




Questions and Answers on the Juche Philosophy

- What Is the Social History? -

1. How Has Philosophy Regarded Society?

“In the years prior to Marxism, even those who had advocated materialism or dialectics adhered to the idealistic stand towards social history. Marxism made it clear that, like nature, society belongs to the material world and changes and develops in accordance with the general laws that govern the development of this world. In this way it disproved the idealistic view on social history.”

(“On the Juche Idea” by Kim Jong Il)

Philosophy considers the essence of society where man lives and acts and its change and development along with the world as a whole. The philosophical consideration of the essence of society and its change and development is called an outlook on social history.

For a long time, the outlook on social history was under the control of idealism in the philosophical history.

The dispute between two conflicting schools, materialism and idealism, dialectic and metaphysics, was conducted in the philosophical history, but before Marxist philosophy, even advocates of materialism and dialectic were

in the position of metaphysics regarding social history.

Idealism can be divided into two large types; objective idealism and subjective idealism. Some philosophers insisted on the objective idealistic outlook on social history saying that social history was determined by supernatural and mystical spiritual substance such as the God, idea and absolute ideology. Others insisted on the subjective idealistic outlook on social history saying that social history was under the control of individual's subjective will and sensibility. The same things could be found not only in the ideologists like Plato and Hegel, but also in materialism in France in the 18th century and in that of Feuerbach.

Like this, the fact that idealism had predominated exclusively is a characteristic of the process of changes in the outlook on social history, which is distinguished from that of the outlook on philosophical world.

It was the Marxist philosophy that extended materialism and dialectic to the domain of social history which had been under the control of idealism and built the outlook on social history on the scientific foundation. The Marxist philosophy established a materialistic

dialectic outlook on social history, that is, the materialistic view of history.¹

A focal point in establishing the materialistic view of history was how social history in man and his activity could be given the scientific explanation. This means social history is explained through objective factors, not through consciousness of man, though social history can't be discussed without man with consciousness and man's purposeful and conscious activity.

The Marxist philosophy divided society into two groups; material things and conscious things, in other words, social being and social consciousness and made the materialistic explanation about society by giving social being the definitive significance.²

Social being is a concept which means the material condition of social life existing objectively and defining social consciousness.

¹ It was a preferential task for Marxist founders to formulate the outlook on social history on the scientific foundation. Under the condition that idealism was dominant over the outlook on social history, they had to defeat idealism in argument in order to transform socialism from a fanciful idea into a scientific idea. The Marxist philosophy exploded the idealistic understanding of social history and proposed the philosophical bacon clarifying that it was inevitable that capitalism should be ruined and it was necessary that capitalism should change into socialism by establishing the materialistic view of history. For this reason, the materialistic view of history occupies the proper position in Marxism as scientific socialism and is mentioned as the theoretical achievement of Marx in the field of philosophy, not materialistic dialectic.

² "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness." ('Preface' of "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" by Karl Marx 1859)

This concept includes the physical geography condition, environment and population density, but fundamentally means a mode of production of material wealth consisting of the productivity and the relation of production. However, society has its political system and social consciousness as well as the mode of production, and various kinds of society existing in history can be divided not only by the mode of production, but also by its political system and social consciousness. Moreover, the mode of production of material wealth defining social consciousness consists of productive force and the relation of production.

From the statement above, the Marxist philosophy described the structure of society such as productive force and the relation of production, the political system and social consciousness by elaborating the concept of a foundation and an upper-structure. Comparing society to a building, the Marxist philosophy regarded the ensemble of relation of production and the economic system as the foundation of society, and insisted the upper-structure consisting of the law and politics stood on the foundation. The relation of production defines the upper-structure directly, while productive force has an indirect influence on the upper-structure by defining the relation of production as its social form. The legal and political upper-structure stands on the economic foundation and many forms of social consciousness correspond to the upper-structure.

In short, the materialistic view of history considered society as a unity of productive force and the relation of production, and of the



foundation and the upper-structure. The foundation as the ensemble of the relation of production is defined by productive force while the upper-structure is done by the foundation. The economic construct of society is a concept that describes about the historical type of society formed by the foundation and the upper-structure. The respective economic construct of societies are distinguished from other constructs, for each of them has the peculiar foundation and the upper-structure regulated by the standard of its production force.

The Marxist philosophy showed the law of social development by clarifying the connection between productive force and the relation of production, the foundation and the upper-structure from the viewpoint of understanding the development of society in the process of natural history.³

To understand the development of society in the process of natural history means that the social movement and history of human beings have a regular law and like the movement law of nature, the law works objectively without depending on the intention of man.

Firstly, the Marxist philosophy said that the relation of production develops in accordance with the development of productive force. In the case, the development of society begins with

that of productive force. The productive force at a certain level comes to be contradictory to the relation of production. The existing relation of production changes from the form of development of productive force into the fetter, and in order to develop productive force more than before, the new relation of production can help taking turn with the old one. Such contradiction between the productive capacity and the relation of production makes the class contradiction deeper and intensifies the class struggle for overcoming it. Therefore, the new relation of production replaces the old one. In other words, it is the law that the mode of production counterchanges after solving the contradiction between productive force and the relation of production by the class struggle.⁴

Secondly, the Marxist philosophy said that the upper-structure was reformed in accordance with the changing of the foundation. In the case, the huge upper-structure as a whole is reformed according to changing of the foundation having a definitive significance. Historically, each time the relation of production changed into slavish, feudal, capitalist one in form, the upper-structure on the foundation also became slavish, feudal, capitalist in form. In other words, it is the law that the type of society counterchanges by the reform of the upper-structure in accordance with the changes of the foundation.

³ "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 he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them." ('1867 Preface to the First German Edition' of "Capital Volume One" by Karl Marx)

⁴ "In broad outline, the Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production may be designated as epochs marking progress in the economic development of society." ('Preface' of "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" by Karl Marx 1859)

Like this, the materialistic view of history regarded society as the process of the natural history and showed the law that the relation of production promoted according to the development of productive force, and the change of the upper-structure was brought about in compliance with the changing of the foundation which was the ensemble of the relation of production. It defined that the mode of production of material wealth was a decisive factor which dominated the social character and the level of the social development, and that the process of social development was the one that the contradiction between productive force and the relation of production was solved through the class struggle and a new mode of production replaced the old one.

