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JUSTICE: AN INTER-FAITH TASK

With every passing day, the nation watches in stupefied horror the blood-thirst overtaking this land. It is a steadily creeping madness. A psychosis of evil now afflicting what until yesteryear were considered to be impregnable and near-idyllic islands of sanity and serenity. Its symbol is the gun. Its victim: Muslims, Hindus, Harijans, Brahmins, women, children, we the people (....) The country is passing through one of the more violent periods in its history.¹

If this comment is received [as the summary of the Indian situation in the eighties, the 90s do not offer a more optimistic picture.

Millions get displaced as a result of large development projects; shifts in economic policies, often under the guidance of international agencies, render the poor more vulnerable and insecure; natural resources – a base of common property resources which is already fragile which once enabled the survival of the poor communities dependent on them, is increasingly being taken over by business interests or the State. All this is done in the name of serving all. But raise any questions about inverted consequences of this logic and you will be immediately castigated as anti-development, anti-science and anti-national.²

Communalism and developmentalism symbolise the violent and unjust situation in the country today. If communalism is the perverted understanding and expression of religious sentiments, developmentalism is the distorted and misguided pursuit of social welfare. Apparently these two are unrelated questions; the one related to more individual and collective questions of faith; and the other belongs to more scientific field of planning and economy. However

1 Editorial comment titled "March of the Gun" in *India Today*, Oct 15, 1989.

2. Harsh Sethi, "The Problem", *Seminar*, May, 1993, p. 14.

sociological analysis of these two phenomena reveal certain ideological presuppositions common to both. Taking clue from the sociological survey we argue that these two issues have to be addressed together, and that justice in the Asian context remains an inter-faith task.

1. The Ideological Assumptions: Modernization, Nationalism, and Secularism

The immediate agencies of communal violence and developmental plans may be varied and many; nonetheless there seems to be mainly three ideological assumptions at work in them.

1.1. Modernization.

In his analysis of communal riots Ashis Nandy has demonstrated that communalism is mainly an urban phenomenon and that the participants are mostly 'massified, abandoned children of modern India thrown up by the process of social change and development'³. In fact terrorism and the displacement of peoples can also be traced back to the results of modernization in India. Sudhir Kakar holds that

as modernization picks up pace, individuals will increasingly seek membership of groups with absolute value systems and with little tolerance for deviations from their norms. Initially the attraction will be for the youth and urbanized classes; but the circle will widen and more people will be sucked in.⁴

There are several features of modernization⁵ which, I think, have much bearing on the kind of unjust situations that we find around us.

i) Modernization results in population movements involving separation of families and the loss of familiar neighbourhoods and ecological niches; ii) the ever increasing globalization, due to the communications media and the multi-nationals, encroaches upon traditional group solidarities and migrations occur beyond national boundaries; iii) the vast internal migrations give rise to overcrowded living conditions, specially in the sprawling shanty towns and slums; people live there on 'a permanent psychic mobilization and heightened

3. Ashis Nandy, "Three Propositions", *Seminar*, Feb, 1993, p. 16.

4. Sudhir Kakar, "Reflections on Religious Group Identity", in *Seminar*, Feb, 1993 p. 50.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

nervous arousal'; iv) there is also a loss of ancestral ideals and values, and grief for the values of the lost world; v) along with this loss, there is also the feeling of humiliation and radically lowered self-worth, as modernization does not respect cultural plurality and local values; vi) for the elites of the non-western world, there is an additional humiliation in their greater awareness of the defeat of their civilizations in the colonial encounter with the west. This defeat is not simply a memory of the past but a present reality due to the peripheral role their countries play in the global market system; this is all the more true with regard to the migrant Indians (specially in the U.S.) exposed to indifference towards their cultural traditions; they then turn back to their ethnic identity with greater fervour; vii) global migrations, tourism and communications confront people in a given society with the foreignness of others, and leads to self-questioning and search for identity, specially in ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are preferred to class groups because ethnic groups such as Hindus and Muslims, are 'primordial' in nature, providing an encompassing world-view and myths that have a meaning and hope for their future.

Modernization has created a vacuum, which the terrorists and the communal groups have actively filled in. The Hindutva ideology worked on primordial 'time and place' concepts in order to provide a sense of 'national (pseudo) identity'; it also appealed to the grandiosity of Hindu religion in order to counter the sense of humiliation or worthlessness. The ideology of modernization has thus been the breeding ground for violence and injustice at various levels.

