

The nation’s orphans : the obscured questions of Dalits and Muslims in India

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“The stars are dead. The animals will not look.

We are left alone with our day, and the time is short and

History to the defeated

May say Alas but cannot help or pardon.”

——–W.H.Auden, Spain (1937)

A democratic society's failure to bear the weight of the dead star will not be forgiven by history. We must not overlook the weight of this burdened, terror-stricken society, which is pulsating due to both state-instigated and state-sponsored killings. What a strange country we inhabit, where the murder of a Dalit youth for affectionately calling a child from a relatively higher caste "*beta*" (son) occurs. The incident occurred in Amreli district, in Gujarat, the land of the Prime Minister and the Home Minister of the country.

The mere suspicion of carrying beef led to the brutal attack of four Muslim youths in Uttar Pradesh. Their fate could have been the same as that of Mohammed Akhlaq, who was lynched by a mob for allegedly storing and consuming beef at home. As these events are recent, they are vivid in our memory, as fresh as the oozing blood. We have either "thought over the rest with mild sadness" and forgotten it, or we are currently in the process of forgetting it. It is precisely because we forget, and are being made to forget, that a significant part of this society is being systematically transformed into killers—often in terms of ideas, sometimes quite literally. We tend to forget these incidents, one after another, almost daily. This country is witnessing the beating and death of Dalits and Muslims on a regular basis.

Can we take a moment to reflect on those who have faced persecution over the past 11 years due to religious coercion and caste violence — at least, to the extent that this has been revealed? The everyday insults and persistent petty humiliations experienced by Dalits and Muslims in our social landscape remain largely unknown and invisible to the upper castes and the majority. Thus, what has made it into the headlines—the true weight of a corpse lifted onto the shoulder—serves as a poignant illustration of these injustices.

“There where it smells of burnt flesh”

Mohammad Akhlaq, Dadri, Uttar Pradesh, 2015
Pehlu Khan, Rajasthan, 2017
Tabrez Ansari, Jharkhand, 2019

From 2015 to 2018, the Human Rights Commission reported that cow vigilantes killed at least 44 Muslims during those three years.

This incident is not a mere coincidence. From the Prime Minister to every BJP leader, communal hate speech has been transformed into a systematic initiative — one whose blueprint the RSS has been crafting for a century. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, their ideological forefather, wrote in 1923: “*There is no nation of Indians in real existence outside the Hindu religion*.”

And the state-sponsored media has carried this narrative all the way into the inner rooms of the majority population. **Christophe Jaffrelot** calls this ***“an ethno-nationalist project that seeks to exclude Muslims from the national body politic*.”** Just look at the Union Cabinet — for the first time in the history of independent India, **not a single Muslim** has been given charge of any ministry. Although there were Muslims in the former BJP cabinet, their presence did not lead to a reduction in the hatred against Muslims.

The government brazenly defied the Constitution by enacting blatantly unconstitutional laws, such as the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). When citizens protested against this discriminatory legislation, the state responded with orchestrated brutality — most notably in Delhi in 2020, where over 50

people were killed, the majority of whom were Muslims. The state set entire neighbourhoods ablaze, reduced homes to ashes, and desecrated mosques.

An insidious narrative is emerging — the idea that beneath almost every mosque lies a temple. This rewriting of history is not solely being constructed through mainstream and social media; it is being purposefully shaped by state-backed intellectuals, specifically selected to theorise, legitimise, and disseminate these distortions of the past.

“We dig a grave in the Air”

India, the world’s largest parliamentary democracy, takes pride in a constitution founded on pluralism and the affirmation of diverse voices. Affirmative action, in the form of reservations, is implemented for Dalit and Adivasi communities as an endeavour to address and rectify historical injustices. However, this constitutional safeguard faces relentless scorn. The upper castes, bolstered by generations of inherited social and cultural capital, deride beneficiaries of reservations as “quota people”, “golden boys”, or “undeserving freeloaders”, accusing them of appropriating opportunities without merit. These allegations represent a form of symbolic violence—an insidious othering that inflicts wounds as deep as any physical assault.