It can be said the materialistic view of history brought the historical change in the development of the outlook on social history, but it has a series of limitation.

The first limitation of the materialistic of history lays in that it considered society focusing on not man but the material and economic factor and didn't regard man as an original component part of society.

Society is a collective of man above all and its master is only man. Therefore the consideration of society should be started out from man.

The materialistic view of history divided society into material things and conscious things and gave the former a definitive significance so as to make a materialistic explanation to society. As a result, it didn't


regard man as the original component part of society and considered a structure of society centering on the material and economic factors like the material production and the economic relation.

The second limitation of the materialistic view of history lies in that it considered the development of society on the basis of objective factors without clarifying the proper law in the social movement.

The social movement is a movement of man which is distinguished from a movement of nature. The social movement is basically different from that of nature as man is different from nature in quality. Therefore, the consideration of the development of society should be given in the light that the social movement is a movement of man.

The materialistic view of history considered the connection between productive force and the relation of production, the foundation and the upper-structure on the view that the social development was understood in the process of natural history so as to clarify the objective law of social development. As a result, it explained the process of social development as the one of change in the mode of production attributing to a cause and motive force of social development to the objective factors such as the material production and the economic relation.

The outlook on social history which follows the changes from dominance of idealism into establishment of the materialistic view of history has developed toward a new stage by the



Juche philosophy.⁵

The Juche philosophy elucidated the essence of society and the law in its development in a new way based on the man-centered philosophical outlook on the world. The outlook on social history of the Juche philosophy is the one focusing on man and on the basis of the proper law in the social movement.

2. What Is Society?

“Society, in a nutshell, is a collective of people. The community in which people live, linked together by social wealth and social relations—this precisely is a society.”
 (“The Historical Lesson in Building Socialism”
by Kim Jong Il)

⁵ The limitations of the materialistic view of history was revealed as the reality in the process of the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union and the East European countries. Those who dogmatically accepted the materialistic view of history considered that not the masses of people as the masters of society but the socialist mode of production decided the essence and superiority of socialism, and economic factors that the relation of production changes according to productive force extremely contributed to the promotion of construction of socialism. Therefore they thought if they promoted the construction of economy catching the control of means of production, they could build socialism, and therefore they didn't stress the importance of activities of reforming man for strengthening a subject. As a result, the masses of people as the masters of society couldn't play a role as the masters. In the end the construction of economy went wrong and every sphere of society fell into the stagnant condition. That became a root cause of the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and the East European countries.

It is a primary question arising in establishing the outlook on social history to understand the essence of society correctly. By understanding what society is, it becomes possible to clarify the law in the change and development of society.

Society is a collective where man lives forming social wealth and the social relation.

It is a collective of man above all.

Man lives and works in the collective, not in isolation. Man can't live and develop if he is isolated from the collective.⁶

Although society is the collective of man, it isn't a mechanical one of man at all. It is the one of man where people have a relation each other purposefully and consciously in a regular order.⁷

Society occurred with man's appearance in the process of the permanent evolution and development of the material world. Only nature was in the world before the appearance of man. With the appearance of man, the world came to have the society as well as nature.

Man is a fundamental component part of society defining the existence and development of society.

Society is formed of social wealth and social relationships as well as man.

Social wealth is an important component

⁶ An individual ability can't fill in collective's wisdom and power, however great it is. The individual can reform nature and society and sharp one's destiny only by gathering around collective. In short, man can live and develop in the world by joining wisdom and power with each other.

⁷ There are animals living in collectives in nature, but collectives of animals are only formed spontaneously.

part of society.

Social wealth is material and cultural means man creates and utilizes. Daily commodities needed for housing, food, and clothing and various kinds of material and technical means, spiritual and cultural means are an indispensable condition in existence and development of man. Man maintains his existence by creating social wealth and realizes his independent demand and extends his creative ability in the process of reforming nature and society by utilizing it.⁸

Social wealth is largely divided into material wealth and mental and cultural wealth.

Material wealth includes the living means which is used directly for meeting people's demands of the material life and the means of production which is used for creating new things. Mental and cultural wealth includes ideology, moral, science, culture and art serving for fulfilling the ideological and spiritual life of people.

The social relationships are an order making up society.

The social relationships are the ones of people formed in the process of social life. As society is a collective of people, there arose a regular relationship which connects up people. The relationships connecting people to society are social ones.⁹

Social relationships are the indispensable

condition for the existence and development of society.

For man to live and develop in a collective called society, certainly indispensable is the order so as to control people's demand and interests and to enable people to use the diverse capabilities socially. Man occupies a position as a member of society and plays a social role suiting to the position. Man lives and develops on the basis of social and collective cooperation of people connecting organically.

Originally, only in the social relationships man obtains and enhances independence, creativity and consciousness which are his nature. Social wealth is also a product of people's social recognition and practice on the basis of the social relationships.

The social relationships formed in the range of all society are a social system.

The social system is an outline of the social relationships controlling people's position and role in their own respective society. For the social relationship to become the social system, it has to be general in all the areas of society and continues for a certain period without changing, and needs the social force guaranteeing it. It is the stable social relationships the state and law control and guarantee.

The social system is divided into the political system, economic system and cultural system in light of what kind of fields in social life it is related with. The political system, economic system and cultural system are the stable outline controlling the people's position, role

⁸ Social wealth is an important condition for improving the social relationships as well as indispensable means for existence and development of man.

⁹ The social relationships can be divided into the political one, economic one and cultural one in light of what kinds of fields they are created in.



and behavioral order in the various fields.¹⁰

Like this, it can be said that society consists of man, the social relationships connecting them up, and social wealth he creates, but the master in society is only man.

