

Decline of the West – Harmony and Chaos

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July 11, 2005

The Decline of the West and the Rise of the East

Excerpt from a letter I wrote to Mahmood Nawaz, a Pakistani student in Cyprus, on November 19, 1992 (words in square brackets were inserted later for clarification):

... I grew up in Europe and have spent all of my life, except for about two and a half years, in a western/Christian cultural environment (including 6 years in the United States, 5 years in Cyprus and close to 2 years in Greece). I think I have enough of an understanding of western/Christian culture [read: civilization] to be in a position to tell you that it is in decline. Western culture [civilization], which has dominated the world for centuries, is running out of steam, and Europe, the cradle of that culture, is in danger of becoming a cultural backwater and a spiritual desert. Europe has a huge moral debt to pay to the rest of the world because the European peoples caused death and destruction everywhere and ruthlessly exploited the peoples of Africa, Asia and the original inhabitants of the Americas and the Australia-Pacific region. Europe, however, does not recognize this and wants to continue exploiting others. And white America, which was created by the Europeans, is going the same way. But in Europe and America there are signs that their system is crumbling. Society is falling apart, riven by decadent immorality, crime, drugs and so on. I believe it is Karma. The west as a whole has to suffer because it refuses to pay its debt to the rest of the world. And I am sure there is more to come.

Mind you, I don't think we will see a total breakdown of the western system in the next 20 or even 50 years, unless there is a major economic, natural or military catastrophe. But the western system is definitely crumbling, and changing. The west, which has long imposed change on other societies throughout the world, is now being changed by a kind of reverse osmosis as it absorbs other cultures. I don't think we would recognize it if we could come back to the world even 100 years from now. There is great potential for an Asian culture [civilization] to rise to become the guiding light of coming centuries. It is not yet so. It has not happened yet, and, in fact, that Asian culture I am thinking of is still in a process of fermentation, so to speak, and it is not yet clear what eventual form it will take (I think it will arise primarily from 3 countries: China, Japan and Korea). I hope, of course, that the dark side of the rise of one culture as a guide to others can be avoided this time, or at least that it will be far less dramatic than the terrible destruction caused by the Christian west.

I am basically bored with Europe, and I cannot relate to the people who continue to firmly believe that the western system is the hub of the world's cultures. To me it is already a thing of the past. The motor of history for the next century and beyond will be Asia. But this does not mean that Europe has nothing left to do in the world. Apart from the dark side of Europe's progress through history, which I mentioned above, there are also positive achievements, and there are aspects of its culture and its science that others are well advised to learn. Europeans, and Americans, for that matter, have much to give and to teach. I believe that Europe and America should welcome millions of people like you from Asia, Africa and elsewhere, and allow them to study and work in the west. And millions of Europeans and Americans should go to the developing countries to help and to teach. All doors should be opened wide, because I firmly believe that the more communication and exchange we have with other cultures, the better it is for the world because the more likely we can resolve misunderstandings and disputes, and create conditions for real peace.

... The western world is in decline precisely because it has forsaken the moral and spiritual ideals that

originally inspired and guided its progress. Those ideals were always challenged by the temptation of materialism. Today, more than ever before, moral and spiritual ideals have lost out and western culture [civilization] is ruled by the gods of materialism and individualism, or its extension: ethnocentrism (nationalism, etc. ...).

Harmony and Chaos = Thoughts recorded on September 7, 1996:

It is quite obvious, I think, that God's Creation is not a completed work but rather a process that will never end. It is indeed a sort of evolution, but not one destined to reach an end result, a specific goal. If I accept Sun Myung Moon's Divine, or Unification, Principle, then God created mankind as His children, who are meant to continue the act or process of creation that He began. He meant for us to be co-creators. We were meant, first of all, to continue the creation and development of ourselves. Then we were -- and are -- to extend the greater order we have built within ourselves to the natural environment in which we live.

In the world of God's Creation there is both order/harmony and disorder/chaos. If God had completed a Creation of total order/harmony, then this Creation would have/could have had no separate consciousness. It would have been a programmed robot world. -- Beyond that, even God Himself must be incomplete. He is supposed to be love. Love is, in part, a desire or will to build an orderly relationship with another being. God completes Himself through His Creation in an everlasting process, yet there is no completeness in the strict, simple sense because this goal of completion is -- and must be -- forever unreachable. Full completion implies stagnation. So there will always be order and chaos side by side; there will always be entropy. But God's love is also a will to order, meaning an actual effort to expand the order and harmony in Creation. -- The creation or guided evolution of man/woman seems to be the achievement of the highest degree of order in the world -- as far as we know. Yet it was achieved only at the expense of a substantial degree of dominion over the Creation. Making man as a separate, individual consciousness meant that a very high level of order was achieved locally, so to speak, at the expense of global or universal order. At the same time, the separation from God's will to order meant that man contained the element of entropy and of chaos within himself to a higher degree than anything else created by God. --

I accept the idea that mankind is also responsible for the separation from God and we have to re-establish a link with God. God bears the primary responsibility, not simply because He created man, as the Principle says, but because He created all the conditions that made the full extent of that separation not only possible but very likely if not inevitable. Yet man has to struggle to build order within himself and outside in order to be able to relate to God. In love itself, there is both order and chaos, known and unknown, and love would really be meaningless if not impossible without either one of them. So, in a sense, it can be said that God Himself is still being created.

God is an orderly consciousness which can maintain absolute order only as long as it is insubstantial. As soon as God's consciousness/mind manifests itself or projects itself into anything substantial, such as the world of His Creation that we know, there is entropy and "randomness" alongside order. The order is fundamental, essential and primary, and the chaos is an epiphenomenon. But neither can eliminate the other. One can compare the human brain to a computer. The brain is vastly superior to a computer in part because it combines a very complex order with an element of randomness or chaos that would be unthinkable in the highly structured system of a computer. The computer is limited by its inability to incorporate an element of chaos within or around its order. Any element of randomness would totally disrupt the system. "Fuzzy logic" is still a long way from being able to cope with an element of randomness within the system itself.