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2005). He denounced the concept of economic man because he refused to recognize the separation of economics from ethics. He denounced technological determinism because it enslaved man and sanctified only those technologies that conformed to value premises (ibid). Above all, he struggled against the mightiest imperial power in terms of non-violent theory and order. As he went about these tasks, he discovered his own science of economics, although he did not analyze it in a very vigorous manner. He was not interested in the scope of and method of economic science, as we economists "naturally understand it" (ibid). Rather, he worked for an entire lifetime on articulating the principles of an alternative and "more real" human economy centering on the very themes outlined in his 1916 Lecture: the lack of correlation between material expansion and genuine progress, the need for an economics-cum-ethics that would enable moral growth and dignity in general, the fallacy of seeking happiness in individual acquisitive behaviour, and the need for encouraging people to seek a life in teams of acquiring a healthy self-esteem and a genuine meaning. Modern Economic Development including globalization tend to bypass Gandhian tenets" (ibid).

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Relevance of Marxist Ideas in Contemporary Socio Political and Economic System in India

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Abstract:

Karl Heinrich Marx was an epoch making German philosopher, social scientist, a renowned economist and a great statesman of 19th Century. Karl Marx is believed to be one of the most influential thinkers whose work has not only influenced the political, economic and social sphere but also been instrumental in bringing about structural changes in world economies. This paper will try to throw light on the contemporary socio-political and Economical changes that occurred during the past century. It is an attempt to find the relevance of Marxist Philosophy in contemporary Indian Society. And to find out if all these changes have their roots in Marxist Philosophy which is based on 'Class Struggle'. Marx read history through the lenses of class struggle. Which apparently remained absent in Indian society in its direct form. Revisiting the ideas of Marx in the context of Indian society is not only the academic need but also has practical utility. Also the present political and economic system in India demands the overall assessment and for that no criterion will prove as useful as Marxist socialism.

Key words: Marxism, Communism, Idealism, Materialism, Class Struggle, Caste System

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Introduction:

The industrial revolution in 18th century in Europe brought in many evils with it. Machines were made to make human life easier but what was made was nothing but machinery for exploitation of humans. Karl Marx had never been a representative of this working class, as a son of a successful lawyer; he had never been confronted with such exploitation. But his conscience and his study of philosophy at Bonn and Berlin made him realize the very fact that the history of the world is history of class struggle between haves and haves not, between capitalists and proletariats, between exploiters and exploited, between depressors and depressed. In India there had been exploitation, though the basis of exploitation in India is not as same as what Marx observed in case of European countries. The economic, socio-political environment in India as compared to the European countries has some unique characteristics. The observations and remedies to the problems Karl Marx identified are naturally not suitable to Indian case as it is. But still inherently the problem of class struggle which is the core of Marxist theory is common for India.

Reflections and Relevance of Karl Marx in the Contemporary Indian Society

Karl Marx's theory 'Historical Materialism' or 'materialistic conception of history' is an attempt to explain the origin and development of the society from materialistic perspective based on Hegel's claim that, "history occurs through a dialectic, or clash, of opposing forces". G. W. F. Hegel was a German philosophical idealist. Idealism stresses the central role of the ideal or the



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spiritual in the interpretation of experience. Marx accepted the notion of the dialect but rejected Hegel's idealism; because he did not accept that the material world hides from us that 'real' world of ideal, idealism is thus directly opposed to materialism which believes that basic structure of the world is matter. Marx's disagreement with idealism can also be stretched to Indian philosophy which is nothing but the Indian version of idealism. Vedanta is known as "essence or conclusion of the Vedas", which is probably the most important idealist school of India.

Marx was not the first philosopher who invented socialism or materialism, even before Marx the idea of socialism was discussed by classical Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. It can also be traced in religious teachings of Prophet Mohammad and Jesus Christ; but Marx's theory was more scientific than philosophical. He gave it practical utility and proved his theorems scientifically whether it is Dialectical Materialism or Socialism.

Marx thought that historically and socially specific ideologies prevented people from seeing the material conditions of their lives. He also observed that when it comes to religion, people almost become blind as far as their material needs are concerned. Marx mainly attacked the dominant religion in Europe, i.e. Christianity. But his observations can also be applied to religions of India, mainly to Hinduism. The time period when Marx proposed his ideas was the time when religion played a vital role as an institutional social control not only in Europe but across the world, it was a great transition period for Europe after adoption of free trade policy as advocated by classical economists like Adam smith and David Ricardo. But in India the society was still under the influence of religion, the social life in India was entirely controlled by religion. Alienated from industrial revolution and being a closed economy the impact of religion on social mind was far stronger than that of Europe. Hence the Marxian views about religion can be considered as well suited to Indian case and that too not only for the past but for the present also, because the influence of religion in social and political life of India is still dominating. In every election The Hindu card is being used. People are fooled in the name of religion, the very democratic structure of country has been shattered and the mass is driven by medieval mindset. India witnessed traumatic partition at the time of independence and escalating of communal tensions thereafter due to the demolition of the historic Babri Masjid in 1992 and the genocide of Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 triggered the worst kind of communal riots in India. No one can deny the fact that it's an identity crisis which compels one to take up arms. The basis for such riots is religion, and religion has been the most divisive factor in social and political life in India, which exactly proves what Marx stated "religion is opium of people."

Marxism and Contemporary Socio-Political and Economic conditions in Indian Society

Marx had said about India that, "Indian Society has no history at all, at least no known history, what we call its history, is but the history of the successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society." As such the former part of this statement is true, that the history of India is full of intrusions from outside and India had been subjected to slavery of some or other foreign empires i.e. such intrusion was by Aryans and resulting struggle between Aryans and aborigines caused the formation of caste system in India. Aryans defeated aborigines and forced them to be the lowest strata of caste system, Shudra, which was assigned to serve the remaining varnas, Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya. The story of labour and exploitation of labour starts here in India.



