



RESEARCH PAPER

The Limits of A Moralism: A Critical Study of Marxist View of Revolution

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the limits of A moralism and critically examine the concept of Revolution in the Philosophy of Karl Marx, who is regarded as the most famous and influential among the Western philosophers and to elaborate the complete A moral character of Marxist Philosophy and to understand and share the dangers of it. The important concepts in Marxism like Dialectical Materialism, Historical Determinism and Alienated Labor have also been studied. The study is fundamentally theoretical and qualitative in nature in which the original writings of Marx, Popper, Thomas Hobbes etc. are used. Finally, it is concluded that there should be a limit to A moralism and it is recommended that every student of Philosophy, History and Political Science should concentrate about the moral or A moral characters of the political ideologies.

KEYWORDS A Moralism, Alienated Labor, Historical Determinism, Marxism, Socialism

Introduction

The views of Karl Marx (Marxism) are the combination of his Metaphysical, Political, Social, Economic and Historical views. Metaphysically, he is a materialist according to whom, the ultimate reality of this universe is matter. The Historical view of Karl Marx is called Historical Determinism according to which the change in History is not due to the great leaders only but due to the historical forces and its Dialectical movement (Popper, 1944). In order to understand Marxism properly, it is but necessary to understand that in this philosophy, there is no room for God, Soul, World Hereafter or a Mystic or Spiritual element. If Religion is the primary source of Moral values, then we hardly find this sort of a source in the philosophy of Marx. According to Historical Determinism, Man is not free but bound before the Socio-economic forces of History. The real good in Marxism is nothing but to understand the operating forces of History and act in the progressive direction of it (Marx, 2020). Even in his concept of alienated labor, Marx does not give any moral directions to the workers and their leaders apart from being revolutionaries.

Keeping in view the above discussion, it is not difficult to understand that in Classical Marxism (and also in Neo-Marxism) there is no room for traditional morality or moral values. The biggest good in Marxism is to struggle for Socialism and the biggest evil is to create hindrances in this process. In this way, Marx reduces all Morality to the struggle for revolution and since this revolution would be bloody in nature then the revolutionaries should be brave, cunning and ruthless. In the humble opinion of the author, this sort of ideologies always creates hatred, horrors and false convections. Now we can take the views of Karl Marx one by one and critically examine their validity.

Literature Review

For the preparation of this article, I have studied the books of Karl Marx i.e., *Capital* (Marx, 1906) and *Theories of Surplus Values*. The views of Karl R. Popper and Bertrand Russell towards Marxism have also been studied and apprehended. For this purpose, the book of John Rawls, titled '*A Theory of Justice*' (1971), Popper's famous books *Open Society and its Enemies* and *Unended Quest: An Intellectual Autobiography* have been studied. Popper's research article 'Marxist Theory of the State' (1945) has been carefully studied and comprehended. Another article of Karl Popper 'Individualism vs Collectivism' (1945) has also been studied thoroughly.

Materials and Methods

Like most of the philosophical studies, this research article is fundamentally theoretical and qualitative in nature in which primary sources and secondary sources are utilized. The references are given according to American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition.

Discussion

Any sort of materialism (Monist Materialism believes matter as the ultimate reality but according to them, this ultimate matter is one and through this single, soul principle they want to explain the whole world and universe (Stace, 2010). The Metaphysics of Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes are the great examples of Monist Materialism; the Metaphysics of Empedocles is a good example of Pluralistic Materialism (Russell, 2003). According to him, the four material elements are responsible for creating and sustaining this universe. The materialism of Karl Marx is different from Monistic and Pluralistic Materialism both. His materialism is called Dialectical Materialism (Overdose, 2017). According to this point of view, matter is the ultimate reality but the gradual changing in matter is not due to the external forces but a dialectical movement within it) actually has no room for a Religious or Spiritual element. If matter is the ultimate reality, then there is no question of the existence of an omnipresent, omniscient God; and if there is no God, there is no room for a moral (traditional) and spiritual life. This is quite a debatable point in Marxism that with this spiritual vacuum, how can any human being survive? (Russell, 1957)

