

ascendency of class or class fraction. Class formation takes place in class struggle, the motor force of history. Class formation, therefore, necessarily involves change in both quantitative and qualitative terms. It involves quantitative change in the degree of development of the productive forces at the disposal of society, and qualitative change in the relations of production dominant in society. The interaction between the forces of production and the relations of production is thus the context in which class formation occurs. This interaction represents necessarily a contradictory unity of materially opposing tendencies in which the relations of production predominate. The formation of classes as social forces in class struggle signifies a new balance of forces, the emergence of new historical phases.

The development of a new historical phase means change in the conditions of the material life of a social formation ("society"). These conditions are essentially determined by the way people go about procuring their means of subsistence (food, clothing, housing, and instruments of production, etc.), i.e., by the method used for maintaining and reproducing their existence; that is, the dominant mode of production. Each successive historical phase is characterized by the dominance of a new form in the existing mode of production, or of a new mode. A mode of production consists of two components: the productive forces (labor, instruments of labor, skill, technology, etc.) and relations of production (the way in which people and things are related (as expressed in the patterns of ownership and the division of labor, etc.)). Expressed in these terms, development can be said to be the byproduct of the interaction of the productive forces and relations of production. For social formation to re-