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ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE AND THE CRISIS

OF THE WEST

by

MARVIN PERRY

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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PREFACE

Arnold J. Toynbee's A Study of History, is a deeply-felt response to the world wars and totalitarianism that nearly wrecked Western Civilization in the first half of the twentieth century. At the core of Toynbee's thought is his belief that the values of higher religions are mankind's finest achievement and religious prophets humanity's noblest souls. It is not my intention to challenge Toynbee's historiography or to attack his religious world-view but to explain his understanding of the essential meaning of the Western tradition. The principal value of Toynbee's immense effort, I believe, derives from his awareness of the enduring power and importance of the non-rational in human affairs.

I am grateful to my mentor, Professor Andrew G. Whiteside, for considering Toynbee a worthy subject for study and for leading me, by means of Socratic questioning, to an integrating principle with which to approach Toynbee's thought -- the crisis of the West.

MARVIN PERRY

CHAPTER I

THE DILEMMA OF REASON AND FREEDOM

In many ways Arnold J. Toynbee's A Study of History seems out of place in the twentieth century. While scholars in the various disciplines have been carving out still narrower areas of specialization, Toynbee has chosen to write a universal history. In an age of intellectual fragmentation he has suggested a comprehensive meaning behind the facts of history. In an era that strives for knowledge according to the standards set by science, much of Toynbee's philosophy of history is rooted in poetry and prophecy; in a secular age he has seen religion as the principal goal of life and the essential concern of the historian. Such an approach had to arouse strong reactions. While the Study has received popular acclaim, particularly in the United States, academic historians, especially in Britain, have been less enthusiastic, if not openly hostile. Critics have ridiculed as meta-history Toynbee's religious orientation, have attacked him for using myths and poetry as historical proofs and have denounced his pivotal belief that the West suffered a moral failure when it abandoned its Christian heritage for secularism. Some critics, with unrestrained fury, have

accused Toynbee of conceiving himself as a messiah and of writing not history but a bible or at least a modern day version of the City of God, a twentieth-century warning to sinful man.

In treating an historian who has made a comparative study of all the world's civilizations, one must select a suitable approach. Clearly, to undertake a critical examination of Toynbee's discussion of more than twenty civilizations would require the monumental erudition and effort of another Toynbee. Moreover, highlighting inaccuracies is perhaps the least fruitful way of understanding the meaning of Toynbee's work.

A second approach might be to evaluate Toynbee's methodology, his ambiguous attitude towards objective history. On the one hand he states, "I was, and am, a whole-hearted believer in the value of an approach to human affairs that is as 'scientific' as is humanly possible," ¹ and maintains that whereas Spengler resorted to a typically Germanic a priori approach, his conclusions derive from the methods of British empiricism. He also recognizes, sensibly, that because in history there is an absence of strict regularity, the study of human affairs cannot proceed along the same lines as physics. Toynbee professes to follow an empirical approach, in so far as one can be empirical in dealing with human affairs, given the unpredictable behavior of the human actors and the prejudices and preconceptions of the historian. But,

on the other hand, holding that "study does not have to be scientific in order to be illuminating,"² he often thinks and writes like an inspired poet relying on flashes of insight from imagination, poetry, and mythology in order to find principles that give order, form, and unity to a multiplicity of facts and experiences.

Plato taught me, by example, not to be ashamed of using my imagination as well as my intellect. He taught me, when, in a mental voyage, I found myself at the upper limit of the atmosphere accessible to the Reason, not to hesitate to let my imagination carry me on up into the stratosphere on the wings of a myth. In never being either too proud or too timid to take a myth for the sake of reconnoitering regions of the Spiritual Universe beyond Reason's range, Plato was showing both the humility and the audacity of a great mind. ...I have now lived to see the subconscious well-spring of Poetry and Prophecy restored to honor in the Western World by the genius of C. G. Jung.³

It is precisely this approach that has aroused the ire of historians and has made suspect Toynbee's claim that his conclusions are based upon an empirical method. "For although Toynbee, in analyzing civilizations, claims to be dispassionate and scientific, in fact his whole analysis is governed by strong emotional prejudice,"⁴ asserts H. R. Trevor-Roper. Toynbee uses myths and metaphors, says G. J. Reiner, "not merely for the purpose of assisting thought, but as the basis for subsequent reasoning and classification. ... A metaphoric argument. . . or an enumeration of myths -- neither leads us to truth nor to knowledge. ... I dislike Toynbee's method, because

it dwells in the sphere of myth and allegory, outside rationality."⁵

While it would be fruitful to analyze systematically Toynbee's methodology, this is not our principal concern. How then shall we approach the Toynbee corpus? We regard Toynbee's work as a deeply-felt response to the spiritual crisis that has confronted Western Civilization in recent generations. It is a passionate and pained expression of a century divested of its spiritual moorings. Conceived at a time when the West seemed near collapse, the Study is, as Hans Kohn says, "a tract for our own age and its predicament. ... a witness to the time of our life and its problems, and as such it will remain of enduring interest to all future historians."⁶ Toynbee represents one response to the crisis of Western Civilization that defined the first half of the twentieth century. Having lost confidence in reason and no longer committed to freedom, some intellectuals found a new faith in fascism. Rejecting liberal society and entranced by a utopian vision of the "end of days," others converted to communism. Shattered by the senseless slaughter of World War I, Toynbee became disillusioned with a Western secularism, liberalism, technology, and nationalism. Finding the individualism of liberalism too selfish and competitive and the rationalism of Enlightenment unable to contain the power of the irrational or to sustain human freedom, Toynbee has urged mankind to listen to its religious prophets who have taught the presence of God,

the dignity of man, the unity of mankind, and the spiritual purpose of existence. Toynbee's thought is a protest against the materialism, rootlessness, and spiritual fragmentation that have pervaded our age; it is a cry of pain of a humane and sensitive thinker who saw the collapse of his Victorian hopes and optimism and has sought to understand why. It is our intention to explore how Toynbee defines and analyzes the crisis of Western Civilization and to interpret his prescription for rescuing the West from the fate of disintegration that has overtaken other civilizations. It is Toynbee as an historian of crisis in an age of crisis that is our theme.

But why in the twentieth century was Western Civilization nearly overwhelmed? What was the nature of this crisis that caused many to reject the liberal-rational tradition in favor of totalitarian ideologies and others like Toynbee to return to God? The crisis of the West can be defined as the Western mind's loss of confidence, and in some instances, conscious repudiation of the Enlightenment tradition of reason and freedom and its regression into mythical categories of thought and behavior. In the midst of the French Revolution, Condorcet expressed the sentiments of a generation nurtured by the thought of the philosophes.

The time will therefore come when the sun will shine only on free men who know no other master but their reason; when tyrants and slaves, priests and their stupid or hypocritical instruments will exist only in works of history and on the stage; and when we shall think of them only to pity their victims and their dupes; to maintain ourselves in a state of vigilance by thinking on their excesses; and to learn how to recognize and so to destroy, by force of reason, the first seeds of tyranny and superstition,⁷ should they ever dare to reappear amongst us.

After the Great War, Paul Valéry summed up the mood of a generation for whom Condorcet's vision had lost its power to inspire:

The storm has died away, and still we are restless, uneasy, as if the storm were about to break. Almost all the affairs of men remain in a terrible uncertainty. We think of what has disappeared, we are almost destroyed by what has been destroyed; we do not know what will be born, and we fear the future, not without reason. We hope vaguely, we dread precisely; our fears our infinitely more precise than our hopes; we confess that the charm of life is behind us . . . but doubt and disorder are in us and with us. There is no thinking man, however shrewd or learned he may be, who can hope to dominate this anxiety, to escape from this impression of darkness, to measure the probable duration of this period when the vital relations of humanity are disturbed profoundly.

. . .all the fundamentals of our world have been affected by the war. . .But among all these injured things is the Mind. The Mind has indeed been cruelly wounded; its complaint is heard in the hearts of intellectual men; it passes a mournful judgment on itself. It doubts itself profoundly.⁸

Between Condorcet's paean to progress and Valéry's testimony of pain, the consciousness of Europe had been altered. The self-assured confidence in the future had given way to despair and doubt; the unswerving faith

in reason had been shattered. And the sentiments voiced by Valéry were often repeated as totalitarianism descended and a new war brewed. Many Europeans believed that Western Civilization had lost its vitality and entered its decline; some, adhering to Spengler's determinism, insisted that the decline was irreversible and the fall imminent. To this day it is impossible to escape from the tremors of anxiety that have swept across the West in the twentieth century. The crisis is total, as Hans Kohn points out, for it embraces the West's "intellectual foundations, its spiritual outlook, its social order, its political forms, and its economic structure. . . . This crisis endangers the survival of that civilization which seemed so secure in the nineteenth century."⁹

The Enlightenment was the intellectual culmination of the trend towards secularism, rationalism, and individualism that had emerged with the breakup of the medieval synthesis. In an expansive view of Western history, the Enlightenment also represented a harmonizing of a Greek legacy -- a method of perceiving truth, that is reason -- a Stoic and Roman legacy -- the idea of natural law applicable to all men -- and a Judaeo-Christian legacy -- the belief in human dignity and brotherhood. In 1789 it appeared to both revolutionaries and foreign observers that a new era was dawning that promised to realize the ideals of the Enlightenment: the emancipation of the human

personality from superstition and irrational traditions, the triumph of liberty over tyranny, the refashioning of institutions in accordance with reason and justice, the tearing down of barriers to equality. It seemed that the natural rights of man, hitherto a distant ideal, would now reign on earth, terminating centuries of oppression and misery. Both the Revolution and Christianity asserted the value and dignity of each human being. But whereas Christianity viewed man as God's precious child who would devote his earthly life to achieving transcendental bliss, the Revolution focused on an earthly city inhabited by free and autonomous citizens. Both Christianity and the Revolution thought in Universalist terms. Christianity preached the brotherhood of man and opened heaven to all the faithful; the Revolution, with equal conviction, espoused a religion of humanity whose principal tenets were the equality of man under the protection of law and the preservation of inalienable rights without distinction of birth, religion, race, nationality. Never before had man displayed such confidence in the power of human intelligence to shape the conditions of his existence; never before had the future seemed so replete with hope. Reason embodied in laws, reality planned, shaped, and governed by the human intellect -- this exalted conception of human capacities, observed Hegel, thrilled the world with a spiritual enthusiasm.

Man free, rational, autonomous, dwelling in a society that actively promoted the actualization of these ideals --

this was the highest goal and central meaning of Western civilization since its inception in the Greek polis. And to those inspired by this vision, the French Revolution held the hope of fruition. For Robespierre, it promised to "fulfill the course of nature, to accomplish the destiny of mankind."¹⁰ Into the reforms of the Revolution, says Georges Lefebvre, perhaps its greatest historian, flowed "a great stream of ideas which . . . constituted a common ideal that summarized the evolution of Western civilization."¹¹

The tragedy of the Western experience is that this humanist conception, conceived in antiquity, formulated in religious terms in the Middle Ages, re-secularized and brilliantly expressed by the Enlightenment, and given recognition in the reforms of the French Revolution would, in later generations, lose its enchantment for Western man. While liberalism (in its ecumenical, not sectarian form) sought to preserve Enlightenment ideals, other forces in the nineteenth century arose to undermine this tradition, thereby engulfing the West in a spiritual crisis.

Perhaps the crisis began with the French Revolution itself which spawned total war, modern nationalism, terror as government policy, and a revolutionary mentality that sought to change the world through violence. Nevertheless, the Jacobin era saw no conscious rejection of freedom or reason. The Terror may have represented the fanaticism

of liberty but it did not glorify the irrational or aspire to crush liberty.

The romantic movement, which stressed the poetry of life while denouncing the poverty of reason, was a direct challenge to the Western tradition of rational thought. Rebelling against the intellectualism of the Enlightenment, romantics considered reason a less valid approach to life than emotions and imagination. To the romantic mind, reason was cold and dull compared to the passions that burned within the soul. Focusing on the inner man, the self, romanticists insisted that reason was inadequate to grasp man's true essence; they sought to understand man through poetry not scientific analysis. Indeed the intellect was considered an enemy of human nature. It destroyed what was genuine in man; it stifled man's spirit. The romantic mentality agreed with Wordsworth.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can....

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.¹²

Conservative theoreticians, reacting against the French Revolution, shared the romantic's hostility to the pure intellectualism of the Enlightenment.

The unsuspecting, overweening self-confidence of the eighteenth century balked at nothing, and I do not believe that it produced a single stripling of any talent who did not make three things when he left school: an educational

system, a constitution, and a world.

.....
 What shall we think of a generation which has thrown everything to the winds, including the very foundations of the structure of society, by making education exclusively scientific?¹³

In the critique of the romantics we have a principal component of the Western dilemma. Romanticism highlighted a fundamental inadequacy of the Enlightenment conception of man -- the insufficient recognition given to the non-rational side of human nature. The problem raised by Rousseau still persisted: what happens to man's sentiments, to his moral nature in a world increasingly rationalized? The philosophes sought to make intelligible not only the physical universe but also the world of man, and they did so by applying the concepts of Newtonian physics; thus man's moral and political life was governed by natural laws of cause and effect. Carried to its logical extreme this effort to interpret society according to a mechanical model reduces man to merely another object in a mathematicized and mechanized universe. His religious inclinations are dismissed as superstition, a lingering expression of a pre-rational age; his emotions are regulated by rational formulations; his imagination is channeled into avenues prescribed and proscribed by scientific methodology; his economic life, emptied of its human content, is subjected to the relentless laws of a dismal science. Building upon the thought model of the Enlightenment, nineteenth-century mechanists tried to reduce physical nature, organic processes

social life, and even spiritual experiences to mechanical principles. "The mechanistic view projects through all fields of cultural activity," says Ludwig von Bertalanffy. "The acceptance of living beings as machines, the domination of modern world by technology, and the mechanization of mankind are but the extension and practical application of the mechanistic conception of physics."¹⁴

Man cannot endure this thoroughgoing rationalization of his life, the transmutation of spirit into matter and motion which deprives him of his feelings, his attachments to community and traditions, his closeness to nature, his reverence for things sacred. Perhaps this is what de Maistre had in mind when he wrote: "if science is not uniformly relegated to a subordinate rank, incalculable evils await us. We shall become brutalized by science and that is the worst sort of brutality."¹⁵ Man rebels against this despiritualization and atomization of his person. In doing so he finds spiritual sustenance in myth which is an older legacy than Greek rationalism. In the modern West the most powerful myth to which men disheartened with reason have given their allegiance has been the myth of the national state.

