Chapter-7
Concluding Observation

In all the preceding chapters of the thesis, starting from the ‘Introduction’ (chapter-1) and thereafter in chapters 2,3,4,5 and 6, an attempt has been made to address the primary research question: Does individual have any significant role to play in the process of social change or is it the objective conditions that resolve the course of history? The age-old traditional debate on the factors behind the process of historical change and more particularly the Marxist position on the same with special reference to Plekhanov’s remarkable stand as reflected in his book, *On the Role of the Individual in History* (1898), has been the main basis for answering this research question. This debate is specially addressed in this thesis by taking up a case study of the role of a leader, i.e., Charu Majumdar in a prominent historical event, which is the Naxalite movement. Theoretically, this is a stimulating traditional debate that began since the documentation of human history and is specially tackled here with a case study to pragmatically substantiate the journey to facilitate some additional information. It also has its most contemporary reflection on the theory of structure-agency debate in the study of social science. This point is touched at the end of this chapter after a brief jotting down of findings of each chapter.

After the preliminary discussion in **Chapter 1** about the hypotheses, literature review, methodology, **Chapter 2** begins with the particular focus on Plekhanov’s book *On the Role of the Individual in History* (1898), where an authentic and relatively balanced position of Marxism on the issue of the role of the individual is explained by Plekhanov. An analysis of his book shows that he criticised all the then available positions of historians and social scientists. According to him, all of them were biased either on the side of the subjective or objective factors. He termed these theories as ‘factor theory’ which failed to understand the complex layers of history and he declared that the future depends on the philosophy which
could balance these two stands. Then he proceeded towards the task of analysis and he opined that behind the process of change in history there are three main factors: general cause (the overall socio-economic condition), particular cause (the socio-economic condition of the particular society where the change is taking place) and finally, the individual cause (which also includes all the accidental causes of history). Plekhanov was quite balanced and extensive enough to include the subjective factors in the process of social change. However, he gradually shifted towards the orthodox position of Marxism, which considers material conditions as the main determinant of history and Plekhanov considered the role of the individual as an ‘accidental cause’ of history. He rejected any unique role of the individual in history just as an ‘optical illusion’. By referring to the analysis of many other scholars and critics on Plekhanov’s position, it has been finally inferred in this chapter that Plekhanov’s view about the role of the individual is heavily tilted towards objective determinism and his understanding of history suffers from the symptoms of what postmodernists have called a ‘grand narrative’. He, like all his Marxist predecessors, tried to provide a general formula of historical change, which is claimed as scientific and objective. By examining the various analyses of his critics and a minute analysis of various inconsistencies in his arguments, a visible gap in this regard actually becomes evident by the end of this chapter, which paved the way to take up the research question to probe further through the scrutiny of a case study.

The findings of chapter-2 give clues to probe the theme further and for that a case study is chosen, which is introduced in the Chapter 3. The focus of chapter 3 is on the case study, which is the Naxalite movement and its central figure Charu Majumdar. A brief narration of the historical condition of that time is unfolded in this chapter which shows that the movement had a few material objective conditions, which were even considered by many contemporary Left leaders as ‘good enough’, for the initiation of a Left movement. However, the objective conditions of that time was not at all conducive for such a movement. A further probe in this chapter is done to see how far a case study on Majumdar as the leader of the movement could be viable, with the general frame of the ‘role of the
individual in history’ in the background, and for that purpose an effort is made to find out the centrality of his role in the movement. Interestingly, it is found that not only his supporters but his critics too, considered him as the key person of the movement. Some among them even thought that the objective conditions were near perfect for the Left movement, but Majumdar misused the opportunity due to his wrong leadership based on his subjective understandings and thus the movement failed in spite of its immense potentialities. Others, who never thought that objective conditions were ripe enough for such a movement, also solely blamed Majumdar for his subjective romanticism about the revolution and interpretation of the situation which led an entire generation into the pool of bloodshed without the actual target being achieved. So by the end of the chapter it becomes clear that positively or negatively, Majumdar’s role is at the centre of the movement and both his supporters as well as critics believed that his leadership is one of the most crucial causes of the failure of the movement and its outcomes as well, whatever it was. This chapter thus confirms the leadership position of Majumdar in the Naxalite movement. Hence Charu Majumdar and his leadership in the movement have proved to be good enough for conducting the case study for the main purpose of the research.

