

Violence and Human Values

Dr. Kishan H. Pawar: Assistant Professor in English, M.D. College of Arts, Commerce and Science, Parel-E. Mumbai

Introduction: Intelligent communities of human race set the rules in the human society with the view that it would help in establishing peace. Since the living gene is selfish by nature, others and the weak either fall victim to the intelligent cunning policies or their power. They, in this way, systematically exploit the less privileged, uneducated and ignorant masses. To prove that it is a crime against humanity, it takes hundreds of years, because the law setters are extremely intelligent people. Who are they?

History

There are four blackest stigmas on the face of Human civilization, which were universally legalized in the books of law, religion and morality. These four crimes were the blackest blots on the face of humanity; but its execution was so systematic, lawful and legal that even the gods seemed to be convinced by their philosophy. I would like to begin the discussion with these four stigmas, which no human civilization can ever afford to forget.

A : European Colonialism and Imperialism

The European mind was as bright as its skin-very white, fair in appearance but foul within. Europeans, especially the British, first terrorized the Red Indians- the aboriginal citizens of America. They settled themselves there with thirteen colonies and established their roots. Then they spread their roots to Africa continent, and captured the natives. The third and richer continent was Asia. And the fourth continent was Australia. The Europeans named their colonies as white man's burden and terrorized the natives raping all human values. It will not be wrong to call the European colonizers as the first terrorists of the world. Their colonialism and imperialism, with their co-colonizers, established their religion, culture, literature and power almost everywhere in the world. It was the beginning of the modification of the old human values, and establishing the new ones. It was the true beginning of globalization. In the name of trade, the British spread their wings all over the world with a dangerous hidden agenda-an agenda to rule the world. And they did execute it with all perfection. Patriotic feeling was a motivation behind their barbarism. The agenda of their missionaries too was a part of it.

B : Slavery:

The second blackest stigma and most inhuman legalized crime against humanity was the slavery in America. It was the most unnatural human activity, committed against natural law. This was the foulest act, man has ever done against humanity with the help of law.

C: The Untouchability in India

The untouchability in India was the third blackest stigma on human face, which was executed systematically with the help of religion, morality and different man-made theories about origins of the Brahman from the head of Brahma, Kshatriyas from his shoulders, Vaishas from his stomach and Shudras from his legs. They symbolize as below- the head –

knowledge, shoulders – power, stomach- work for earning food, legs-low category work. It was the most intelligent way of exploiting human mind and enslaving the whole human race that belonged to the community called Shudras.

D: The Massacre of Jews at the hands of Nazis: The fourth most foul and legalized crime against human civilization that no human generation can ever forget is the massacre of Jews in the name of law and religion. Hitler had to create his own philosophy and spiritual law for this bloodshed.

In all these cases, one thing is common – the shrewd and intelligent communities misused and exploited the ignorance of the sufferers, because human kind was the most barbaric and violent of all species on the planet. They had mind more powerful than other animals. Right from the prehistoric times, man has survived with violence. And violence is a multidimensional – we have cultural violence, physical, violence psychological violence, educational violence, economic violence, spiritual violence religious, linguistic, socio – political , National, International sexual, intellectual, emotional violence etc.. To use others, to rule and suppress others man found violence insufficient at times, because in the course of time man turned to be more human and nonviolent. The suppresser used law and ethics to suppress this religious kind of man. He also misused human values and spiritualism. British, French, Portuguese and other colonizers, in my view, were the first terrorists of the world. They terrorized all the above mentioned continents with power and religion. British named themselves as the reformers of the world, and the colonized world was the white man's burden, as if this burden was imposed upon them by someone else. They, not only befooled the colonized natives of America, India, South Africa and Australia, but promoted themselves to the level of the gods of the colonized subjects.

Renaissance and Revival of Human Values

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 at the hands of Turks brought about numberless changes in human life one of which was the Renaissance. It was in France and Italy, the scholars of Constantinople sought shelter and started teaching human values to the children of warriors. More than two thousand years ago, in India the human values were already being taught in Gurukulas. The values which were taught in Asia as well as in Europe were the universal ones, whose centre was “**the other**”, and not “**the self**”. Those teachers of humanity taught suffering for others as a moral value which ultimately brings peace and self enlightenment. Sacrifice was another value which enhanced human capacity to tolerate injustice and violence. In ancient times of human civilization these values were taught by two teachers – they were Jesus Christ and Gautama, the Buddha. Both of them emphasized on yeoman service keeping animals and all the living beings at centre of their action. Self suffering and sacrifice of self interest for others was the bottom line in their teachings. These teachings and values were lost in oblivion during the crusades after the birth of Islam. No art, literature or other constructive things worth mentioning happened between the birth of Christianity and the Renaissance. These fifteen hundred years, from first century AD to 15th century AD Europe and West Asia were busy in protecting their religions with the help of violence and bloodshed. Theirs was a religious crime committed against humanity.

