

A NEW MORN-BREAKING THROUGH THE DEAD OF NIGHT

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There can hardly be any two opinions about the genesis of our age. Humanity is being haunted by the spectre of a great catastrophe. Ominous shadows of war are hovering over our heads. Bitter feuds and bloody convulsions have torn the very fibre of society: people have been uprooted, ruined, mutilated and annihilated by devastating wars, coming in rapid succession. World has become a huge hunting ground, an arena for competing barbarisms. Leaders and their followers, all are at their wits' end, groping about in the dark. They stand bewildered and aghast, in the midst of doubt and confusion. How true these lines of Arnold seem to be:

"Wandering between two worlds, one dead
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest their head."

All the great philosophers of history are agreed that night has set over the western civilization. They are unanimous in viewing our times as the end of the western civilization. Oswald Spengler, Nikolai Danilevsky, Arnold J. Toynbee, Pitirim A. Sorokin, Walter Schouberet, N. Berdyaev, A. Kroeber, F.S.C. Northrop, Albert Schweitzer, J. J. Saunders, Lewis Mumford, Fulton J. Sheen, all explicitly describe our times as the period of one of the greatest transitions from one civilization or cultural super system to a different one. No one believes in the survival value of the Modern Civilization which has spelled disaster on an unprecedented scale.

A study of the history of civilisations and philosophy of history further reveals that ethical renaissance and religious revival alone have arrested the decay of civilisation. Dying cultures have survived only by a religious transfiguration. Ethical movements alone have saved tottering cultures. The emergence of the Buddhist reverence for life, of the Stoic ethical upsurge in Greece, of the religious renaissance in the early Rome, the rise of Islam and the contemporary pacifism, M.R.A., Christian Socialism and a host of similar ethical movements of the dying western civilisation are a few instances in point. Same is the verdict of all great philosophers of history.

P.A. Sorokin epitomises their views as follows:-

Spengler contends that the last "civilisation" phase of a high culture is marked by an Emergence and growth of the "Second religiosity", which serves as a passage to the emergence of a new high culture and its new "spring-phase".

"Toynbee states that in the last phase of civilization there emerges the "universal church" and a new religion which ushers in a new civilization dominated the new religion in its period of childhood or growth. My study (i.e. the study of P.A. Sorokin — K.A.) of the succession of the supreme systems during some thirty- five centuries of the Greco-Mino- an; Creto-Mycenaean, Graeco-Roman and Western European Cultures and Hindu cultures have shown likewise that in all observed cases, after the decline of the Sensate supersystem (i.e. Secular materialistic, amoral and purely this-worldly—K.A.) a new ideational (religious) supersystem becomes dominant."

Spengler's "second religiosity," Toynbee's "universal church" ushering in a new religious phase of a new civilization, Berdyaev's new "Medieval" culture succeeding the declined "Humanistic-secular", Schouberet's "new Messianic prototype"—all these concepts are similar, Kroeber also states that often, "...after science and philosophy had been their active source, religion once more becomes important." (Configurations of Culture Growth, P. 803).

Thus on this point all the theories seem to be in an essential agreement as to a new Ideational-Religious super system supplanting the declined Senate — or "disintegrating" phase of a dying civilization. (See Social Philosophies in an Age of Revolution).

The author concludes that. "Notwithstanding the difference in the details and interpretations, almost all the writers considered agree on the revival of ethical movements in the last phase of the declining super system of civilization."

This is a fundamental historical truth. When, in the light of this principle, we view the contemporary world, we come to the conclusion that religion alone can give the world a new civilization. Nearly all the philosophers of history prophesy that the coming civilization will be Religiously Ideational (Demilovesky, Spengler, Toynbee, Shubart, Berdyaev and Sorokin) or Integrat as a synthesis of the Asthetic-Theoratic (Northrop) of the Yoluntarlstically-Ethical and Rational (Schweitzer) or purely religious and Theistic (Fulton J. Sheen). In short, the coming civilization is going to be basically different from that which has been dominant over the world during the last six centuries. It is also interesting to know that:

"All the writers agree that with the end of the dominant old and the emergence of the dominant new culture, a shift is taking place from the geographical centre, and from the nation or nations that were the old super - system locale to a new nation or nations. Since Western Europe was the centre of the dying cultural super system, the new civilization must emerge elsewhere" (Social Philosophies in an Age of Revolution : P. 298).

They are a pointer to the future. If the clouds of destruction are to dissipate, if the sorrows of man are to be lightened, if the curse of war is to be lifted off the borows of mankind, if civilization is to survive—the light of religion must dawn and it must be realized that fear of God and reverence for moral values alone can arrest the downward march of humanity and that Divine Revelation alone can offer the bridle that will control our passions and the light that will guide our steps. —And wherefrom can we have that light excepting the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be on him!)? Islam is a complete code of life—a moral order, a social scheme, a polity and a cultural force. In its scheme of life, nothing is lacking, nothing is superflous. Its efficiency as a culture-producing factor is beyond any shadow of doubt. The pages of history bear testimony to the fact that it gave a new face to civilization and a golden era to history. Its principles are as modern as the tomorrow morn and they can, even today, herald a new era in the life of humanity.

The current of history is moving towards this system of life— a system which humanity is ceaselessly searching.— The Materialistic civilization has chained man down to unnatural ways of life and has sapped his soul. Islam can give man a new lease of life. It gives the message of truth and ' justice which steals into the heart. It can liberate man from tile iron shackles of fulse gods, it can bring a revolution in the hearts and souls of human beings. It can usher in an er of peace and prosperity. It can bracket power with virtue and tamper strength with justice. I can fill the dried bones of humanity with flesh and blood. It cat turn clay into soul and make the dead live again.— But remember This needs sincere effort and honest endeavour. Efforts and sacrifice on our part, can herald a new era for mankind. Should we not strive for the noble goal:
