



Social Psychology

Sadhana Mishra

In society the following fundamental factors are necessary — unity, social security and peace. Unity among the members of any society or social structure is absolutely necessary; otherwise the structure will start disintegrating. Lack of unity among the members of society because of too much self-interest in the individual members, the formation of groups for economic or social advantage, and the lack of understanding of others' acts not only bring about the downfall of society but also completely eradicate it from the face of the earth. Instances of so many groups and empires disappearing altogether are not rare in the little-known history of this world.

The problem, therefore, is the preservation of unity in society. If it is possible to enthuse the members of society with the following they will ensure unity in society — a common ideal, a casteless society, collective social functions and no capital punishment.

It is so often heard that a particular country was never so united as during the war. This is entirely due to love of one's motherland, since all of the individuals had a common ideal and goal — to face the perils of wars. This common ideal is, however, a temporary phase that disappears when the dangers of war decrease.

According to P.R. Sarkar's theory, such an ideal will never disappear like the common ideal of facing the dangers of war, so the unity in a society founded on the ideal of Brahma will be everlasting. In the economic field, there is a common ideal, as the whole property of the earth is the common property of all and is to be shared by all members of society. This is instilled in every member by the shloka (verse).

*"Sam'gacchadhvam' sam'vadadhvam'
sam'vomana'm'si ja'nata'm,
Deva'bha'gam' yatha'pu'rve sam'ja'na'na' upa'sate.
Sama'nii va a'kuti sama'na' hrdaya'ni vah,
Sama'namastu vomano yatha'vah susaha'sati."*

(“Let us move together, let us radiate the same thought-wave, let us come to know our minds together, Let us share our wealth without differentiation, like sages of the past, so that all may enjoy the universe. Let our aspirations be united, let our hearts be inseparable, Let our minds be as one mind, so that we live in harmony and become one with the Supreme.”)

Love for all, the ideal that the whole of humanity is one family, and the utilization of all the property of the world as that of one unit, combined with the idea, given to those participating in the Na'makaran'a or naming ceremony of a child, that the social, psychic and



spiritual upbringing of the child is the common responsibility of all — all these provide an undying common ideal.

Casteless Society.

Caste is another important factor which brings disruption in society. The evils of the caste are nowhere better known than in India. For unity in society there should be no small groupings within society claiming unjustifiable economic and social privileges.

This along with the common goal of Brahma inspires the formation of a society where individuals identify themselves as living beings only, and not as belonging to any particular caste, creed or sect. Also, no family is prevented from taking part in our social functions because of the fault of a member of that family. With this the chance of the formation of a society of outcaste families is eliminated. In such a society where belonging to a particular group or section is not necessary for marriage, for learning the Vedas (scriptures) or for achieving anything, the formation of castes is not possible. The upbringing of every child is a combined responsibility, where the whole property of the universe is to be collectively utilized, and where there is no caste restriction for spiritual practices, the formation of castes for social, economic or spiritual reasons is not possible.

Collective Social Functions

Many of the ills of Society develop because people do not care to know other members of society. This ignorance of the condition and difficulties of other leads to intolerance and a lack of interest in the affairs of the other members of society. Common social functions bring different members of society together and are, therefore, a great unifying force. By performing certain functions collectively all the participants are engaged for some time in doing the same thing and brings about a feeling of unity

and interest in others. Common social functions in the physical, psychic and spiritual fields. Common participation is a very unifying force and the participants of such functions will have no intolerance for each other, instead they will become more united. Such functions are therefore a great unifying force.

No capital Punishment

Capital punishment brings about the deterioration in society and stops the further progress of the individuals on whom capital punishment is inflicted. Such individuals form sects or groups which become the lower or discarded groups of society and this gives rise to social disruption and discord. Such punishments are employing themselves in better pursuits than they would in their normal life by making efforts to show the right path. Thus they are not only improving themselves, but they are also making efforts to improve society by bringing about more social unity.

Social Security

Lack of security in a society leads to the disintegration of society itself. Any society where security against injustice is not provided to people cannot exist long. Lack of security also increases because of indiscipline. If the laws of society are not obeyed social security will not be possible. The most important requisites for social security therefore, are that there should be no injustice and there should be strict discipline.

Economic injustice is usually the result of lack of appreciation of the dignity of labour. Occupational distinctions in society lead to economic injustice. It is better to serve as a sweeper and earn one's own living rather than be dependent on others for one's livelihood. If such importance is given to one's own earning and living many economic injustices will cease to exist. Economic injustice also comes about because of



the hoarding instincts of human beings. People want property only for themselves. If only they felt that property should be shared by others also many economic injustices will not be committed. All the property of the universe is considered to be the common property and has to be utilized jointly. This idea leaves hardly any scope for economic injustice.

Members of a particular race who consider themselves superior to others also very frequently inflict injustices on other sections of society. The expulsion of the Jews from Germany by Hitler's so called superior Aryan race is a glaring example of racial injustice in society. In this country also, injustices on deprived classes by so-called superior races have caused a tremendous disruption in society. To remove this type of social injustice the first step should be to do away with racial distinctions in society. The first step that a person takes is to forget their race or sect and to no longer identify with their race, caste, or sect, regardless of whether their race was superior or inferior. Racial prejudices are very predominant in social functions. There are no such considerations: these petty differences among human beings are not given any importance. The seeds of an ideal humanity are sown from the very beginning of life and humanity as a whole is considered as one family belonging to the race of living beings. In such a society injustice due to economic considerations will be unknown.