Romanticism contributed to nationalism by focusing upon the nation's past, by seeing something heroic, mystical, glorious in its history and culture. "It mobilized the fascination of the past to fight against the principles

of 1789," says Hans Kohn. To the romantic mentality, "the relationship of man to state became intimate and highly personal; the state, an object of deep love and admiring devotion."¹⁶ By identifying with their people, their history, their state, romanticists could find the emotional experience for which they were yearning.

German romanticists in particular sought to find meaning in life by surrendering their souls to a higher ideal -- the greater glory of Germany. For the romantic, traditions became sacred, history holy, and the state an object of reverence.

In the first half of the nineteenth century many liberal intellectuals identified nationalism with liberty. Liberal nationalists believed that a unified state free of foreign subjugation was in harmony with the principle of natural rights and insisted that love of country led to love of humanity. "With all my ardent love of my nation," stated Frantisek Palacky, the Czech patriot, "I always esteem more highly the good of mankind and of learning than the good of the nation."¹⁷ Addressing the Slavs, Giuseppe Mazzini declared: "We who have ourselves arisen in the name of our national right, believe in your right, and offer to help you to win it. But the purpose of our mission is the permanent and peaceful organization of Europe."¹⁸ But as nationalism gained in intensity, it soon clashed with liberal ideals and few liberals hesitated to sacrifice liberal principles for nationalist goals.

During and after the Revolutions of 1848 liberals

demonstrated an increasing fascination for nationalism and the power-state and a decreasing commitment to liberalism. The link between liberalism and nationalism was completely severed in the last decades of the nineteenth century by integral nationalists who not only glorified state power but also insisted that liberalism was an obstacle to the achievement of nationalist ends. In the early part of the century, liberals had stressed the close connection between nationalism and individual freedom, considering the nationalist goal of liberation and unity to be in accord with the rights of man. In the last part of the century, integral nationalists attacked liberalism as the principal menace to national greatness, removing, in the process, all restraints imposed by liberal principles that sanctified human dignity and exalted reason. As nationalism became increasingly dissociated from liberalism, it embraced mythical modes of thought. No longer committed to liberal goals of freedom and reason, nationalists became entranced with the cult of ancestors, the cult of native soil, the cult of heroes, the cult of the leader, the cult of force, the cult of the state. In stressing communion with one's people, in creating a system of belief replete with holy commandments, gospels, holidays, martyrs, in appealing not to the intellect but to imagination and feelings, nationalism showed the tremendous influence that myth continues to exercise over man's consciousness and actions.

By the end of the nineteenth century a narrow-minded, nakedly bellicose, and absurdly racist chauvinism stalked the European continent attracting both elite and masses. Some thinkers recognized the danger as did the astute German philosopher, Friedrich Paulsen, who wrote in 1902:

A supersensitive nationalism has become a very serious danger for all the peoples of Europe; because of it they are in danger of losing the feeling for human values. Nationalism, pushed to an extreme, just like sectarianism, destroys moral and even logical consciousness. Just and unjust, good and bad, true and false, lose their meaning; what men condemn as disgraceful and inhuman when done by others they recommend in the same breath to their own people as something to be done to a foreign country.¹⁹

Romanticism was a revolt against reason in order to save the feelings from a life-denying science. Nationalism demonstrated the immense power of this non-rational side of human nature. Would the future belong to the forces of reason or would the mythic mentality, never fully subdued by reason, erupt once again and bury under its outpourings the values of the Enlightenment? In the last part of the nineteenth century the Enlightenment tradition was undermined further by Social Darwinists and a whole group of thinkers that focused on the non-rational.

While the philosophes had denied divine intervention in the operations of nature, they generally did not deny God's existence, if only because they wanted a convenient explanation for the origins of things. Thus the Christian

notion that man as God's child possessed dignity was not doubted. By contributing to "the death of God," or at least casting doubt upon the belief that man is God's unique creation, Darwinism, for many, stripped man of his self-respect. Together with our full understanding of the Copernican Revolution, the Darwinian Revolution has undermined man's sense of security. How could this universe in which Earth is only a cosmic speck spinning about in an infinity of space for what seems an eternity of time have been created just for man? Why should man, a descendant of lower animals, an accidental by-product of impersonal and unguided forces that have been operating for hundreds of millions of years, think that he is the wanted child of a heavenly father? And social theorists, applying Darwin's theory to human relations, further undermined human dignity. In the view of these Social Darwinists, some peoples were less human than others and struggle between individuals, races and nations was a law of nature. It seemed as if the discoveries of rational science had divested man of his soul, leaving him just one of the many creatures that inhabit the earth. Not only man's physical being but also his social world was regulated by iron laws of necessity. This depersonalization of man would make the concentration camp intellectually justifiable and morally acceptable.

And man's vaunted reason was also called into question. In the decade of the 1890's, social theorists penetrating the world below the level of consciousness rejected as naive

the Enlightenment's view of man as self-consciously rational and morally autonomous. These intellectuals, says H. Stuart Hughes, "obsessed, almost intoxicated with a rediscovery of the nonlogical, the uncivilized the inexplicable,"²⁰ concluded that man's freedom was limited by sociological and psychological necessity; his behavior was influenced more by non-rational considerations than by logical consciousness. The Lockean view of the mind as a tabula rasa was dismissed as simplistic along with its corollary that a proper environment will make man virtuous. Some intellectuals sought to comprehend with reason these below the surface determinants of human behavior; they tried to redefine man in order to give recognition to the irrational side of his nature, thereby rescuing reason from being overwhelmed by these mysterious and dangerous forces. Others celebrated the irrational, glorifying the instinctual life over the development of rational faculties. The general effect of their work was to encourage an attitude of anti-intellectualism, a major precondition for the emergence of totalitarianism.

In the late nineteenth century most Westerners were unaware of the challenge to the liberal-humanist tradition presented by chauvinism, Social Darwinism, and the diminishing faith in reason expressed by social theorists. For the comfortable middle class the fin de siècle was an

age of contentment; the triumph of liberalism seemed incontrovertible and irreversible. Advances in science and technology, the spread of representative government, improvements in the standard of living, and an absence of general wars seemed to confirm the Enlightenment's trust in reason and progress. Most Europeans shared the view of American anthropologist Lewis Morgan: "Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence, and knowledge are steadily tending."²¹ Beneath the facade of progress, however, the lamps of Europe which went out in 1914, were already beginning to flicker.

After World War I the values of freedom and reason as formulated by the philosophes came under heavy attack and the crisis deepened. In the long view of Western Civilization, totalitarianism stands as the summation of the anti-liberal and anti-rational tendencies of earlier generations; it was in intent a deliberate rejection of the core values of the West. Hitler understood his world historical role far better than did his adversaries:

To the Christian doctrine of the infinite significance of the individual human soul and of personal responsibility, I oppose with icy clarity the saving doctrine of the nothingness and insignificance of the individual human being, and of his continued existence in the visible immortality of the nation.

.....
 Providence has ordained that I should be the

greatest liberator of humanity. I am freeing man from the restraints of an intelligence that has taken charge; from the dirty and degrading self-mortification of a chimera called conscience and morality and from the demands of a freedom and personal independence which only a very few could bear.²²

Hitler intuitively grasped the problem of the West: man finds the methodology of science life-denying and political freedom burdensome. For a human spirit desperate for stimulants that would revitalize, Hitler offered man's oldest elixir -- myth. Reason was employed to create myths and to ensure their success. This evil genius would utilize the West's finest achievement, reason, not to liberate but to enslave. The irony and tragedy of reason was complete; it had shaped a mythical world-view that became the centerpiece of existence.

A spiritually rootless bourgeois world, enthralled by heroes and yearning for new faiths that would ennoble their lives and liberate their souls from the chaos of a multiplicity of opinions, rejoiced in fascism's authoritarianism and its displays of strength and solidarity. Desperate to join the ranks of supermen, they transformed themselves into sub-men; longing for certainty, for a non-intellectual understanding of life, they embraced an ideology that sought to root out forever the Western ideals of freedom and reason.

Whereas the Enlightenment sought the rule of law, totalitarian ideologies preached and practiced political lawlessness and violence. There could be no accommodation

with racial or class enemies; they had to be liquidated. Whereas the Enlightenment saw war as a sickness that could be cured by doses of reason, Hitler taught a crude form of Social Darwinism. After World War I, it seemed that violence was a law of nature, a normal expression of human instincts, a recurring phenomena in history. Totalitarianism offered the mob the excitement of violence and the fascination of great power and great evil. "Terrorism had become a kind of philosophy through which to express frustration, resentment, and blind hatred, a kind of political expressionism which used bombs to express oneself, which watched delightedly the publicity given to a resounding deed,"²³ says Hannah Arendt.

Doctrines of violence and the methods of terror cheapened human life whose value had already been diminished by the mechanistic philosophies, impersonal factory system, a tremendous rise in population, and the astronomical but cold fatality figures of the Great War. The superfluosity of the individual, characteristic of ancient oriental despotisms, had seemingly vanquished the Greek and Christian heritage of individual worth. The Enlightenment valued the dignity of the individual and sought to protect man from tyrannical government; totalitarianism denied individual liberty and asserted the primacy of the state, race, the class, the leader, history. The degradation of the individual epitomized in mass exterminations would have seemed incomprehensible to nineteenth-century liberals

reared in the values of the Enlightenment.

Both Hitlerism and Stalinism represented a renunciation of the tradition of scientific objectivity. Hitler glorified the will and intuition over the intellect; both dictators dispensed with objective truth and required the mind to obey official falsehood. A revolution had occurred in the Greek polis when man became aware of the power of mind; a world of myth gave way to the rational analysis of nature and society. Under totalitarianism a distorted and corrupted reason manufactured myths, dressed them in scientific terms, and spread them to the masses. Reason had become a tool for myth-making, a slave of its own creations. The circle was closed; the mind had again come under the domination of myth.

The concentration camp was the final working out of a mechanistic view of man and society; it was also the terrible fulfillment of the mythical world-view of Hitlerism. Reason, divorced from values and employed in the service of myth, stripped man of his uniqueness, of his spiritual qualities; it created a laboratory world of soulless technocrats and dehumanized victims; it forged assembly lines for murder and fashioned an attitude of mind that killed without conscience; it relegated man to the world of things.

For the politically indifferent, excitable, and impatient masses, for whom reasoned debate, government by

law, and protection of rights were unappealing abstractions, totalitarianism offered the hope of immediate solutions and the comfort of definite beliefs. While totalitarianism sought to negate democratic values, its triumph was made possible, in part, by the instruments of democracy -- political parties, elections, universal suffrage.

. . . the totalitarian regimes . . . and the totalitarian leaders . . . 'command and rest upon mass support' up to the end. Hitler's rise to power was legal in terms of majority rule and neither he nor Stalin could have maintained the leadership of large populations, survived many . . . crises . . . if they had not had the confidence of the masses.

.....
The totalitarian movements aim at and succeed in organizing masses -- not classes.

.....
Totalitarian movements are possible wherever there are masses who for one reason or another have acquired²⁴ the appetite for political organization.

Nor were intellectuals immune from mass attitudes. Alienated intellectuals, "the armed bohemians to whom war is home and civil war fatherland"²⁵ hungered for a cause worthy of their idealism and unqualified devotion. It is not surprising that an alienated élite, already dizzy from the anti-intellectualism and philosophies of action of previous decades, would be enticed by Nazi dynamism. "The members of the élite," concludes Arendt, "did not object at all to paying a price, the destruction of civilization, for the fun of seeing how those who had been excluded unjustly in the past forced their way into it. . . . The temporary allegiance between the elite and

the mob rested largely on the genuine delight with which the former watched the latter destroy respectability." ²⁶ Others could not tolerate the values of bourgeois society. Previously, they had welcomed World War I as a great escape from the boredom and hypocrisy of middle class life. The war gave them an opportunity to participate in a great event, to make a heroic sacrifice. In the post-war era, they threw themselves into another exhilarating struggle. Some intellectuals had an irrational wish to submerge themselves in a movement that would destroy their individuality. They felt as Bakunin had once stated: "I do not want to be I, I want to be We."²⁷ Somehow the whole man, the genuine man, would emerge from the denial of the intellect, the fusion of private life with the party, and rejection of the ideal of liberty. For the pleasure and security of becoming a true believer, many intellectuals deliberately sacrificed the Western legacy of freedom and reason. This was their treason.

Totalitarianism brought into stark relief the immense power and fury of the irrational; it humbled the liberal, making him permanently conscious of the limitations of reason and the fragility of freedom. It revealed the enduring power of myth which was man's first way of viewing the world. Like primitive man, twentieth century true believers in political myths have sought to overcome fears and doubt, give coherence to their feelings, and find clarifying principles with which to

frame their experiences. In his political behavior, twentieth-century man has demonstrated those illusions, fantasies, and deep emotional longings that have characterized the myth-making mentality since the dawn of man. Myth is a style of apprehending and believing that reason has never fully subdued. Particularly in times of stress, men have abandoned rational thought with its taxing demands for rigorous logic and objective truth and have reverted to myths whose simple explanations and simple solutions alleviate the anxieties and overcome the doubts of tormented souls. In the twentieth century, myths have taken a new form; political myths are not just the free play of the imagination, but as Ernst Cassirer points out, "are artificial things fabricated by very skillful and cunning artists."²⁸ Twentieth-century myths of the class, the race, the state, the leader, the party, are all expressions of a perennial irrationality in human behavior, of an elementary layer of human existence that logos will never obliterate. They remind us that civilized man is never far removed from the attitudes of primitive man. Concludes Cassirer:

In politics we are always living on volcanic soil. We must be prepared for abrupt convulsions and eruptions. In all critical moments of man's social life, the rational forces that resist the rise of old mythical conceptions are no longer sure of themselves. In these moments the time for myth has come again. For myth has not really been vanquished and subjugated. It is always there, lurking in the dark and waiting for its hour and opportunity. This hour comes as soon as the other binding forces of man's social life, for one reason or another, lose their strength and are no longer able to

combat the demonic mythical powers.²⁹

The crisis of the West then stems from the dissolution of Enlightenment certainties. In the Middle Ages, God was at the intellectual center of the West. By the Enlightenment the integrating principles were Nature, Reason and Freedom. Nature was viewed as an harmonious machine governed by laws accessible to the mind and reducible to mathematical equations. Through the instruments of reason, man could reform his society, not haphazardly, but according to those natural laws that also govern the social sphere. The philosophes attributed evil not to human nature, to any original sin, but to society which corrupted man's essential goodness. Freedom was man's birthright which would be reclaimed and cherished once superstition and tyranny were eliminated. While not all the philosophes shared Condorcet's faith in linear progress, the general mood of the century was that of triumph over the past and hope for the future.

