opposite, viz., that it is the material conditions of life which serve as the foundation upon which rises the ideological superstructure in all its richness and variety, Human history is itself the irrefutable proof that religious and other world outlooks are not the prime factors, but are themselves determined by the material conditions of life, and reflect those conditions, each in its own particular way.

History demonstrates that every civilisation is based upon a specific historical mode of material production, for without this human society itself could not exist. Such an interpretation makes it possible to *correlate* the concept of civilisation and the concept of socio-economic formations which, in Marxism, refers to an integrated system covering all the major aspects of social life: economic relations and their corresponding manifestations in the superstructure.

This in no way implies that Marxism considers the two concepts to be synonymous. The aim of the theory of civilisation is to identify those particular features which distinguish one civilisation from another and to discover which relations serve to bind into one living whole the

[1] Louis Dumont, *Homo hierarchicus*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966, p. 15.

production-labour practices, racial and ethnic community, way of life, and cultural, ethical, aesthetic and religious concepts and practices that together constitute a given civilisation. In this sense the concept of civilisation approaches that of culture in its broad interpretation, i. e. as the construction and use of instruments and means of labour and weapons of defence and attack, as the building of dwellings and the accumulation and transmission of information, as a particular mode of life and a particular level and forms of intellectual development, as a characteristic mode of thinking and using oral and written language, and as a particular set of political and legal concepts, practices and institutions.

There are yet other important reasons why the terms 'civilisation' and 'socio-economic formations' may not be treated as *synonymous.* Some civilisations have undergone *substantial* changes and passed through several socio-economic formations. On the other hand, one socio-economic formation may give rise to a variety of civilisations, as did feudalism, for example, in the countries of Europe and Asia.

Any civilisation examined at a particular moment in its history is found to rest upon a variant of a particular socio-economic formation. Can we, when speaking of Roman civilisation, separate it from the slave-owning socio-economic formation, from the economic basis of this formation and its particular superstructure? Niether the Roman pantheon, nor its cultural achievements, nor the moral code of the ruling class, nor yet the level of development of its instruments and means of labour are able to explain the specific character of Ancient Rome. The 'mystery' of this civilisation can only be solved by first grasping the nature of the slave-owning formation and only thereafter can we speak of the particular variant that operated in the Roman Empire as distinct from that which operated in, say, Babylon or Ancient Egypt.

We have already noted that different civilisations can be based upon one and the same socio-economic formation. This then raises the question of the cause of the differences between civilisations having the same socio-economic base. The answer lies mainly in the material conditions of life. However, there are other factors involved. Each civilisation gives rise to a specific culture, religion, moral

code, etc., whose unique combination affects every other aspect of that civilisation, serves as its main identifying characteristic, and would appear to be its determining base. It is indeed true that each civilisation has a specific spiritual character, but this specific character, which is expressed primarily in its legal, political, ethical aesthetic, mythological and religious concepts and institutions, is *ultimately* conditioned by a historically determined mode of production.

In saying that any civilisation is determined by the socio-economic formation upon which it rests and which itself is based upon a particular mode of production, it is important to make one reservation. Western philosophical, sociological, historical and culturological literature occasionally betrays a tendency to view the level and nature of material and technical development as the type-shaping factor in the formation of a given civilisation. This view gained broad acceptance as a result of the spread of the ideology of 'technological determinism', which attempts to prove that civilisation is determined primarily by technology, and also by the social structure and spiritual culture that this technology gives rise to. Technology is thus transformed into a demiurge, into the basic factor determining social changes, changes in morals, social structure and, finally, the whole complex of values of a given society.[1] This fetish of technology presented as the main driving force of social development, of civilisation, is designed to replace a dialectical-materialist explanation of social processes. It must be emphasised that this 'ultra-materialist' technological determinism leads to a fairly banal idealism. Thus Rostow suggests that this original technology develops as a result of the inner needs of men, their curiosity, etc.[2]

Technology is one element of the productive forces which, together with the production relations, constitute a given historically-determined mode of production. Technology thus cannot be divorced from its social context and transformed into the driving force of civilisation. The genet-

[1] Cf. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages. America's Hole in the Technetronic Era,* The Viking Press, New York, 1970.

[2] W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth. A Non-Communist Manifesto* , Cambridge, at the University Press, 1960; *idem, Politics and the Stages of Growth,* Cambridge, at the University Press, 1971.

ic foundations of civilisation are to be found not in technology alone, but in the realm of social production taken as a whole, that is, in the system of social relations.

Investigated in its direct relationship to the theory of socio-economic formations, the theory of civilisation rests upon a secure scientific foundation and is supported by verifiable and verified facts. Such an approach makes it possible to preserve the theory of civilisation from subjectivism and social mythologisation, and also from an excessively and unjustifiably broad interpretation of civilisation.

Up to this point we have been looking at what one might call the 'horizontal' aspect of civilisation, civilisation as the totality of socio-cultural complexes existing simultaneously or at different times in different regions of the globe and placed side by side. Civilisation also has a 'vertical' aspect related to the diachronic replacement of one civilisation by another and the genetic relationship between successive civilisations. Basing itself upon historical reality, dialectics examines civilisations in their sequential, genetically-related stages of development. A new civilisation, while negating its predecessor, nonetheless preserves the most essential material and spiritual achievements of the previous stage of social development. As a rule, no civilisation disappears before having prepared the essential prerequisites of its own negation and the rise of a new social reality, a new system of social relations and material and spiritual values.

While emphasising the sequential link between civilisations as an objective historical process, we cannot overlook the fact that some civilisation have arisen, developed and disappeared in almost total isolation, neither inheriting nor bequeathing anything of any import. Thus specialists speak of the isolated civilisations of the Mayas, the Incas and others. The reasons for this relative isolation in specific instances must be sought in particular historical, geographical and other factors.

The supporters of the theory of isolated civilisations have absolutised the fact of the existence of relatively isolated civilisations with specific characteristics, and have erected insuperable barriers between these civilisations, comparing them to the monads of Leibnitz.

The concept of isolated, enclosed civilisations creates a false picture of human history and disrupts the unity of the historical process. Such a concept rules out any possibility of there being universal historical laws and denies the progressive dimension of human development. If every civilisation is viewed as absolutely original, unique, and existing independently of all other civilisations, then the problem of historical progress as constituting the general trend in human history is thereby removed. Each civilisation arises as it were spontaneously, inheriting nothing from any previously existing social structures, and develops without any contact or exchange with other contemporary civilisations. Having reached its apotheosis, the civilisation falls into decline and perishes without bequeathing anything that could be adopted and developed further.

One of the supporters of the theory of isolated civilisations, Oswald Spengler, expressed his credo in the following words:

> I see not a monotonous picture in which world history follows a single straight line, a view possible only if one ignores a whole host of facts, but rather a kaleidoscope of many mighty cultures ... each culture has its own idea, its own passions, its own life, will, feelings and its own death... Each culture has its own possibilities of expression which emerge, bloom and fade and are never to be repeated... In world history I see eternal creation and change, the miraculous genesis and passing away of organic forms. The professional historian, however, merely sees something resembling a tapeworm indefatigably building epoch upon epoch.[1]

The negation of the unity of historical progress has its shaky foundation in the absolutisation of the qualitative features of civilisation. Wherever peoples belonging to different races entered into some form of intercourse, they exchanged not only material commodities but also the production practices, ideas, and achievements of their respective civilisations. The more advanced production practices and ideas of one people were adopted by other peoples. This is particularly true of scientific and philosophical ideas, as the history of Marxism, its rise and development, serves to demonstrate. Having first arisen in Western Europe, in Germany, Marxism then spread to every country and continent and became the intellectual weapon of peoples

[1] Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte.* Erster Band. Gestalt und Wirklichkeit, C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oscar Beck, Munich, 1924, S. 28-29.

belonging to the most diverse civilisations in their struggle for a revolutionary transformation of society.

The establishment in various countries of one and the same mode of production inevitably led to the formation of similar political and legal concepts and institutions, to similarities in moral consciousness, in literature and art, in the whole structure of social and cultural life. The recurrence of historical phenomena, of which we have already spoken, was not the result of some imaginary endless round but of the rise of single-type socio-economic formations. Thus capitalist relations took root in Japan despite its isolationist policy, giving birth to material and spiritual phenomena similar to those that had previously occurred in Europe. Naturally the essence of capitalist civilisation was expressed in a specific manner in Japan, as it was in other countries.

History is not characterised by wastefulness. Nothing, or almost nothing is lost in the rational experience of mankind. Achievements in any sphere of life and knowledge, regardless of their geographic and ethnic source, gradually become the possession of all the peoples of the world.

The rise of a new, advanced civilisation has by no means always coincided chronologically with the collapse of an old civilisation. In the majority of cases the old civilisation is able to continue in many countries and regions of the world for a considerable time after the emergence of the new civilisation. In noting the rise of civilisations, dialectics does not exclude stagnation, regression in social development, instances of the temporary suppression of important and progressive social relations and institutions by reactionary forces. The history of Europe knows of cases in which ethnic groups at a lower stage of civilisation succeeded in overthrowing and destroying states that had achieved a relatively high level of social and cultural development. Nonetheless, the destructive forces then ebbed away, and the previous centres of civilisation 'rose from the ashes' and pursued further the temporarily discontinued process of social development. The interconnection and mutual enrichment of different cultures and civilisations can only be denied by distorting the facts of history.

The dialectic method has a special role to play in arriving at an understanding of social phenomena, and of civilisations in particular. Dialectical materialism examines any object of research in the course of its spontaneous movement. Viewed in this way, the rise, development and decline of every civilisation has its objective reasons, and every civilisation prepares the way for a more developed and more progressive civilisation. The driving forces of civilisation lie hidden within the process of social development, within the internal contradictions whose resolution is the creative force behind the history of civilisation, behind the different stages in its development. Such an approach to the problem reveals the futility of attempts to explain the fate of a civilisation merely in terms of external influences or collisions with other civilisations. Dialectics is thus directed towards a search for the internal causes of and objective laws governing the development of civilisation and the various stages by which it reaches maturity and is then invariably replaced by a more advanced and viable civilisation.

Dialectic analysis is essentially a qualitative analysis that attempts to discover the essential differences between the given object of investigation and any other comparable object. In comparing civilisations, the dialectic method lays great stress upon identifying the specific characteristics, the qualitative features that make a particular civilisation what it is. In devoting most of its attention to the qualities of a given civilisation, however, Marxist analysis does not, unlike the method used by those who support the theory of isolated civilisations, ignore the points of contact between different civilisations, the inherited links between them. The need to study the qualitative characteristics of different civilisations thus in no way precludes the search for common elements. This approach makes it possible to account for the radical differences between various civilisations while understanding these civilisations as links in the unified historical process.

Dialectics reveals the unity and diversity of the emergence and development of civilisations in various social and national milieus and various geographical regions of the world. Despite the wide variety of social structures the dialectic of the general and the particular identifies the general laws governing this diversity and excludes the atomisation of social phenomena where such phenomena express a single essence. A substantial dialectical analysis

also prevents heterogenous civilisations from being identified one with another by demanding that due consideration be given to the 'social incompatibility' of antagonistic social systems.

Marxism values the contribution made by the comparative-historical method to linguistics, sociology, biology, geology, paleontology and other branches of science. The comparison of phenomena and the identification of their similarities and dissimilarities is an important, indeed essential stage in the acquisition of scientific knowledge. The process of comparison becomes even more significant when it is applied to developing phenomena and to the identification of similarities and differences in phenomena of the same category existing at different stages of historical development. None of this is disputed. However, the principle of comparison, despite its undoubted advantages, may reveal negative aspects if the comparative-historical method is absolutised and isolated from other, more universal methods of scientific investigation. Such an approach restricts the comparative-historical method itself to the sphere of phenomenology, and converts it into a tool of description rather than into an instrument permitting a theoretical analysis of fundamental processes with a view to perceiving the essence of the phenomena being compared and identifying the laws governing their emergence and evolution. Taken to its extreme, the absolutisation and simplification of the comparative-historical method leads to the production of meaningless historical analogies and parallels that lack any identification of or concrete investigation into the essential properties characterising the development of the object of research. The already discredited oversimplified comparativism that arose, for example, in the spheres of culturology, the history of literature and folklorism, eloquently testifies to the consequences of applying the comparative-historical method without adopting a dialectical approach.

In a number of works by the school of thought referred to above, the vulgarised, simplistic application of the comparative-historical method has led to a purely superficial comparison of cultural phenomena and to the identification of external similarities between them, similarities, moreover, which, emerging in different ethnic milieus, were explained primarily by the influence of the prototype. The socio-economic and other causes of similarities in the

intellectual and cultural sphere were ignored, as were both the essence and the specific characteristics of these intellectual and cultural phenomena and processes. Unfortunately this erroneous approach has now been adopted in sociological investigation. Suffice it to mention the unjustifiable thesis of the similarity, and even identity, of the social consequences of the technological revolution in a society based on private ownership and under socialism. In its hunt to find external analogies, superficial comparativism is unable to identify mutually exclusive processes and trends of social development. Thus a distorted method, totally unable to pass from appearance to essence, is used to construct every possible kind of social centaur, to point the convergence of incompatible social systems and civilisations.

Up to this point we have spoken primarily of the simplistic and distorted results of the application of the comparative-historical method. A question arises: is this method designed mainly to identify similarities and dissimilarities in the objects of investigation, capable of proving a sufficiently reliable instrument, even when correctly applied, for resolving such cardinal socio-historical problems as the disclosure of the essence of civilisation? Before answering this question it should be pointed out that the comparative-historical method is a specialised method which deals with primary empirical data. It does not set itself the task of prognosing the future, of analysing given phenomena and the trends of their future development. While recognising the importance and potential of the comparative-historical method, we must also remember that, like any specialised method, it has a limited field of application, beyond which it may prove invalid and even create considerable difficulties. This holds true of the study of civilisations, too.

A comparison of the civilisation of Ancient Khorezm and that of the ancient Mediterranean in terms both of their general characteristics and of their individual features and specific qualities would, of course, be quite interesting. However, such comparison and contrast embraces only superficial phenomena; in order to penetrate to the essence a more universal method is required which makes it possible to pass from the identification of similarities and differences in the socio-economic organisms under study to an explanation of the essence of different civilisations,

of the conditions in which they arise, develop and decay, or which makes it possible to identify and explain the common characteristics indicating that they belong to one type of socio-economic formation. The dialectical method in all its various aspects is precisely such a universal method. The comparative-historical method is merely one of the components of the dialectical method of cognition.

The study of such a complex problem as civilisation is unthinkable without the use of the dialectical method, without its laws and categories which enable social phenomena to be studied in their development and operation. in the variety of forms in which they manifest themselves. One can confidently state that the impasse in which certain Western schools of sociology find themselves, and the now obvious crisis facing Western sociology as a whole is largely a consequence of the failure to apply the dialectical method. Numerous socio-ideological prejudices prevent certain sociologists from using a method that is essentially revolutionary in nature, and this in an age when the enormous rate of social development and the profound contradiction it involves can only be adequately understood by applying the dialectical method of cognition. This is equally true for any investigation of the complex problem of civilisation.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, surveying the revolution taking place in the natural sciences, the collapse of previous concepts in physics and other sciences and the bankruptcy of spiritualist, metaphysical and mechanistic views of the world, Lenin concluded that the latest discoveries in the natural sciences confirmed the materialist dialectic, developed it and broadened the scope of its application. He also noted that it had become impossible to assimilate this more complex picture of the world without the conscious application of the dialectical method of cognition to natural phenomena and processes.

In extending Lenin's ideas to the modern revolutionary age, with its complex internal contradictions, its social cataclysms, its evolutionary and revolutionary processes, its variety of ways of establishing a new world and the equally varied ways in which the old disappears, the role of the materialist dialectic in modern philosophical and sociological theory must be constantly emphasised. No detailed and comprehensive understanding of an age so dynamic and so full of dialectical contradictions as ours is possible without a strictly scientific, dialectical method of investigating social phenomena.

There is yet one more important aspect to the problem under discussion, and that is the comparison of capitalist and communist civilisations. Over its long existence, the first has revealed great creative potential. Despite its internal antagonistic relations, it heralded an important stage in the process of social development and now, like all preceding civilisations gripped by class antagonisms, has reached its apogee and started upon its decline. The passing decades only serve to reveal more clearly its insoluble contradictions, irrationality and obsoleteness.

