

The Resurgent India

A Monthly National Review

October 2020



“Let us all work for the Greatness of India.”
– The Mother

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Successful Future

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella

Common name: Indian blanket, Blanket flower, Fire-wheels

Contents

A Perspective on Modern Polity in the Light of Sri Aurobindo : Part II	6
II. The Rational System of Governance, Democracy, Socialism and Communism, the Experience of the Last One Hundred Years and Its Likely Culmination.....	6
1. The Individualistic Age of Reason and Its Two Ideas of a Master Potency.....	7
2. The Birth and Development of the Democratic Idea and Democracy in Europe....	8
3. The Experience of Communism in Russia and China	13
4. The Nature of Modern Progress	15
5. A Deeper View of the Modern World – The Religion of the Humanity and Its Future	19
HIGHLIGHTS	27
1. Hathras Case – Playing Politics	27
2. Pakistan – A Shambled State	29
3. France Coming Under Islamic Siege	32
4. Changing Situation in Kashmir and Ladakh	36

A DECLARATION

We do not fight against any creed, any religion.

We do not fight against any form of government.

We do not fight against any social class.

We do not fight against any nation or civilisation.

We are fighting division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood.

We are endeavouring to establish upon earth union, knowledge, consciousness, Truth, and we fight whatever opposes the advent of this new creation of Light, Peace, Truth and Love.

— The Mother

(Collected works of the Mother, Vol. 13, pp. 124-25)

A PERSPECTIVE ON MODERN POLITY IN THE LIGHT OF SRI AUROBINDO (2)

II. THE RATIONAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY, SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM, THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS AND ITS LIKELY CULMINATION

“Governments, societies, kings, police, judges, institutions, churches, laws, customs, armies are temporary necessities imposed on us for a few groups of centuries because God has concealed His face from us. When it appears to us again in its truth & beauty, then in that light they will vanish.” (CWSA 12: 465)

Talk of 18.05.1926

“At one time it was thought that the mind could grasp the whole Truth and solve all problems that face humanity. The mind had its full play and we find that it is not able to solve the problems. Now, we find that it is possible to go beyond mind and there is the Supermind which is the organisation of the Infinite consciousness. There you find the Truth of all that is in mind and life.

For instance, you find that Democracy, Socialism and Communism have each some truth behind it, but it is not the whole Truth. What you have to do is to find out the forces that are at work and understand what it is of which all these mental ideas and ‘isms’ are a mere indication. You have to know the mistakes which people commit in dealing with the truth of these forces and the truth that is behind the mistakes also. I am, at present, speaking against democracy. That does not mean that there is no truth behind it – and I know it, yet I speak against democracy, because that mentality is at present

against the Truth that is trying to come down.

In order to get the true form – and if you want the unhampered play of the Higher Truth – what you have to do is to be very open and ready for changing all your ideas, personal, social and national.” (Purani, A.B.: Talks with Sri Aurobindo, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2007, p. 343)

1. THE INDIVIDUALISTIC AGE OF REASON AND ITS TWO IDEAS OF A MASTER POTENCY

The individualistic age of reason had in its discovery of the individual fixed among the idea forces of the future two of a master potency which cannot be eliminated by any temporary action against them. “The first of these, now universally accepted, is the democratic conception of the right of all individuals as members of the society to the full life and the full development of which they are individually capable. It is no longer possible that we should accept as an ideal any arrangement by which certain classes of society should arrogate development and full social fruition to themselves while assigning a bare and barren function of service alone to others. It is now fixed that social development and well-being mean the development and well-being of all the individuals in the society and not merely a flourishing of the community in the mass which resolves itself really into the splendour and power of one or two classes. This conception has been accepted in full by all progressive nations and is the basis of the present socialistic tendency of the world.” (CWSA 25: 24) The second idea having a deeper truth behind it is that, “...the individual is not merely a social unit; his existence, his right and claim to live and grow are not founded solely on his social work and function. He is not merely a member of a human pack, hive or ant-hill; he is something in himself, a soul, a being, who has to fulfil his own individual truth and law as well as his natural

or his assigned part in the truth and law of the collective existence.¹ He demands freedom, space, initiative for his soul, for his nature, for that puissant and tremendous thing which society so much distrusts and has laboured in the past either to suppress altogether or to relegate to the purely spiritual field, an individual thought, will and conscience. If he is to merge these eventually, it cannot be into the dominating thought, will and conscience of others, but into something beyond into which he and all must be both allowed and helped freely to grow. That is an idea, a truth which, intellectually recognised and given its full exterior and superficial significance by Europe, agrees at its root with the profoundest and highest spiritual conceptions of Asia and has a large part to play in the moulding of the future.” (CWSA 25: 24-25)

This idea is at the root of the modern conception of Human Rights, Democracy, Freedom and the push for universal education. We have seen in the earlier section how the age where reason has been a dominant social renovator and creator has passed through successive stages which have been the very logic of its growth. Beginning with democratic individualism it passed on to democratic socialism and, in some cases, eventually to communism.

2. THE BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA AND DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

The democratic idea was brought to the forefront of European consciousness by the famous French Revolution which began in 1789 with its slogan of Liberty, Equality and

¹ This is no longer recognised by the new order, Fascist or Communistic, – here the individual is reduced to a cell or atom of the social body. “We have destroyed” proclaims a German exponent “the false view that men are individual beings; there is no liberty of individuals, there is only liberty of nations or races.”