1.2. *Nationalism*

Nationalism came into existence as a binding ideology in opposing the British imperialism. Although during the British period, nationalist movements had taken a religious tone, the presence of Gandhi on the national scene, helped containing and galvanizing the religious sentiments towards national liberation, notwithstanding the partition of the subcontinent on religious lines. In the post-independence era, nationalism was employed to build 'a modern and central state power' with a thrust on homogenization of various cultures and identities into the national mainstream. This eventually pushed various com-

munities such as Muslims, dalits, and tribals to the status of 'backward minorities'.⁶

With the heavy modernization thrust of the Nehru era, the priority was given to building India as a nation-state among the nations of the world. A linear development, strong protective national forces, and uniform laws were the catch words. The emergence of insurgent groups and the reassertion of various cultural and linguistic communities provided the legitimization for the State to acquire for itself more powers.

The logic of developmentalism has brought the nation-State India into debt traps set by the global funding agencies, and forced it to function under the conditionalities of the IMF. The nation-State has to follow suit in the dominant international order which is an emotion-free, hard-headed and performance-minded truism of technology. It glorifies masculinity, homogeneity and adulthood, and is embarrassed at femininity, plurality and humaneness. Trade, technology, and communications are controlled by inter-national agencies, and the nation-State remains powerless. This in turn forces the nation-State to adopt a heavy handedness towards local identities and pluralities in order to assimilate them into the global technological culture. Communal violence and displacement of peoples are created by the internal logic of developmental nation-State ideologies.

1.3. *Secularism*

Developmentalism and communal violence have brought back religion to the centre stage in Indian political life. Viewed as faith, religion operates as a way of life and is pluralistic in its expressions; viewed as ideology, religion functions in a rigid manner as a lever for certain political and social interests. In post-independent India, secularism received a new respectability with Nehru as its prime advocate, and it was mainly a European secularism. It viewed religion as an ideology; felt uncomfortable with it and wanted to contain it. Religious clashes were reduced to socio-economic clashes. Secularists argued that religion should be a private affair, and should not be allowed to threaten the modern nation-State.

6. Mukesh Srivastva, "Whose Nation?", *Seminar*, Feb, 1993, p. 36.

Over the last five decades this sort of secularism in the name of modernity has won over more and more Indians, pushing religion-as-faith to the background. Ashis Nandy holds that

... much of the fanaticism and violence associated with religion comes today from the sense of defeat of the believers, from their feeling of impotence, and from their free-floating anger and self-hatred while facing a world which is increasingly secular and desacralized.⁷

Both the State and the modern Indian advocate the ordinary faithful to go slow or dilute their faith in public (keep it a private affair), as only then there will be 'progress'. However for the ordinary Indian, life is not worth living without a horizon of transcendence/immanence. While the State is enthusiastic about keeping public life out of religion, it does not safeguard the citizens from the onslaught of other ideologies of modernity, secularism etc. Rather it imposes them on the people in the name of religion. Nandy is forthright in exposing and condemning the built-in violence of modernity:

Certainly in India, the ideas of nation-building, scientific growth, security, modernization and development have become parts of a left-handed technology with a clear touch of religiosity - a modern demonology, a tantra with a built-in code of violence.⁸

The prevailing conception on secularism is wanting in its response to the Indian psyche. The concept of 'self' in Asian culture is a configuration of selves, and religion as faith is a configuration of principles and beliefs. To reduce them into well-defined, monolithic concepts is unbecoming for the Asian mind. Secularism as an ideology is bequeathed by the West. India has to look for a secularism that is born out of its traditions and cultures.

7. Ashis Nandy, "The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance", in *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, riots and survivors in S. Asia*, (Ed) Veena Das, Delhi: Oxford Press, 1990, p. 79.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

2. Emerging Trends in the Indian society

2.1. Faulty Ideologies

The most extreme form of communal violence in India occurs in urban industrial sectors. Much of this does not result from faulty passions; they are the products of the faulty ideologies of nation-State, modernization and secularism. Communal violence and dehumanizing poverty are symptomatic of a society that is led by ideologies of national security, modern technological progress and development at any cost.

