

MARXISM AND THE INDIAN TRADITION

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"All the consequences are contained in the definition that the product is related to the producer in a hostile, inimical manner... The point is to change this."

—Marx

Marx clearly indicates in this remarkable formulation the most fundamental cause of every kind of social problem. It can be the war within the nation, or between nations, or between industries, or finally at home. When your own activity, which results in one or the other product, turns against you nothing can be more tragic than that. It only means that you are compelled to be your own enemy. You are also unable to avoid such an activity. This is the situation with the worker who has to create the wealth which turns against him/her. It is such a kind of relationship, namely the production relationship, which is alienating. Hence the most fundamental aim cannot but be to abolish such a relationship and create in its place a harmonious one. That is the aim of the great revolution.

When Marx says that the immediate demand is 'less hours of work and more wages', we should know clearly the aim of such a demand. Does it mean that Marx wants the worker to be lazy, or he wants him to cheat the capitalist? Is it finally an expression of a selfish demand? There are trade-union leaders in our country who say that the capitalists cheat the workers and hence the workers also could do so whenever there is a chance. Hence the demand! Was that the aim of Marx? It can never be so. The main aim is just to prevent the capitalist from becoming more powerful. The more surplus value is taken away from the working class the less the purchasing power of the workers. It means more impoverishment. It also means that the political power of the capitalist will become more, to the detriment of the working people. To the same extent the worker becomes weaker and thereby loses his ability to fight. Apart from all that the work unquestionably is a dehumanizing one; not at all relished by the worker. Hence this period has to be shortened, which only can give him more leisure, so that it can be used for humane purposes, which very much include his political development and cultural one too.

Hence Marx is not simply interested in the production of wealth or the productive forces. The theory of productive forces put forward by the revisionists is highly reactionary, though it also is unquestionably a materialistic proposition and certainly not an idealistic nonsense. So we should clearly know that every kind of materialism need not be revolutionary. In the same way a simple denial of god also need not be a revolutionary notion. Many scoundrels including downright fascists are atheists, we cannot forget. Finally the idea expressed in this aphorism is true for all situations and for every society. Hence it cannot be outdated.

"All the illusions are due to object bondage".—Marx. This is the most fundamental truth that all the ancient saints had realized. Marx once again points out this truth to the modern European man who was running after wealth as

though the possession of it was the basis of freedom and happiness. In fact, at some point he clearly states that private property has made this man's senses dull and so on. Marx does not ask this man to fight for wealth. That exactly is what the bourgeois is doing. Is he not struggling, fighting and warring for wealth? Can Marx also justify this? Certainly not. On the contrary, he demands that this man should fight against the domination of wealth. That is the basis and the path of freedom.

That was very clear to Lenin too. He clearly emphasizes this aspect in his article 'On Economism'. Lenin wrote that within the confines of trade unionism the worker would become worse than the capitalist. He will not become a freedom-fighter. However, it is this economic side that is very much emphasized by many so-called Marxists. No wonder they too are the slaves of the capitalist society and the advocate of the theory of productive forces which Mao very correctly called a reactionary theory. That also is one of the main reasons for the setback of this great emancipatory movement. Marx points out in his own remarkable manner that this domination of wealth is like the domination of the dead over the living. Today we see this in another area too. The laws applicable to the dead are accepted as the laws to explain the living too.

Marx points out that object-bondage is the cause of un-freedom. Just as knowledge is the most fundamental prerequisite for freedom the lack of it or illusion is the cause of un-freedom. Only a freedom of the mind can grasp the truth too. If we are slaves of our own pet ideas, however attractive they may be, we cannot know the truth. Hence it is necessary that we should be detached. One should be free from one's false ego to be really detached. In our Indian tradition it is called being free from *ahankara*. Marx, Lenin and Mao connect this freedom with class struggle. If we do not involve ourselves in class struggle we cannot free ourselves from class prejudice, which means that we can neither understand the social truth nor the path of freedom. This was clearly appreciated by the Tamil saints, particularly by the *Vaishnava* saints, the *Alvars*. The great saint Thirukkottinambi clearly states that unless one frees oneself from caste, wealth and intellectual arrogance one can neither understand the essential truth nor the way or the path of freedom.