**Chapter-4** expands on the basis of the conclusion of the preceding chapter, which ends by ensuring the leadership position of Charu Majumdar and thus made it an imperative necessity to analyse the concept of leadership and other related issues by considering their instrumental value for the general purpose of the research. In this chapter, primary focus is given on the meaning of leadership and on those basic leadership theories, which can be broadly categorised into two general heads: trait theory and process theory. Trait theory is the oldest and is still evolving, and gives primary focus on the individual leader; whereas process theory focuses on leader-follower relationship and situational aspects of leadership. As this research primarily focuses on the individual leader and his influence in history, trait approach to the study of leadership is considered as the relevant tool for the general focus of the work. Gradually most important trait approaches like traditional trait theory of leadership, charismatic theory,
transforming leadership theory, big five factors model theory are discussed and it is found that since its inception till date, in case of human history (in spite of criticisms and counter theories), there isn’t any dearth of scholastic stand on this perspective. It is further pointed out that all these analyses along with their own set of arguments, coincide at a common point-- leadership quality or the effectiveness of a leader’s influence largely depends upon the personality of the leader. Some of the theories like the big five factors model, even have made a list of some personality traits that are essentially connected with the nature of the leadership. So the result of this section of the chapter led towards the analysis of another very relevant and related aspect of leadership, i.e., personality. Thus, in the sub section II of the chapter, concept and basics of personality theories are discussed in order to have those devices which would be essentially helpful for the analysis of the case study i.e., the role of Charu Majumdar in the Naxalite movement in succeeding chapters. In this sub-section a brief discussion is made on different theories of personality: viz. psychoanalysis, behaviourism and humanism. It is further located that whereas the former approach focuses on the critical functioning of mind, the latter focuses on the social surroundings and its influence over the growth of personality and reflection of human personality through the behaviour of man. Some important theories of personality study are located through this brief discussion like Adler’s ‘style of life’, Maslow’s theory of ‘self-actualization’ and ‘meta-needs’, Carl Roger’s journey of personality from the ‘real self’ to ‘ideal self’ etc., which seem to be relevant for probing the case study. In the conclusion of this chapter, a brief discussion is made on the sub-discipline of political psychology, with a reference to the role of some of the world famous revolutionary leaders of the Left movement. This final discussion led to the concluding result of the chapter which indicates that, since the time of Plekhanov or even before, understanding of the role of the individual has progressed thoroughly in different directions and not only from the perspective of political science but also from the perspective of leadership; but the debate on the role of the individual in history is still evolving. Thus, by the end of the chapter it is found that a meaningful comprehensive case study is possible and also
epistemologically desirable by taking clues from the study of political science, leadership, political psychology and related angularities of personality study and such an effort is made in the next two chapters of the thesis.

**Chapter-5** and **Chapter 6** are the final two chapters of the thesis where special attention is given to identify the intense connection between the individual and the historical moments by analysing the case study from all possible angles that is, the impact of Charu Majumdar over the Naxalite movement. **Chapter 5** is about the ideological guidance and leadership of Majumdar over the movement. It is found in this chapter that Majumdar’s philosophical stand provided the main frame to the movement as it is reflected through his famous ‘Eight Documents’, different letters to his comrades, his articles and speeches. He gave his clarification of the revolutionary situation of the world and India, evaluation of the role of the Communist movement in India, interpretation of Mao’s thought with regard to the need of the peasant revolution in India. It was he who actually imported Mao-Tse tung’s thought and popularized it in India. In fact, the violent mode of revolutionary methods like guerrilla war, action squad, annihilation of class enemies upon which the movement was based, were formally introduced and heavily justified by Majumdar. Sometimes, it is also found that Majumdar had come up with his theory even after a mass action had already taken place on the spur of the moment out of the impulsive behaviour of the activists. For example, demolition of statues and burning of educational institutions. This, however, became a part of their revolutionary practice soon after his theorisation. Chinese leadership and media also had acknowledged his position as a theoretical leader of the movement and most of his followers as well as his critics have accepted him as the brain behind the movement. It is also found through the analysis of his ideological position, that the way Majumdar had challenged the revisionist stand of Indian Communists by upholding a radical non-Eurocentric Marxist version, which stands out as a major theoretical contribution of Majumdar in the evolution of the Communist movement and philosophy in India. Under his guidance C.P.I. (M-L) was formed in 1969, which formally became the political party of the movement, based on the philosophy of Mao. Furthermore, the way Majumdar
upheld the importance of peasantry in the assessment of the history that it set a new benchmark for the scholars of social science and a fresh epistemological journey began in 1980s in the name of Subaltern Studies. It is greatly indebted to Majumdar’s theoretical position and to the movement. “A new generation of scholars emerged on the scene in the 1980s onwards who dared to take up the questions that were thrown up in course of the Naxalite movement ” (Banerjee in Basu 2010:11). 1 This chapter thus proves the key ideological position of Majumdar and his influence over the movement and the historical consequences related to it.