2.2. Monocultural Self

In this ideological march of the neo-colonial Nation-State that is India, an unholy alliance has been struck between developmentalists of the modern-state and the fundamentalists of religion. In order that India may become a distinct and strong nation-State among the nations, they advocate a monocultural identity which is co-terminus with Hindu religious culture. The increasing globalization of the market-economy and communications, paradoxically pushes nation-States to struggle for identity. While the real Indian self is pluralistic and inclusive, the new ideologies project an identifiable and exclusive Indian self that is religiously knit together.

2.3. Search for Identity

The participation of urban middle class English-educated youth in terrorist activities and in communal violence show that the uprooted and tradition-lost people are searching for an identity of their own. The support of the non-resident Indians from abroad confirms this search for a cultural and traditional identity, on the background of their inferiority feeling. The general 'paternalising' attitude of these groups towards smaller cultures and tribals, and their attempt to integrate them into the 'national mainstream' at the expense of latter's identity explain the alienation and the fear expressed by tribals and minority groups.

2.4. Invisible Referent

Ashis Nandy holds that behind the ideological struggles and the resultant violence in India, there is an *INVISIBLE REFERENT* present, i.e. the *WESTERN MAN*; not the one of reality nor of history, but

as the defeated civilization in this part of the world has construed him.⁹ He is the one who rules the world with technological rationality, economic statecraft and organized religion.

2.5. *Model Rival*

The responses accordingly are twofold: to model oneself on the western man or to rival him at his own game.¹⁰ At the modelling level, the attempt is to capture cultural, political, economic and religious traits that are thought to be the reasons for success of the West. One is blissfully unaware of the new legitimacies, systems of domination and exploitation perpetuated by the contemporary West. At the rivalling level, the attempt is to defeat the western man in those areas in which he is projected as being strong. In the recent Hindu fundamentalist struggles, there was an obvious attempt at semiticizing Hinduism, projecting it as a monotheistic, scripture-centred and structurally organized religion, and advocating a Hindu Rashtra (a Nation-state). The dominant were the Christian and Islamic models of religion and the western concept of nation-state.

2.6. *Scapegoat*

Since the real model-rival western man is not fully accessible to the ordinary, non-modern majority (though the wide-network of communications systems based abroad is successfully reaching out to the remote villages), the Hindu fundamentalists in their attempt to create a monocultural nation-State set up the Muslims as 'the Other' of the Hindus, and then humiliated them as proof of Hindu resurgence.¹¹ Incidentally, as the one time conquerors and occupants of India, and as the present petro-dollar merchants of the world, the Muslims have a dominant status; however the 'backward status' or the so-called 'unduly privileged treatment' of the Indian-Muslim-minority enabled the Hindu fundamentalists to target a conquerable rival.¹²

9. Ashis Nandy, "Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance", in *Mirrors of Violence*, p. 81.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

11. Ashis Nandy, "Three Propositions", *Seminar*, Feb. 1993, p. 17.

12. "Far more central to Hindutva as a mass phenomenon (or for that matter to Fascism) is the development of a powerful and extendable enemy image through appropriating stray elements from past prejudices, combining them with new ones, skilfully dressed up as old verities, and broadcasting the resultant

2.7. Perpetuators

The large scale participation of English-educated urban youth in communal activities or the instigating or supportive role of the educated dalit and tribal people at the forefront of their mass movements point out to the fact that English medium schools have contributed to perpetuating the ideologies of nationalism, secularism and modernization; and have projected the west as the model-rival.

3. Scientific Rationality

These three ideologies claim certain 'scientific temper'. Modernization is easily linked to technologization which, many think, is identical with scientific achievement; secularism seems to have dethroned religion's hold on truth and have developed a secular attitude towards life; nationalism claims to give a rational identity to people beyond narrow creeds. Thus a rational and scientific approach seem to have won the day. In this logic, the *Invisible Referent* is the west, the model of science and rationalism.

Let us examine further this scientific temper and invisible referent. In fact they are two sides of the same coin. Towards the beginning of the modern period in western history, the use of science based on mathematical thinking brought a radical outlook, ushered in 'rationality'. This was initiated by Descartes. Knowledge was limited to rationality, alienated from the larger reality. Religious authority, gave way to 'protestantism' and there emerged a mercantile, technocratic and economic man.¹³ Knowledge was for utilitarian purpose, and was no more part of a larger process of self-actualization and self-transcendence. Science was thus reduced to 'scientism' and had nothing much to do with wisdom.

