

AN OVERVIEW

Ideological Mess –A Scientific Perspective

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[Philosophical theories can greatly influence large sections of humanity separated by space and time for a long period. Impacts of the philosophies, good or bad, can have long lingering effects affecting politics, as well as societies. The veracity of scientific findings are testable within a reasonable time and expenditure. But philosophies' laboratory is vast in time and space and testing of their findings are to be done mostly on battle fields. Hitler's dangerous Nazi ideology that caused the greatest genocide in history had its genesis in Hegel's erroneous philosophy which was demolished one and half a century later on the battle fields of WWII. Marx's Communism in some way also had its genesis in the erroneous Hegelian concept of Historicism and Dialectic. The essential kinship between Nazism and Communism is that both ends up in totalitarianism and robbing of lives and liberties of the people accompanied by large scale massacres as observed in Germany, Russia, China, and also on a much smaller scale in Nandigram and other places in West Bengal.

Marxism was demolished by people in the 1980s in Russia and in East Europe and in West Bengal in 2011. Philosophies' tools of investigation is Logic which is less rigorous than Science's tool of Mathematics and actual laboratory or field experiments. Sciences are the windows through which philosophy views the world. Both are important. Together they can form a coherent world view and help humanity to a brighter life and better world. India must remain a plural democracy with peoples of various identities between which some conflicts are natural and inevitable. These indeed contribute to progress and sustainable peace.]

Ignorance is bliss, faith brings peace and happiness, are common popular beliefs in India. Knowledge disturbs, reason invites problems. But bereft of knowledge and reason man is weak, misfortunes become eternal companion and so enjoyable happy good life is naturally shelved to the other world achievable only after death through life long slavery, faith and devotion. For freedom from disease and hunger and diverse miseries, prayers, worshippings are resorted to obtain divine blessings or surrendering to fate or some Guru. The origins of such widespread beliefs and practices with varied rituals can be traced to residual beliefs in primitive Magic which gradually evolved into Religion in ancient times. Evolution is the grand process in Nature and also in Human Society. Man also evolves towards better or worse.

Western education, inculcation of modern sciences created some elites in India who could see through the futility of Magic and Religion and they found modern science with its rational and realistic attitudes along with appropriate socio-political changes is the only way to achieve and establish peace, prosperity and happiness for all. Still people or groups of people, inspired with noble ideals remain divided and mutually conflicting, often violently, and their cherished common goals of development and progress remain ever elusive. It is very difficult to understand the situations. But some wise people, very few, had been able to trace the sources of such divergences. But most others, even the leaders of political groups seldom understand why they behave and act as they do. Theoretical analyses and understanding of all these complex socio-political issues pertain to the subject of political philosophy and nowadays of sociology. Evolution and maintenance of human societies and their political systems are mostly driven by theories of reformers or leaders who in their turn are influenced by magical, or religious beliefs and newer scientific revelations. People know of them from history but seldom judge their present utility or effectiveness. Their constant scrutiny by all is essential.

SCIENCE VIS-À-VIS PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy means love of wisdom. Science means knowledge as distinguished from ignorance and misunderstanding. These two developed indistinguishingly from ancient times, that is they coevolved which process still continuous. Science, earlier called Natural Philosophy, became separated from philosophy only in the 19th century and emerged as distinct powerful arena of human knowledge and wisdom. Because of its immense usefulness in advancing industrial interests it naturally attracted many talented people and its phenomenal progress continues unabated. Philosophy has lost much of its earlier

