



The Shûdras (I)

Mircea A. Tamas

Today, the Great Disarray spreads like a plague. It is no surprise, considering – as everybody knows – that we live the end of *Kali-yuga*, and this “Iron Age” is under the government of the Shûdras. When we say “the Shûdras” we have in mind firstly the symbolic partition in castes, since we cannot just copy the Hindu traditional system of castes and apply it everywhere. There was a similar partition in the Middle Ages, in Occident, and René Guénon compared the Bolsheviks with the Shûdras.¹

The modern and occidentalized world considers the system of castes as something unfair and obsolete, promoting a terrible confusion of castes. Yet, in fact, the modern mentality, even if – apparently – seems to be a “Vaishya mentality,” is a product of the Shûdras.

From a traditional point of view, there is nothing wrong to be a Shûdra. Like in the case of the races, each individual or group of individuals has to take the place that is in concert with its nature, and participate at the evolvement of the present cycle (the Hindu *Manvantara*). The Shûdras, in compliance with their duties, are important for the well being of the society and they could also be a good example of how people should behave as “Muslims,” that is, obeying God and being His servants. With this respect, the fact that the Shûdras correspond to God’s feet should be related to the symbol of God’s footprint into the world and to the respect paid to His feet.²

Nevertheless, when the Shûdras revolt against the normal order they lose this special characteristic of being “Muslim” and for this reason we should stress that the modern

¹ “... et comme l’usurpation appelle l’usurpation, après les Vaishyas, ce sont maintenant les Shûdras qui, à leur tour, aspirent à la domination : c’est là, très exactement, la signification du bolchevisme. (...) si les éléments sociaux les plus inférieurs accèdent au pouvoir d’une façon ou d’une autre, leur règne sera vraisemblablement le plus bref de tous, et il marquera la dernière phase d’un certain cycle historique... ” (René Guénon, **Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel**, Véga, 1976, pp. 91-92).

² The footprint of God is, as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy explained, the presence of the Principle into the manifestation. In Sri Lanka, for example, there is such an imprint of Buddha’s foot, considered by Muslims as being the footprint of Adam, by Christians that of St. Thomas and by Hindus the footprint of Shiva.

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society is a world of “revolted Shûdras,” and in any domain, including priesthood, this “Shûdra mentality” is active.¹

There is a bigger picture though, which is connected to the doctrine of the cosmic cycles, since with respect to this doctrine our present *Manvantara* contains numerous sub-cycles, longer and shorter, more or less important, and each of these cycles presents a similar development like the *Manvantara* itself, and therefore, even though at one moment from a main cycle perspective the human society is marked by a “Shûdra mentality,” from a secondary cycle perspective there still are “castes” corresponding to Brâhma and Kshatriya; and that is why we can say that Jesus Christ or Buddha is of Kshatriya descendency.

To understand the symbolic hierarchy and development of the castes we may compare them with the principal elements (*bhûtas*) from the Hindu tradition. René Guénon described the five elements using two different representations: a ladder-like and a cross-like one. The ladder-like representation presents the elements from a cosmogonic perspective, as given in the Upanishads, in the progression: ether – air – fire – water – earth.

The cross-like representation places the air as a neutral element along the horizontal diameter of a circle, the fire as the upwards element along the vertical diameter, and the water as the downwards element along the vertical diameter. The ether is on the top and the earth at the bottom.²

A similar picture could be drawn for the castes. In fact, René Guénon presents such a diagram for the castes, similar to the one for the elements, in which Brâhma is the upwards half-diameter, Kshatriya the horizontal diameter and Vaishya the downwards half-diameter; Hamsa (the primordial people beyond the castes) is on the top and Shûdra is at the bottom.³

From a cosmogonic perspective, the castes are in the following progression: Brâhma – Kshatriya – Vaishya – Shûdra, and in the Hindu tradition the four castes are in correspondence to the cardinal points North – East – South – West.⁴ In a letter to Gaston Georgel, Guénon suggested these associations: North – white race – water; East – yellow race – air; South – black race – fire; West – red race – earth.⁵

René Guénon built the cross-like diagrams for the elements and for the castes based on the traditional theory of the three gunas. We find in **Vishnu Purana**: “When Brahmâ, with respect to his goal, wanted to produce the world, the beings in whom sattwa prevailed were generated from his mouth; others in whom rajas prevailed were produced

¹ Dante was not against the papacy, but against popes with a “Shûdra mentality.” We underline again, when we refer to “Shûdra mentality” that is not the vassalage, considered from a religious perspective, that we have in mind, but all the specific characteristics defining the fourth caste, in comparison to the “twice-born” (*dwija*) castes.

² See the figure in René Guénon, **Études sur l’Hindouisme**, Éditions Traditionnelles, 1979, p. 59.

³ See the figure in René Guénon, **Études sur l’Hindouisme**, Éditions Traditionnelles, 1979, p. 79.