Communist civilisation, which is now replacing that of capitalism, won the sympathy of hundreds of millions of people from the very beginning, its achievements a source of inspiration and its victories full of promise for the future. Now it is developing at a rate unknown to any previous civilisation.

Mikhail Mchedlov

The Concept of Civilisation in Marxist Philosophy

Any meaningful analysis of the Marxist concept of civilisation requires that at least two factors he taken into consideration. Firstly, the concept of civilisation in Marxist social philosophy has undergone a degree of evolutionary change, secondly in dealing with theoretical and political questions, the term 'civilisation' has slightly different shades of meaning.

In the classics of Marxism-Leninism the term 'civilisation' has a variety of meanings. In the nineteenth century the historical sciences traditionally used this term to refer to that stage of social development that followed barbarianism, and this is the meaning that predominates in Marxist literature, and particularly in the work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* by Engels.

Engels frequently expresses his support for the ideas of Lewis Henry Morgan, a renowned American ethnographer and author of the book *Ancient Society.* Morgan considered the monogamous marriage (as distinct from the pairing couple characteristic of the barbarian period, and the earlier group marriage characteristic of savagery), the shift from tribal to political organisation and the division of society into antagonistic classes to be the attributes of civilisation. In the above-mentioned hook Engels summarised Morgan's views as follows:

> . . .Civilisation is that stage of development of society at which division of labour, the resulting exchange between individuals, and commodity production, which combines the two, reach their complete unfoldment and revolutionise the whole hitherto existing society. [1]

The great achievement of Marxist theory was its identification of the antagonistic content of all pre-socialist typos of civilisation, of the contradictory nature of their development. Describing the progress achieved in the sphere of material and intellectual production, the founders of scientific communism pointed out that human progress takes place within a specific cultural, social and class medium, that is, within the context of different historical types of civilisation, and, in the case of all pre-socialist types of civilisation, within the context of exploitation and class struggle. In *The Poverty of Philosophy,* Marx formulated the following idea: 'The very moment civilisation begins, production begins to be founded on the antagonism of orders, estates, classes and finally on the antagonism of accumulated labour and immediate labour. No antagonism. no progress. This is the law that civilisation has followed up to our days.' [1]

In *The Origin of the Family. . .* Engels develops this idea still further. Basing himself on a survey of concrete scientific data, he reveals the contradictory nature of all historical types of civilisation that develop within the framework of an exploiter society. The three main consecutive stages of pre-communist civilisation are characterised by three basic forms of enslavement—slavery in the ancient world, serfdom in the Middle Ages, and wage-labour in modern times. Insofar as civilisation was founded upon the exploitation of one class by another, the entire course of its development was marked by contradictions, 'assigning to one class pretty nearly all the rights, and to the other class pretty nearly all the duties'. [2]

At the end of this particular work, Engels concludes by quoting from *Ancient Society* the conditions which Morgan sees as necessary to supercede 'civilisation' as defined above. The completion of that form of historical development whose sole ultimate aim is personal enrichment and profit leads Morgan to contemplate the next, higher stage of social development 'to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending' and which will be characterised by 'democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education'. [3]

Thus the meaning of the term 'civilisation' is here quite

[1] Frederick Rngels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the Slate,* p. 330. (More detailed information on the quoted works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin is given in the bibliography.)

[1] Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy,* p. 132.
[2] Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family...,* p. 333.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 334.

clearly defined, historically delimited. Civilisation as a specific stage in the development of civil society must be superceded in order to establish a new, higher social system that will bring freedom, enlightenment, equality and brotherhood.

A similar interpretation of the term 'civilisation' was also used by the Utopian socialists. In the social philosophy of Charles Fourier, for example, a great deal of attention is devoted to the contemporary stage of civilisation, that is, to the bourgeois system, which is subjected to harsh criticism for its socio-economic and moral flaws. According to Fourier, the civilised system based on deceit and compulsory labour (*le monde a rebours*) will be replaced by a higher social system characterised by harmony and justice *(le monde a droit sens)*. [1]

A careful analysis of the theory of scientific communism as formulated by Marx and Engcls reveals that, for them, the term 'civilisation' has a somewhat broader meaning. In defining and describing civilisation, Marxist historical science also takes account of the level of cultural development—the emergence of a written language and of the division of physical and intellectual labour (a progressive phenomenon at that time), achievements in the development of productive forces, and even in weaponry (let us recall here the words of Engcls, 'the bow and arrow was for savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and firearms for civilisation, namely the decisive weapon,' [2]) increasing labour productivity, the rise of industry, artistic and scientific achievement, [3] etc. Science, technology, knowledge in general, cannot begin to develop without a written language the essential prerequisite and attribute of material

[1] Ch. Fourier, 'Le nouveau monde industriel et societaire, ou invention du procédé d'industrie attrayante et naturelle distribuée en series passionnées', *Oeuvres complètes*, Vol. fi, La Librairie societaire, Paris, 1848, p. 2.

[2] Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family...*, p. 205.

[3] In *The Origin of the Family...* (p. 209) Engels wrote:

'Savagery—the period in which the appropriation of natural products, ready for use, predominated; the things produced by man were, in tho main, instruments that facilitated this appropriation. Barbarism—the period in which knowledge of cattle breeding and land cultivation was acquired, in which methods of increasing the productivity of nature through human activity were learnt. Civilisation—tho period in which knowledge of the further working up of natural products, of industry proper, and of art was acquired.'

and intellectual culture which makes it possible to register words and perpetuate the useful practices and experience that assist the transmission of socio-cultural values and the entire stock of cultural information from one generation to the next. Mankind owes an enormous debt to the unknown genius from Mesopotamia who around 4000 B. C. first began to use pictographs to represent sounds. Tho subsequent invention of an alphabetic script stimulated the development both of a communications system and of science and technology.

Without the transmission to subsequent generations of the sum of social experience, registered and preserved by means of the written word (and also by means of preserved material values, primarily work tools and buildings, and by means of skills, customs, social organisation, etc.) the knowledge and values of the past could not become a part of the present. Similarly, if the common human heritage were not preserved in the social memory, no tangible progress could take place and civilisation would not arise and develop.

The term 'civilisation' also expresses a value judgement and is used in comparative descriptions of various socio-cultural communities and in assessing their ability to create original values surpassing the achievement of others. In describing the Sumerian civilisation, for example, we first of all note their achievements—the invention of cuneiform script, the plough, the wheel, etc.

In the works of Marx and Engels, the term 'civilisation' occasionally has other meanings, or shades of meaning. It is also used to describe a social organism more limited in space and time than the whole of class-antagonistic history, and is also used in analysing the specific features of historical types of production relations and the corresponding socio-cultural communities ('the old civilisation', 'bourgeois civilisation', [1] etc.). Marx and Engels frequently used the word 'civilisation' to designate and evaluate the sum total of human cultural achievement, both material and spiritual, to characterise progressive shifts in social development and the level of achievement in various spheres of social activ-

[1] Cf. Frederick Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 41; Karl Marx, 'The Future Results of British Rule in India', in Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 221.

ity, and also to indicate the degree to which the masses had access to these achievements.[1] When used this way, the terms 'civilisation' and 'civilised' are closer in meaning to the concept of progress.

In contemporary Marxist research the term 'civilisation' also has a variety of meanings, and is used to designate a whole hierarchy of socio-cultural communities. Thus it might refer to an essentially ethno-social organism (for example the Maya, the Egyptian, the Sumer civilisations), that is, to a community that is, ethnically speaking, relatively homogeneous. It might be used to refer to a broader socio-cultural community that includes a number of ethnic groups which, by virtue of their socio-cultural parameters, constitute one traditional-cultural area (the Hellenic, European and Latin American civilisations, for example). The term 'civilisation' is also frequently used to designate all socio-cultural communities belonging to one historical type of socio-economic formation (slave-owning civilisations, bourgeois civilisations, etc.). Finally, the term 'civilisation' can be used to refer to all the socio-cultural achievements of mankind. In this case the term is being used in its broadest sense and includes all that has been achieved in a number of formations.

Given the variety of meanings indicated above, it is essential that in the course of any scientific investigation it be made clear which particular meaning is being used. It should also be noted that the process of investigating and summarising the historical process and the consequent development of social philosophy is serving to further enrich and deepen this concept.

The meaning of the term 'civilisation' has been considerably enriched during the period following the Groat October Revolution in Russia, which heralded the creation of a new world free from exploitation, a world in which socialist and communist transformation is being consistently carried through. A major contribution to the development of the Marxist concept of civilisation was made by Lenin.

In his article 'Our Revolution (Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes)' Lenin, analysing the characteristic features of the communist socio-economic formation, developed a number

[1] Cf. F. Engels, 'Die Armeen Europas', Marx/Engels, *Werke,* Hand 11, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1974, S. 412; *idem.*, 'Persien-China', Marx/Engels, *Werke,* Band 12, 1974, S. 213-214.

of important concepts that shed new light upon the meaning of the term 'civilisation'. Naturally, Lenin's interpretation continues to involve a historically high level of economic and cultural development, a high level of democracy, the spread of education among the population and their active involvement in political life. It was precisely in this sense that Lenin, noting the unique socio-geographical position of Russia in the 1920s, declared that it stood

> on the border-line between the civilised countries and the countries which this war has for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilisation—all the Oriental, non-European countries...[1]

It was also this meaning that Lenin had in mind when he wrote in some of his last articles that, as a result of the centuries-old reactionary policy of tsarist autocracy, the working people of the young Soviet republic were insufficiently civilised and that one of the main tasks of the revolution was to draw them into the world of culture.

At the same time, arguing that Russia had now only to create the prerequisite conditions for the further development of civilisation, Lenin makes another significant statement, namely that the prerequisites of genuine civilisation were 'the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists', which will then enable the movement towards socialism to begin.[2] The concept formulated by Lenin of the link between socialist transformation and the development of a new civilisation anticipated to a large degree the meaning that was later to be attached to the term 'civilisation' in Marxist-Leninist historical and social science.

Thus the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which represented a turning point not only in the life of the peoples of Russia but also in the historical development of the whole of mankind, breathed new meaning into the Marxist concept of civilisation. Thanks to the harmonious link between universal human values and class values in the ideology and socio-political practice of the working class, the revolution made it possible for the people to realise their hopes of enjoying the benefits of civilisation, made these benefits, created by the labour of the people, the property of the people themselves. The socialist revolution has considerably enriched the meaning of the concept

[1] V. I. Lenin, 'Our Revolution...', p. 477.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 480.

'civilisation' by giving civilisation itself a new path of development.

In contemporary Marxist literature, the most important components of the concept of communist (sometimes, given the particular stage of historical development, referred to as socialist) civilisation are the following: the generalised characteristics of a new type of social progress, the high level of material and spiritual culture under socialism, the achievements of a social system free from exploitation and oppression, and the advantages of the new formation. In correlating these socio-class factors and characteristics with the material and spiritual values created by mankind during the course of history, and in disclosing their place within the unified progressive movement of world history, the humane nature of the new type of civilisation is revealed. It constitutes a higher stage of human civilisation, as it creates the conditions necessary for the full flowering of the individual and the development of the working classes, of nations and of the whole of mankind.

As a rule, the Marxist concept of civilisation covers socio-cultural communities that exist at different times in different parts of the ecumene. It reflects a specific stage in the development of these socio-cultural communities, limited in time and space, and the sum of their social, material and spiritual values. Each community is characterised by comparatively stable features (traditional culture, language, habitat, a single economic or spiritual system, etc.). This cultural milieu, traditional for a given region, affects every type and form of life-activity engaged in by the social organism and predetermines the particular way in which the general laws of the historical process manifest themselves in that particular community. Thus, in identifying socio-cultural communities due consideration is given to both the sociological, formational characteristics and the traditional characteristics of the given culture. Thus, according to Yu. V. Bromley, Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the criteria for identifying socio-cultural regions are to be found,

> on the one hand, in the factors characteristic of the social organisms composing that region and belonging to one type and, on the other, in the typical features of the corresponding traditional-cultural areas. [1]

[1] Cf. the article by Yulian Bromley in the present collection.

In our opinion, a particular form of civilisation emerges and takes shape during that period when a society is capable of creating values that represent a contribution to the forward development of mankind and leave their mark on the history of culture, as did the Sumer civilisation, whose contribution was mentioned above.

The main problem facing the theory of civilisation is the unity of social, formational and traditional-cultural factors, combined with a certain autonomy, a relative independence, and the fact that civilisations can exist for far longer periods than any one given socio-economic formation. Understanding the essence of the problem is rendered all the more difficult if due account is not taken of its component parts and their specific features.

A given civilisation—that of Sumer, of Ancient Greece, the Arab civilisation or that of Western Europe—can, of course, be described solely on the basis of its external characteristics. However, the disclosure of the essential characteristics of a historical type of civilisation, produced by qualitative differences in the nature of its social relations, and the identification of the generic essence of a social organism (the slave-owning type of civilisation, for example) of which specific civilisations (Ancient Egyptian, Ancient Greek, Ancient Roman, etc.) are particular manifestations, require a deeper analysis that relies upon the capacity to extrapolate and generalise.

In order to examine objectively and comprehensively the essential core of each civilisation, the causes of its rise, development and subsequent historical fate, it is essential to discover the link between that civilisation and the historically determined mode of material production, the existing economic relations and the consequent socio-economic formation. [1] Such an approach makes it possible to understand the inherent nature of a given socio-cultural community rather than dealing only with its individual elements, be they techno-economic or spiritual.

In analysing the 'theory of civilisation' advanced by the economist Henri Storch, Marx showed its methodological invalidity, which was displayed in the argument that civili-

[1] Cf. the articles by Yevgeni Lysmankin and Yuri Pletnikov in the present collection.

sation is a 'general category' based on the division of material and spiritual production.

> If material production itself is not conceived in its *specific historical* form, it is impossible to understand what is specific in the spiritual production corresponding to it and the reciprocal influence of one on the other, [1]

and therefore it is impossible to determine the historical type of civilisation and explain the dynamic of its development.

In his polemic with the Narodnik philosophers, Lenin elaborated on the Marxist proposition that the mode of production plays a determining role in the development of social, political and spiritual processes, substantiating the proposition that culture rests on a material base. This proposition is crucial to a scientific understanding of the theory of civilisation. The concept of the 'material base of culture' is, of course, quite specific and varies with different historical periods and different regions. Lenin saw the material base of culture in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century in 'the development of capitalist technology, the growth of commodity economy and exchange, which bring people into more frequent intercourse with each other and break down the medieval isolation of the separate localities'. [2] However, if we leave aside the concrete content of the concept 'the material base of culture', then its general methodological importance lies in the fact that it indicates the necessity of analysing the objective prerequisites of cultural activity, without which the function and development of culture in any civilisation cannot be understood. In the same way, it is impossible to understand the social characteristics of any historical typo of civilisation without analysing the dominant economic and production relations, without taking into account the specifics of the existing mode of production.

Thus the essence of the Marxist concept of civilisation can be summarised as follows:

First, every civilisation, examined at a specific historical moment of its existence, is based upon a particular socio-economic formation.

Secondly, the existence of a number of civilisations of the same type based on one and the same socio-economic formation, is a consequence of the unique and unrepeatable combination of forms of culture, ethnic and national characteristics, and specific socio-political, religious, legal, ethical and aesthetic relations and institutions. It is a stage in the socio-cultural development of the given part of the ecumene linked to a definite level of social achievement in material and spiritual production.

Thirdly, the progressive development of socio-cultural communities reflects the consistent development of the possibilities, the potential of the human mind, of science and culture, and the development of social organisation; the contribution of each specific civilisation to this forward-moving process is original, yet at the same time each civilisation is geneticaly linked to those that preceded it. This continuity can be observed even when the new civilisation is a negation of the previous one, as the new civilisation preserves the universal material and spiritual values created in the course of previous social development. This universal human legacy, preserved thanks to the social memory of mankind, accumulates everything from the past that is of significance for the future, that will serve as the prerequisite for the emergence of the new, being an essential aspect of the process of development.

This process is, of course, extremely contradictory. Natural disasters, wars, political and religious division have caused irreparable harm to the development of human civilisation, wiping off the face of the Earth individual local formations. Mankind has more than once lost much of what had already been achieved, having to 'rediscover America', and repeat the same steps in mastering the forces of nature, improving social organisation and developing science, technology and art.

