

# Democracy and the Fight against Communalism

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THIS is a belated response to Sumanta Banerjee's 'Sangh Parivar and Democratic Rights' (*EPW*, August 21, 1993). Belated, hut certainly not too late, for the issue he has raised is one that we are living with, and will continue to live with for a long time to come. And the attitudes he adopts are part of the legacy of the left that needs to be critically re-thought.

Banerjee's suggestion that the -left and secular forces should be prepared to take on the Hindutva forces physically cannot be faulted, if by that he means that they should be prepared to face force with force in defence of the existence and the rights of the Muslims or other likely targets of the Hindu communalists. such as for instance the dalit communities. If this is all he means, his complaint that the secular forces are hesitant to take the plunge and are seeking tame refuge in issuing pamphlets and holding seminars is a valid complaint too. Though one is sure he does not object to the issuing of pamphlets and the holding of seminars as such.

But Banerjee's complaint and argument do not stop there. Alleging fairly enough that "the left parties... have betrayed an unwillingness to engage unhesitatingly in confronting the politico-religious configuration of Hindutva and throw the power of their organised working class base behind such a confrontation", and citing the example of the heroic of tragic efforts of the German and Italian communists of the 1930s, he adds that the left parties justify their inertia by chanting the old principle ("now reduced to an almost anachronistic mantra") that "communalism should be fought ideologically and politically, instead of by administrative measures". Let us ignore for a moment whether the organised or other working class is itself interested in being 'thrown' into the confrontation with communalism (for it is always assumed that the working class is ready for all such progressive tasks, and only the leadership is at fault). What is striking in his argument is that he begins with the working class as the possible but neglected battering ram against communalism. and ends with 'administrative measures' as the force needlessly despised by the left. This is not an isolated slip in his argument. Throughout his argument against 'democratic tolerance' towards the Hindu communalists, Sumanta Banerjee is quite ambiguous on the question: whose tolerance is he talking about? That of the democratic forces, or that of the institutions of the Indian state and the political process called the government of

India? It is precisely because Sumanta Banerjee, given his long involvement in civil rights work, cannot be accused of a light-hearted altitude towards democracy and democratic rights, that this ambiguity needs to be discussed.

The Sangh parivar does not believe in democracy, nor in the democratic values expressed in the Indian Constitution. The more it grows, the more it will destroy those values. And so to show the Sangh parivar democratic tolerance is to wantonly destroy democracy. The preservation of democracy and the protection of the lives of the thousands of individuals who are likely to be sacrificed for the rise of the parivar are much more important than the democratic rights of the unholy parivar. This is the crux of Banerjee's argument.

## THE DILEMMA

There is no denying that there is a dilemma here. But let us look at all that is involved here - all the elements of the dilemma - before we come to a conclusion. The denial of democratic rights such as for instance the rights of free speech and assembly to any individual or group in society does not only destroy the chances of that individual or group to grow and dominate society. It simultaneously destroys the values expressed by the rights denied, and the institutions responsible for guaranteeing those rights. These values and institutions may be termed 'bourgeois' (I am not imputing this terminology to Sumanta Banerjee) if their historical origin and philosophical expression is traced to the anti-feudal democratic revolutions of Europe which resulted in the domination of capital over society. For the reason of that historical origin the specific meaning and institutional form of the rights do also carry bourgeois limitations. Nevertheless each such right expresses a value that is as much a lasting resource of human civilisation as the steam engine that Marx was immensely impressed by, and each of the institutions evolved by bourgeois society for the implementation of the rights (a professional and independent judiciary, for instance) embodies principles that need to be carried forward while the structural and conceptual limitations of the institutions (such as the equation of total alienation from society with judicial impartiality) are criticised and overcome. Every contemporary civil liberties struggle must strive and does strive not only to protect a given right in a given context (the right of a prisoner against torture, or of slumdwellers against eviction)

but also the democratic values and institutional principles relating to that right, while critically overcoming the bourgeois expression of the notions and forms in which the principles are embodied, and the institutions in which their realisation is enshrined. This is a complex task that can never be reduced to a black and white 'class character' of rights (such as that bourgeois democracy is honeyed poison, with accent on the poison, or that it is more of a poison because it is honeyed, with accent on the honey), though the class character does enter the definition, conceptualisation and institutionalisation of the rights.

