Quid est veritas?

Written by Subhasis Chattopadhyay

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What is the truth? Quid est veritas?

The truth is I am scared. But why am I scared?

I have to confess my truths are all nice and clear. I know enough history, enough philosophy, enough archaeology and enough theology to know that I know the truth. My Christmas cake has to be better than yours. My life has to be cooler than yours. I know the truth of the stock markets. I know to buy at lows and sell at highs. I know truth when I see it. I know I have to lick the feet of the powerful of this world. I know I have to bow to the wealthy. I know I have to compromise just this once to get my deal done. I know I have none looking out for my own, so please God, I know that religions are so much give and take. I know the truth that even the greatest will crack just with the right bait. I know the truth that there is no truth.

But oh God, no…how will I face the truth being born this 24th December’s evening in a poor-house? Scholars still debate: whether he who scares me was born in a manger or a side-room by some God forsaken inn? I love these scholarly intrigues. The history or the a-history of these scholars. The scapegoat theory of Girard or, shall I go for those new methods of reading holy texts? They scrub the miracles out of all the religions and reward those best at gutting these little discomforts. For we want to see the truth. I solemnly believe in the power of blockchain money, the Bitcoin which I have never seen. But being a hard man, can you blame poor I for not believing in your boy-God, God-boy?

I’ll wager my lot with the historical folks. The reasonable ones who know that the world is a selfish world where I have to be on my own watch. The Psalmist be damned.

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I am a Hindu and they say we live in the end-times (the Kali Yuga); what you who believe in that far-sighted man, John of Patmos, call the Apocalypse. I know that if your little babe really grew into that Man who rose from the dead then I am roasted. If little baby Man-God, God-Man answered Pilate the Powerful by rising up from His Tomb, then Hindu holy texts are true.

And I have lived all my life knowing how to spread the butter thick on my daily bread. I know it all. But why then am I scared each Christmas? Why then am I speechless in fear and read my Kierkegaard? If your little boy Jesus grew up and rose from his Tomb, then with Him was no cake walk. He was slowly, lewdly and with relish tortured and murdered on his Wood. That’s Gothic stuff and all imaginary. But then why am I terrified?

Quid est veritas?

Pray for me my readers.

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