

## **EVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM AND LOHIA IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**

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The renowned Prof. S. H. Alatas in his inauguration lecture in Multiversity's Penang –II conference made a good speech on 'The captive Mind', particularly in the context of the knowledge available amongst the scholars of the erstwhile colonial countries. He referred to '... this tendency of our people to imitate the thinking of the West and the ideas introduced by the colonial powers.'

In the third world Gandhi and Lohia were original thinkers. No wonder, they were sidelined by the mainstream thinkers who were either the votaries of capitalism, communism, a semitized Hinduism or an aggressive Islam. To quote Prof. Alatas, ".....in the university of Amsterdam, I remember being continuously bombarded with the idea of neutrality and the theory of relativity in social sciences. There is no such thing as objectivity without morality. Research must be based on objectivity, but it cannot be without morality....If a cancer expert studies cancer cells objectively, he does not bring his private bias into the study. But having done that, he has to ask himself the question – does he want to promote cancer? The answer is- no".

Every country in the world has its unique geographical and historical features. Traditions and cultures differ. Even in the fields of history and culture, scholars may make perspectival errors. A scholar, having the Marxist or an aggressive religious perspective cannot do justice to the ancient rationalistic, atheistic, materialistic culture of India which Kautilya in 'Arthashastra' calls 'Anwikshiki' Leading historians and philosophers of India have ignored the evidence contained in the three important books: 'Arthashastra', 'the writings of Megasthenes' and 'the Mahabharata (including the Gita)'. Our modern and post modern ideas of human progress and development have been falsified by the latest research in the field of science. To quote from the article 'Humans becoming more Stupid over Time, Finds Study' (The New Indian Express Dt.3.01.2011 page-11), "Over the past 20,000 years, the average brain of the human male brain has decreased from 1500 C.C. to 1300CC The female brain has shrunk by the same proportion, the Daily Mail quoted a report in 'Discovery' magazine". Among the few thinkers who question the modern civilizational ideas, Lohia is a prominent one. In his essay 'A Philosophical Hypothesis' he writes, '.....those who adhere to God, demon or closed philosophies, be they Adam Smith or Karl Max, and adhere to them in a rigid classical style, become fanatical and have exclusive faith in their own mistaken notions..... I wish for our country to have an experimental frame of mind". Lohia wants revolutionaries who "will at least have tried to remove weapons of fear and hatred from their own armory." Lohia criticizes modern civilization as it is based on poverty, hatred and war. People who study humanity through the recorded blood- soaked, exploitation – stamped history of the last 5000 years, forget that the advent of Homo sapiens was an event preceded by 3.7 millions years of mainly a monkey- type of non-violent gatherer community. Human mind grew from 500 CC to about 1500 CC within this period. The shrinking of the human brain shows that we are going in the opposite direction to the nature's process of evolution. Writes Fritjof Capra in his book 'the hidden connections'. "The design principles of our future social institutions must be consistent with the principles of organization that nature has evolved (deep ecology) to sustain the web of life. A unified conceptual framework for the understanding of material and social structures will be essential for this task."

Capra and scientists like Damasio rightly denounce the idea of the mind-body separation in Descartes' philosophy. European science and philosophy could not shake up Descartes' shadow for a long time. The idea of mind-body wholeness is expressed by Lohia in his quest for the integration of economic aims (equality in the field of basic necessities) and general aims (like democracy, freedom and fraternity) for the whole of humanity. To quote Lohia, "the foregoing, examination of general and economic aims reveals that they have both their autonomous existence, but that a doctrine of their integration is possible." (The Doctrinal Foundation of Socialism). F. Capra has a systemic view of life which no one can dispute; but when there is a search for a solution, he falters. He presents the ideas of Anthony Giddens and Habermass as integrationist theories. Nature uses the process of autopoiesis (Self-generation) in its web or net-like process. People as agents draw upon social structures for their actions and behaviours and by their contemplation and activities influence the structures. This structuration theory of A GIDDENS is cyclic like natural cycles. Habermass belonged to Frankfurt school and was influenced by Marxism. He called his theory the theory of communicative action. There is the external world of facts and objects. There is also the inner world of Hermeneutics or the world of meaning. Habermass says that right action refers to factual truth in the material world, to moral rightness in the social world and to sincerity in the inner world. Both the theorists deal mostly with abstractions. In the words of Lohia there is no corresponding concrete action which enables humanity to rise to higher levels. Genetically human beings do not differ much from the Chimpanzees. (The genetic difference is only 1.6%). A Chimpanzee – like –brain –having animal grew to a developed- brain- having (more than three times that of a Chimpanzee) hair -less ape during more than 3.7 million years of its sojourn in this earth.