Then arises the most important question as to how to free oneself from this kind of object-bondage. This is the most important problem faced by the contemporary emancipatory movement, the communist movement inspired by Marx. But it was this most fundamental teaching, one concerned with the basis or the logic of freedom that is almost totally ignored or neglected.

Finally, to be free from object-bondage immediately involves also being free from the hankering of the flesh. When we yield to it we will not be able to be free from object-bondage. This was very well recognized by the ancient saints of this land. Conquering wealth or the object is directly related to the conquering of the flesh. We all have become familiar with the most normal condition, where it is said that the 'will is powerful while the flesh is weak'. Yielding to the flesh is the cause of every kind of sin. It is the permanent basis of revisionism. Lenin said that revisionism is no sin. All he meant was that it is not unnatural. However, we should also know how men and women could free themselves most dependably or become masters of the flesh. The monist idealist Adi Sankara in fact criticizes

the dotage of this man over flesh and wealth. That is the essence of his *Moha-Mudgraha* or *Bajagovindam*. The entire theme is concerned with the problem of object-bondage and the way to free oneself from it.

He sees every kind of relationship, which no doubt involves a contradiction, as a snare or a source of enslavement. So he demands the severance of every kind of relationship, which includes the relationship of the observer and the object of observation (subject-object relationship). It is only when this last contradiction is also resolved this being is said to reach total liberation or *Mukthi*. This also is called *Jeevan-Mukthi*. It is the state where this being is said to become *Brahman*. This is Sankara's *Nirvikalpa-Samadi*. The saints that come after Sankara reject this solution. They do not think that it is a real solution at all. While the vulgar materialist runs after the object and clings to it as though that is freedom the *Advaiti* runs away from the object. Both of them are really afraid of the object. In a similar way both are afraid of the flesh and senses also. The god of one is the devil of the other. It only means both of them do not show the way to conquer either the wealth or the flesh. What is elixir for one is the all-consuming poison for the other; however it is not so in the case of Marx. He realizes that wealth can be an elixir if only man or society can control or digest it. He found the clue in the quality of the relationship between man and his product. In this he was perfectly correct. So this man has to find out the most dependable way to control and conquer the wealth. That also involves the control of the flesh, which appears almost as an impossible task. Marx, recognizing the importance of this problem, connects it with the problem of the aim of production, which is the most essential social activity. He demands that it should be for the social welfare or amelioration and never for profit.

However, such an aim demands also a change in the attitude of men and women. Can mere abolition of private property, which can be done by law or by some force, change the attitude of man? Certainly not. There should be at the same time a protracted ideological drive coupled with economic reforms that will satisfy the essential needs of the people. If the people are deprived of their essential needs all talk of selflessness will only be hypocritical. The result will be counterproductive. What could be the best way to achieve the most desirable goal? Mao realized this very clearly. In fact, the Chinese revolution brought forth this truth very clearly. That was also the one reason why Mao could not accept the western definition of freedom that stops with the 'cognition of necessity'. Mere knowledge of necessity is not at all enough. It needs an act. It is also not enough if the act involves the mere changing of the external world. It should change men and women too in the desirable way. What kind of an act can change the quality of man and woman is the central issue. That alone will also be the most revolutionary act. It should be the most vital life-generating act too.

Mao, realizing the limitation of the Western Marxist idea of freedom, finally arrives at the position of *Kainkarya Marga* and declares that the cadres should "Love the cadres, love the people, serve the people and struggle against self". This was the great slogan during the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. This is also the underlying principle of people's war. While discussing philosophy Mao very rightly states that by philosophy he means mainly epistemology. In fact, he evaluates his own work in the following way. Many of

his admirers often say that his most original contribution in the area of philosophy is his analysis of contradictions.