So, despite the existence of reservations, what is the true standing of Dalits in this caste-ridden society?

Dalits continue to experience disproportionate poverty and political

marginalisation. In rural India, untouchability is not merely a relic of the past; it remains a prevalent and ongoing practice. Were Babasaheb Ambedkar alive today, he would observe that Dalits are still barred from temples, denied access to public wells, and prohibited from using communal cremation grounds. In countless villages, a Dalit child's innocent act—such as sipping water from a common tap or brushing against a space deemed "pure"—can provoke a storm of cruelty. A simple human gesture can swiftly transform into a deadly threat. For daring to quench their thirst like any other child, they risk being beaten, mutilated, or even lynched. This illustrates the terrifying fragility of Dalit existence in a society where caste dictates who may live with dignity and who must suffer dire consequences for touching a drop of water. A 2018 survey by the Navsarjan Trust revealed that in 60% of villages within the home states of both the Prime Minister and the Home Minister, untouchability is openly practised—a blatant violation of the Constitution.

The plight of Dalit women is even more harrowing. Sexual violence, brutalisation, and murder at the hands of upper-caste men is horrifyingly normalised. The cases of Hathras and Unnao are not isolated incidents; they represent only a small portion of the larger issue. According to data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), over 50,000 crimes were registered against Dalits in 2021 alone—a number widely believed to be a gross undercount. The actual figures, obscured by underreporting and institutional apathy, are far grimmer. None of this information is new, yet it bears repeating: we are living in an age of darkness, and that darkness deepens by the day.

The judiciary is theoretically our ultimate recourse. However, in practice, Dalits are systematically denied justice in cases of caste-based violence. The

judiciary and the police, predominantly run by upper-caste officials, ensure that most caste atrocities are suppressed before they even reach the courtroom—silenced under the convenient pretext of "preserving social harmony." Many will remember the notorious 2018 judgement by a Supreme Court bench consisting of two upper-caste judges, which aimed to dilute the landmark Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. It was only following a nationwide surge of Dalit protests that the Modi government reversed the ruling, exploiting the situation to portray itself as a champion of Dalit rights in the lead-up to the 2019 parliamentary elections.

Let us revisit the brutal incident that initiated this account. A young Dalit man was lynched for the 'offence' of addressing an upper-caste child as 'beta'—a term of endearment meaning 'son'. Three of his companions were also subjected to merciless beatings. The father of the child who incited this bloodshed was not a political heavyweight but an OBC shopkeeper. Yet, this violence—now intensified by the ruling party's majoritarian politics—has effectively permeated the microlevels of society, emboldening ordinary citizens with its toxic influence and allowing them to commit horrific acts of violence with complete impunity.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar once warned with perfect precision about the political machinery that animates this divisive ideology: "*Caste is not a division of labour, it is a division of labourers. It is a hierarchy in which the division of labourers is graded one above the other*." (Annihilation of Caste)

At first glance, it may seem that Muslims and Dalits face distinct forms of discrimination—Muslims are persecuted for their religion, while Dalits are

oppressed due to their caste. However, when considering issues such as poverty, systemic neglect, lack of education, and the denial of fundamental rights, both communities share a common struggle.

For Dalit Muslims, this burden is even heavier. Although caste is fundamentally opposed to Islamic principles, it remains deeply ingrained within Indian Muslim society. The Sachar Committee Report highlights the harsh reality that the socio-economic status of Dalit Muslims is considerably worse than that of Hindu Dalits. To further exacerbate their marginalisation, Dalits who convert to Islam or Christianity lose all the benefits associated with reservation policies regarding Dalits—essentially being penalised for their change of faith.

Hindutva's insidious politics of division effectively create a rift among the oppressed. This approach has consistently succeeded in putting Muslims and Dalits—two communities that ought to unite in any just political struggle—against one another in tragic and counterproductive conflict.

