

# Dying Cultural Factors

by Martinus

**From Eastern religions** we learn that meditation is the grand high road leading to perfection. We are advised to rid ourselves of all earthly ties, material desires and longings, to retire into solitude and concentrate ourselves solely on God and on matters of the spirit. The fact that Eastern peoples have made this view a primary article of faith has been highly instrumental in forming their attitude and behaviour. But this does not seem to have brought them any nearer to perfection. Millions of human beings in Eastern countries must eke out a miserable existence, ever in imminent danger of dying of hunger, while other millions starve to death every year without very much being done about it. Eastern peoples are extremely religious, and decidedly spiritually minded, but are not, however, intellectually inclined. Numbers of more or less "wise men" have appeared among them from time to time, and some of them have been greatly revered by the general population, but even if these philosophers have, admittedly, been in many ways the divine leaders of their countrymen, they have never been able to liberate them from their misery or to create a secure, peaceful type of civilisation in their Mother countries. With the exception of the genuine world redeemers who have lived in the East, these "wise men" never possessed true cosmic consciousness. They gained a certain proficiency in psychic and occult experiments, which now however, belongs to bygone stages of development.

**The primary principle** in the religious attitude of Eastern peoples has thus been to occupy themselves as little as possible with material things and to concentrate mainly on spiritual matters. Even if such a view may be beneficial in some ways, it may also, (as has actually been the case) lead to a kind of "derailment" in which the human beings either stagnate or stray aside from the path leading to the goal that is their true destination. This unintellectual spiritual attitude has become a sort of "sleeping pill" - a flight from the outer world. The main factor in life became too much meditation on spiritual matters and gave too little training and practice in associating with one's "neighbour".

**Through this artificial training** in meditation, many people's spiritual attitude became far too exaggerated as compared with their stage of moral development. They came to prefer to live in solitude away from other people. Even though many of these hermits may be pleasant and delightful enough people to talk to, this by no means implies that they can be accepted as models of what is the true aim of humanity. It is not the purpose of life to escape into solitude away from one's fellows and think only of God. Fleeing from our fellow human beings means fleeing from the lessons and mind-enriching experiences which daily association with other people will unavoidably entail.

**This tendency to by-pass the true road**, i.e. life together with other people, and the training thus given in trying to make such association more perfect, has also, though possibly in another way, appeared in the Western world in the Christian religion. In this religion - in spite of the fact that Christ showed us by His example the mode of behaviour of a perfect human being - people have created a "sleeping pill" called "Forgiveness of Sins", and "Redemption through the Blood and Mercy of Christ". In this dogmatic conception of Christianity it is not charitable acts that are the goal of human strivings, but it is solely a question of becoming a member of the chosen flock for whom Christ suffered crucifixion. According to this dogmatic Christianity we are all born in sin, have the original sin within us even before we are born, and are already obvious candidates for eternal damnation if we do not beseech God for his Mercy and for Redemption "through the Blood of the Lamb".

Here in the West, this is the main comforting "sleeping pill" for people whose mentality is still so unintellectual within the spiritual field that, to them, this ideal seems divine, even if it has nothing whatsoever to do with Christ's own mode of behaviour. Both the Eastern and the Western highly unintellectual spiritual attitude have clearly shown that neither of them will ever be able to lead humanity to true peace in the world, or to a state of things where the blessings of life will be equally and fairly shared by all mankind. The only way of ensuring such a peaceful world will be by developing the true art of living in the consciousness of human beings, or, in other words, by developing their ability to live in complete harmony with each and all of their fellow human-beings. The course of life is not a road along which people should flee from each other, to live in solitude in out-of-the-way places, nor is it a road along which they should elbow their way forward at the expense of others while foolishly imagining that they will be saved if only they beg for Mercy and the Forgiveness of sins.