However, the development of mankind, viewed as a whole, moves irresistibly forward, though sometimes at the cost of sacrifice. Today the unparalleled increase in military expenditure and the accelerated development of new types of strategic nuclear arms constitute, as was noted at the 26th Congress of the CPSU, a potentially lethal threat to the whole of mankind. This process is accompanied by the

[1] Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, pp. 284, 285.
[2] V. I. Lenin, 'What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats', p. 249.

promotion of dangerous doctrines, such as the notorious Carter doctrine according to which nuclear war could be limited. However, in his report to the 26th Congress, Leonid Brezhnev noted that

> a 'limited' nuclear war as conceived by the Americans, in, say, Europe, would from the outset mean the certain destruction of European civilisation. And of course the United States, too, would not be able to escape the flames of war. [1]

Hence such plans are being firmly rejected throughout the world. We are convinced that the progressive forces of civilisation will prove able to overcome the destructive forces and defend peace. As a result, on the basis of all the losses and all the achievements in a given epoch, the level of development of a given form of civilisation takes shape.

Fourthly, the content of each civilisation is determined by the creative labour of the people, who are the source of ail material and spiritual advance. Hence the main driving force of civilisation was and remains the working people, the popular masses.

Elitist theories of civilisation still exist today. According to such theories, gifted individuals are the 'genuinely active factor', and not only do they 'propel civilisation forward' but they also mould civilisation. Consequently, in these theories, civilisation is presented as the product of individual genius educating the inert mass of the population, who live off the fruits of the activity of genius. Such views, according to which any civilisation can only progress thanks to the florescence and independent activity of an elite who guide the masses, are today being propagated by a number of Western sociologists. In his article 'Social Classes and Civilisations' Maurice Allais, a follower of Vilfredo Pareto, declared that the existence of an elite is an inevitable and permanent aspect of any civilisation as a result of the natural difference in abilities, of biological factors, etc. In his opinion, the progress of civilisation depends on the existence within society of conditions favouring the optimum development of real elites. [1] While the role played by outstanding individuals in the development of culture must not be underestimated, it should bo noted that these individuals are born of a specific environment and of a specific people, and that their creative activity cannot bear fruit outside the activity of the mass of the population. Various social classes and their individual members play each a specific role in creating the values of civilisation, but the activity of progressive classes and sections of society is of special importance.

In *different civilisations* (antagonistic or communist) the relationship between the popular masses and the material and spiritual goods possessed by that society is different. In a society based on private property, most of the achievements of culture or civilisation are available only to a relatively small group of socially privileged people, as a result of which the mass of the population are robbed of what is rightfully theirs, and even find that many of the achievements of culture and civilisation are used against them. Therefore in assessing the progressive nature of any socio-cultural community it is most important to consider not only its material and spiritual achievements, but also their effect upon each individual, the degree to which they help to disclose his spiritual, intellectual and physical abilities, and the degree to which the individual may participate in the shaping of his way of life and that of the given society. The need to find a broad and comprehensive solution to the problems facing mankind and to develop civilisation in the interests of the popular masses presupposes that the limitations and flaws of a civilisation based on the alienation of labour and social wealth be overcome by means of radical reorganisation.

Naturally, when speaking of the flaws of antagonistic civilisations, and in particular of bourgeois society and the essential qualitative limitations of its basis and values, no Marxist denies the major advances achieved in the course of its development. Commenting on the contribution made by bourgeois civilisation to the development of the productive forces of society, Lenin, echoing Marx and Engels, noted: 'Capitalist culture has *created* large-scale produc-

[1] *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,* Novosli Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, p. 28.

[1] M. Allais. 'Classes sociales et civilisations', *Economies et sociétés* Vol. 8. No. 3. 1974.

lion, factories, railways, the postal service, telephones, etc...[1] While subjecting the anti-popular, inhumane qualities of antagonistic civilisation to justified criticism, they did not view it as a regressive movement in history. The 'mole of history' carries on with his task notwithstanding; socio-cultural communities continue to develop despite opposition from reactionaries. Whenever antagonistic class relations threatened to destroy the fruits of civilisation, the forces of social progress have always found a way ouI of the situation. Elaborating on this idea, Marx wrote in a letter to P. V. Anncnkov:

> ...In order that they may not be deprived of the result attained and forfeit the fruits of civilisation, they are obliged, from the moment when their mode of carrying on commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms.[2]

Progressive processes and trends manage to clear their way forward oven when their hearers and supporters are temporarily defeated.

At every turning point in human history, social revolutions cleared the way for the further development of the positive potential of every type of civilisation. Whereas the formation and initial development of civilisation required that savagery and barbarism be overcome and a class society established, today mankind is faced with the urgent need to shatter the bonds of the bourgeois class-based civilisation.

As a result of socialist revolution and the establishment of a radically new typo of civilisation, not only do the benefits and values of civilisation achieved over the course of history become available to all, but also new values intrinsic to socialism are created which meet the needs of the individual, of the nation, and of all of mankind. Bourgeois civilisation is incapable of creating these values. The new economic and political conditions and the new overall social climate make it possible to draw the mass of Ihe people into creative historical activity. The social and cultural activity of Ihe people assumes a hitherto unparalleled scope and diversity. Describing the new society in his book

[1] V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, pp. 425-426.

[2] Marx to P. V. Anncnkov in Paris. In K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 519.

The State and Revolution, Lenin remarked that under socialism

> for the first time in the history of civilised society, the *mass* of the population will rise to taking an *independent* part, not only in voting and elections, *but* a/so *in the everyday administration of the slate.*[1]

Socialism is the establishment of a new type of civilisation—communist civilisation--that is to be identified by the level of social progress, the level of material and spiritual culture achieved in the new society and the universal nature of its values. These identifying characteristics permeate the socialist type of social progress and are manifested in the emancipation of labour, in the establishment of peace throughout the world, in the just distribution of national wealth, in the participation of the mass of the population in the management of state and public affairs, in the universal accessibility of culture, in the new lifestyle and in the qualities marking the socialist type of individual.

The principles and characteristics of this new historical type of civilisation are inseparable from a radical, revolutionary change that replaces uncontrolled economic and social development with the conscious organisation of production and the whole of social life. They are inseparable from the consistent implementation of those ideas that have inspired the best social thinkers throughout the ages and which were scientifically formulated by Marx, Engols and Lenin, namely freedom, full well-being and free, all-round development for all the working people and other members of society.[2] Consequently, the emergent communist civilisation is characterised not only by the assimilation and propagation of the entire progressive cultural heritage of mankind, but also by the radically new content of human activity in various spheres of social life, by the wealth of its social relations and way of life, by a new set of values, requirements and motivating forces, by a high level of spiritual culture and a genuinely humane social climate.

To sum up, the historical role of communist civilisation in the development of mankind derives from the fact that

[1] V. T. Lenin, 'The State and Revolution', pp. 492-493.

2 V. I. Lenin, 'Draft Programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 26.

it alone is capable of solving the social and class contradictions and the universal problems facing the world today in a way that meets the interests of the whole of humanity. Communist civilisation is an essential prerequisite of further social progress. As its basic characteristics correspond to universal human interests, it is capable of being the legitimate heir to the values accumulated by previous generations. The new values that it itself gives rise to meet to the fullest the basic needs of men. For this reason, the transformation of communist civilisation into a single universal civilisation is historically inevitable.

Yevgeni Lysmankin

The Relationship Between the Concepts 'Socio-Economic Formation' and 'Civilisation'

In analysing contemporary history, Marxist philosophy has over recent years made frequent use of the term 'civilisation'. Defining the relationship between this concept and those fundamental to historical materialism, and in particular the concept 'socio-economic formation', is a problem of major importance whose solution will help to render the meaning of the term 'civilisation' more precise and to clarify its methodological function in social cognition.

Marxist philosophers both in the Soviet Union and abroad have already attempted to determine the relationship between 'civilisation' and 'socio-economic formation'.[1] Investigation into the term 'civilisation' has revealed that in fact a whole complex of concepts and meanings are comprised under this one term. Thus, for example, it can refer to definite socio-cultural entities existing at a specific moment in history. In a number of cases these socio-cultural formations arc ethnically relatively uniform communities and constitute ethno-social organisms. It may refer to socio-cultural communities covering larger regions (for example the Hellenic civilisation, the European civilisation, etc.). The term 'civilisation' is also used to refer to specific stages in history marked by a change in social relations and culture. In this case, civilisation is contrasted against barbarism to denote a progressive stage in the development

[1] For a general description of the situation with regard to this problem cf.: *Мчедлов М. П.* Социализм -- становление нового типа цивилизации. М., Политиздат, 1980, с. 58-61 (M. P. Mchedlov, *Socialism: the Emergence of a New Type of Civilisation*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1980, pp. 58-61).

of mankind associated with the social division of labour, the appearance of private property, classes, etc. When defined in this way, 'civilisation' is then further subdivided into progressive periods associated with the formation of a qualitatively new social system, which is then referred to as a 'civilisation' in contrast to the 'barbarism' of the outmoded social order. Hence in the Marxist classics capitalist society was sot against feudal barbarism, and communism was considered to be the highest type of civilisation.

The term 'civilisation' may also refer to the sum total of human socio-cultural achievement. Thus it is possible to speak of the achievements of world civilisation, referring to the cumulative nature of its development.

On the basis of the foregoing it is, in the opinion of the author, possible to attribute two basic meanings to the term 'civilisation'. Firstly it can be used to refer to socio-cultural entities, which are primarily an object of investigation by individual sciences. Such entities are historical communities which left their mark upon the development of world history and culture (the Maya civilisation, the Egyptian civilisation, etc.). Such a definition of the term 'civilisation' also covers an investigation into civilisation as a specific regional phenomenon (Hellenic, European, etc.).

The second meaning of the term 'civilisation' constitutes a general concept of an axiological nature in which a particular level of social development is compared with a previous level and its advantages are then described as the achievements of civilisation. In this case it is possible to speak of the civilising mission of the progressive class or social system. When used in this way, the term 'civilisation' acquires a far more general meaning and identifies certain essential characteristics of the historical process. The term 'civilisation' can then be included within the system of concepts used in historical materialism to explain the axiological aspect of the development of human society. Tn this connection, the correlation between civilisation as an interscience concept and the socio-philosophical aspect of the term 'formation' is of theoretical interest.

The term 'civilisation', when used to refer to specific historical socio-cultural communities, cannot he directly correlated with the term 'formation' as these two terms involve different levels of abstraction. The term 'formation'

belongs to the essential-universal category of concepts, while the term 'civilisation' refers to a specific historical entity, to something individual, and therefore it includes the unity of the general, the particular and the unique. The teaching on socio-economic formations is, of course, extremely important to any understanding of such a specific historical entity, but rather as a means of elucidating the methodological function of this theory, a question that will be discussed later.

The second, that is, the axiological definition of the term 'civilisation' involves an evaluation of essential-universal characteristics in the development of human history, and as such can be directly correlated with the term 'socio-economic formation'. However, the teaching on socio-economic formations does not deal primarily with the axiological aspect of the issue but is concerned with providing a theoretical explanation of the essence of human history as a world-historical process. Marxism-Leninism views tin's process as a process of natural history governed by objective laws that determine the sequence of specific historical modes of organising social life.

In adopting this view of the historical process, the teaching on socio-economic formations is continuing the best traditions of pre-Marxist philosophical thought, which had already begun to view the development of history as an internal, integrated process that comprised a number of succeeding stages whose sequence was the expression of the objective logic of history. Giovanni Vico is generally considered to he the founder of this philosophical tradition. He was the first to attempt to draw a general picture of world history and to strive to understand it as an all-embracing global process with its own cyclic pattern, which was revealed in the rise, florescence, decline and death of each nation that emerged onto the arena of world history. Thus human history appears as the sum total of these cyclic repetitions. This idea gave rise to the so-called cyclic theory which sees history as a sequence of mutually independent civilisations (cf. Toynbee). However, this view of history as a global process also stimulated the search for a more profound explanation of the process of social development. Such an explanation was formulated by the German classical philosophers in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The dialectical method, even in combination will) the idealist world-view characteristic of these philosophers. made it possible to examine the content of social life and the nature of the changes occurring within it. In their writings, these philosophers presented human history as a world-historical process which was seen not only as global in nature, but also as purposeful, progressive and possessed of its own inner logic. The inner logic of history was, in their opinion, an expression of the essence and objective pattern of social development. Attempts were made to distinguish qualitatively definite stages in the forward movement of history, attempts that anticipated the discovery by Marx and Engels of a scientific approach to the identification of such stages and the periodisation of history.

German classical philosophy, therefore, sought the key to the periodisation of history not only in chronological sequence, evaluating a given historical period of the basis of how far removed it was from contemporary society for example, ancient history, medieval history, modern history. contemporary history, etc.) but also in essential characteristics. This led to the identification of qualitative turning points in the unfolding of the very essence of the historical process. Naturally, the substantive basis of history remained within the realm of the ideal.

Immanuel Kant, for example, sought the inner meaning and logic of history in the moral sphere. In Kantian philosophy man is both a sensual biological being and also a being endowed with moral consciousness that operates independently of sensual motives or individual, egotistical considerations. According to Kant, moral consciousness is par! of the sensual consciousness of individuals, but constitutes an autonomous system. Following this, the external and internal aspects of social evolution are also distinguished from each other. The external aspect is identified with the subjective aims of man. which are based on sensual motivations such as egoism, ambition, pursuit of wealth and other passions and desires. The internal aspect of social evolution, concealed from direct observation, involves the increasing pre-eminence of the rational principle which liberates men from subordination to sensual motivation. The gradual liberation of man from the rule of emotion and his subordination to the rule of reason and the moral law is the inner meaning of history. The movement towards moral

perfection is, according to Kant, the objective result of the subjective aspirations of men. The interacting subjective activity of individuals and of nations constitutes the realisation of an objective Jaw. This inner logic of history involves the identification of essential stages in the development of human society. Human progress consists in the movement of society towards the moral autonomy of the individual, and it is this that reveals the main trend of the inner logic of social evolution.

Fichte followed Kant in viewing the development of society as a world-historical process, as a sequence of succeeding epochs. Any given epoch is seen as a link in the chain of epochs that together make up the process of human development, and as such can only be understood in connection with the other epochs.

According to Fichte, the basic meaning of the term 'epoch' stands in the same relationship to its specific characteristics as does unity to diversity. In the course of the historical process the destiny of man is accomplished, the world plan for mankind is achieved. In its journey towards this destination, the human race passes through five epochs distinguished from each other by the level of individual self-awareness, which depends in its turn on the level of human intellectual development.

Hegel also distinguished between the external and the internal aspects of the historical process. According to Hegel, the historical process is essentially the expression of the Spirit's discovery of itself. In objective idealist philosophy, the subjective aspect, individual aims, passions and objectives are presented as the instrument of the World Spirit. At the same lime these subjective strivings on the part of individuals conceal an essential reality which is the expression of the objective logic of history. The overall movement of history is caused by the idea of freedom (which is the essence of the spiritual) seeking self-knowledge. This then serves as the basis for dividing world history into stages corresponding to the level of awareness of the idea of freedom achieved by the Spirit and by man.

However, the idealistic interpretation of history cannot reveal the truly objective basis of history and its true essence as its search for this basis is confined to the spiritual. Nonetheless, the very attempt to discover such a basis and to use it to demarcate the historical stages of social

development proved very fruitful. Referring to the importance of understanding the essential foundations of history, David Hume wrote:

> ...General principles, if just and sound, must always prevail in the general course of things, though they may fail in particular cases; and it *is* the chief business of philosophers to regard the general course of things. [1]

This search for the substantive basis of human history was continued by Marx and Engels in their elaboration of the theory of socio-economic formations. The basis of history was thus discovered to lie beyond both objective and subjective reason, in the sphere of material production. In the course of human productive activity, which is directed at transforming nature, social relations of production are formed independently of social consciousness. Formed as a result of the development of the productive forces, these relations determine the whole of the superstructure of society and the entire course of social development.

We are not here concerned with analysing the principles of the materialist interpretation of history. Suffice it to say that Marx and Engels discovered the essential basis of history, which exists independently of social consciousness. Moreover they also identified the internal causes that explain subjective thoughts and feelings, the objective logic of history and the objective laws governing its development. Social development started to be viewed as a process of natural history in which qualitatively different specific historical types of social organisation successively replace each other. The identification of particular types of production relations based on qualitatively distinct forms of ownership of instruments and means of production made it possible to identify different types of social organisation, which arose not accidentally but in response to the demands of the developing productive forces.