Caste construct: A colonial spectrum reforged by the nation

The modern Indian state—fractured, polarised, and teetering on the precipice of majoritarian absolutism—is not merely an accident of contemporary politics. It represents the culmination of the Sangh Parivar's century-old ideological blueprint. Ironically, this vision—vociferously touted as decolonial and indigenous—derives its ideological and political sustenance from the

legacy of colonialism. Far from being its antithesis, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its ideological progenitor, the Sangh Parivar, are the most significant inheritors, disseminators, and executors of colonial culture and politics in postcolonial India—more so than any other force in the country. It may seem astounding as the self-declared leader of decolonisation, Narendra Modi, chants Sanskrit shlokas, recites the Gita in Parliament, fraternises with saints beneath the dome of secular democracy, commissions the sale of Ganga water through post offices, and transforms science conferences into mytho-nationalist spectacles under the guise of “ancient Indian science”—a list that is, of course, inexhaustible. When political legitimacy falters, people invoke mythological grandeur and religious symbolism to galvanise public sentiment. These theatrics undoubtedly yield short-term electoral gains. However, beyond that lies a broader design of social domination—a militant nationalism aimed at constructing a Hindu Rashtra—that is, in fact, birthed from the womb of colonial capital.

Pre-colonial Indian subcontinental society, despite its oppressive caste practices, existed within a landscape devoid of a singular national identity. It was a civilised mosaic of regions, languages, and castes—localized, fragmented, and diverse. The influence of Brahmanical orthodoxy, although structurally hegemonic in many areas, was inconsistent; its impact was significantly less structured in the South, the East, the Northeast, and among regions where tribal populations inhabited. British colonialism, in its quest for efficient governance and control, disrupted this fluid social order by instituting a rigid caste apparatus. This transformation was facilitated through extensive surveys based on caste and religion, as well as the enforcement of a uniform legal code that restructured Indian society into a bureaucratically administered and hierarchically stratified system.

The outcome was a calcified social order that favoured the upper castes as the Empire's default allies. Colonialism reshaped caste into a rigid framework, serving as a tool for colonial rule and exploitation. Between 1865 and 1871, the British conducted sweeping ethnographic studies. The notorious Risley Report categorised the population by caste, religion, military background, and even physical characteristics. H. H. Risley, while codifying caste as a pseudo-scientific construct, claimed, "The social position of a caste varies inversely as its nasal index." In conjunction with the Aryan supremacy thesis and its bureaucratic application, these pseudoscientific racial theories reduced millions to mere dehumanised caste classifications.

In the era of early colonisation, as early as 1776, the British established a "Caste Court" in Calcutta under Maharaja Naba Krishna Deb to adjudicate caste disputes—most of them directed against the Brahmins. This is why the British appointed Maharaja Nabakrishna, a non-Brahmin and influential ally, as a judge. Historical records indicate that instances of influence or bribery led to the lowering or elevation of caste in that court, demonstrating that the caste system lacked social rigidity in Bengal. The establishment of a more rigid, centralised caste order under the colonial state eventually made such type of courts redundant.This analogy illustrates how colonial rulers employed the process of caste codification to create a more oppressive and solidified apparatus. The result was a grotesque hybrid that merged the moral codes of Brahminism with the administrative rationality of British colonialism. Paradoxically, these same censuses—although designed to divide—also ignited new caste-based solidarities and resistance among the oppressed.

India's mainstream nationalist politics, spearheaded by the Indian National Congress, were not insulated from this colonial epistemology. Predominantly

composed of English-educated upper-caste elites, the Congress largely embraced the colonial framework, thereby perpetuating the exclusion of Dalits and other oppressed castes. Although their nationalist agenda was couched in anti-British rhetoric, it seldom prioritised the eradication of castes. The political establishment showed little inclination towards incorporating Dalits into the national narrative. Consequently, distinct political assertions from the Dalit community emerged at the periphery.