The existence of the Frankfurt School (Neo-Marxism) signifies many things. What the philosophers of Frankfurt School have been doing? Herbert Marcuse, Adorno and Eric Fromm etc. have been adding some important elements in Classical Marxism, without denying its fundamental point of view (Overdose, 2022). They have been adding the elements of culture, civilization, psychology and aesthetics. But again, there is no room for Religion or Spirituality of any kind. For all the philosophers (including Karl Marx) Morality is relative and not permanent and the Morality of one class of society will always be different from the other class of society. Believing in the Matter as the ultimate reality of the universe and taking Morality as relative and changing, there has always been a lack of Permanent and stable Morality for the people who believe in Socialism as their guide or as their way of life.

Marx's point of view of Historical Determinism is very controversial. Karl Marx took the concept of Dialectics from Hegel and applied it on the movement and changes in History declaring that History has a pattern and it always moves towards certain direction (Popper, 1944). Karl Popper outrightly rejected this concept and said that history has no

fixed pattern at all. In the humble opinion of the author, Marxism having no Religious or Spiritual element in it and also having an erroneous view about History reduced every moral or spiritual element to the revolution giving no direction for the workers and their leaders. That is why the states of Russia, China and other Socialist states have been so cruel and ruthless to their own people.

A Moralism and One-Party Rule

The one-party rule in all the Socialist states is another big example of their being dictatorial and exploitative (Popper, 1992). In Marxism (especially in Classical Marxism) there is no room for Democracy i.e., the existence of an opposite view of the society. This is a dangerous view of the state. In the opinion of many great political philosophers, the state should not be over powerful. Despite having many drawbacks and limitations, Democracy is a better form of government than any government having one party rule. In an ideological state or in a Religious or Socialist state, there is hardly a room for Democracy with many political parties of different agenda and character. There should always be an opposition and dis-opposition must be tolerated and protected by the Constitution of the Country. Different political parties in one country could be different from each other on their point of views, Religious or Secular nature, their individual program and agenda for the development and prosperity of their country. But imagine the form of government where only one-party rules. This could be very dangerous, very exploitative and very dictatorial. That is why, for Popper the fundamental question of Political Philosophy should not be – who will rule the country (as said above) but how we will protect the people from the possible harms of the state (Popper, 1945).

Religious and Secular Morality

For the humble opinion of the author of this article, any religion at least provides three answers to three fundamental questions of human life.

- i. It provides the answer of any Metaphysical question (For example, it provides the concept of God, Soul, immortality, the world hereafter etc.).
- ii. It provides a system of rituals for the purification of soul. (For example, prayer, fasting and pilgrimage etc.)
- iii. It provides a fixed and permanent moral law.

Marxism, being a Materialistic Philosophy cannot provide its people the above mentioned three answers. Secular Morality on the other hand considers moral values as social in nature. From this point of view, morality does not generate from Religion of Spirituality but the collective consciousness of the people. It provides some fundamental answers to some fundamental questions.

- i. How should we live with other people?
- ii. What are the basic rights of the individuals?
- iii. As a social being, how much and how can we sacrifice our individuality for the collectivity?

Unfortunate enough, the Classical Marxism neither provides the answers of Metaphysics nor of Social Morality. For Marx the question of Morality is linked with power

and class struggle and the greatest good is to struggle for a Socialist revolution (as said above). The only moral answer the Classical Marxism provide is the negation of individuality for the collective and social life of human beings.

Marxist view of social change does not give answers to the following important questions.

- i. What will happen if the revolutionaries behave with cruelty?
- ii. What will happen if the one-party government become dictatorial and exploitative?
- iii. In the absence of any other philosophy and in the absence of any other party, what will be the future and fate of the people having different point of view - Politically and philosophically?