popularity and prestige. But its importance has not diminished. Science and philosophy are both important, mutually helpful and indispensable for man at all levels : from individual to social and state, even at international levels. Philosophy aims at a theoretical understanding of the structure of the world and also try to discover and inculcate the best possible ways of life. Philosophy, exerts a great influence and a prevalent philosophy may have an intimate connection with the happiness or misery of large sections of mankind. Obviously the sciences are the windows through which philosophy views the world. Together these two can give a coherent world view and can give us good guidance at all levels. Science and Philosophy may be of the same genre, but much difference exists in their methods and findings. Philosophy originates in human minds, philosophers develop their theses starting practically from some preconceived notions, developing their subjects towards what they desire, what they feel is good for humanity and recommend what they feel lay in the future. Science proceeds somewhat in a different way. Though science also starts from initial guesses, hypotheses, intuitions, still it proceeds very objectively and makes observations, performs experiments, analyses the results and in many cases applies mathematics to reach and present conclusions in the form of equations which can be checked by anyone within a reasonable time and expenditure. This is not possible in philosophy and hence philosophy's methods are less rigorous and less reliable. Philosophy's laboratory is vast in time and space.

There occurred an impressive Scientific Revolution in Europe a parallel of which didn't happen in philosophy. Scientific works of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Mendeleeff, Einstein, Max Planck, and the quantum scientists during early 1900's brought about an epoch making advance in human thoughts and powers. Jacob Bronowski wrote (*Magic, Science and Civilization, 1978*):

“In the evolution of any animal there come moments when the species takes a radically new step, a mutation is built into the total genetic system, and from that moment on the species is committed to some new way of life – like coming out of the water onto the land. Now I believe that the Scientific Revolution has done exactly that kind of thing to our cultural history. There has been an irreversible step in the cultural evolution of man, it took place at the beginning of the scientific revolution from say, 1500-1700 AD and it will never be undone. We are committed to a scientific way of thinking and to what it entails, a technological way of acting the whole complex of changes between 1500 and 1700, was just as radical as the invention of agriculture, the invention of writing, the invention of poetry and art or the invention of urban life”.

Such revolutionary progress has not happened in philosophy. Despite philosophers' immense capacity of argumentation, they reach conclusions which are not only at variance with each other, often conflicting and reach absurd conclusions.

LOGIC vs MATHEMATICAL LOGIC

A comparison between the method and tools of investigation in philosophy with those of science may be illuminating in our choices and decisions. An example comes to mind. Scientists's intuition that Mathematics may represent and epitomize natural processes proved correct in many cases. As in Quantum Revolution in the 1920's, Louis de Broglie (1923) applied mathematics assuming that the course of science will truly follow the course of mathematics. Louis de Broglie's hybridization of Planck's and Einstein's famous equations ($E = hv$ and $E=mc^2$) to derive his brilliant equation ($\lambda = h/mv$) of matter waves, (inconceivable and abstract) was correct and proved very effective in Quantum Revolution and generation of powerful modern technologies. This was because the equations used were derived from experimentally correct facts and based on sound mathematics. Morris Kline's "Mathematics and the Physical World (1959) may be enlightening. Conclusions reached through philosophical logic (subject to psychological bias) are less realistic and may even be misleading as one can see what happened in the case of Marx's wrongful philosophical inventions of Historical Materialism and the Inevitability of Proletarian Revolution by hybridizing Hegel and Feuerbach as will be shown shortly. . Hegel erroneously believed that the course of Logic and the course of History are identical.

HEGEL AND HIS FRANKENSTEIN

Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) founded the most powerful and prestigious philosophical school in the history of philosophy which culminated in the fanatical worship of the state and idealization of war. Hegel's belief in "Historicism" (Movement of history on the basis of some determinable laws) has now been proved erroneous. History has no and cannot have laws of motion and the future, contrary to Hegel's beliefs, is indeterminable ever. Nature's evolution has laws, some of which have been discovered by science, but subjects like history does not and cannot have any laws because the subject is too complex to yield to Reductionism (i.e. over simplification) as is possible in Natural Sciences. This fond belief in historicism (which also misled Karl Marx in deriving his famous Historical Materialism) led Hegel to believe in the brighter future of a Nation State which again is another misbelief traceable to Hegel's personal psychology and limited, often erroneous, knowledge of history of the world.