⁴ See A. M. Hocart, **Caste**, Methuen & Co., 1950, p. 27, and René Guénon, **Symboles fondamentaux de la Science sacrée**, Gallimard, 1980, pp. 120-121.

⁵ Gaston Georgel, **Les Quatre Âges de l’Humanité**, Archè, 1976, p. 17.

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from his bosom; others in whom rajas and tamas were strong were produced from his thighs; eventually, others were born from his feet, having tamas as main characteristic. From these beings the four castes (varnas) were composed: Brâhmaṇa, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shûdra, which were born from his mouth, bosom, thighs and feet.”¹

Guénon said: “... the hierarchisation of the four varnas, imposed by the gunas that predominate in each caste, is identical with that of the elements (bhûtas).” If we consider the production of the castes and races following a cosmogonic succession, like in the case of the elements, we should assume the associations: Ether – Hamsa – primordial race; Air – Brâhmaṇa – yellow race; Fire – Kshatriya – black race; Water – Vaishya – red race; Earth – Shûdra – white race. On the other hand, with respect to the cardinal points, the associations should be: North – Brâhmaṇa – white race – water; East – Kshatriya – yellow race – air; South – Vaishya – black race – fire; West – Shûdra – red race – earth.

From the point of view of the doctrine of the three gunas, as we have already mentioned, sattwa (and the white colour) predominates in Brâhmaṇa, rajas (the red colour) predominates in Kshatriya, rajas mixed with tamas (the yellow colour) predominate in Vaishya, and tamas (the black colour) predominates in Shûdra, revealing an obvious correspondence with the “degrees of subtlety” of the elements.

However, in a traditional society, the organization of the city required the four castes to be placed in the four cardinal points, in connection with the four yugas. Following a solar circumambulation (*pradakshinâ*), starting with the Northern point, the successive four castes are obtained, in a natural descendent order. Guénon remarked that Brâhmaṇa is placed at North, being linked to the polar tradition, and Kshatriya is placed at East, belonging to the solar tradition.

There is an interesting similarity between the text of **Vishnu Purana** and the dream of Nebuchadnezzar from the **Old Testament**, a dream translated by Daniel as follows:

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot be known by the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.² Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled

¹ **The Laws of Manu** says the same thing: “But for the sake of the prosperity of the worlds he caused the Brâhmaṇa, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya, and the Sudra to proceed from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet.”

² We note that the four ages are in direct correspondence with the four castes.

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the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that reaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

In Hesiod's **Works and Days** the four yugas are described as follows:

First of all the deathless gods who dwell on Olympus made a golden race of mortal men who lived in the time of Cronos when he was reigning in heaven. And they lived like gods without sorrow of heart, remote and free from toil and grief: miserable age rested not on them; but with legs and arms never failing they made merry with feasting beyond the reach of all evils. When they died, it was as though they were overcome with sleep, and they had all good things; for the fruitful earth unforced bare them fruit abundantly and without stint. They dwelt in ease and peace upon their lands with many good things, rich in flocks and loved by the blessed gods.

But after earth had covered this generation – they are called pure spirits dwelling on the earth, and are kindly, delivering from harm, and guardians of mortal men; for they roam everywhere over the earth, clothed in mist and keep watch on judgments and cruel deeds, givers of wealth; for this royal right also they received; – then they who dwell on Olympus made a second generation which was of silver and less noble by far. It was like the golden race neither in body nor in spirit. A child was brought up at his good mother's side an hundred years, an utter simpleton, playing childishly in his own home. But when they were full grown and were come to the full measure of their prime, they lived only a little time in sorrow because of their foolishness, for they could not keep from sinning and from wronging one another, nor would they serve the immortals, nor sacrifice on the holy altars of the blessed ones as it is right for men to do wherever they dwell. Then Zeus the son of Cronos was angry and put them away, because they would not give honour to the blessed gods who live on Olympus.

But when earth had covered this generation also – they are called blessed spirits of the underworld by men, and, though they are of second order, yet honour attends them also – Zeus the Father made a third generation of mortal men, a brazen race, sprung from ash-trees; and it was in no way equal to the silver age, but was terrible and strong. They loved the lamentable works of Ares and deeds of violence; they ate no bread, but were hard of heart like adamant, fearful men. Great was their strength and unconquerable the arms which grew from their shoulders on their strong limbs. Their armour was of bronze, and their houses of bronze, and of bronze were their implements: there was no black iron. These were destroyed by their own hands and passed to the

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dank house of chill Hades, and left no name: terrible though they were, black Death seized them, and they left the bright light of the sun.