With Industrial revolution a new class of working community came into existence in Europe- and then in the world. This was the strugglers' class. This revolution popularized a word which changed the mind of every business man upside down; this word dehumanized the whole human system- and the word was **PROFIT**. Profit, money and income in terms of monetary rewards, became the centre of all human activity. Money became so important that it redefined human values and human relationships.

With money, man purchased almost everything so much so that man gradually overcame the fear and respect of the superhuman and the surreal. As the result of this, he redefined, and at times, invented new values which suited him fittingly, and which he could afford following. They were more applicable, practical and scientific in appearance. Man has redefined beauty, ugliness, good, bad, sin, virtue, moral, Immoral, Godism, Satanism humanity and inhumanity. Man, of late, has realized the relative nature of these terms. This new thought or system has, eventually influenced modern creativity in arts like literature, cinema, music, dance and painting. The few of the examples to be mentioned here are-

1. The modern hero behaves and acts like a villain at times and still creates sympathy in the hearts of audience. Still he ends up as a heroic character.
2. The super human like Lord Rama is asked certain questions whose answers, perhaps, He Himself won't have- the questions such as – how can he or his brother Laxmana insult a woman Shurpanakha, just because she had proposed him for marriage? And why Ravana only is treated badly. He just took revenge of his sister's insult.
3. Today, even the black is called beautiful, and an adage is quoted that reads "Beauty lies in the eyes of beholder."
4. In old values, sacrifice and suffering for others were heroic actions; but in modern values "self" has become the centre of these activities. No god is worshipped in any religion, without any motives.
5. Karmayoga has remained only a theory; whereas, modern man wants fruit without action. Old value was action without fruit" new value is "fruit with action", or "more fruits with less action".
6. Selfishness was a vice in old value system; and in the new one "selfishness has become a virtue." Ian Rand's novels are the best examples this. As these redefined new values are relative and subjective terms, and as they have been used from time to time by the individuals for their self interests, man has always been using it for his benefits at the cost of loss of others. Material gain became the centre of every human activity leading man to many complications in relationship as well.

Rise of Individualism: Selfishness as Virtue

The post-modern age is the age of individual. Individualism has become the universal religion which is worshipped by one and all. It has shattered the concepts of unity and uniformity, right from the joint family system to the united and Free states. Everywhere, decentralization is in demand. This has been popularized by the psychoanalyses of Sigmund Freud, Jung and recently by Jacques Lacan. In new literatures, story is no more found, narrating anything untold. Individual character has become more prominent; his psychological personality has become the main interest of modern theory of criticism.

Today, doctors, professors, teachers, engineers, judges, the statesmen, the religious preachers and all the so-called white collar bureaucrats, or *Babus* have made their own selves and their own “self interests” as the centre of their professional activity. Senior college teachers of Maharashtra went on forty-five –day strike in 2009, which is tragic impact of the Government Policies of Maharashtra; and immediately after the strike the government issued a circular mentioning that the teachers would be paid their strike period salaries only after the compensation of the strike period work. The government refused to trust the teachers, because they asked for their rights. And thus, the government has refused to treat teachers like teachers. Another example of legal exploitation of teachers is seen in the case of Shikshan Sevak policies. Most shameful episode and another shade of government’s policies.

The theory is that a primary teacher has to learn till twelfth standard and do a two years diploma in education (D.Ed.) followed by six month’s apprenticeship; all to work as a Shikshan Sevak to earn Rs. 2,500 per month, which is five times less salary than the monthly income of a beggar in Mumbai. Which law will prove this to be a crime? There is no provision of law to stop it, because the law-makers themselves have made this exploitation legal one which is a crime against humanity.

A teacher is *the* engineer of society. He should be safe and economically, socially and psychologically protected, then only he can frame the future of the country to match the upcoming challenges. All the revolutions in the world have been brought about by the teachers and students. The country, which exploits its teachers and women, actually endangers her future because both, the women and the teachers are the mothers of human civilization. The woman begets an individual physically, and the teacher begets him mentally by making him a worthier citizen of the country.

Corruption as the Modern Value

Modern changing human values are the result of these legalized crimes. This also is resulting in corruption which dwells in almost every single human mind. We cannot legally fight against corruption because it is not a system to fight against, but it is a newly defined virtue which dwells in human mind in the form of fashion and desire which has been accepted overwhelmingly in all realms of life. The corrupt art is called as modern art, corrupt and hybrid literature has been renamed as popular literature, corrupt and remixed music has become remix, corrupt styles have become trendy fashions and pop styles.

In my view, we all of us are responsible for everything happening to us, because it’s only us who choose our punishments and rewards. After all we only carry our own cross on our shoulders, to crucify ourselves in the Kurukshetra of life.

References

1. Legouis and Cazamian , *History of English Literature*, Macmilan 2005
2. Rafael and Michael, *History of the Human Civilization*, Pen Craft, 1995