

Religions and Politics I

Rig-Veda X.90

When they divided Purusha how many portions did they make? The Brahmin was his mouth, and from both his arms the Kshatriya was made. His thighs became the Vaishya, and from his feet the Shudra was produced. The moon was gendered from his mind, and from his eye the sun had birth..

Artha Shastra I.4

The scepter conduces to the acquisition of what has not been acquired, the preservation of what has been acquired, the growth of what has been preserved, and the distribution among worthy people of what has been grown. It is on it that the proper functioning of society depends. There is no means for subjugation of beings as the scepter, say the ancient teachers. The king, severe with the scepter, becomes a source of terror to beings. The king, mild with the scepter, is despised.

Manu Smriti I.87-91

But to protect this whole creation, the lustrous one made separate innate activities for those born of his mouth, arms, thighs, and feet. For Brahmins, he ordained teaching and learning, sacrificing for themselves and sacrificing for others, giving and receiving. For the Kshatriya are protecting his subjects, providing, having sacrifices performed, and remaining unaddicted to sensory objects. Protecting his livestock, giving, having sacrifices performed, studying, trading, lending money, and farming the land are for the Vaishya. The Lord assigned only one activity to the Shudra: serving these classes without resentment.

Manu Smriti VII.99-101

The king should try hard to get what he has not and to guard what he has; he should make what he guards grow, and he should deposit in worthy receptacles of charity what he has made to grow. He should realize that these are the four ways of accomplishing human goals; never tiring, he should strive to employ them properly. By means of his army he should seek what he has not; by careful attention he should guard what he has; he should make what he guards grow by means of the pursuit of self-interest; and he should deposit in worthy receptacles of charity what he has made grow.

Mahabharata XII.67

A kingdom in which anarchy prevails becomes weak and is soon afflicted by robbers. In kingdoms torn by anarchy, righteousness cannot dwell. The inhabitants devour one another. Anarchy is the worse possible of states. The sacred texts declare that in crowning a king, it is Indra that is crowned. A person who desires prosperity should worship the king as he should worship Indra. No one should dwell in kingdoms torn by anarchy. Agni does not convey the libations that are poured upon him in kingdoms where anarchy prevails.

Gandhi, writing in *Young India* in 1931

Even in 1888-89, when I first became acquainted with the Gita, I felt that it was not a historical work, but that, under the guise of physical warfare, it described the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind, and that physical warfare was brought in merely to make the description of the internal duel more alluring.

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, *Integral Humanism*

Dharma is of primary importance, but we should not forget that it is not possible to practice Dharma in the absence of Artha. There is a saying "What sin will not be committed by one who is starving? Those who have lost everything become ruthless." Therefore we are enjoined to see that there is enough wealth created continuously, since wealth also strengthens Dharma. Similarly the government has to maintain law and order and prevent chaos, which definitely destroys Dharma. At the time of Chaos, law of the jungle prevails where the strong feed upon the weak.

Bibliography

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