Beginning with the Satyashodhak Samaj, which was founded by Jyotirao and Savitribai Phule in 1873 in Maharashtra, a wave of caste-resistance movements spread across the subcontinent. These included the Satnami movement in Chhattisgarh, the radical anti-Brahmin Dravidian movement led by Periyar in Tamil Nadu, the Namasudra movement in Bengal, the Ezhava mobilisation in Kerala, and ultimately Ambedkar’s assertion of Dalit-Buddhism. These were grassroots revolts that claimed dignity, rights, and a political voice.

The communist movement was concurrently gaining momentum, by organising workers and peasants in anti-imperialist class struggles. However, this effort tragically unfolded in parallel. Despite a shared opposition to colonialism and Brahminical exploitation, there was little intersection between Dalit movements and communist struggles. The opportunity to forge a genuinely emancipatory alliance that could integrate caste and class struggles into a broader liberation movement for the oppressed was lost. This ideological and organisational disconnect proved to be detrimental during crucial decades of anti-colonial resistance and post-independence nation-building.

Meanwhile, Hindu nationalists, led by ideologues such as Savarkar and Golwalkar, maneuvered with strategic intent. Savarkar advocated for caste unity without directly endorsing untouchability. His foresight lay in contextualising the use of lower castes against Muslims to construct a Hindu nation in India. In contrast, Golwalkar, mirroring colonial administrators, glorified a rigid and hierarchical social order. The cunningness of the RSS resides in its rebranding of the caste system as a divine division of labour, repurposed to promote Hindu unity.

Today, we witnessed the culmination of that project. The BJP nominates Dalit and Adivasi presidents to project inclusion while simultaneously co-opting tribal identities into the 'Hindutva' ideology, fostering resentment against Muslims among these communities. In addition to embracing them within the Hindu fold, it orchestrates the dispossession of forest-dwellers, extracting land, forests, and water for corporate gain. The British administration devised forest acts and labelled the forest-dwelling indigenous community as "criminal tribes". That led to their forcible evictions for the sake of railroads, plantations, mines, and urban development. History repeats itself as we see that forest-dwellers are labelled as 'Maoists' today.

The caste system, rather than being a mere relic of the past, has been modernised, militarised, and digitised. Its colonial reconstruction persists as a haunting spectre over the republic, rebranded as cultural nationalism and cloaked in the saffron flag.



Photocredit – Wikipedia

“Religion… an inverted consciousness of an inverted world…”

For centuries in the pre-colonial era, Hindus and Muslims coexisted with layered and plural identities, marked at times by concord and at others by conflict. However, the reduction of religious identity into a rigid political binary was largely a construct of the colonial period. The British, in their quest for administrative control over a vast population, erased internal class distinctions and portrayed Indian Muslims as a monolithic religious group. This strategy not only fragmented society but also cultivated an atmosphere of

suspicion and estrangement. In this context, the systematic othering of Muslims began.

The so-called Bengal Renaissance was driven by upper-caste Hindu intellectuals who were educated within the British education system. They were deeply captivated by the European concept of the nation-state, which led to the development of a narrow nationalist historiography that portrayed Muslims as the quintessential adversary. The Swadeshi movement originated as a response to the Bengal partition of 1905. While Hindu leaders of the movement sought political solidarity from Muslims against the partition, their literature and nationalist narratives instead celebrated heroes who were retroactively constructed from those who had opposed Muslim rulers—although most of these historical conflicts lacked religious motivations. During this period, efforts by Sarala Devi Chowdhurani, the niece of Rabindranath Tagore and social-political activist, to emulate Maharashtra's Shivaji Festival in Bengal through the commemoration of Pratapaditya—a figure linked to resistance against Muslim rule—elicited a strong critique from Tagore, who perceived in such symbolism the potential for communal discord.