That man is the master of society means he is the master of social wealth and the social relationships. It is because social wealth and the social relationships are created and utilized by nothing but man.

Man is the master of social wealth.

Man creates and utilizes social wealth. It is man that demands and has the capability to create social wealth. Conversely, social wealth is created only through man's activity and given its value by serving man. The relation between man and social wealth is the one between a creator and a creature. It is natural that the creator be the master of the creature.

Man is also the master of the social relationships.

Man forms and improves the social relationships leadingly. It is man that demands, forms and develops new relationships. He creates many kinds of social relationships in accordance with his intention and demand, and improves them continuously. There is no reform of the social relationships without man's purposeful and conscious activities. As the

¹⁰ It is the political system and economic system that are important in the social system. The political system is the stable one of social order formed on the basis of the possession relationships of political power. The economic system is the stable one of social order formed on the basis of possession relationships of the means of production. Both systems decide the social position and role of people.

social relationships are the social condition of the independent and creative life, man proposes the demand to reform them reasonably and realizes them.¹¹

It is the independent understanding of the essence of society that society is a collective where man as the master lives and acts creating social wealth and the social relationships.

3. What is a Nation?

"A nation is a solid community which has been formed and developed historically, and it is a unit of social life.

"Independence is the lifeblood of the people as well as of their country and nation. If a man is deprived of his independence, he is as good as dead; likewise, if a nation is deprived of its independence, its existence and development is inconceivable."

("Let Us Achieve the Great Unity of Our Nation" by Kim Il Sung)

¹¹ In some cases, social wealth can be a means of domination over man. The class monopolizing the means of production exploits and oppresses people who don't possess it. However, in this occasion, it is not social wealth itself that controls people. It is the class monopolizing it that controls other people by using it. Social wealth is just the means which is utilized and serves for people.

It is also a fact that there is a case where man is restricted by the social relationships, but the social relationships itself doesn't control man. They are nothing but the social order for man and its characteristic and content are defined by man.

Like this, social wealth and the social relationships are the means and conditions for realizing the people's living demands. Man lives and develops enjoying social wealth and the social relationships.

Society consists of various social collectives. People live and act in units of the regular social collectives.

As for the social collective, there are various sizes of collectives in conformity with the fields the collective covers, from the small collectives like family to large ones like international society.¹²

It is the nation and class that are important as the subjects of philosophical consideration of social collective. It is because the nation is a basic unit of people's social life and the class is a fundamental element in social relationships.

The nation is not social collective existing from the dawn of human being's society. Clan and tribe were the first social collectives appearing in human history.

Clan is a social collective of the primitive ages formed of the relatives having the same ancestors. In those days, it stemmed from the primitive group and became a basic unit of living in the primitive society. Tribe is a social collective formed by the connection among clans whose ancestry came to be the same in a certain level of the clan's development.

Clan and tribe were the social collectives where people gathered consanguineously on the basis of the common demand to keep their

living reforming nature and led a community life of a community through certain custom, moral and social organization like a council.

As society was developing, clan and tribe came to disappear gradually and then a social collective, the nation, came to appear on the historical stage.

The nation is a steady collective of people formed in social history based on the commonness in blood, language, cultural living and region.

In a long historical process of reforming nature and developing the social relationships, the economic and cultural cooperation among people belonging to different clans and tribes became closer than before. As a result, a unified living unit occurred on the basis of the commonness in blood, language and cultural living inside of a certain area and a new social community, the nation, was formulated.

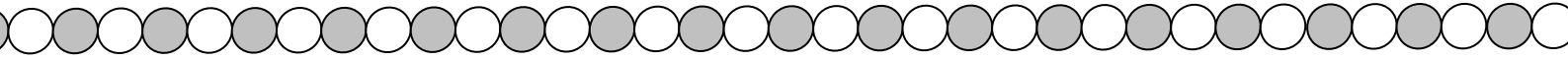
The commonness in blood is the basis of molding the nation.

"The commonness in blood" here doesn't mean not biological one like tribe, but the relationships in blood formed in social history.¹³

The relationships in blood play an important role in making people feel the physical and mental commonness, and gather as a steady collective, the nation. They are the starting point for people to formulate the commonness in language and cultural living exchanging and cooperating closely each other.

¹² As for the social collective, there are various types of collectives. Some collectives are divided in the light of the natural character like tribe and others are done in the light of the social character. As for the latter, there are collectives such as the collective formed in history like the nation and classes and ones formed on the basis of the commonness in the demand and interest in a certain level of the historical development like political parties and social collectives.

¹³ Tribe means a collective of people divided by a biological criterion like the genetic origin and the physical feature formed at the beginning of the human's development.



The commonness in language is the fundamental condition guaranteeing the community life of the nation.

Language is a means of expressing thinking and communicating socially as well as the form of abstract speculation.

People cooperate politically, economically and culturally through language and community life of society is led in the process. Without the national language, the nation can't be formed and developed into a unique nation.

The commonness in cultural life is a basic factor preserving the national bonds and community life, and guaranteeing maintenance and development of the national characteristic.¹⁴

The commonness in cultural life is the one described in a mode of people's living, customs, literature, art and so on.

The commonness in cultural life is formed in the process that people create mental and cultural wealth, and material wealth, using the same language in the same region for a long time. It defines the national form of social wealth.

The commonness in a region is the objective condition for the formation and the development of the nation.

The commonness in the region becomes a foundation to gather people as a living unit and form and develop other commonness. In the

¹⁴ The characteristic of the nation is the unique internal one to the nation. It is the ensemble of the proper culture and tradition formed in the historical process that people have led social lives creating the blood relationships in a certain region. As for the characteristic of the nation, the national consciousness is important. The national culture including the national language is of significance.

process that people have led a community life in the same region for a long time, they have come to acquire the commonness in blood, language and cultural life, and gather as the one nation.¹⁵

The nation is the fundamental unit for people with independence as life and soul to shape their destiny. The nation formed in social history is, today, the fundamental unit of people's social life, community of destiny.¹⁶

Man's life is independence. Independence is a social attribute and realized only through the collective cooperation. The process that man realizes independence is the one that he shapes his destiny. People gather around social collective called the nation so as to realize their independence and sharp their destiny. It is the nation that is the fundamental unit for people to

¹⁵ According to the Marxist philosophy, "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture"; and "It is only when all these characteristics are present together that we have a nation." ("Marxism and the National Question" by J.V. Stalin)

Though this view is right to some extent under the condition of Europe, the problem of the diverse nation including a divided nation and foreign brotherhood can't be explained by the view.