This preface is not intended to imply that Sumanta Banerjee has expressed himself in these terms: it is however necessary to state these ideas in black and white to realise the full implication of Banerjee's argument. He recognises the crudest of these implications when he posits an argument his critics may offer: if the police are allowed to behave unlawfully with the Sangh parivar they are likely to behave in the same fashion with others. He does not really answer this argument, probably because he does not regard it worthwhile to do so. Yet, one only has to listen to complaints about police misbehaviour in post-Gill Punjab to realise how serious the consequences of wilful erosion of legality in police behaviour can be. (We had a taste of it when some companies of commandos from Punjab were posted in Karimnagar to thwart the Peoples War's bid to forcefully obstruct the election process: the commandos struck terror among women by behaving like privileged studs in heat.) In Andhra Pradesh, policemen who have done a stint in the naxalite affected areas are taking to such lawless behaviour wherever they are posted in the state that the public opinion' that condoned police excesses in Telangana because it fell the naxalites did not deserve democratic rights is now rueing its altitude.

But this is only the crudest, and therefore the most easily recognised, implication of his argument. For instance, he also criticises the judiciary for allowing 'democratic space' to the Sangh parivar by merely doing its duty as understood by the judges concerned: for striking down the ban order on a BJP rally in Calcutta: for ordering the Orissa administration to reopen the locked VHP office: for striking down the ban on the RSS and the Bajrang Dai; and for allowing the installation of Ramlalla idols at the site of the demolished masjid. Some of these orders of the courts can be faulted for a lack of judicial impartiality in interpreting facts and the law. Such a criticism is even politically very necessary for it points to the growth of a shamelessly pro-Hindutva outlook in the judiciary and the administration, to the detriment of the values of secularism and the evenhanded interpretation of law. But

such is not Sumanta Banerjee's criticism. He is against the granting of 'democratic space' to the Sangh parivar by the courts irrespective of how judicially correct the orders are. His argument is that because the Sangh parivar is a fascist force, it should not be allowed any democratic space by the courts, quite irrespective of the legal merits of the case. How much harm this can do to the Sangh parivar one does not know, but it will certainly do immense harm to the courts as an institution of democracy-of bourgeois democracy, yes, but as we have said above, that is not an uncomplicated description.

When we move from the judiciary to the armed executive, the plea for greater intolerance towards the fascists becomes positively dangerous. Sumanta Banerjee is allowed to lay down - and legitimise in the name of democratic rights - the principle that fascists do not deserve democracy. But he will not be the one to determine who the fascists are when the time of determination comes. He is careful enough to argue that his contention will not apply (if he can help it) to the naxalites and other radical forces, who too indulge in unconstitutional acts, because their goal is the constitutional goal of socialism, and the democratic goal of upliftment of the oppressed. This is both irrelevant and arguable. It is irrelevant because once 'the left, the liberal intellectuals and the human rights groups' endorse the view that the Indian state need not extend democratic tolerance to fascists because such tolerance will result in the growth of fascism and the throttling of democracy, they are not going to be consulted about whom the Indian state will define as fascists. In his rhetoric, Sumanta Banerjee has already included the 'Punjab and Kashmir terrorists' in the list of the damned with whom the Hindu communalists are to be treated on par and denied democratic rights. Though his prose leaves room for the unhappy supposition that in his view democratic rights groups should only oppose the torture and killing of "non-involved persons" by the security forces in situations such as Punjab and Kashmir and not of persons who are actually involved in the militancy, I will take it that he intends it only as a rhetorical statement: when the Punjab and Kashmir militants are denied rights on the ground that their aims are unconstitutional and their politics communal, why should not the same apply to the Sangh parivar? The Indian state will be only too glad to use the licence Sumanta Banerjee offers in reverse. Not only the Punjab and Kashmir militants but also the Naga, Mizo and other north-east militants too have aims that are unconstitutional, and some of them at least will probably not ensure the rights of minorities in their regions once they succeed (and in that sense are communal). And yet it is precisely the civil liberties groups that have consistently argued that behind the secessionism and sectarianism of these movements there is a historical legacy and a social reality that need to be tackled at the level of argument and