He distinguished two kinds of truth: one kind can be understood by scientific experiments and in the production process, while the other only by involving in class struggle. Social truths like good, bad, right and wrong etc. can be understood only by involving in class struggle. Any amount of knowledge in chemistry or physics cannot be the qualification adequate to realize the moral truths. Mao did not bring in either the Kantian notion of transcendental truth or intuition and in that way clearly avoided the criticism of Kantian deviation. Yet in a subtle way he established the fact of two kinds of truths, which to this date no Western Marxist dares to do. Mao, the Eastern Marxist, thanks to his Taoist tradition, could correct Western Marxism and thereby continue the spirit of Marxism. Mao's epistemology can rightly be called the *Kainkarya Marga*, which is the only path that recognizes the cognitive, creative and the liberating role of loving service. This is the way that can be easily and readily practiced by the working people. This also is the way to defeat the powerful experts too. At this stage it is necessary to have an idea of Mao's appreciation of class struggle and how it differs from those of the majority of the Marxists.

Mao declares 'do not forget class struggle'. What is the full meaning of this instruction? Does it only mean 'power comes through the barrel of gun'? Such an idea is the poorest notion of class struggle. 'Man cannot become good by being kept in cotton and wool, he has to fight against his own evil', wrote J.B.S. Haldane, the Marxist, clearly bringing out the essential aspect of class struggle in this pithy sentence. Class struggle is no doubt intended to destroy the evil that is external. But the more important side is the destruction of the evil in us, who involve in such a class struggle. At the same time, it also cures a lot of people who are outside. Hence, those who conduct the class struggle are like doctors who cure the diseased, said Mao. It is a great purifying struggle. By making us perpetually empty and thereby selfless we can inspire the mass of people. and they become a tremendous force. It is not just the word but also the deed that can really inspire and release the slumbering energy. This is the basic or the fundamental difference between the *Gnanamargi* (Sankara and Marx) and a *Kainkaryamargi* (*Vaishnava* saint and Mao). Both of them deal about object-bondage and the way to become free from it.

"Philosophers have interpreted the world; the point is to change it."

—Marx.

The most popular interpretation of this most famous aphorism is that the main purpose of philosophy is to show the way to change the world and not just interpret it in various ways. To understand the meaning of this aphorism we should also know the aim and claim of Marx. Marx claims that his work, particularly Historical Materialism, is scientific. First of all he is criticizing speculation, which does not reckon with the facts that are empirical. Secondly, he is very much concerned with truth and the ways by which man cognizes it. It is in this context that he gives the highest importance to practice wherein and whereby man manipulates or changes the objective world. He reshapes both the physical and social reality and only in this process cognizes the truth of the object too. He cannot understand the object by merely contemplating on it in a passive manner.

Action forms the dialectical living link. So revolutionary action only can give the truth of the social reality. Hence, Lenin and Mao insist that the party cadre should involve in class struggle. We should also know that Mao clarifies this Marxist proposition.

Marx wants us to realize that unlike phenomena, which are amenable for interpretations, scientific statements should not be amenable for such interpretations. For example a formula like $E=Mc^2$ can only be explained but it should not be amenable for interpretation. That is why such statements are considered universal. So Marx wants to establish a science of the society. Whether he succeeded in it or not is a different issue. I can say that he did not. That is why we have in every country several groups each claiming to be truly 'Marxists'. Marx thus for all practical purposes appears like another great religious reformer! That keeps the innocent followers in perpetual confusion. So the modern 'Red priests' have control over the laymen, a thing Marx wanted to put an end to. Marx wanted that his words should not be amenable for interpretation, which means also misinterpretations. He knew how the so-called sacred writings or the divine words are variously interpreted; at times even one interpretation opposing another.

Vedantha to Koran—all are amenable for interpretation. Such are the Hermeneutics. Marx did not want that his writings should also meet the same fate. However, we know today that his work cannot be compared even to Biology. Regarding the scientific truths and the truths discovered in the areas of engineering and technologies that are of great practical value any person can understand them. Such a person can be a downright scoundrel. The so-called experts in this area need not be honest fellows at all. In fact, the majority of them become mostly revisionists and reactionaries. Western Marxism remained very much like the *Gnanamarga* or elitist in character. This is recognized by no less a person than Lenin himself. Lenin at some stage says, "It is more easy to be a materialist but most difficult to be a dialectician." Marxism also becomes the property of the elite, and the working people have to be governed by the new elite, the modern Red Priests! The priests, who Marx decidedly wanted to drive out, once again entered into the very houses of the workers as the Red Priests. It can only mean that no variety of *Gnanamarga*, be it Idealist or Materialist, can avoid the priest.