About the commonness in the nation, the one in blood and language is important. It can be said that even if people live apart one another artificially, they are in one nation, and even if they live abroad, they are brotherhoods belonging to the original nation when they keep the relationships in blood and live having the same language.

¹⁶ If that the nation is formed on the basis of the commonness in blood, language, cultural life and region is defined in the light of matter of the nation's form, it can be said that the nation is the fundamental unit for people to shape their destiny is defined in the light of the reason of the nation's existence.

shape their destiny based on the basic demand and interest to realize independence.

People's destiny is connected with the national destiny. If the freedom and prosperity of the nation are guaranteed, the dignity and development of people making up the nation are realized. If the nation is subject to something, it is inevitable that people making up the nation also go to the road of subordination.

People build up the activity for shaping their destiny with the nation as a unit. Under the condition that there are nations which are in different environment and levels of development in the world, people lead political, economic and cultural lives on the basis of unique national traditions, and make a new history by bond of solidarity of the nation.

All the nations have the right to live and develop independently without restriction, and have the power to be able to exercise such a right. Therefore all the nations are equal and the relationships of domination and subordination, command and obedience are not acceptable among the nations at all. Independence is the nation's life as well as man's life.

The nation formed on the basis of the commonness in social life as a fundamental unit for people to shape their destiny develops historically.

The process of each nation's development is not the one that a nation assimilates to and is absorbed by other nations. The process is the one that each nation develops as a stronger one, creates their original life and history freely, and that the cooperation and concert among

the nations extend and develop continuously on the basis of the law of full equality and spontaneity.¹⁷

This shows that the proper relationships among the nations are in unity and cooperation based on independence. If independence of the nation is oppressed and infringed, inequality and disagreement occur among the nations, and unity and cooperation cannot be realized. The relationships among the nations can come to be spontaneous and solid in a true sense under the conditions that the independent development of the nation is guaranteed and they respect their independence each other.

4. What Are Classes?

"An exploiter society is divided into the exploiter class and the exploited class, or the ruling class and the ruled class, depending on who owns the means of production and who controls state power. The exploited class, the ruled class, forms the majority of the masses of the people."

("Socialism Is a Science" by Kim Jong Il)

¹⁷ According to the Marxist philosophy, on the basis of the understanding that "nation" belongs to the historical category in the era of capitalism, nations shall cease to exist not only by abolishing the present division of mankind into small states and all national isolation; not only by bringing the nations closer to each other, but also by merging them. ("Marxism and the National Question" by J.V. Stalin and "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" by V.I. Lenin)



Classes are the fundamental forms of social collectives along with a nation.

They are the collectives of people whose social circumstances are distinguished by the possession relationship toward the means of production and political power. In class society every person belongs to a certain class, having various relationships with classes.¹⁸

Classes are defined by the possession relationship toward the means of production.

The possession relationship toward the means of production has two aspects of possessive degrees and forms of the means of production. The former means whether people possess the means of production or not and how much they possess if they do, and on the other hand the latter means what form of the means of production they possess. The latter is mainly divided into private possession and social possession. Private possession is a form in which individuals possess the means of production, and on the contrary social possession is a form in which social collective possesses it on a conjoint basis. In social possession, all working people

become the masters of the means of production.

The possession relationship toward the means of production directly defines people's economic circumstances. That is because it defines the reins for production and power of disposition for products. In other words, it creates gaps in position and role in social labor, and in distributive principle and volume of products, in the event it creates the relationship in which people exploit others or are exploited by others.

In society dominated by private possession toward the means of production, people who possess lots of the means of production become the exploiter class which can dominate the majority of products, even if they do not directly join social labor. Slave masters, landlords and capitalists are in such class.

Meanwhile, people who possess no means of production, or who possess little become the exploited class which is forced to be economically subjugated by being deprived of their own labor results, even if they directly join social labor. Slaves, bond laborers, farmers and workers are in such class.

There is no exploiter class and exploited class which are distinguished by possessive degree of the means of production in socialist society in which all of the people become the masters of the means of production. All-mass possession and collective possession, which are two forms of social possession toward the means of production, created in transition

¹⁸ "Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it." ("A Great Beginning—Heroism of the Workers in the Rear and 'Communist *subbotniks*—' by V. I. Lenin)

This means that the Marxist philosophy dealt with classes mainly in association with economic factors, that is, people's economic circumstances and the production relationship to define them.

from capitalism to socialism, however, create the working class and collective farmers.¹⁹

Classes are also defined by the possession relationship toward political power.

The possession relationship of the means of production is a cause for defining people's economic circumstances, and the possession relationship of political power is a cause for defining people's political circumstances on the one hand.

Above all, the possession relationship of political power is a basic factor to define people's social position and role since political power is substantial authority and power to command and control society. The possession relationship of the means of production is absolutely the one toward material objects, whereas the possession relationship of political power is the one toward man who possesses them.

People who capture power are in the ruling class of society, and people who do not take power are in the ruled class of it. From a historical point of view, slave masters, landlords and capitalists became the ruling class which acted as the masters in a political manner by capturing power. Meanwhile, slaves, bond laborers, farmers and workers who could not take power became subordinate class which

was oppressed in a political manner. There is no ruling class and ruled class in socialist society in which all of the people become the masters of political power.²⁰

Classes are historical bodies which continue to exist in a certain phase of social development.

There was no class in primitive society. The level of people's independence, creativity and consciousness was so low in those days that they could not live without forming their community. In the final days of primitive society, classes came into existence in association with the generation of material-economic and political-ideological conditions under which man's independence was trampled.