3.1. Paradigm Shift

If the modern period in western history elevated science onto a preeminent position, dethroning theology, the 'post-modern period

compound through the most up-to-date media techniques.... The Muslims becomes the nearest exact equivalent of the Jew or the Black in contemporary white racism". Sumit Sarkar; "The Fascism of the Sangh Parivar", in *The Economic and the Political Weekly (EPW)* Vol.28, No.5, 1993, p. 165.

13. Cf. Ashis Nandy, *Tradition, tyranny and Utopia*, Delhi: The Oxford University press, 1987 p. 86; J. L. Metha, *Philosophy and Religion* (Essays in Interpretation), Delhi: Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 1990, p. 227.

seems to witness a shift in the paradigm. Today science acknowledges that real scientific method needs to be inter-disciplinary and trans-positivistic. The verifiability of scientific experiments and findings, are always hypothetical; given the similar 'spatio-temporal categories' science can assert that its findings are true; once those conditions undergo changes, scientific truths also have to be reformulated.

The paradigm shift of the sciences from a strict rational positivism to a trans-rational stand has been necessitated by the ecological awareness. The eco-sense supplies us with a hermeneutic of suspicion on the claims of modern sciences. The inter-relatedness and inter-dependence of various levels of life challenge us to place our 'analytic' findings in the wider eco-system in order to arrive at a 'holistic' perception of realities. A hard-headed, neutral and masculine approach need not be 'scientific'.

Ecology has further strengthened the view that scientific findings will have to be projected on to a trans-science 'referentiality', to a wider cosmic and meta-cosmic system. Such a referentiality will safeguard the inter-relatedness and inter-dependence of various aspects of reality. Increased isolation and minutest analysis are not the only valid way of knowing. The assumption that economic planning and technological development will by themselves usher in justice and remove poverty, has been proved wrong. The so-called developed societies maintain their economic development at the expense of the poor masses of the third world, and at the cost of the survival of the entire eco-system and at the loss of meaning of life.

3.2. Religious Referentiality

There have been other traditions of knowledge; though unnoticed they still persist and provide alternate models. First, in China, India, Persia, the Arab countries, and later in medieval Europe there were alternate forms of knowledge. These traditions had certain common features: knowledge was a search for truth and a basis for human enlightenment and liberation, and not just a means for domination. Knowledge was holistic in which science and culture were not separate; the act of making and the pursuit of truth were inseparable. These alternate models had a pluralistic and interdisciplinary approach. Knowledge as scientism did not have a imperialistic,

false universalism. Secondly, these ancient traditions witness to the fact that science and technology were not the monopoly of the West. As J. Needham and C. Alvares have pointed out Chinese and Indian traditions had their technology. The three inventions which Bacon considered so basic to the development of the world—namely printing (in the area of culture), gunpowder (in the political and military sphere), and magnet (in navigation and hence in commerce)—were Chinese in origin.¹⁴ Thirdly, these traditions had not only invented their own technology but had placed it within their knowledge system, without giving an undue dominating role to technology. Ashis Nandy points out that technology was deemed an inferior form of activity:

In Hindu society, despite the Vedic sacrificial rituals being a basic prototype of technology, the social status of Brahmans, concerned with interpretation of the macro-and micro-cosmos of nature, was higher than the status of the artisan castes often seen as lowly makers or manipulators of things. Theogonically, too, the Hindu goddess of learning, Saraswati was a first order of deity, whereas the god of technology, Viswakarma, was a minor second-order deity.¹⁵

The ancient cultures like China and India not only encountered 'rationalism' of technology but had devised ways and means to integrate it into the larger culture. Such an integration occurred through the overarching 'religious horizon' of those societies, or through the referentiality of all knowledge system to the ultimate quest for Truth and Self-realization. Today the western models are projected as imitable bringing about unhealthy competitiveness and the resultant violence.

In our struggle to remove poverty and bring about justice through the instrumentality of economics of development, we will have to take into account the '*external religio-cultural mediation*'. Such an

14. Joseph Needham et al, *Science and Civilization in China* Cambridge: 1984, vols. 1-7; Claude Alvares, *Homo Faber, Technology and Culture in India, China and the West from 1500 B.C to the Present Day*, Bombay: Allied Pub; 1979 as cited by F. Wilfred in *Jeevadhara*, XXII, 127, 1992 pp. 73-75.