According to Religious Morality, Man is good by nature and according to the Political Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, Man is by nature aggressive, wicked and gloomy (Hobbes, 2018). For Thomas Hobbes a state is necessary to control the dark side of human nature and to maintain the day-to-day life properly. Karl Marx as a political philosopher has a different position. He believes that human nature is good but can be corrupted easily by the greed of private property (Marx, 1906). In this way for Karl Marx the real evil is the concept of Private property and the real good is to struggle for a classless society. If one looks to see, there are many logical and philosophical fallacies in the over simplified views of Karl Marx about human nature and also about human morality. Again, some very important questions arise. Is it impossible for a Man to be good after possessing some kind of Private Property? Is it impossible for a Man to be wicked and cunning in spite of being poor and helpless? Actually, for the preparation of a bloody revolution, Karl Marx consciously or unconsciously reduced all kinds of evils to the private property and associated all kinds of good with a struggle of a classless society. Socially it is dangerous to have no moral plan at all and politically it is extremely dangerous to create a one-party rule of government.

Individualism vs Collectivism

In the history of Western Philosophy, there have been two rival point of views about Individual and Social life. Many great philosophers like Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Nietzsche and Schopenhauer etc. are the upholders of Individualism. For existential philosophers, mob is inauthentic and the polished individual is authentic (Blackham, 2012). These philosophers are not ready to sacrifice individuality, individual liberty and personal freedom for the sake of collective and social life. The Superman of Nietzsche is not social but aloof (Nietzsche, 1896). The Hero of Albert Camus is an *The Stranger* and not very social and practical (Camus, 1946). Authentic human individuals are for these philosophers as ripened fruits of the civilizations. Hegel is also of the view that Objective Spirit sometimes take the extra ordinary persons of the world as His instrument and tool to present extraordinary ideas before the world.

Collectivism on the other hand emphasizes on the social and collective life of the people. The political views of Plato, the social and political views of Karl Marx and the political philosophy of John Rawls are the good examples of Collectivism (Rawls, 2005). In this point of view, there is no room for individual liberty and freedom. In *Republic* Plato does not seem to allow the people of Athens any personal freedom (Plato, 2008). He

presents the idea of collective marriages, collective approach towards education and training and the biggest virtue is (it seems) to sacrifice his or her individuality for society.

In this way, Marxism as a philosophy and as a way of life does not provide an ethical code having permanent values (as one finds in Religion). Marxism does not provide any social or political morality in the true sense of the word. In the field of Politics, Marxism does not allow any other point of view, philosophy or political agenda. In this way Marxist point of view of social change or revolution becomes very dangerous and detrimental to humanity.

Conclusion

There have been two kinds of morality all over the world and also in the history of Western Philosophy. The one is Religious and the second is Secular. Religious morality presents a code of ethics that is supposed to be permanent and absolute and Secular morality explains the moral values as social enterprise. Surprisingly, Marxism (Classical Marxism) has neither religious values (being a materialistic philosophy in nature) nor a significant social philosophy in which there would be any code of conduct for revolutionaries and social workers struggling for the Socialist revolution. This philosophy lacks Democratic values also. It advocates the one-party rule which does not allow or tolerate any other philosophy, political agenda or ideology. In the humble opinion of the writer of this article, the concept of human nature in Marxism has also been controversial and debatable. For Religious morality, human nature is good basically and for Thomas Hobbes (being a great Political philosopher) human nature is basically aggressive, gloomy and evil. Marx's position in this regard is also unsatisfactory. For Marx human nature is good but private property corrupts it. In this way in Marxism, we hardly find any religious or social moral values. The real evil is the private property and class society and the real good is to abolish this class society and try to establish a Socialist state. In this article, it has been attempted to explain and elaborate the complete A moral character of Marxist Philosophy and it has been tried to establish that there should be a limit to that kind of A moralism.

Recommendations

The humble recommendations of the author are as follows:

- Every student of Philosophy, History and Political Science should concentrate about the moral or A moral characters of the political ideologies.
- Every student should be clear about the size and power of the state (whether the state should be minimal or powerful).
- Every student of History, Political Science or Philosophy should be clear about the concept of human nature (whether it should be good, bad or corrupted by private property).

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