About 40 to 50,000 year back (in the upper Paleolithic or late stone – Age period), Homo sapiens invented killer apparatus that made him a successful hunter. Human brain stopped growing in this period. As violence and cruelty increased in the human world, this was sure to happen because that part of the human brain (the pre-frontal cortex) which grew in size, consisted of neurons (nerve-cells) which were connected with sociability and control of violence. Every revolution based on violence fails because the values needed in sustaining the ideal societies dreamt of by revolutionary thinkers are womanly virtues (values) that were prevalent during the long gathering phase of humanity's existence on this earth. Even a non-violent revolution is sure to fail in a world where war preparations are common and greed dictates the progress of a nation – state. In such a country, there is no likelihood of a truly socialist society coming into being. The tragedy of humanity started with the hunter society of males gradually overwhelming the previous society of gatherers (females), thus bringing into being a strictly patriarchal society. Among the few thinkers of the world whose views tally with the values of a gathering society the foremost are Gandhi, Lohia and Einstein. Lohia's stress on spade, vote and prison are the appropriate steps which, if implemented with sincerity and determination by the millions will, by emphasizing the values of a gatherer's society, solve many of the problems of the suffering humanity. Women are likely to play a leading role in movements based on spade, vote and prison.

In the present war-preparing world, no single country can afford to accept non-violence as its creed by disbanding its army, navy and air force. Nature cannot be partial to any species and the evolution process as a whole as simulated in super- computers by eminent scientists of Santa Fe fame, indicate that all elements are freely taking part in the process of evolution (covering millions of years). They agree that there is no central controller and order evolves out of the free activity of every entity. In the words of Stuart Kaufman, Prof. of Biochemistry, Pennsylvania University, "..... the research program was to find order for free. As it happens, I found it. And it's profound."

Prof. Brian Godwin says, "... everything in new Biology changes. Instead of the metaphors of conflict, competition, selfish genes, climbing peaks of fitness landscapes; what you get is evolution as a dance." Collective total freedom is another name for non-violence. That the gatherers' society and also the hunter's society in the first phase of its existence were free from violence and greed is confirmed from the study of primitive societies as found out by anthropologists. Human mind's decline started when women were subdued completely through violence and patriarchy reigned supreme in modern advanced societies. In spite of living in a patriarchal society, Lohia never accepted women as the second sex, and went ahead of his mentor Gandhi in honoring the so-called fallen women who lived by selling their bodies.

Non-violence in action, the principle of Satyagraha, reached great heights in Gandhi's able disciple Lohia's writings and actions. The eye reddening at the sight of any injustice and the heart moved by sympathy, combine in the act of Satyagraha which is the true spirit of democracy. All leading thinkers of democracy agree that criticism is the essence of democracy. Lohia conclusively proved that criticism will be ineffective by remaining at the abstract level unless criticism concretized in the form of Satyagraha. Lohia's idea of Satyagraha becomes relevant in the context of what Noam Chomsky says about modern societies. "In the advanced industrial societies the problem (tension with regard to the locus of power) is typically approached by a variety of measures to deprive democratic political structures of substantive content, while leaving them formally intact. A larger part of this task is assumed by ideological institutions that channel thought and attitudes within acceptable bounds, deflecting any potential challenge to established privilege and authority before it can take form and gather strength .... My personal feeling is that citizens of democratic societies should undertake a course of self-defense to protect themselves from manipulation and control, and to lay the basis for meaningful democracy. (Necessary Illusions).

