**Axis 8: French socialist thought and Marxist thought**

**First: French socialist thought**

French socialist thought was known as ideal or utopian socialism. This socialist movement is divided into two parts, one of which is authoritarian and the other is cooperative.

**1- Control current:**

This trend goes back to Saint-Simon and his followers (the Sansimonians). Saint-Simon considers the role of the state to be very important in increasing well-being. He did not call for the abolition of private property, but his followers criticized private property and attacked the principle of inheritance because there is no guarantee that the heir will be more efficient than others in using inherited funds, so they called for the state to be the sole heir.

**2- The Cooperative Current:**

This type of socialist thought aims to bring about transformations in the existing system by establishing a cooperative system aimed at achieving public benefit rather than the goal of profitability. One of the most important pioneers of this thought in France was Charles Fouret (1772-1837), the author of a social and economic theory known by his name. He was not a socialist in the strict sense. He did not call for the abolition of property, but rather he called for unification in production through voluntary participation and for every person to be allowed to work according to his personal ability and to have the right to change the type of work.

**Second: Marxist thought**

The Marxist doctrine is considered one of the most important and influential doctrines in practical life, as Karl Marx (1818-1883) is credited with the spread and dominance of socialist ideas beginning in the late nineteenth century, in a broad and scientific manner. Marx analyzed the market economic system in his book "Capital", and in this work, he borrowed most of the concepts from classical English economists such as Smith and Ricardo to introduce new concepts such as added value.

*The economic analysis of the Marxist school revolves around the following ideas and theories:*

**1- Value Theory:**

Like his predecessors, the classical scholars and thinkers, Karl Marx distinguished between use value, which means the benefit of the commodity to satisfy human needs, and it is personal because it depends on individuals. The exchange value means the ability of a commodity to be exchanged for another commodity. The question is: What is the common thing that goods contain that allows for exchange? Marx believes that the common thing is what he simply called “value,” and that value reflects the labor time expended. Labor means “socially necessary labor time” and means the amount of labor time required to produce a good under typical conditions and with a normal degree of skill, labor intensity, and tools.

**2- The theory of surplus value:**

According to Karl Marx, surplus value appears when the employer or capitalist exploits the worker’s effort.

The workers work for the factory owner in exchange for a wage equal to the minimum standard of living, while they produce materials for him whose value is equal to the amount of work necessary to produce the commodity itself. Thus, the owner of capital obtains the difference between the value of the commodity, that is, the labor, and the value of the wage, which is called surplus value.

Therefore, surplus value corresponds to the amount of work that does not pay a wage to the worker and is a profit for the owner of capital.

**3 - Accumulation Theory:**

Marx acknowledges that accumulation appears in the income shares received by the owners of the means of production, and Marx confirms that capitalists invest the largest portion of their profits in establishing new capital.

Marx divides capital into two parts: constant capital, which is represented by machines and raw materials, and there is variable capital, which is the one from which wages are paid, and Marx considers it to be the source of surplus value.

**4- Focus theory:**

Marx asserts that the capitalist system tends to concentrate capital through unfair competition, which leads large projects to completely drive out small projects, and thus large projects (small in number) are unique in the market, and therefore the capitalist system is evolving towards concentrating capital in the hands of a small group. And turning a large number of producers and merchants into mere workers.

**5- The theory of impoverishment:**

As a result of the phenomenon of surplus value, the profits of capitalists constantly rise, which entails a decrease in the level of wages. This leads to a low standard of living for workers.

**6- Crisis theory:**

As a result of the poverty of the broad working class, consumer demand decreases and declines, and thus there is an imbalance between supply and demand, which leads to the accumulation of stocks. The crisis begins to emerge, which results in the closure of factories, the layoff of workers, and the spread of unemployment. Crises follow one another until capitalism reaches a major crisis that overthrows it. This is an objective inevitability in Marx’s view.