Whereas the philosophes possessed beliefs whose certainty seemed self-evident, the twentieth century knows only doubt and confusion. Ideas of justice and goodness no longer rest on any firm foundation, on normative principles to which most assent; they no longer are linked to the natural order of nature or nature's God, but are regarded as expressions of one's economic class, psychic state, or historical circumstances.

Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are regarded as great prophets because they stressed the subjectivity of truth, an attitude that has become pervasive in the twentieth century. Man's conception of himself has also become problematic. "We have a scientific, a philosophical, and theological anthropology that know nothing of each other," wrote Max Scheler in 1928. "Therefore we no longer possess any clear and consistent idea of man. The ever-growing multiplicity of the particular sciences that are engaged in the study of men has much more confused and obscured than elucidated our concept of man."³⁰ With increased specialization and burgeoning of technical terminology, scholarship has become a Tower of Babel; in contrast to the Enlightenment, man is now hopelessly confused about who he is.

Even our view of the outer world has been transformed. Classical physics assumed that the universe existed outside of man and operated with machine-like precision and regularity. Modern physics teaches us that there is no motionless, absolute fixed frame of reference anywhere in the universe, that in the small-scale world of electrons the laws of cause and effect do not apply, that certainty is not in the nature of things, that man's position in space and time determines what he means by reality. To describe the new model of the universe that has replaced the Newtonian world-machine, scientists speak of probability, indeterminacy, relativity, chance, mystery.

The unity of outlook characteristic of the Enlightenment has been shattered. We have lost our spiritual center; anarchy and fragmentation pervade our intellectual life. Cast adrift from our intellectual and spiritual moorings, we have floundered in a sea of uncertainty unable to drop anchor. Arendt concludes:

Whether we like it or not, we have long ceased to live in a world in which the faith in the Judaeo-Christian myth of creation is secure enough to constitute a basis and source of authority for actual laws, and we certainly no longer believe, as the great men of the French Revolution did, in a universal cosmos of which man was a part and whose natural laws he had to imitate and conform to

Our new difficulty is that we start from fundamental distrust of everything merely given, a distrust of all laws and prescriptions, moral or social, that are deduced from a given, comprehensive, universal whole.³¹

And when man loses both his faith in God and his confidence in reason,

Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.³²

Since the Enlightenment, man's comprehension of himself has been altered. We can no longer define man exclusively in terms of his ability to reason as did Descartes in his famous dictum: "I think, therefore I am." Our art, literature, psychology, political behavior all highlight a mysterious underworld of seething passions. The intellect is not autonomous, self-regulating, the master of our persons; more often than not it is subject

to the relentless demands of the unconscious. Dispensing with the doctrine of original sin, the philosophes had stressed man's innate goodness and attributed evil to a faulty education and wicked institutions. Now we cannot escape from the feeling that man's propensity for good, his capacity to improve his society, his potential for happiness are severely limited by an inherent irrationality, that civilization itself is threatened by our instinctual needs, as Freud noted:

The element of truth behind all this, which people are so ready to disavow, is that men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved and who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked, they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness. As a result, their neighbor is for them not only a potential helper or sexual object, but, also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him. Homo homini lupus... In consequence of this primary mutual hostility of human beings, civilized society is perpetually threatened with disintegration.³³

And yet to deny the instinctual, to thwart the non-rational side of our nature, may lead, as Freud tells us, to psychic distress, or to a stifling of our creative capacities, as Nietzsche proclaimed, or even to a blunting of our moral sentiments, as Rousseau warned. We cannot have society without reason and yet man cannot live by reason alone. Can man provide for intuition, feelings, without undermining the rationality

upon which civilization depends? The philosophes were largely untroubled by this awesome problem.

Along with diminishing confidence in reason the twentieth century has seen a loss of faith in man's capacity to preserve freedom. Even more distressing we wonder whether the average person desires political freedom or knows what to do with it. In 1939 John Dewey reflected on this dilemma.

Does freedom in itself and in the things it brings with it seem as important as security of livelihood; as food, shelter, clothing, or even having a good time? . . . How do the fruits of liberty compare with the enjoyments that spring from a feeling of union, of solidarity, with others? Will men surrender their liberties if they believe that in doing so they will obtain the satisfaction that comes from a sense of fusion with others and that respect by others which is the product of strength furnished by solidarity.³⁴

The paradox of freedom, compellingly stated in Dostoevski's fable, The Grand Inquisitor, continues to thwart the best laid plans of liberals.

I tell Thee that man is tormented by no greater anxiety than to find someone quickly to whom he can hand over the gift of freedom with which the ill-fated creature is born. . . . Didst Thou forget that man prefers peace, and even death, to freedom of choice in the knowledge of good and evil? Nothing is more seductive for man than his freedom of conscience, but nothing is a greater cause of suffering. . . . Instead of taking possession of man's freedom, Thou didst increase it, and burdened the spiritual kingdom of mankind with its suffering forever. . . . But didst Thou not know he would at last reject even Thy image and Thy truth, if he is weighed down with the fearful burden of free choice.'

 We have corrected Thy work and have founded it

upon miracle, mystery and authority. And men rejoiced that they were again led like sheep, and that the terrible gift that had brought them such suffering was, at last, lifted from their hearts.³⁵

The participation of the masses in politics has given some credence to this view that men seek to "escape from freedom." Certainly the expectations of nineteenth-century democrats who believed in the goodness of man and educating for freedom have not been fulfilled. The assumptions on which democracy rests -- man's basic decency and rationality and his desire for liberty -- can no longer be uncritically accepted. The following observation of Freud shows that Plato's criticism of democracy still applies:

It is just as impossible to do without control of the mass by a minority as it is to dispense with coercion in the work of civilization. For masses are lazy and unintelligent; they have no love for instinctual renunciation and they are not to be convinced by argument of its inevitability; and the individuals. . . support one another in giving free reign to their indiscipline. It is only through the influence of individuals who can set an example and whom masses recognize as their leaders, that they can be induced to perform the work and undergo the renunciation on which the existence of civilization depends. All is well if these leaders are persons who possess superior insight into the necessities of life and who have risen to the height of mastering their own instinctual wishes.³⁶

The crisis of our civilization is the distressing awareness that reason and freedom are forever threatened by mythical patterns of thought and behavior, that the instruments of reason that have expanded man's knowledge of the universe and given him mastery over nature operate

only partially in political and social life, that "the postulate of objectivity has conquered its place in ... men's practice but not in their hearts."³⁷ It is the feeling that civilization is fighting an unending and, at times, seemingly hopeless battle against the dark forces of the irrational. It is the comprehension that reason has not learned how to provide for the non-rational. To crush it by total ratiocination is to deny a fundamental component of human nature to which man cannot submit; to give it full play is to regress into a world of myth in which civilization cannot survive. It is the awareness that the creations of reason -- bureaucracies and technology -- can deprive man of his humanity, threaten his sanity, and cause his self-extinction. It is the fear that in exchanging the immediacy of natural existence for an artificial world of imagined needs we have become estranged from ourselves. It is the recognition that belief in the perfectibility of man and linear progress is only an expression of naive optimism. It is the knowledge that our civilization too is mortal. In short, it is the destruction of the world-view of the philosophes and their vision of the future.

Some intellectuals, recognizing the enormity of the crisis, asserted the need to recreate freedom constantly and to salvage reason by enlarging our knowledge of the irrational so that it can be controlled; others expressed the loss of confidence in the Western heritage by adopting political myths and social forms that exalted elemental

forces with human nature. Still others proclaimed that everything is absurd; there is no meaning, only nothingness. And there were those who insisted that only by returning to a divine center could Western man overcome his spiritual malaise. This was the position of Arnold Toynbee.

FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER II

HISTORIAN WITH A MISSION

Teynbee was born in 1889 to a middle-class family. His interest in history was prompted by his mother, who was an historian, and by a great-uncle, a sea captain, whose stories about voyages to the East excited the young Teynbee. Teynbee attended boarding school at Winchester, where he cultivated "the classics with an almost demonic fervor,"¹ entered Oxford in 1907, and, after completing his studies, received a fellowship to teach ancient history at his college, Balliol.

One benefit that Teynbee derived from his classical education "is a life-long conviction that human affairs do not become intelligible until they are seen as a whole, and a consequent life-long effort that I have made to arrive at a comprehensive view of human affairs."² Teynbee insists that the historian must be more than a specialist who divides human affairs into numerous and minute morsels. As a humanist student of the classics he learned to see the world of antiquity as an organic unity. "The languages, literature, visual arts, religion, politics, economics, and history of the Classical World are not so many separate 'subjects', insulated from each other in thought-tight compartments; they are facets of a unitary way of life, and neither this nor they can be seen properly unless the parts are seen synoptically as contributions to the whole."³ In numerous other ways, Teynbee's study of antiquity affected

his historical consciousness. It gave him a model by which to compare the rise, growth, breakdown, and disintegration of civilizations and made him aware that his own civilization is mortal.

Toynbee's original interest in history derived from curiosity; in August 1914 he acquired a more compelling reason to study history. Once the "rational, orderly, and peaceful world" ⁴ in which he had matured and expected to live out his life came to an end, he awakened to the true lessons of classical civilization. He now believed that Gibbon was wrong in holding that the West could not suffer the same fate as the Roman Empire.

I had continued to concur in Gibbon's judgment till, in the first days of August, 1914, the disaster, unforeseen by me, into which my own world was now rushing, suddenly opened my eyes to the truth. The illumination had caught me in a flash; my illusion that I was the privileged citizen of a stable world had been shattered by a thunderbolt. Since that moment I have seen the world with different eyes and have found that it is not the kind of world that, until then, I had naively imagined it to be.⁵

It was also the shock of the Great War that gave Toynbee the inspiration to study history comparatively.

In August, 1914 it flashed on my mind that the fifth-century B.C. historian Thucydides had already the experience that was now overtaking me....He, like me, had been overtaken by a fratricidal great war between the states into which his world had been divided politically. Thucydides had foreseen that his generation's great war would be epoch-making for his world, and the sequel had proved him right. I now saw that classical Greek history and modern Western history, were, in terms

of experience, contemporary with each other. Their courses ran parallel. They could be studied comparatively. I soon also came to see that Greek history and Western history were two specimens of a species which had a number of other representatives. I counted up to at least thirty-one, besides a few that were abortive.⁶

And it was the war that gave him a sense of mission. Not called upon to serve because of dysentery, Teynbee would always regard himself as a fortunate survivor of a conflict that took the lives of about half of his classmates. Their deaths would always grieve him; as a survivor he would always feel that his remaining years of life were a gift that must be used in the service of humanity. "The longer I live, the greater grows my grief and indignation at the wicked cutting-short of all those lives. I do not want my grandchildren and great-grandchildren to have the same fate. The writing of this book has been one of my responses to the challenge that has been presented to me by the senseless criminality of human affairs."⁷ Teynbee viewed World War I as a watershed for the West; it was also the turning point in his own life.

Teynbee began work on A Study of History in 1921. Volumes I-III were published in 1934, volumes IV-VI in 1939, volumes VII-X in 1954, volume XI, an historical atlas and gazetteer, in 1959, and volume XII, a reconsideration of his theories and a discussion of the views of his critics, in 1961. Remarkably, from 1924 to 1956 Teynbee also produced an annual survey of international affairs for the

Royal Institute of International Affairs.

While we do not attempt a systematic analysis or critique of Toynbee's philosophy of history, three facets of his historiography seem significant for an understanding of his interpretation of the crisis of Western Civilization: (1) a rejection of national histories in favor of studying whole civilizations; (2) a belief that there are patterns to history; (3) a religious orientation.

In searching for an intelligible field of historical study, Toynbee rejects national histories as too parochial. In order to comprehend major developments in English history, for example, it is necessary "to extend the field of vision across the whole horizon of modern Western history."⁸ In studying history, "we have to think in terms of the whole and not of the parts; to see the chapters of the story as events in the life of the society and not of some particular member; and to follow the fortunes of the members, not separately but concurrently, as variations of a single theme or as contributions to an orchestra which are significant as a harmony but have no meaning as so many separate series of notes."⁹ A society or civilization, then, is Toynbee's intelligible field of history; ultimately the boundaries of his investigation encompass all the world's

civilizations, surviving and extinct. Toynbee's decision to make a comprehensive study of human affairs stirs his historical imagination and accords with his Christian - humanist temperament:

In a world that has been unified in both space and time, a study of human affairs must be comprehensive, if it is to be effective. It must include, not only the whole of the living generation, but also the whole of the living generation's past. In order to save mankind we have to learn to live together in concord in spite of traditional differences of religion, civilization, nationality, class, and race. In order to live together in concord successfully, we have to know each other, and knowing each other includes knowing each other's past. . . . Historical forces can be more explosive than atom bombs. . . . We must learn to recognize, and, as far as possible, to understand, the different cultural configurations in which our common human nature has expressed itself in the different religions, civilizations, and nationalities into which human culture has come to be articulated in the course of its history. . . .

We shall, however, have to do more than just understand each other's cultural heritages. . . . We shall have to value them and love them as being parts of mankind's common treasure. . . . Without the fire of love, the dangerous fissures in mankind's social solidarity cannot be annealed.¹⁰

By stressing national histories and by assuming the cultural superiority of the West to all other civilizations, asserts Toynbee, Western historians have been guilty of self-centeredness, which is both a sin and an intellectual error. Now that the world is becoming unified as a result of the outpouring of Western ideas and institutions, it is the responsibility of historians to think globally and to take a synoptic view of history. The history of the West has become a vital part of the

history of a rapidly Westernizing non-Western world.