Fraternity. Before the coming of the French Revolution, the European society had been permeated, not with liberty but with bondage and repression; not with equality, but with inequality and injustice; not with brotherhood, but with selfishness and violence. The world was not ready then and still does not seem to be ready for it because of the inherent difficulty in approaching the above triangle through Fraternity – the base. It has only been approached unsuccessfully through the apex of Liberty and Equality. “The French were ignorant of this practical principle; they made liberty the basis, brotherhood the superstructure, founding the triangle upon its apex. For owing to the dominance of Greece & Rome in their imagination they were saturated with the idea of liberty and only formally admitted the Christian and Asiatic principle of brotherhood. They built according to their knowledge, but the triangle has to be reversed before it can stand permanently.” (CWSA 01: 512-13)

Actually the birth and development of democratic forms of governments in Europe may be looked upon as the result of the European mind’s attempt to preserve and give form to the idea of liberty brought to the forefront by the French Revolution. But it was never realised then and is still not realised that, “Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty; on the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organised annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. It may be that from the more violent and brutal forms of despotic oppression which were associated with those systems, democracy has indeed delivered those nations which have been fortunate enough to achieve liberal forms of government, and that is no doubt a great gain. It revives now only in periods of revolution and excitement, often in the

form of mob tyranny or a savage revolutionary or reactionary repression. But there is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematised, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading. The tyranny of the majority has become a familiar phrase and its deadening effects have been depicted with a great force of resentment by certain of the modern intellectuals; but what the future promises us is something more formidable still, the tyranny of the whole, of the self-hypnotised mass over its constituent groups and units." (CWSA 25: 508-09) The truth of this becomes evident if one closely looks at the present functioning of government in autocratic democratic Russia and totalitarian Communist China. It seems that this kind of vehement reassertion of humanity's need of a king, crowned or uncrowned, and a ruling and administering oligarchy has been the last outcome of the two centuries of democracy and a century of the supposed rise of the proletariat to power.

Europe's failure in truly giving form to the triple godhead of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity is perhaps one of the most important causes that led to the last two World Wars. **Fraternity is the only base on which both equality and liberty can be built and it is because of the absence of the true spirit of this godhead (which exists only in the soul) that all attempts steeped in the spirit of Western culture and based on taking either equality (Communitic or Socialistic forms of authoritarianisms) or liberty (capitalistic democratic forms) as their starting point or base have failed to establish the triple-godhead.**

The basic reason behind this kind of difficult equation is simple. Men are created equal in the spirit but not in their outer nature and are endowed with varying assortment of abilities,

capacities and qualities. **People who are endowed with a strong vital nature, and consequently a powerful will, have always been able to stamp their will on all those around them. Such people will always come to occupy positions of importance and authority in any walk of life – especially in the political and economic fields because of the special attraction these have for the human vital ego – regardless of the nature of the outer form of a government or society. The past experience of humanity amply bears it out and the European experience of the last century only confirms it beyond any shadow of doubt. The crux of the matter is that the wolves will always dominate the sheep no matter where and in what kind of physical arrangement or structure they are put together.** We all know how nature has put them together in humanity with a perfect similarity in the outer appearance and with no other distinguishable features. They differ only in capacities and force, the things which become visible only in action and manifestation and then who – except perhaps some other wolves who would have their own axe to grind – can stop them, certainly not the sheep. **The only approach that can possibly tame the human wolf is the approach through the heart – not from its surface parts but from its depths where the soul has its station and where all feel oneness. Once the deep and inherent feelings of Love and Brotherhood are awakened in human hearts, the discords automatically begin to dissolve and humanity can smoothly advance towards the triple-godhead because it is only Love that can prevent the misuse of Liberty and it is only Brotherhood which can make Equality tolerable.** Socialism and Communism in eastern Europe gave supreme importance to equality but failed to achieve either equality or the other arm of the triad – liberty. Capitalistic western Europe gave the supreme importance to liberty but it also failed to achieve either liberty or equality. “...Two ideas of

that formula Europe has pursued with some eagerness, Liberty and Equality; but she has totally rejected the third and most necessary, Brotherhood. In its place she has erected the idol of her heart, Machinery, and called it Association; for Association without Brotherhood is merely Machinery.” (CWSA 01: 547-48)

It is really impossible to change humanity by political machinery – however ingeniously it may have been designed. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, “This erring race of human beings dreams always of perfecting their environment by the machinery of government and society; but it is only by the perfection of the soul within that the outer environment can be perfected. What thou art within, that outside thee thou shalt enjoy; no machinery can rescue thee from the law of thy being.” (CWSA 12: 468) He further declares, “A perfected human world cannot be created by men or composed of men who are themselves imperfect. Even if all our actions are scrupulously regulated by education or law or social or political machinery, what will be achieved is a regulated pattern of minds, a fabricated pattern of lives, a cultivated pattern of conduct; but a conformity of this kind cannot change, cannot re-create the man within, it cannot carve or cut out a perfect soul or a perfect thinking man or a perfect or growing living being. For soul and mind and life are powers of being and can grow but cannot be cut out or made; an outer process or formation can assist or can express soul and mind and life but cannot create or develop it. One can indeed help the being to grow, not by an attempt at manufacture, but by throwing on it stimulating influences or by lending to it one’s forces of soul or mind or life; but even so the growth must still come from within it, determining from there what shall be made of these influences and forces, and not from outside. This is the first truth that our creative zeal and aspiration have to learn, otherwise all our human endeavour is foredoomed to turn in

a futile circle and can end only in a success that is a specious failure.” (CWSA 22: 1058-59)

It is in contradiction to this inviolable truth of Nature that the collective experiments at perfection had been organised during the nineteenth century with predictable outcomes.