In order to understand the essence of the teaching on socio-economic formations and the meaning of the category itself, it is essential to note that this teaching is concerned with the essence of the actual historical process. However, identifying this essence and elaborating the theory of specific historical socio-economic formations is by no means an

[1] David flume, *Essays, Literary, Moral and Political,* Ward Lock and Tyler, Wurorck House, London, s.a., p. 150.

easy task. It involves the use of the appropriate forms and techniques of theoretical analysis and theoretical generalisation. Thus the theoretical analysis of society is performed using not only specific techniques of social research (an approach necessitated by the singularities of the object under investigation) but also universal methods of theoretical analysis and theoretical generalisation.

Marx and Engels recognised that the elaboration of the theory of socio-economic formations was the result of the formulation of the materialist interpretation of history. The link between the materialist interpretation of social life and the theory of formations is twofold. Firstly, the theory of formations was developed as a means of reflecting the actual historical process, which is determined by objective factors independently of theories and theoreticians. The content of this theory of formations must therefore be recognised as objective, as is the value of a philosophical understanding of society. Secondly, the identification of economic relations as objective and determining the course of social development and the entire structure of social life then became the starting point for defining the specific historical types of society in *essential-universal* terms.

Having identified economic relations as the determining factor, Marx and Engels then discovered a certain recurrence in social life which enabled them to classify social phenomena and disclose the objective laws of history. This recurrence was found to reside primarily in the forms of ownership of instruments and means of production, which constitute the material base of production relations. This discovery then became the fundamental principle underlying the theory of socio-economic formations.

It was precisely the analysis of material social relations that at once made it possible to delect recurrence and regularity in social phenomena and to generalise the systems of various countries to form the single fundamental concept: *social formation.* Recurrence in socio-historical development revealed itself in the fact that countries with approximately the same level of production development had identical production relations. This generalisation made it possible to proceed from a purely empirical description of social phenomena to a strictly scientific analysis at the level of a general theory that penetrates into the essence of the historical process and individual specific historical

types of society. At this level of analysis, the theory ignores the differences between countries that have attained approximately the same level of development in order to concentrate on that which is common to them all.[1]

It follows from the above that the concept 'socio-economic formation' is not used to refer to the sum total of concrete objects of one specific type (or category) but rather to identify and specify the essential-universal characteristics which, although in reality existing only in individual typos, can, in the course of theoretical analysis, be abstracted and converted into an object of independent analysis. This is, indeed, the starting point of the theory.

In order to grasp the essence of the process of its construction, let us look at the history of the formulation by Marx and Engels of the theory of the capitalist socio-economic formation.

Marx himself admitted that in *Capital* he had concentrated primarily on an analysis of one specific historical formation, namely the capitalist formation. However, the logical techniques used in constructing the theory of the capitalist formation have a universal validity and can be used in constructing theories for any other specific historical socio-economic formation.

One of the most important techniques used by Marx and Engels in the construction of their theory was the 'cleansing' of capitalist relations from various 'accretions' that, in reality, existed alongside it, that is, from non-capitalist social forms. Essentially this is a technique widely applied in constructing any scientific theory.

By the process of abstraction, Marx separated out 'pure' capitalism. This technique is of great cognitive importance since natural and social processes are extremely complex and comprise numerous interacting factors. In order to understand them, the actual processes are 'simplified' by first separating out just one aspect that is essential to grasping the essence of all the interacting phenomena. Therefore, out of the aggregate of social relations to be found in individual capitalist societies, Marx selected only those that were related to the capitalist type. This process of abstraction was the prerequisite of his theoretical analysis of capitalist society in order to understand its essence.

[1] See V. I. Lenin, 'What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats', p. 140.

According to Marx, theory examines the 'pure' processes, and presents the laws governing capitalist production as they would operate in their pure form, not obscured by any of their non-typical manifestations.[1]

Thus, in developing the concept of the capitalist formation, Marx put to one side all the non-typical, non-essential aspects characteristic of both European and non-European bourgeois countries. However, the elaboration of the theory of the capitalist formation involved yet another technique of logic known as idealisation.

Capitalism, as a specific type of society, passes through a number of stages in the course of its development, and the key to the understanding of the less developed forms in this social evolution is to be found in the more developed forms. In order to construct the theory of capitalism, Marx had to visualise an idealised model of pre-monopoly capitalism in which all social relations had reached their ideal development. Thus the category 'bourgeois social formation' as elaborated by Marx referred to the ideal capitalist system. The concept 'ideal' is not used here in the sense of perfection and permanent value for mankind, but in the sense of the extreme limit of development of given social relations. The technique used by Marx is also of a universal scientific nature and is important in the construction of theories and the process of theoretical analysis. Noting the use of such techniques in the natural sciences, Engels referred to Sadi Carnot who, upon examining the steam engine, discovered that its basic processes did not operate in their pure form but were obscured by secondary processes. These he put to one side, and created an ideal steam engine (or gas engine) which cannot be built in practice but which is essential for theoretical analysis. It can be added here that Karl Marx would never have constructed the theory of capitalism if he had not applied these universal scientific techniques of theoretical analysis, if he had not set aside social relations that were purely secondary to capitalism, and if he had not mentally taken pre-monopoly capitalism to its extreme form. The essence of this type of social relations would have remained hidden in obscurity and its discovery would have been impossible.

There is yet another aspect to consider as regards the

[1] Cf. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 175.

definition of the concept 'socio-economic formation' and the techniques used in constructing the theory of the basic socio-economic formations. A given specific historical type of society is usually examined in that form which represents its extreme development, and this serves as the basis for the theory of specific socio-economic formations. This aspect of formation analysis is sometimes known as typological analysis. There is, however, another aspect without which the dialectical approach to this teaching would ho incomplete. This second aspect can he referred to as genetic, that is, it deals with the genesis, development and decline of specific historical social formations. The genetic analysis of a given socio-economic formation involves an examination of all the essential stages of development which it passes through while still retaining its qualitative distinctness with regard to other types of social formation.

Marx and Engels revealed the essence of both developed and undeveloped forms of social relations in a given type, together with the stages of development passed through by various socio-economic formations. At the same time, each formation is seen as an essential stage of social evolution which cannot be by-passed in the process of world history.

The typological and genetic aspects of the analysis of socio-economic formations reflect the inner contradiction of the historical process itself. Hegel was one of the first to attempt to give this contradiction theoretical expression within a system of concepts in his famous thesis 'All that is real is rational; and all that is rational is real'. This formula attracted the attention of ideologists from various classes and for a long time lacked a correct interpretation. Engels interpreted it by applying the principle of historism. Setting aside the idealist form in which this thesis was presented, he revealed its concealed dialectic essence: the unity of stability and mutability in the historical process. A given form of social relations retains its qualitative distinctness for as long as it continues to ho historically necessary, that is, while it corresponds to the level and nature of the development of the productive forces. It disappears as soon as it ceases to satisfy the requirements of the more advanced productive forces. Engels emphasised the fact that the stable aspect of specific social forms is relative, while their mutability is absolute.

The theory of formations assumes that the historical process of each specific historical type of society is described from two distinct, yet complementary and interrelated points of view: functional stability and genetic mutability.

Any definition of the relationship between the concept 'civilisation' and the concept 'formation' also involves comparing these concepts with certain other closely related categories. In philosophical literature the terms 'society' and 'formation' are often treated as synonyms, and if any distinction is made between them, it is treated as being of little importance. A more thorough analysis, however, reveals that the distinction is quite significant. In our opinion, the concept 'society' is not identical with the concept 'socio-economic formation.' The concept 'society' has two meanings. First, it is a form of the motion of matter that has emerged within the natural world, possesses qualitative distinctness and functions and develops according to specific laws. Secondly, it can be used to refer to individual societies as real historical entities. In order to make the distinction between the two terms clear, it can be said that 'formation' discloses the essence of qualitatively distinct stages of social development, while 'society' (in its second meaning) refers to the historical process in all its diversity. A society of a given kind, therefore, exists as the unity of the general, the particular and the unique, and possesses the qualities of a definite formation. The term 'formation' refers only to the type of society and its essential characteristics. Thus, for example, capitalism as such is the capitalist formation, while capitalist Britain is a society which belongs to a definite formational type.

Not all philosophical or historical enquiry into the theory of socio-economic formations uses the term 'society' with the meaning given above, although the need for such a concept has now become persistent. In order to distinguish clearly between the term 'formation', referring to the essence of a society of a given type, and a particular society as the unity of the essential-universal, the particular and the unique, the Soviet philosopher Yu. I. Semyonov has suggested the new term 'social organism',[1] to be used to refer

[1] *Семенов Ю. И.* Категория «социальный организм» и ее значение для исторической науки. «Вопросы истории», 1968, № 8, с. 88-106 (Yu. I. Semyonov, 'The Category "Social Organism" and its Significance for the Historical Sciences', *Voprosyistorii*, No. 8, 1968, pp. 88-106).

to actual individual societies. This new term is now quite widely used in philosophical and historical publications, and has made it possible to distinguish more precisely between the actual historical process and its theoretical representation. As a result, the term 'historical epoch' has also gained in precision. This term refers to a particular period of history with its numerous facts and events, and comprises the universal, the particular and the unique aspects characteristic of all 'social organisms' existing in a given historical period.

Marx, Engels and Lenin did not regard the formulation of the theory of socio-economic formations as an end in itself. By disclosing the essence of social phenomena this theory makes it possible to deal with social processes in all their complex diversity. The abstract categories of historical materialism, commented Marx, are meaningless when divorced from real history. Their value lies in the fact that they make it possible to organise historical material and reveal the relationship between its various layers. Indeed,

> the difficulties begin only when one sets about the examination and arrangement of the material—whether of a past epoch or of the present—and its actual presentation.[1]

Thus the category 'socio-economic formation' represents an essential-universal concept, just as the theory of formations constitutes a theoretical representation of an essential-universal type. It reflects the real essence of specific historical types of social organisation and the historical process of their self-development.

Marxist literature on social-economic formations generally distinguishes five historical types of social system: primitive-communal, slave-owning, feudal, capitalist and communist. There are also those who favour the identification of yet another type of social organisation which is known as the 'Asiatic' formation.

Historians have noted regional characteristics specific to the historical development of the countries of the East, and such singularities cannot bo ignored by social philos-

[1] **Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 'The German Ideology', p. 37.**

ophy, even at the level of generalisation. Nonetheless, the materialist interpretation of history makes it possible to detect a general line of historical development and common major types of production organisation both in the East and in the West.[1] There is little foundation for the isolationist tendencies in interpreting the social institutions and culture of the East.[2] It would seem that attempts to depict Oriental social organisation as a special type of formation are the result of confusing together the concept 'socio-economic formation' and the regional manifestations of certain types of social organisation.

One must, for example, distinguish between the slave-owning formation and ancient society. Ancient society is a social phenomenon that includes not only features common to all slave-owning societies, but also features unique to itself. Therefore it would be unacceptable to identify ancient society with a formation, which expresses the essential-universal features of any form of slave-owning society. From a methodological point of view, the theory of the slave-owning formation serves as a means of explaining antiquity as a special form of that formation in comparison with other slave-owning social systems in other parts of the world. In precisely the same way, the theory of formations (primitive-communal, slave-owning, feudal, etc.) makes it easier to understand the common essence of their development and the specifics of their emergence within the world process of civilisation.

The supporters of the concept of an 'Asiatic' formation frequently refer to Marx, who formulated the concept of the 'Asiatic mode of production'. However, Marx referred not only to the 'Asiatic' mode of production, but also to the 'ancient', the 'German', the 'Slav', etc. In each case these terms were used to refer to regional specifics, singularities of social development, mainly in the early stages. Marx distinguished a number of regional manifestations of the

[1] Cf. *Конрад Н. И.* Запад и Восток. М., Наука, 1972; *Жуков Е. М., Бирг М. Л., ЧернякЕ. Б., ПавловВ. И.* Теоретические проблемы всемирно-исторического процесса. М., Наука, 1979 (N. I. Konrad. *West and East*. Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1972, Ye. M. Zhukov, M. L. Birg, Ye. B. Chernyak, V. T. Pavlov, *Theoretical Problems of the World-Historical Process*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1979).

[2] Cf. the article by Natalia Kozlova and Valentina Fedotova in the present collection.

primitive-communal system Roman, German, Celtic, Slav, Hindu, etc. However, the concept 'primitive-communal formation' includes only those essential-universal characteristics typical of all primitive social forms.

As has already been mentioned, the formulation of the theory of specific historical formations is not the final aim of investigation into given social systems. It marks only the first step in the theoretical understanding of the actual historical process or contemporary history. Empirical data on countries, regions and historical epochs is acquired along the difficult road leading from abstract theory to factual knowledge.

Having now defined the term 'formation', we can return to examining its relationship to the term 'civilisation'.

If 'civilisation' is understood to refer to a specific socio-cultural community, that is, to a specific historical entity, then the term 'formation' represents a different level of abstraction. The teaching on formations will function vis-à-vis such communities as a general theory that assists in their typological definition as members of a particular formation, and also helps in understanding the essential characteristics of their social organisation at a particular level and the basic Jaws governing their mode of operation and development.

When 'civilisation' is contrasted against barbarism, then the emphasis is put upon the axiological meaning of this concept, whereas 'formation' refers to the essence of a society of a given type.

The concept 'civilisation' includes within it a value judgement, implicitly confirming the superiority of a given stage of social development over the preceding stage. It underscores the significance of the first form of the social division of labour and the contribution made by the social organisation and culture based on this form of the division of labour to the common human heritage. The term 'formation', on the other hand, discloses the nature of the social system of a specific type, its structure and its place in the world historical process. These two concepts arc complementary in that the teaching on formations makes it possible to determine the historical type of 'civilisation', while the category 'civilisation' helps in evaluating a society of a particular historical type within its specific historical context.

It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between the concepts 'civilisation' and 'formation' in terms of their structural organisation. Here the concept 'formation' would include the essential aspects of social life, the historical forms of community, etc., whereas the concept 'civilisation' acts as a structural framework for those aspects of social life that arc susceptible to value judgement, primarily cultural achievements.

Sometimes the concepts 'formation' and 'civilisation' can be distinguished in space and time (the geographical and historical limits of civilisations and formations). Further elucidation is required here, particularly as regards the geographical limits of formations. Strictly speaking, it is theoretically inaccurate to use such an expression in speaking of a formation, as the essential-universal (in this instance 'formation') does not exist independently of its concrete manifestations. Therefore certain reservations must be made when speaking of the geographical and historical (spatial and temporal) limitations of 'formations'. In our opinion, it is more accurate, theoretically speaking, to talk of the chronological limits of a historical epoch dominated by a given type of social organisation or a specific 'socio-economic formation'. It is historical epochs belonging to the corresponding formational type that have temporal limits. If the formalional type itself is seen as having temporal limits, this could lead to the conclusion that beyond these limits the given formational type ceases to exist, whereas history proves this to be wrong. There still exist today not only developed but also extremely archaic social forms whose theoretical investigation requires a knowledge of the theory of the primitive-communal organisation of social life, etc. An analysis of the modern historical epoch requires a knowledge of all the aspects of the theory of formations.

The same reservations must be made as regards the spatial limits of formations. This obviously refers to the geographical location of those countries and regions which are comprised within that formation which expresses the basic content of the given epoch. This is, in fact, the basis for determining the formational character of the historical epoch itself, while the formational character of individual countries or regions is based on their dominant forms of social organisation.

Thus the concepts 'formation' and 'civilisation' serve to unite the content of social life and the historical process from different points of view and at various levels of abstraction. They are distinguished by their methodological, cognitive function. The further development of these concepts will make it possible to penetrate still further into the essence of historical events and their axiological significance.

Eduard Markarian

The Correlation of General and Local Historical Types of Culture

The elaboration of methodologically effective methods of researching into and expressing both the general and the particular parameters of cultural-historical processes in their systemic unity has always been one of the basic tasks facing the philosophy of culture. Today this is necessary not only in order to understand history, but also in order to meet the demands of practical social management. It should also be added that the very development of historical culturology as a whole did not favour a balanced study of the general and the individual-specific aspects of cultural-historical processes, as can be seen from American cultural anthropology. Here the development of one-sided evolutionism that took place at the turn of the century, with its emphasis on the common, universal aspects of the development of mankind, later gave way to an equally unbalanced tendency (in the other direction), with attention being paid mainly to the unique individuality of culturo-historical systems.