persuasion and not with guns; that the people who support these movements should be won over if that is at all possible, and not terrorised; that even militants caught red-handed should not be executed extra-judicially but should be tried in a court of law; and that at the end if it is not possible to prevent secession by persuasion, then they should be allowed to secede. This point of view, which was first expressed by a handful of civil liberties groups in the teeth of universal condemnation has now been grudgingly accepted as a legitimate viewpoint that has to be acknowledged and accommodated, however unwillingly. The criterion whether the goals of a political movement are constitutional or not, which Sumanta Banerjee introduces quite arbitrarily to distinguish the radical forces from the Sangh parivar, can be a dangerous one. A political group may honestly want to effect changes which are not visualised by the Constitution, and may take to arms to that end. It would be suicidal for the notion of one's democratic right to espouse politics of one's choice if on that ground civil rights groups allow the state the discretion to deny them the very right to exist politically, that is, to enjoy the right of free speech, peaceful assembly and a fair trial if arrested on charges of violence.

Sumanta Banerjee, of course, has a more solid criterion than constitutionality. This is whether a movement is faithful to the ideals of social, political and economic democracy. He would argue that those who indulge in violence towards ends which are violative of those ideals do not deserve democratic rights. But again, the question arises who is to judge in case of doubt, for doubt there will always be. Most of the minority-nationalities movements in India can be faulted with espousing ethnic self-determination (an element of political democracy) without commuting themselves to a democratic form of political life after 'liberation', and "also often at the cost of social regression. The communists too can be fairly accused of espousing economic and social democracy at the cost of political authoritarianism. And soon. Indeed, anyone who wants to seriously dispute Sumanta Banerjee's argument that the naxalites can be allowed democratic rights for their goal is the constitutional goal of socialism may well argue (as the more intellectual among police officers are already arguing) that all that the communist revolutions have achieved in this century is the discovery of a rather crude and ungainly road to capitalism - or rather, neocolonial subordination - which state India has any way reached by a more civilised route, and therefore there is no reason why the naxalites should be allowed the freedom to take a lot of lives and impose upon this country an authoritarian government. This argument can no doubt be disputed by exhibiting the material and cultural advancement of poor people's lives under communist regimes, but it is the Indian state and not some well-meaning democrat

that one will be trying to convince. And it would be dangerous for the naxalites and other radical forces if their democratic right to exist politically is predicated on the possibility of proving to the satisfaction of the Indian state that the trade-off between, political authoritarianism and material well-being in the erstwhile communist bloc countries has been positive at the end of it all.

Democracy can only be indivisible because in this imperfect world of imperfect human beings and their imperfect politics there can be no dividing line that will ensure by mere logic that all those who deserve democracy will get it, and those who do not will not. It is quite likely, on the contrary, that once such a line is drawn and approved by 'the left, the liberal intellectuals and human rights groups', it is those who do not deserve it that will get it, and it is those who deserve democracy that will get pushed out, for it is not those who have drawn the line that will decide its application, but the likes of P V Narasimha Rao.

But what will definitely happen in the course of this effort is that the notion that the state has the prerogative of deciding who has the right to exist politically and who does not have that right gets legitimised, and that is to the detriment of all that we understand by democracy. If religious fundamentalism can be a basis for fascism, so can state authority if allowed to take arbitrary forms. To call for strengthening the latter to fight the former can be suicidal. In more immediate terms, there is nothing that P V Narasimha Rao would like more than to have the liberal intellectuals and the civil liberties groups egging him on to 'ruthlessly suppress by coercive measures' the Hindutva forces, for when he decides to get tough with them he has all the democratic forces behind him, and when he decides to be indulgent towards them, he is more democratic than all the democrats in the land. It would just suit his kind of unprincipled and opportunist manipulation that is read as ambivalence by some, pragmatism by others, and the quintessential broad-mindedness of an ancient civilisation by the rest.

#### WINNING OVER PEOPLE

But it is necessary to go deeper into the matter. A discussion of some of the assumptions that lie behind Sumanta Banerjee's argument is necessary, quite apart from the problem of Hindu communalism. Sumanta Banerjee recognises that the ideological battle against Hindu communalism should enable us "to reconquer space in the democratic arena in favour of the anti-communal forces". One would imagine this is the essence of the matter. This space that is to be reconquered is not out there somewhere in society, but in the minds of the people, in the social consciousness of the era. And therefore what he is saying is the same as winning over people to the secular and democratic world view. How is this to be done? Why would or should people be attracted to the secular and democratic

view of life? What is it that prevents people from getting attracted to it? Sumanta Banerjee says at one point that a democratic and peaceful debate with Hindutva is not possible when people are all terrorised or partisan, and rendered somnolent by the bulldozing of Hindutva. Let us admit that more people are partisan than are terrorised, and that what is an opium-induced somnolence for you is conviction born of faith for me. And it is these convinced partisans that are to be won over, or at least made to realise that their ideas will not be allowed the legitimacy that every idea requires to become socially effective. Is that to be done by banning the propagation of the ideas they are convinced of? Certainly, the least likely way of changing people's views is to start by banning the expression of the views to be changed.