Chapter 6 is an extension of the effort that was initiated in chapter-5 and taking a step further towards finding out relevant connections between the individual and the historical change in a way as intense as possible. To do so, more focus is given in this chapter on Charu Majumdar’s influence over the movement as an individual. In other words, this chapter has tried to identify his personality and personal issues that would have not only influenced his philosophy and the movement, but also had played an important role in determining the nature of the movement. For convenience, it is discussed under three heads, which is purely heuristic in its purpose:

A. Influence of Charu Majumdar as the charismatic leader:

A number of attributes were found and analysed in detail with various examples that could be considered as the foundation of his charisma, viz., his capacity as a public orator, his honesty, warmth, knowledge and dynamic thinking, his long experience in grassroots politics, and even impact of his eyes. It is found that these personal attributes of Majumdar as an individual gradually built up his charismatic image as a leader to his followers to the extent that even many stories and myths about him came up that led a section of his followers to fight for the confirmation of his ‘revolutionary authority’ within their party and in the movement. All these had such a serious impact, that a whole generation of urban
educated youth along with the rural peasants were swept away by the dream of revolution even at the cost of their family, career and life.

B. Influence of Charu Majumdar’s unique personality traits:

Some unique personality traits were identified that showed a strange resemblance between the nature of the man and the movement. It is found that Majumdar as an individual was aggressive, adamant, anti-ritualistic, bohemian, and romantic in nature. Interestingly it is found that the nature of the movement is also being described by various scholars and critics very often by using these same adjectives. The way Majumdar evaluated and assessed all socio-political norms and rejected or violated them since his early age in his personal life, exactly the same attitudes get reflected in his theory and practice later on through the movement and these were greatly copied by his followers. It is also found that Majumdar’s perception of death was very exclusive and his mind on this aspect is precisely reflected by Tagore’s verse *Mrityunjay*, for which he had great fondness. On the other hand, it is also found that the Naxalite movement became almost synonymous with death and self-sacrifice. Majumdar showed the dream of death as the highest form of victory to the young minds of a whole generation of youth of Bengal, who were ready to forgo their life without much hesitation. They followed a dream of highest glory of sacrifice in their minds which they did by conforming to the vision of Charu Majumdar. In other words, the way the silhouette of death loomed large over the entire course of the movement and led to an countless and many a time unnecessary processions of deaths, is a hint towards Majumdar’s some kind of intrinsic connection to personal reverie of death.

