

## **JATHIKATHVAYA AGAINST GLOBALISATION**

Globalisation is not a recent phenomenon. It started way back in the fifteenth century. The day Vasco de Gama went round Africa the globalisation began. As a phenomenon it has passed through several stages and today we are experiencing a stage, which has been named globalisation. The so-called globalisation is only the name given to the stage in which people both in the west and the non-west directly experience the process of globalisation.

Globalisation is a western phenomenon or rather it is a European phenomenon. In fact it could be called a British phenomenon. The west is nothing but an extended Europe with the Europeans physically occupying the lands in America and Australia. The British took with them their culture, politics and economics to these countries and were able to establish themselves after almost annihilating the indigenous populations. In the rest of the world either they were not able to do so due to various reasons or perhaps did not want to settle down in some of the countries they came across.

The colonisation was the beginning of globalisation. The old European colonial countries can be divided into three groups. The southern Europeans meaning the Spanish and the Portuguese belonged to one category. They were prepared to mix with the local people and establish their dominance through their political institutions. The so-called Latin American countries were established as a result of this type of colonisation. The British colonisation was different. If they could, they massacred the indigenous populations as they did in north America, Australia and New Zealand and were not interested in general in mixed marriages or mixed cultures. They established their hegemony through the political institutions and the educational systems they created in the colonised countries. The British culture was transplanted through trade, politics and education. The others like the French colonialists adopted a policy that was in between those of the British and the Southern Europeans.

The Europeans came to Asia, Africa and the Americas not only for trade. They came with the gun in one hand and the bible in the other hand. The gun represented the political power and the bible the European culture, more than the preaching of Jesus Christ. The political, economical and cultural components were there from the day one in colonialism that was later developed into imperialism. In the beginning all the three components were equally important but however as the nation states became stronger the economic and the political components came into prominence superficially.

From the very beginning Britain more than any other colonial power had understood the phenomenon of globalisation. It was a case of implanting their political institutions, their economy and their culture in the colonial countries. In other words they had tried to bring the whole world into one system with a common economy, common political institutions and a common culture. Globalisation is not merely having a world trade organisation and a world economy. It is also a matter of bringing the whole world under one culture. It was

the British model of colonisation, which triumphed eventually, with the United States of America playing a bigger role after the so-called second world war.

It has to be remembered that European (British) colonisation began before the advent of capitalism. British and European colonisation, which is the first stage of globalisation, is more fundamental than capitalism. British colonisation differs from the previous invasions in the history of the world that had taken place for centuries. While the Spanish and Portuguese colonisation were not much different from the previous invasions in the sense that the cultures of the coloniser (invader) and the colonised were allowed to mix explicitly, the British colonisation wanted to make it a one way process explicitly. The colonised were given the culture of the coloniser but the coloniser took the culture of the colonised in a discrete way. The coloniser took only those parts of the other cultures that were beneficial to them while giving the colonised all aspects of the culture of the coloniser irrespective of the wish of the colonised. It was the beginning of cultural imperialism. British colonialism added the most important component of cultural imperialism into their structures. Under normal circumstances parts of the other cultures are absorbed into a particular culture or in old colonisation processes a new culture common to the coloniser and the colonised is created. In the case of cultural colonialism or cultural imperialism these two alternatives are ruled out. The colonised is forced to adopt the culture of the coloniser irrespective of the wish of the former.

British colonialism was followed by the French and the others though not with the same success. British colonialism in particular and European colonialism in general were associated with what is now known as modernity. Modernity, meaning European (western) modernity, is not something that was begun with the enlightenment, as the western intellectuals would want us to believe. European (western) modernity like globalisation started in the fifteenth century. European modernity, globalisation, western science are all interconnected. Copernicus and Newton would not have been as "modern" as Einstein and Dirac, the famous British Physicist. But they were "modern" (in a European sense) in their outlook when compared to Aristotle, Socrates and Plato. Enlightenment to European modernity is as same as imperialism to European (British) colonialism. Enlightenment was only a stage, though a very important stage, in the process of European (western) modernisation. Descartes did not start rationalism and western science though he separated the observer from the observed outlining the ontology of western science.

Though the Chinese had created a vast system of knowledge that can be described as Chinese science and though they were aware of the compass, gun powder and the printing press, the ingredients for navigation, gun and printing the bible, the Chinese neither created a science in the western sense nor went on to colonise the world. Joseph Needham asked the question as to why "western science" was not created in China and he himself gave an answer. He said that it was due to the absence of capitalism in China. However that is not a satisfactory answer as then the question arises as to why capitalism was not created in China.

Capitalism in Europe did not appear overnight. It took several centuries for British to develop capitalism. France had to wait even longer and the creation of capitalism there was a long process though sometimes the impression is given that it happened almost overnight with the French revolution. Capitalism was not the cause of western science, and it could be thought that western science and capitalism are associated with western modernity, which together with globalisation has a deeper foundation. Colonisation, globalisation, capitalism, western science, rationalism etc., all arose as a result of the Chinthanaya of the Europeans in general and the British in particular. The attitudes and the philosophies of the European Judaic Chinthanaya in general and the worldview are given in an appendix to the "Mage Lokaya".

