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Aldous Huxley's Persepective on Science

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Aldous Huxley is completely disillusioned with the contemporary materialistic age struck by the unprecedented scientific development, atrocities of the world wars and disillusionment. Frustration, materialism, moral laxity, skepticism, biased scientific progress etc., are some such diverse factors that shaped Huxley's cynical vision of the modern world. Huxley found the war-torn humanity crippling into darkness and depression. As a humanist, through his novels he tried his best to inject the morals into the veins of the morally erroneous modern generation.

Huxley voices a spirit of the revolt against insincerity, discontentment, anxiety, pointlessness, chaos and hypocrisy prevailed in the industrialized society. The industrialized society has mechanized the human beings and consequently the humanity is completely in the lack of the warmth sentiments and feelings. Human beings are not treating one another in friendly terms but in the mechanical way. As In his novel *Point Counter Point* Huxley articulates through Rampion his worry what will happen, if a timely restraint is not imposed upon this too much mechanical growth: "Industrial progress means over-production, means the need for getting new markets, means international rivalry, and means war. And mechanical progress means more specialization and standardization of work, means more ready-made and individual amusements, means diminution of imitative and creativeness, means more intellectualism and the progressive atrophy of all the vital and fundamental things in human nature, means increased boredom and restlessness, means finally a kind of individual madness that can only result in social revolution. Count on them or not, war and revolutions are inevitable, if things are allowed to go on as they are at present." Here Huxley draws a terrifying picture of the disappointed modern scientific society, the unscrupulous system of which has paralyzed the vibrancy of the life. Even the dynamic concept of the life has been replaced by the static life.

Modern generation is also suspected and doubtful about the present and the future times. In the mechanical society means has been taken for ends. The gadgets and materials have been taken for realities. The people are under this illusion that only science would make them the master of the whole world and even of their fate and the soul. But Huxley believes that this scientific knowledge would facilitate one to achieve only the materialistic pleasure, not the spiritual happiness. As he speaks: "On the human level, men live in ignorance, craving and fear. Ignorance, craving and fear results in some temporary pleasures, in many lasting miseries, in final frustration." Likewise in the novel *Time Must Have a Stop* Huxley laments on the worse condition of the human beings: "People love their egos and don't wish to mortify them, don't wish to see why they shouldn't express their personalities and have a good time. They get their good times: but also and inevitably they get wars and syphilis and revolution and alcoholism, tyranny and, in default of an adequate religious hypothesis, the choice between some lunatic idolatry, like nationalism, and a sense of complete futility and despair. Unutterable miseries."

Even Mr. Wimbush in the novel *Crome yellow* is dissatisfied with the confused living standard of the modern life. So he has confined himself to a secluded life and does not like to mix up with the people. Now he likes to be lost into the glorious moments of past which this modern age has nothing to do with.

All these characters are the representative of the contemporary times. Huxley totally condemns this scientific society because it is incapable to give real peace and true happiness. Undoubtedly, this society has made man free from the superstition and economic chaos but however on other hand it has destroyed spiritual conflicts of any kind, great creative art of whatever kind and the beauty of the old traditional things. It has also shaken man's faith in sympathy and humanity. Huxley realized that this immense technological development caused the modern generation to move towards ruin and destruction. The scenario of modern technological age as Huxley depicted in his novels, is well summed up by Swami Prabhavananda: "The modern spirit can be defined as utilitarian and rationalistic or scientific. The history of the last four hundred years in Europe, since the age of the renaissance, marks the attempt at progress politically, socially and intellectually from the standpoint of utilitarianism. The world today, however, is rudely shaken by the confusion that it is facing in every phase of life and human activity. The basic structure upon which we built the civilization of the West seems to be hopelessly collapsing."

Huxley found that the attention of the modern generation is focused only on the worship of worldly achievement. Consequently, he is highly critical of those business men who are masters of money power with an obscene hatred of life, a true spontaneous life. Therefore, his attack upon the current social system is based on the argument that the real cause of human's anxieties is materialistic desire. This desire, Huxley believes, initiated the process of mechanizing human life. So

He condemns the industrialism not because that it is a 'manual labor destroyer' but also 'destroyer of creative power'. Hence Huxley warns against this mechanical life which will make us only restless, unscrupulous, thoughtless, undisciplined and money-grabbing community. Actually, as a novelist Huxley's aim is to acquaint the readers with genuine truths about their industrial society, however unpleasant they may appear.

Though Huxley was dissatisfied with the unprecedented progress of technology, he was not against science. His aim always was at making some sense of the world. He was the man who believed that good wins at the end, if the most persistent and tremendous efforts are made to curb this unlimited progress of science which is destitute of values. He suggested some remedies for. Really, to solve all the above mentioned complicated problems, a writer is required to have a call for the highest intellectual power along with moral courage and also the ability to turn a new insight into the humanity. In fact, Huxley had such a quality and as a writer he enriched our knowledge by adding new meaning and altering our understanding of life. He analyzed the most fundamental problems of the modern generation with penetrating insight and prophetic vision. Each and every problem hinted at by him, is followed by a brilliant suggestion.

He saw that the new advances in applied science had given rise to two developments which had indirectly promoted centralization of powers in the hands of the few who happened to be the ruling oligarchy. He saw that modern science had adversely affected the prevailing mental climate by projecting an erroneous concept of progress and creating a tacit assumption that

human beings are no more than bodies, animals and machines. He holds the opinion that science is for human beings, not human beings for science. So, for the welfare of mankind, technicians and scientists must take an oath as proposed by Dr. Weltfish: "I pledge myself that I will use my knowledge for the good of humanity and against the destructive forces of the world and the ruthless intent of man; and that I will work together with my fellow scientists of whatever nation, creed or color for these our common ends."

According to Huxley the results of scientific research should be applied to the continued improvement and progress of the whole humanity. So, for this purpose it is required to end the narrow nationalistic attitude, under which there are buried many evils: "Nationalism leads to moral ruin, because it denies universality, denies the existence of a single God, denies the value of the human being as human being; and because, at the same time, it affirms exclusiveness, encourages vanity, pride and self-satisfaction, stimulates hatred and proclaims the necessity and the rightness of war."

So, Huxley implicitly inspired all the countries to come ahead to cope with the war-like ferocious problems with peace-loving attitude : "Peace-loving countries must unite to throw thermite, high explosive and vesicants on the inhabitants of countries ruled by aggressive dictators. They must do this, and of course abide the consequences, in order to preserve peace and democratic institutions."

His disgust and despair is not against the science but human's ignorance of science's misuse. So, for a bright future it is necessary to liquidate their ignorance which is the biggest obstacle to progress of these individuals. When these unpleasant but necessary preliminaries are over, the golden age will begin.

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