C. Some other influences of Charu Majumdar:

In this part, focus is given to those aspects of Majumdar’s life which are basically very personal aspects and subjective in nature which had an important influence over the movement, both in a direct as well as latent way. It is found that there was a great impact of his family and particularly of his father on him which
helped him to develop his political stand and thus to shape up the movement in
the later period. In other words, a politically conscious, active, liberal and fairly
open-minded family which was poor but honest and bohemian in nature and
which was little different from other typical Bengali middle-class families of the
time, facilitated him to expand his own unique political stand. Another very
important but personal aspect of Majumdar that had affected the movement in an
extremely negative way was his own health condition. It was found that he was
sick since early 1960s and had three cardiac attacks even before the movement
began in 1967. His health condition deteriorated rapidly in a way that kept him
bed-ridden and completely dependent on medicines like Pethidrine and oxygen
support since the beginning of the movement. It got further aggravated due to his
rigorous underground life that began since late 1969. Due to such ill-health
condition, Majumdar gradually lost direct contact with the field and its activists;
he became dependent on others for all the information on the ground situation of
the movement and was almost imprisoned in the hands of a few fellow activists.
This had a negative impact on the movement and Majumdar gradually lost control
over it and eventually lost track of the movement. A significant fact that comes
into light in this regard is that Majumdar’s personal rift with many of his
comrades and activists has time and again contributed negatively to the
movement. It is explored that with many important comrades like Sushital Roy
Chowdhuri, Satyanarayan Singh, Asim Chatterjee, Suniti Kumar Ghosh, Majumdar developed serious tiff gradually on issues pertaining to party line and
methods of revolution. This finally led almost all of them to leave the party,
making him very lonely and helpless from 1971 onwards. This had further
isolated him from the reality and made him dependent on a few who could neither
provide him safety nor the assistance for the success of the revolution. The final
shock to the movement came from his sudden arrest and untimely death in the jail
custody. Ironically, this happened at a moment when Majumdar, for the first time,
was seriously thinking of revising and rectifying his party line. The movement
which was already suffering its biggest low due to severe oppression by the state
and the central Government became further unstable due to Majumdar’s arrest.
His death in jail custody within twelve days of his arrest put the final nail to the coffin of the first stage of the Naxalite movement. Police and state atrocities went uncontrolled; all the activists either went fully underground or were arrested and killed by police. Fragmentation within the party and the movement was at an all-time high and it is believed that with the death of Majumdar on July 28, 1972 the first phase of the Naxalite movement came to an end.

**Contemporary Theoretical Debate**

Now theoretically speaking, this thesis began with one of the fundamental and age-old debates about the importance and the role of the subjective/objective conditionality in history with special focus on orthodox Marxist stand (Plekhanov to be precise) and its primary hypothesis is based on this. Eventually, it is found that this theoretical origination can easily be attached to one of the very important and contemporary debate in the study of social science, i.e., the **structure-agency debate**. In fact it can even be said that the old debate on the role of subjective/objective factors in history has taken a new shape through this contemporary structure-agency debate. It has become so crucial in recent time in the study of social science, that Margaret Archer has aptly said that, “The problem of structure and agency has rightly come to be seen as the basic issue of the modern social theory” (Archer : ix). As pointed out by most of the scholars, there are broadly three visible positions within the structure-agency issue:

1. On the one hand, some social theorists have suggested a vision of the world where powerful “structures” are dominant and responsible for contouring the conduct of human individuals. Emile Durkheim, A. R. Radcliffe Brown, Meyer Fortes, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Levi Strauss, Althusser (and Structural Marxists) are some of the prominent scholars associated with this school. Pierre Bourdieu specified this school as the **Objectivists** and he observed: “My intention was to bring real-life actors back in who had vanished at the hands of Levi-Strauss and other structuralists, especially Althusser” (Bourdieu, cited in Jenkins:18).
(2) On the other hand, some scholars have been eager to stress the primacy of individual judgments, decisions, and actions and emphasised the importance of human “agency” in social life. Bourdieu referred to this as the **Subjective position** which includes Sartre’s existentialism, Schutz’s phenomenology, Blumer’s symbolic interactionism and Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology.

**It is very fascinating to see that these two stands resemble the original age-old debate about the role of various factors in the process of change.** While, the first position is close to the old theoretical stand that focused on the ultimate importance of the socio-economic conditions in determining the courses of history, the second position is comparable to the old arguments that have primarily focused on the role of heroes in history.

(3) In this contemporary structure-agency debate, there is a third position as well, which was not there in the old sets of arguments, though some scholars including Plekhanov attempted to strike a balance. This third discernible position is adopted by scholars who have attempted to **reconcile both of the perspectives** mentioned above. More specifically, they have presented theoretical frameworks that acknowledge the dialectical relationship between “structure” and “agency” like Anthony Giddens’ work on “structuration theory” as well as Pierre Bourdieu’s views on a “theory of practice” and habitus.³