As I understand it the chinthanaya of Amarasekera is a concept that is at a deeper level than the paradigm of Kuhn and the episteme of Foucault. The modernisation of Europe consists of two parts. Firstly the British and the other Europeans acquired the Judaic Chinthanaya if they were already not in possession of it. Secondly the Europeans were able to absorb the knowledge that had been created in the east and the Americas into their culture based on the Judaic Chinthanaya. It is now accepted that most of the mathematics including Leibniz's and Newton's calculus and the sciences that are supposed to have been created in Europe were known in India in the fifteenth century. Even the helio centric theory of Copernicus was known to the Indians or rather the Bharatha Puthras and the Puthris. Having absorbed the knowledge of the other cultures into their culture the Europeans were able to create a new system of knowledge with original theories and concepts, which is now called the western sciences, from Physics to Sociology, based on the western Judaic Chinthanaya. The process still continues and at certain stages the European intellectuals have made attempts not only to absorb the knowledge based on the other chinthanayas but the chinthanayas themselves, though not with success.

The rationalism and the other ingredients of European modernism can be found in the European Judaic chinthanaya. With Descartes rationalism and the two valued logic were crowned within the European culture. The enlightenment that gave so much prominence to reasoning was not due to the philosophy of Descartes or any other seventeenth or eighteenth century western philosopher but was only a stage in an evolutionary process that was started in the fifteenth century. In the eighteenth century reason was elevated to an "unreasonable" position within the European culture. Foucault in an article entitled "What is Enlightenment", referring to a paper by Kant, has the following to say on reason. " We must note that the German word used here is *rasonieren*; this word, which is also used in the Critiques does not refer to just any use of reason, but to a use of reason in which reason has no other end but itself.....Kant in fact describes enlightenment as the moment when humanity (Kant had no business to refer to humanity in general. He should have used Europeanity or some such concept. Over generalisation and over abstraction are also parts of the European chinthanaya. In fact globalisation follows from generalisation - NdeS) is going to put its own reason to use, without subjecting itself to any authority; now it is precisely at this moment that the critique is necessary, since its role is that of defining the conditions under which the use of reason is legitimate in order to determine what can be known, what must be done, and what may be hoped." I am sure that Mr. Ashraaf will agree with me that the Kalama Suthraya does not condone that type

of reasoning. I must also add, to Foucault modernity was only an attitude and that he would not have agreed with the views on modernity expressed in this article. However in sympathy with a western post modernist condition, he was against forms of generalisation, as we would see later.

Capitalism followed colonisation and evolved as a part of western modernisation. During this time the nation states also grew in strength both politically and economically. Lenin identified imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. However this was not to be the case as capitalism continued to evolve. During the stage that was identified by Lenin as imperialism the political and economic components of colonialism were the prominent. However with subsequent evolution the cultural and the economic components, in that order have become stronger than the political component. The nation state is withering away politically though not in the sense of Marx and Lenin. The present stage of colonisation can be categorised as world imperialism, with strong cultural and the economic components, where the power is distributed over the whole world. It is very difficult to pin point the centres of power. The power is everywhere and not concentrated at a point. In a sense power in the present phase of imperialism is more like a quantum "particle" that seems to be everywhere, than a Newtonian particle that can be tracked down. Globalisation is a characteristic of world imperialism, which attempts to enforce a common culture and a common economy to the entire world. It is the cultural component that is the strongest as can be seen in Serbia and East Timor. The western powers are not interested in the market of East Timor. They are more interested in the culture of the East Timor.

The western civilisation has to overcome two other important world civilisations in order to fulfil the dream of giving the western culture to the entire world. Though there may not be a Buddhist civilisation, as such, common to the entire world there are Buddhist cultures in various different countries. Then there is the much stronger and more aggressive Muslim civilisation. The other civilisations are not spread over the whole world and confined mostly to the countries of origin. The Chinese civilisation though very strong is not a world civilisation as such. Therefore it is not surprising that in the evolution of western civilisation and in its desire to enforce it on the whole world it has decided to concentrate on the Muslim civilisation and the Buddhist cultures. Serbia and East Timor have to be seen in this context as far as Muslim civilisation is concerned. It is unfortunate that the Tamils have allowed themselves to be used against the Sinhala Buddhist culture in Sri Lanka.

Globalisation and related world imperialism cannot be defeated based on western theories including Marxism. Marxism is part of globalisation in the sense that it recommends and justifies a common culture whether it is called the proletariat or not, to the whole world. The so-called proletarian culture is nothing but a western culture. Globalisation, which stems from generalisation that is found in the western culture, cannot be defeated by using theories that are based on generalisation. Foucault has said in the above mentioned article that "the historical ontology of ourselves must turn away from all projects that claim to be global or radical."

With or without Foucault there is only one way to defeat globalisation and that is to evolve programmes based on the *jathikathvas* of the different countries. The *jathikathva* like *Hinduthva* cannot be translated into English. It is neither nationalism nor nationality. If we do not have a programme based on the *jathikathva* it is very likely that all of us in this part of the world will continue to suffer under world imperialism which is only the present phase of a process that was started five hundred years ago.