As people's creative ability to transform nature was getting higher, collective labor of the community diverged to family or personal labor, which created surplus products. That was a material-economic condition under which individuals possess the means of production and exploit others.

Meanwhile, the level of development of people's independent consciousness was not high enough to work devotedly for the good of society, respecting each other's independence. The divergence of labor and the generation of

¹⁹ Transition from capitalism to socialism signifies historical period of time to the achievement of complete triumph of socialism over capitalism in all areas of social life, such as politics, economy and ideological culture, after the formation of socialist regime. It ends up with the realization of classless society and the termination of anti-socialist maneuvers by imperialist forces.

²⁰ The exploiter class (the class gaining control of the means of production) and the ruling class (the class gaining control of political power) essentially correspond each other, but they do not necessarily. For instance, emerging bourgeoisie, who appeared in the final days of feudal society, was in the exploiter class gaining control of the means of production, but it was not in the ruling class since it did not gain control of political power.



surplus products in such circumstances added wings to people's egoism. Chieftains of races and clans accumulated wealth by taking advantage of their social authority, and enslaved the weak including prisoners of war by a gradual process.

Privileged stratum turned up in society in conformity with these material-economic and political-ideological conditions. The generation of private property system and anti-mass administration to protect their interest divided society into the exploiter class and the exploited class, the ruling class and the ruled class.

When people's independent consciousness and creative ability develop at a high level, and all-mass possession of the means of production is established, and political privileges are all eliminated, classes are dismantled and classless society is realized.

Society includes stratum besides classes. Social stratum are social collectives which consist of people from different classes, not from a unique class.

A representative example in social stratum is intellectuals. They are those who engage in mental labor, having specialized knowledge and skill. They are social stratum which was generated on the grounds that awareness and practical activity toward nature and society developed into a definite phase, and as a result, physical labor and mental labor were separated.

Intellectual stratum plays an important role in activity to realize people's independence.

Intellectuals not only directly join struggles for social transformation, but also play a role of enlightening masses and leading them to the struggles. In addition, they make a great contribution to the transformation of nature and the development of society, enlarging social wealth with their own knowledge and skill.²¹

5. What Areas Is Social Life Divided into?

"An economic life constitutes the basis of a social life. The independent and creative life of people is guaranteed by a free and prosperous economic life.

"A political life is of decisive importance in a social life. Only when they participate in a political life as masters of the state and society can the popular masses lead an independent and creative life.

"An ideological and cultural life is an important aspect of a social life. Through their ideological and cultural life people develop their independent ideological consciousness and creative ability, satisfy a variety of their cultural and emotional needs and acquire

²¹ In class society, intellectual stratum renders a service to classes with its own specialized knowledge and skill. Conservative intellectuals render a service to the ruling class, but on the other hand, progressive intellectuals struggle standing on the side of masses of the people.

The Juche idea regards intellectuals who conduct activities in a creative manner with independent demand as a subject for transforming society on a par with workers and farmers.

noble mental and moral traits.”
 (“Our Socialism Centred on the Masses Shall Not Perish” by Kim Jong Il)

People lead a social life in social collectives. A social life, in essence, is an activity to realize essential demand of social human being. People’s social life is led through the creative activity to realize their independent demand for living and developing as the masters of nature, society and their own. Accordingly a social life is extremely multiple and complicated, but it is divided into three main areas; an economic life, a political life and an ideological and cultural life. These three areas have continued to exist and develop in the whole period of human history.

An economic life is an area of life which satisfies people’s material demand.²²

It is a life to produce, distribute, exchange and consume the means of a material life. It includes a process of creating material wealth and a process of enjoying it.

A Life to transform nature and produce material wealth is called a labor life.

Only when material wealth is produced, it can be distributed, exchanged and consumed. Therefore, a labor life is of significance on a preferential basis in an economic life, and the development of production is namely the development of economy.

²² Man demands to lead an affluent material life, and live and develop in good health. An economic life is an area of a social life which satisfies such man’s material demand.

When man possesses the means of labor and acts on subject of labor, material wealth is produced. Man with labor force, the means of labor and subject of labor are called three major factors of production.²³

When man’s labor force combines with the means of labor, productive force is brought about. Productive force is, in essence, man’s power to transform nature. Labor force is an ensemble of man’s own physical and mental power, and the means of labor is the embodiment of it.

Since it is man that plays a leading and active role in productive force, man should be developed at the first setout in order to develop productive force.


A Life to enjoy and consume created material wealth is called a material life.

Man can not sustain its physical life and lead its social life without clothing, food and housing. The production of material wealth does not end in itself, but is absolutely intended to enjoy it. It can be said that a material life in connection with clothing, food and housing is a life to realize primary demand of man.

People’s economic life is led in a definite relation.

People’s relationships built in an economic life are called the production relations. They include the possession relationship to the means of production, the distributive relationship to products and the role-sharing relationship

²³ Here, the means of labor and subject of labor are collectively called the means of production.



in production.²⁴

The bottom of the production relationship is the possession relationship to the means of production. They define all contents of the production relationship including distribution of products, cooperation of labor, division of labor, and the rest. In fact, they define people's position and role in an economic life.

An economic life is an area which is the underlying basis of a social life. It brings material conditions essential to the existence and development of man.

A political life is an area of life which realizes people's socio-political demand.

In order that many people who are different in demand and ability may conduct social activities in social collectives, they need function to organize and lead the social collectives in a unified way. This unified organizing-leading function toward society can be carried out in conformity with interest common to classes or society. The essence of politics lies in the social function to organize and lead people's activities in a unified way in conformity with interest common to classes or society.

Organizing and leading people's activities in a unified way means defining and adjusting people's social position and role, which can be bound by the social relationship and social

systems. Therefore, politics is an activity to organize and lead people's activities in a unified way by establishing definite social relationship and social systems, and by controlling and operating them. In addition, a political life is a life to realize them by participating in politics.