Hindu revivalist currents gradually cast Muslims into a homogenized mould, stripping them of regional and class distinctions and caste too.The founding of the Muslim League in 1906 was not the spontaneous uprising of a unified religious community, but rather a project led by elite higher-caste Muslims—just as the Congress had long been a preserve of upper-caste Hindu landowners and, eventually, the national bourgeoisie. While Congress, reflecting itself as the representative of the majority, had to maintain an appearance of ideological inclusivity for its highest political gain in nationalist politics, it never relinquished its structural bias for elite upper-caste

hegemony.The League, on the other hand, in reaction gradually adopted an overtly communal identity as its political currency. Yet, theirs was not the only Muslim voice. Those alternative, different and small voices died down under the weight of these two big parties' so-called rivalry dynamics and Britishers' evident support to that.

As an instance, In Bengal, the Krishak Praja Party under Fazlul Haq offered a non-communal alternative rooted in peasant interests. But the Congress, through both passive non-cooperation and active marginalization, stifled its growth. Forced into expedient alliances with the League and even the Hindu Mahasabha, Haq's political significance was ultimately neutralized. The Congress bears substantial responsibility for enabling the Muslim League's rise as the purported sole representative of Indian Muslims. This phenomenon must be examined through the prism of class-theory to apprehend its full intricacy.

Today, the notion that Partition was inevitable because of the so-called "two-nation theory" serves as a convenient alibi for Hindu nationalist forces. The assertion that every Indian Muslim supports the "two-nation" theory so they should "go to Pakistan" is a pernicious falsehood propagated by the Sangh Parivar. Contrary to such claims, a broad section of ordinary Indian Muslims did not endorse Partition. The Muslim League's electoral triumph in 1946 is often cited as proof of a collective Muslim mandate for Pakistan. Yet in British India(the princely states excluded) only 25% of Muslims were enfranchised—a statistic that renders such a conclusion deeply flawed.

Indeed, numerous marginalised low-caste Muslim communities, such as the Momins and Ansaris—who are primarily weavers and artisans—strongly

opposed the Muslim League. In 1941, over 50,000 weavers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh gathered in Delhi to protest against the Pakistan Resolution of 1940. Their demonstration was met not with support from the Congress but with deliberate silence. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari of the Momin Conference even penned a letter to Nehru in 1939, requesting a discussion regarding legislative reservations for lower-caste Muslims; however, his appeal was outright dismissed. Such a concession would have strengthened claims for caste-based reservations among Hindus as well—a path that Congress circumvented through the coercive compromise of the Poona Pact in 1932, which was extracted from Ambedkar by Gandhi's fast-unto-death.

The Congress and the Muslim League both manipulated caste and religion to further elite interests. Consequently, they conveniently ignored the issue of caste-based exploitation among Muslims. What persisted was a harmful myth: that Indian Muslims were uniformly pro-Pakistan and inherently disloyal to the Indian nation-state. This myth continues to plague them, resurfacing during every national crisis—whether in the Pahalgam incident or in various loyalty tests routinely imposed on Muslim citizens.

The accumulated historical distortions facilitated the rise of the Sangh Parivar—a coalition of pro-Empire forces with minimal investment in the anti-colonial struggle. Over a century, the RSS methodically constructed a significant ideological framework based on the lingering effects of colonial divide-and-rule strategies. It is documented that Savarkar, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the RSS openly supported the Muslim League's two-nation theory. In fact, even prior to Jinnah, Savarkar proposed a similar notion in 1937, yet his work has been systematically hidden under the rug. Assigning sole responsibility for partition to the Muslim League and Jinnah constitutes a

significant distortion of history, conveniently overlooking the role played by Hindu communal forces in India provoking the Muslim League to resort to call for the partition of India.

Today’s incendiary rhetoric and communal vitriol espoused by BJP leaders are not historical aberrations—they are the toxic fruits of a deeply rooted colonial and communal legacy. Until that legacy is reckoned with, India’s democratic promise will remain hostage to the spectres of a past deliberately misremembered.



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“Freedom comes slowly, but so do coffins….”