But when earth had covered this generation also, Zeus the son of Cronos made yet another, the fourth, upon the fruitful earth, which was nobler and more righteous, a god-like race of hero-men who are called demi-gods,¹ the race before our own, throughout the boundless earth. Grim war and dread battle destroyed a part of them, some in the land of Cadmus at seven-gated Thebe when they fought for the flocks of Oedipus, and some, when it had brought them in ships over the great sea gulf to Troy for rich-haired Helen's sake: there death's end enshrouded a part of them. But to the others father Zeus the son of Cronos gave a living and an abode apart from men, and made them dwell at the ends of earth. And they live untouched by sorrow in the islands of the blessed along the shore of deep swirling Ocean, happy heroes for whom the grain-giving earth bears honey-sweet fruit flourishing thrice a year, far from the deathless gods, and Cronos rules over them; for the father of men and gods released him from his bonds. And these last equally have honour and glory.

And again far-seeing Zeus made yet another generation, the fifth, of men who are upon the bounteous earth.

Thereafter, would that I were not among the men of the fifth generation, but either had died before or been born afterwards. For now truly is a race of iron, and men never rest from labour and sorrow by day, and from perishing by night; and the gods shall lay sore trouble upon them. But, notwithstanding, even these shall have some good mingled with their evils. And Zeus will destroy this race of mortal men also when they come to have gray hair on the temples at their birth. The father will not agree with his children, nor the children with their father, nor guest with his host, nor comrade with comrade; nor will brother be dear to brother as aforetime. Men will dishonour their parents as they grow quickly old, and will carp at them, chiding them with bitter words, hard-hearted they, not knowing the fear of the gods. They will not repay their aged parents the cost their nurture, for might shall be their right: and one man will sack another's city. There will be no favour for the man who keeps his oath or for the just or for the good; but rather men will praise the evil-doer and his violent dealing. Strength will be right and reverence will cease to be; and the wicked will hurt the worthy man, speaking false words against him, and will swear an oath upon them. Envy, foul-mouthed, delighting in evil, with scowling face, will go along with wretched men one and all. And then Aidos and Nemesis, with their sweet forms wrapped in white robes, will go from the wide-pathed earth and forsake mankind to join the company of the deathless gods: and bitter sorrows will be left for mortal men, and there will be no help against evil.

In *Metamorphoses*, Ovid told also the story of the four ages:

The golden age was first; when Man yet new, No rule but uncorrupted reason knew: And, with a native bent, did good pursue. Unfor'd by punishment, un-aw'd by fear, His words were simple, and his soul sincere; Needless was written law, where none opprest: The law of Man was written in his breast: No suppliant crowds before the judge appear'd, No court erected yet, nor cause was heard: But all was safe, for conscience was their guard. The mountain-trees in distant prospect please, E're yet the pine descended to the seas: E're sails were spread, new oceans to explore: And happy mortals, unconcern'd for more, Confin'd their wishes to their native shore. No walls were yet; nor fence, nor mote, nor mound, Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound: Nor swords were forg'd; but void of care and crime, The soft creation slept away their time. The teeming

¹ René Guénon said: "The Age of Heroes is none of the four ages that divide the Manvantara, nor is a different and special age, which should be added to these, but rather a simple subdivision."

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Earth, yet guiltless of the plough, And unprovok'd, did fruitful stores allow: Content with food, which Nature freely bred, On wildings and on strawberries they fed; Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest, And falling acorns furnish'd out a feast. The flow'rs unsown, in fields and meadows reign'd: And Western winds immortal spring maintain'd. In following years, the bearded corn ensu'd From Earth unask'd, nor was that Earth renew'd. From veins of vallies, milk and nectar broke; And honey sweating through the pores of oak.

But when good Saturn, banish'd from above, Was driv'n to Hell, the world was under Jove. Succeeding times a silver age behold, Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold. Then summer, autumn, winter did appear: And spring was but a season of the year. The sun his annual course obliquely made, Good days contracted, and enlarg'd the bad. Then air with sultry heats began to glow; The wings of winds were clogg'd with ice and snow; And shivering mortals, into houses driv'n, Sought shelter from th' inclemency of Heav'n. Those houses, then, were caves, or homely sheds; With twining oziers fenc'd; and moss their beds. Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows broke, And oxen labour'd first beneath the yoke.

To this came next in course, the brazen age: A warlike offspring, prompt to bloody rage, Not impious yet...

Hard steel succeeded then: And stubborn as the metal, were the men. Truth, modesty, and shame, the world forsook: Fraud, avarice, and force, their places took. Then sails were spread, to every wind that blew. Raw were the sailors, and the depths were new: Trees, rudely hollow'd, did the waves sustain; E're ships in triumph plough'd the watery plain. Then land-marks limited to each his right: For all before was common as the light. Nor was the ground alone requir'd to bear Her annual income to the crooked share, But greedy mortals, rummaging her store, Digg'd from her entrails first the precious oar; Which next to Hell, the prudent Gods had laid; And that alluring ill, to sight display'd. Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold, Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold: And double death did wretched Man invade, By steel assaulted, and by gold betray'd, Now (brandish'd weapons glittering in their hands) Mankind is broken loose from moral bands; No rights of hospitality remain: The guest, by him who harbour'd him, is slain, The son-in-law pursues the father's life; The wife her husband murders, he the wife. The step-dame poyon for the son prepares; The son inquires into his father's years. Faith flies, and piety in exile mourns; And justice, here opprest, to Heav'n returns.