In any case, the politics of Hindutva is based on a political and tendentious elaboration of the day-to-day culture of brahminical Hinduism, and while the Viswa Hindu Parishad can be banned, neither this culture nor its myriad organisations can be banned. Can the Indian state place a ban on the Ganesh Utsav Committees and the Dassara Pooja Mandalis? Can it ban the Shankaracharyas and the smaller fry among the brahmin preachers from carrying on Hindutva propaganda? Can it ban the newly created Pharmasansads that are issuing ultimatums to the two brahmins sitting at the top of the Indian state? Can it ban the responsive chord that their dicta strike in the hearts of the two brahmins?

Assuming that it can or will do this (which is to assume the impossible), will it win democratic space for the anti-communal forces? All the erstwhile socialist countries reasoned exactly thus, not only about ideas of religious fanaticism, but all ideas unpalatable to socialism. They only succeeded in creating for themselves the illusion that all reactionary ideas had died out and the 'new man' was born. It only required the removing of the lid to disclose that not a single reactionary idea had died out. And for having been suppressed ruthlessly, religious and ethnic chauvinism have burst out with a maniacal passion unknown in countries which believed that however unpalatable and pusillanimous it may seem, political and ideological freedom, is indivisible.

We do not yet know fully what it is in human beings that keeps ethnic, religious or communal violence alive as political passions, and have been content with explanations of why such violence is espoused by whom in a given setting (which is about all that Marxism as popularly understood can tell us); but certainly, the ruthless suppression that Sumanta Banerjee advocates is no way to save ourselves from the cancer. We can on the other hand try to convince the oppressed and exploited classes, castes and other social groups that Hindutva is contrary to their material and cultural interests we can work for organising such people to resist the forces of Hindutva

physically if necessary; and we can try to appeal to the democratic, humanist and anti-authoritarian values that all human societies possess side by side with values of domination and suppression. The first of the three tasks has been attempted on a sizeable (if still inadequate) scale by the left parties, the dalit groups and other democratic organisations. The second is yet to be attempted on a significant scale, as Sumanta Banerjee rightly complains. But the third is a vital task whose necessity is insufficiently understood by progressive forces because it is not adequately comprehended by radical political philosophies, including Marxism which is the most comprehensive of them all. So long as the fanatical chauvinism of Hindutva is not consciously rejected as a value, or rather as a value-complex that forms part of society's culture and shapes human ideas and behaviour, it will not be fully defeated, and even if it is defeated in one form, it can re-emerge in ever new forms, whether or not related to Hinduism. (History is witness to innumerable instances where those who have fought an authoritarianism that oppressed them have themselves turned authoritarian thereafter, for what they have fought is not oppression *as such* but the oppression of the Other that has hurt their interests.)

And it is in view of this need of rejecting Hindu fanaticism as a value-system that the call for an end to democratic tolerance needs to be rejected, for such a prescription allows religious or ethnic fanaticism no content of its own but only the role of an instrumentality in protecting a material interest. Hindutva, on the contrary, is not only that but over and above that it is a set of values, attitudes and norms of behaviour that can only be countered with the aid of alternative values and norms. And this task must necessarily be undertaken by an open and equal debate that calls upon the historically evolved human sense of justice, equity and fairness. Such a debate can never be conducted, and can never win minds and open up democratic space, if one party to the debate is suppressed by being denied freedom of expression. Of all arguments, an argument for justice unfairly conducted can never win approval, even if it is entirely logical and scientific. That would be contrary to the human moral sense.

The alternative values and norms can emerge from struggles against Hindu fanaticism; or rather, they can be recalled through the struggles from the moral storehouse of the human species, itself a historically evolved and contradiction-ridden product of human civilisation. This process of emergence of new values from struggles is not as straightforward a process as it seems in the midst of struggles, but is an intricate pattern of generalisation, consolidation and recovery. A proper understanding of this process requires a more thorough understanding of the moral life of the human species than is revealed by the base-superstructure determinism and the concomitant presumption that social consciousness can be fully

classified in a one to one fashion in terms of the base' determinants such as class or caste.