To avoid the middleman, 'the priest', the most dependable way is to uphold the epistemology of the *Kainkarya Marga*. This was very clearly recognized by the *Vaishnava* saints of Tamil culture long back. Let us not forget the fact that the mighty majority of them were from the highly backward castes, and some of them were from among the untouchables. No wonder they had to discover the most dependable way to free themselves from the clutches of the clever priests. Their voice was the rich voice of the alienated. Once again, the same message emerges from the East.

Before Marx, Islam wanted to get rid of the priesthood. No wonder the Jesuit Fr. Wetter called modern communism the twentieth century Islam! However, Islam also did not succeed in this. This has also to be attributed to its lack of appreciation of the *Kainkarya Marga*, which only can help in destroying the hierarchy. The priests who are the anointed interpreters of Holy Koran also

dominate in the Islamic world. The revolutionaries are comparable to the saints, while the revisionists are the priests and we cannot avoid them also. The struggle between the priests and the saints is inevitable.

In the final analysis, we cannot avoid the interpreter and interpretations. This kind of knowledge can never become anything comparable to a positivist science. It will ever be a hermeneutic one amenable to interpretation. Then naturally arises the question as to how every ordinary person can readily understand the true meaning of the sayings and writings of these great revolutionaries. Only those men and women who whole-heartedly and gladly serve the people can easily and readily understand the true meaning of their writings. It is also the most dependable way to avoid the cunning priests as well as the way to build an egalitarian society. It also is the way which will permit the withering away of the state. The indications of such a trend were clearly visible at Yenan. No wonder the young British communist Ralph Fox writes in his book "Communism" that Yenan indicated the path for the new civilization.

"Capital is man wholly lost to himself, labor is man lost to himself." Here Marx points out that the wealth or any of his creations is really another form of the same being; 'objectification of his essential powers', as Marx would call it. Hence capital is Man. But he immediately asks as to what kind of man it represents. Marx defines all the creations of man by such terms as externalization, or objectification of man, as essential powers of Man. Hence they represent this man. In the same way labor too represents man. Here also Marx asks the same question as to what kind of man labor represents. Finally, capital-labor relationship is human relationship, no doubt an unequal relationship, in which each represents one pole of the dialectical unity. Man has become split into two standing in antagonistic relationship. At the same time, each produces the other. One cannot exist without the other. In this relationship one represents the restless negative side and the other the self-satisfied positive side as Marx calls them. Because all the artifacts or all his creations are really the expressions of the person or the society that produces them, the archaeologist is capable of understanding the life of the people that produced them.

So capital is Man who wants everything for himself and hence wholly lost to himself. He is not for anyone. He is the embodiment of selfishness, selfishness incarnate. His hunger is insatiable. For such a being can there be kith or kin? All such words are empty. He cannot also be really patriotic. Did not Marx say that for the bourgeois there is no nation, whichever is his market is his country, when defeat were to be advantageous he will without qualm or compunction betray the nation. So the capitalist also has no country. The man who is on the other pole of this dialectical unity—the negative being—has to live for the other being. That is his misfortune. The other being considers that as his fortune. The misery of the one is the basis of the pleasure of the other. The un-freedom of the one appears as the freedom of the other. However, both are interlocked. Both are expressions of the alienated situation. It is a divided humanity. Hence when one vanishes the other too has to.

Slavery like freedom is also indivisible. Can it be otherwise? However, for the capitalist this un-freedom or the alienated situation appears as free life. He loves the illusion. Such an illusion is pleasing to him as it satisfies most eminently his

creaturely comforts. No wonder he jealously guards the alienated existence. He cannot face or bear the truth. He cannot liberate himself without liberating the other. Hence he cannot readily work for his liberation. True liberation will appear as loss of freedom for him and sacrifice and misfortune. The worker, only because he lacks the wealth, needs association, friendship, companionship and love. These traits Marx saw in ample measure amidst the French workers. They joined together, smoked, drank, ate and loved to meet. They too had no country. Yet we can find genuine patriotism only amidst them, which is used by the capitalist class for its class wars, which are most inhuman, and the wars between the nations, the imperialist ones, which are the most devastating wars.

