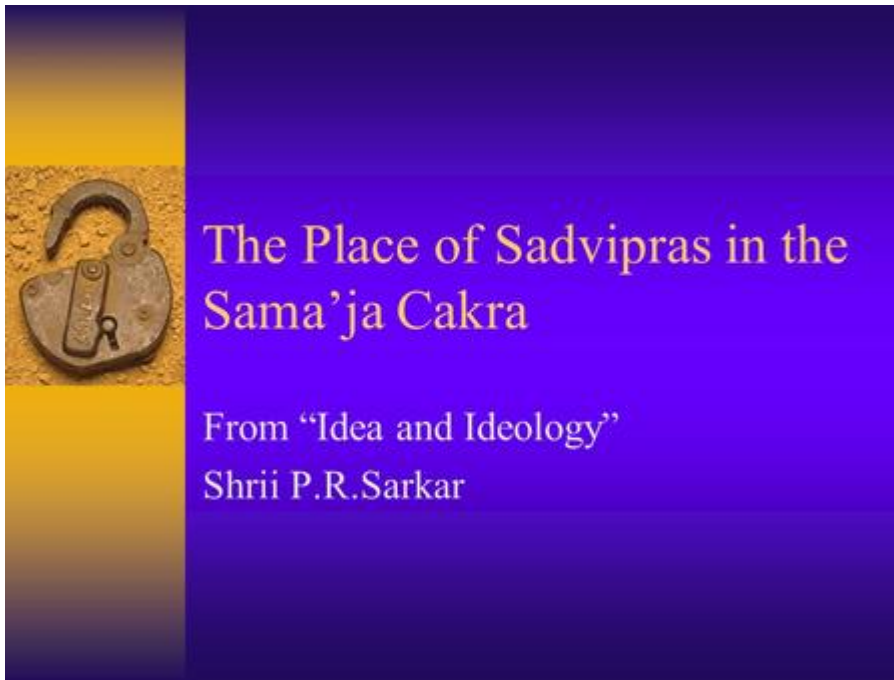


The Place of Sadvipras in the Samája Cakra



By Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

Primitive human beings had no society and the whole set-up was individualistic. Even the concept of family was absent. Life was brute and non-intellectual. Nature was the direct abode and physical strength ruled the day. The strong enjoyed at the cost of the weak, who had to surrender before the voracity of the physical giants. However, the sense of acquisition had not developed in them, and they worked manually, and there was no intellectual exploitation in that age. Though life was brute, it was not brutal.

If shúdras be defined as those who live by manual work or service, this primary stage of nature's brute laws could be named the Shúdra Age, because all were manual workers. The reliance on physical power gradually led a chosen few to lead the rest by the strength of their muscles. They were the leaders of the shúdras.

Simultaneously, the family developed. And the above-mentioned leadership, once based upon the superiority of muscles, passed on from the father to the son or from the mother to the daughter, partly due to the momentum of fear and power

commanded, and partly because of superiority of animalic breed.

Superior strength requires the assistance of other superior strengths in the neighbourhood for all to maintain their status. Generally such superior neighbours belonged to the same parenthood or were related through matrimonial ties. Gradually the leaders by physical might started a well-knit group, and ultimately formed a class known as the kśatriyas. The age when the power to rule, or supremacy in arms, was the only material factor that mattered, was the Kśatriya Age. The leaders of the Kśatriya Age were Herculean, huge giants who depended on the supremacy of personal valour and might, making little or no use of intellect.

With the development of intellect and skill as a result of physical and psychic clash, physical strength had to lose its dignified position according to the growing intensity of intellectual demand in the kśatriya-dominated society. One had also to develop skill in the use of arms, and even for this the physical giant had to sit at the feet of some physically-common men to learn the use of arms and strategy. A reference to the mythology of any ancient culture reveals numberless instances where the hero of the day had to acquire specific knowledge from teachers. Subsequently this learning was not confined to the use of arms only but extended to other spheres, such as battle-craft, medicine and forms of organization and administration, so essential for ruling any society. Thus the dependence on superior intellect increased day by day, and in the course of time real power passed into the hands of such intellectuals. These intellectuals, as the word implies, justified their existence on intellect only, performed no labour themselves, and were parasites in the sense that they exploited the energy put in by others in society. This age of domination by intellectual parasites can be called the Vipra Age.