When people believe that Redemption lies in separation from other people they get out of training as regards getting to know and understand these other people. They abandon the training given by making use of all those skills and abilities in their consciousness specially intended for use in forgiving others, serving others and understanding others. By living in solitude they lose their ability to uncover all the evil, unfinished tendencies in their nature. " But that can only be an advantage" some

may suggest. No! For if these tendencies are not brought out into the light of day they cannot be conquered and thus got rid of. It is not difficult for some people to appear to have a good character if he lives in solitude away from other people, and they even supply him with food and clothes, and honour and respect him as a holy man. It is all very well to sit training oneself up in pious thoughts - that we may all have use for now and again. But it is not enough merely to think such thoughts, they must be practised in life to be of real importance. How would numbers of the aforesaid hermits fare if they were suddenly forced to live among people who slandered them, lied about them, persecuted them, and dealt them all the painful blows that have to be met in daily life among other people. One cannot help wondering how long untrained as they are in living under such conditions - they would be able to sustain their holy atmosphere. Wouldn't they most probably suffer material shipwreck in such surroundings? But this is exactly what people of the East have done. They have allowed an unintellectual spiritual attitude to entice them away from their proper development in daily, practical material life, and in this way they have allowed the Western nations to become their masters and oppressors for centuries. It is thus amply proved that meditation and solitude are not the ideals which will lead humanity forward to perfection, peace and happiness.

**But the Western dogma** of "the Remission of Sins" and "Redemption through the Blood of Jesus", or through "God's Mercy" has certainly not afforded the Western peoples any real peace or protection either! Numberless wars have been fought in the name of Christ; priests have blessed the armaments of war and have prayed to God for victory, and the host of true believers has become ever smaller as the intellectual faculties have gradually been developed. Western people to-day stand well-equipped as regards their practical intellectual powers, which have been developed in the struggle for existence, but, for this very reason their religious dogmas have proportionately lost in importance, so that now the chief objects in life have become the material values.

There is war both in the East and in the West. All are at war with all, and there is little possibility nowadays of finding any secluded solitude's to escape to. Even Tibet which for thousands of years has been a locked religious fastness, has now been dragged out by the communists into the sphere of materialism.

But having reached such an impasse, what fact stands out with ever-increasing insistence? The fact that Meditation on one hand, and the "Remission of Sins" and "Christ's Mercy" on the other, must give way as staple cultural factors. But does this imply that Materialism and Godlessness shall prevail? Not at all. There is no question of victory either for Eastern or Western conceptions, and even if it is evident that both the Eastern and Western orthodox beliefs have degenerated and must go under to practical materialism, the latter cultural factor alone will prove just as untenable as a too narrow-minded unintellectual spiritual attitude. The only remedy that can assist mankind to get out of this "everyone's war against everyone else" which dominates the world to-day is the universal acquisition of a thorough knowledge of the physical and psychical laws of life. Life constitutes but one single purpose, namely, that life must unite with life, and this unity can only be consummated through love.

But love does not consist merely of caresses and the uniting of the bodies of living beings, with the propagation of the races as its objects. Love is a power which permeates the entire universe. We know it also under the expression "The Holy Spirit". What the great world redeemers proclaimed in the past, and what Christ has shown humanity by His example, is that it is possible for every individual human being to ally himself with the Divine or Universal Love in such an intimate way that, instead of fleeing from life as it is here in the physical world, we let this love pour into this world, transforming it by our practical mode of behaviour.

**But we have learnt** that, if we are to be able to familiarise ourselves intellectually with the physical world with its profusion of natural laws, we must have a Science through which we may get to know said laws, and thus be able in practice to evolve a mode of life and of creation in conformity with these laws. By reason of man's continuously improving power of thought - which is a spiritual power - we all live just as much in a spiritual world - namely the world of thought - as we do in the physical. In order to be able to familiarise ourselves with this spiritual world - which is also governed by multitudinous laws - we must also have a Science through which we can get to know these laws and conform to them. And here we have just such an assisting factor - given to humanity through the modern Spiritual Science - which, put into practice by ever increasing numbers of human beings both in the Eastern -and Western Hemispheres, will form the basis for a new world civilisation, the motto of which will be: "EVERYONE FOR HIS NEIGHBOUR". The human beings of such a new kind of civilisation will not take flight into solitude - even they will, occasionally, enjoy being alone. Nor will they try to join any special sect calling themselves the "saved" or "chosen people", and holding the view that anyone outside their group is irretrievably lost and will expiate his sins in the torments of an "Everlasting Hell". They will know that "Hell" is nothing but that very world of war, revenge, hate, bitterness, misunderstanding and self-made suffering, which is sown and reaped by human beings in life after life, as long as they do not live in conformity with the universal law which is the essence of all laws: the Law of Charity. Training in the exercise of this law is the only reliable way to establish peace in a world where the best of Eastern and Western