Similarly, the past histories of non-Westerners

are going to become a part of our Western past history in a future world which will be neither Western nor non-Western but will inherit all the cultures which we Westerners have now brewed together in a single crucible. . . . Our own descendants are not going to be just Western like ourselves. They are going to be heirs of Confucious and Lao-Tse as well as Socrates, Plato, and Plotinus; heirs of Gautama Buddha as well as Deutero-Isaiah and Jesus Christ; heirs of Zarathustra and Muhammad as well as Elijah and Elisha and Peter and Paul; . . . and heirs (if still wallowing in the Serbonian Bog of politics) of Lenin and Gandhi and Sun Yat-sen as well as Cromwell and George Washington and Mazzini.¹¹

Toynbee hopes that his universal history will contribute to the world-mindedness which he considers a precondition for man's self-preservation: "Mankind must become one family or destroy itself."¹²

Toynbee insists that man must search for meaning in history. History must be more than fact-finding; the historian must be motivated by more than just an antiquarian interest in the past. History is not a tale "full of sound and fury signifying nothing." The empirical facts of history allow the human psyche, in a Bergsonian sense to feel life, and to feel it as a whole; they illuminate the present and aid us to face the future more wisely.

Toynbee believes that a study of history reveals "a certain amount of pattern in the shape of regularities and uniformities and recurrences."¹³ To deny that there are patterns to human experience or to refuse to search for

them is ludicrous, says Toynbee. The human psyche cannot view things without imposing some order without giving them some form. We do this whether we admit to it or not. Our assumptions show through our "objective" efforts. The historian must synthesize, must try for a unity of vision.

While maintaining that there are patterns to the past, Toynbee rejects determinism. He does not hold that past occurrences were inevitable or that out of necessity the patterns of the past will repeat themselves in the future. Toynbee first read Spengler's Decline of the West in 1920. He approved of Spengler's inquiring into the histories of whole societies, instead of national states, and of his comparative approach to the study of civilizations. He also has employed Spengler's thesis that there are patterns to the growth and decay of civilizations. What he disliked about Spengler was his determinism, his "arbitrary fiat," his dogmatic insistence that "civilization arose, developed, declined, and foundered in unvarying conformity with a fixed timetable."¹⁴ Unlike Spengler, Toynbee believes that despite our knowledge of the past we cannot predict with any certainty the course of history; human affairs are amenable to regularities, but these "laws" are not inexorable.

Toynbee's rejection of determinism has important implications for his philosophy of history in general and his comprehension of the crisis of the West in particular.

The repetitive element in history does not make man a slave to fate but provides him with "an instrument for freedom of creative action;"¹⁵ to a large extent man can shape his own destiny. For Spengler, civilizations are organic bodies that are destroyed by necessity; rejecting the organic model, Toynbee attributes decline to man's sinfulness which he has the capacity to remedy. While every living generation "starts life as a prisoner of the past. . . . The prisoner is not helpless; he has it in his power to break the fetters of inherited custom; but he can break them only by a mighty effort, and he can never break them all. Human freedom is not illusory, but it is never total."¹⁶

If there are patterns to history, it follows that we can learn from past experiences, but like stiff-necked and impulsive children unwilling to profit from the experience of their parents "we have usually proved not to be rational enough to profit by other peoples experience to anything like the extent that our records of this past experience put within our power. . . .In our collective behavior we are all prone as young people to ignore the lessons of past experience."¹⁷ Yet statesmen and nations have acted wisely on the basis of a rational reading of history. Recent examples have been the willingness of Japan and Germany to recognize the meaning of World War II and thereby to break with earlier policies of militarism and imperialism.

Toynbee writes history didactically; he believes that from his study of the past he has gained certain insights into the human condition that can assist a foundering humanity today. "My study of the World will have been barren and irresponsible if it has not equipped me and spurred me to do what I can -- infinitesimal though the effect of my action may be -- to help mankind to cure itself of some of the evil that, in my lifetime, I have seen human beings inflict on each other."¹⁸ While historical precedents are not scientific blueprints, Toynbee believes that they allow us to understand better and to cope more successfully with our problems.

For Toynbee there is a religious meaning behind the facts of history and this is why he has

an overwhelmingly strong impulse to spend my time and ability and my energy on the study of history I study history because, for me, this happens to be the avenue along which I can best find my way to communion with the ultimate reality. . . . For me, the study of history would be meaningless if it did not have an ultimately religious significance and religious goal, and the motive that moves me has been, I believe, the motive for studying history that has inspired the historians of the past. I hope that it will be again the motive for the historians of the future.¹⁹

The vocation of historian, Toynbee regards as "a call from God to feel after Him and find Him. . . .History (is) a vision -- dim and partial -- of God revealing Himself in actions to souls that were sincerely seeking Him."²⁰ History leads us to "a revelation of God and a hope of communion with Him."²¹ Toynbee believes that his craft

is "ultimately a quest for the vision of God at work in History."²² The facts of history, he maintains, are "clues to the nature and meaning of the mysterious Universe in which every human being wakes to consciousness. We wish to understand the Universe and our place in it.... The spiritual reality behind the phenomena is, I believe, the ultimate objective of all curiosity."²³ This religious orientation permeates Toynbee's historical consciousness; ultimately his definition and analysis of the crisis of the West is expressed in religious terms.

Toynbee's view of history derives, in part, from the ancient Hebrew conception, inherited by Christianity, that God's hand operates in the world to punish man for his sins, that history serves a moral purpose and contains a moral lesson. "While civilizations rise and fall and, in falling give rise to others, some purposeful enterprise, higher than theirs may all the time be making headway, and in a divine plan, the learning that comes through the suffering caused by the failures of civilizations may be the sovereign means of progress."²⁴ Thus Toynbee shares the Judaeo-Christian view that history has value for man for it is replete with spiritual meaning.

The three features of Toynbee's philosophy of history that we have chosen to highlight are crucial for an understanding of Toynbee's interpretation of the crisis of Western Civilization. The rejection of national histories in preference to a comprehensive and comparative study of

civilizations reveals Toynbee as a critic of parochial-mindedness and an advocate of ecumenicalism and internationalism. Regarding Western man's idolization of the nation state as a principal cause of the spiritual crisis confronting the West, he urges the creation of a world-state as a necessary means of abolishing war. By eschewing specialization in preference to a panoramic view, Toynbee's Study remains vulnerable to criticism by historians who have mastered small segments of history and can detect factual errors which an enterprise of this scope must contain. Nevertheless, this does not disqualify the Study from serious consideration, for its true importance is that it challenges historians to think critically and conceptually about broad themes in history, about rhythms and patterns in human affairs, about the meaning of history, the eternal significance of religion, the prospects of man -- questions which twentieth-century students of history have tended to consider as beyond their competence or province. From the vantage point of a Toynbee-like universal history, says William H. McNeil,

New insights may arise with breadth of view; fallible and never completely provable perhaps, yet enormously stimulating to exact and careful study which may find new questions to ask of familiar data in the light of general ideas generated by men like Toynbee. No multiplication of specialisms or narrowing down of fields of history in the interest of more perfect accuracy can by itself hope to achieve such an enrichment of our understanding of man's past. Interaction between large views, bold hypothesis, fallible intuitions, and exact, detailed scholarship is what we need. If we concentrate upon the latter alone, by drawing ever closer to the facts and seeing details ever more completely, we may blind ourselves to other

aspects of reality.²⁵

Secondly, by asserting that there are patterns to history while repudiating determinism, Toynbee can underscore the failures of past civilizations and his own Western Civilization at the same time that he allows contemporary man the freedom to shape his own future. For Toynbee history is more than just an endless and meaningless cyclical rise and fall of civilizations revealing human weaknesses and excesses. From suffering man acquires understanding. Thus from the anguish of disintegrating civilizations there emerged higher religions; a spiritual advance was attained at the painful price of a collapse of a civilization. History is a progressive series by which man ascends in stages and with suffering to communion with God. In seeing civilizations rise and fall, in comparable rhythms and patterns, Toynbee remains a Hellenist; in regarding history as a gradual and painful revelation of God's way to man, he remains a Christian.

Thirdly, by embracing the spiritual values of higher religions, Toynbee believes that the West and a Westernizing world may heal the maladies that threaten to annihilate mankind. Religion can rescue the human personality from reason's ruthless drive to rationalize all of life; it is man's finest way of expressing his inner self.

And pervading Toynbee's works is a sense of mission. He feels that all creative effort is ultimately barren if it does not enhance man's spiritual and social development, if it does not promote harmony and eliminate discord. For

him the "ultimate purpose of life is not study but action."²⁶ While Toynbee denies all pretensions to playing the role of prophet, he believes that in a world struggling for survival, he has a religious obligation to make a contribution, however modest, to an understanding of the nature of the crisis that has afflicted the West and now the entire globe and to offer remedies. Toynbee's religious orientation leads him to embrace universalism; as God is one so too should there be the unity of mankind. In his expansive view of history, mankind "is one family; it always has been one family in the making."²⁷ The teachings of the prophets of higher religions make man conscious of this truth; this is a principal reason why religion occupies a central position in his thought. It is for Toynbee the key for comprehending and coping with the crisis of the West and a Westernizing world.

FOOTNOTES

1. Toynbee, Experiences, p. 14.
2. Ibid., p. 108.
3. Ibid.
4. Arnold J. Toynbee, A Study of History, revised, abridged, illustrated one-volume edition (New York: Oxford University Press & American Heritage Press, 1972), p. 11. Hereafter referred to as Study, one-volume edition.
5. Experiences, p. 202.
6. Study, one-volume edition, p. 11.
7. Ibid.
8. Study, 1:20.
9. Ibid., p. 23.
10. Study, 12: 138-40.
11. Arnold J. Toynbee, Civilization on Trial (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948; reprint edition, published together with The World and the West, Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1958), pp. 85-6.
12. Arnold J. Toynbee, A Study of History, What the Book is For: How the Book Took Shape, pamphlet written on the completion of volume 10 of the Study (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), in Montagu, ed., Toynbee and History, p. 11.
13. Arnold J. Toynbee, Surviving the Future (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 73.
14. Civilization on Trial, p. 20.
15. Ibid., p. 44.
16. Experiences, p. 84.
17. Surviving the Future, pp. 74-5.
18. Experiences, p. 81.
19. Surviving the Future, pp. 57-8.
20. Study, 10:1.

21. Ibid., p. 116.
22. Ibid., p. 42.
23. Experiences, p. 90.
24. Civilization on Trial, p. 25.
25. William H. McNeill, "Some Basic Assumptions of Toynbee's A Study of History," in Edward T. Gargan, ed., The Intent of Toynbee's History: A Cooperative Appraisal (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1961), pp. 31-2.
26. Experiences, p. 81.
27. Toynbee, What the Book is For, in Montagu, ed., Toynbee and History, p. 11.

CHAPTER III

HELLENISM: THE FAILURE OF 'MAN-WORSHIP'

Toynbee's interpretation of the crisis of Western civilization is derived to a large extent from his understanding of classical antiquity. Indeed, Toynbee himself recognizes that the conceptual framework that he uses to compare all the world's civilizations, living and dead, is "constructed from the pattern of Hellenic history and the pattern of its relations with the histories of Christianity and after Western Civilization."¹ In Toynbee's view, modern Western Civilization, coming after a Christian Western Civilization, is a revival of the secular humanism of the ancient Greeks and suffers from the same defect -- an overvaluing and worshipping of man's creations.

For Toynbee Hellenism emerged in the second millennium B.C. and collapsed in the seventh century A.D. During this period Hellenism preserved its identity and attracted converts, the most important of whom were the Romans. The principal feature of Hellenism in its early stage was the city-state and its accompanying humanism, best represented in the celebrated dictum of Protagoras: "Man is the measure of all things." Toynbee views Greek humanism as "the most whole-hearted and uncompromising practice of man-worship that is on record up to date."² And it is precisely this glorification of man and his works that lead to Hellenism's breakdown and disintegration.

Before dealing directly with Toynbee's comprehension of Hellenism, it is necessary first to examine a concept central to his diagnosis of civilizations -- challenge-and-response. It was a successful response to the challenges posed by the environment that enabled civilization to emerge and it is a series of creative responses to ever new challenges that enable it to grow. For most of human history man lived in primitive societies in which the younger generation acquired its attitudes and ideas by imitating its dead ancestors "who stand, unseen but not unfelt, at the back of the living elders, reinforcing their power and enhancing their prestige. In a society where mimesis is thus directed backwards towards the past, custom rules and society remains static."³ The breakthrough to civilization came when creative personalities broke 'the cake of custom' and attracted the mimesis of the uncreative majority.

The impulse that gave rise to civilization stemmed neither from any special quality of race or from a favorable environment, but from a creative response to a challenge. The founders of Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations were heroic pioneers who "plunged into the jungle-swamps of the valley-bottoms, never before penetrated by Man"⁴ and made marsh lands give way to irrigation works, fields, and cities.

In challenge-and-response Toynbee has a plausible explanation to account for the rise, growth and decline of

civilization. In accounting for the origin of civilization Toynbee stresses not the environment in and of itself but the "human heroism" that enables man to transform the environment for his own benefit. In the Nile Valley man had to clear jungles and drain swamps before he could plant; the wantonness and formlessness of nature had to be subdued and ordered by man before civilization could arise. This point is central to Toynbee's analysis of civilizations. Man's great achievements stem from creative acts of the human spirit; conversely, spiritual and psychological defects ultimately underlie a civilization's decline. Hence, we shall see, the essential problem confronting the West is not material but spiritual.

Toynbee interprets classical antiquity in the light of the theory of challenge-and-response. The city-state represented a creative response to the challenge of anarchy that burdened Hellenic society in its formative stage, the Dark Age that followed on the ruins of Minoan-Mycenaean civilization. Formed by the union of a number of smaller communities, the city-state provided its inhabitants with a viable political unity that brought security during an age of disorder. By engaging in colonization when threatened by overpopulation and food shortages, the city-states again responded successfully to a challenge. In addition to enabling the Greeks to overcome the problems of anarchy and stringency, the city-states also stimulated cultural creativity. For these reasons the Greeks glorified their city-states, regarding them as more worthy of devotion than the

Olympian gods. "But," asks Toynbee, "did a local political community whose hand was against its neighbors, and whose neighbors' hand was against it, fully deserve the amount of devotion that it demanded and exacted? Was it capable of giving scope to the individual's highest capacities, and of stimulating him to be his best self? These were the issues on which the future of Hellenism depended."⁵ Toynbee sees two defects in the institution of the polis: warfare, which was endemic to Hellenic society, and injustice, for slavery was unchallenged, women had no political rights, and peasants, whose farms were too far removed from the civic centers, found it too difficult to participate in the political life of the city. Thus the city-state, despite its considerable achievements, was still an imperfect human creation; its undeserved idolization led to the decline of Hellenic civilization.

