

WHY COUNT STEPS WHEN YOU HAVE AN ELEVATOR?

In his preface to Volume I of "Capital" Marx wrote:

"One nation can and should learn from others. And even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement - and it is the ultimate aim of this work to lay bare the economic law of motion of modern society - it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth pangs."

"Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." (Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx Engels Selected Works, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow 1969, p. 398) is an oft-repeated quote.

"One nation can learn from others. This is happening in Africa and is the source of much turmoil. Also the Aborigines of Australia have jumped right into capitalism owing to the European colonization. Margaret Mead, in "New Lives for Old", relates that she witnessed amongst the Manus of Polynesia a people who had traveled from the stone age to modern culture in the space of twenty-five years. This happened because of the presence of an American Army on the island during the last war." (*Historical Materialism*, the Socialist Party of Great Britain).

This is somewhat true in my life for instance; we were living in a village without any primary school. Then we shifted to a city. I got admitted in class-II. After a year, the Head Master called my father and informed that they had decided to promote me to class-IV directly, as I was adjudged fit for a higher class. It was possible as I used to study my lesson with my cousins who were in higher classes and I learned extra simple things from them. The point is, when your right hand learns something, the left hand also learns. However, for a right-handed, the right hand learns more because of more practice. Similar is the case with society. When one section of society gets ahead in knowledge and skill and thereby improve production process; the knowledge cannot remain confined or stagnant; it flows as fluid flows, to enrich other sections of society. The history has abundance of such footprints, of movement of civilization from one part of the globe to other..... But there were inaccessible parts on Earth where men had to live in isolation for a couple of century or more. These societies too developed; but did not get the benefit like the contiguous localities, where cross flow of knowledge was a regular trait. In spread of knowledge and ideas 5+5 often makes 15 or 25. So in medieval ages also, there were center of excellence from where free flow of knowledge and ideas were spreading. It is only recently that knowledge and idea has a price tag in the form of patent rules, intellectual property rights, royalties, etc.

Development has many stages like the standards in a school: class I class-II..... to class-XII. The advancement in school is in steps from 1 to 12th grade. Similar is the case with different sections of human society. Sections of society estranged from the main stream due to inaccessibility, continue to live in a lower stage of development or primitive stage. But then, there is no imperative that the development of society shall be step by steps like a student in a

school. The aborigines of Australia and the Manus of Polynesia for examples took a leap in a short period to a modern way of living. While this is true the opposite examples too are prevalent. Jarwa, a tribe of the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago for instance stubbornly refused to be drawn in modern life despite the Government or several organizations trying to bring them into the main stream of modern life.

There are other reasons for sections of society not to adapt to the modern progressive way of living and idea. Readily available examples are that of certain cult societies and religious sects. Whereas atheism and anti religious thought is considered as scientific, the overtly or ingeniously religious people shun the scientific way of living and thought. There are other instances of sections of society or clans, who are not amenable to scientific thinking even though they enjoy and utilize all the fruits of science and technology, which are the vehicles of progress. Quite a few of these sections may have their reasons related to their deep rooted fear, property or profit /earning-related prudence / caution. Some others are so lazy mentally that they prefer to just float on the flow and would adjust their stance to the tune of the time – they are just conservatives and opportunists. Thus far, things are comprehensible. But there is another large section of people from all economic classes, education standards, life styles, from both genders, which stubbornly refuse to see reason and take to the scientific thinking and way of life. Who are these populace or gentry?

A big example can be the North Korean, purportedly happy to remain, leading an ignominious life style for their great icon Kim-Il-Sung had determined it, for them to follow without questioning. It is awe inspired. To keep this awe struck people under the spell of the dead icon, the state had to device number of awe inspiring functions in regular intervals to keep the gentry oblivious of the progress taking place around them. One of the main devises is to keep them physically isolated and secluded so that the people do not come to know about things taking place around, by strict censoring and by feeding with totally distorted information or white lies. In addition artificially creating a very strong but misplaced nationalist pride is doing the trick. Likewise Cuba, erstwhile East Germany and other East European countries kept their hold on the people for over or around 40 years! The World Socialist Movement (WSM) and the SPGB as early as in 1918 strongly condemned the so called Russian Revolution (in fact a coup d'état) and establishment of 'socialist' Soviet Republic, actually State Capitalist, which in fact, is more dangerous than simple capitalism.