“Freedom is indivisible; the working class cannot liberate itself unless and until it liberates the entire society which includes its opposite, the capitalist class also”—Marx. It is another way of saying that freedom is not possible for the slave unless the slave driver is also freed. Finally it is the quality of the relationship between any two. In short, it is a kind of reciprocal relationship in which each fulfills itself in and through and because of the other. If we agree to this then we should understand that the slave has no envy or vendetta against the slave owner. In fact he is the real liberator. What is really destroyed is the inimical production relationship, which is the cause of all the worst consequences.

“History is nothing but Man cognizing himself, losing himself and regaining himself again and again”. It will be obvious from the above proposition that Man could have realized his true nature or the essential truth of himself long back. What can be such a truth? It cannot but be that he is a part of this reality, which has become self-conscious, realized that it and the reality are the same. That exactly is the meaning of the *Maha Vakya* ‘*Thath Thuam Asi*’ or ‘that is Thou’, yet you are also different. Hence you are that yet you are also not that. You are the cognizing subject and that which includes you becomes the observed object. The relationship with the other is a dialectical one. Is this not also what is symbolized in the *Linga*, which is worshipped, by the Saivites? It is symbolic of the dialectical unity of the Male and the Female—the *Yin* and *Yan* of the Chinese. However, this truth is forgotten and the world appears as something other than him and one which should be subjugated, controlled and exploited. It is the same amidst mankind too. Private property very much hides the essential truth, particularly his relationship with his fellow being or with his community. So he loses himself, says Marx. In the capitalistic society he loses himself in the commodity. He becomes a purchasable and saleable thing and that is fetishism. He has to realize his true nature. It is only while realizing his true nature that he starts the struggle to free himself. It is such a freeing process that is both the cause as well the consequence of the revolutionary movement.

When Marx was asked whether he had done any artistic creation he said that his work “Capital” itself was a great piece of art. Unquestionably, it is a great drama. When the screen goes up it opens with this Man fast vanishing into the very product that he creates. He is brought under its domination. Before this mighty Jin he appears like a puny creature. He cringes before it. It is the greatest threat too. That is the tragedy so far as the capitalist is concerned. He is also unable to face the truth; hence not prepared to work for his freedom. He is indeed happy to be a prisoner. He loves the illusion. He does every-thing to hide the

truth. Such is this great drama. Such is the truth pointed out long back by no less a person than the great atheist Gauthama Buddha to deny the almighty god who was held responsible for everything. The idea that Man makes himself is at the core of Marxism. However, it does not mean that he can do anything and everything. There is an objective world consisting of both Nature as well as his society both of which not only open to him several possibilities, but also at the same time set certain limitations. By his own work he can no doubt increase the possibilities or also reduce them. Hence in a real way man makes himself. He is the master of his own destiny. At the same time, it has also another side. Such an attitude can very well make him arrogant. That will cause his ruin. At the same time, if one accepts the opposite namely that he has no freedom and he is the victim of circumstances he could very well disown his responsibility of his act of crime and sin. This attitude is not the exclusive one of a person who believes in an all-powerful god. An atheist who says that man is a creature of circumstances and says that all things are due to economic circumstances also is a fatalist. Both are really reactionaries. *Hence an atheist need not be in any way a progressive or a revolutionary.*

Mao Tse-tung while criticizing Lin Piao categorically states that he was not a genius and further adds that the masses or the people make history. He emphatically rejects the theory of genius. Our own saints when they declare that it is all God's will, it does not imply an acceptance of any kind of fatalism. They did work that too most willingly and deliberately. They were very much involved in social work. They did not sit quiet. Their actions themselves are enough proof that they did not submit to any kind of fatalism. If it were to be so how are we to understand their pronouncement, that it is finally God's will and not theirs? This is another case of 'Transformational criticism'. If we substitute the term 'masses or people' for the term God the statement will become identical with that of Mao. It is also a denial of the theory of genius. Hence it is not at all any kind of fatalism or a blind faith in any all-powerful God who alone determines every-thing or the virtual denial of freedom of man. Only because of his freedom, that means deliberate choice, this human can be accused of crime and punished, also can be rewarded for a virtuous deed. It is also because he has freedom that he can tell a lie as well as cognize the sublime truth, which no other animal can. That also is the reason why he can believe in a fantastic religion as well as become an atheist. If he had no such freedom he would not have been in any way different from any other animal.