A significant shift towards the absolutisation of the unique aspects of various cultures also took place as a result of a philosophical idealist interpretation of history whose main tenets were given their fullest and most consistent expression in the views of Spengler and Toynbee. Both these writers advance the relativist principle of the equivalence of their proposed basic units of human history, regardless of the epoch represented by the given unit. Spengler named his units 'cultures', while Toynbee named his 'civilisations'. As a result, both ancient and modern civilisations were ranged side by side as equivalents. This relativist principle in the historical philosophy of Spengler and Toynbee denies the progressive development of world

history. Although much has been written on these and other similar concepts in the philosophy of history and cultural anthropology, there has boon little critical analysis o[their common principle of the equivalence of the historical units or of the initial conceptual structure which expresses these units. However, such an analysis is essential to understanding the essence of these concepts and the common approach to history from which they spring. Moreover, an analysis of the principle of the equivalence of cultures or civilisations, a principle characteristic of this approach, is of interest not only as a critique of the concepts involved. In fact, the principle itself is the result of a distorted view of real and important, but poorly-studied problems of historical science. These problems deserve close attention and detailed examination. It is proposed to look at some of them in the present article.

Before moving to the problems themselves, let us first note the one-sided, local-individualising interpretation given by Spengler and Toynbee of the units of the development of human history (e. g. cultures, civilisations). The concept of local culture or civilisation was introduced by us in a critical analysis of the views of Spengler and Toynbee in which we set out to identify and precisely define the nature of the historical parameter expressed in these units. The general principle used in constructing such systems we named 'the concept of local cultures or civilisations'.[1] In a later work we labelled this approach to the philosophy of history 'the concept of equivalent cultures or civilisations'. Both these expressions then became accepted terms. Moreover, the first, the concept of 'local culture' and 'local civilisations', was then sometimes ascribed to Spengler and Toynbee, even though they labelled their historical units 'cultures' and 'civilisations' without the epithet 'local'. Indeed it is this omission that lies at the root of the problem. The use of the terms 'culture' and 'civilisation' would be quite acceptable provided they reflected not only the local-individualising but also the general-phasic characteristics

[1] Cf. *Маркарян* ,9. *С.* 0 концепции локальных цивилизаций. Ереван, изд-во АТI Арм. ССР, 1962; он же. Очерки теории культуры. Ереван, изд-во АН Ар.\r. ССР, 1909 (E. S. Markarian, *On the Concept of Local Civilisations*, Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, Yerevan, 1962; *idem.*, *Outlines of a Theory of Culture,* Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, Yerevan, 1969).

of the historical complexes under consideration. However, the idealism of Spengler, Toynbee and other representatives of this trend makes it impossible for them to grasp the dialectic unity of these characteristics.

In their attempts to explain the dynamics of the historical process, idealistically orientated scholars turn their attention immediately to the spiritual, most individual and distinctive spheres of the social practice of various peoples. As a result, they almost always concentrate upon the local form and stylistic singularities of the object of investigation, its overall 'spiritual shape' as it were. It is precisely these local singularities that the idealistic scholar is often obliged to regard as the sole basis upon which to integrate culturo-historical complexes and the sole criterion of their correlation. Thus the factors which legitimately permit local singularities in the social practice of different peoples and regional communities to be equated with each other become the factors that serve as the basis for equating whole historical complexes. This is the key to the concept of equivalent cultures.

Historical materialism adopts a very different approach to research, providing criteria that permit a far more comprehensive and detailed analysis of culturo-historical systems. For the most part, these criteria pertain to material production. The theoretical generalisation of the historical sequence of modes of production, which constitutes the objective basis of the history of social formations, makes it possible to distinguish the phasic parameters of history, which are almost completely ignored by those who support the theory of equivalent cultures. Indeed, it is above all this aspect of historical materialism that is evoking enormous and growing interest in Marxist methodology in an effort to find an alternative to the theory of equivalent cultures and various forms of neo-evolutionism.[1]

The aforesaid in no way implies that those who base their approach on historical materialism ignore the local parameter of history. Rather they view it in a far broader, and therefore far richer context. The interest of Marxist researchers in the local aspect of history is reflected, for example, in Soviet literature on this subject over the last

[1] Cf. David Kaplan, Robert Alan Manners, *Culture Theory*, Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs (New Jersey), 1972.

few years, which reveals that a great deal of research is being conducted on the individual-specific aspects of the development of mankind within the framework of the theory of social formations.

Clearly, the main methodological problem is that of correlating these two aspects of research into culture (civilisation) and giving them precise conceptual expression within a unified theoretical conceptual system. The conceptual system that divides historical types of culture into 'general' and 'local' is meant to serve precisely this purpose. This system can be used to investigate and represent specific historical cultural complexes in their entirety, allowing for two qualitatively different cognitive projections. One of these requires that the objects of study be abstracted from their specific historical, local-individual links with the surrounding world. Such abstraction is necessary in order that attention be concentrated on their general characteristics and their historical similarity or dissimilarity established. It is this abstract-analytical approach that makes it possible to distinguish the corresponding stages of cultural development. The second cognitive projection, on the other hand, concentrates attention on those specific historical, local-individual links between the systems under investigation and the surrounding world which are ignored in investigating general historical types. Accordingly, the generalisation and typologisation of the objects under investigation at this level takes account of characteristics localised in time and space. This particular method of generalisation and typologisation is designed 1o express local historical types of culture.

The concept of socio-economic formations corresponds to the first, most general level of investigation into the social process. This concept is the classical expression of that form of general historical type which represents the systemic phasic unity of social processes [1] and it can only fulfil its cognitive functions if the local-individual aspects of the societies it comprises are set aside, this being the indispensable prerequisite of a phasic-formation description of these societies. These aspects of the concept of socio-economic formations must be fully appreciated in order to arrive at a correct formulation of the problem of its relationship to culturo-historical processes, and also in order to formulate

[1] Cf. the article by Yevgeni Lysmankin in the present collection.

a concept of culture that is essentially similar to the concept of socio-economic formations both logically and in content. Such a concept is that of formational types of culture. This concept expresses the various phases of cultural development as determined by radical changes in the modes of material production.

Any explanation of the relationship between socio-economic formations and formational types of culture inevitably touches upon a problem fundamental to culturological theory, that of clearly defining the criteria to be used in distinguishing culture from social life as a whole. The very nature of the phenomenon of culture, a phenomenon that is 'diffused' throughout the entire social organism, that literally penetrates its every pore, makes this problem particularly difficult to solve. Moreover, when separating culture out from the entire complex of social life in order to subject it to scientific investigation, it is essential to avoid the frequently restricted interpretations of this phenomenon (as a system of values, as the creative aspect of human activity, etc.), and to preserve its comprehensive integrity and richness of content. This problem cannot be solved by a one-dimensional approach. Its solution requires the construction of a multidimensional model which permits a systemic examination of society and in which culture is not merely seen as one of the parts, but as one of the basic dimensions of social life. The structural cross-section reflecting this dimension then reveals social life from the point of view of those modes of human behaviour that are characteristic of social life in being extra-biological.

The other two dimensions of the proposed model are designed to reflect the subjects (individual and collective) and the diversity of human activity, the latter being the result of corporate activity directed towards the corresponding objects of reality.

The above-mentioned categories (subjects of activity, spheres of activity, and extra-biological means of activity) together form, in our opinion, the basic componential structure of society. In other words, all the diversity of sociocultural phenomena can be expressed and represented by these categories. In reality, these categories are indissolubly united into one whole which serves as the basis for the integrated network of social life and the source of its development.

From a general typological point of view, this integrated unity of the elements that constitute social life is expressed by the concept of socio-economic formation. Formational types of culture give phasic expression to only one of these categories of elements—the specific means by which human communities interact with their natural and socio-cultural environment and organise their social life on the basis of the institutionalisation, stimulation, programming, material provision and social reproduction of the activity of their individual members. The construction of formational types of culture is a specific line of theoretical enquiry within the general process of investigation into socio-economic formations.

The elaboration of a multidimensional systemic model of society that provides the criteria for correlating the culturological and other fundamental theoretical lines of enquiry involved in investigating social life also has an important role to play in substantiating the teaching on socio-economic formations as applied to every epoch of human history without exception. The theoretical potential of historical materialism in this respect is recognised not only by Marxists. The well-known American anthropologist Marvin Harris places great value on precisely this property of historical materialism as developed by Marx, who, in Harris's words, formulated a principle no less valid scientifically than Darwin's principle of natural selection. [1]

However, in the West considerable influence is still enjoyed by interpretations of the theory of socio-economic formations which declare that, while this theory makes it possible to explain the nature and development of certain historical epochs, in particular the age of capitalism, it is of no assistance in understanding other epochs. The most common argument is that economic institutions play the dominant role in some societies, but others are dominated by other types of institutions—religious, for example, or military. However, such arguments are based on a false premise and cannot invalidate the teaching on socio-economic formations. This theory is not based on asserting the determining role of *economic institutions,* but points to the ultimately determining role played by *economic activity* in

[1] **M. Harris,** *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*, Crowel1, Now York, 1969.

the development of society and the shaping of general types of social development. Therefore, in this particular instance it is not social institutions (i.e. elements of culture), but the institutionalised spheres of human activity that are to be directly correlated, and these last express a qualitatively different structural cross-section of society.

The cognitive situation under analysis requires that two corelative units—economic and extra-economic activity —be distinguished within the given structural cross-section. The historical relationship between these two spheres in the process of social development permits the conclusion that the mode of economic activity determines the essential characteristics of the basic spheres of extra-economic activity, i.e. their general type. It is this cognitive function of the given principle of historical materialism that we will apply to all the phases and all the epochs of human history.

While not claiming that the concepts of socio-economic formations and formational types of culture can explain everything, we would nonetheless like to stress yet again their general-typological nature. Their application is restricted to the identification of the common, invariable characteristics of social development on the basis of the criteria discussed above, and it cannot be used directly to explain the specific characteristics of individual societies, which are the product of concrete historical conditions. The teaching on socio-economic formations serves as the essential general methodological prerequisite in studying these individual characteristics, which, however, themselves require a different principle of explanation and generalisation. The systematic and comprehensive elaboration of this principle is a problem that has arisen only recently.

Paradoxically, it is the modern age with its powerful unifying tendencies that has posed with particular urgency the problem of conducting scientific research into the local parameter of cultural development. Until recently, interest in the individual-unique, local characteristics of culture was limited, at the scientific level, mainly to the corresponding historical and geographical disciplines. A dramatic change is occurring today in this regard. From being a strictly academic and peripheral problem, research into the local aspect of human development has now become of ma-

jor theoretical and practical importance. A major reason for this change is that, in managing social processes on a scientific basis, it is becoming increasingly important to take account of the local parameter expressing the individual-unique aspect of history and embodied in cultural traditions. The need for a branch of learning able to give precise and systematic expression to the local parameter of human history is today making itself felt in various spheres of practical activity, from socio-economic planning to the formulation of foreign policy towards specific countries and regions.

For a long time research into the local diversity of culture was dominated by purely descriptive and phenomenological methods based on a subjective understanding of and emotional response to specific forms of culture, and on an intuitive grasp of their individual stylistic characteristics. There can be no doubt that this phenomenological approach is quite legitimate and, indeed, in some cases indispensable. However, in the instance now under consideration, an approach is needed that makes it possible to express in a system of precisely defined terms, the local, individual-unique experience of historical communities as embodied in their ethnic and local traditions. This would then make it possible to represent the units of this experience as comparable objects.

The integrative interaction of the social and natural sciences that is typical of our age enriches social research with universal scientific methods and useful analogies. Of potentially enormous significance in this respect is the view of human social development as a qualitatively distinct form of adaptive processes. At present, this approach to human history raises more questions than it solves. However, this research strategy, whose aim is to disclose the invariable characteristics of the adaptive processes and on this basis establish the fundamental nature of society as an adaptive system, would seem to be promising. Such an approach, which fully corresponds to contemporary processes of scientific integration, sheds new light on many social science problems, including the problem of the ontological status of local variation in the development of human culture.

Of interest in this connection is the concept of specific and general evolution put forward by the American anthropologist M. Sahlins.[1] Attempting to find some common reference points in examining socio-cultural development and biological evolution, Sahlins believes he has found them in the essentially similar forms these two processes assume, even though the processes are accomplished by qualitatively different mechanisms. Both biological and cultural evolution occur by means of adaptive modification of the corresponding forms to the existing conditions of the environment, and both involve a progression from lower to higher levels of development. These two aspects of development are very similar to the differentiation of two types of biological change proposed by the Soviet scientist A. N. Severtsov.[2] These are 'idioadaptation' (adaptation to a specific environment, the former being wholly relative to the latter), and 'aromorphosis' (changes of a general and progressive nature). However, as has already been pointed out, Sahlins is attempting to view these aspects of development as invariants characteristic of the development of all forms of life, including human social life.

Sahlins' approach deserves attention because of its attempt to discover an objective basis for correlating the general and the local (or, as Sahlins describes it, 'specific') aspects of human cultural development. However, this merely indicates the general direction of research. Sahlins not only fails to discuss, but does not even mention the fundamental methodological problems involved in such a correlation of the general and local aspects of cultural development. Thus, for example, Sahlins does not deal with the problem of differentiating the methods of generalisation to be used for the general and local aspects of cultural development, although this problem should, in our opinion, be considered as fundamental to any investigation of the questions under review.

The local parameter in both biological and socio-cultural evolution derives from the fact that the potential capacities contained in the evolutionary units can only manifest

[1] M. Sahlins, *Evolution: Specific and General in Theory of Anthropology*. Ed. by R. Manner and D. Kaplan, Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago, 19G8, pp. 230-234, 229-240.

[2] *Северцов А. Н.* Главные направления эволюционного процесса. М., изд-во Московского университета, 1967, с. 58, 67, 87 (A. N. Severtsov, *The Main Trends in the Evolutionary Process*, Moscow University Press, Moscow, 1967, pp. 58, 67,87).

themselves in a plurality of evolutionary forms by means of regional self-limitation. This supposes tho development of corresponding, integrated, locally specialised modes of existence which are capable of reflecting the concrete conditions obtaining in the environment to be assimilated. As a result, the maintenance of a local cultural individuality is as important for social units of human development as is the maintenance of the appropriate programmes for the units of biological evolution.

The maintenance of the local individuality of different societies was particularly important during the past stages of human development, when the historical accumulation of economic experience assumed a stable ethnic pattern, being woven into national traditions. However, even today when some of the more important ecological functions that were previously carried out by ethno-cultural traditions have started to shift to the realm of supra-ethnic culture, characterised by a tendency to unification, the localised diversity of human culture is displaying a notable capacity for survival. This is explained primarily by the fact that the local diversity of human culture is one expression of its redundancy. This redundancy is potentially of great adaptive importance, for it is culture that serves as the specific adaptive mechanism of society thanks to which society has been transformed into a 'universal adaptive-adapting system' unique among all forms of life. If it is to carry out its adaptive functions effectively, culture, like modes of organising and reproducing biological life, must have some degree of redundancy. In other words, it must not only be constantly able to meet the minimum demands of the environment, but also contain within itself the capacity to adapt to new, sometimes sharply changing conditions. The form and degree of the expression of local cultural diversity can vary considerably at different stages of social development, but diversity itself nonetheless remains an essential feature of any of these stages as a consequence of the factors mentioned above, and others, which are produced by the processes of social self-organisation.

These processes are fundamentally contradictory, as is the very means of their realisation—culture. Although culture serves as the specific adaptive mechanism of society, it has always carried within itself a destructive, destabilising element. This is particularly noticeable in the local

diversity of culture, one of whose manifestations can be seen in the contradictions of ethnic and regional interests, ideas and social institutions. These contradictions and conflicts have naturally proved to be one of the most important destabilising factors in history. However, in the actual process of interaction between human communities, these contradictions also act as the source of cultural forms corresponding to the existing environment.

Until now, the process of adapting local cultural traditions to the existing social environment was spontaneous and took place over long historical periods. That this should be so was natural for ages characterised by a relatively slow rate of social development. However, today the situation has undergone a qualitative change as a result of the sharp acceleration of social change. Thus the main common task facing humanity involves the need for a scientifically grounded mechanism of adaptive self-modification for human communities living in the rapidly changing contemporary world.

The task of exercising direct control over the dynamics of cultural traditions in order to adapt them to the imperatives of world development can be considered as the maximum programme. Today we are faced with another, also very important but comparatively easier scientific and managerial task connected with the systemic study of cultural traditions, and in particular their local parameter. This is the task of allowing for cultural traditions in setting up forecast models simulating social systems at the global and regional level in order to determine their most likely paths of development. Cultural tradition is a phenomenon whose study makes it possible to combine into one whole the past, the present and the probable future of the system being simulated.