3. THE EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNISM IN RUSSIA AND CHINA

“Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped: as is his material, so is his method. Let it help to transmute itself into nobler and purer metal, his ways with it will be gentler and sweeter, much loftier and fairer its uses.” (CWSA 13: 210)

In Russia for seven decades and in China for three decades, the Communist model of economy and society got a free and full chance of working itself out before it was abandoned. At its inception a dictatorship of the proletariat was established and the right to private property was abolished to achieve equality and in order to maintain the equality so achieved, the free market model of the economy which – given the huge natural differences between the capacities of individuals – automatically engenders inequality was replaced by a mechanism of detailed centralised economic planning instituted by a huge governmental bureaucratic machine. This huge machine was entrusted with the task of solving the three basic problems of What, How and for Whom to produce which an economy must solve satisfactorily if it is at all going to function. This problem which is just too huge, vast and complex even for the most developed and capable human intelligence to solve satisfactorily, gets solved smoothly and automatically by

a market mechanism due to its free and plastic arrangements utterly sensitive to the preferences of consumers and producers to which it responds through necessary changes in the demand, supply and the prices of various goods and services. It should be clear from the above that no consciously designed mental arrangement can ever get even close to the efficiency of the market in responding to the three basic questions or problems faced by an economic system. A deliberate – but limited – intervention in the market in a socialist economy was justified on the ground that, when left to itself, the solution arrived at by the market – given its sensitivity to the varying and hugely differing abilities and capacities of the players in the economy – is found to be an unideal solution because it gives rise to glaring inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth among the individuals. But it was found that no amount of intervention in the market mechanism – so long as it was respectful of freedom and right to property of individuals – could really achieve much on this front. Therefore, a complete abandonment of these rights and the replacement of the free market by a detailed centralised planning was resorted to in the Communist countries. As should have been expected (but was not in the zeal and blind enthusiasm for Communism), the bureaucratic machine could not at all match the skill and efficiency of a free market mechanism in answering to the basic problems faced by an economic system. The result was an ever increasing inefficiency leading to a huge physical and psychological suffering for the masses. The inevitable result was the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1990-91 and a painful transition to an open market system. The east European countries followed suit and Communism swiftly evaporated from Europe.

In the case of Communist China, something entirely different happened. It stuck to its authoritarian Communist

political system but began, in the late 1970's, to gradually introduce the market mechanism (allowing private property and entrepreneurship) in various sectors of the economy – a system based, increasingly, on economic incentives and disincentives rather than the brute force to make people work. As a result, China has not only avoided the fate of the Soviet Union and other east European Communist countries, but at the same time, its economy has undergone an unprecedented miraculous transformation during the last four decades. Due to its huge unexploited economic potential and its still centralised but pragmatic – free of all dogma – management of the economic system, China has been the fastest growing economy in the world. Since the beginning of this century, the Chinese economic miracle and its overall progress in all the fields of national endeavour has so impressed the rest of the world that the Chinese nationalistic – no longer Communistic except in name – authoritarian model of government is put forward, in some quarters, as being much better equipped to face and overcome the most serious environmental and other problems faced by the world at large than the individualistic democratic model of the West which at present is in crisis in many countries and faces the prospect of a collapse in the near future.

After the failure of Communism in Europe, democracy and capitalism came to be, almost, universally acknowledged as the systems best suited to modern mankind. However, as should have been expected, the naked and unabashed pursuit of capitalism during the decades after the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union has been increasingly leading humanity towards an ever higher and higher level of a new kind of barbarism – the barbarism of the utilitarian economic man – which is proving dangerous not only for the existence of the capitalistic economic system – which has its own

irremediable contradictions and shortcomings – but even for the very existence of the human race.

4. THE NATURE OF MODERN PROGRESS

The experience of past one hundred years clearly shows that the fundamental issue before us is not of the right form of the government – we have seen the working of every possible form of government (democratic, authoritarian or some form in between) – but of the spirit of governance, which means that those who would rule would not do so just formally in the name of the people using some outer machinery (elections, voting, parliaments) to sanctify their authority but would actually be very sensitive to the feelings of the common masses – not in appearance only (like in the modern democratic forms of government) but truly. A time must come, and soon, when people will no longer remain wholly oblivious of the reality of things and continue to be fooled by appearances or impressed by the empty, idealistic notions of the sanctity of the elected bodies (parliaments, assemblies, councils, etc.) or the sacred written documents such as constitutions, Laws, etc., for, as pointed out by Sri Aurobindo, “Constitutions can only disguise facts, they cannot abrogate them: for whatever ideas the form of the constitution may embody, its working is always that of the actually realised forces which can use it with effect. Most governments either have now or have passed through a democratic form, but nowhere yet has there been a real democracy; it has been everywhere the propertied and professional classes and the bourgeoisie who governed in the name of the people.” (CWSA 25: 400)

“There is then a radical defect somewhere in the process of human civilisation; but where is its seat and by what issue shall we come out of the perpetual cycle of failure?... It is found that civilisation has created many more problems than

it can solve, has multiplied excessive needs and desires the satisfaction of which it has not sufficient vital force to sustain, has developed a jungle of claims and artificial instincts in the midst of which life loses its way and has no longer any sight of its aim. The more advanced minds begin to declare civilisation a failure and society begins to feel that they are right. But the remedy proposed is either a halt or even a retrogression, which means in the end more confusion, stagnation and decay, or a reversion to "Nature" which is impossible or can only come about by a cataclysm and disintegration of society; or even a cure is aimed at by carrying artificial remedies to their acme, by more and more Science, more and more mechanical devices, a more scientific organisation of life, which means that the engine shall replace life, the arbitrary logical reason substitute itself for complex Nature and man be saved by machinery. As well say that to carry a disease to its height is the best way to its cure.

It may be suggested on the contrary and with some chance of knocking at the right door that the radical defect of all our systems is their deficient development of just that which society has most neglected, the spiritual element, the soul in man which is his true being. Even to have a healthy body, a strong vitality and an active and clarified mind and a field for their action and enjoyment, carries man no more than a certain distance; afterwards he flags and tires for want of a real self-finding, a satisfying aim for his action and progress. These three things do not make the sum of a complete manhood; they are means to an ulterior end and cannot be made for ever an aim in themselves. Add a rich emotional life governed by a well-ordered ethical standard, and still there is the savour of something left out, some supreme good which these things mean, but do not in themselves arrive at, do not discover till they go beyond themselves. Add a religious system and

a widespread spirit of belief and piety, and still you have not found the means of social salvation. All these things human society has developed, but none of them has saved it from disillusionment, weariness and decay. The ancient intellectual cultures of Europe ended in disruptive doubt and sceptical impotence, the pieties of Asia in stagnation and decline. Modern society has discovered a new principle of survival, progress, but the aim of that progress it has never discovered, – unless the aim is always more knowledge, more equipment, convenience and comfort, more enjoyment, a greater and still greater complexity of the social economy, a more and more cumbrously opulent life. But these things must lead in the end where the old led, for they are only the same thing on a larger scale; they lead in a circle, that is to say, nowhere: they do not escape from the cycle of birth, growth, decay and death, they do not really find the secret of self-prolongation by constant self-renewal which is the principle of immortality, but only seem for a moment to find it by the illusion of a series of experiments each of which ends in disappointment. That so far has been the nature of modern progress.” (CWSA 25: 223-24)