Gradually evolutionary scientists are realizing that forces of nature work to preserve the entire living world as a whole. Where there is danger of a species dying through internal violence, nature's defense mechanism controls it. Two wolves fighting each other do not bring it to the finish. The weaker party understands its danger and meekly surrenders to the stronger. Immediately the stronger wolf ceases its struggle and allows its opponent to depart in peace. (Constance Lorenz). As man has become the worst predator in nature and exterminates other species cruelly, nature's defense mechanism becomes active in taking away the power of the human brain thus making man more stupid or more self-destructive as ages pass.

The bell of human extinction is ringing loud and clear. Climate change is menacing human survival. There is little chance of humanity taking appropriate steps to halt it. The danger of war or preparation for war is devastating human resources and as long as group-selfishness masquerades as patriotism or god-devotion, disaster threatens the human species.

Lohia's tiny essay 'Fundamentals of a World Mind' is a seminal one that guides an internationalist. Very few thinkers have written a better piece on the bankruptcy of human thought in the 20th century, "...thinking has ceased to be creative. Ideas are designed and tested for their value to one or other of the two power blocks. ... The question of all questions stridently urging an answer is which shall serve what; shall idea serve force or force, idea?... both (capitalism and communism) are doctrines of political and economic centralization, of technical and organizational efficiency...."

Lohia was an ardent votary of a world government. He wrote, "Peace can come only via a world government.... All those who desire a world government must aspire to achieve a worldview of equality and against class, caste or regional inequalities." Evolutionary Scientist F. Capra wrote, "...I also argued that the philosophical school of deep ecology, which does not separate humans from nature and recognizes the intrinsic values of all living beings, could provide an ideal, philosophical and even spiritual context for the new scientific paradigm. Today, twenty years later, I (still) hold this view". Capra's rooted views are those of a gatherer society. Very few countries, philosophies or religions forbade its inhabitants or adherents to shun meat eating and stop any sort of cruelty to animals. The world views of every country are important; amongst them are those that can provide humanity the right path to life and happiness. "...he (Haber Mass) points out that people's interpretations always rely on a number of implicit assumptions that are embedded in history and tradition .... social scientist should evaluate different traditions critically, identify ideological distortions and uncover their connections with power relations. Emancipations take place whenever people are able to overcome past restrictors that resulted from distorted communication" (the hidden connection). The whole of humanity suffers from distortions of its ideas because of its hunter mentality. Emancipation from it is needed, so that instead of power relations governing human communicative actions, humanity gets guided by sharing and caring relations that prevailed during its million years of existence in a matricentric (woman-centric) gatherer society.

Buddha, Gandhi, Lohia and JP are all products of a culture that was unique in the world. India had the only gatherers' society in the world which produced advanced city civilizations. The rich fauna and flora of India which nourished the most leisured class of females and males was highly conducive to contemplation and compassion. Archeologists show surprise when they study the artifacts and weapons of pre-Vedic India. Writes the Harvard-trained famous geneticist Spencer Wells in his famous book "The Journey of Man", "... India is unusual, since there is very little evidence of the upper Paleolithic there ... at least there are abundant tools from the earlier periods". The upper Paleolithic age was the earliest age of great hunters because of the abundance of killer apparatus among these hunters in this age. Human mind's innovative tendencies and skills thus led to the first great violation of nature's design. Man's journey of killer-ship continued relentlessly from this age. All the animals other than men were subjected to cruel exploitation and slaughter. Men 'too' shared the same fate in later periods.