This thesis has made an effort to make some relevant contributions to the old debate by focusing on a case study and it is found in fine that the tendencies which have become visible through this research can also be theorised by this structure-agency debate, especially by the third position of this debate. In other words, here in conclusion an attempt is made to relate the case study and its findings with this particular position of the structure-agency debate, which has tried to integrate both structure and agency within its theory. More specifically, some possible correlations will be attempted here in between the tendencies that are found through an intense scrutiny of the particular case study of the thesis on the one hand and position of Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu on the other.
**Anthony Giddens**, a very eminent British sociologist in his attempt to integrate structure and agency, has developed his **theory of structuration** most specifically in his book, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of the Structuration* (1984). His structuration theory is based on two fundamental concepts: agent and structure. According to him, agents i.e., individuals as agents, continuously monitor their own thoughts and activities as well as their physical and social context. Agents in search of their security develop a routine that help them to deal efficiently with their social life. Agents have motivation to act and this motivation involves the wants and desires that prompt actions. Giddens’s ‘agent’ has the ability to make a difference in the social world; agent is not powerless or unconscious. He recognises the constraints that agents would face, but that does not mean that the agents have no choice to make the difference. ‘Structure’ on the other hand, is defined by him as, “The structuring properties (rules and regulations)...the properties which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them systematic form ” (Giddens 1984: 17). He has specified that structure only exists in and through the activities of the human agents. He rejected both the polar positions that focus either on social structure or on individual agents and argued in favour of ‘recurrent social practices’ where both the structure and agents converge. Structure and agency are not separated, but they are two sides of the same coin. He observes: “The basic domain in the study of the social sciences, according to the theory of structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across time and space ” (Giddens 1984: 2). To Giddens, the constitution of structures and agents are not independent of each other; the properties of social systems are seen as both medium and outcome of the practices of the actors, and those system properties recursively organise the practices of actors (Ritzer: 526). However, activities are not brought to the agents through the social structure, rather in and through their activities agents produce the conditions that make these activities possible.
By using the basic understandings of Giddens, it can be said that the overwhelming role of Charu Majumdar over the movement, is quite like the role of the agent as described by Giddens in his structuration theory rather than being presumed by Plekhanov. Unlike Plekhanov’s depiction of the role of the individual in history, who is almost powerless and surrendered to objective provisions, it is observed that Charu Majumdar played a more powerful role in steering up the movement, not only by affecting but also at times by changing the given and existing socio-political and economic patterns (read structure). Following Giddens, the role of Majumdar can be interpreted as an agent, who developed routine functions of revolutionary activities, based partially on his motivation, partially on his reflexivity and partially on his understanding of structure that helped him to deal his social life. Giddens gave importance to motivation behind action of the agent, as he believed that motivations are the potentials of action. Any revolution or even attempt of revolution, is an act of high level motivation, which can be explained with Maslow’s theory of ‘need of self-actualisation’ and ‘meta-needs’. World history shows that leaders of such movement become the obvious source of this motivation and Majumdar was no exception. In other words, Majumdar with his motivation for revolution acted in such a manner, that it not only paved the way for the movement, but also motivated other agents, which gave birth to a collective action in the form of the Naxalite movement. Another important point of Giddens about the agent is that, he tried to separate agency from intentions as, “…he wants to make the point that actions often end up being different from what was intended; in other words, intentional acts often have unintentional consequences ” (Ibid: 524). This understanding of Giddens further helps to rationalise those outcomes of the Naxalite movement which were never consciously targeted or thought of by its leader Charu Majumdar, but for which he was squarely blamed to the extent that he is considered by many as the main cause of the failure of the movement. So it can be reasonably concluded by following the structuration theory of Giddens that out of the dialectical relationship between the given social structure and Charu Majumdar as an agent, a ‘recurrent social practice’ had deeply influenced the
emergence of the Naxalite movement, through which structure (the then objective conditions) and agency (individual i.e., Charu Majumdar) congregate without an absolute overpowering of each-other.

Let us take up the theorisation of Pierre Bourdieu, a famous French sociologist of this time. His theory is an attempt to end the forged opposition between objectivism and subjectivism; in his own words, “absurd opposition between individual and society” (Bourdieu 1990: 31). Bourdieu was influenced by both the existentialism of Sartre and structuralism of Levi Strauss but later he rejected both of their absolute positions and developed his own theory with an intention, “to integrate at least a part of Sartre’s existentialism with Levi-Strauss’s structuralism” (Ritzer: 533). In his attempt to establish the dialectical relationship between the structure and agency, he introduced three basic concepts centering which his whole theory has evolved: habitus, cultural capital, and field. It is found after concentrating on Bourdieu’s analysis, that the findings of this thesis can be elucidated with the help of these notions. So a brief discussion on these concepts and their applicability are undertaken here.