Discipline

Throughout history the lack of discipline in a society has often been the main reason for the extinction of that society. The indiscipline of some members of society may make the peaceful existence of other members impossible. Discipline is therefore absolutely necessary for the preservation of society. Indiscipline in a society arises when some members think that the laws of society are wrong. If such thinking is confined to

analyzing and arguing only and does not lead to breaking the laws of society, there will be no indiscipline. In order to maintain discipline, the laws of society should be rational and capable of change from time to time according to society's development and then alone can discipline be preserved. When reason is given so much importance and reasonable changes are accepted, all possibilities of dissatisfaction resulting in indiscipline are eliminated. If after obeying the laws of society one feels they are wrong, one has every right to argue and have the laws changed, but argument before obedience leads to indiscipline. In a society which is based on rationality alone and not on prejudices, there is no chance of indiscipline arising and undermining the social security of people.

Peace and Spiritual Practices

Psychic equilibrium is peace. We must consider what brings about psychic equilibrium and what disturbs it. Spiritual practices will lead to psychic equilibrium and belief in superstitions will disturb it. Hence for the preservation of peace spiritual practices and struggle against superstitions are necessary. Relief from *duhkha* or sorrow is the main desire of human beings, and without the fulfillment of this desire peace is not possible. Relief from sorrow is called *nivrtti* and is of two types: *nivrtti* and *atyantikii nivrtti*. That which helps in attaining relief or *nivrtti* is called *artha*. But *artha* is only physical and psychic and gives only temporary relief. For everlasting freedom from *duhkha*, *parama'rtha* is the only remedy. *Parama'rtha* does not bring temporary relief, but everlasting freedom from *duhkha*. *A'tyanatikii nivrtti* can only be obtained by *parama'rtha* which relieves all *duhkha* — physical, mental and spiritual. This *parama'rtha* can only be attained by spiritual practices. Thus for maintaining peace psychic equilibrium is necessary, and for maintaining this equilibrium permanent freedom



from all *duhkha* is necessary. Freedom from *duhkha* or *a'tyantikii nivrtti* can be attained only by *parama'rtha*, and *parama'rtha* can be achieved only by spiritual practices. Spiritual practices begin when the child reaches the age of five. From the very beginning of a child's life he or she is initiated into spiritual practices. With the development of the child's life the spiritual practices also advance, bringing within their scope not only mental development but also bodily development. The spiritual practices do not teach one to forsake the world: they teach the proper use of all crude and subtle wealth. Spiritual practices are a systematic and scientific method for physical, mental and spiritual progress by which permanent psychic equilibrium and thus everlasting peace is established.

Fight against Superstitions

The nature of the mind is to become like its object. Superstition of any kind — social, psychic, or spiritual — influences the mind to such an extent that the mind, due to its worries, leads a person into difficulty. The mental equilibrium of those believing in superstition is disturbed; and the result is not only do people lose their peace of mind, but they may also be led to perform some action which is detrimental to themselves. Such superstitions have contaminated every field of existence. In the social sphere there is no dearth of superstitions. Witchcraft, the persecution of widows, etc., are curses in society only due to such superstitions. In the psychic sphere also there are deep-rooted superstitions like the belief in ghosts, *bhu'ta*, etc. Not only this, but superstitions of funeral ceremonies, etc., have also burdened even the progeny of a person. In the spiritual field, too, ignorant people have been forced to do so many things only because of their deep-rooted superstition of heaven and hell. All of these only disturb people's psychic equilibrium and bring discord and anxiety in society. For the

preservation of peace, the fight against superstitions is of prime importance.

Superstitions have been given any place. In the social field, witchcraft has been discredited as only a psychic creation of some wicked person. Widows have been given the same status as unmarried girls with no restrictions on their dress, behavior, lifestyle, etc. It is strictly prohibited to exercise any restraint on widows to make them adopt a particular pattern of life based on superstitions, or to prohibit their presence in social functions. The spiritual superstition of heaven and hell and fear of God suppress people and destroy their psychic peace. Not infrequently, fear of such superstitions has had very undesirable reactions on people, totally disturbing their equanimity. Spiritual practices are based on rationality: Systematic and scientific method of spiritual practices leave no place for fear and superstitions.

It can thus be seen that an ideal society will come into being only when there is unity, social security and peace. To provide for such a society the Supreme Entity has a foundation and common ideal. Unity is secured by evolving a casteless society where capital punishment is prohibited and all people unitedly take part in social functions irrespective of caste, creed, or race. Further strengthens society by refuting and discouraging all superstitions, whether social, psychic or spiritual, and by providing a systematic and scientific method of spiritual practices and codes for physical, mental and spiritual progress and advancement in an ideal society.

Reference :

Shrii Shrii P.R. Sarkar, A Few Problem Solved, Part-VII, published by Ananda Publication, 1957.

Sadhana Mishra, Qrs. No.24/3, Type-E, Unit-9 Flat, Bhubaneswar.