There is abundant literary and archeological evidence to prove that Mahenjodaro Harappa civilization was an egalitarian, atheistic, kingless civilization which was free of wars. The availability of fruits in abundance in India come out in Max Muller's essay 'Indian view of life'. "Bhartrihana says," There is fruit on the trees in every forest, which everyone who like may pluck without trouble. There is cool and sweet water in a river in the pure rivers here and there."

No hunter's society can produce a philosophy of praxis like the Yoga where the primary values are nonviolence and non-acquisition of money or materials. Yoga was a discovery of the womenfolk, who had equal rights with males even in the field of sex. So geneticists stress the fecund Draupadi phenomenon is India. We, the Indians, are the descendents of a few females, each impregnated by a number of males. There is ample literary evidence of female sexual freedom available in the Mahabharata which supports what the geneticists say. Human evolution took the right evolutionary road in Pre-Vedic India. Monogamy in later families was also because of female preference for it; but occasional sexual freedom was prevalent in society.

Here, in India, not more and more powerful killer weapons but a healing science like the Ayurveda and the knowledge of public health and measures that made city life pleasant and free from diseases were given importance by the then elites of society, the Yoginis and Yogis (called Gymno-sophists by the Greek travelers to India).

In Killer societies, hunters became warriors whose war – leaders or chiefs morphed into kings. The concepts of in all –powerful super king led to the conception of God whose favourite courtiers were the priests. In hunter” societies, warriors and priests were the elite.

No king or super – kings (God or Gods) evolved among the Yoginis and Yogis. In Mohenjodara Harappa civilization, no such phenomenon took place. The Yoginis and Yogis occupied the highest place in society (as available from the writings of Megasthenes). Max Muller writes, “The greatest conqueror of antiquity (Alexander) stood in silent wonderment before the Gymno-sophists, regretting that he could not communicate with them ....” (Indian View of Life).

Evolution used ‘the pleasure principle’ to direct all the living beings in the planet earth. Sigmund Freud made a great mistake in putting the reality principle above the pleasure principle. Today’s science falsifies Freud’s idea and proves that the culprit is not nature but culture. The knowledge of the absence of killer apparatus in the upper Paleo - lithic age in India and the lack of war weapons and domesticated animals in Mahenjodaro Harappa culture are the discoveries of archeology. Modern science establishes that we are genetically programmed to have a brain that accepts rationality. Scientist Antonio Damasio M.D., Ph.D., the writer of the famous book ‘Descartes’ Error’, examines in the laboratory the brain of a person called Elliot who had a big tumour in his right frontal lobe and comes to the conclusion that emotion and rational decision making are twins in the same areas of the human brain.

Generations of historians and philosophers in India and abroad, the flag bearers of hunter society philosophy and culture of the Greeks and other Europeans and Americans, failed to understand the pre-Vedic culture of a gatherers’ society. The key word used in Buddhism and Jainism, Mahabharata, Samkhya, Yoga and Lokayat was SUKHA which precisely meant the pleasure principle of nature Nature’s ‘pleasure principle’ got associated with ‘hedonism’ because European thinking was deaf to the true meaning of ‘SUKHA’. Had our historians and philosophers studied sincerely at least one book of the Buddha ‘Dhammapada’ and read the Bhagawad Gita in the light of ‘Dhammapada’ and excluded the Gita’s massive scholarly violence- justifying and Brahminic interpolations, (Kosambi), there would have been no necessity for them to ignore Kautilya’s emphasis on ‘Anwikshiki’ in Arthashastra and Megasthenes’ emphatic declaration that Gymno-sophists had the highest rank in India among the seven categories of people who lived in India. Nature abhors the limitless cruelty and predation of humans leading to total extermination of other species. Pre-Vedic India, by making non-violence and APARIGRAHA (minimizing one’s wants) the supreme values, actually followed the dictates of nature.