Hegel in his youth was greatly impressed and inspired by the French Revolution (1789) and the spectacular military victories of Napoleon and the heroes of earlier times. He was also a great admirer of the Prussian Emperor Frederick the Great (1712-86) and the impressive progress of the Prussian state under Bismark (1815-98). Mentally he was also very happy because he received the prestigious highly paying post of Professor of Philosophy at Berlin.

The main feature of Hegel's philosophy was the dialectic method (imbibed from Plato) by which an idea (thesis) was challenged by its opposite (antithesis), the two ultimately reconciled in a third idea (synthesis) that subsumed both. Hegel found this method both in the working of the human mind, as a logical procedure, and in the workings of history of the world, which to Hegel was the process of development and realization of world spirit (Weltgeist). For Hegel the course of Logic and the course of history were broadly identical. Such fanciful idea is neither scientific nor conform to reality. Hegel was notoriously a state intoxicated man who put the stamp of philosophical respectability on doctrines, which are necessary for the emergence of a totalitarian state. This philosophical guidance inspired Mazzini's thinkings, which through Garibaldi (1802-82) culminated in a Fascist state in Italy under Mussolini (1883-1945) and the Third Reich under Hitler through Hidegger.

Russell respectfully started reading Hegel, but disdainfully rejected it finding Hegel's mathematical ignorance and lack of necessary historical knowledge. Schopenhauer (1788-1860) who spoke for many when he said : "Hegel installed from above, by the powers that be, as the certified great philosopher, was a flat-headed, insipid, nauseating, illiterate, charlatan, who reached the pinnacle of audacity in scribbling together and dishing up the craziest mystifying nonsense".

EUGENICS, INDIAN CASTEISM AND GERMAN NAZISM

The subject of Eugenics, a science that deals with the improvement (as by control of human mating) of hereditary qualities of a race or breed is old and used to be applied on limited scale in ancient Sparta. This gathered momentum in the second half of the 19th century after Herbert Spencer (1850's) which later became known as Social Darwinism, earned misplaced popularity after Charles Darwin's theory (1859) triumphed. This began to be grossly misapplied as in India when the British enacted the Notified Criminal Tribes Act, 1871 which became Denotified only in 1952 after independence. Throughout history Indian tribals were persecuted and tortured and exploited as the Europeans did in the Americas, Australia and Africa. Eugenics became extensively misapplied and legally caused enormous human atrocities on innocent people in many countries including not only in Germany but also in Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, even in USA. But it is only in Nazi Germany the eugenic movement received political and philosophical support that caused the greatest genocide in human history. Such mistaken eugenic practices came to an end in USA only after a special committee of the American Neurological Association decisively opined after much deliberations that the legality and practice of eugenics has no scientific basis.

But modern theories of racial inequality in forms that affect political life and social institutions are mainly a product of mid-nineteenth century. Germany was the breeding ground of great philosophers,

scientists and other talented people in music, literature and in almost every subject. Germany fell an easy prey to absurd national chauvinism and concepts of Nordic superiority doctrines of racial superiority strongly infused with anti-Semitism (Semite : a member of any of a number of peoples of ancient southwestern Asia including the Akkadians, Phoenicians, Hebrews and Arabs). The German philosopher Gobineau (1816-1882) contended that the racial divisions of mankind are inescapable and fundamental. Gobineau following Plato held that men are born unequal and remain unequal. So marriage between people of different races were discouraged. Such mistaken beliefs were further corrupted by Hitler who came to believe that there exists an 'Iron Law of Nature' that each beast mates only with a companion of the same species. Before tracing the genesis of Hitler's Nazism one may have some glimpses from Hitler's ridiculously famous book *Meinkampf* (My Struggle).

PERVERTED NAZI IDEOLOGY

The task of the National Socialist Party (the Nazi Party) under the inspired leadership of Adolf Hitler was to assert and ensure for a thousand years the domination of the Aryan race, the natural "Master Race" of history. This task required a monolithic state resting on the mystical union of "Blood and Soil" (Blut and Erde) and the totalitarian principles of *one people, one state, one leader* (Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Fuehrer). It required, therefore, bringing all German minorities within the borders of the state and at the same time claiming 'living space' (Lebensraum) for the German peoples purifying German blood by eliminating alien minority and above all, by exterminating the Jews, and establishing the hegemony of the German state in Europe, and eventually in the world.