The study of the local parameter of culturo-historical processes is directly linked with their individualisation, i.e. with the comprehensive reproduction of the unique experience of the units of the given processes as expressed in their cultural heritage. The individualisation of cultures is, however, one of the methodologically least explored problems of social science. The Baden school of neo-Kantianism, and in particular Heinrich Rickert, did, it is true, devote considerable attention to this problem, but Rickert, who put the individualising, historical (idiographic) meth-

od in opposition to the generalising, natural-scientific (nomothetic) method, produced a one-sided and distorted interpretation of the task oi' individualising the objects of historical research, and in fact led such research into an impasse, where, in Western literature on this topic, it has remained to this day.

Rickert overlooked the fact that, in addition to the 'idiographic individualisation' of the objects of historical research, which involved the perception and description of single events and facts selected on the basis of their relation to the corresponding values, there is another, special type of individualisation based on the generalisation of these objects within their given regional space-time co-ordinates. We have called this method of generalisation 'generalising individualisation'.[1] Moreover, as one might expect, this method of individualisation is particularly important for historical and geographical research into culture, since in the process of carrying out its functions culture is constantly reproduced in the actions of various individuals united within specific groups.

In order to carry out these functions (which, as was stated earlier, consist in stimulating, programming, controlling, co-ordinating, materially providing for and socially reproducing human activity by special, extra-biological means), culture must necessarily assume the form of the corresponding stereotyped actions. The processes involved in the stereotypisation of culture are reflected in norms of behaviour, tools, weapons, works of art, means of transport, dwellings, food and many others. It is very important to note that culture is seen as that which is self-repeating, reproducing a large number of basically identical copies, not only by those engaged in the theory of culture, but also by those engaged in historical and geographical research, for each is attempting to interpret certain manifestations of the culturo-historical process, including their characteristic individual-unique aspects.

The cultural historian is, of course, perfectly justified in

1 E. Markarian, 'Methodological Principles of Studying the Local Diversity of Culture'. In *6th International Congress of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science*. Abstr. (sections 10, 11, 12), Hannover, 1979, p. 10.

examining certain cultural manifestations not as identical samples of the corresponding cultural complex, but as facts having a value of themselves and to be viewed in their unique integrity. However, what is then to be the approach to the study of the specific characteristics not of individual products of a culture but of the culture itself, of which these products arc the direct expression; as, for example, in the study of the unique characteristics of the culture of a given people? In such a situation, the historian is naturally obliged to generalise the diverse manifestations of culture, to examine them in the light of the stereotypes typical of that particular ethno cultural tradition. Only when the various culturo historical practices of a given people have been repeatedly compared amongst themselves, and their inherent characteristics typologised in comparison with the culturo-historical practices of other peoples is it possible in principle to individualise their respective cultures. This is true of any historically delimited culture. In other words, the individualisation of culturo-historical systems is achieved in such cases by a process of generalisation, this last understood in the literal sense of the word, a process that the representatives of the Baden school of neo-Kantianism repeatedly tried to represent as being the antithesis of historical knowledge. It is this process that was referred to above as 'generalising individualisation'.

Although the method of investigation described as 'generalising individualisation' is widely used in both historical and geographical research (suffice it to mention here the investigative techniques used in archeology or ethnography), it has still not achieved recognition in its own right as a logico-methodological procedure. This is no doubt largely explained by the fact that, in terms of abstract logic, generalising individualisation in no way differs in principle from other forms of generalisation, and also necessarily presupposes abstraction from the individual characteristics of the objects under investigation. If, for example, a particular ethnic group is taken as the object of generalising individualisation, then the cognitive task undertaken in relation to this group can only he accomplished by, on the one hand, separating out those features typical of the given ethnic culture while, on the other, leaving to one side all those features that deviate from what is, in the given instance, the recognised ethno-cultural norm.

The qualitative distinctness of generalising individualisation as a method of generalising objects is revealed not by abstract logic but in the course of its application in actual multidimensional cognitive situations, which require that different functions be allocated to different types of generalising mental activity. Only in the actual cognitive situations that arise during the investigation of human history does the procedure of identifying the models of activity typical of a particular ethnic culture acquire an individualising function that enables it to be relatively clearly distinguished from those forms of generalisation which are intended to disclose the generic features of ethno-social organisms.

The existence of a distinct, generalising form of individualisation should naturally be reflected in the corresponding historical types. Therefore a special concept is required that is capable of providing a generalised description of that kind of typological concept as applied to culture. The concept 'local historical type of culture' is designed to provide a generalised expression and definition of the direct result of the generalised individualisation occurring in the course of cultural development.

The use of the concept 'local historical type of culture' requires that the term 'local' be more fully explained, as it is often linked to the identification of relatively small geographical areas. Indeed, it was in this sense that it was used to designate one of the rungs in the hierarchy: global-regional-local. It is worth noting here that this widespread, restrictive interpretation of the term 'local' is never substantiated. Nor is this surprising. It is impossible to give any precise criteria for restricting the local nature of any cultural phenomenon for the simple reason that we are dealing here with a characteristic intrinsic to any unit of human development regardless of its scale. Our use of this term in the concept 'local historical type' differs from that just described in two ways. First, we use it to describe not the hierarchical levels of a system, but one of the logically equivalent parameters of a two-dimensional cross-section of that system (i.e. correlated to the parameter expressing the general properties of the system). Secondly, we use the concept 'local' in combination with the units of historical development at any taxonomical level on condition that these units are examined within their specific space-time

co-ordinates. These characteristics are the expression within the systems under investigation of the complex of specific conditions within which they exist, and of the crystallisation within the corresponding modes of historical existence of those individual features naturally acquired by these systems as a result of interaction with their environment. It is this factor which objectively justifies the use of the concept 'local' in a manner permitting variability as to range and content according to the cognitive task.

The factors mentioned above are of fundamental importance and are essential in selecting a qualitatively distinct projection of individualising research into systems together with the corresponding specific method of generalisation.

As with general historical types of culture, its local historical types arc not concepts that can be used directly in a particular piece of research. This is because these concepts are not correlated with specific units of analysis such as, for example, 'nation'. However, these types, expressing as they do two different points of reference in investigation into culturo-historical systems, are designed to function as generic types for all concepts reproducing in one way or another either the individual or the general features and properties of the given systems. Practical research in contemporary culturology and the social sciences in general sorely needs such clearly formulated and expressed theoretical concepts. By establishing the initial reference points of the analysis of socio-cultural systems, they avoid any blurring of the different aspects involved and provide an appropriate method of classifying the research data.

In terms of the range, content and number of identifiable characteristics, general and local historical types may vary considerably. Earlier we looked at the fundamental concept of socio-economic formations. From this is derived the concept of formational types of culture (civilisation) as the manifestations of general historical types of culture. However, it should be noted that the latter can be based on the identification of certain other general features and properties of the socio-cultural process, of which an example is the concept of economico-cultural types so important in ethnographic research. [1]

[1] Cf. the article by Yulian Bromley in the present collection,

Formational types of culture and economico-cultural typos in different projections (phasic and geographical) arc designed lo express whole cultural complexes. However, general historical types of culture can also he used to reproduce their individual subsystems (segments): technology, science, religion, ethics, art, etc. [1] In this way the concept of a general historical type of culture is generic in relation to any historical type of culture abstracted from its direct local links with its environment. Viewed in this way, this concept serves as an elementary and variable theoretical unit of the phasic and generalised geographical diversity of culture.

As regards (he local historical type of culture, this concept is designed to serve as the generic concept in relation to all historical types that are the result of the generalising individualisation of the units of cultural development. Accordingly, it can also be seen as an elementary and variable theoretical unit of the individual diversity of human culture reflecting the unique features of its development within specific space-time co-ordinates. The particular space-time co-ordinates chosen may vary according to the objective properties of the development process itself and of the cognitive problems under consideration. Thus they may comprise both large culturo-regional complexes such as Latin America, South-East Asia or Western Europe, or micro-units of culture that comprise only a few hundred, or even a few dozen, individuals.

In the earlier analysis of the concepts of Spengler and Toynbee, it was noted that the suggested use of the terms 'culture' and 'civilisation' for the units of the historical process singled out by these two authors would have been acceptable if these terms were methodologically capable of expressing not only the local-individual but also the general-phasic characteristics of the given units. However, this problem can only be solved by adopting the Marxist synthetic approach that makes it possible to combine their general and individual characteristics and identify their dialectic relationship and its objective basis. The suggested concepts of general and local historical types of culture arc designed to fulfil these cognitive functions and provide precise criteria

[1] Cf. Section II of the present collection.

for distinguishing between characteristics within the framework of a single conceptual system, thus making it, possible to consider their relationship and interdependence within the system.

Let us now turn to the problem of the equivalence of historical cultures mentioned at the beginning of this article. It is our opinion that the principle underlying the differentiation of general and local historical types of culture will provide the key to solving this intricate problem, which is of prime importance for the comparative study of historical systems. There is a qualitative difference between a comparison of equivalent objects belonging lo the same type and a comparison of objects that are not equivalent and do not belong to the same type. Hence the question of the criteria of equivalence to be used in comparison is of great importance. Indeed, the methodological value of any theory for comparative research is determined primarily by the adequacy of the criteria used to class the systems under comparison as equivalent objects belonging to the same type, or as non-equivalent objects belonging to different types.

In order to illustrate this problem, let us take a comparison between the culture of the East and that of contemporary Western Europe. Only too frequently, this comparison is made without any allowance for one extremely important factor, namely that these two cultural systems reflect qualitatively different stages of social development. As a result, the researcher in comparative social history is deprived of the concept of general phasic types in history, an important tool of cognition, and is effectively restricted in his examination of the objects of history to just one, 'horizontal' dimension. The cognitive importance of the concept of genoral phasic historical types lies mainly in the fact that it supplies research with the criteria necessary to determine whether the cultural systems being compared are equivalent or not. It is therefore not surprising that the relativist, principle referred to above was subjected lo vigorous criticism even by Western social science, in which it enjoyed considerable influence during the first half of the twentieth century.

The whole problem of the equivalence of cultures springs from the fact that it is not capable of such a simple solution. Hence the fundamental difficulties involved in exam-

ining this problem. The concept of phasic historical types provides precise criteria for determining the degree of equivalence of the objects of culture by establishing their common nature. However, this, though indeed important, is not the only factor involved. There is another approach which provides a qualitatively different projection of the problem of the equivalence of the objects of culture. This projection is designed to reveal the individual-unique characteristics of the given objects, whose theoretical crystallisation and classification is possible thanks to a distinct generalising individualisation and local typologisation. If, for example, Buddhism, Islam and Confucianism and the traditional decorative arts or etiquette systems of China, India, Japan and the Arab countries on the one hand, and the corresponding components of Western European culture on the other are examined from this point of view, they can be considered to be essentially equivalent. However, this equivalence is determined not by their belonging to one type, but by other criteria connected with the individual originality of cultures. The concept of local historical types of culture, which expresses the individual variations of socio-cultural development, is here adequate to meet the given cognitive situation.

Thus in dealing with the problem of the equivalence of the objects of culture we are confronted once more with different projections as concerns their investigation and evaluation. To sum up, one can say that *there are two kinds of equivalence between the objects of culture. One derives from the principle of identity oj type, while the other derives from the principle of idioadaptive relativity.* In the first case, by constructing general historical types of culture, the objects of culture can be ranged together as equivalents thanks to certain commonly possessed inherent and invariable characteristics. In the second case, by constructing local historical types of culture, the objects of culture can be ranged together as equivalents because they all express idioadaptive solutions to particular, concrete problem situations based on the capacities of the specific traditions of historical communities.

Therefore, when speaking of the individuality of traditions, we must hear in mind not only, and not mainly, the originality and uniqueness of the elements of culture (more often than not, elements of culture are repealed in numerous local traditions), but rather the way in which these elements fit into the general system of the traditions under consideration, and the combinations they form with other elements of these traditions. It is precisely in this systemic combination of the elements of experience that the cause of cultural individuality is to be sought.

On the whole, local historical types of culture viewed in the abstract can be considered idioadaptively equivalent, as they are relevant in relation to a particular combination of conditions characteristic of particular environments in which human communities are living, and of those means of assimilating the environment that present themselves as complexes of cultural traditions typical of given communities. It is here that one must sock that criterion whoso absolutisation leads to historical relativism.

Although the thesis advanced above is heuristically useful, it must be remembered that in reality the true equivalence of local forms of culture is by no means common as they are not infrequently found in combination with general-typological characteristics. Sometimes this combination is obvious, but at times it may be difficult to detect. Furthermore, the possibility in principle of a number of local solutions to the same problems leads in practice to a situation in which, from the point of view of the effectiveness of these solutions, local types of culture may be either equivalent or characterised by a significant difference in value. This is particularly noticeable as regards ecological practices. The mere fact that a society has survived does not mean that its culture is the optimum possible, but simply that it corresponds to a certain adaptive minimum.

None of this, however, invalidates the thesis advanced earlier, for it should also be noted that historical systems ranged together as equivalents on the basis of general types of culture are also, in reality, by no means always characterised by actual equivalence. Here, as in the study of other objects of scientific investigation, it is necessary to average out and idealise to a certain degree. This method of forming concepts, intrinsic to the very nature of logical thought, is here legitimately used to distinguish the aforementioned idioadaptive form of equivalence between objects of culture.

To conclude, we would like to point out that it is impos-

sible, in the space of an article, to deal with all the questions connected with the principle of the differentiation of general and local historical types of culture (civilisation), nor with its application to culturological problems. However, we hope that the arguments advanced above are sufficient to prove the necessity of formulating a special principle that will make it possible to differentiate and proportionally express general and local cultural forms.

Yulian Bromley

Civilisation as a Hierarchical System of Socio-Cultural Regions

The term 'civilisation', first introduced into historical science by A. Ferguson, subsequently came to acquire a variety of meanings. It was used to refer to a definite stage (epoch) of social development (Morgan),[1] and also to spatial communities (Danilevsky,[2] Spengler[3]), in which case it is generally used in the plural. Although this second use of the term has become widespread over recent years, there are fundamental differences in its interpretation. On the one hand it is used, for example, to refer to certain components of spiritual culture, in particular religion, world outlook, ideology (Toynbee, Sorokin)[4], while on the other

[1] Lewis Morgan, *Ancient Society*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1964.

[2] *Данилевский Н. Я.* Россия и Европа. Взгляд на культурные и политические отношения славянского мира к романо-германскому. Изд. 5-е, СПб., 1895 (N. Ya. Danilevsky, *Russia and Europe. An Examination of Cultural and Political Relations Between the Slav and the Romano-Germanic Worlds*, 5th edition, St.-Petersburg, 1895).

[3] O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*. Erster Band. *Geslall und Wirklichkeit*. C. H. Becksche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oscar Beck, München, 1924. (For a critical analysis of the concepts of Spengler see: *Семенов Ю. Н.* Общественный прогресс и социальная философия современной буржуазии. М., Наука, 1965, с. 7-12 (Yu. N. Semyonov, *Social Progress and the Social Philosophy of the Contemporary Bourgeoisie*, Nauka, Moscow, 1965, pp. 7-12).

[4] Arnold Toynbee, *Change and Habit. The Challenge of Our Time*, Oxford University Press, London, 1966; Pitirim Sorokin, *Social Philosophers of an Age of Crisis*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1951. (For a critical analysis of the concepts of these authors see: *Семенов Ю. Н.* Общественный прогресс..., с. 13-94; *idem.*, Социальная философия А. Тойнби. Критический очерк, М., Наука, 1980 (Yu. N. Somyonov, *The Social Philosophy of A. Toynbee. A Critical Outline*, Nauka, Moscow, 1980).

it is used to refer to the material and technical achievements of mankind (Walter, Ogburn) [1].

Moreover, there exists the not unjustified opinion that the terms 'civilisation', 'society' and 'culture' are frequently synonymous. [2] Therefore, in examining the use of the concept 'civilisation' (more exactly, 'civilisations') to designate spatial (geographical) communities, it is necessary to examine its relationship to such closely allied concepts as 'society' and 'culture'. However, these also have a variety of interpretations, a circumstance that must also be taken into account. The narrow interpretation of the concept 'culture' limits it to purely spiritual values, while the broad interpretation includes not only spiritual but also material culture and, in addition, language. In the given instance it is the second, broader meaning of the concept 'culture' that would appear to be the one necessary, as otherwise any solution to the problem of its relationship to both society and civilisations will inevitably be restricted.