Finally, this aphorism implies that this being should be a '*Karma Yogi* and a '*Gnana Yogi*' that is one who does his/or her work without an iota of egoism. This is best achieved when one serves the other being with love, which means that this being is a '*Kainkarya Margi*'. That is exactly what Mao wants every communist to be. That also is the great aim of our noble heritage.

"Philosophical materialism simply means the recognition of an objective world independent of our thought".—Lenin. Barring the extremely subjective idealistic *Maya Vaada* of the *Advaitic* Adi Sankara no one in the tradition of Indian philosophy denied the reality of the external world. This was very clearly realized by all of our saints. It is clearly pointed out when they say, "The sun will not set or the world will not become dark when the cat closes its eyes". In fact,

our saints have been most critical of the *Mayavadin* by saying that for the one who denies this reality and calls it an illusion there can be no ethics or morality.

“The degree of emancipation of women is the natural measure of the general emancipation”—Marx. This is a very hoary idea. Even a thousand years back this was clearly realized. A Sanskrit aphorism says, “where women are worshipped there the angels dance, where they are not worshipped nothing will come to fruition”. The freedom of the male is directly related to the other sex. When one sex is unfree the other too cannot be free. Unfortunately, the great emancipatory movement to this date has been more male biased and that also is one of the reasons for its present crisis. In a way here too it will be the task of the woman to liberate the man. Hence the future revolution will be very much a struggle of women.

If the above propositions are false or outdated only then Marx can become outdated or irrelevant. From all evidences, Marx is indeed the most relevant thinker for our contemporary world.

The several Indian philosophies—or the *Dharsanas* and *Margas*—can be classified as Absolute Monistic, Dualistic and qualified Monistic. Engels classified the modern European philosophies as Materialistic and Idealistic. That may be adequate or even a natural classification so far as the modern Western schools are concerned. However, such a classification will be very unnatural as far as the Indian *Dharsanas* are concerned. Such a classification cannot tell much about the various schools of Indian philosophy.

Nevertheless, we can very well compare Marxism to our philosophical tradition. And that exactly is what we should do. Marxism is not Absolute Monism because it accepts duality without accepting simple Dualism; it accepts that everything is a unity of the opposites. It is a *Yin* and *Yan*—as the Chinese would put it. No wonder Mao, who was quite familiar with the Taoist thought, could very easily grasp the dialectical notion of Marxism. Have we not here in Indian philosophy too something very similar? We have the notion of *Prakrithi*, the Feminine, and *Purusha*, the Masculine. They are united forming the unity of the opposites. That means that Marxism is a variety of qualified (*Visishta*) Monism (*Advaita*); neither the *Advaita* of Sankara nor the *Dvaita* of Madhva but a kind of *Visishtadvaita*. However it is materialistic and denies a divine principle or any kind of a supernatural principle.

The second aspect of Marxism is that it is a variety of materialism, which means that it recognizes that there is a world existing in its own right or independently, whether one thinks of it or not. What kind of a world it is is a different matter altogether. That is an issue. Barring the *Mayavadin* all the other Indian philosophers do admit that the world around us does exist and to that extent accept the materialistic position.

Now let us pass on to the next aspect. Marx and following him both Lenin and Mao connect knowledge and that too social knowledge with class struggle. Is this unknown in our tradition is the next question? Apart from ideological struggle and armed struggle Mao teaches that loving service to people is a very important part of class struggle. This may look strange. But once we realize the full significance of class struggle we will understand how serving the people wholeheartedly with love is a very important aspect of class struggle. Let us hear

what Mao says in this context. Mao says, 'Love the cadres, love the people, serve the people and struggle against self'. This is the essence of the proletarian epistemology. Class struggle is not only meant to change the external social reality, but it is very much more to change the persons who involve themselves in it. That is the way this human being gets rid of the false ego, which makes this being the most arrogant and selfish being. Hence Mao very correctly connects serving the people with love and struggling with oneself. It is the most dependable way by which anyone can purge out his /her evil. Mao, the Eastern Marxist revolutionary, shows the most dependable way, which even the most illiterate can practice with success.