**Habitus** is the mental and cognitive structures through which people deal with the social world. “People are endowed with a series of internalized schemes through which they perceive, understand, appreciate and evaluate the social work. It is through such schemes that people both produce their practices and perceive and evaluate them” (*Ibid*: 533). Habitus, according to Bourdieu is thus, “the product of the internalization of the structures”. Habitus is the combination of the agent and the structures that both produces, and are produced by, the social world. “Habitus, as an evolving structure, provides unlimited scope for the production of new ideas, views, and approaches based on the socio-historical, political, economic, cultural and technological context in which they are generated” (Costa and Murphy in Costa and Murphy: 7-8). Habitus, thus, on the one hand, is a “structuring structure” i.e., which structures the social structure and, on the other hand, habitus is the “structured structure” which is a product of the social structure (Ritzer: 534). In Bourdieu’s own language habitus is the “dialectics of
the *internalization of externality* and the *externalization of internality*” (Bourdieu 1977:72). Practice stands in between habitus and the social world and through this concept of habitus Bourdieu finally escapes from choosing either the structure or the agent (objectivism or subjectivism).

Another very crucial concept of Bourdieu especially relevant for this particular research is his concept of **cultural capital**. His concept of cultural capital refers to the collection of symbolic elements such as skills, tastes, posture, clothing, mannerism, material belongings, credentials etc. Certain forms of cultural capital are valued more than the others and can help or hinder one’s social mobility just as much as income or wealth. Bourdieu observes:

> Depending on the field in which it functions, and at the cost of the more or less expensive transformations which are the precondition for its efficacy in the field in question, capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility (Bourdieu in Richardson 1986).

Bourdieu has further referred that ‘cultural capital’ exists in three distinct forms: **embodied cultural capital** is a competence or skill that cannot be separated from the person who possesses it; in **objectified form**, cultural capital takes the form of objectified goods like books, cars, painting etc.; finally, in societies with a system of formal education, cultural capital exists in an “**institutionalized**” form. Bourdieu argues that cultural capital is unequally distributed in society, with upper class families possessing large amounts, and working-class and poor families possessing little or none at all. It is transmitted in the home, beginning at birth, so that there are clear class differences in the possession of cultural capital.
by the time children reach school age (Dumais:85). Bourdieu has made it clear that despite the fact that cultural capital is acquired on the basis of the class and social position via exposure to a given set of cultural practices and therefore has a social origin, it is equally liable to be perceived as inborn “talent,” and its holder “gifted,” as a result of the fact that it is embodied in particular individuals. However, at the same time, Bourdieu also points out that, “It cannot be accumulated beyond the appropriating capacities of an individual agent; it declines and dies with its bearer (with his biological capacity, his memory, etc.). Because it is thus linked in numerous ways to the person in his biological singularity and is subject to a hereditary transmission which is always heavily disguised, or even invisible…” (Bourdieu in Richardson). This cultural capital shapes up the habitus, the conscious and unconscious perception and thinking of the agent about the social world and also is dominant in deciding their practices in the social world.

The third important concept of Bourdieu is his concept of field. “In analytic terms, a ‘field’ may be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents, or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.)” (Bourdieu 1992: 97). In simple words, ‘field’ is the ground of various social and institutional arrangements where people express and reproduce their dispositions and where they struggle for the allocation of different types of capital. As a space of potential and active forces, ‘field’ is also the field of struggle aimed at preserving or transforming the configuration of these forces.

Taking help from these important ideas of Bourdieu, it is possible to place the research findings of this thesis within the frame of this analysis. In fact, his concepts can be applied at manifold levels of this research. In its effort to find out
the depth of the influence of an individual leader in shaping up the process of social change, this thesis has finally derived that, Majumdar as the leader of the movement had helped other agents (all activists/followers) to locate their certain position and role within the ‘field’. In other words, Majumdar’s influence over the movement is not an influence of a mere individual leader in the traditional sense of the term, but was more like an agent of these contemporary theories, who had helped the activists to ‘internalize the externality’ and ‘externalize the internality’ and thus contributed significantly to form their ‘habitus’, who were engaged in the movement. These intense and layered relationship between Charu Majumdar and the Naxalite activists probably had given birth to the movement and a series of historically relevant activities related to the movement.

