

From Decadence to Destruction

Classification of Matter

In the physical world, matter manifests itself in four forms:

- Matter that is totally inert to external stimuli e.g. earth.
- Matter which responds to external stimuli to a limited extent, e.g. the flora. It feels and reacts to them. It draws its nourishment out of them. It procreates and multiplies itself. But it can't protect its kind. It has no apparatus called brain.
- Matter in which there is a developed mechanism called brain, e.g. fauna. The brain is a complicated organ that is connected with the nerves of the body. It receives the stimuli through its nerves, judges for itself, protecting its offspring and kith and kin.
- Matter in which intellect is highly developed, i.e. man. Man has a brain that does not depend on instinct alone. It can learn from experiences: it stores the knowledge, differentiates and discriminates and utilizes it for preserving not only himself but also his kind. It can find ways and means of harmoniously adjusting itself to the environment. It can take stock not only of itself but also of the entire cosmos and the laws governing it.

These four forms provide a basis for scientific categorization of matter according to the degree of consciousness that is manifest in it.

Classification of Men

Such categorization equally applies to humans. All men are not equal in intellect though though they are physically similar in appearance. There are

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some in whom consciousness is so undeveloped and inert that they are loath to leading an active life. Such men are so much concentrated in themselves that they would not utilize opportunities to their advantage. There are others who are so self seeking that beyond their own comforts and career, they take nothing into consideration. There are, however, some more developed in consciousness than these, who are active only in enjoying the bounty of the world but have not developed the spirit of sacrificing their comforts for their country, kith and kin. There are, again, some whose consciousness impels them to take a role of protecting their country or their kind, even at the sacrifice of their individual comfort or career.

Consciousness is highly developed in the few who take stock of the laws of nature and society. Realizing the rhythm of the universe, they tune their lives in complete harmony with nature. Needless to say, philosophers, as Pluto would call them, are most suited to be at the helm of human activities and to give mankind proper direction. The ancient Hindu classified the human society into four categories according to the degree of consciousness that dawned on each individual. They categorized them into four shades of people according to the light each possessed and called them the four Varnas: Sudra, Vaasa, Kshatriya and Brahmin. They graded people according to their respective attainment and allotted duties appropriate to his ability and natural bent of mind. Such categorization has a scientific basis and was very necessary not only for an orderly life, but also for peace, prosperity and progress of society. There was no element of heredity attached to Varna nor was one condemned to a particular Varna lifelong. The scriptures prescribed ways of life that would be conducive to develop one's consciousness.

The Vedas and the Puranas are replete with instances of persons born in a lower grade attaining a higher Varna. e.g. Ratnakara becoming Maharshi Valmiki or the son of a Vaisya woman becoming Maharshi Vyas. Speaking about the division of society into different Varnas, Swami Vivekananda says, "This system of division into different Varnas is the higher stepping stone to a civilization, making one rise higher and higher in proportion to one' s learning and culture."

Creation of Castes

Communalism corroded into the social science of categorizing mankind into Varnas. Brahmins introduced heredity into it and made it a profession for their children to inherit. The Vedas directly and through the parables of Jabala and Satyakama have denounced the tendency. But, inspite of it, communalism gained ground turning Varna into the caste system. In course of time, to safeguard professional interest, caste rigidly developed making it impossible for any member of lower caste to attain the status of a higher Varna. Inter-caste marriages were forbidden. People pursuing intellectual profession looked down upon men doing manual work. Menial workers came to be looked down upon and became untouchables for the higher castes. Intellectual pursuits became the privilege of a class, which held itself as a superior race created by divine law to lord over the rest in society. This led to incompetent persons occupying positions of national leadership. Persons began to covet offices not for the onerous discharge of duties but for power, position, prestige and the material benefits attached to them. The Kshatriyas followed suit and handed over the throne to their sons to whom the corrupt Brahmins readily granted sanction. Social and political administration thus degenerated Indian social and political life and ripped it into a thousand shreds, making unity impossible at any level.

Corruption

Brahmins, lacking the cosmic vision to claim spiritual leadership of society, clung to their offices and professions simply by masquerading the formalities of scriptural rites and rituals. They prescribed grand and pompous rites not for spiritual upliftment of society but to make material gains for themselves out of the gifts and donation laid down as necessary accompaniments. Penances in the form of pecuniary penalties were imposed in the name of spiritual atonement. The element of mysticism was introduced to spiritualism to cover up the hollowness of spiritual leaders and to keep it beyond the reach of the common man.

Indian society oppressed with such abuse by the Brahminic leadership revolted and gave birth to Buddha, who denounced such practices as simply

nonsense. Buddha freed the common man from the oppressive communal rule of the Brahmins. He laid down rules of righteous conduct as the very essence of spiritualism, which the common man would practice in his day to day life without troubling himself with the intricate laws of the scriptures or the mystic concept of God. As a great liberator of the masses, Buddha cut across the caste system and in unmistakable terms pronounced that a person would never be considered to be Brahmin simply due to the accident of his being born of Brahmin parents.

Na Chahm Brahmanam Bruim Jonisam Mattisambhan.

Dhammapada(14)

The Golden age of Indian society during the Mauryan period owes much to the upliftment of public morals and the sense of liberty which Buddhism brought to Indian life.

Buddha immobilized

Buddhism, however, failed to recognize Indian society on the scientific basis of four Varnas. The communalists accepted the Buddha, ironically, as an incarnation of God. The universal esteem that Buddha enjoyed as the liberator of the masses was contrary to what they practiced by reintroducing caste system into Indian life and regaining for themselves the lost leadership. The declining curve, which had been halted for a while by the wave of Buddhist culture, once again reappeared, making the common man lose interest in social life. He began to consider life to be a curse, a Maya, to be born as a human being and human life as an evil, to escape. This brought about an attitude of social detachment and indifference for the common man, an attitude of individualism, which made India so very vulnerable to all organized gangsters to freely plunder, conquer and rule over this country for centuries. The Brahmins and Kshatriyas licked the boots of Yavanas as much as did the Sudras.

Objective Lesson

Indian history presents an objective lesson in the evils of communalism.

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The communalist, in his love for some material gain, seeks to acquire a high social position. He seeks to possess goods, power, position, prestige and seeks to secure it all for his sons and scions, kith and kins, using any means. What the communalist gains in the short run is lost in the long run, bringing colossal loss to society as it disintegrates society in no time. He places incompetent persons in key positions by stringent laws and harsh rules. In short, it corrupts public administration, making social life hell. People are driven into desperation. In spite of being the richest living civilization with vast landscape, formidable natural protection, unbounded resources and teeming millions, India lost her political freedom and became among the poorest countries, full of ignorance and superstitions. India became a country of robbers and beggars, a country oblivious of her past and desperate about her future, with darkness enveloping all around her. Religious leaders and social reformers have time and again held massive movements to rid India of the evils of communalism but the evil persists producing the downward curve, dangerous for one and all, spelling disaster and dismay at each step.

Beware

Mahatma Gandhi raised a powerful movement against communalism. This mass awakening frightened the communalist who has now adopted the usual trick of the devil quoting scriptures. While paying homage to Mahatma, the communalist seeks to retain the old ways in a new form. Favouritism, nepotism and slave like surrender to the man in power are the order of public life. The practise of communalism has already landed us in complete desolation, the ascent of the modern-day communalist is doomed to lead us to total destruction. Sadhu, Savadhan! (Beware of the Holy Man!)

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