And Plato, in his **Republic**, underlined: “the god who formed you mixed gold in the composition of those who are capable to command; also, these are the most precious; he mixed silver in the composition of the guardians; brass and iron in that of the workers and other artisans.”

An Arabic text, quoted by Guénon, illustrates also this decay of the cycle: “In the ancient times, the people were differentiated by knowledge; after that, the birth and the family ties were taken into consideration; then, the wealth was considered a sign of superiority; eventually, in the present times, the people are judged only by the exterior appearance.” It is easy to note the correlation between the four castes and the four ages (yugas).

In a fairy-tale, called **The Grain of Wheat**, the descent of the cycle is vividly described: an emperor tries to find out the place where the wheat has grains as big as the hen's egg. In front of him will come, one after another, an old man, supported by two crutches, then his father, supported by one crutch, and eventually the latter's father, who, without crutches, explained to the emperor that in his time the grain of wheat was as big as an egg, men were men, but today, the men are undeveloped beings, their life is shorter and

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shorter, their only concern being the food, the drink and the clothes, that is, the exterior things. We remark the invert analogy: the old man with the two crutches suggests the four feet of the last age (complete solidification); then, in an ascendant sense, the old man's father with a crutch represents the three feet (more mobility), the man without crutches indicates the two feet and, eventually, even if the fairy-tale does not say, there should be a man with one foot symbolizing the Golden Age.

Lao Zi described the four ages as follows: "In the highest antiquity, (the people) did not know that there were (their rulers). In the next age they loved them and praised them. In the next they feared them; in the next they despised them. Thus it was that when faith (in the Dao) was deficient (in the rulers) a want of faith in them ensued (in the people)."

The vestiges of the Toltec tradition saved the "Legend of the Suns" in which the cycle (*Manvantara*) is parted in five Great Years, these "Years" corresponding to the different races that dominated the world, in conformity with the evolvement of the cycle.¹ We should say that, if the passing from one yuga to the other was marked by a revolt of an inferior caste,² the passing from one Year to another was accompanied by a cataclysm linked to one of the five elements (bhûtas), which was predominant in that age.

Consequently, the Iron Age or Kali-yuga appears to be under the sign of the revolted Shûdras. If the first three castes were *dwija*, twice-born, fully participating to the Tradition, the Shûdras represent the last possibilities, the inferior ones of the manifestation, a fact that was clearly illustrated by how the different traditions described this final age, but also by the present events of our modern world. In Kali-yuga, the Hindu tradition affirms, reign the deceit, falseness, inertia, greed and depravity; the Brâhmanas become addicted to luxury, the servants quit their masters, *the Shûdras take the power*; the whole world is filled with perverted people, and the strongest among the Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas or Shûdras will become kings; the kings will behave like villains; *the castes will be all like Shûdra*.

And the people with the mentality of the revolted Shûdras will spread all these absurd modern theories about progress and evolution, when in fact they are the end of the string, not the beginning. They will promote the stupid idea of taming and mastering the Nature and its "fearful" forces, because they will try with any price to get rid of their real status, that of servants. They will invent automatons and machines, robots and remote controls, to appear as masters having the whole world as their servant. They will dream to dominate the outer space and the other planets. Yet, a mild storm is enough to disrupt these Shûdras, to see their machines impotent and their democracy crashing.

¹ Guénon said: "... finally, there is no consequence to be drawn with respect to the superiority of one race or another, they are only different and they have, each one, their own possibilities, and each race has or had its period of supremacy or domination, in conformity with the laws of cosmic cycles."

² These revolts appear, in conformity with the laws of cosmic cycles, also in the secondary cycles.

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The modern democracy is the result of the same “Shûdra mentality,” but we have to understand that countries where dictators or kings reign do not have a very different mentality today.¹

The present humanity will last, even if today the Shûdra mentality, corresponding to the Iron Age, is in power, as long as a Brâhmana mentality, corresponding to our secondary cycle, somehow subsists. When the Shûdras of the Shûdras will prevail, the end of times will have to come.²

¹ “Un gouvernement dans lequel des hommes de caste inférieure s’attribuent le titre et les fonctions de la royauté est ce que les anciens Grecs appelaient «tyrannie»” (René Guénon, **Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel**, Véga, 1976, p. 78).

² As an example, if somebody sees today an angry, vulgar and hectic priest, instructor or spiritual master, there is no doubt that this one has a Shûdra mentality not a Brâhmana one.