Hitler's ideologies (as expressed in *Meinkampf*) were received from Hegel through Hegel's intellectual descendant Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Heidegger was philosophical guide to Hitler, who openly subscribed to Nazi ideology, even he became a member of the Nazi party. Another Hegelian Nietzsche (1844-1900) admired the much older Hindu Law Giver Manu, who helped consolidate caste divisions in ancient Hindu society which continues even today. Gita preached absolute unquestioned allegiance and obedience to the Almighty whose earthly epitome was believed to be Srikrishna and naturally in his absence the king and the state or the kshatriya-Brahmin class. The essence of fully developed feudalism is the chain of personal loyalty which binds retainer to chief, tenant to lord and baron to king or emperor. Such unquestioned obedience is necessary for a totalitarian state as was observed later in Hitlerite Germany or Stalinist Russia. Such unquestioned obedience to orders of the state or its officials were systematically inculcated in implementing the orders of killings of millions of Jews in Germany or common people in Stalinist Russia and elsewhere. Outside the Brahmin-Kshatriya ideological domination lay the vast majority of native Indians who are variously designated as Sudras, Ati Sudras or Dalit-Bahujan. In Bengal around 1920 (as P C Ray wrote) the Brahmin Kshatriya-Baidyas (constituted a small minority (approximately five percent of the population) and they still now dominate the administration, education, medical, engineering services and also in politics of modern India. Kancha Iliah in his small powerful book "Why I am Not a Hindu : A Sudra Critique of Hindutva Philosophy, Culture and Political Economy" (1996), [Samya, Calcutta] has shown that the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata were actually kshatriya wars of subjugation of non-Aryan or Dravidian kingdoms of Ravana in the south as depicted in Ramayana and on Sudras or Dalit Bahujan king of the Dalit majority under Duryadhana, the Kaurab in the North of India. Gita most of which are later Brahminical interpolation, for the continued sustainability of the Indian feudalism which culminated in the Hindu imperialism under the Mauryas and Guptas. Sankaracharya's *Mayabad* (Brahman is truth, the world is an illusion) discouraged worldly material progress and an enjoyable happy human life. This philosophy acted against the progress of Science and Civilization in India and Acharya P C Ray was the first to point it out. Wrong philosophy can wreak havoc (as observed under Nazism, Fascism or Stalinism) or at another place and time stultify progress as happened in ancient India after the fall of Buddhism and emergence of Brahminism with rigid caste divisions.

DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was a brilliant young Hegelian and was very much moved by the miseries of the industrial proletariat and sought political and economic reforms so as to permanently improve the

quality of human lives. Unlike Hegel he did not receive any lucrative position in his home country but found him exiled. Marx with his outstanding genius suffered a life long hard miserable life. He died in England quite frustrated. But an historical and scientific assessment of his contributions cannot be avoided (David Thomson : *Political Ideas*, Penguin, 1966).

Marx took the Dialectic and belief in Historicism from Hegel, combined these with Feuerbach's (1804-1872) scientifically correct Materialism and arbitrarily used them for the interpretation of the past and future of humanity. This is the sterile Marxian offspring of Historical Materialism.

Marxism is committed to the notion of a centralized, undemocratic revolutionary party with an inner iron discipline which in the name of democracy (democratic centralism) is to impose upon the masses not what the masses say they want, but what the party knows that they really want, irrespective of what they may say. Marxism had inherited the tradition of such a party from the Jacobins in the French Revolution, who had been influenced by Rousseau. So it can be seen that theory was lying at root of political error.