This moral life of the human species is something that it has cultivated as elaborately as its technical skills, and conjointly with it. Any oppressive social structure or practice such as for instance the fanaticism of the majority reflected in Hindu chauvinism gains support by appealing to what is violent, destructive and anti-human in human moral life. Democratic tolerance and the acceptance of social equality as a principle, which are central values of secularism in the Indian context, appeal to the sense of justice that human cultures equally possess. These moral possibilities are intrinsic to human beings as much as they are a product of history, in the sense that they are a historically determined elaboration of innate human potential expressed in spontaneous qualities such as empathy, satiety, revulsion, fear, etc, that are universal to human beings.

In understanding the moral life of the human species, Marx's dictum that Being determines Consciousness must be understood with reference to the specific nature and structure of *human* consciousness and *human* psychology. Social being determines social consciousness by virtue of and through the specific form in which human consciousness is structured. It is easily demonstrable that humane ideals such as equality and justice are born of resistance to conditions of injustice and inequality, whereas inhuman values are born of oppressive social relations, and social practices structured oppressively. But that is not the whole of the matter. Firstly, the values and the norms are the ideal form of expression of immediate needs, interests and aspirations, whether narrow or broad; it is a characteristic of the structure of human consciousness that immediate interests and aspirations - whether just or unjust, whether of the oppressors or the oppressed - get expressed in terms of universal values, ideals and moral precepts. This generalised expression is not necessarily a fraud perpetrated consciously for hegemonic social purposes; nor is the generalised ideal co-equal with the immediate interest or aspiration, an assumption that enters all glorification of the 'class consciousness' of the oppressed. It is on the contrary just what it is: a characteristic feature of the structure of human consciousness, of the nature of human thought, which cannot conceive of immediate interests except in terms of universal values, just as in general it cannot think of the concrete without the aid of abstractions.

And secondly, this universal value in which a particular interest is expressed, or through which a particular life condition is conceptualised, is capable of surviving the particular situation (indeed that is when we realise that it is not co-equal with, nor a fraudulent generalisation of, the particular interest), of abstracting itself from the particular context, and becoming part of the 'common sense' of that society, attaching itself to this and that situation, and acquiring

this and that inclining at later stages. There is thus a continuous process of generation, definition and specification of ethical norms, values and precepts that arise in and are generalised from specific life situations and struggles, which process creates the moral content of social culture which is institutionalised in civil society in the manner described by Gramsci and others, and which in turn shapes human behaviour in society through the kind of conflict typified (though certainly not fully explained) by the Freudian conflict between the Id and the Superego. The ensemble of the values and ethical principles that have accumulated in the history of any society is a very complex structure of norms that carry historically specific meanings and interpretations attached to moral absolutes such as truth, kindness, love, etc. A critical attitude to wards this moral universe, in which one rejects the inhumanity that hides behind high morality and continuously calls forth the humanism that co-exists with it, ought to be an important part of radical political practice.

#### NEED FOR A FRESH LOOK

All this has a bearing on the need to take a fresh look at familiar Marxist positions, of which Sumanta Banerjee's is but one example. The light against Hindutva, or against authoritarianism and fascism in general, is not just a defensive struggle to protect democratic rights and values. It is part of the struggle for restructuring human existence on a higher plane. The whole question of this restructuring needs to be rethought afresh, now that the total failure of the communist project - the attempt to put Marx's ideas into practice - is evident. The proletariat has nowhere exhibited the desire imputed to it by Marx to take charge of the affairs of humanity and rebuild its existence on the basis of communist collectivism. And the communist parties that substituted themselves for the proletariat have made a mess of the job, at enormous cost, whichever way they tried, the Stalinist way, the Maoist way, the Titoist way, and even the Sandinista way.