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If one has the curiosity to look at India's map, one will notice that various regions of the country are called *pradesh*. The word *pradesh*, in fact *paradesh*, means in Sanskrit "supreme region," from this word deriving the well-known appellative "paradise," a remarkable thing suggesting that, for a traditional mentality, any country has the right and even the obligation to represent a land of prosperity and peace, based on the concord (*cum – cordia*, "the union of hearts") government – people, on justice and natural laws (*dharma*).

In the Judaic and Christian traditions, the legitimate leader of such an ideal *paradesh* is the mysterious Melkisedek, "the King of Justice" (Ebr. *melek* = "king," *tsedeq* = "justice"), the Lord of Salem, that is, the Lord of Peace.

In other words, in a traditional society, the king, obeying the cosmic Law, was seen as a warrantor of peace and justice, his residence being the core of the World Wheel, from where he regulates¹ its rotation, interfering as little as possible with the public activities,² striving to realize a perfect harmony between himself and the people,³ establishing a prosperous and good government.⁴

¹ In the Hindu tradition, the king was Chakravarti, "the one who turns the wheel," and Dharmachakra, "The Wheel of Law," symbolizes the World; the king is the Latin *rex*, who regulates and guards the rules (the words *rex*, regulate and rule are related).

² The traditional leader had the duty to oversee that the natural regulations were observed; fewer artificial decrees he promulgated, less he interfered in the public details, more the country prospered.

³ Tit Livy affirmed: *Multitudo semper ferme regenti est similis* ("the people is always similar to its leader"). Yet Joseph de Maistre said: "No nation owes its character to the government; on the contrary, the nation owes its government to its character," that is, "each nation has the leader it deserves." Therefore, the people must contribute, in the same proportion as its leader, to the realization of the "paradise," obeying the Law (in the Islamic tradition, each member of the society is a Muslim, that is, "complying to the divine Will"). The **Yi Jing** stated: "The Dao of emperor signifies to supervise, from the height of his exceptional rank, the plan of the Providence, while everything contained inside the four cardinal points follows his government and obeys him; if the emperor realizes and operates the celestial Way (Dao), all the provinces enjoy the peace."

⁴ A good government means to respect and understand the *principal* Rule (in Daoism), the supreme Law (Dharma, in the Hindu tradition), means *eynomia*, the good legislation (see Plato). If the Law is tarnished and desecrated by ignorant, arrogant, and fake translators, who deceive the people, there are in that country no more "Muslims" but "anti-Muslims," and this truth applies to any nation, including the Islamic countries.

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“The emperor Yao strived to rule the people of the kingdom, and he thought he maintained a perfect government within the four seas. Having gone to see the four (Perfect) Ones [the Guardians of the Rule] on the distant island [the World Center, the Pivot], when (he returned to his capital) he admitted to have ruined his government [with his artificial endeavor]” (*Zhuang-zi*, 1, 6). The traditional perspective¹ is so different that probably the modern mentality is completely opaque to it. No modern Shudra would understand today that a leader of a country, region, company, organization, or group must do nothing in disaccord with the natural law and with the welfare of people, that he must forbid completely his individual impulses, and repress the desire to express his power by inventing all types of rules.

“Therefore the superior man, who feels himself constrained to engage in the administration of the world will find it his best way to do nothing. In (that policy of) doing nothing, he can rest in the instincts of the nature with which he is endowed. Hence he who will administer (the government of) the world honouring it as he honours his own person, may have that government committed to him, and he who will administer it loving it as he loves his own person, may have it entrusted to him” (*Zhuang-zi*, 11, 2).

In our modern world, the individual initiative is the supreme praised characteristic. It is the characteristic of a revolted Shudra, of course.² Even if various leaders will try to hide their initiatives under the cover of stentorian words such as “in the name of the people” or “it is God’s Will,” make no mistake: it is all about their own limited, pitiful and ignorant desires and ideas, it is about their own greed and arrogance. It is amazing how such people cannot learn from the natural laws, how they cannot see that a simple storm is impossible to be stopped, how they, like puppets on strings, play their dissolvent roles.

“Therefore, if the superior man will keep (the faculties lodged in) his five viscera unemployed, and not display his powers of seeing and hearing, while he is motionless as a representative of the dead, his dragon-like presence will be seen; while he is profoundly silent, the thunder (of his words) will resound, while his movements are (unseen) like those of a spirit, all heavenly influences will follow them; while he is (thus) unconcerned and does nothing, his genial influence will attract and gather all things round him: what leisure has he to do anything more for the government of the world?” (*Zhuang-zi*, 11, 2).