Using the term 'culture' in the broad sense, we are in general agreement with the view that culture constitutes one aspect of the functioning of society, while the other (and basic) aspect of society is made up of social phenomena proper: social relations and the social structure. [3] Accordingly it is possible to conditionally distinguish two types of human community: the specifically social and the cultural. In the first case the main structural factors are, obviously, certain parameters of the social structure, which are themselves based upon certain social relations. These are the factors used in defining such social communities as classes, professional groups, societies, etc. As, among all the specifically social communities, we are particularly interested in 'societies', it is necessary to say something about this term. Firstly, it is a term with a wide range of meaning. In Russian, the word 'society' may simply refer to the human community, and also to any specialised group with-

[1] Emil J. Walter, 'Das Problem einer wissenschaftlichen Theorie der Kultur'. In *Kultur und Norm*, Dr. Georg Lüttle Verlag, Berlin, 1954; William Fielding Ogburn, *On Culture and Social Change*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1964.

[2] Philip Bagby, *Culture and History. Prolegomena to the Comparative Study of Civilizations*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1958.

[3] *Маркарян Э. С.* Очерки теории культуры. Ереван, изд-во АН Арм. ССР, 1969 (E. S. Markarian, *Outlines of a Theory of Culture*, Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR, Yerevan, 1969).

in it (a philatelist society, for example, or a sports society, or a philosophical society). It may refer to the inhabitants of a particular country and slate. The situation is similar in many other languages. Therefore the suggestion that independent units of historical development (and it is precisely such units that the triad already mentioned had in mind when using the term 'society') be termed 'social organisms' [1] is worthy of attention. In primitive history, the role of 'social organism' is played by the tribe; in conditions of class relations it is played by the state as a social, territorial-political community.

World history has been built up out of the sum total of all the histories of these social organisms; in viewing 'societies'—'social organisms' as the basic self-reproducing cells of the world-historical process, it is essential to emphasise that these terms represent human communities which are bound together by an entire network of social relations based, according to Marxist theory, upon production relations. The nature of these basic relations and the corresponding superstructural relations ultimately determines the phasic type of any given social organism. However, within history nothing exists in a pure form, and therefore

> the same economic basis—the same from the standpoint of its main conditions—due to innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences, etc. [shows] infinite variations and gradations in appearance, which can be ascertained only by analysis of the empiricially given circumstances. [2]

Moreover, in addition to the dominant typical (typological) social parameters, each specific social organism comprises atypical parameters—various social structures belonging to other types (both preceding and succeeding). Finally—and this, as we shall see later, is quite important as regards the point under discussion—each particular social organism possesses not only specifically social, but also cultural parameters. Thus, although each social organism contains subgroups distinguished both by specifically social and by cul-

[1] *Семенов Ю. Н.* Категория «социальныи организм» и ее значение для исторической науки. «Вопросы истории», 1966, Ns 8, с. 88-106 (Yu. N. Semyonov, 'The Category "Social Organism" and Its Significance for Historical Science', *Voprosy istorii*, No. 8, 1966, pp. 88-106).

[2] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 792.

tural differences, the social organism nonetheless constitutes a definite socio-cultural whole. It is true that the pluralistic nature of such social organisms frequently causes problems of typologisation, particularly when the criteria for typologisation are chosen from among phenomena belonging to the superstructure. The selection of production relations provides an objective criterion allowing all the social organisms which, on the basis of this criterion, belong to the same type to be grouped together into one macro-typological community known as the socio-economic formation. [1]

As regards cultures or cultural communities, the process of typologisation here has its own specific characteristics, due largely to the absence of any direct link between or rigid hierarchisation of the numerous cultural components. It must also be pointed out that a number of cultural components develop to some degree independently of the socio-economic basis as is clearly evidenced by art. Those who are inclined to identify Marxism with vulgar economism should take note of a comment made by Marx which bears directly upon this question:

> As regards art, it is well known that some of its peaks by no means correspond to the general development of society, nor do they therefore to the material substructure... [2]

However, such is not the case with many of the components of material culture, nor yet with the ideological, political and legal components of spiritual culture, which are directly linked to the socio-economic structure of society.

In examining the question of the typologisation of cultural communities it is essential to remember that the most diverse individual components of culture (or even several simultaneously) may serve as the system-forming factors distinguishing individual types of such communities. Moreover, this role may also be played by either externalised (objectivised) or internalised forms of the existence of culture, and by either individual components or entire complexes of material and spiritual culture, awareness of the very fact of community or the absence of such awareness. To this must be added space-time factors. Thus any investigation into cultural communities from a 'horizontal' viewpoint involves taking into consideration the dimensions, degree of homogeneity and extent of territorial diffusion of their system-forming components. Any description of the temporal parameters of cultural communities requires that (in addition to purely chronological indices) due account be taken, firstly, of their relationship to any given stage in the socio-historical development of mankind, and secondly, of the degree of stability of such communities: are they traditional by nature, or are they characterised by dynamism and instability.

All these factors taken together make it possible to identify a large number of different cultural-areal communities (for example, areas characterised by specific components of material and spiritual culture: dwellings, clothing, food, traditional practices and ceremonies, etc. as shown on ethnographic maps). Moreover, many of these communities not only exist simultaneously, but also overlap in space, forming a multilayered network. Individual components within this network are, for reasons explained above, to varying degrees autonomous and dependent both upon each other and upon socio-economic factors. In order to identify within this network the relatively homogeneous 'cultural foci' it is essential to examine those cultural-areal communities that are complex (multicomponential) in nature. The very nature of such communities itself indicates the significance of the cultural components for their bearers. We are speaking here, of course, not of a random selection of different cultural components (as is sometimes the case in the identification of so-called archeological cultures), but of their interconnected integrity in both time and space.

The historical sciences are known to adopt very different approaches to solving the problem of identifying basic complex cultural-areal communities. For example, in North American cultural anthropology and Western European ethnology it was common practice until recently to identify, alongside the culture of individual peoples, only one other type of wide-ranging complex cultural sphere, viz. one that comprises diverse components from the cultures of a number of peoples. [1] However, we are of the opinion that, when

[1] Cf. Lenin, 'What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats', p. 140.

[2] Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 215.

[1] Clark Wissler, *The Relation of Nature to Man in Aboriginal America*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1926; Wilhelm Schmidt, *The Culture Historical Method of Ethnology*, *The Scientific Approach to the Racial Question*, Fortuny's, New York, 1939.

dealing with this question, it is more appropriate to distinguish not two, but three types of complex cultural-areal communities. One of these is related primarily to material culture (economy), while the remaining two are related primarily to spiritual culture.

In Soviet ethnographic literature the first is traditionally known as the economic-cultural type, which refers to historically formed complexes of specific economic and cultural features characteristic of peoples living in particular natural-geographical conditions and having reached a particular level of socio-economic development. Economic-cultural types constitute a phenomenon that not infrequently occurs simultaneously in different parts of the ecumene, provided the ecological conditions and levels of economic development are approximately the same. Such, for example, is the economic-cultural type represented by the nomadic hunter-gatherers. Until comparatively recently it was still possible to iind such tribal groups in Africa (Pygmies, Ituri, Hadzapi, etc.), Asia (Punans, some Aeta, Kubu, etc.), and America (the Siriono, Lengua, etc.); yet another example is provided by the semi-nomadic stock-breeder-hunters in Africa (Hottentots, Herero), or in Siberia (Evenks, Nenets, etc.). However it must be pointed out that, taken overall, such economic-cultural communities are expressed differently at different stages in the world-historical process: clearly defined in primitive society, less clearly defined in the pre-capitalist class-based social organisms, and almost without importance under capitalism. Following the industrial revolution, the economic-cultural differentiation of peoples and countries is increasingly determined by differences deriving from the balance between industrial and agrarian forms of economic activity.

Among the complex cultural-areal communities, an important place is occupied by the ethnos in the narrow sense of this term. Such communities are not only complex or multicomponential in character, but are also distinguished by self-awareness. We have more than once set forth our point of view concerning this community, and therefore we will restrict ourselves here to a brief description. In contemporary Soviet literature, the term 'ethnos' is, to a large extent, used as a synonym for the term 'the people' (as in 'the people of France', 'the people of Ancient Greece'—*Tr.*) However, in Russian as in many other languages, the word 'people' has a wide range of meanings. Therefore, when (he term 'the people' is used to refer to a historical community possessed of a stable culture and clearly defined self-awareness, it is proposed to use the term 'ethnos' (from the ancient Greek 'ἔθνος', 'people', 'crowd', etc.). Moreover, in Soviet scientific usage this term can refer to both small and large ethnic groups existing both in the past and today. Sometimes in scientific usage the essence of ethnoses is reduced to the self-awareness of their members, which distinguishes a given ethnos from all other similar communities. However, this is clearly an over-simplification. Behind such self-awareness are the real and important differences of each ethnos that serve to express its particular integrity. In this respect it is obviously important to note first and foremost the stable characteristics of ethnoses as these characteristics are usually preserved down many centuries. The ethnos is also usually closely associated with yet another stable component of culture (understood in the broad sense of the term), namely language. However, it would be a mistake to simply identify together ethnic and linguistic communities. If language and ethnos, linguistic and ethnic division, always coincided then the distinction between these two concepts would clearly have lost any purpose. It is no accident that in identifying ethnoses, not only language, but also such other stable cultural components as religion, national artistic traditions, customs, ceremonies, norms of daily behaviour and traditional practices belonging to the traditional-everyday (domestic) aspect of culture are commonly indicated.

It has, it is true, long been pointed out that no one cultural component serves as an invariable indicator of ethnic differentiation. It would be wrong, however, to deny on this basis the ethnic functions of culture. Wo have before us evidence which merely indicates that it is not one single cultural component that characterises an ethnos, but rather the totality of all the specific features typical of its culture. Ethnoses are also distinguished from one another by certain psychological characteristics, for the most part psychological nuances, by their particular manner of displaying the universal properties of the human psyche. It is this more than anything else which constitutes what is known as ethnic (national) character.

As has already been mentioned, an essential characteristic of the ethnos is ethnic self awareness—the awareness on the part of the members of the ethnos of their membership of that ethnos, an awareness that involves demarcation from other ethnoses and is revealed above all in the use of a common name (ethnikon). An important component of ethnic self-awareness is the sense of common origin, the real basis i'or which is the common historical destiny of the members of the ethnos and their forbears throughout its existence. Common cultural and psychological characteristics and self-awareness can, in our opinion, be defined as specifically ethnic properties. They are invariably possessed to some degree by all the members of each ethnos, regardless of whether they live together in a particular region or are widely separated from each other (for example, the Armenians in the USSR, Syria, the USA and elsewhere). Thus the purely ethnic community, or ethnos in the narrow meaning of the term, can be defined as a historically formed group of people having common and relatively stable cultural (including language) and psychological characteristics, aware of their unity and their distinctness from other similar groups, and possessing their own name. For this narrow interpretation of the term 'ethnos' we propose the term 'ethnikos' (from the Greek 'ἐθνikos' —the adjective from 'ἔθνos'). [1] As for the 'broad' interpretation of the term 'ethnos', this will be discussed later. as here the term refers not to purely cultural but to socio-cultural communities.

Among the areal, specifically cultural communities of a complex character Soviet ethnographers distinguish, alongside economic-cultural types and the ethnikos, *historico-ethnographic areas.* This term refers to parts of the ecumene whose population has, as a result of common socio-economic development and a long history of links and mutual influence, developed a similar culture and way of life. Whereas cultural-economic types are characterised chiefly by the communality of those components of culture that are directly linked to production (instruments of labour. production practices, etc.), the population of each historico-ethnographic area is united primarily by communality in the sphere of traditional spiritual culture. Moreover, this communality is also revealed to a certain degree in material culture, and particularly in those of its elements that have an aesthetic value. Historico-ethnographic areas take shape over long periods of time in the course of cultural interaction among neighbouring peoples. Consequently, such communities have a multilayered structure and their boundaries are relatively flexible. As a rule, if the population of a given historico-ethnographic area is aware that it belongs to such an area, this awareness is rather vague. Such communities are characterised by the retention of the basic features of their culture down many generations. Indeed, it would seem more appropriate to term them 'traditional-cultural' (and in our opinion such a term would be preferable). It is important lo bear in mind that, viewed spatially, traditional-cultural communities have different taxonomical levels. Amongst them can be distinguished the largest subdivisions or 'provinces', which comprise entire continents or large groups of neighbouring countries, and smaller regions, which in their turn are further subdivided into subregions and local historico-cultural districts. [1] Defining the criteria lo be used in demarcating the different levels within historico-ethnographic or traditional-cultural communities is quite a complex problem. This is explained by the fact that, on the one hand, such entities are genetically and structurally multilayered, and that, on the other, they are frequently found in association with various types of 'unicomponential', metaethnic communities (religious, linguistic, culturo-political, etc.), which for such entities play to some degree or other a system-forming role.

In examining the basic types of multicomponential cultural-areal communities it must be remembered that such communities, insofar as one is considering past or present complexes, do not exist independently of people living in specific social organisms—the basic independent units of historical development. This, in its turn, makes clear the irn-

1 Yu. V. Bromley, *Soviet Ethnography: Main Trends* USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 1976; Yu V. Bromley, *Ethnos und Ethnographie*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 1977.

1 Cf. *ЧебоксаровИ. И., ЧебоксароваИ. А.* Народы, расы, культуры. M., Наука, 1971 (N. N. Cheboksarov, I. A. Cheboksarova, *Peoples, Races, Cultures,* Nauka, Moscow, 1971).

portance of clarifying the relationship between the basic types of complex cultural-areal communities discussed above and social organisms. It is not difficult to perceive that we are here talking of that part of the problem under discussion that bears upon the autonomy and dependence of societies and cultures.

We will retain the order followed above, and begin with a comparison of social organisms and economico-cultural types. The role played by such areal communities is extremely important for social organisms. The type of economy, and in particular the economic level, i.e. the level of development of the productive forces, largely determines the character of the production relations, which, as has already been stated, are of typological importance for social organisms. Economico-cultural types are of particular significance during the early stages of social development, when membership of one or other such community almost entirely determined the mode of life of the social organism concerned. (As, for example was the case until recently for the gatherers and hunters of the forests in the tropical zone—the Kulu of Sumatra, the Semang of Malacca, the Aeta of the Philippines, the Pygmies of the Congo basin, etc.)

However, it would be a mistake to assume (as is frequently done, particularly in Western literature on contemporary society) that the economico-cultural type always determines the essential parameters of social organism and its characteristic mode of life. On the one hand, it is a well-known fact that one and the same economico-cultural type may 'serve' social organisms belonging to various social formations. In addition, many, if not all, economico-cultural types survived several formations. The economico-cultural type represented by fishermen, for example, has survived over an extremely long historical period. Nomadism, which first began towards the end of the primitive epoch, continues to this day, as does primitive plough farming, which emerged at the dawn of class-based formations. The economy of many social organisms of both the capitalist and the socialist type is industrial. On the other hand, a given socio-economic formation may comprise within itself various economico-cultural types, as is illustrated by the fact that during the Middle Ages there existed both plough farming, nomadic stock-breeding and other economico-cultural patterns.[1] Equally, individual social organisms can prove to be multiple in the economic sense, combining, for example, hunting and stock-breeding, arable farming and industry, etc.

As regards the relationship between social organisms and such cultural-areal communities as the ethnos, taken in the narrow sense of the term, it is important to note first of all that the ethnikos generally takes shape within the framework of specific social organisms (either of a tribal or of a state nature); i.e. from a historico-genetic point of view the social organism is primary and the ethnikos secondary. However, viewed diachronically the ethnikos is usually longer-lived than the social organism, and typologically different social organisms may function on the basis of one and the same ethnikos (the Polish ethnikos, for example, has served as the 'substratum' for the feudal, bourgeois and socialist social organisms-states). Viewed synchronously, the symbiosis of an individual social organism and a specific ethnikos may be regarded as a particular type of community, which we have termed an ethno-social organism (ESO). The phasic type of the ESO is determined by the socio-economic formation, or sequence of socio-economic formations to which the social organism belongs. (Thus Soviet scientific literature identifies the following basic types of ESO: for the primitive-communal formation —the tribe; for the slave-owning and feudal formations —the nationality; for the capitalist formation—the bourgeois nation; for the socialist formation—the socialist nation.)