The basics of Marx's prognosis of the future therefore need to be rethought, and hence also the basics of his theory of history. Marxism, as well as other radical and progressive political philosophies, have rightly stressed the necessity of organised struggle against unjust social structures as the only way of defeating them, for mere moral preaching will never put an end to injustice. But the rebuilding of human existence in the form of just structures and on the basis of just social relations is a different matter. This rebuilding has wrongly been seen as a direct continuation of the struggle against injustice. This notion that the force that is necessary to destroy unjust social structures will by itself lead to the reconstruction of society on a just basis through the class rule of the oppressed has been sufficiently proved an illusion by the happenings of this century. Struggle against

oppressive social structures, and the reconstruction of society on the basis of co-operative and egalitarian relations, are evidently linked not through the *dictatorship of the fast victors*, but through the *cultural possibilities opened up by the successive struggles*, and there is no last struggle, nor a millennial victory. To understand this, we need a more complete understanding of human consciousness, culture, forms of social behaviour, and the mode of formation of the human personality through the snuggle between the universal psychic substratum of human nature and the particular norms of contradiction-ridden social culture, than even a Gramsci ever attempted. (Mao's notion of cultural revolution is politically inspiring but philosophically it goes no farther than is allowed by the base-superstructure framework.)

The elaboration of its technical capabilities by the human species in its struggle to win a livelihood from nature has been given a central place by Marx in the notion of human progress. This elaboration is based on the specific physical structure of human beings, such as the possession of two hands to work with, and a brain capable of an elaborate learning process. But equally, human progress has involved the elaboration of moral values conducive to a co-operative, collective appropriation of the wealth created by the hands and the brain, which values have been elaborated in a struggle against anti-social values (also generated in the course of the same history) of oppression, domination and violence. This moral evolution is a historical process of elaboration of moral possibilities implied by the specific psychic structure of human beings, a structure that makes both anti-social and social responses intrinsically possible. What human beings have done for themselves with their physical possibilities is made the thread of human history and therefore also the thread of human liberation (for in Marx's understanding, liberation is immanent to history) by Marx. This has given us valuable insights into our past and valuable guidelines for our future. But this understanding is incomplete without supplementing it with an understanding of what human beings have done for themselves with their moral potential, and what future that indicates for the species.

Marx certainly did not ignore the moral history of humankind, but for him this moral history has no parameters of its own but is a derivative of the material history. This is evidently not true. The human species possesses moral as well as physical possibilities - based on its psychic and physical structures - both of which it has elaborated conjointly in the course of its struggle to satisfy its (constantly elaborated) needs. The one is not a derivative of the other. The two are two limbs of the process of conjoint realisation of the total potential of the species on the basis of a given framework of its physical and psychological needs and responses. The physical structure

is the starting point for its technological evolution, and the psychic structure the starting point of its moral evolution, both of which are part of a single process. That the potential of human material development is not unlimited and unbounded as is sometimes implied in Marx has been well brought out by the ecology movement. Human moral potential is also equally not an unlimited and unbounded one, as imagined in the wilder of Marx's ideas about communism. What we require today is a reinterpretation of all that is true in Marx's theory of history and society from the point of view of the totality of the human subject, the totality of its given humanness, physical as well as psychic, rather than the human subject reduced to an intelligent and acquisitive toiling animal, whose moral possibilities are rendered infinite and irrelevant for political practice by being simply ignored theoretically.

The future revealed by such a reinterpretation may not look particularly rosy right now, and one cannot be denied one's rightful pessimism about any millennium: for while human beings are universally capable of both violence and love, cruelty and generosity, it is violence and cruelty that have constituted the fundamental organising principles of all social structures (e.g. property, caste, family) in all civilised human societies till now, whereas the human capacity for empathy, love and kindness has been subordinated to these violent structures (often in a cruelly distorted form). The only reason for not totally rejecting Marx's utopia is that while all people at all times have indulged in hatred, violence and falsehood, not merely as personal aberrations but as fundamental structural practices, there is no human society that has accepted these modes of behaviour as morally noble. On the contrary, only love, kindness and truth have been accorded that honour in all societies. The anti-social qualities, have certainly been sanctioned morally and socially and even mandated as in brahminical dharma, but always in the name of higher values such as truth and equity. (Amartya Sen in his study of inequalities says that even those who defend inequality do so in the name of a higher equality.) Perhaps this paradox of human civilisation understood as a quality of its moral universe gives hope of the possibility of a 'co-operative commonwealth of the working people' (in which everyone does all work), provided that the struggle for appropriating the material wealth it has produced for and by the whole of the society rather than a fraction of it, is joined with a struggle to invert the moral universe of the species so that violence is subordinated in social structure and habitual practice to love, and envy similarly to generosity.

But perhaps also not. In any case, if the millennium fails our practice must at least give us a reformed society, which is doubtful if we go on uncritically repeating old ideas and altitudes.