Even though the vipras came into the forefront by the use of their marked intellect, it is more difficult than in the case of the kśatriyas to maintain a hereditary superiority of intellect. In an effort to maintain power amongst the limited few, they actively tried and prevented others from acquiring the use of the intellect by imposing superstitions and rituals, faiths and beliefs, and even introducing irrational ideas (the caste system of Hindu society is an example) through an appeal to the sentiments of the mass (who collectively cannot be

called intellectual). This was the phase of human society in the Middle Ages in the greater part of the world.

The continued exploitation by one section of society resulted in the necessity for the collection and transfer of consumable goods. Even otherwise, need was felt very badly for the transport of food and other necessities of life from surplus parts to deficit parts. Also, in the case of clan conflicts, the result of the resources of one community or class versus another gained importance. This aspect was confined not only to the producers but also to those handling the goods at various stages up to the point of consumption. These people became known as vaeshyas, and ingenuity and summed-up production began to enjoy supremacy and importance, till an age was reached when this aspect of life became the most important factor. These vaeshyas, therefore, began to enjoy a position of supremacy, and the age dominated by this class is said to be the Age of Vaeshyas.

Individualistic or laissez-faire sense develops [into] capitalism when the means of production pass into the hands of a few who are more interested in personal exploitation. At this stage it can be said that the instinct of acquisition has developed tremendously. The thirst for acquisition instigated them to [develop] the psychology of complete exploitation of the human race also, and this resulted in a class by itself. In the race for greed and acquisition not all could survive, and only a few remained to dominate the society in general and the economic set-up in particular by their capital. The great majority were either duped into believing that they would be allowed to share such resources, or were neglected and left uncared-for for want of strength and did not survive the race. Such people in society ultimately occupy the place of exploited slaves of the capitalists. They are slaves because they have no option other than to serve the capitalists as labourers to earn the means of subsistence.

We may recall the definition of shúdras as persons who live by manual work or labour hard for their livelihood. This age of capitalism is the age when the large majority of society turn into such shúdras. This develops into dejection and dissatisfaction on a large scale because of an internal clash in the mind, because the psychology of society is essentially dynamic in nature and the mind itself exists as a result of constant clash. These conditions are necessary and sufficient for labourers, whether manual or mental, to organize and stand up against the

unnatural impositions in life. This may be termed “shúdra revolution”. The leaders of this revolution, also, are people physically and mentally better-equipped and more capable essentially of overthrowing the capitalistic structure by force. In other words, they are also kśatriyas. So, after a period of chaos and catastrophe, once more the same cycle - Shúdra Age to Kśatriya to Vipra, and so on - recommences.⁽¹⁾

In this cycle of civilization one age changes into another. This gradual change should be called “evolution” or kránti. The period of transition from one age to another can be said to be yuga samíkránti - “transitional age”. One complete cycle from the Shúdra Age evolving through the other [three] ages is called parikránti.⁽²⁾

Sometimes the social cycle (samája cakra) is reversed by the application of physical or psychic force by a group of people inspired by a negative theory. Such a change is, therefore, counter-evolution - that is, against the cycle of civilization. This may be termed vikránti. But if this reversal of the social cycle takes place, due to political pressure or any other brute force, within a short span of time, the change thus brought about is prativiplava, or “counter-revolution”. It is just like the negative pratisaiñcara of Brahma Cakra. Thus the progress and march of civilization can be represented as points of position and as the speed of approaching Puruśottama, respectively, by a collective body in Brahma Cakra.

The world is a transitory phase or changing phenomenon within the scope of the Cosmic Mind. It is going in eternal motion, and such a motion is the law of nature and the law of life. Stagnancy means death. Hence no power can check the social cycle of evolution. Any force, external or internal, can only retard or accelerate the speed of transition, but cannot prevent it from moving. Therefore progressive humanity should cast off all skeletons of the past. Human beings should go on accelerating the speed of progress for the good of humanity in general.

Those spiritual revolutionaries who work to achieve such progressive changes for human elevation on a well-thought, pre-planned basis, whether in the physical, metaphysical or spiritual sphere, by adhering to the principles of Yama and Niyama, are sadvipras.