In the course of the sixth century B.C. the Greek city-states experienced an economic revolution, a change over from subsistence farming to the production of industrial goods, wine, and olive oil for export that could be exchanged for cereals from Egypt, Sicily, and the Ukraine. This economic revolution necessarily led to greater economic interdependence among the city-states, but this was not accompanied by political interdependence. The new economic circumstances demanded the creation of some kind of Panhellenic unity, perhaps a voluntary federation. Could the Greeks meet this new challenge?

Blocking this political necessity was a religious obstacle -- the idolization of the city-state, for the polis had become the true god for the Greek. "Could these city-state worshippers bring themselves to transfer their political allegiance from their deified city-states to a Panhellenic body politic? This would require a spiritual revolution. Could they make this, and make it fast enough to save themselves from disaster?"⁶

The advent of the Persian Wars gave the Greeks an opportunity to achieve that political unity made necessary by the accelerating economic unification of the Hellenic world. However, the cooperation displayed by Greek city-states in their victory over Persia did not endure. While the half-century following the Persian Wars was a period of cultural flowering, it also saw the Hellenic world "heading through internal dissension towards self-inflicted disaster."⁷ Instead of being a creative attempt to unite politically the Hellenic world on a voluntary basis, the Delian League became a means for Athenian domination. This misguided Athenian policy "led to a renewal of fratricidal warfare, the breakdown of the Hellenic civilization, and the tardy political unification of the Hellenic world by overwhelming Roman force."⁸ With the Peloponnesian War Hellenic civilization had entered its decline.

Man, we have seen, achieved a tour de force when he overcame physical and human challenges and created civilization. But if a civilization is to grow, it must move from

"challenge through response to further challenge."⁹

The creative spirit that enabled a civilization to take rise must be preserved if the civilization is to avoid arrest and to continue its growth. A society grows when "it replies to a challenge by a response which not only answers the particular challenge that has evoked it but also exposes the responder to a fresh challenge."¹⁰ A society in growth progresses towards self-determination, that is, it provides itself with challenges that trigger a chain reaction of successful responses and still more challenges enabling it to move from strength to strength. In the terminology of Bergson, whom Toynbee greatly admires, a growing civilization possesses an elan vital, an inner spiritual power, which enables it to face successfully one challenge after another.

By forming the polis, Hellenic society had responded creatively to the challenge of anarchy that existed during the Dark Age. But the institution of the polis was inadequate to cope with a society growing more complex. Because the Greeks idolized the polis, says Toynbee, they could not create a Panhellenic political framework which the new economic circumstances demanded. The rhythm of challenge-and-response was broken and there was a subsequent loss of self-determination.

It is creative personalities, men who "have succeeded in attaining self-determination through self-mastery,"¹¹ that propel humanity out of its inertia and enable a society to grow. These pioneers break the 'cake of custom', stir

the inert and uncreative majority to follow their lead, and keep a civilization in a healthy state of dynamic movement. Solon had performed a creative act by stimulating manufacturing of pottery and the cultivation of the vine and olives thereby enabling Athens to overcome the limitations of her poor soil and to become a great commercial center. After the Persian War, Athens was in a position to push the Greek world in the direction of unity but her leadership failed her when it transformed the Delian League into an instrument of Athenian imperialism. The price paid for this decline in the quality of statesmanship was the Pelopponnesian War which started the Hellenic world down the path that leads from breakdown to disintegration.

Societies are not predestined to death, insists Toynbee. Neither an inexorable time table nor any form of racial degeneration causes a civilization to break down. Civilizations are not condemned by fate or by forces outside human control. Nor is the breakdown the consequence of a mortal blow delivered from invading armies. Rather civilizations breakdown for internal reasons, from wounds that are self-inflicted. "The most that the alien enemy has achieved has been to give the expiring suicide his coup de grace or to devour his carcass after it has already become carrion."¹² The truth is, in the words of George Meredith, "we are betrayed by what is false within." Suicide, not murder, is

the reason why civilizations die. Civilizations break down when there is a deterioration within the social order, an inability to respond to challenges and a subsequent loss of that self-determination that impels growth; instead of variety and versatility, there is deadening uniformity and uninventiveness.

One aspect of the process of breakdown is "resting on one's oars." Becoming infatuated with its own achievement, a creative minority looks to the past, becomes senile, and loses the elan that had once enabled it to respond creatively to challenges. Resting on one's oars may take the form of idolizing an institution that has outlived its usefulness. An infatuation with the polis, for example, prevented the Greeks from achieving the unity that alone could save Hellenic civilization from the suicidalness of internecine warfare, of which the Peloponnesian War was the most destructive. Toynbee regards this conflict as "the outward visible sign of an inward visible breakdown in the life of Hellenic Society."¹³ This fatal war had broken out because Athens had proved unable to conquer the next challenge set by her own outstanding domestic successes: the challenge of being called upon to create an Hellenic political world order.

The spiritual damage wrought by the Peloponnesian War, brilliantly described by Thucydides, was more significant than the material damage. The atrocities committed both on the international scene and in the civil wars that broke out

within a number of city-states were evidence of a spiritual decline. The Peloponnesian War was the nemesis of the Hellenic failure to achieve political unity peacefully, a unity required by new economic circumstances. The Time of Troubles was upon the Hellenic world which would be devastated by international and civil warfare with hardly a breathing space for the next four hundred years, until Octavian became master of Rome.

Ninety-three years after the disastrous Peloponnesian War, the Macedonians imposed political unity upon the Hellenic society for a short period. Toynbee praises Alexander for rising "above the low ideal of an Hellenic ascendancy over non-Hellenes to the lofty ideal of brotherhood of mankind,"¹⁴ an ideal to which Toynbee himself aspires. In 479 B.C., after the defeat of Persia, Sparta and Athens were in a position to impose unity on the Hellenic world; their failure led to the Peloponnesian War and Hellenism's Time of Troubles. Similarly, in 323 B.C., the premature death of Alexander ended the brief period of Hellenic unity and dampened hopes for peace within Hellenic society which once again broke up into contending camps. Alexander's successors could not maintain the political unity of Hellenism and were blind to Alexander's vision of the common humanity of man. After Alexander's death, Hellenic society remained politically fractured but now into contending kingdoms rather than warring city-states.

In the post-Alexandrian world, the deification of

the king, "a sinister self-assertion of an individual human personality,"¹⁵ replaced the deification of the city-state. Conceiving kings as gods or their deputies could not fill the spiritual vacuum that existed in the Hellenic world after city-states had lost their power of attraction.

Meanwhile, the problem of establishing an effective world-polity still remained, but now it was Rome that took up the challenge. By the middle of the second century B.C. Rome stood alone in the Mediterranean world. The Seleucid empire, the Ptolemaic empire, the Kingdom of Macedon, and the Carthaginian empire had either been greatly weakened, broken up, or liquidated entirely.

Although Rome created a universal state that eventually brought order to the Mediterranean world, she could not reverse the process of breakdown that had begun with the Peloponnesian War.

Societies on the downhill slide from breakdown to disintegration, says Toynbee, are torn by social discord operating on two levels. First there is internecine warfare among a number of parochial states within the same society; "and this warfare exhausts the energies of the society before it brings itself to an end through a 'knock out blow' in which a single surviving state is left staggering, half-dead among the corpses of its fellow combatants."¹⁶ Civilizations are not destroyed by foreign invasions but ruin themselves by "a reckless

indulgence in the crime of inter-state warfare."¹⁷ An increase in the level of warfare is a strong indication that a civilization is on its downhill slide.

A second manifestation of disintegration is the division of society along factional lines: dominant minority, internal proletariat, external proletariat. Society becomes increasingly more schismatic. The creative minority that had once spurred the society to grow, loses its ability to create and becomes merely a dominant minority that "attempts to hold by force -- against all right and reason -- a position of inherited privilege which it has ceased to merit," and the proletariat, responding to the perversion of the creative minority, "executes its act of secession."¹⁸ In a society experiencing growth, "the different ranks which are divided in status are apt to be united morally by a common consciousness" of performing functions indispensable for the social good. In a society that is breaking down, "the schism between classes is a product of the disintegration of a coherent social ethos."¹⁹ Characteristically, three institutions emerge: a universal state, created by the dominant minority; a universal church, created by the internal proletariat; and a bevy of barbarian warrior bands, the creation of the external proletariat. The universal state and the barbarian warrior bands belong wholly to the past; the universal church, while having a footing in the past, will become the predominant force that shapes the future.

This schism in the body social of a disintegrating society is accompanied by a schism in the souls of individuals; they evidence "personal crises of behavior and feeling and life which are the true essence and origin of the visible manifestations of social collapse."²⁰ Some individuals demonstrate this loss of creative faculty by becoming extreme hedonists; others go to the other extreme and become ascetics. A selfish individualism replaces a sense of duty to the community. Another conspicuous attitude of mind displayed by individuals living in disintegrating societies is the "hopeless feeling of being adrift in an uncontrollable, if not evil, Universe."²¹ The sense of spiritual uncertainty leads many to find comfort by glorifying an earlier period of time (archaism) or by dreaming up utopias (futurism). Both archaism and futurism are uncreative responses to the spiritual crisis afflicting the broken-down civilization.

A universal state emerges after a civilization has already begun to break down; it is the means by which the dominant minority checks for a time the process of disintegration. But the reprieve is only temporary. The universal state does not represent recovery from a Time of Troubles that might be centuries old; it is only a rally that enables the afflicted society "to enjoy a brief 'Indian Summer' before its final dissolution."²² When the universal state comes too late and at too great a cost it will not endure, despite the expectations of its citizens who believe their earthly commonwealth is

really immortal. However long it may last, it represents only the last phase of a civilization prior to its extinction. The Roman universal state was created by force, one state delivering a knock-out blow to the previously contending parochial states. Warfare between states and strife between classes are really symptoms of the spiritual disease that afflicts a society on the verge of disintegration. Because the Roman Empire was created by force and much too late, it could not redeem the afflicted Hellenic society. Pax Romana was only a temporary reprieve; "the political concord that was now achieved had been due for 500 years; and overdue for 400, and the wounds that Hellenes had inflicted on themselves during these centuries of incessant trouble were mortal."²³ Coming too late and achieved violently, Pax Romana was only a long rally, a peace of exhaustion, uncreative and impermanent that could not reverse the breakdown of Hellenism.

During Pax Romana the Hellenic World was no longer convulsed by war and revolution but it was not spiritually rejuvenated. The new cults that prevailed -- deification of the emperor and idolization of the Roman world-state -- were artificial and dull, unable to "fill in human hearts the place left vacant by the decay of the worship of the once idolized city-states."²⁴ The cults of the goddess Rome and the god Caesar were spiritually bankrupt, and the city-states, no longer centers of bustling political life, had lost their charm and fallen from the ranks of idols.

While the Roman emperors ended internecine warfare, they could not rejuvenate the disintegrating society; nor could the Roman philosophers, who like the emperors, only "made it possible for their moribund society to bask for a moment in the pale sunshine of an Indian summer."²⁵

Into this spiritual vacuum stepped Christianity whose strength lay in its power to give "back to Hellenic life some of the significance and the zest that it had lost,"²⁶ and to provide an ideal of human brotherhood that could overcome cultural differences. Not the dominant minority but the internal proletariat takes advantage of the Pax Oecumenica to propagate a higher religion and to establish eventually a universal church. It is the internal proletariat that is the chief beneficiary of the formation of the universal state, for it uses the peace, the capital cities, the legal codes, the common language, and the roads to spread the message of a higher faith. While the dominant minority no longer possesses the creativity to inspire growth,

The drama of challenge-and-response continues to be performed, but in new circumstances and with new actors. In this changed constellation of social forces, it is among the mass of erstwhile followers -- now deprived of leadership -- that creative spirits are born and perform their work. What we are seeing in the secession of the proletariat is thus the familiar process of creative action; but the rise of a creative minority and the process of mimesis are now confined within the limits of a single social class instead of being realized through society as a whole.²⁷

When the internal proletariat, resentful, disinherited,

and unwanted, secedes from the old society that is breaking down, there emerges within its ranks a new creative minority that attracts to itself the mimesis of the uncreative masses. The old dominant minority performs a valuable service in the political field by establishing a universal state and schools of philosophy. While the old society stubbornly fights its losing battle for survival, a new civilization is being germinated in its womb. The internal proletariat gives rise to a higher religion in which gentleness triumphs over violence, an achievement that surpasses the dominant minority's universal state and schools of philosophy. The higher religion articulates itself into a universal church which survives the disintegration and collapse of the old society and serves as the germ of a new civilization.

It is also the external proletariat that benefits from the world-state, for under the peaceful conditions imposed by the universal state, the dominant minority loses its zest for combat. The ranks of its army are filled with recruits from the barbarian external proletariat. These intruders from beyond the imperial borders are the political beneficiaries of this psychology of peace that disqualifies the dominant majority from dealing with military enemies. Eventually, invasion by the external proletariat will register the extinction of the society. The rot that had been gathering during the Time of Troubles proves insurmountable; the universal

state cannot save the dying society but merely postpones the day of death. Thus the establishment of a universal state enables both the internal and external proletariats to perform their historical roles. The barbarian war bands penetrate the state and celebrate the old civilization's death; the internal proletariat gives birth to a higher religion.

Neither Christians nor barbarians destroyed the Roman Empire; they merely walked over a corpse. "Before Christianity had become the official religion of the Hellenic world-state, and before the barbarians had established their successor-states on what had formerly been Hellenic ground, Hellenism was already dead; and it had died of the Hellenes' own failure to respond to a challenge with which they had been confronted as far back in their history as the fifth century B.C."²¹ The failure of the Hellenes to achieve political unity made necessary by the economic transformation of the sixth century B.C. led to incessant warfare, both international and civil, that devastated Hellenic society for four hundred years following the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 431 B.C.