civilisations can be united. There no one will wish to flee from this world's "vale of woe" into a too one-sided meditation on spiritual things, nor will anyone forget the spiritual reality and its laws in preference to all the mundane happenings of the physical world.

**Many followers of Western Christianity** have been of the opinion that it was their duty to go abroad as missionaries, and that, in so doing, they were carrying out Christ's bidding: "Go forth and make disciples of all men". So they have tried to convert Eastern peoples to the doctrine of Christianity and to a belief in "the Forgiveness of Sins", "God's Mercy", and "Redemption through the Blood of Christ,". They have, undoubtedly, done much good, especially through their practical, intellectual abilities, when serving as doctors and teachers. But as long as Christianity among Western peoples remains only a dogmatic faith one must adopt in order to be saved, and not a mode of life one must try to live in accordance with Christ's teachings, the "Christians" of the West are certainly not the disciples of Christ they profess to be, and hence are not in a position to create a Christian civilisation. When Christ said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples: if ye have love one to another", this precept is in such contrast to the civilisation of the so-called Christian countries that every oriental who has begun to develop any logical sense, and is also receptive to new impulses, will disdainfully exclaim: "You can keep your Christianity for yourselves, it yields no good result. But give us your Science and Technology, so that we can create our own modern community".

Western peoples can put the forces of Nature to work for them, but, at the same time, they employ these forces to manufacture bombs and other instruments of destruction, which they use both against one another and against Eastern peoples. All possible variations of war and discord ravage the countries of the West, so much so, indeed, that the populations of these countries stand just as badly in need of becoming Christ's disciples as do the peoples of the East.

**What humanity is witnessing to-day**, in the East as well as in the West, is the decline and fall of an old civilisation. It was built upon religious cultural factors which are now dying. The materialism that replaces them is but the embryo of a new civilisation, a primitive inception of the organic structure which will embrace the entire globe, and thus fulfil the old prophecy: "A new Heaven and a new Earth", and "One Fold One Shepherd". It will be the fulfilment of the promise that, through the seed sown by Christ, "shall all the peoples of the earth be blessed", not by being baptised with water, by dogmas and sacraments, but, as Christ also said: by being "baptised with the Holy Spirit".

The Holy Spirit - which is the same as cosmic science or spiritual science will gradually be accepted and understood by the people in the East as well as in the West. Not as a religious doctrine that must be adopted if one is to be saved, but as a science dealing with both the physical and psychical laws of Nature. Through spiritual science Eastern peoples will learn to combine their spiritual attitude with practical and logical efficiency, and will thus be able to organise the physical world for the good of all. And they will teach the Western peoples that true Christianity does not consist of dogmas, rituals and prayers for mercy, but of emulating Christ's mode of behaviour, viz. to serve or in the modern sense of the word - to use the highly developed creative power one has gradually acquired, to create civilisation which, in big as in little things, will be based on peace and co-operation between all human beings of the earth,

And people in the East as well as those in the West will understand that, whether in their prayers to Providence they address their words to God, Father, Allah or Brahma, these are only different names for the Divinity in which we all "live, move and have our being", whose Holy Spirit, or Divine Consciousness, pervades and permeates the entire Universe.

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**The present condensation made by Mogens Møller has been approved by Martinus. Translated from the Danish by C.Campbell-McCallum**

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