Again, while focusing on Majumdar’s political biography as well as his social and personal aspects that might had influenced the nature and strategies of the Naxalite movement, his position within the field on the basis of his cultural capital is actually addressed. In the thesis, his family background, schooling, behavioural pattern since his childhood, early exposure to politics, long political experience in active movement etc., along with his world view based on his perception of rituals, social customs, education or any other sort of established institutions, his concept of romanticism and death are discussed in detail (in chapter-6). This as a whole gives an idea about Majumdar’s embodied cultural capital. By going a few steps further even from the perspective of the leadership study, it can be said that the combination of his embodied cultural capital along with objectified cultural capital (like his poor household conditions, dilapidated wooden house, keeping photographs of Mao, Lenin and Rabindranath Tagore together on the wall) and institutionalized culture (like his school days, his interpersonal relationship with his teachers, his result, college days and exposure to the communist politics in college, his incomplete study), ensured his charismatic position among his followers and thus helped him to formulate the methods and decide the mode of the Naxalite movement by moulding the objective conditions or structure. This created the ‘habitus’ for the revolution and the revolutionaries. As Bourdieu has pointed out, habitus provides the principles by which people
choose the strategies that they will employ in the social world (Ritzer :535) and in this sense, Majumdar gave the strategies of social change to those who were utterly frustrated with the then existing socio-economic-political structure and on the basis of which they defined their “logic of practice” to deal with the social world. So it can be said that on the basis of his cultural capitals, Charu Majumdar’s influence over the formulation and the execution of the movement was not limited just to an individual leader whose role is dissected in between subjective and objective dichotomy. Rather, by going a step further, it can be concluded that he played an important role of the agent who had immensely contributed to the formation of the ‘habitus’, relevant for the understanding of the movement. This ‘habitus’ settled the collective practices of revolution of an entire generation and also engraved an important route of history. The final finding of the thesis about the role of the individual in history theoretically thus can be reconciled with Bourdieu’s view:

One last and critical point: social agents are not “particles” that are mechanically pushed and pulled about by external forces. They are, rather, bearers of capitals and depending on their trajectory and on the position they occupy in the field by virtue of their endowment (volume and structure) in capital, they have a propensity to orient themselves actively either towards the preservation of the distribution of the capital or towards the subversion of this distribution (Bourdieu 1992:108-109).

**Concluding Remarks**

As concluding remarks, it can be said that the age-old theoretical question which was taken up at the time of the initiation of the thesis has voyaged through the case study which resulted into eventual uncovering of multilayered angularities of the prime hypothesis and finally anchored in the contemporary theoretical structure-agency debates. It is an interesting and complex interdisciplinary research journey which took necessary support from various disciplines like leadership study, psychology and personality study, political psychology, along
with political science, within which its key research query is rooted. Thus, it
definitely suffers from manifold limitations both at methodological as well as
theoretical execution levels as the researcher has obvious technical limitations
along with subjective constraints. In general, this thesis has identified the need
and the relevance of studying the role of individual in the process of social change
by taking up the contextual non-fictional event and, in particular, it has detailed
out the complex relationships between the man and the movement that is, Charu
Majumdar and the Naxalite movement. At the same time this thesis also has
constructed a political biography of Charu Majumdar, which has traced the
political passage of the man. This is specifically relevant for the study of history
of the Communist movement and party in India. This research fervently hopes
that it will complement the growing necessity of culture and community-based
studies in the contemporary social science and also promote the relevance of such
findings in order to recognize other latent and layered dimensions of a general
theory and framework. This research has once again acknowledged the
epistemological need to look beyond any ‘grand narrative’ by focusing on the
possibility of alternative routes to understand social phenomena.

Endnotes:

2 See different articles in Pradip Basu (ed.) 2017 for post structural, post colonial,
subaltern perspectives.
4 See chapter 4 of the thesis for detailed analysis.
6 This effort of Bourdieu has a definite similarity with the effort that Plekhanov gave in
his particular book On the Role of the Individual in History (1898) in the background of
his particular theoretical context of his time.
7 See Chapter 3 and 6 of the thesis for detailed discussion
References:


Bourdieu, Pierre.


Costa, Christina and Mark Murphy.“Bourdieu and the Application of Habitus across the Social Sciences” in Christina Costa and Mark Murphy (eds.). *Bourdieu, Habitus and Social Research: An Art of Application*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2015