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Some people justify caste system being a simple division of labour; but in fact, caste system in India is not a simple division of labour but a rigid hierarchal social order where one's status in society is determined solely by one's birth. Therefore labour class in India is more definite and predetermined class not only in economic sense but also in social sense.

Marx's concept of exploitation of labours more economic in nature than social. According to him the surplus production has been taken away by capitalists leaving labour with mere subsistence, but Indian labour class has to face two fold exploitation, one on economic basis which is exactly similar to what Marx had explained through surplus value theory and another, rather more serious is social, being a lowest strata of hierarchal order of caste system which adds in the misery of life of labour in India. Probably this is the reason why Dr. Ambedkar found Marxist ideas to be inconsistent and insufficient as a solution for Indian economic and social problems.

However there has been a great influence of Marxism on the labour movements in India. Trade unions in India are mainly communist or socialist, which is not at all surprising. The labour in India faces the problems Marx rightly had observed, though his solutions are practically difficult to implement in a democratic country like Indian labours consider Marx as a constant source of inspiration for their proletarian struggle against every kind of exploitations they are exposed to.

The communist parties in India played a vital role in propagating Marxist ideology among working class. Communist parties are in power in some of the states like West Bengal and Kerala. Their contribution in Indian Polity has been remarkable. In fact from the early revolutionaries of Bhagat Sigh's HSRA party to many national leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru or Subhash Chandra Bose were influenced by Marxism.

Dr. Ambedkar was influenced by Marx's humanitarian views towards working force. Dr. Ambedkar state that there are some principles of Marx, in their purest form and much relevant in every times like-

- 1) The objective of philosophy is to restructure the world not to explain the origin of it.
- 2) There is constant struggle between classes.
- 3) Due to private ownership of resources one class exploits another thereby generates unrest among exploited
- 4) In the interest of society as a whole the private ownership should be discarded.

It is worth to mention here that, in India, private ownership is a part of Manu's justice system, as dictated by religion. Here, the history and concept of private ownership is quite different from how Marx and Engels saw them. In India, the Varna system gives the right to own and run industries and businesses only to the Vaishya caste or class. Thus, the centralization of capital is the gift of the Hindu economy, which, in turn, is the product of the Varna system – the soul of Hinduism. Unless the Varna system is obliterated, private ownership cannot be eliminated. That is probably why the Indian capitalists are doing everything they can to preserve and perpetuate the Varna system." This is the reason why we can find the dominance of certain castes in business in India, why there are very few exceptions like a Dalit entrepreneur Milind Kamble. If we enquire into the contemporary Indian Economic System comparing above mentioned principles, we find that we are not even close to the comprehension of these principles. The economic power is still concentrated in hands of some handful of businessmen, the governments are not at all able to solve the problems of farmers and labour class whatsoever.



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Rather ruling parties have replaced the bourgeoisies. Marx had put forward a theory of reserve army of labour which is exactly the same case in India. The conditions of farmers force them to migrate in cities in search of employment; such migrated farmers are ready to work for pittance. The condition of farmers Marx had observed in his times has not changed much, at least for India; farmers are in miserable conditions and forced to commit suicide. Marx's considerations about farmers are still relevant and so his solutions.

India adopted a New Economic Policy to keep up with the pace of world economic development. With the introduction of this new policy many technological advancement occurred as a part and parcel of this policy, but on the other hand we still suffer from the unemployment resulting from replacement of labour intensive technique of production with capital intensive one. Prasenjit Bose has rightly observed that, "For heavily populated countries like India, China and other developing countries, with a major proportion of the workforce outside the formal capitalist sector, the rate of exploitation remains much higher than the advanced capitalist world".- (National Herald) May 6, 2018.

The Question to be asked, are we in a confused state as an economy, irrespective of whether it is a capitalist or a socialist or a mixed economy. We were supposed to strike a fine balance between the two. Did we succeed in it? We nationalized banks but can we claim that we have a sound banking system, there had been unimaginably huge scams have come in light these days, we recently witnessed the lowest fall down of Rupee in history, growing inflation rate has become a concern for households and for industries. The public enterprises like BSNL are running in loss, scholarships are not being discharged for many years; no university has been ranked even among 100 best universities in world. The growing unemployment in India is also responsible for the growth in crimes, poverty and even terrorism. The sense of insecurity among different sections of society is growing, hampering the social fabric of country. The question arises as to why the working class still continues to live in distress? Certainly Marxism provides the answers to these questions, what we need is an immediate critical inquiry of Marxist ideas, which have the great potentials of being answers to many economic and social problems of country.

Conclusion

India is going through a transitional period. It's rather a challenging phase for both people of country and government in power. In what direction we should march forward as a nation and strengthen not just the economy but also safeguarding the constitution, its democracy and providing a commitment towards nation building remains a challenge that needs to be addressed.

The Constitution of India cherishes the democratic values; but in reality we face various economic and social problems. So, this contradictory condition calls for the immediate need to strengthen democracy and to head towards an egalitarian society. We need to incorporate different ideologies that will help the nation sail through various dynamic processes, may it be at the global level or national level. As such Marxism is one of these ideologies that holds true as many principles in Marxist theory are not in accordance with Indian situation; but the socialist viewpoint which is the soul of Marxist theory has already been incorporated in our constitution. Therefore we should be open to adopt any ideas which will help us to overcome these challenges. Karl Marx and his Theory will prove to be helpful on this path.



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