If human beings are ever going to truly come out of the repeated rounds of wasted efforts, emotions, untold suffering and useless strivings, they must first realize that the working of things in this universe is such that all works from within without and that nothing can really manifest unless it is already within. Therefore, what they (human beings) are within that alone they shall enjoy outside. It can never be otherwise. Essentially, there are hardly any world problems that cannot be traced to human agency and which could not be overcome, to a great extent, by appropriate changes in human behaviour brought about from within. The root cause of all our problems – even of the most external – is the severe

inner constraints on our vision and values which are, to a great extent, the byproducts of our acute selfish concentration on our surface selves. As things stand at present, we contemplate changing almost everything on this earth – the whole media is full of the deafening noise of intellectuals and political and social leaders about such changes – but ourselves wherein lies the only key to the solution of all our problems. There is not a single country – out of an aggregate of more than 200 on the globe – which at all concerns itself with real “man-making”.

The one way out of this problem is that an increasing number of people become conscious of this deeper aspect of our problems and make a determined move in their own way to address them. As the evolutionary crisis deepens – especially in relation to ethical and moral infrastructure – it may lead to a real awakening to this need, intense and critical enough to enable it to become at least one of the most important goals to be pursued by the governments across the world.

5. A DEEPER VIEW OF THE MODERN WORLD – THE RELIGION OF THE HUMANITY AND ITS FUTURE

“A religion of humanity may be either an intellectual and sentimental ideal, a living dogma with intellectual, psychological and practical effects, or else a spiritual aspiration and rule of living, partly the sign, partly the cause of a change of soul in humanity. The intellectual religion of humanity already to a certain extent exists, partly as a conscious creed in the minds of a few, partly as a potent shadow in the consciousness of the race. It is the shadow of a spirit that is yet unborn, but is preparing for its birth. This material world of ours, besides its fully embodied things of the present, is peopled by such powerful shadows, ghosts of things dead and the spirit of things yet unborn. The ghosts of things dead are very troublesome actualities and they now abound, ghosts of dead religions,

dead arts, dead moralities, dead political theories, which still claim either to keep their rotting bodies or to animate partly the existing body of things. Repeating obstinately their sacred formulas of the past, they hypnotise backward-looking minds and daunt even the progressive portion of humanity.... The religion of humanity was mind-born in the eighteenth century, the *mānasa putra*² of the rationalist thinkers who brought it forward as a substitute for the formal spiritualism of ecclesiastical Christianity. It tried to give itself a body in Positivism, which was an attempt to formulate the dogmas of this religion, but on too heavily and severely rationalistic a basis for acceptance even by an Age of Reason. Humanitarianism has been its most prominent emotional result. Philanthropy, social service and other kindred activities have been its outward expression of good works. Democracy, socialism, pacificism are to a great extent its by-products or at least owe much of their vigour to its inner presence.” (CWSA 25: 564-65)

A. THE INTELLECTUAL RELIGION OF HUMANITY – ITS FUNDAMENTAL IDEA, ITS WORK AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS

“The fundamental idea is that mankind is the godhead to be worshipped and served by man and that the respect, the service, the progress of the human being and human life are the chief duty and the chief aim of the human spirit. No other idol, neither the nation, the State, the family nor anything else ought to take its place; they are only worthy of respect so far as they are images of the human spirit and enshrine its presence and aid its self-manifestation. But where the cult of these idols seeks to usurp the place of the spirit and makes demands inconsistent with its service, they should be put aside. No injunctions of old creeds, religious, political, social or cultural, are valid when they go against its claims. Science

² Mind-born child, an idea and expression of Indian Puranic cosmology.

even, though it is one of the chief modern idols, must not be allowed to make claims contrary to its ethical temperament and aim, for science is only valuable in so far as it helps and serves by knowledge and progress the religion of humanity. War, capital punishment, the taking of human life, cruelty of all kinds whether committed by the individual, the State or society, not only physical cruelty, but moral cruelty, the degradation of any human being or any class of human beings under whatever specious plea or in whatever interest, the oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class, of nation by nation and all those habits of life and institutions of society of a similar kind which religion and ethics formerly tolerated or even favoured in practice, whatever they might do in their ideal rule or creed, are crimes against the religion of humanity, abominable to its ethical mind, forbidden by its primary tenets, to be fought against always, in no degree to be tolerated. Man must be sacred to man regardless of all distinctions of race, creed, colour, nationality, status, political or social advancement. The body of man is to be respected, made immune from violence and outrage, fortified by science against disease and preventable death. The life of man is to be held sacred, preserved, strengthened, ennobled, uplifted. The heart of man is to be held sacred also, given scope, protected from violation, from suppression, from mechanisation, freed from belittling influences. The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training and self-development and organised in the play of its powers for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in the persons of men and nations and mankind. This, speaking largely, is the idea and spirit of the intellectual religion of humanity." (CWSA 25: 565-66)