I mentioned about cults, sects and awe-inspired sections. Capitalism is much more an inventive society than feudalism. Along with advancement of science and technology, it had invented a very strong resolute top-down management system and hierarchy, branching out from the head. Whereas socialism is meant for negation of this, Lenin took the opposite view of emulating it; the Taylor management hierarchy came as a tailor-made solution for V.I. Lenin. He renamed it as Democratic Centralism. The whole world did witness how much democratic it was and how much centrist it is. A frequently used joke by common man is, if one can ascend to the top level of a communist (meaning Leninist) party, the position can only be vacant by his death, natural or unnatural, is a strong censure or indictment, by commoners. But how can one refute it? Are there any examples to argue? My thorough search resulted to a zilch! The Kim-Il-Sung effect is rather limited but Stalin-effect, Mao-effect and above all of them was Lenin, at the top of the pyramid.

Hence the Lenin-icon-effect is the strongest. How is it? It is quite difficult to explain, hence a metaphor of an elevator and a ladder steps.

So, there are people, huge in number, who only knows of ladders or stair cases and can count the no. of stairs, each step being a stage to go on the top floor. Being a long way up, one has to take rest, so it takes time. It may happen that they lose the count of stairs and subsequently forget the destiny. What do they do? They come down take or write down the address once again and start recounting the stairs again (I step ahead, 2 steps behind!). But these men are oblivious that there's a lift/elevator already in place, installed and there's no need of staircase except in case of emergency.

Trotskyists, who are also Leninists, are such a breed. Marx had been anticipating when the workers' cooperatives will produce enough to achieve an abundant flow of all necessities. Lenin made a volt-face of renaming his RSDLP and converting bourgeois democratic revolution to socialist revolution and effected a coup d'état. He should have understood that objective condition is no less important than subjective one. He even ignored, that subjective condition was extremely poor too. But he was dictatorial intrinsically, hence his 'one dozen wise men' were sufficient for him to rule. Trotsky in the meanwhile, was on a simple harmonic motion, had a to and fro movement between Menshevik and Bolshevik camps, took out a word from Marx vocabulary of 1847/48 in a completely different context; Marx later regretted (may not be in so many words), "PERMANENT REVOLUTION" and later in 4th international etc developed it as a great, great theory!

Incidentally Capitalism from its advent stage through developing and developed stage has predictably reached to a most anarchic decadent stage. (Why anarchists don't support it is a riddle! Is it that there is existence of government in name-sake is the only reason? – I fail to understand!) More importantly mankind has reached a stage of abundance. That is in my analogy of a lift/elevator, already installed. But Lenin, Trotsky and the ilk only know stairs/steps and the count. So they need all the stages – very low, low, medium State-capitalist, 1st stage/primary stage, then secondary and then forget the destination; still oblivious that an elevator is already in place.

I'm not an academician hence my articulation is provoking and why not? That I was kept blind folded by Leninism, for over 25 years and wasted that time always itching in my brain, is in the background which provokes me, constantly.

I'm sorry to say, most of the participants make a convenient happy home surrounded by their own opinions and don't bother to come out of their protective egg shell. But I do not rest. I visit everyone's citadels to cut into pieces their arguments with cruelty like history is if I find them unscientific. However, I'm not stingy and do praise an apt scientific straight forward essay / blog / post, lavishly.

Hence I invite all, to make mincemeat of me by counter arguments.

To a request from Robert Howes, asking me .. "Please explain the elevator, Dipak. It is a good metaphor perhaps but for what?" - I replied:

Robert, I must Thank Harisadhan Ghosh, for this metaphor. It happened one day in course of discussion on necessary steps; he suddenly mentioned it. For you, let me say that Marx had been facing a dilemma about meeting the demand and expectations of all people in a post capitalist, classless socialist society. The productivity was low; hence had to think about labor-time voucher and a sort of a rationing as an interim arrangement, until there is abundant flow from all the cooperatives, to meet the total demand. Marx was aware of the pitfalls of the system as he thought, if the system continues for a long time, labor-time vouchers would surely assume the form of a new type of currency and the whole purpose of socialism will come to a naught. The important point here is abundance, nothing else. The problem for Leninists and Trotskyists is that they take it as rituals for socialism/communism (one and the same) and hence they still consider the steps as ritual just like in an Indian marriage - Hindu bride and the groom has to take seven rounds around a fire pyre to complete the marriage! But presently we have reached a period of over production and glut, why then should working class follow all that rituals like stupid? Why not just implement, "Work as per your ability and take as per your self-defined need" i.e. the key matter of a socialist society. As a Marxist (non ritualistic) I believe, once the working class is self consciously unite and wish by majority will, they, in one tidal swipe can bring socialism. While Leninists and Trotskyists will count ritual steps/rounds – 1, 2... (of the 7 rounds in Hindu marriage) the working class will reach the top floor with the aid of the elevator by the name "abundance", already achieved by the working class endeavor (for me all technologists etc. are working class, I myself used to be one).

Deepak Kumar Bhattacharya
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