While contemporary observers and future historians may regard the universal church as a social cancer, a parasite that destroys the social order, this is far

from the truth. In a direct challenge to Gibbon, Toynbee maintains that "Hellenic Civilization reached and passed its zenith, and that in truth it had inflicted mortal wounds on itself long before the appearance, above its horizon, of Christianity."²⁹ Churches are not cancers but chrysalides; they do not destroy civilizations but preserve them by keeping alive "a precious germ of life through the perilous interregnum between the dissolution of one mortal representative of the species and the genesis of another."³⁰

The Roman universal state had put an end to fratricidal warfare that exhausted Hellenic society during its Time of Troubles, but it did not provide outlets for man's spiritual energies tending "to look askance at all new manifestations of Life as so many more openings for fresh outbreaks of the demonic spirit of Anarchy."³¹ The emerging universal church opened up "new channels for the balked spiritual energies of Mankind." Utilizing the experiences and accomplishments of the declining universal state, the Church built "new oecumenical institutions of her own, and draws into her service for this purpose men of mark who have failed to find scope for their genius as public servants of the secular imperial power in its tragi-comic last phase of paralysis and ineptitude."³² The Church would give vitality to the new civilization whose embryo she carried. The Christian Church was the creation of an internal proletariat distressed by the Empire which

"presented itself to them as an alien institution imposed upon them by force."³³ Unlike the disintegrating Empire,

the Church was animated by a fresh vitality. And so when the moribund Empire fell, the ensuing 'interregnum' gave the living Church an opportunity to perform an act of creation. The Church then played the part of a chrysalis out of which there emerged in the fullness of time a new society. . . . Thus the Catholic Church, like the Roman God Janus, was a figure with two faces: in one aspect the refuge of the internal proletariat of an old society in decline, and in another aspect the chrysalis of a new society in gestation.³⁴

During the final decades of the Roman Empire the barbarians, the external proletariat, came down in spate from the no-man's land beyond the frontiers of the Empire. In the interregnum between collapse of Hellenic society and the emergence of Western society, the barbarians established a number of successor states. Unlike the Church, these successor states were not a creative prelude to Western society but merely an epilogue to Hellenic history. The barbarian states were short-lived, their contribution to Western Civilization insignificant. Both Church and barbarians shared the same stage during the interregnum, but only the Church had an enduring influence on the shaping of Western Civilization. The barbarian achievement was limited to an Heroic Age distinguished by epic poetry; the Church, on the other hand, born of the old society, survived the interregnum to become the soul of the new society -- Western Civilization.

Toynbee's conception of Hellenism is crucial to his understanding of the nature, meaning, and destiny of Western Civilization. A traditional interpretation of the achievement of the ancient Greeks stresses the distinction between Hellenism and the theocratic kingdoms of the Near East. The Greeks conceived the ideals of freedom and reason, the integrating principles of Western Civilization. Greek humanism broke with the mythopoeic outlook of the Orient and gave man an alternate world-view whose focus was not mythical gods or absolute kings but man. It is precisely this tradition of secular humanism which the West has esteemed since the Renaissance that Toynbee is questioning and challenging. For Toynbee, reason is not man's finest achievement and freedom derived from a non-spiritual source is tenuous. Toynbee's dissatisfaction with Greek humanism is at the core of his critique of the modern West which he views as a depressing revival of Hellenic secularism and a repudiation of Christianity, for him the true essence of Western Civilization. Toynbee regards the humanists of the Renaissance and the philosophes of the Enlightenment as heirs of Greek humanism, and therefore, contributors to the crisis of the West.

For Toynbee Greek humanism was an expression of "man-worship," that is it glorified man and his works; man, not God, was central to the world-view of Hellenism. The great failing of the ancient Greeks, insists Toynbee, is that they "saw in Man 'the Lord of Creation' and worshipped him

as an idol in place of God."³⁵ Hellenic man-worship took two forms, says Toynbee: one was the worship of collective human power as manifested in the idolization of first a city-state and then a world-state; the other was the worship of an individual human being as manifested in the idolization of a Macedonian king or Roman Emperor or a Stoic or Epicurean sage. This sinful deification of man and his creations was at the heart of the failure of Hellenism; a similar attachment to the things of this world, a movement away from the spiritual values of our ancestral religion has created the crisis of the West. The great lesson that we learn from a study of Hellenism, insists Toynbee, is that man-worship, in any of its variants does not work. Not Greek humanism, but Christian spirituality is for him the most precious ingredient of Western Civilization.

For Toynbee the conflict between Athens and Jerusalem still persists and one of his aims is to try to resolve it. While, we shall see, Toynbee does not reject reason, he does consider philosophy an inadequate substitute for a higher religion and philosophers lesser figures than saints. For example, Toynbee regards the moral autonomy and self-sufficiency sought by Stoics and Epicureans as a largely selfish aim which forced them to neglect two emotions -- love and pity -- that are most vital for man's social existence and are the highest feelings that humans are capable of demonstrating. For this reason, says Toynbee,

Stoic and Epicurean sages were inferior to St. Francis. The whole-hearted feeling of love for a fellow human being can stem only from religious inspiration and not from the intellectualism of philosophy. Moreover, philosophy is a poor substitute for religion. Taught by an intellectual elite "in the scientific language of the Intellect and not in the poetic language of the Heart,"³⁶ philosophy cannot stir ordinary people.

The idolization of the self-sufficient philosopher was, for Toynbee, a higher form of man-worship. A lower form of man-worship, demonstrated by Hellenism, was the deification of the community, first evidenced in the adulation shown the polis and later the Roman Empire. The Greeks viewed their city-states as gods and gave to them the total dedication that one gives to a religion. Such an attitude, we have seen, prevented the Greek world from overcoming the challenge presented by the need for unity. Unable to organize a larger political framework, the Greeks battered themselves in war; ultimately, it was the Peloponnesian War that marked the beginning of the breakdown of Hellenic civilization. The rhythm of breakdown and disintegration would persist until the seventh century A.D. when Hellenism died. The Roman world-state, because it was established violently and belatedly, could only slow down but not reverse the downhill slide towards disintegration.

While the modern West has not established a universal state -- although Germany tried twice in the 20th century -- there is a distinct parallel between Hellenism and Western Civilization, maintains Toynbee. Since the Renaissance the West has revived the very practice that was at the root cause of Hellenism's ruin -- "the worship of idolized local states." Nationalism, insists Toynbee, is the modern form of city-state worship; it is today "the dominant religion of the West and of a rapidly Westernizing world. . . . The Modern World must exorcize this demon resolutely if it is to save itself from meeting with its Hellenic predecessor's fate."³⁷

An analysis of Toynbee's conception of Hellenism leads to still another principal component of Toynbee's thought -- rejection of the parochial state in favor of a universal state. But such a state, if it is to endure and enable man to fulfill his human potential -- that is if it is to be a sign of progress and not of disintegration -- must be achieved peacefully and must not become another object of human worship. A universal state built upon spiritual foundations -- this is the culminating principle to which all of Toynbee's thought points. It is his prescription for healing a Western and a Westernizing world torn by crisis.

FOOTNOTES

1. Study, 12:160.
2. Arnold J. Toynbee, Hellenism: The History of a Civilization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 10.
3. Study, 1:192.
4. Ibid., 1:305.
5. Toynbee, Hellenism, p. 56.
6. Ibid., p. 82.
7. Ibid., p. 91
8. Ibid., p. 110.
9. Study, 3: 128.
10. Ibid., p. 377.
11. Ibid., p. 234.
12. Study, 4:115.
13. Study, one-volume edition, p. 171.
14. Hellenism, p. 127.
15. Ibid., p. 139.
16. Study, 5: 17.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 26.
19. Study, one-volume edition, pp. 223-24.
20. Ibid., p. 241.
21. Ibid., p. 243.
22. Ibid., p. 228.
23. Hellenism, p. 197.
24. Ibid., p. 211.

25. Study, one-volume edition, p. 233.
26. Hellenism, p. 234.
27. Study, one-volume edition, p. 228.
28. Hellenism, p. 243.
29. Study, 7b: 385.
30. Ibid., 392.
31. Ibid., 395.
32. Ibid., 397.
33. Study, I: 56.
34. Ibid., pp. 56-7.
35. Hellenism, p. 10.
36. Arnold J. Toynbee, An Historian's Approach to Religion (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 75.
37. Hellenism, p. 253.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANITY: THE SOUL OF THE WEST

Toynbee maintains that in studying history as a whole we should "relegate economic and political history to a subordinate place and give religious history the primacy. For religion, after all, is the serious business of the human race."¹ Civilizations have an historical function: their downfalls prepare the way for a spiritual advance, a deeper religious insight provided by higher religions. Thus Graeco-Roman civilization fulfilled its historical role by ministering to the birth of Christianity. The emergence of a Christian society in the Middle Ages represents for Toynbee a spiritual advance over the Hellenic world, and our current "post-Christian secular civilization might at best be a superfluous repetition of the pre-Christian Graeco-Roman one, and at worst a pernicious back-sliding from the path of spiritual progress."² According to this model, continues Toynbee, we should no longer regard our secular civilization as progress, as

being the great new event in the world which demands our attention and commands our admiration. If we can bring ourselves to think of it, instead, as one of the vain repetitions of the Gentiles -- an almost meaningless repetition of something that the Greeks and Romans did before us and did supremely well -- then the greatest new event in the history of mankind will be seen to be a very different one. The greatest new event will then not be the monotonous rise of yet another secular civilization out of the bosom of the Christian Church in the course of these latter centuries; it will still be the Crucifixion and its spiritual consequences.³

Religion then is at the core of Toynbee's thought. It gives significance to history; it is a greater achievement than a secular civilization.

Toynbee's high regard for religion is based in part on his conception of human nature in which he sees "a vein of diabolical evil."⁴ A brutal and irrational spirit constitutes our original sin, says Toynbee. No one race or civilization has a monopoly over it; rather it is the common heritage of mankind. Man's original sin manifests itself in self-centeredness and, on the larger social scale, in warfare and class antagonisms. The institutions of war and class, which have proved fatal to civilizations, "are social reflexions of the seamy side of human nature -- or what the theologians call original sin."⁵ While the Christian tradition made our forefathers aware of the power and persistence of original sin, the doctrine has been discarded by a Western Civilization that has become rapidly secularized since the Renaissance. However, asserts Toynbee, the atrocities of the twentieth century and the discovery of the unconscious mind have compelled us to regard as naive the belief in the essential goodness of man and recognize the reality of original sin.

While Toynbee insists that human nature contains "an inherent vein of abominable wickedness," it also "has in it an inherent vein of lovable goodness. . . . Every human soul is a battlefield in which these two irreconcilable spiritual forces are perpetually contending for

mastery."⁶ If man is not to be consumed by the wickedness that he harbors within himself, asserts Toynbee, he must seek the support of religion. This spiritual division of the soul, says Toynbee, manifests itself in human society which is an arena of continual warfare between good and evil. The values of higher religions fortify the forces of good. Every human being is predisposed to behave as if he were the center of the universe and to exploit everyone else in the universe. The higher religions have tried to help the individual to overcome this sinful attitude that he is the raison d'ê[^]tre of existence. For Toynbee the higher religions are humanity's finest achievement and the religious prophets history's greatest figures. He sees religion as the true aim of life, for it enables the individual to conquer his inherent self-centeredness and the community its tribal-mindedness. Religion enables man to realize his best qualities, it enables society to remedy its worst abuses. Because religion is an expression of the unconscious, the well-spring of human feelings, it is central to the human experience. The non-rational component of the human psyche will resist all efforts of reason to eliminate religious sentiments; if the feelings are not directed towards the higher religions, they will find other and dangerous outlets.

Toynbee regards religion as a component of human nature; a human being cannot be without some form of religion. "To

feel reverence and awe seems to be one of the inborn instincts of human beings; they feel the need to look beyond themselves to some supernatural or natural being or power, or even to do obeisance to some particular object such as the flag which has become the symbol of nationhood."⁷ Since religion is a universal need, says Toynbee, the rejection of higher religions will not lead to the end of religion but to a spiritual vacuum that will be filled by morally repellent lower religions which conceive the godhead as the exclusive property of a given community not as the God of all men. "The suffering and shame which Western man had brought upon himself by the sin of 'totalitarianism' had been a painful revelation of the truth that human beings cannot live without worshipping something. When they repudiate the worship of the One True God, they swiftly relapse into a worship of Leviathan."⁸ Toynbee, we shall see, considers nationalism the most repulsive and the most destructive of these lower religions. Lower religions reinforce man's innate egocentricity, while higher religions, despite their apparent differences, urge the individual to overcome his self-centeredness, through love.

Toynbee's conception of religion is personal rather than sectarian. He defines religion as a "human being's relation to an ultimate reality behind and beyond the phenomena of the Universe in which each of us awakes to consciousness."⁹ Convinced that there exists a spiritual element within human nature, Toynbee then infers the

existence of an ultimate reality with which this spiritual element seeks communion. Reared as an orthodox Church-of-England Christian, Toynbee became an agnostic while an undergraduate at Oxford, concluding "that religion itself was an unimportant illusion."¹⁰ He now affirms the importance of the higher reality with which all the higher religions are concerned. The higher religions share a "benign desire to help human beings to make their rough passage from birth to death. . . . Man is aware of his own sinfulness. He therefore longs for an assurance that, in spite of appearances and experiences, his universe is fundamentally and ultimately rational and good, and that he himself, in spite of his sinfulness, is redeemable."¹¹

While Toynbee admires the spiritual message of higher religions he rejects doctrines that lack credibility. He cannot adhere to some essential Christian dogmas -- the Virgin Birth of Jesus, the Resurrection, the Ascension -- for they are irreconcilable with what science tells us about the uniformity of nature. Nor does Toynbee regard Jesus as divine, but as a man inspired by a love of humanity unmatched by any other human being. To this extent, of all of God's children, Jesus came closest to fulfilling the ideals of the sonship of God. Toynbee considers self-sacrificing love "divine. . . the only god that we know from experience and . . . Man should devote himself to this god without any reservations whatever the

consequences may be."¹² This is what Toynbee sees as most valuable in Christianity. In teaching that "self-sacrificing love is both the best and the most powerful of all the spiritual impulses that are known to us,"¹³ Christianity enables a human being to overcome a destructive self-centeredness and to transfigure himself into a true child of God. Toynbee does not regard himself as an orthodox member of any of the higher religions because he cannot accept their exact and definite answers. But he subscribes to their spiritual values -- love and compassion. Favoring "the maximum of religion with the minimum of dogma,"¹⁴ he wants all the historic higher religions to separate the essentials of their faith, a love of God and therefore a love of man, from doctrinal and ritual accretions. While Toynbee laments the West's drifting away from Christianity, he is unwilling to sacrifice the intellectual freedom that came with the repudiation of elements of Christian theology.