“One has only to compare human life and thought and feeling a century or two ago with human life, thought and feeling in the pre-war period to see how great an influence this religion of humanity has exercised and how fruitful a work it has done. It accomplished rapidly many things which orthodox religion failed to do effectively, largely because it acted as a constant intellectual and critical solvent, an unsparing assailant of the thing that is and an unflinching champion of the thing to be, faithful always to the future, while orthodox religion allied itself with the powers of the present, even of the past, bound itself by its pact with them and could act only at best as a moderating but not as a reforming force. Moreover, this religion has faith in humanity and its earthly future and can therefore aid its earthly progress, while the orthodox religions looked with eyes of pious sorrow and gloom on the earthly life of man and were very ready to bid him bear peacefully and contentedly, even to welcome its crudities, cruelties, oppressions, tribulations as a means for learning to appreciate and for earning the better life which will be given us hereafter. Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles, and this religion of humanity, even without taking bodily shape or a compelling form or a visible means of self-effectuation, was yet able to effect comparatively much of what it set out to do. It to some degree humanised society, humanised law and punishment, humanised the outlook of man on man, abolished legalised torture and the cruder forms of slavery, raised those who were depressed and fallen, gave large hopes to humanity, stimulated philanthropy and charity and the service of mankind, encouraged everywhere the desire of freedom, put a curb on oppression and greatly minimised its more brutal expressions. It had almost succeeded in humanising war and would perhaps have succeeded entirely but for the contrary trend of modern Science. It made it possible for

man to conceive of a world free from war as imaginable even without waiting for the Christian millennium. At any rate, this much change came about that, while peace was formerly a rare interlude of constant war, war became an interlude, if a much too frequent interlude of peace, though as yet only of an armed peace. That may not be a great step, but still it was a step forward. It gave new conceptions of the dignity of the human being and opened new ideas and new vistas of his education, self-development and potentiality. It spread enlightenment; it made man feel more his responsibility for the progress and happiness of the race; it raised the average self-respect and capacity of mankind; it gave hope to the serf, self-assertion to the downtrodden and made the labourer in his manhood the potential equal of the rich and powerful. True, if we compare what is with what should be, the actual achievement with the ideal, all this will seem only a scanty work of preparation.” (CWSA 25: 566-67)

In order to accomplish more “...this idea and religion of humanity has to make itself more explicit, insistent and categorically imperative. For otherwise it can only work with clarity in the minds of the few and with the mass it will be only a modifying influence, but will not be the rule of human life. And so long as that is so, it cannot entirely prevail over its own principal enemy. That enemy, the enemy of all real religion, is human egoism, the egoism of the individual, the egoism of class and nation. These it could for a time soften, modify, force to curb their more arrogant, open and brutal expressions, oblige to adopt better institutions, but not to give place to the love of mankind, not to recognise a real unity between man and man. For that essentially must be the aim of the religion of humanity, as it must be the earthly aim of all human religion, love, mutual recognition of human brotherhood, a living sense of human oneness and practice of human oneness in thought, feeling

and life, the ideal which was expressed first some thousands of years ago in the ancient Vedic hymn and must always remain the highest injunction of the Spirit within us to human life upon earth. Till that is brought about, the religion of humanity remains unaccomplished. With that done, the one necessary psychological change will have been effected without which no formal and mechanical, no political and administrative unity can be real and secure.” (CWSA 25: 567-68)

B. THE FUTURE OF THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY – AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION FOR ITS FULFILMENT IN THE LIFE OF THE HUMAN RACE

“The weakness of the intellectual idea, even when it supports itself by an appeal to the sentiments and emotions, is that it does not get at the centre of man’s being. The intellect and the feelings are only instruments of the being and they may be the instruments of either its lower and external form or of the inner and higher man, servants of the ego or channels of the soul. The aim of the religion of humanity was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition; that aim was and it is still to recreate human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality and fraternity. None of these has really been won in spite of all the progress that has been achieved. The liberty that has been so loudly proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward, mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practicable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at the best a comradeship of labour. This is because the idea of humanity has been obliged in an intellectual age to mask its true character of a religion

and a thing of the soul and the spirit and to appeal to the vital and physical mind of man rather than his inner being. It has limited his effort to the attempt to revolutionise political and social institutions and to bring about such a modification of the ideas and sentiments of the common mind of mankind as would make these institutions practicable; it has worked at the machinery of human life and on the outer mind much more than upon the soul of the race. It has laboured to establish a political, social and legal liberty, equality and mutual help in an equal association.

But though these aims are of great importance in their own field, they are not the central thing; they can only be secure when founded upon a change of the inner human nature and inner way of living; they are themselves of importance only as means for giving a greater scope and a better field for man's development towards that change and, when it is once achieved, as an outward expression of the larger inward life. Freedom, equality, brotherhood are three godheads of the soul; they cannot be really achieved through the external machinery of society or by man so long as he lives only in the individual and the communal ego. When the ego claims liberty, it arrives at competitive individualism. When it asserts equality, it arrives first at strife, then at an attempt to ignore the variations of Nature, and, as the sole way of doing that successfully, it constructs an artificial and machine-made society. A society that pursues liberty as its ideal is unable to achieve equality; a society that aims at equality will be obliged to sacrifice liberty. For the ego to speak of fraternity is for it to speak of something contrary to its nature. All that it knows is association for the pursuit of common egoistic ends and the utmost that it can arrive at is a closer organisation for the equal distribution of labour, production, consumption and enjoyment.

Yet is brotherhood the real key to the triple gospel of the idea of humanity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.” (CWSA 25: 568-70)

“One thing seems to me clear that the future will deny that principle of individual selfishness and collective self-interest on which European society has hitherto been based and our renovated systems will be based on the renunciation of individual selfishness and the organisation of brotherhood, – principles common to Christianity, Mahomedanism and Hinduism.” (CWSA 12: 58)

(to be continued...)

HIGHLIGHTS

1. HATHRAS CASE – PLAYING POLITICS:

The recent Hathras case in Uttar Pradesh petered out soon after it became a burning national issue, having become a focal point of political agendas. The case involved the alleged gangrape and murder of a Dalit girl – belonging to Balmiki community – in Hathras. The alleged accused include a Rajput boy and his associates. While the case occurred in mid-September, it became the focal point of public attention only after 10-11 days when it was sensationalized by the Bhim Army.