In the Indian tradition *Tharka* or logic is never accepted as a *Marga* while *Gnana*, *Karma* and *Bhakthi* are accepted as *Margas*. Marxism—particularly of the West—can be compared to a variety of *Gnana Marga* as well to a variety of *Karma Marga* because it does insist on revolutionary work as the most important way to cognize the social truths. In fact, Vinoba Bhave—the Sarvodaya leader—compared Marx to a *Maha-Muni*, but did not consider him as a *Bhakthi Yogi*. We also know that the saints of India almost rejected *Gnana* in favor of *Bhakthi*, which finally culminated in the *Kainkarya Marga* expounded by the *Vaishnavite Alvars* of Tamil Nadu. This demands selfless and loving service to the people and can be considered a very a big part of class struggle. The saint Thirukkottinambi, who lived in the 12th century AD, clearly states that to get rid of the three kinds of arrogance—namely those of caste, of wealth and of knowledge —the upper caste wo/man has to gladly serve the lower caste. Only such a service can destroy the rugged ego (*ahankar*).

That is exactly what the Eastern Marxist revolutionary Mao also demands from every revolutionary; Mao very clearly brings out the cognitive, creative and the liberating role of loving service. It is also the meaning of the proposition: "it is by renouncing that one reaps a thousand fold". By emptying oneself one really becomes a sustaining power and never a coercive one. This is the feminine power as well as the generative one. It is this kind of power that cannot be challenged or threatened simply because it is not a threatening power and hence the most fearless power. It is the one that can make itself a redundant one indicating the way for a stateless condition. The People's Liberation Army cannot hate the soldiers who are fighting them. Finally, we can say that Marxism of Mao is comparable to an updated version of the *Vaishnavism* of the *Alvars*. □□□

Explanatory Notes

Advaita—Monism (A philosophical theory that all being may ultimately be referred to one category)

Advaiti—Monist

Advaitic—Monistic

Ahankar—Ego

Alvars—The Vaishnava saints of Tamil Nadu

Bajagovindam—The great contribution of Adi Sankara, which deals essentially with the problem of object-bondage and the way to free oneself from that, but it is an idealistic, anti-materialistic and anti-feminist approach.

Bhakthi—Devotion

Bhakthi Yogi—One who upholds and practices the devotional way

Brahman—The absolute

Dharsanas—Pathways

Dvaita—A philosophy which accepts the dual nature of reality

Gnana—Knowledge

Gnana Marga–Pathway of knowledge
Gnanamargi–One who upholds the path of Gnana
Gnana Yogi–One who believes in the path way of knowledge
Jeevan-Mukthi–Liberation in life itself
Kainkarya Marga–The pathway of loving service
Kainkarya Margi–One who believes in the liberation by loving service
Karma–Work
Karma Marga–Pathway of work
Karma Yogi–One who practices the path of work
Linga–A caste symbol (idol) also denoting the sex
Madhva–A South Indian Brahmin, who came in after Ramanuja, was highly critical of Sankara, and who believed in two principles
Maha-Muni–The great upholder of knowledge path
Maha Vakya–The great saying
Marga–Pathway
Maya Vaada–The theory of illusion
Mayavadin–One who believes in the illusion of this world
Moha-Mudgraha–The path of getting rid of illusion
Mukthi–Salvation
Nirvikalpa-Samadi–A state of existence where all contradictions are resolved.
Prakrithi–Nature
Purusha–Masculine
Satyam eva jayathe–Truth only wins
Tharka–Logic
Thath Thuam Asi–That art thou
Vaishnava–Follower of Vishnu
Vaishnavism–Religion which accepts the supremacy of Vishnu
Vaishnavite Alvars–Alvars who believed in Vishnu as the supreme deity
Vedantha–The speculative philosophical part following the vedas
Visishta–Qualified.
Visishtadvaita–Qualified monism
Yin and Yan–Two Taoist principles established by Lao Tse.