In 1947, Dr B.R. Ambedkar emerged as a unique architect of social justice, crafting a crucial constitutional space—though not an expansive one—for the historically oppressed Dalits during the transfer of power and the constitution-making process. Through provisions for reservations and statutory safeguards against caste atrocities, he aimed to embed a promise of dignity at the core of the Republic. However, for religious minorities—particularly Muslims—no such structural reprieve was envisioned within the secular framework of the state. This approach has led to a tragic irony: in the world's largest democracy, secularism has become a hollow slogan, incapable of protecting its minorities. Lacking genuine inclusion, they have been commodified—transformed into electoral fodder and treated as the perennial "milch cow" in the cynical marketplace of vote-bank politics.

This narrative, rather than being a sudden invention, has insidiously evolved over decades—disguised beneath shifting political vocabularies, yet driven by the same spirit of expediency and exclusion. Despite its solemn promises, constitutional secularism has failed to materialise in the lived realities of Indian society. A significant portion of the Muslim populace views the Constitution as merely an ideal, providing minimal tangible protection against the growing tide of institutional neglect and growing Islamophobia.

While Dalits have been granted legal protections, the Constitution cannot eradicate centuries of caste-based prejudice that is intricately woven into the fabric of everyday life. Statutory measures alone cannot extinguish the torch of social hatred that has been passed down through generations. Consequently, the burden of caste endures—vicious, intimate, and persistent—eluding the reach of legal remedies. This constitutional shortfall inflicts a profound failure upon Indian democracy, rendering it ultimately

hollow.

“We the people of India…”

A retrospective examination of the composition of the Constituent Assembly reveals a significant truth: it was predominantly composed of upper-caste Hindus, primarily affiliated with the Indian National Congress. This demographic imbalance was not merely incidental; it was foundational. As Achin Vanaik astutely points out in his essay, India’s Constitution: How Democratic, How Just:

“*The asymmetries of class power are obscured in the constitution by propping up a notion of the ‘people’s will’, as expressed through electoral democracy. The Constitution is testament to the fact that the members of the original Constituent Assembly, incidentally not elected by universal suffrage, were overwhelmingly members of the Congress party…”*

This account of truth reveals the fundamental contradiction at the heart of the constitutional project. How could the lofty ideals of secularism, anti-untouchability, religious liberty, and social equality be genuinely realised when the voices of the most oppressed—those for whom these promises were matters of life and death—were glaringly absent at this very moment of political genesis? The subaltern, having been silenced, found no place at the table where their destinies were being determined.

Upper-caste Hindu dominance did not merely cast a long shadow over the

political sphere; it became entrenched in the very fabric of India's bureaucratic machinery. Consequently, the Nehruvian vision of socialism and the secular ethos enshrined in the Constitution remained limited to what can be described as a "palace discourse."

Today, that long-standing imbalance has transformed into something more threatening. Hindu majoritarianism now looms over us, symbolising the emergence of an upper-caste Hindu state, strengthened by decades of suppressed anxieties and historical exclusions. The veneer of secularism appears increasingly worn, exposing the ideological framework beneath.

Historian Ayesha Jalal cuts through the nationalist mythos with surgical clarity:

"*Communalism in India was not the expression of primordial religious identities, but the result of calculated strategies by colonial rulers and indigenous elites to secure their own power."*

(The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan)

"Left! Left! Left! March with the left foot forward —"

During the colonial era, leftist politics in India aligned with the broader global wave of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movements, planting a radical political imagination within the Indian national struggle. This movement

organised workers' strikes and led peasant revolts against the crown and its allied classes. Despite some strategic missteps, it was in the communist programme that the ideal of secularism found its most significant expression.

In the violently communalised landscape of 1946, the Tebhaga movement erupted under the leadership of the Communist Party. During this period, Hindu and Muslim peasants came together in solidarity, demanding their rightful share of the harvest. They bravely challenged landlordism and defied the communal tensions exacerbated by the Hindu Mahasabha and colonial repression.