For Toynbee the higher religions are variations on a theme; they all present some facet of God's truth. They all aspire to help the individual to attain the true end of life -- communion with a higher spiritual reality. They all liberate man by teaching that God alone, not man or his creations, is the supreme value in the universe; only He is worthy of worship. Man owes no ultimate loyalty to king or general for they are only idols, false gods. Man's primary concern is moral growth not power fame or riches

which are also man-made idols. The higher religions address themselves to all mankind, not just a part of it. They enable man "to overcome the political barriers between parochial states and even the cultural barriers between parochial civilizations."¹⁵ A higher religion abandons its inspiration and essential meaning when it lapses into parochialism, when it becomes exclusive, persecuting, and hostile to non-believers. Historically the higher religions were revolutionary new departures, for they were imbued with a sense of universalism -- the unity of mankind. None of the higher religions has a monopoly of truth insists Toynbee; rather they all have seen facets of the truth and all have helped man to combat egocentricity. The spiritual message of the higher religions allows man to overcome the discord that has racked civilizations, for prophetic values give him an impelling spiritual reason to restrain his natural self-centeredness. And most importantly in Toynbee's scheme, belief in the unity of God makes possible the unity of mankind, a condition that is now necessary for human survival.

The higher religions offer man membership in the city of God, giving a spiritual value and meaning to his participation in the earthly city. The creed of humanists, insists Toynbee, is an inadequate replacement for the teachings of prophets. It cannot hold society together; it cannot prevent man from thinking and behaving selfishly.

In Victorian England, as in Periclean Athens and in Medicean Florence, Humanism had seemed sufficient unto itself, because Man was then experiencing the momentary sensation of being triumphantly master of his own fate through the power of his own arete or virtu or science, without needing the intervention of God either to chasten or to inspire him. By the year 1933 it was once more manifest that, when they were thinking of nothing but their own gain, men were not only quite incapable of serving the public, but were even more impotent to manage their own personal affairs to their own personal advantage.¹⁶

Because the ideals of the Enlightenment were divested of religion, they have failed and will continue to fail man. "The attainment of a secular higher standard of living is always unsatisfying, even when this standard is not merely a material one, but includes non-religious spiritual values."¹⁷

However, while Toynbee champions Jerusalem over Athens he too shares in the humanist tradition of the West. He does not reject reason nor submit to the authority of theology but seeks a creative synthesis between the reason of the humanists and the faith of prophets. Although recognizing that the "issue between skeptics and believers looms larger in the present-day world than in any other known society in any previous age,"¹⁸ Toynbee believes that some type of common ground can be found between rationalists and believers. Believers have to dispense with trans-rational explanations when examining human affairs; for their part rationalists should recognize "that rational explanation is imperfect and incomplete not

merely in practice but intrinsically,"¹⁹ that the human experience contains mysterious, unpredictable, inexplicable elements. While Toynbee urges the use of reason for apprehending reality he maintains "that rationalism is not enough. . . .that there are questions which reasoning cannot answer but which human beings are nevertheless bound to ask,"²⁰ and must try to answer even though they are essentially unverifiable. Toynbee does not propose overriding reason by means of unverifiable religious dogmas, but he does affirm the limitations of reason in dealing with the most crucial questions of human existence. Science gives man a command over non-human nature, but this "is of almost infinitely less importance to Man than his relations with himself, with his fellow men, and with God."²¹ Theoretical reason allows man to formulate rules that give unity to the phenomenal world; it does not enable him to enter into communion with the spiritual presence behind the universe or to recognize the Thou of his neighbor. Only the higher religions stir man to feel love and pity for his fellows. Toynbee would have the higher religions relegate exclusively to science those areas of intellectual knowledge which traditionally have been within the province of religion. Religion cannot challenge the findings of science but this does not at all impair the mission of religion. Indeed it was never meant for a higher religion to enter the realm of science, Toynbee insists. In doing so,

Christianity mistakenly and foolishly turned into dogma an Aristotelian-Ptolemaic world picture that essentially had nothing to do with the communion between man and God and was therefore not a legitimate concern of religion. For Toynbee it is the mission of higher religions to inculcate humanity with prophetic ideals and not to demand obedience to dogmas that defy reason.

Man has always demonstrated religious feeling, says Toynbee; it is through religion that man tries to answer questions about the purpose of existence and to discover and to reconcile himself "to the formidable facts of life and death."²² Primitive man expressed his religious feelings through the worship of nature: animals, rain, moon, stars. Nature gods were for primitive man embodiments of the presence behind nature of forces to which he was at mercy. Nature worship receded because man had begun to exercise power over nature and we do not deify things that we have learned to control. Thus the first creators of civilization, impressed with their human achievement, began to worship their own collective power, that is institutions created by man. While the primitive religion of nature worship persisted after the rise of civilization it was eventually superseded by another lower religion, the worship of collective human power. In Greece, for example, the Greek goddess Athena, originally a nature divinity, came to represent the political power of the human community, Athens. In idolizing the collective power of their community,

the Athenian had adopted a lower religion; he hated, massacred and enslaved for the sake of a man-made institution. By giving a total commitment to his city, the Hellene displayed a sinful self-centeredness. In transforming the human community into a virtual god, he committed an act of idolatry that ultimately wrecked Hellenic civilization.

Toynbee defines the period from the eighth century B.C. to the seventh century A.D. as an age of spiritual progress. It began with the Hebrew prophets and ended with Mohammed. Included within the period were other of the world's great religious prophets: Buddha, Laotze, Confucious, Zarathustra, Socrates. Throughout his works Toynbee continually urges man to return to the values taught by these prophets, history's most inspired men. While man has had dazzling success in science and technology he has failed dismally to elevate himself morally and spiritually. Our human nature, says Toynbee, is out of balance. Man has demonstrated a much greater talent for mastering the world of inanimate nature than for controlling his own passions and for living in peace and friendship with others. Man's technical and social achievement in building civilizations has been undermined by a spiritual infirmity, the pursuit of false gods, particularly nationalism, that has led to the breakdown and disintegration of civilizations. The higher religions, insists Toynbee, have given man the cure for his spiritual malady; they have shown him how he

can transcend his innate self-centeredness and improve the quality of social relationships. The higher religions have taught that man is not God, that human power is limited, that man should never substitute a human being or a human institution for God. In short, the higher religions can save man from the destructive capacity of lower religions, which are manifestations of the worst elements of human nature.

Toynbee breaks down all the varieties of the world's religions into three categories: the worship of nature, the worship of man, the worship of absolute reality, that is, God. The last is the object of the higher religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Hinduism. Although elements of nature worship still persist and have been incorporated into the higher religions, nature worship has been almost totally replaced by the other religions. Man-worship has taken the form of deifying the community or an individual, a practice which, Toynbee regards as suicidal. An essential component of Toynbee's comprehensive view of Western history, is that the lower religion of man-worship, as manifested in the deification of the parochial community, that is, nationalism, has become the master religion of civilized man. In the early civilizations man-worship won out over nature worship, and has to this day predominated over the higher religions. Herein lies the tragedy of civilization, for the worship of parochial communities inevitably leads to war between

different states. The devotees of state worship have adopted a religion that

is an expression of self centeredness. . . . [and] self-centeredness is the source of all strife. . . . The collective ego combines the puny individual power of each of its devotees into the collective power of Leviathan. This collective power is at the mercy of subconscious passions because it escapes the control of the Intellect and Will that put some restraint on the individual ego. And bad behavior that would be condemned unhesitatingly by the conscience in an individual culprit is apt to be condoned when it is perpetuated by Leviathan, under the illusion that the first person is absolved from self-centeredness by being transposed from the singular number into the plural. This is, however, just the opposite of the truth; for when an individual projects his self-centeredness on to a community, he is able, with less sense of sin, to carry his egotism to greater lengths of enormity.²³

A higher religion represents a new spiritual departure from the worship of nature, the human community, or an individual. Life takes on a much higher significance than self-centeredness. As the center of human existence becomes the love of a Supreme Being, the individual engages in self-sacrifice for the sake of other human beings. Whereas the old order had been "founded on a belief that Man is God,. . . the new gospel is founded on a belief that Absolute Reality is neither Man nor Nature, but is beyond and above them both." Under this new dispensation man transcends the self-detachment of the philosopher and learns to care for all humanity, to devote himself "to the service of others at the cost of whatever suffering this service may bring with it."²⁴ The higher religions make man cognizant of a fundamental truth: self-centeredness precipitates the

greatest of evils and love stimulates the greatest good.

A universal church emerges after a civilization has been caught in the rhythm of breakdown and disintegration and it attracts the internal proletariat that has suffered greatly from parochial-state warfare. Christianity drew inspiration from a number of secular catastrophes that had burdened the Mediterranean world. In times of secular prosperity man remains deaf to the call of the spirit but during times of stress, when man "finds himself standing again in the open at the mercy of the elements, he also finds himself standing again face to face with a God whose perpetual presence is now no longer hidden from man's eyes by prison walls of man's own making." In such periods are found "flashes of intense spiritual illumination and bursts of fervent spiritual activity."²⁵

We have seen that in the process of imposing peace upon the Mediterranean world, the Romans had also created a spiritual vacuum in human souls; while life was more secure it was also duller for the city-states had lost their freedom of action. By the second century B.C. there existed no ideal that could replace the lost devotion to the city-state. The dominant minority sought to fill this spiritual vacuum by turning to the schools of philosophy; the internal proletariat turned to Christianity, for

it treated them, not as proletarians, but as human souls; it showed its consideration for them in a practical way by taking care of the widows and orphans, the sick and the aged, for whom neither the municipal governments of

the city-states nor the ecumenical government of the Empire performed any comparable services; and it did all this disinterestedly, under the inspiration of Christian ideals, and not with the ulterior aim of recruiting supporters.²⁶

A principal reason for Christianity's success was that it offered an ideal of human fraternity that drew no distinction between Scythian, Greek, or Jew, between slave or freeman, between male or female, between rich or poor. Christianity also enabled man to enter into communion with a superhuman God not with a human god or human institution. The Graeco-Roman world had already found wanting worship of the deified emperor, the deified universal empire, the deified self-sufficient philosopher, and the deified city-state. Man could not devote himself entirely to these human idols something he could do to the One God. Christianity restored to its adherents a zest for life because they now had a cause for which they were called upon to risk their lives. Now that one could again display courage and idealism, life took on a renewed significance. In laying down their lives for the sake of God, the martyrs attested to the power of the religion.

In the form of a higher religion the oriental world was launching a counter-offensive against the Graeco-Roman world whose previous offensive had been waged on a military and philosophical level. The Hellenic World had offered to orientals and barbarians a secular way of life "in which the intellect had been conscripted to do duty for the heart by working out philosophies that were to take religion's

place."²⁷ This was not enough either for orientals or for the Greeks and Romans themselves. The disillusioned dominant minority in the generation of Marcus Aurelius showed itself to be suffering from spiritual starvation. By dressing itself in the language and categories of Greek philosophy, Christianity was able to win converts from the elite of the Hellenic world. Nevertheless, Christianity remained at war with the most formidable version of Hellenic man-worship, the worship of the world-state of Rome and its human emperor.

What was the issue between the Christian Church and the Roman Empire? It was not that Christians refused to obey the law, for they were in fact law abiding citizens or that Christians, conscientiously opposed to shedding blood, refused service in the army, for the Roman army was a professional army made up of volunteers drawn principally from ex-barbarian peasants, whereas the Church attracted the urban proletariat. The conflict arose says Toynbee because Christianity repudiated the worship of Leviathan.

The question was whether Caesar himself was God, or whether Caesar was merely the human vicegerent of a One True God whom Caesar had not nominated and did not and could not control. This question whether Man in one or other of his less ungodlike forms is God, or whether the True God is to be found neither in man nor in Non-Human Nature, was, and still is, one of the great issues confronting human souls.²⁸

As the institutions of the disintegrating Roman Empire atrophied, the Church became the most vital force

in the Hellenic World. After the disintegration of Hellenic society the Church became the source of unity of the emerging Western Civilization. It was the soul of the West. The creation of Respublica Christiana saved the West from feudal anarchy. Its aim was to replace violence with a reign of spiritual authority and it demonstrated the immense power that religious values exercise over human hearts; for, indeed, devotion to the spiritual church exceeded the loyalty once given to a temporal Roman Empire.

The papacy, which had been waging a "battle for spiritual freedom against material force," declined when it became "infected with the very evil which it had set itself to cast out from the body social of Western Christendom."²⁹ The papacy had acted creatively when it gave unity to a world burdened by feudal anarchy, when it substituted spiritual authority for physical force. Then the papacy had relied principally on the power of the spirit; when it began to use force against its opponents the Church set "upon a course which was to end in the victory of. . . [its] adversaries the World, the Flesh, and the Devil over the City of God which . . . [it] was seeking to bring down to Earth."³⁰ The tragedy began with Hildebrand, who, in seeking to rescue the Church from sexual and financial corruption, was drawn into the arena of power politics in which force was utilized for spiritual ends. This was a dangerous game. Intoxicated by the successful use of force

the papacy carried it to extremes causing its own spiritual degeneration. The conflict with the Holy Roman Emperor eventually caused the papacy to lose its moral leadership and the devotion hitherto granted to an ecumenical Church was transferred to emerging secular states with disastrous consequences for the future of the West, for

this spiritual heritage from the Hildebrandine Church is the element in the constitution of our modern parochial states which has turned these once harmless and useful institutions into a grave menace to the welfare of our civilization. For the spirit of devotion which was a beneficent creative power in Western Christendom when it was directed through the gates of a Civitas Dei towards God himself, has degenerated into a maleficent destructive force in the process of being diverted from its original divine object and being offered instead to an idol made by human hands. Parochial states, as our medieval forebears knew, are man-made institutions, useful and even necessary in their place, which deserve from us that conscientious but unenthusiastic performance of a minor social duty which we render, in our time, to our municipalities and county councils. To idolize these pieces of social machinery, which have nothing divine about them, is to court a spiritual disaster; and this is the disaster towards which our modern Western World is heading to-day as an ultimate consequence of the spiritual spoliation of the Holy See by the secular principalities which were once kept in their place by the Papacy's moral authority.³¹

In the Early Middle Ages, because of the incompetence of the barbarian successor states to the Roman Empire, conditions were unusually favorable for the establishment of a Christian commonwealth under papal leadership. When the papacy pursued spiritual ends it rose to the occasion of

its mission. However, the spiritual shortcomings of ecclesiastical statesmen resulted in "the miscarriage of this Medieval Western Respublica Christiana. . . the most tragic of all the disasters that the Western Society has brought upon itself so far."³²

While recognizing the danger in idealizing the Middle Ages, Toynbee still holds that "the Medieval Western Christian way of life still looks like one of Mankind's rare achievements." The medieval genius lay in shaping a

creative balance between authority and liberty . . . between the moral authority of the Apostle at Rome and the political liberty of parochial princes and city-states. . . between the theological authority of established Western Christian dogma and the philosophical liberty, within this theological framework, for the schoolmen to cultivate Aristotelian philosophy and science, not only in secular studies, but even within the domain of theology itself."³³

The final shock to a medieval Christendom already weakened by a Church-state conflict was the Protestant Reformation which destroyed religious unity, strengthened the power of secular rulers and ushered in the brutal Wars of Religion. In these conflicts, religion became a "tool for the furtherance of mundane military and political purposes. . . a consequence of Religion's own unprincipled attempt to use War and Politics as weapons in ecclesiastical struggles for supremacy."³⁴ In the modern West, Christianity has ceased to command the unquestioning assent of Western minds. This was the principal result of the Wars of Religion, in which Christians, believing that they were in possession of an exclusive revelation, destroyed

spiritual values in an orgy of fanaticism.