If this question is now examined from a spatial viewpoint, it must be pointed out that, as a natural result of their genetic link with social organisms, the ethnikoses frequently coincide with them territorially. Sometimes this territorial coincidence remains fundamentally unaltered during the entire existence of a given ESO. However, it is also common for a greater or smaller part of the ethnikos to he distributed among various social organisms and, moreover, not only in adjacent areas but in territories far re-

[1] Cf. *Марков Г. Е.* Этнос, этнические процессы и проблема образа жизни. «Расы и народы», 11)77. № 0. с. 16 (G. Ye. Markov, 'Ethnos, Ethnic Processes and the Problem of the Mode of Life'. *Rasy i narody*, No. 6, 1977, p. 16).

moved from each other. In addition, it is also not uncommon to find several ethnikoses, sometimes dozens, and even hundreds within one social organism (for example the USSR, India, Indonesia, etc.). In describing the 'structural' aspects of the relationship between the ethnikos and social organisms, i.e. for the main part the basic characteristics of the ESO, it is important to note two factors. On the one hand, the 'outward appearance' of the ESO, its specific characteristics, are largely determined by the characteristics of the ethnikos that it comprises, i.e. primarily by traditional-domestic culture. On the other hand, as has already been stated, the formational type of the given community is of phasic-typological significance. Thus the culture of each ESO is characterised by two inseparably interwoven tendencies—continuity and renewal—which reflect the basic laws governing its evolution.

Let us now move on to the question of the relationship between social organisms and historico-ethnographic or traditional-cultural areas. First of all it must be remembered that, when examined from the synchronous, spatial point of view, such regions are either associated with one polyethnic social organism (as with modern India, for example), or comprise a number of adjacent social organisms. Moreover, because of the hierarchical nature of traditional-cultural areas one and the same social organism may simultaneously belong to taxonomically different communities of this kind (regions, provinces, etc.). It is important to note that, viewed diachronously, traditional-cultural areas (like ethnikoses) are usually longer-lived than the corresponding social organisms and, in addition, often predate them, i.e. enjoy considerable continuity through time. (Some of the characteristic features of the Caucasian traditional-cultural area, for example, date back to the Neolithic period.) [1] In other words, traditional-cultural areas are to a certain degree autonomous with respect to social organisms. However, this in no way implies that they arc totally independent of them. By no means every characteristic feature or typical clement of the culture of a social organism goes on to become a stable acquisition of the entire corresponding area. For this to happen at least two conditions are essential. Firstly, such an element must spread beyond the boundaries of its 'native' social organism to penetrate the entire area, or at least the greater part of it. [1] Secondly, it must become a tradition capable of outliving the social organism itself, or at least that phase of its development that gave rise to this cultural element.

[1] Cf. *Алексеев В. П.* Происхождение народов Кавказа. М., HayKa, 1974 (V. P. Alexeyev, *The Origins of the Caucasian Peoples*, Nauka, Moscow, 1974).

Viewed structurally, the relationship between traditional-cultural areas and their constituent social organisms (or organism) are strongly reminiscent of the ESO. The characteristic features of the traditional culture, features typical of the given area, find varying degrees of expression in the 'external appearance' of such social organisms (acting as the complement, as it were, within each ESO to the specifically ethnic characteristics of the traditional culture). However, the phasic characteristics of that socio-cultural complex formed by all the adjacent social organisms (or by one social organism) comprised within the traditional-cultural area are determined (as with the ESO, and for the same reasons) by the formational type of these organisms (or organism). This means that all those social organisms belonging to one formational type and comprised within one traditional-cultural area constitute a specific socio-cultural whole (a socio-cultural region). Thus, within one traditional-cultural area it may be possible to distinguish separate socio-cultural regions belonging to different formational types (within the Central Asian traditional-cultural area, for example, there exist today both socialist and capitalist socio-cultural regions).

Traditional-cultural areas may, in their turn, exert a certain influence upon the formation of complexes of social organisms belonging to the same formational type. As is well known, the specifics of the concrete manifestation in one or other social organism of the general laws of socio-cultural development depends to no small degree upon the traditional-cultural environment. Also, as a result of the hierarchical nature of traditional-cultural areas, the socio-cultural regions formed under their influence belong to different taxonomical levels. Thus, using the term 'macro-

[1] This may bring with it the diffusion of the cultural values themselves (things and ideas). and also their spread in the course of migrations.

level' with reference to the contemporary capitalist world, it is obviously possible to describe Western Europe, North America, Latin America, etc. as socio-cultural regions. In the feudal age, viewed typologically, it is possible to identify Western Europe and Eastern Europe as socio-cultural macro-areas. Within medieval Europe it is possible to distinguish various types of socio-cultural development ; one took shape in regions strongly influenced by the traditions of the ancient world (Italy, Byzantium), a second in regions only moderately influenced (northern Gaul), and a third in regions very slightly influenced (England, Scandinavia). [1] As has already been stated, the ESO is also a kind of socio-cultural region. In our opinion it can, with certain reservations, be considered the basic unit of the hierarchy in question. The ESO itself, of course, includes various socio-cultural subdivisions formed by classes, professions, and other groups. However, here we have already stepped outside that hierarchy which reflects varying degrees of intersection and symbiosis between traditional-cultural areas and social organisms.

This hierarchy of socio-cultural regions is manifest to some degree everywhere in the ecumene throughout the whole of human history. Although individual components of this hierarchical system display a notable stability and adherence to tradition, the system as a whole is fairly dynamic as it is based upon social organisms whose development is determined by formational factors. [2]

What are the criteria for identifying socio-cultural regions? Clearly the answer to this question has a double aspect. On the one hand it must be sought in the factors

[1] Cf. *Гутнова Е. В., Удальцова Э. В.* К вопросу о типологии развитого феодализма в западной Европе.— Проблемы социально-экономических формаций. Историко-типологические исследования. Под ред. Е. М. Жукова. М., Наука, 1975, с. 114-115 (Ye. Gutnova, E. V. Udallsova, 'On the Question of the Typology of Developed Feudalism in Western Europe. In *Socio-Economic Formations. A Historico-Typological Study.* Edited by Ye. M. Zhukov, Nauka, Moscow, 1975, pp. 114-115).

[2] Cf. *Бромлей Ю. В.* Основные виды историко-культурных общностей и тенденции их динамики. «Советская этнография», 1981, № 1, с. 10-23 (Yu. V. Bromley, 'The Basic Types of Historico-Cultural Communities and Their Trends of Development', *Sovetskaya Etnografia*, No. 1, 1981, pp. 10-23).

characteristic of the social organisms belonging to one formational type comprised within the region, while on the other it must also be sought in the characteristic features of the corresponding traditional-cultural areas. In addition, the particular socio-economic formation, or phase within it, to which the social organisms belong is of phasic-typological significance, while the spatial communality of the traditional cultural characteristics is the determining factor in identifying the regional boundaries. The mode of life of the population of a socio-cultural region is a synthetic expression of these parameters, [1] and reflects the underlying features of the social awareness, perception of the world, ideals and moral values of that community. Therefore it would be an over-simplification to totally deny the role played by religion in identifying socio-cultural regions in pre-capitalist formations, and particularly the feudal formation. Religion served as an ideological synthesis of the existing social system. However, as society progresses and science, philosophy, art and ethics develop, the significance of a religious world outlook diminishes. It is significant that the early stages of capitalism saw the rise of rationalism, the antithesis of the irrationalism characteristic of religion, as is revealed by the Renaissance.

There are, however, considerable difficulties involved in identifying both individual socio-cultural regions and, even more so, their hierarchy. These difficulties are to a large extent connected with the specifics of traditional-cultural areas; firstly, with the above-mentioned flexibility of their borders, and secondly, with the fact that, as such areas are 'complex' in nature, the system-forming role is usually played by a number of factors, which makes it difficult to establish single-value indices for the traditional characteristics of the mode of life. Finally, it must be remembered that in the communities under investigation the system-forming role of the various components varies at different hierarchical levels. The identification of the hierarchy of socio-cultural regions is complicated by another of their components, namely the social organisms. In particular, the typologisation of social organisms is made difficult by the fact that their social structure often has numerous layers

[1] Cf. G. Ye. Markov, *Op. cit.*

in which are represented various types of social relations. This is particularly true of 'inter-formational' periods, which in turn give rise to a variety of transitional ideological forms.

However, these cognitive difficulties do not serve to refute the fact of the existence of the phenomenon in question. This is an objective reality whose significance lies in the fact that the social and cultural aspects of its activity never exist apart.

Is the concept 'civilisation' related in any way to this hierarchy of socio-cultural regions? The answer is largely dependent upon the interpretation of the concept itself. As has already been pointed out, the term is used with many meanings, which considerably lowers its cognitive value. However, it would be premature to reject the term altogether for this reason, for it is now too well established in both the scientific and everyday vocabulary of most modern languages. The solution, in our opinion, lies not in introducing new definitions of the word 'civilisaiton', but in bringing it closer to its etymological origin, the Latin word *civilis,* whose basic meaning is 'civil' or 'of the state'. It is therefore evident that its use to designate material-technical and spiritual achievements is one that is far removed from its original meaning and that severely restricts it. Those definitions which cover not only cultural but also social factors are far closer to the original. In other words, it properly designates socio-cultural communities. However, such communities vary in scale, including micro-communities such as the family, the local community, the settlement, and macro-communities such as socio-cultural regions, which, as we know, have various taxonomical levels. Here we are clearly not dealing with micro-communities. This in turn means that, in defining the concept 'civilisation', the socio-cultural regions we have identified may be used as a reference. Indeed, the 'cultural-regional' meaning of this term in scientific usage is then complemented by the meaning 'social', which returns to it its original meaning. [1] The hierarchical nature of the structure of socio-cultural regions must, of course, be borne in mind, and

[1] Cf. the articles by Khachik Momjian and Yevgeni Lysmankin in the present collection.

the different taxonomical levels of civilisation distinguished accordingly.

The first of these taxonomical levels is, as we have seen, the ethno-social organism, which serves as the base unit in the hierarchy of socio-cultural regions. The second level is comprised of groups of complex social organisms belonging to the same socio-economic type and the same traditional-cultural area, the latter being relatively distinct from other, similar areas. (It has already been noted that such formations may themselves have various taxonomical levels as a result of the hierarchical nature of traditional-cultural areas.) The third level is composed of the sum total of all the social organisms of one socio-economic type, and constituting from a spatial point of view one fairly closely interrelated whole. Such a community may cover the greater part or the whole of the ecumene. This last level must be distinguished from the concept 'world civilisation', which generally refers to all human socio-cultural achievements, this phenomenon being hypothetically contrasted against extra-terrestrial civilisations.

Different stages in the world-historical process are characterised by the dominance of civilisations belonging to one or other level. Thus, the first (in their region) early class-based societies are characterised by civilisations of the first level (for example, Egyptian, Sumer, Harappa, the Maya civilisation, etc.), which are relatively ethnically homogeneous social organisms, i.e. ESOs. Developed pre-capitalist class formations are clearly dominated by civilisations of the second order, which themselves consist of socio-cultural regions at various levels, including the first (for example, at one level the Spartan civilisation, at another the Hellenic civilisation, and at a third, ancient civilisation). With the rise of capitalism and its extension to include a considerable number of social organisms on the world-historical arena, there emerges a civilisation of the third order, namely capitalist, which also comprises socio-cultural regions at various levels (including the first, and in this sense it is quite permissible to speak of contemporary French civilisation). With the appearance of socialist states in Europe, Asia and America after the Second World War, the socialist world, as is well known, has considerably extended its borders. Although, viewed territorially, it does not constitute one whole, and the main socio-cultu-

ral parameters of its individual regions are still marked by specific distinctions, the increasing convergence of these parameters among the countries of the socialist community and the intensive development of various links among them give grounds for speaking of the emergence of a world communist civilisation.[1] This civilisation, according to the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the sequence of socio-economic formations, is ultimately to become world-wide.

[1] Cf. the article by Richard Kosolapov in the present collection.

Section 11.

The Unity of the Historical Process

Yuri Pletnikov

The Social Development as a Process of Natural History

Despite the various interpretations of the concept of civilisation, a fact already referred to in the foregoing articles, its content is bound up in one way or another with the etymology of the word itself. In the history of social thought, civilisation has been contrasted against savagery and barbarism and viewed as a civil condition associated with the rise of the stale (in the ancient world—the polis, the city-state), the division of intellectual and physical labour, the creation of a written language and the spread of agriculture and handicrafts. As for the original cause of the rise of civilisation, this is inseparable from the development of material production– the increase in labour productivity and the appearance of surplus product, trade, private properly and exploitation, the division of society into antagonistic classes and the beginning of the class struggle.

> The very moment civilisation begins—wrote Marx—production begins to be founded on the antagonism of orders, estates, classes, and finally on the antagonism of accumulated labour and immediate labour. No antagonism, no progress. This is the law that civilisation has followed up to our days. [1]

The formational stages of the development of antagonistic society are simultaneously the formational stages of the development of human civilisation. The culmination of this development is bourgeois civilisation. Having created a world market and thereby fulfilled its main civilising mission, capitalism converted history into a single world-historical process. However, a progress based on the dynamism of social antagonisms had been taken to its limit. Today the truth discovered by Marx is more clearly manifest than ever before:

[1] Karl Marx, 'The Poverty of Philosophy', p. 132.

> Barbarism reappears, but created in the lap of civilisation itself and belonging lo it; hence leprous barbarism, barbarism as leprosy of civilisation. '

Marxists have never predicted the 'automatic collapse' of capitalism. They assessed and continue to assess objectively its reserves and its capacity for adaptation lo new conditions. However, such adaptation, including as it does state-monopoly regulation of the economy, does not mean that capitalism has been stabilised as a system Falling production, growing unemployment, energy and raw material crises, inflation and the strikes of recent years have only served to further confirm the conclusion that capitalism is a society without a future.

However, this in no way means that human civilisation is without a future. Not for nothing did Marx distinguish between 'sham' and 'real and general civilisation'.[2] The liberation of mankind from oppression, exploitation and the class struggle, the free development of each as the condition of the free development of all constitute the essential characteristics of the formation of a genuine civilisation, a new civilisation of the communist type. The establishment of this civilisation is a natural-historical process in the same way as is the development of human society and the whole of human history.

In what docs the development of society, the development and succession of socio-economic formations consist? What are the distinguishing and characteristic features of this natural-historical process? The present article is devoted lo answering these questions.

Upon entering into existence, no new generation can choose at will the conditions of its life. It inherits that which has been created by its predecessors, and in one way or another continues the trends contained within that legacy. Therefore within concrete historical conditions are accomplished only concrete historical changes. Summing up the results of his scientific research, Marx declared:

> My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose: creature be socially remains, however much be may subjectively raise himself above them.[3]

1 Karl Marx, 'Wages', p. 434.
2 Karl Marx, 'The Emancipation Question', p. 147.
3 Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 21.

As with processes occurring in nature, the natural-historical process of the development of society does not depend upon human consciousness and will. However, as distinct from natural processes, it acquires an objective form of being only in and through human activity. People, more accurately the popular masses, create history. Marx described history as 'the activity of man pursuing his aims'.[1] However, the individual is not a 'social atom'. In pursuing his aims, the individual, consciously or unconsciously, is contributing to the achievement of the common aims of a given socio-historical community of people (in a class-based society, this community is first and foremost a given class), from which he is inseparable in terms of his social position and social outlook. Where the surface of social life is marked by the interplay of accidental phenomena (the clash of numerous separate aspirations and activities), these very accidents are revealed to be the products of historical necessity. Human activity reveals general, fundamental, essential interconnections that are objective by their very nature and serve as the laws of social development.

The natural world, exclusive of man, is governed by blind, unconscious forces, and the laws of nature operate as the interaction of these forces. Society is composed of men endowed with consciousness and will, positing goals and striving to implement them. However, this raises a question the answer to which eluded many great thinkers. What are the true causes behind the motives, including the ideological motives, of human activity? Only Marxism was able to provide a scientific answer to this question. Engels used the term "historical materialism"

> to designate that view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into distinct classes, and in the struggles of these classes against one another.[2]

Human activity is the only possible means by which historical reality, including the rise, development and solution of social contradictions as the source of social devel-

1 Karl Marx, 'The Emancipation Question' p. 147.
2 Frederick Engels, 'Socialism: Utopian and Scientific', p. 103.