What Zhuang Zi described here was, of course, an ideal case, difficult to follow in the Iron Age, and we have to keep in mind that in Zhuang Zi’s times the tenebrous age was in full evolvement. The following anecdote will stress why today’s endeavour to “subdue the nature in favour of humankind” and “for a better life” is, in fact, a lethal peril, even if it is truly desired, and, again, only a Shudra usurper could believe that such an enterprise will have an auspicious ending. *Quidquid agis prudenter agas et respice finem*. But what we see today in the whole world is a tremendous appetite to act without any intellectual

¹ We always have to keep in mind the difference between “religion” and Tradition; too often the modern people confuse, on purpose or not, these two domains, and we witness the inanity of accusing the Tradition for today’s contradictions. The Shaikh al-‘Arabî ad-Darqâwî said in his *Letters*: “I understood the prophetic saying: «Better an hour of meditation than seventy years of religious practice.»”

² We must insist: when we talk about the modern or revolted Shudras we don’t have in mind the normal and natural Shudras, who have as main characteristic the obedience, a very important trait in any initiatory and spiritual process. We refer to the ages of disorder when the Shudras usurped the place of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas, becoming pseudo or unnatural Shudras.

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thinking, without any providential intuition, without any vision of the ending. When we witness the more or less “official” representatives of the three Oriental major regions (as defined by René Guénon with respect to their fundamental traditions) striving to change them in “super-powers,” in the worst materialistic and corporeal sense, accepting and enthusiastically adapting “the modern Shudra’s way,” we may wonder if Zhuang Zi is still heard outside the sacred kernel.

“Huang-di had been on the throne for nineteen years, and his ordinances were in operation all through the kingdom, when he heard that Guang cheng was living on the summit of Kung-tung, and went to see him. ‘I have heard,’ he said, ‘that you, Sir, are well acquainted with the perfect Dao. I venture to ask you what is the essential thing in it. I wish to take the subtlest influences of heaven and earth, and assist with them the (growth of the) five cereals for the (better) nourishment of the people. I also wish to direct the (operation of the) Yin and Yang, so as to secure the comfort of all living beings. How shall I proceed to accomplish those objects?’ Guang cheng replied, ‘You push your ambition to the limit, wanting to govern the nature. If you receive such a power, you will ruin all the beings. According to your government of the world, the vapours of the clouds, before they were collected, would descend in rain; the herbs and trees would shed their leaves before they became yellow; and the light of the sun and moon would hasten to extinction. Your mind is that of a flatterer with his plausible words; it is not fit that I should tell you the perfect Dao.’ Huang-di withdrew, gave up (his government of) the kingdom” (**Zhuang-zi**, 11, 4).

The next anecdote will elaborate about the difference between a real king and a Shudra leader, between a traditional government and a government of thieves and bandits. The major element of governing is, we must stress, the concord government – people, the peace of the kingdom and the welfare of the society. The slogan “fighting for peace” is a contradiction in terms, the real peace requiring a deep understanding of this metaphysical notion; and only the pseudo-Shudra mentality will be open for a continuous fight and revolt against something, since the Shudras are the climax of the series of revolts along the ages.

“Yao asked Hu Yu, saying, ‘Is Nie Kue fit to be the correlate of Heaven? (If you think he is), I will avail myself of the services of Wang Yi to constrain him (to take my place).’ Hu Yu replied, ‘Such a measure would be hazardous, and full of peril to the kingdom! The character of Nie Kue is this; he is acute, perspicacious, shrewd and knowing, ready in reply, sharp in retort, and hasty; his natural (endowments) surpass those of other men, but by his human qualities he prevents the Heaven, the Principle for governing; he exercises his discrimination in suppressing his errors, but he does not know what is the source from which his errors arise. Make him the correlate of Heaven! He would employ the human qualities, so that no regard would be paid to the Heavenly gift. Moreover, he would assign different functions to the different parts of the one person. Moreover, honour would be given to erudition, and he would have his plans take effect with the speed of fire. Moreover, he would be the slave of everything he initiated. Moreover, he would be embarrassed by things. Moreover, he would be looking all round for the response of things (to his measures). Moreover, he would be responding to the opinion of the multitude as to what was right. Moreover, he would be changing as things changed, and would not begin to have any principle of constancy. How can such a man be fit to be

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the correlate of Heaven? Nevertheless, as there are the smaller branches of a family and the common ancestor of all its branches, he might be the father of a branch, but not the father of the fathers of all the branches. Such government (as he would conduct) would lead to disorder. It would be calamity in one in the position of a minister, and ruin if he were in the position of the sovereign" (**Zhuang-zi**, 12, 5).