The refusal of UP Police to give way to Bhim Army chief to meet the victim who was admitted in a Delhi hospital escalated things. After her death, the secretive cremation of the victim by the police, was widely criticized across the country. The entire case snowballed into a massive controversy, used by many to settle scores with the Yogi government. Protests and candlelight marches were held in Delhi.

CONGRESS AND MEDIA PLAY POLITICS:

Through much publicity and media attention, Congress politicians, Priyanka and Rahul Gandhi, were shown trying to reach Hathras to meet the victim's family and their clashes with the UP Police. Despite the fact that strict security measures were in place to prevent things from escalating, various politicians and media people were finally allowed to meet the victim's family. Here also, the media played a highly malignant role by making a spectacle out of the whole thing, simply to tarnish the image of the Yogi government.

The Dalit card was liberally played. However, a reporter from India Today news channel – Tanushree Pandey – was recorded allegedly talking to the brother of the victim, coaching

him on what statements to make, assuring him that Priyanka Gandhi will help him and telling him to reject the compensation offered by the government. This was a major embarrassment for the media.

However, even then the sensationalization did not stop.

CONTRASTING CONSPIRACIES:

Eventually, detailed local accounts and video evidences showed a different picture – locals of Hathras were united in asserting that the entire case was an honour killing and not a gangrape. The families of victims not only knew each other, but also had enmity for several years. The very first statement given by the petrified girl was that the Rajput boy had tried to murder her. There was no mention of rape or gangrape.

But in a later statement, the girl and her family alleged that it was a gangrape. UP Police was adamant in its stand that forensic report says that no rape occurred. Eventually, the government decided to form an SIT and even suggested that case be transferred to CBI. The government even said that narco tests should be conducted on everyone – police officers, victim's family and eyewitnesses – to ascertain the truth.

REVERSAL OCCURS:

Mysteriously, the victim's family rejected all three options viz. SIT, CBI and narco test. A Congress-linked activist, Saket Gokhale, filed an urgent petition in the Court saying that no narco test should be conducted on the victim's family.

Things became worse thereafter. It soon emerged that UP Police had arrested a local opposition politician and a journalist for paying lakhs of rupees to the victim's family for making certain statements. The UP government also highlighted that they had busted an international web network wholly dedicated to this case, meant for defaming the BJP

government. Moreover, 4 members of a radical Islamic outfit – Popular Front of India (PFI) – were also arrested while on their way to Hathras.

It soon became evident that the victim's family was receiving money from a dubious networks of people – politicians, journalists, activists etc. – whose funding was suspect. Subsequently, it was revealed that a woman who was supposed to have been the sister-in-law of the deceased victim and was living with the family for many days, was a fake woman who was set up. She had given all kinds of outrageous statements to the media. She was revealed to have Naxalite connections, and had also participated in Congress party events.

NOTHING CONCLUSIVE

After the unexpected way in which the case turned against the media and Congress, not much has been written or said about it. It has been transferred to the CBI and is currently being monitored by Allahabad High Court.

2. PAKISTAN – A SHAMBLED STATE:

Pakistan has been at the receiving end of several protests for the past few weeks. In Sindh, there was a confrontation between Pakistani Army and Sindh Police, after the Army abducted the Sindh IGP and forced him to sign an order for Captain Safdar's arrest (ex-Pakistan Army and son-in-law of former PM Nawaz Sharif). The drama unfolded following a massive Opposition rally against the government and the Army, led by Captain Safdar, Maryam Nawaz, Bilawal Bhutto and others. Following this abduction, the entire Sindh police force tendered their letter announcing leave, to protest against their 'humiliation'. Matters were brought under control after the Army Chief announced a probe into the incident.

Besides the drama in Sindh and the Opposition rallies, Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) is also on a boil. There have been rising protests against Pakistan across PoK, due to various reasons. There have been consistent anti-Pakistan, anti-China protests in the region due to construction of dams as part of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In addition to these protests, there have also erupted, in the past few weeks, protests to secure the release of prominent political prisoners – such as activists like Baba Jan. These protests recur intermittently.

Finally, on October 22nd, there were huge protests across PoK – especially in Muzzaffrabad – to protest against the historical memory of Pakistan’s invasion of Jammu and Kashmir on October 22nd, 1947. The protestors observed October 22nd as a ‘Black Day’. The protests were led by the United Kashmir People’s National Party (UKPNP). These developments mark a beginning of the likely events to unfold in the future. Significantly, **they explicate clearly how the decades-old status quo in India-Pakistan relations has been firmly reversed, due to the changed Indian approach towards Pakistan and the Kashmir issue.**

During the last few decades, it was always India that seemed to be on the defensive and pushed against a wall, with Pakistan being an active aggressor and facilitator of terrorism across Kashmir and rest of India. However, presently, ever since Article 370 was nullified by India, it is Pakistan that seems to have lost its feet. Nor is it no longer able to interfere through its terror proxies in Kashmir, it is also witnessing frequent disturbances and anti-Pakistan disgruntlement across PoK – for which it accuses India. The state of affairs is such that the Pakistani government accuses every anti-government protester to be an Indian agent, right from its own Punjab

governor to the opposition political parties and the common protesters.

We are witnessing a time when Pakistani national security advisor is gloating about giving interviews to fringe Leftist Indian media outlets and considering it a success. Pakistan's day seems to begin and end with India. Pakistani media intermittently spreads rumours that India is planning a surgical airstrike on Pakistan. They have highlighted India's criticism across the United Nations and other international fora. In contrast, India has not reacted at all to Pakistan.

The result of this entire dynamics is Pakistan's increasing international isolation, so much so that Pakistan's only ally in the world is Sunni Muslim nation, Turkey. Organization of Islamic States (OIC) countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Bahrain and others have increasingly turned cold towards Pakistan, refusing to give in to its position on Kashmir.