The principles of Yama are ahimsá, satya, asteya, aparigraha and Brahmacharya. Ahimsá means not causing suffering to any harmless creature through thought, word or deed. Satya denotes action of mind or use of words with the object of helping others in the real sense. It has no relative application. Asteya means non-stealing, and this should not be confined to physical action but [extended] to the action of the mind as well. All actions have their origin in the mind, hence the correct sense of asteya is “to give up the desire of acquiring what is not rightly one’s own”. Aparigraha involves the non-acceptance of such amenities and comforts of life as are superfluous for the preservation of the physical existence. And the spirit of Brahmacharya is to experience His presence and authority in each and every physical and psychic objectivity. This occurs when the unit mind resonates with Cosmic will.

The five rules of Niyama are shaucha, santośa, tapah, svádhyáya and Ishvara prañidhána. Shaucha means purity of both physical and mental bodies. Mental purity is attained by benevolent deeds, charity, or other dutiful acts. Santośa means “contentment”. It implies accepting ungrudgingly and without a complaint the out-turn of the services rendered by one’s own physical or mental labour. Tapah means efforts to reach the goal despite such efforts being associated with physical discomforts. Svádhyáya means study of the scriptures or other books of learning and assimilating their spirit. The whole universe is guided by the Supreme Entity, and nothing that one does or can do is without His specific command. Ishvara prañidhána is an auto-suggestion of the idea that each and every unit is an instrument in the hands of the Almighty and is a mere spark of that supreme fire. Ishvara prañidhána also implies implicit faith in Him irrespective of whether one lives in momentary happiness or sorrow, prosperity or adversity.

Only those who by their nature adhere to the above ten commands in their normal and spiritual conduct are sadvipras. Such a morally- and spiritually-equipped sadvipra has to perform a fundamental and vital duty to society.

In the cycle of social evolution, during each age before it is succeeded by another age, one particular class enjoys the position of domination and superiority. Such a class, while in political power, has every chance of exploiting the society. History has shown that this is not mere chance, but has been repeating itself. Now the

duty of the sadvipra is to see that the dominating class does not take recourse to exploitation. The four classes - shúdra, the toiling class; kśatriya, the warrior class; vipra, the intellectual class; and vaeshya, the capitalist class - have remained well defined in the cycle of human civilization, and the gradual domination and decline of each class shall continue to occur in this cycle.

Life is a dynamic principle, and the movement of the samája cakra continues without any break or pause. The cycle cannot be checked, as stagnation implies death. The function of a sadvipra shall, therefore, be to see that the dominating or the ruling classes do not have any scope for exploitation. The moment one class turn into exploiters, the life of the majority becomes miserable; a few enjoy at the cost of many whose lot is only to suffer. More than that, in such a state of society both the few and the many get degenerated. The few (exploiters) degenerate themselves due to [an] excess of physical enjoyments and the many (exploited) cannot elevate themselves, because all their energy is taken up in mundane problems and all their mental waves are always tending to attain psycho-physical parallelism, thus getting day by day cruder. Hence, for the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of the administrator and the administered of the society as a whole, it is essential that no one be given any scope to exploit the rest of the society.

Sadvipras are not inactive witnesses. They are active participants to see that no person or class exploits the rest. For this they may have to resort even to physical violence, because the sadvipras will have to strike at the source of the power [of the class] which is tending to become the exploiter. In case the kśatriya class are becoming exploiters, the sadvipras may have to resort to physical force, and in an age where the intellectual or vipra class are dominating, they will have to bring about a revolution in the intellectual field. In case the vaeshyas are dominating, the sadvipras may have to contest and win elections, because the vaeshya class rules by democracy, and the democratic set-up enables them to accumulate undue gains.

Footnotes

(1) A period of chaos and catastrophe ends when kśatriya leadership re-emerges,

signifying the start of the next Kśatriya Age. For a more detailed discussion of this process, see “The Shúdra Revolution and the Sadvipra Society” in Human Society Part 2 by the author. -Eds.

(2) See also the definitions of parikránti in the author’s Problems of the Day, section 34, and Ānanda Sútram, Chapter 5, Sútra 7. Eds.

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