A political life is led through political bodies. What is the most important of them is nations.²⁵

Nations are the most comprehensive political body which exercises its political rein over the whole society. They have legislative, administrative and judicial bodies required to realize political leading over the whole society.

There are two aspects in a political life through nations. One is an activity to seize the reins of government and sustain them, and the other is an activity to practically enjoy political freedom and rights by exercising the reins of government.

Political bodies also include political parties and social groups.

Political parties are political bodies of people with the same ideology and principle. They conduct their activities to realize profits common to a certain class, social collective or society. There are some social groups on

²⁴ The role-sharing relationship in production is, in essence, a social form to utilize productive force. The development level of social forms to utilize productive force like division and cooperation of labor is chiefly defined by the development level of productive force.

²⁵ Marxism formulated that the state arose as political means of the most powerful, economically ruling class; and it is a machine or an apparatus of violence for maintaining the rule of one class over another. ("Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State" by Frederick Engels; and "The State" by V. I. Lenin)

the basis of the commonality of people's various demands and interests, besides political parties.

What is important in a political life through political parties and social groups is to sustain and develop people's social and political lives by getting all of them in on any bodies.

A political life is decisively significant in a social life. It is the most precious life for social man with independence as life, and it sways a social life at large by defining people's social position and role.

An ideological and cultural life is an area of life which satisfies people's ideological and mental demand.²⁶

People create mental and cultural wealth and nurture their independent ideological consciousness and creative ability through their ideological and cultural life. One of the contents of ideological and cultural life is to seek for ideology and science, to execute literary art and to enhance quality and ability as social man.

²⁶ Mental and cultural wealth created by man is generally called culture. Social ideology is also mental and cultural wealth, and therefore it is comprised in culture. In this sense, a life directed to mental and cultural wealth including ideology can be called a cultural life, and the fundamental area of a social life can be also divided into politics, economy and culture. Ideology is, however, qualitatively distinguished from other mental and cultural wealth since it is a consciousness reflecting people's demand and interest. From this point of view, an ideological life can be treated as an independent area of life separately from a cultural life in general, and an area of life directed to mental and cultural wealth can be called not just a cultural life but an ideological and cultural life.

In addition, people realize a huge variety of cultural and emotional demand through their ideological and cultural life. The other content of an ideological and cultural life is to mentally lead an affluent, fair and enjoyable life by enjoying mental and cultural wealth and acquiring high level of cultural accomplishment.


An ideological and cultural life includes education, science, literary art, health and physical education, and the rest, including ideological activity.

An ideological and cultural life is an important area of a social life. It enhances quality and ability as social man, which leads to the development of an economic life and a political life.²⁷

6. What Is the Relation between Economic Life, Political Life and Ideological and Cultural Life?

“Political life and ideological life play a leading and decisive role in social life. Therefore, underestimating the principal significance of political life and ideological life, and only emphasizing that the three kinds of life have each their own importance is of no

²⁷ Distinguished from a cultural life, an ideological life plays a decisive role in a social life on a par with a political life. It defines ideology and ways of activities of people in charge of a social life. Life and contents of an ideological life regulate aims, development courses and fundamental principles of other areas of a social life.



use in practice.”

(“On Having a Correct Viewpoint of Juche Philosophy” by Kim Jong Il)

Each of the three major areas of a social life, an economic life, a political life and an ideological and cultural life, has unique and irreplaceable significance.²⁸

When it can be said that an economic life is a life to realize man’s demand for being the master of nature, a political life is a life to realize man’s demand for being the master of society, and an ideological and cultural life is a life to realize man’s demand for being the master of one’s own.

When it can be said that an economic life is a life to sustain the existence of social man through creating and enjoying material wealth, an ideological and cultural life is a life to enhance quality and ability of social man through creating and enjoying mental wealth, and a political life is a life to control and operate society through establishing social systems and exercising the reins of government.

An economic life, a political life and an

²⁸ Marxism considered interaction among politics, the economy and ideological culture with the economy as the center. Marx said as follows: “The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life.” (‘Preface’ of “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy” by Karl Marx 1859) In other words, an economic life constrains a political life and an ideological and cultural life. This is arguing about the relation among politics, the economy and ideological culture from a viewpoint that the economy is the basis of a social life and its development defines that of politics and ideological culture.

ideological and cultural life respectively have unique significance, while there is a relation in which they depend and constrain each other.

An economic life makes material conditions for a political life and an ideological and cultural life, and an ideological and cultural life makes personal conditions for an economic life and a political life, and a political life makes institutional conditions for an economic life and an ideological and cultural life.

An economic life materially supports a political life and an ideological and cultural life. A political life regulates the courses and processes of an economic life and an ideological and cultural life. In addition, an ideological and cultural life guarantees an economic life and a political life by enhancing quality and ability as social man.

In consequence, there is no ideological and cultural life or political life without an economic life, no economic life or ideological and cultural life without a political life, and no economic life or political life without an ideological and cultural life.

As they depend and constrain each other having unique significance respectively, they should be developed all together in a balanced manner. Only when doing so, a social life as a whole can be developed rapidly and normally in organic links.

In the developmental process of history, however, they did not necessarily develop in a balanced manner. There arose an imbalance in the three major areas of a social life under the exploitation and oppression in class

society. As a result, it followed that the development of a political life and an ideological and cultural life was slower than that of an economic life.²⁹

In capitalist society today, a serious imbalance is arising among the three major areas of a social life.

In capitalist society, developed economy does not fairly render a service for the people. A corrupt life is promoted by the artificial manipulation of inhuman demand and the contrivance of various measures which corrupt the people. As material wealth increases, by contraries people's sound mind is paralyzed and immorality and social evil are disseminated, and on the other hand politics is conservatized and the obstacle to people's independent political activity is enlarged. As the economy grows, in a word, a material life is corrupted, an ideological and cultural life is impoverished, and a political life gets reactionary.³⁰

In socialist society, the three major areas

of a social life can be developed in a balanced manner.