15. Ashis Nandy, *Traditions, Tyranny and Utopias*, p. 86.

external mediation will take economics out of its straight-jacket and bring human affections and longings for liberation in its purview. It is time that we reassert a liberating inter-dependence of all sciences—secular and religious, more particularly between economics and theology. The ancient cultures had such a religious referentiality built into their institutions, and so there never existed a total separation between religion and culture, culture and sciences, and hence they were less destructive.

4. Justice an Inter-Religious Dilemma ?

The religious referentiality that we have argued for, in matters of justice looks rather a complicated affair in the context of the multiplicity of faiths. Is it possible to address the various and many questions of poverty if we were to consult all religions?

Aloysius Pieris, from his study of the Asian religiosity, has authoritatively shown that 'poverty and religiosity' are the two key features of Asianness and they have to be addressed together. Both have oppressive and liberating features. The Buddhist Sangams seem to have addressed them together and evolved a just social structure. Probably we in Asia have too quickly jumped into the band-wagon of the western models of development and progress without paying enough attention to the models available in our traditions. The increasing conflicts that we find in the Asian sub-continent explain that the present models of development are unable to contain the religious and cultural aspirations of our people.

4.1. Contributions of the Church's Social Teaching

It is interesting to note that the social teaching of the Church has gradually recognized the importance of viewing justice as an inter-cultural and inter-religious task. Specially since Leo XIII, the Church had attempted to address the various questions of justice. At the challenge of communism, though belatedly, Leo XIII dwelt on the rights of the workers. With John XXIII, the social agenda was extended to questions of justice, peace, women, agricultural workers and new nations etc. (cf. *Mater et Magistra, Pacem in Terris*). In a significant departure from the earlier understanding, *Pacem in Terris* refers to culture as a genuine expression of the common spiritual heritage of human society (no. 36).

The Second Vatican Council shows greater sensitivity to the joys and sorrows, hopes and anxieties of our times and deals with economic development and justice. 'Technical progress' is rated high in the advancement of agricultural and industrial production, the fundamental aim of which should not be profit or domination but the service of human beings (GS.64). Parallel to these considerations on justice, culture is viewed as 'humanizing, self-expressive, self-communicating acts of human beings symbolized in various behavioural, religious and civic ways. (53); culture manifests peoples' ways of thinking and feeling (59). The document however, does not bring about a dialogue between culture and justice.

Paul VI sees the interrelationship between culture and justice and dares to address them together. In *Populorum Progressio*, Paul VI insists on integral development of the human being and of all human kind. "We do not believe in separating the economic from the human, nor development from the civilizations in which it exists. What we hold important is man, each man and each group of men, and we even include the whole of humanity" (no.14). Though he shares the lopsided optimism of GS that holds that industrial growth means greater development, the linking of development to culture is vital. Similarly in *Evangelium Nuntiandi*, Paul VI elaborates on the dynamic relationship that exists between culture and the Gospels, and admits: "The split between the Gospel and culture is without doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times". (no.20).

The culture-development debate reaches a dynamic stage in *Justice in the World*, the document of the Second Synod of Bishops in 1971. It accepts 'action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world. (. . .) as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel' (no.6), and reiterates that development, modernization and justice should not be at the expense of the true cultural identity and heritage (no.19). Justice is recognised as a cultural task and vice versa. In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, John Paul II finds himself up against a form of 'superdevelopment' which consists of 'excessive availability of every kind of material goods' for certain social groups which make peoples slaves of possession creating a civilization of consumerism and trass materialism' (no.28). Such a wasteful culture is invented by certain form of 'modern imperialism' which is part of the 'structures of sin' characterized by an 'all consuming desire for

profit and thirst for power'. The idols of our time are money, ideology, class and technology (no.37). In the light of this analysis, John Paul II invites solidarity of the human family based on the common patrimony of religiosity (ref. the Assisi Meet of all Religions in 1987) that can vouch for true justice that includes cultural identity (no.47).

John Paul II has thus explicitly linked religiosity and culture with justice debate. This is a welcome thrust. One should immediately add that this link up between justice and religiosity is yet to enter into the systematic thinking of the church. The Church's social teaching often runs parallel to the documents on inter-religious dialogue, or make cursory remarks on their inter-relationship. A systematic treatment of justice from an inter-religious perspective is an imperative, specially for the Asian countries.

4.2. *Swadeshi Model*

The religious referentiality that we are arguing for, in matters of justice and development seems to complicate the already intricate questions of justice. Even if for arguments sake we accept religious mediation, it seems a practical impossibility to arrive at a common referentiality. Hence a homogenous developmental model seems to be the best way out.