However, post-Independence India experienced a significant shift in its political landscape. Over the past few decades, the left has become increasingly fragmented, resulting in a loss of ideological cohesion and mass momentum. A comprehensive analysis of this decline, particularly in relation to international leftist trends, would require further exploration. For now, two profound and interconnected processes are unfolding, marked by bloodshed and suffering:

The ongoing othering and silencing of the Muslim community is becoming increasingly severe.

Furthermore, there has been a profound marginalisation and estrangement of Dalit communities.

Beneath these overarching issues lies a multitude of agonies faced by these two communities – their languages, women, children, and marginalized gender and sexual identities are subjected to various forms of oppression

and exploitation. Even without delving into these complexities, it is urgent to analyse how leftist forces interpret identity-based struggles.

Even if fractured, it is only the left-democratic tradition that possesses the theoretical, historical, and moral capacity to revive Indian democracy and secularism, moving it from the sterile legal corridors to the dynamic streets of popular politics.

The Sangh Parivar and its ideological machinery have long identified their true adversary—not just the electoral presence of leftist parties but the very worldview they embody. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in an interview, acknowledged this reality: it is not merely the left parties that must be uprooted but the 'left thought' itself. Modi's continued perception of a spectre of the left, despite its status as a depleted parliamentary force, highlights the considerable ideological strength that the left still possesses. It is evident that the bourgeois parliament is not the primary source of leftist strength. Consequently, the parliamentary leftist parties ought to acknowledge these realities and reconsider their broader vision of leftism.

Regardless of the electoral outcomes, leftist beliefs represent the most authentic and significant opposition to the Hindutva project. This initiative aims not only to alter the Constitution but also to reshape Hindu thought, undermine diversity, and establish a new framework of religious dominance and caste control.

All identity struggles are, at their core, ultimately **deflected class struggles**. i.e., manifestations of underlying class conflicts. Each instance of identity-based discrimination exacerbates the already overwhelming pressures of

capitalism.

The caste system is not merely a remnant of feudalism; it serves as a mechanism for enhancing capitalist profit. The silenced voices of minorities endure similar suffering. However, these marginalised groups still lack adequate representation in leftist politics.

The historical dominance of upper-caste leadership in both large and small left parties persists. It is insufficient merely to express solidarity. If the embedded class conflicts within identity struggles are not recognised and embraced, the hope for class unity among the oppressed will continue to erode. Hindutva represents a doctrine of perpetual violence. It disregards centuries of shared coexistence and fractures society, dehumanising communities to construct a violent, casteist, religiously fascist state. It redefines, fragments, and oppresses each identity according to its convenience. Who is safe from its violence—Adivasis, Dalits, women, minorities, or gender-variant individuals? No one. Each struggle of these oppressed communities bears the seeds of class struggle, rendering them vulnerable. By instilling fear and promoting caste pride, the ecosystem of the Sangh Parivar has jeopardised educational institutions, the media (the fourth pillar of democracy), and the Hindu imagination. It is manufacturing consent for a Hindu Rashtra. The uneven development of Indian modernity has now, under neoliberalism, reached an immense state of insecurity. Social safety nets and the welfare functions of the state have been crushed beneath its brutal wheels. Democratic institutions stand helpless in the face of corporate giants. Extreme right-wing forces, such as the BJP, can ruthlessly execute neoliberal policies. Consequently, this is also the most fertile moment for Hindutva to expand. The BJP is currently mobilising a vast, impoverished,

insecure, and educationally deprived youth to violently challenge every marginal identity.

This imperilled and melancholic moment was echoed in Antonio Gramsci's words:

"*The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum, a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.*" (Prison Notebooks)

Hindutva stands as one such "morbid symptom". If left-democratic and genuinely secular forces cannot come together—setting aside their internal contradictions and ideological differences (while permitting mutual criticism)—not only within Parliament but also in the broader realms of social and cultural politics, then the prevalence of dead bodies, bloodshed, violence, rape, and aggression will increasingly become normalised.

Our eyes will no longer shed tears for anyone.

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