A WRONG THEORY

Committing absolute allegiance to the state and Fuehrer even good Germans killed millions of innocent persons without any bite of conscience as it is shown in Steven Spielberg's film *Scindler's List*, as happened in Hitlerite Germany. Similarly millions were killed in Stalinist Russia under directions from the party. The other day (2007) similar phenomenon was observed, may be on a smaller scale, at Nandigram and elsewhere under Buddha-Biman regime in West Bengal. Even now skeletons and remains of charred bodies are being recovered almost daily. Arjuna of Mahabharata war under Srikrishna and Gita could kill and kill much against his initial revulsion to ghastly killings of friends and relatives. For the last 100 years communist cadres at various places under the iron-discipline of the party killed, and wrecked other havocs. The Islamic fundamentalist terrorists may not be much different.

From these one can learn to oppose totalitarianism, uphold democracy, of course, a plural democracy. This is the best possible form of political ideal. It may also be mentioned that democratic states are most powerful because, inter alia, that can ensure willing participation of the majority. It is a fact that since 1700 AD in all important wars the democratic side was always the winner.

Marx's belief in the superiority of the proletariat is debatable and his belief in the inevitability of proletarian revolution is questionable. The present day most developed countries became developed without Marxist or French type of revolution of the 1780s. Marx's conception of the establishment of a communist state with dictatorship of the proletariat invariably leads to totalitarianism was observed in the former USSR under Stalin. It happened as follows:

The people (meaning mostly the working class) were supposed to be represented in the Communist Party which was represented in the Central Committee of the Party which was represented in the much smaller Polit Bureau which was the permanent secretariat of top political officials that was the chief policy making and governing body. In USSR it had 11 voting members along with 9 non-voting members. The Head of the Communist Party, the General Secretary of the Russian Communist Party, became the Virtual Dictator not unlike Hitler.

Marx's correct diagnosis of the sufferings of the common people as due to ruthless exploitation of capitalism is valid. And so Marx Engels' prescription is Revolution and establishment of Socialism. In India sufferings of poor people was diagnosed by the Brahmins as due to their evil deeds in an earlier incarnation. So it was propagated that the road to emancipation lies in good deeds (that is devoted service to the Brahmin-khastriya and feudal lords) which will secure for them eternal heavenly bliss after death. In Marxist view working class people will have to toil and sacrifice for the party which will bring socialism (the Hindu equivalent of *Swargya*) and perpetual peace and prosperity will auger in, may be not in the life time of the party workers but at least for his descendants.

SOCIALISTIC BLISS AFTER REVOLUTION

It is to be noted that Marx-Engels' scientific socialism is unscientific because it violates the great Entropy Law of Science which states that the natural tendency of every system left to itself, is to move towards a state of more disorder. The inexorable operation of the Entropy law is inevitable everywhere, even in human societies.. Lenin's belief that the greatest, problems in the life of nations are solved by force alone has some truth. But it seems to be dated because the World has progressed from his time. Now strong public political opinions exert much pressure and can sometimes force governments to change policies. In India universal adult franchise is a powerful weapon in the hands of the people.

By now it should be apparent that at present a fundamental difference has developed between philosophy and science. Scientific conclusions have become more reliable and they can be tested within a relatively much shorter time and inexpensively. But philosophy's method of Logic building and deriving conclusions directing social and political practices may often be misleading which may even end up in disasters. The disasters from misused S&T are much less than those resulting from belief in wrong philosophies. Though there was no dearth of virulent critics of Hegel's limitations of knowledge of history, mathematics and other areas of human knowledge, still its final demolition took some one and a half century and that not in meeting or conference rooms, but in the battle fields of World War II. Likewise another of Hegelian Frankenstein the Russian Stalinism which had its genesis in Marxism took tolls over a century for its final demolition that occurred in Russia and East European countries in the late 1980s. Just think of Srimadbhagbad Gita, Hegel or Marx. Hegel is now gone. Marxism is now on its final way out.

At High Gate cemetery in London lay both Karl Marx and Michael Faraday ,a revolutionary political philosopher and a great scientist. Marxism is now practically dead but Faraday will remain alive for ever. One may ask who contributed more to human progress and advance of civilization : Karl Marx or Michael Faraday?