SENSATIONAL DISCLOSURES WITHIN PAKISTAN

Pakistan's internal situation seems even worse. Most recently, significant statements were made in the Pakistani legislature. Pakistani leader from PML-N, Ayaz Sadiq, said in the Pakistani National Assembly that, in February 2019 when Indian pilot Abhinandan was held in Pakistan, **Pakistan Army Chief's 'legs were shaking' while Foreign Minister SM Qureshi told the meeting of Parliamentary leaders that India was planning to attack Pakistan 'that night by 9 PM' if Abhinandan was not released.**

Related to this, another explosive statement was made by a Pakistani minister – Fawad Chaudhary – when he said in the legislature that Pakistan's biggest success under Imran Khan was the Pulwama attack in India, where Pakistan entered India's home to kill the Indians. This clear reference to the Pulwama terror attack is Pakistan's own admission of its role in

orchestrating it. It is also a message to India's opposition parties which have fallen to the utterly debased level of accusing BJP of orchestrating the attack.

In the Pakistani legislature, some chants of 'Modi Modi' were also heard, as a way of protesting against the Imran Khan government. These slogans were in continuation of the slogan "whoever is a friend of Modi, is a traitor of Pakistan" – being shouted by Pakistani opposition lawmakers who were accusing Imran Khan government of bending to Modi. Therefore, the Modi slogans were accusatory. Subsequently, when the Pakistani foreign minister did manage to speak, he accused that Modi's spirit had got inside the Pakistani lawmakers.

Over the next few days, posters of Modi and Abhinandan came up across Lahore along with Ayaz Sadiq, to convey the message that Sadiq had betrayed Pakistan. These posters were put up by the Imran government to supposedly shame Sadiq. As a counter, PML-N put up posters of Modi, Abhinandan and Imran Khan, in order to supposedly shame Imran Khan.

Overall, the developments in Pakistan clearly convey the country's obsession with India and with Modi, even as India has ceased to pay any attention to it.

3. FRANCE COMING UNDER ISLAMIC SIEGE:

The row over French President Macron's comments on Islam continues to rage. On October 16th, an Islamic refugee beheaded a school teacher, Samuel Paty, some days after he had shown caricatures of Prophet Mohammed to his students. France has taken a tough stand on this incident. President Macron has made it clear that he does not treat this as an isolated incident limited to one jihadi individual, but as being representative of the larger crisis within Islam itself. He also declared the need to 'reform' Islam in accordance with French

tradition of freedom of expression.

He openly stated that France would never abandon its tradition of freedom of expression. Indeed, recently, major government buildings in France prominently displayed the cartoons over which the teacher was beheaded. In the wake of the beheading incident, French police has launched a crackdown on Islam, by temporarily shutting down mosques suspected of spreading hatred, by targeting NGOs who claim to work for human rights but support an Islamist agenda.

The French Education Minister has directly attacked the ideology of 'Islamism', saying that 'there's a combat to be led' against the kind of 'intellectual framework' coming from US universities.

France has witnessed a series of further terrorist attacks, following this response by the French government. There were two more beheadings and a killing in the Notre Dame church in France, and another knife attack the next day in Avignon. Furthermore, the French embassy in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia was attacked, but without any casualties. There was also a knife attack by terrorists in French-dominated Quebec province of Canada.

VIOLENT MUSLIM BACKLASH:

The response of the global Muslim community and Muslim governments to the French approach has been to viciously insult and threaten France, so much so that France has had to issue safety advisories to French citizens going abroad and has had to ask other governments to pay attention to safety and security of French citizens. Muslim countries like Pakistan and Turkey have heaped personal insults on Macron on a regular basis. Turkey has suggested that Macron needs a 'mental' checkup. Pakistan has accused Macron of sowing the seeds of

division.

However, Pakistan has also made a laughing-stock of itself across the world. Pakistani propaganda machinery managed to drag India into the row by accusing India and France of being responsible for growing ‘Islamophobia’ (Agrawal, 2020). **The Pakistani National Assembly passed a unanimous resolution that Pakistan should recall its ambassador from France, only to discover later that Pakistan had no ambassador in France.**

In other Muslim countries, situation is not much different, even though their governments have refrained from attacking Macron directly. **In Bangladesh, the protests against France have been amongst the most vociferous, with thousands of Muslims and clerics taking to the streets of Dhaka – latest being 50,000 Muslims virtually laying siege to the French embassy** by issuing an ultimatum for its closure. They had to be restrained from physically attacking the French embassy in Bangladesh. Kuwait and Qatar have taken a stand against France. Egypt has said that freedom of expression should stop when it comes to Islam.

Former Malaysian PM, Mahathir Mohammad, called for an outright genocide of French people, by arguing that “Muslims have a right to be angry and to kill millions of French people for the massacres of the past.”

While other major Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia and UAE who have kept quiet, sections of their public has vented some anger on social media. Across all Muslim countries, there is a call – from public and various non-governmental outfits – to boycott French companies, brands and products. However, no official action has been taken.

MODERATE MUSLIM VOICES:

Out of all Muslim countries, Saudi Arabia and UAE were

the only ones who condemned the terrorist incidents in France, but were careful not to officially say that they support France in its crackdown on Islam.

However, UAE's prominent Minister of State on Foreign Affairs, Anwar Gargash, did explicitly support Macron, saying that Macron was absolutely correct and that Muslims living in western societies should listen to Macron and also need to "integrate" themselves in these societies in a better way.

OUTLIERS IN THE WEST:

Curiously, Justin Trudeau of Canada, instead of supporting France, has stated that there should be limits to freedom of expression – implying that the cartoons which mocked the Prophet were unjustified. Other than Trudeau, a United Nations body – United Nations Alliance of Civilizations – while condemning the terror attack, also stressed that free expression should have limits and that the cartoons were 'insulting and deeply offensive' to Islam.