In socialist society, there is no privileged class having an interest in the imbalance of the three major areas. Since the masses of the people become a common master in an economic life, a political life and an ideological and cultural life, they play a role as the master in all of the areas. Therefore, it becomes possible to purposefully and consciously maintain a balance in the development of an economic life, a political life and an ideological and cultural life.

The three major areas of a social life depend on and constrain each other having unique significance respectively, but each of them occupies different positions in a social life.

A political life and an ideological life play a leading and decisive role in a social life.

A political life defines the developmental course of a social life as a whole, and adjusts and controls its entire process. It regulates a process of creating, spreading and enjoying material wealth and ideological and cultural wealth.

An ideological life defines ideology, behavior and role of people in charge of a social life. It regulates aim, will and fighting spirit of people who participate in each area of a social life.³¹

²⁹ Even though the remodeling of nature made a progress and material wealth increased, people who created wealth started to live poor, while even unworking privileged stratum started to have abundant wealth because of the backwardness of political institution. Even though people became materially affluent, in addition, there arose a harmful effect of wasting material wealth to corrupt their own mind and body among them because of the low level of their ideological culture.

³⁰ Such corruption of a material life, impoverishment of an ideological and cultural life and reaction of a political life are basic features of modern capitalist society. This shows that in capitalist society we can not overcome an imbalance between an improved material life and an impoverished ideological and cultural life and between independent demand of the masses of the people and a reactionary political life.

³¹ A political life and an ideological life are unified in real life. A political life is led with political ideology as a guiding principle, and people's demand and interest are embodied in a political life in a concentrated manner and are realized through a political life. Political ideology is an ideology



Since a political life and an ideological life have a decisive meaning in a social life, in order to properly develop society, the three major areas of a social life should be developed in a balanced manner while enhancing a leading role of a political life and an ideological life.

7. What Does Define the Character of Society?

“The character of a given society is determined by the class which holds power, and by the form of ownership of the means of production.”

(“The Present Situation and the Tasks of Our Party” by Kim Il Sung)

The character of society is the definition of a society determined by the class or social group in the driver’s seat of society which is at a certain stage of development.

Though man is originally a master of society, it does not mean that all men become masters together in any society in history. In relation to this, an issue concerning the character of society is raised.³²

reflecting people’s demand and interest embodied in a political life in a concentrated manner. Political activities defined by political ideology define aims and courses of a social life as a whole including an economic life and a cultural life, and regulate its process of realization.

³² If an issue related to the essence of society is an issue related to the fundamental characteristic of society differentiated from nature, an issue concerning the character of society is an issue concerning the fundamental character of society, which is at a certain stage of development in history,

The character of society is essentially the character of a social system. A position of a class or social group is controlled and guaranteed by the social system. Apart from the social system, the position of a class or social group is never ensured. A certain class or social group can maintain and enhance its social position only within the bounds of the social system. Accordingly, the issue concerning the character of society results in the issue that the social system established in the society ensures for a position of master for which class or social group.

The character of society is defined by the possessive relations to political power and the means of production.

The character of society is primarily defined by the class or social group that holds political power.

The political power is political control which organizes and helms people’s activities in a unified way in line with common interests of a class or society. The class or social group having held political power can adjust and control people’s behavior in society in accordance with its demand, while establishing and maintaining the social system in line with its intention and interests. On the other hand, the class or social group free from political power is put in such a situation as to be forced to be subservient socially.

In this sense, political power is also called political reins. The class or social group having held political power is assured a dominant

differentiated from other societies.

position, and the class or social group free from it is obligated to be servile.

The character of society is defined also by possessive relations to the means of production.³³

The possessive relations to the means of production are a factor to define the position and role of people in an economic life. The possessive relations to the means of production are basic to the relation of production. The class or social group which possesses the means of production comes to hold a dominant position not only in a process of production but also in distribution and consumption of products.

The possessive relations to the means of production are divided by their forms into private one and social one. In the society dominated by private possession to the means of production, there exist people who exploit others and who are exploited by others. On the other hand, in the society dominated by social possession to the means of production, there no exist people who exploit others and who are exploited by others, as all the people in the society become masters of the means of production.

Holding the means of production enables people not only to be directly guaranteed their position as masters in an economic life, but also to be materially ensured their position as

³³ Though in viewing the character of society, it is of course important more than anything else that for which class political power exists, the character of society is not defined only by that. Even if working class holds political power, you cannot say such society as socialist state under such a condition as that there still remains private possession to the means of production.

masters of political power.³⁴

The basic factor defining the character of society is the possessive relations to political power.

Between two factors concerning the character of society, that is, the possessive relations to political power and the possessive relations to the means of production, the former acts in a more regulatory manner.

Originally, political power is a stronger social authority compared with ownership to the means of production, economic authority. Political power legally regulates overall production relations including the possessive relations to the means of production. When a certain class or social group takes political power, they can possess the means of production and have jurisdiction over social wealth. Accordingly, such a class or social group having taken political power holds a dominant position in every field of a social life including an economic life, and thus comes to play a role as master.

Social relations including possessive relations to the means of production and social system are established mainly in response to demands

³⁴ You should not assess the characteristics of society by various individual phenomena in each society.

There exist phenomena showing essential features of each society and ones showing nonessential features. Besides, the former is also appeared in various ways in every field of a social life, which means that phenomena do not always represent the essence itself.

Consequently, following individual social phenomenon makes it difficult to define the character of society. The character of society should be defined based on its essential features. That is, we should define it by which class or social group takes political power and what kind of the possessive relations to the means of production.



or interests of the class or social group which has taken political power.

Those classes or social groups free from political power have no other choice but to obey the exercise of the former's power even if they can have the means of production. Even classes or social groups with both political and economic reins, if they are deprived of political authority, gradually lose their reins in an economic life as well.

The character of society is changed only when the class or social group which seized political power is replaced. Even if the possessive relations to the means of production are replaced, there is no change in the character of society unless possessive relations to political power are replaced.³⁵

8. What Types Is Society Classified into by Its Character?

"The popular masses have vigorously struggled to win their independence for a long time. During this, class societies have changed and the struggle of the masses for independence has developed."