In fact, by and large the political left in India adopted a similar *Instrumental Approach* to economic issues and dismissed the religious and cultural factors as irrelevant for economic reforms. The cultural and religious aspirations of the people were left unattended to.¹⁶ We need to search for an approach to questions of justice that will account for the primordial aspirations of the people as well. According to Ashis Nandy such a perspective will not originate from today's middle class politicians nor from the fashionable theories of intellectuals, but from the non-modern India, by exploring the symbolism and tolerance in the various faiths of ordinary Indians.¹⁷

16. Cf. Sudhir Kakar, "Reflections on Religious Group Identity", *Seminar*, Feb, 1993, p. 53.

17. Ashis Nandy, "The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance", in *Mirrors of Violence*, pp. 85-87. "It is not modern India, which has tolerated Judaism in India for nearly two thousand years, Christianity from before the time it went to Europe, and Zoroastrianism for more than twelve hundred years; it is traditional India which has shown such tolerance.

This quest for primordial models and institutions is not in itself a rejection of modern institutions. The models that are still operative at the level of the ordinary people contain the wisdom of the ages and of the indigenous. It is in fact a search for continuity and rootedness in the wake of modernity, but not necessarily against modernity as such. While the ancient models seem to have contained the plurality of culture and religions, it did not and could not, respond to the 'globalizing phenomena' of our times. Hence we are challenged to evolve models that would take into account 'primordial aspirations' as well as globalizing realities'. An inter-religious and inter-cultural approach might respond to these polarities.

The 'incarnational pattern' in a wider sense seems to be a common factor in all religious cultures. The transcendent or the immanent reality seems to have chosen to be inserted in a particular 'time and place', respecting the multiplicity of realities and occasioning therefore many cultures and faiths. Any place and time is equally valid for insertion and for reaching out. The solution to multiplicity is not made in heavens and transported to every nook and corner; rather it is the particularity that is appreciated and accepted in an ever-recurring and ever-widening incarnations so as to reach out to all.

The incarnational pattern has often been reduced to a narrow theological category, as if theology has nothing to do with economics and politics. The incarnational pedagogy is perhaps the valid human way to approach plurality. Economy and development cannot ignore the questions of multiplicity and plurality. The external mediation that 'sciences' is looking for, if accepted as 'religious referentiality' will place them immediately in contact with multiplicity, and the religious response to multiplicity is 'incarnational'.

That is why today, as India gets modernized, religious violence is increasing. In the earlier centuries, according to available records, inter-religious riots were rare and localised; even after Independence we had less than one event of religious strife a week; now we have about one and half incidents a day. And more than ninety per cent of these riots begin in urban India, in and around industrial areas. Even now in 1980s, Indian villages and small towns can take credit for having avoided communal riots Obviously, somewhere and somehow, religious tolerance has something to do with the urban-industrial vision of life and with the political processes the vision has let loose". *Ibid.* p. 84.

The Gandhian 'swadeshi' method was at once religious and secular. It is a 'neighbourhood' philosophy that believed that every place and time is sacred, and that every place and time had its economic, social and scientific potentials for the people of the locality to live on. Its out-reach is not for 'consumerist domination' but in 'kenotic self-gift', forming ever-widening circles of human fellowship. Religions and cultures should join together in addressing the questions of justice in an ever-widening human solidarity.

In Conclusion

We have argued that 'communalism and development', are the two major issues of our times eating into the body politic. Sociological analysis shows that these two issues are interrelated, and have to be addressed together. Three ideologies are at work behind these phenomena: Nationalism, Modernization and Secularism. They have two common features: a sort of 'scientism', and an invisible referent. A critical reflection shows that their scientific approach is more of a 'scientism' which cannot stand the test of objectivity; that real scientific approach calls for a referentiality. The referentiality that is now uncritically accepted is 'competitive, rivalrous' and self destructive. Only a religious referentiality will bring about true justice.

While the social teaching of the Catholic church has come to recognize that religiosity should be an important category in matters of justice, it has not, as yet developed a systematic approach to it. The multiplicity of religions seem to suggest that recurrent incarnational approach is the right response to plurality. The 'swadeshi' model, respecting the globalizing trend of our times, need to be explored to include the economic, social and religious aspects. Justice in Asian context cannot but be an inter-religious and inter-cultural task.