Since the Upanishads are the philosophies of the hunters (the nomadic Aryans), their stress on SREYA the good, against PREYA (The pleasant) is nothing unusual or unexpected. The Upanishadic seers replaced the philosophy of Anwikshiki by an inferior philosophy. Lohia wrote that the separation of SREYA from PREYA was wrong. Lohia’s stress on SAMA (equality at the level of mind also) and his unique experience of Samadhi in Lahore jail (when time stood still) speaks of his intuitive preference for pre-Vedic Indian culture whose cultural progenies are Budhisim, Jainism and the other philosophies preached by thinkers like P.

Katyayana, A. Kesha Kambali and others of their ilk. About Gandhi, Romaine Rolland wrote “.... There can be no genius of action, no leader, who does not incarnate the instincts of his race, satisfy the need of the hour and requite the yearning of the world”. The same words can be used for Lohia. The word ‘Sukha’ is central to ancient Indian culture and its discussion is particularly relevant in these calamitous nature-defying days.

Human brain has three layers. There is the reptilian brain which finds pleasure in indolence (examine the life of a crocodile or a Python). The second layer or the mammalian brain finds please in incessant activity sometimes leading to limitless violence. The third layer or the pre-frontal cortex, almost half of the total brain, restrains the violent tendencies in the other parts of the brain and leads to increase of sociability. India’s Samkhya philosophy expresses these tendencies as the three GUNAS. ‘Not extended indolence, or incessant urge to work but ‘Sukha’ is the primary nature-given quality of the pre-frontal cortex (SATWA GUNA). Discontent or mental tension occurs when human actions that lead to ‘SUKHA’ are not indulged in by the man/woman. Explaining Sukha, Gita says, “The knowledge that all living beings are one, though they lead different lives in this world is known as Satwik knowledge.” (The Gita-18 -20). Love of all living beings must direct every action of a Satwik being . The contentment that lends special charm to the face of a Buddha, Mahavira or Samkara is rarely found in the faces of leading Western philosophers. Scientist Amitabh Chakravarthy in an article published in the Radical Humanist (Feb-2011) establishes the fact that modern science has discovered that human goodness is a gift of nature. Next in importance to the evolutionary approach which guided the pre-Vedic gatherers’ India, and whose legacy was milked by Gandhi and Lohia, there is the humanistic realistic approach of Latin America which is scaling great heights in the search for a new variety of humane Twenty First Century socialism.

At the close of the world social Forum -2005, Chavez declared , “We have to reinvent socialism”. He called it the socialism of the 21st century. Bolivar, Rodriguez and Zamora, Meszaros and Harnecker were some of the thinkers whose ideas gifted Marxian socialism new dimensions. Chavez often quoted them. Zamora had said, “Free elections, free land and free men, horror to the oligarchy”. Bolivar called equality ‘the law of laws’. He fought for the rights of the indigenous people. His fights led to the abolition of slavery in Latin America much earlier than the U.S. Rodriguez denounced division of labour in industries because it robotized and brutalized the workers. Meszaros stressed the elementary triangle of socialism.

- A. Social ownership of production,
- B. Social production organized by workers.
- C. Production for communal needs.

Lohia’s stress on small units of production satisfied almost all the aims of these great thinkers of Latin America. Lohia was a fighter for the equal rights of the oppressed people of the whole world and was imprisoned in several countries because he defied the unequal laws prevalent in them. Marta Harnecker denounced Vanguardism’, ‘Verticalism’, ‘authoritarianism’, excessive centralism and opposed a ‘narrow workerist view of socialism’. Lohia believed in decentralized power and economy. He concretized his ideas in advocating the formation of maximum power-wielding village councils as the basic foundational part of the Chauhamba (four - pillared) scheme of economic and political entities. Harnecker aimed at building a society that makes the full development of human beings possible. Lohia’s seven-legged revolution (Sapta – Kranti) is the best way to develop the full potential of every human being.