The English mathematician and philosopher Whitehead (1861-1947) rightly observed that the world never quite recovers from the shock of a great philosopher.

Founders of various philosophical schools starting from similar premises with similar objectives reached often strange conclusions which are not only at variance with each other, but often highly conflicting. They caused much confusion in human thoughts and often wrought havoc on large sections of mankind. Bertrand Russell, the famous mathematician and philosophical commentator remarked that either all the philosophers are erroneous or one of them correct. There is no way, unlike that in science, of ascertaining which one is correct. Then what to do with the 'intellectual rubbish' of most philosophers? Russell recommends that they should be respectfully placed as Professors in created posts of philosophies in German universities and their massive intellectual products safely put in historical archives.

LIMITED CONFLICTS

Democratic opinion, people's verdict is the ultimate arbiter of the correctness or falsity of an ideology. The matter is different with science, a humanized science of course, which not unnaturally now receive more attention and respect. Hence people in India can strive for Democratic Pluralism for which the Indian Constitution provides scope for progress. Only thing one can and should demand that the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution must be justiciable (i.e. liable to trial in a court of justice).

“Neither a classless society, nor a society of strict and impenetrable social barriers is good ... We think of friction as waste of energy ... a classless society should always be emerging into class, and a class society should be tending towards obliteration of its class distinctions. [A society like a giant moving machine composed of various parts between which some frictions are inevitable. We may try our best to minimize them but cannot avoid them totally]..... So, within limits, the friction not only between individuals but between groups, seems to me quite necessary for civilization. The universality of irritation is the best assurance of peace. A country within which the divisions have gone too far is in

danger to itself : a country which is too well united – whether by nature or by device, by honest purpose or by fraud and oppressionis a menace to others. In Italy and Germany, we have seen that a unity with politico-economic aims, imposed violently and too rapidly, had unfortunate effects upon both nations ... Ideally, each village, and of course more visibly the larger towns, should have each its peculiar character”.

Democratic Pluralism ensures the state machinery not to blow up but keep going with minimum energy loss through diverse frictions. Such a view is scientific though enunciated by a non-scientist like T S Eliot (1948).

Amartya Sen’s recent book “Identity and Violence”, 2006 is highly illuminating which emphasizes Democratic Pluralism. Sen has brilliantly shown that all people, all human groups have multiple identities, not one exclusive or unique like ethnicity, religion, language or culture. Such identities should be recognized and respected to. Reason, education, tolerance and freedom of expression and activities can minimize the need for much violence from either side, the state and the dissenters.

WHITHER NOW?

The recent political changes in West Bengal and diverse popular movements in various parts of India against forcible land acquisition, big capital and plunder of natural resources by MNCs, environmental degradations, protecting identities of various regional, religious, ethnic, cultural and other identities should be respected to. Unfortunately India’s organized political parties seem not much interested in people’s struggles, which may be due to their vested group interest or simply, they are mired in ideological mess. Mamata Banerjee with her TMC has been able to ride on the unleashed energies from people’s struggles in West Bengal. In these she has received some valuable help from urban intellectuals. But skepticism lurks in some intellectual circles that the Trinamool chief has the potentiality of becoming a dictator. The fear can be ruled out because she has to operate within the bigger Indian state in which there is free press, judiciary, a central government and the military not in state command. Mamata’s biggest historical contribution will lie in her achievement of destroying the last Sanctuary of Marxism and freeing Bengali intellectualism from the stranglehold of an erroneous philosophy and rooting it once again to the soil and people of the land.

The constitution lays down that “India, a Union of States, is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a parliamentary system of government”. The policies and principles embodied are fairly progressive. If political struggles can achieve these almost all the long cherished dreams of the revolutionaries will be fulfilled even without a bloody Marxist type of revolution. But a small constitutional change, a very big demand, has to be made and achieved. It is : The Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution must be made JUSTICIABLE.