INDIA STANDS UP FOR FRANCE:

India has issued a clear statement in support of France as have the United States and Russia. Alongside some of the European countries, India was one of the first countries to support France in its fight against Islamic terrorism – which India did not hesitate to call out. Both, the Ministry of External Affairs and the PMO issued separate statements to support France. In turn, not only did the French government thank India, but the French opposition leaders – such as Marine Le Pen – and others, as well as, various French government officials thanked India for support.

Marine Le Pen subsequently issued a statement saying that France should ban immigration from radicalized countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh, whose Muslims were violently

protesting against France. French Member of European Parliament (MEP), Dominique Bilde, even accused Pakistan of visa frauds and of using its international aid to fund Islamic terrorism.

All in all, there seems to be a firm cementing in India-France relations during this time of crisis for France. This is in direct contrast to the India of 2005 under the UPA government when a similar incident had occurred. A Danish newspaper had mocked the Prophet by publishing cartoons. That time, Sonia Gandhi had personally written to the Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid expressing her outrage and Manmohan Singh had personally demanded an apology from the Danish paper and asked for an assurance from Denmark that this would not be repeated. In 2006, the Danish PM's visit to India was also cancelled, as he was told by a displeased India that it was not an 'optimal time' to visit.

However, even today, the behaviour of Indian Muslims is still being guided by the Congress ideology. Under the leadership of Congress party, Muslims of India protested against France. In Bhopal, a Muslim Congress MLA rallied more than 2000 Muslims to protest against France. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, promised to take strict action against them. In Mumbai, pictures of Macron were stuck on the roads so that people and vehicles could step on them. Similar thing happened in a Muslim area in Gujarat.

Indeed, even the Muslim wing of RSS – in Telangana, where it has a significant following – burnt posters of Macron. In UP, protests were held inside the campus of Aligarh Muslim University against Macron. In Telangana, Congress has asked the ruling TRS to ban French products from the state. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board has asked Muslims to boycott all French products.

4. CHANGING SITUATION IN KASHMIR AND LADAKH:

Kashmir is witnessing rapid changes. In the last issue, we had covered that around 18 lakh domicile certificates were awarded within three months. Presently, several other developments have taken place. Rapid successes are visible on the security front. **More than 200 terrorists have been eliminated in Kashmir in 2020 till end of October**, including the Hizbul Mujahideen commander-in-chief. NIA also continues its intensified raids and crackdowns across Kashmir.

POLITICAL CHURN:

On one front, there is political activity going on. With Mehbooba Mufti's release, all key political prisoners have now been released. In recent times, these leaders – including Sajjad Lone, Abdullahs and Muftis, along with Congress and Communists and some small non-BJP parties – have renewed the 'Gupkar Alliance'. They have raised the demand of bringing back Article 370 and have made several other baseless anti-India statements which could be fit cases of sedition. Their statements have only further alienated them from people of Kashmir and of the rest of the country and exposed the sham that was going on in Kashmir during the last few decades.

BJP is also becoming a steadily accepted presence in Kashmir. **This was visible in the huge popularity of the recently martyred Muslim BJP karyakartas in Kulgam in Kashmir, who were assassinated by terrorists. Hundreds of locals attended their funeral, despite warnings by terrorist groups like The Resistance Front (TRF) to not do so.**

UNDOING LEGALIZED WRONGS OF THE PAST:

On another front, there is continuing and expanding crackdown on illegal networks by central agencies. This month, the Jammu & Kashmir High Court ordered the Central Bureau

of Investigation (CBI) to probe the massive land scam under the contentious Roshni Act. It is a Rs. 25,000 crore scam that took place in 2001 and intensified in 2007 under the Congress government of Ghulam Nabi Azad, where agricultural land was supposedly transferred to “farmers” under the provisions of the 2001 Roshni Act. In this manner, government land was effectively transferred to illegal occupants, benefitting many anti-national elements, senior Congress and NC politicians and top-level IAS officers – all of whom were named by High Court in its order.

There was also an element of ‘**land jihad**’ in this Act, that was highlighted by one of the petitions filed in the court. This was due to the fact that demography of Jammu region was being systematically sought to be changed by selling agricultural land at cheap rates in the Jammu region to illegal Muslim encroachers. It was repealed in 2018, but past transfers were not rendered invalid. Now, the High Court has held that all past transfers were completely illegal and void, and has asked the CBI to probe this scam. Along with this, the administration of J&K has announced that all land given under this illegal scheme will be taken back within 6 months.

Finally, the central government has also notified the changed land laws for Jammu and Kashmir, as per which anyone from any part of India can buy land in Jammu and Kashmir, without the need of being a domicile of J&K. With this, the exclusive rights of J&K people over land in the territory have ended. Some key points are as follows:

- The new law has dismantled 11 existing land laws of the territory.
- While there are conditions to buy agricultural land, as per the new law, district collector can allow agricultural

land to be assigned for non-agricultural purposes also.

- Any piece of land can be declared as ‘strategic’ by the competent authority and used by the Armed Forces.
- Unlike in the past, spouses of J&K domiciles will also be automatically regarded as domiciles.

This is a significant step. It has abolished one of the key pillars of Kashmir’s land reforms ushered in by Sheikh Abdullah viz. the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, 1950 – amongst the most radical redistribution measures in the world outside of the Communist countries. According to the 1950 law, the ceiling on land ownership was placed at 22 acres, with the rest of land to be distributed among landless labour and tillers without giving any compensation to the landlord. Back in 1950, this was seen as a direct assault by Sheikh Abdullah to the Dogra power in Jammu, as they were the big landowners.

Now, with the new land laws, this Act, along with others, stands abolished. The reception to the new changes has not been positive, due to the threat of demographic change. Kashmir observed a complete shutdown as a sign of protest against the law. In Jammu also the reception has been muted.

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INDIA'S MISSION IN THE WORLD

“India has become the symbolic representation of all the difficulties of modern mankind.

India will be the land of its resurrection—the resurrection to a higher and truer life.”

- *The Mother*
(CWM 13: 368)