("Socialism Is a Science" by Kim Jong Il)

Society is classified into several types by its character.

³⁵ Though emerging bourgeois sprouted from a feudal society and capitalist possessive relations to the means of production were created, the character of society did not change and remained as a feudal society until emerging bourgeois took political power.

First society in human history was primitive society. It was society where people lived communally while establishing rudimentary equal relationships.

In this society, people lived equally in units of clan or tribe, the group united by blood ties, based on commonality of ancestry.

There was a council, political organization for common interests of society, which organized and administered people's life. Also, people collectively possessed the means of production, which were poor though, worked, and shared and consumed what they produced. There was neither political privilege nor economic privilege, and primitive democracy was ensured.³⁶

However, equality in primitive society was not based on high awareness and initiative, was habit mainly created by blood ties, and was inevitable under such conditions that there was no surplus product. Also it was primitive one limited to community, and conflicts to conquer repeatedly occurred among clans and strains and almost prisoners captured in battle were killed.

In primitive society, there were neither classes nor states. In the late stage of primitive society, it was divided into classes, state appeared, and class societies emerged.

³⁶ "And a wonderful constitution it is, this gentile constitution, in all its childlike simplicity! No soldiers, no gendarmes or police, no nobles, kings, regents, prefects, or judges, no prisons, no lawsuits—and everything takes its orderly course. All quarrels and disputes are settled by the whole of the community affected, by the gens or the tribe, or by the gentes among themselves." ("Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State" by Frederick Engels)

Slave society was first society based on complete property of slaveholder toward political power, the means of production and slaves.

Classes comprising the basis of slave society were class of slaveholder and servile class. Slaveholders, the only ruling class in slave society, dominated political power and the basic means of production including lands, made slaves their own complete possessions and cruelly exploited them. Slaves, the oppressed and exploited class, never acquired wealth or had their family. They were nothing more than “speaking tools” that were traded and disposed by slaveholders.³⁷

The slaveholder-class established state for slaveholders as authoritative body to guarantee its oppression and exploitation of people including slaves, and made its social position solid by relying on the state.

Slave society was collapsed by slaves’ struggles for breaking free from physical enslavement by slaveholders.

Feudal society is a society where landowners or lieges seize political power and lands, the basic means of production, and subjugate villains or farmers on the basis of their status.

There existed private property of landowners and lieges toward lands and small property of farmers and handicraftsmen toward lands tamed by individual labor and some production tools. Feudalistic landowners and lieges possessed

much lands, tied farmers and lieges to the lands, and exploited the labor and its product in the form of rent and extra-economic coercion.

Oppression and exploitation in feudal society were rationalized by class system. People were classified into social grades which became ordained legally by state, and thus ruling class’s political and economic privilege was perpetuated and succeeded. Villains and farmers had been targeted for oppression and subordination, exploitation and plunder over generation due to this class system as well as feudal landowning relations.³⁸

Feudal society was collapsed by people’s struggle including farmers for breaking free from feudalistic exploitation and enslavement in the sense of estate.

Capitalist society is a society where capitalist class possesses political power and the means of production, and exploits and oppresses working people including laboring class.

Though in capitalist society, there was no more privilege on the basis of status, economic privilege remained in a different form. Bourgeoisies, who were in an economically advantageous position, arbitrarily amassed goods by violence and compulsion and seized the means of production. In this way, society was divided into capitalist class, who monopolized the means of

³⁷ In slave society there existed not only slaveholders and slaves but also free citizens. Free citizens were ruined and enslaved day by day through oppression and exploitation by slaveholders.

³⁸ In feudal society, religion was used as an important means to rule society. This is because it was impossible to compel farmers to submit only by violent constraint, unlike slaves. As a result, in feudal society religion came to control over entire society and obstructed the development of people’s independent ideological consciousness.



production and amassed wealth, and working people including laboring class, who could not live unless being employed in capitalist class and selling labor force.

Economic privilege under such a condition that there was no privilege on the basis of status comes to have almighty power in every field of society. Bourgeoisie democracy also ensures political control of capitalist class, who possesses the means of production, through political free competition being premised on economic privilege. Capitalist class subjugates working people in every field of a social life including not only an economic life but also a political life and a mental and cultural life with money.

In capitalist society, competition based on thorough individualism occurs. Free competition based on individualism is a serious one that divides society into winner and loser and makes the latter be ruled by the former. Though the competition is equal one in view of rank, it can help becoming unequal one based on the law of the jungle as it is premised on economic privilege.

A few capitalists, who have the means of production, amass wealth more and more through free competition, which deepens polarization in society. As capitalism develops and competition intensifies, polarization between classes and social inequality become serious increasingly.

Socialist society is a society for people, which is fundamentally distinguished from former societies.³⁹

³⁹ The changes of class societies before emergence of socialism only varied the form of oppressing the popular masses independence and were unable to

Socialist society is a society where people become masters of political power and the means of production and everything serves for people, and which is developed by unified and solid creative power of the popular masses. It is the essence of socialist society that the popular masses become genuine masters based on collectivism, and it is the motive force of development of socialist society that people unite and conduct with high awareness as masters and ability.

It is people's essential demand and historical desire of human beings to enjoy an independent and creative life to the fullest in the society free from exploitation and oppression. The popular masses advanced history and at last, established socialist society through continuous struggles to complete the dream.

The emergence of socialist society is an epoch-making event in human history that puts an end the history of exploitation and oppression of man by man and inaugurates a society where the popular masses become masters in accordance with nature of man.

emancipate the popular masses from social and political enslavement. This is because every opposing class society was based on individualism. Society based on individualism inevitably splits the popular masses into warring classes, creates polarization between classes and social inequality, and carries exploitation and oppression of the popular masses by a few ruling classes. The history of development of human's society shows the fact that in order to achieve people's independence it is indispensable to change over from society based on individualism to one based on collectivism, socialist society.