Various traditions dealt with this way of governing. In the **Dao De Jing**, Lao Zi stated: "In the highest antiquity, everything was in accordance with the Principle; (the people) did not know that there were (rulers). In the next age, they loved them and praised them (because of their benevolence). In the next, they feared them (because of their laws); in the next, they despised them (because of their injustice). Thus it was that when faith (in the Dao) was deficient (in the rulers) a want of faith in them ensued (in the people) (XVII). "Governing a large country is like frying a small fish. You spoil it with too much poking" (LX). "Why are the people starving? Because the rulers eat up the money in taxes. Therefore the people are starving. Why are the people rebellious? Because the rulers interfere too much. Therefore they are rebellious. Why do the people think so little of death? Because the rulers demand too much of life. Therefore the people take death lightly. Having little to live on, one knows better than to value life too much" (LXXV).

Lama Rajah of Dugyul affirmed: "The king who became rich by robbing his subjects, who rejects the white umbrella of the ten virtues, who does not reward or punish the good and bad deeds, such a king runs to his own end."

Finally, in the Hindu tradition, the **Mânavâ-Dharma-Shastra** stated: "For, when these creatures, being without a king, through fear dispersed in all directions, the Lord created a king for the protection of this whole (creation)" (7.3). "Let him act with justice in his own domain, with rigour chastise his enemies, behave without duplicity towards his friends, and be lenient towards Brahmanas. The fame of a king who behaves thus, even though he subsists by gleaning, is spread in the world, like a drop of oil on water" (7.32-33). "The king has been created (to be) the protector of the castes (*varna*) and orders, who, all according to their rank, discharge their several duties" (7.35). "Not to turn back in battle, to protect the people, to honour the Brahmanas, is the best means for a king to secure happiness" (7.88). "That king who through folly rashly oppresses his kingdom, (will), together with his relatives, ere long be deprived of his life and of his kingdom" (7.111).

With regard to the Shudras, the **Mânavâ-Dharma-Shastra** declared: "A Brahmana who subsists only by the name of his caste (*gati*), or one who merely calls himself a Brahmana (though his origin be uncertain), may, at the king's pleasure, interpret the law to him, but never a Shudra. The kingdom of that monarch, who looks on while a Shudra settles the law, will sink (low), like a cow in a morass. That kingdom where Shudras are very numerous, which is infested by atheists and destitute of twice-born (inhabitants), soon entirely perishes, afflicted by famine and disease" (8.20-22).

The **Mânavâ-Dharma-Shastra** also stated an apparent curious rule: "Day and night the king must strenuously exert himself to conquer his senses; for he (alone) who has conquered his own senses, can keep his subjects in obedience (7.44). Zhuang Zi said too: "Jian Wu went to see the fool (recluse), Ji-yu, who said to him, 'What did Ru-Zhung-Shu tell you?' The reply was, 'He told me that when rulers gave forth their regulations according to their own views and enacted righteous measures, no one would venture not

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to obey them, and all would be transformed.' Ji-yu said, 'That is but the hypocrisy of virtue. For the right ordering of the world it would be like trying to wade through the sea and dig through the Yellow River, or employing a mosquito to carry a mountain on its back. And when a sage is governing, does he govern men's outward actions? He gives example of virtue [rectitude, *De*], which people, if they want, they will follow it" (**Zhuang-zi**, 7, 2).

There is, in accordance with the traditional lore, a perfect analogy between macrocosm and microcosm, and also between a human being and the social organism. Therefore, the traditional leader, instead of governing the outside, will strive first to control his own being, realizing the inner kingdom,¹ the castle inside the heart, the Hindu Brahma-pura. As Plato showed in **Politeia**, the Cosmos (Gr. "order")² is reflected accordingly in universe, city (or society), and in the individual's soul, the royal man being the one who realizes, by way of wisdom, "the inner republic," this realization being precisely the *politeia!*³

As Yoga or Dao means both the way toward the target, and the target itself, so *Politeia* designates not only the city or the kingdom itself, but also the realization of it; it represents the policy of the traditional leader, who, in order to establish a social and exterior *paradesh*, must first realize and accomplish an inner paradise, where will reign the Peace, the real Salem (identical to Brahma-pura and the Heavenly Jerusalem) residing in the heart, where *mishkat al-anwâr*, the tabernacle of Light, is placed.⁴

Such a *politeia*, for a traditional society, is the warrantor of a good government, but it appears nowadays as an ideal policy, much too different and incomprehensible for the modern mentality⁵; since it is clear enough that a *politeia*, to be successful today, requires a wisdom (*khawashsh al-khawashsh*) that facilitates avoiding the errors (*Al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl*), and that seems nowhere to be found in our profane world; the Buddhist adage *dharmam saranam gacchâmi* ("I seek refuge in order and laws") is in the present days more neglected than ever.

Let us offer one more quotation, even if we know that so many modern minds prefer a plain, simple text, exempted of footnotes and quotations.

¹ It is said in the Christian tradition: *Regnum Dei intra vos est*.

² The Cosmos is, of course, not the "cosmos" of the modern scientists, who are completely sunk in the domain of quantity.