Kropotkin wrote to Lenin in 1920, "... Without an organization from below of the peasants and workers themselves, it is impossible to build a new life". The USSR did not follow this advice, but Chavez followed it to the letter. Thus writes Harnecker "Participation, protagonism in all spaces, is that which allows human beings to grow and increase their self-confidence, that is to say, to develop humanly." Articles 62 and 70 of the Venezuelan constitution empower people at the lowest level to build self-managing institutions and co-operatives. Really autonomous power – wielding basic organizations called communal councils (generally consisting of 200 to 400 families in urban areas and fifty to one hundred families in rural areas) dotted all the regions of Venezuela. The ideas of Gandhi and Lohia have found a new home in Latin American countries. Leaders are giving a call to learn from indigenous communities the ways to communal solidarity and local empowerment. This new dawn of 21st century socialism can be enriched if the socialists of India and the Latin American countries interact with each other. Gandhi, J.P and Lohia's ideas will undoubtedly help in the sprouting of healthy shoots of socialism in the lands of Bolivar, Chavez, Castro and Marcos. A great thinker Labowitz says, "Every society has its unique characteristics – its unique histories, traditions (including religious and indigenous ones), its mythologies, its heroes who have struggled for a better world, and the particular capacities that people have developed in the process of struggle".

The only country in the world which can develop evolutionary socialism is India. Evolutionary socialism only can harness the pleasure principle of nature (Sukha) and thus stem the shrinkage of the human brain and the ecological devastations that threaten humanity. Values which developed among the matricentric gatherers which led to the formation of the love – dominated (non-violent) humane societies, can only save mankind from sure destruction. India had heroes like Mahavir, Buddha, Gandhi and Gymno-sophist philosophers who had developed Yogic YAMA values and worked for the welfare of all living beings. Vedic India was a hunter's land and the lavishly ritualistic caste- untouchability-ridden India of the Gupta age (the age of puranas) has not much to contribute to evolutionary socialism. If evolutionary socialism (ANWIKSHIKI) dies in the land of its birth, it will be the worst calamity that endangers the existence of all the species on this earth. Anthropology tells us that in Amazonian lands, communities still exist which give supreme importance to relationship. ".....towards the end of achieving health, wealth and safety, Amazonian people aim to master not nature, but as many as possible of their personal relationships with other beings, human or otherwise, in the world." (Rapport and Overing).

Yogis and Yoginis, having plenty of leisure (The original Affluent – Society – by M. Shahlin) developed the techniques of various types of meditations which enhanced their creative mental powers, giving them the capacity to have full control over their negative emotions. They had only loving attitude towards all living beings. They had perfectly tranquil minds which nothing could disturb. They developed all the qualities that make man / woman a uniquely creative individual and also an intensely social being. The Buddha was such a personality. Mahavir was another. There were many lesser personalities whom history did not take into consideration (Gandhi, J.P. & Lohia did not practice meditation but still were the worthy heirs of the most important Yogic values).

India's rich legacy still awaits deep exploration by the thinkers and historians of the world. This Anwikhikian legacy alone can teach humanity the developed evolutionary path of nature. Many of Latin America's indigenous people can guide us initially because their communities evolved naturally. But pre-Vedic India, free from the evils of the caste system and that philosophical aberration called 'karmic rebirth' proved that the supreme ideal 'SUKHA' was based on the twins: universal love for all living beings and tranquility of mind.

The action or karma – transcending MOKSHA ideal which haunted all the post – Vedic philosophies of India was, though other –worldly, still culturally attached to the Brahminic rituals ( The Gita- 18th canto). It hypocritically approved violence using the plea that renouncing the fruit of karma is equivalent to karma- lessness (The Gita). It justified the caste system and untouchability. The hunter society thinkers invented it to displace SUKHA. They debased Sukha by throwing the patriarchal dust of ignominy on its matricentric value of equal sexual freedom enjoyed by women (Charbak). Lohia always welcomed matricentric values. He vehemently denounced untouchability and the caste system. He was this- worldly and never bothered about Moksha.