³ The monarch, through his orders, realizes the Order; placed in the center of the wheel, as Chakravarti, he, in a ritual mode, produces and regulates the Cosmos. In the Judaic tradition and also in the Christian one, the first order was *Fiat Lux*. In the Hindu tradition, the king is *antaryami*, "the inner ruler." In the Islamic tradition, the realization of the "inner kingdom" means *el-jihâdul-akbar*.

⁴ Ghazali stressed that the true Light corresponds to the "eye of the heart": "There is truly in the man's heart (*qalb*) an eye (*ayn*), which possesses the perfection [to see the absolute Light]. (...) This inner eye belongs to another world that is the heavenly kingdom (*Malakût*). The light that shines in *Malkût*, the inner kingdom, is Dante's "silent light" and the Hesychastic "perfumed light."

⁵ Without developing, we should mention the immense difference between the traditional civilizations of the so-called "native" people of the world, which were based on harmony and a complete accord with nature, and the modern civilization that destroyed them, in the name of "civilization." The *politeia* of the native peoples meant a conformity to order that brought happiness, music and light, and all these without the help of a cell phone, a DVD player, or even an electric bulb.

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“A time arrived when a great disorder ensued in the world, and sages and worthies no longer shed their light on it. The Principle and its characteristics ceased to be regarded as uniform; other principles were invented, the discussions commenced, and everyone considered his opinion the right one. Many in different places got one glimpse of it, and plumed themselves on possessing it as a whole. They might be compared to the discussions among ear, eye, nose, and mouth. Each sense had its own faculty and was right, but their different faculties cannot be interchanged. So it was with the many branches of the various schools. Each had its peculiar excellence, and there was the time for the use of it; but notwithstanding no one covered or extended over the whole (range of truth). The case was that of the scholar who passes his judgment on all the beauties in heaven and earth, discriminates the principles that underlie all things, and attempts to estimate the success arrived at by the ancients. Seldom is it that such one can embrace all the beauties in heaven and earth, or rightly estimate the spiritual and intelligent ways; and thus it was that the Dao, which inwardly forms the sage and externally the king, became obscured and lost its clearness, became repressed and lost its development. Every one in the world did whatever he wished, and had his own rule. Alas! the various schools held on to their several ways, and could not come back to the same point, nor agree together. The students of that later age unfortunately did not see the undivided purity of heaven and earth, and the great scheme of truth held by the ancients. The system of the Dao was about to be torn in fragments all under the sky” (*Zhuang Zi*, 33, 1).

Zhuang Zi describes nothing else than the reign of the revolted Shudras; and all the more his sayings match the actual situation of the world. Each modern Shudra is so conceited, so arrogant of his pseudo-knowledge, so final with respect to his opinion, so thirsty for gossip, so ready and inflexible in criticizing any detail, any trivial mistake, but ignoring the essence and whole, that even the suggestion of such a notion like Politeia would be an insult for him.

The modern Shudras will try to persuade you that texts like Zhuang Zi’s are obsolete and the time for studying the sacred scriptures has passed; that to be traditional means to be anchored in the problems of actuality, and to express your individual opinion about the end of times, about Kali-yuga and what and how this will happen; that it is more interesting to read details about René Guénon, than to meditate over his work; that studying the Upanishads is old fashioned and much better would be to read some modern commentaries or essays about Vedanta.

The modern Shudras have no clue how important the spiritual activity is¹ and how this one occurs. They, who are the personification of selfishness, think that the salvation of the world could be done with common, individual and inferior means. They don’t understand what signifies the Liberation, as a result of an initiatory process, which is regarded as a selfish enterprise, a non-action; they don’t understand that the sage in his non-action develops a tremendous spiritual activity and this activity is not egoistic but regards the welfare of the whole world. Such an activity, like meditating upon a sacred text, during the initiatory realization, and plunging deeply into its real significance, represents enormously more than any humanitarian or militant actions.² The modern

¹ To prevent any misunderstanding, we must insist that “spiritual” has nothing to do with what the modern world tries to suggest it represents, and is not connected with religious notions like “faith” and “believe.”

² The Shaikh al-‘Arabî ad-Darqâwî said in his *Letters*: “Strike neither Jew nor Christian nor Moslem, but

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Shudras have no idea that there are other ways, beside the corporeal ones, much more efficient, which lead to Salem.

There are people who describe the Center of the World as a Christian center; there are others who think that the Center is an Islamic center.¹ These individuals should not even talk about the center, since they understand nothing. Only a revolted Shudra could give an attribute to the supreme Center, “his attribute.”

The Center, which is *Oriens*, has no place for this unnatural Shudras.

strike your own soul (*nafs*) and do not cease to strike it until it dies!”

¹ In a normal traditional society, even from an exoteric point of view, the center had no epithet. Each secondary tradition had the right to pretend that it is the only genuine one, but all the more its center wouldn’t be particularized; the Incas, for example, never called their center “the Inca Center.”