The outburst of moral indignation at the iniquity of the Wars of Religion was the explosion that blew the irreparable breach in the massive fortifications of the Medieval Western Christian Weltanschauung. One practical expression of this moral revolt was a deliberate transference of seventeenth-century Western Man's spiritual treasure from an incurably polemical Theology to an apparently non-controversial Natural Science; and the consequent progressive demolition of the intellectual structure of Medieval Western Christianity was thus an after-effect of a previous revolt against its moral pretensions.³⁵

The outbursts of violence and fanaticism during the Wars of Religion alienated many Westerners from their ancestral religion and the new discoveries in science which seemed incompatible with traditional dogma, intensified this estrangement. The Christian churches that had blundered morally during the Wars of Religion also discredited themselves intellectually by stubbornly retaining "an exploded Ptolemaic astronomy [and] Aristotelian theology . . . as if this pre-Christian flotsam had been as close to the heart of Christianity as the truth that God is Love and God's witness to this truth is Christ's incarnation and crucifixion."³⁶

This revulsion against religious fanaticism and intellectual rigidity led to the demise of Christianity but not to the end of religious sentiments or to an age of linear progress as the philosophes anticipated. Since, for Toynbee, religion is not a relic of pre-rational society but

a necessary constituent of the human soul, the spiritual vacuum created by the West's disenchantment with Christianity could not endure. It was soon filled by lower religions -- the idolization of technology and ideologies: individualism, nationalism, communism. Since savagery is also rooted in the human soul, the end of the Wars of Religion did not lead to the termination of fanaticism. When the storms of the religious wars subsided, a new tempest began to brew. The Wars of Nationality which reached full fury in the twentieth century would outdo in fanaticism the Wars of Religion. Nor has the shift away from religion to science proven to be as beneficial as intellectuals anticipated. After the experience of two world wars and the undermining of the ecological balance of nature, we no longer complacently identify advances in science and technology with progress.

Toynbee laments the decline of Christianity and the upsurge of secularism and regards the modern West as a vain repetition of Hellenism. Moreover, the emergence of a modern secular Western Civilization from a Christian Western Civilization distorted the historical mission of Christianity. It made it appear that Christianity fulfilled its function by acting as a chrysalis between two secular civilizations, a parent Hellenic civilization and a daughter Western Civilization. But in truth says Toynbee higher religions are not the handmaids of civilizations; helping to nurture Western Civilization by preserving

elements of a dead Hellenic civilization was not the principal mission of Christianity, its raison d'être. It is a misconception to regard a higher religion as fulfilling its role, continues Toynbee, when it serves a secular purpose; when it acts as a handmaid to civilization, when it is a means towards a non-religious end:

Religion is an end in itself, because it is concerned with things that matter more to human beings than anything else in the world. This is the discovery -- or revelation -- that was the origin of the higher religions. The utilization of a higher religion to serve non-religious purposes is a reversion to a primitive state of affairs in which religion is an integral part of the total configuration of culture. This social reversion seems to me to be also a spiritual regression. ³⁷

Higher religions are concerned with the individual's relationship with God and only indirectly with social relations that are the concern of a secular civilization. They are a new departure from earlier religions because they speak directly to man. They are not just by-products of a disintegrating civilization or merely one element among many cultural components of a civilization; to be made intelligible, higher religions must be studied as members of a distinctive species and not as religious facets of civilization. Because they put men in direct contact with higher reality, religious civilizations are superior to secular societies.

Although the higher religions are essentially concerned with man's personal relationship to God and not

with the social requirements of society, they are not in opposition to the social needs of society. Civilization is not undermined or social progress retarded when the individual's supreme aim in life becomes the salvation of his soul, for

in seeking God, Man is performing a social act; and, if God's Love has gone into action in This World in the redemption of Mankind by Christ, then Man's efforts to make himself less unlike a God who has created Man in His own image must include efforts to follow Christ's example in sacrificing himself for the redemption of his fellow men. Seeking and following a God in this way that, in a Christian's belief, is God's way, is, in a Christian's eyes, the only true way for a human soul on Earth to seek salvation. The antithesis between trying to save one's own soul by seeking and following God and trying to do one's duty to one's neighbor is therefore false. ³⁸

The Christian seeking communion with God will at the same time try to love his neighbor as God loves man and will want for his neighbor what he seeks for himself, "that is to come into closer communion with God and to become more godlike."³⁹ Consequently, the heightening of religious feelings leads also to greater social progress and reform.

Thus, the demise of Christianity has not been beneficial to Western man. It has not brought a deeper religious insight, but has caused him to regress to idol worship in the form of ideologies.

The enormities that have been perpetrated in the name of each of these three post-Christian ideologies have been, if possible, still more wicked than the worst that have ever been perpetrated in the name of Christianity. Modern Man's state

in the age of agony and atrocity that dawned in 1914 has been even worse than modern Western Man's state was in the age of the Catholic-Protestant wars of religion.⁴⁰

The choice confronting Western man, maintains Toynbee, is not between religion and no religion but between higher and lower religions, between the worship of God and the worship of human idols. To restore his sick soul to spiritual health, Western man, insists Toynbee, must confess the spiritual impotence of technology and science and the post-Christian ideologies and strengthen himself with the moral insights of the prophets of higher religions. Thus the decisive questions confronting Western man in the last part of the twentieth century are religious. Toynbee remains confident that

Christianity will continue to be a living spiritual force in the World for thousands of years after our Western civilization has passed away. Though our vista of history is rather short. . . it is already long enough for us to see that all secular institutions, whether they are states or nations or governments or languages or civilizations, have comparatively short lives compared with religions. We can be sure that the Western civilizations role in history is going to be a minor one compared with the role of Christianity.⁴¹

The world's religious traditions might yet save the planet, Toynbee believes. However, if the future is to belong to the higher religions and not to secular ideologies they will have to replace rivalry with cooperation, deal with pressing social problems, and dispense with non-essential doctrines.

Toynbee does not believe that the higher religions have been permanently defeated by post-Christian ideologies. He sees the historic religions re-emerging while the secular ideologies "in 1969. . . seem to be receding as boisterously as they advanced from 1914 until the nineteen-fifties."⁴² They are making a comeback because they can do what the ideologies and technology cannot -- provide guidance and comfort for human souls born to trouble and suffering. And in our age of alienation the need has never been greater for the spiritual guidance that only the higher religions can provide.

In the beginning, according to Toynbee's scheme, there was primitive society from which by means of a mutation, made possible by a creative minority's successful response to a challenge, there emerged the primary civilizations which in turn gave rise to secondary civilizations. When a secondary civilization broke down (i.e. Hellenism) the way was prepared for a higher religion. The higher religion differed from and was superior to both the primitive society and civilization.

It gave power to overcome the discord which was one of the inveterate evils of Human Society; it offered a solution of the problem of the meaning of History; it inspired an ideal of conduct which could be an effective potent spiritual for the super-human effort of making Human Life possible in This World; and it availed to exorcize the peril that was inherent in mimesis when this was oriented nottowards the One True God, but towards one of Man's fellow human creatures.⁴³

Because a third generation modern Western Civilization represents a repetition of the secularism of a second generation Hellenic civilization, it is, in Toynbee's system, guilty of spiritual regression. For Toynbee Western man's "abandonment of his allegiance to a saving higher religion in order to go a whoring after a mundane civilization of the third generation wore the aspect of a second Fall."⁴⁴ But paradoxically, says Toynbee, some good may yet come from this spiritual regression of the West for a secularized West has made possible the unification of the entire planet, a condition necessary for human survival. But a world-polity built solely on a secular-terrestrial plane will not endure; mankind will have to be held together by a common devotion to a heavenly king. Without this spiritual cement man's world community will turn out to be just another Tower of Babel. If this ecumenical ideal is to be achieved, maintains Toynbee, the West, and a Westernizing world, must confront the challenge of post-Christian ideologies.

FOOTNOTES

1. Civilization on Trial, p. 89.
2. Ibid., p. 207.
3. Ibid., p. 20.
4. Experiences, p. 36.
5. Civilization on Trial, p. 33.
6. Arnold J. Toynbee, Acquaintances (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 242.
7. Surviving the Future, p. 47.
8. Study, 7b: 512.
9. Experiences, p. 125.
10. Ibid., p. 127.
11. Ibid., p. 131.
12. Ibid., pp. 146-47.
13. Ibid., p. 135.
14. Ibid., p. 143.
15. Study, 7b: 433.
16. Ibid., p. 516.
17. Arnold J. Toynbee, Christianity Among the Religions of the World (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p.89.
18. Study, 12: 71.
19. Ibid., p. 73.
20. Ibid., p. 74.
21. Study, 7b: 487.
22. Surviving the Future, p. 38.
23. An Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 34.

24. Ibid., p. 108.
25. Study, 7b: 425.
26. An Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 100.
27. Arnold J. Toynbee, The World and the West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953, reprinted together with Civilization on Trial, Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 297.
28. An Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 97.
29. Study, 4: 534.
30. Ibid., p. 538.
31. Ibid., p. 543.
32. An Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 117.
33. Ibid., pp. 169-70.
34. Ibid., pp. 171-72.
35. Ibid., p. 173.
36. Study, 9: 636.
37. Study, 12: 94.
38. Study, 7b: 387.
39. Civilization on Trial, p. 216.
40. Experiences, p. 340.
41. Christianity Among the Religions of the World, p. 63.
42. Experiences, p. 322.
43. Study, 7b: 507.
44. Ibid., pp. 762-63.

CHAPTER V

POST-CHRISTIAN IDEOLOGIES: FALSE GODS AND CHRISTIAN HERESIES

For Toynbee, we have seen, Christianity is the soul of Western Civilization. The modern West, however, has become a post-Christian or ex-Christian civilization. The loyalty once given to Christianity has been transferred to ideologies; herein lies the explanation for the crisis of Western Civilization. The three post-Christian ideologies, nationalism, communism, liberalism, have all been in competition not only with each other, but also with Christian values. Toynbee regards nationalism as a reversion to the worship of the local community as practiced in ancient Greece and even earlier in the city-states of Sumeria. In communism's mission to convert and to unite mankind he sees a reversion to the worship of the world-state of Rome. Liberalism, or individualism, he interprets as a secular, and, therefore inadequate, expression of the Christian ideal of the dignity and value of an individual soul who is God's precious child. While nationalism has nothing in common with Christian values, it has adopted unfortunate features evidenced in the course of Christianity's history -- intolerance, fanaticism, and exclusiveness. Communism has acquired the Christian notion of social justice and liberalism the Christian precept of respect for the individual; but because both deny the spiritual roots of these ideals they may be regarded as Christian heresies. Because all

three ideologies are forms of man-worship they all represent spiritual regression.

These post-Christian ideologies, says Toynbee, are all substitute religions that Western man has adopted to fill the spiritual vacuum created by the demise of Christianity. For Toynbee, loss of faith is at the root of the crisis of the West and is the most critical problem of our time. These ideologies are religions, but instead of focusing on the spiritual presence behind the universe, as do higher religions, they worship forms of man's own power. While we consider it a mark of enlightenment to repudiate our ancestral higher religions, continues Toynbee, we hypocritically refuse to recognize that we have created new gods.

Enhi1, Athena, Baal, Pharaoh, and Caesar, the city-states Nippur, Athens, Sparta and Tyre and the Egyptian and Roman world-states were worshipped consciously as the gods that they were. France, Britain, the United States and Nicaragua are very gods of the same kind as Nippur, Athens, Sparta and Tyre; the Soviet Union and China are very gods of the same kind as the Egyptian and the Roman world-state; but their worshippers hesitate to hail them as the gods that they truly are.¹

Presented in these terms Toynbee considers the essential question of our age to be whether the world's higher religions can regain ground lost to these forms of man-worship, particularly to nationalism, the most powerful and dangerous post-Christian ideology.

Toynbee defines nationalism as "spirit which makes people feel and act and think about a part of any given

society as though it were the whole of that society."² By designating people as "insiders" and "outsiders," states Toynbee, nationalism represents a regression to tribalism; by compelling man to worship his local community "it is the political counterpart of polytheistic idolatry -- the monstrous association of false gods with God."³ As God is One so too is there a unity of humanity; this vision held by the prophets of all higher religions is at the center of Toynbee's thought. By corrupting this vision of universalism and by causing men to hanker after false gods, says Toynbee, nationalism has perverted man's spiritual development; by provoking fratricidal warfare amongst people that share a common civilization, it has hampered man's social progress. After studying all of man's civilizations beginning with ancient Sumeria, Toynbee concludes that nationalism has been responsible for "the death of no less than fourteen civilizations for certain, and perhaps of no less than sixteen, out of the twenty-one civilizations that had come into existence."⁴

Humanity's highest ideals, says Toynbee, have been expressed by the prophets of higher religions. Adherence to prophetic ideals enables man to overcome his natural self-centeredness and to recognize the oneness of mankind. Historically, the most formidable obstacle to the realization of these ideals has been the lower religion of nationalism; its narrow conception of humanity has set man

against man in unholy warfare and its deification of the parochial community has turned men away from the spiritual presence behind the universe. If twentieth-century man does not extricate himself from a tribal, neo-pagan, morally repellent nationalism, concludes Toynbee, it is doubtful that he will survive.

Toynbee believes that national states, because of incessant warfare, compare unfavorably with world-states. Today because of the annihilation of distance by modern technology and the threats to human survival stemming from nuclear weapons, pollution, and over-population, political pluralism is clearly opposed to the best interests of humanity. Nevertheless, nationalism persists as one of the strongest forces in the contemporary world. The powerful attraction that nationalism exercises, Toynbee suggests, results partly from emotional feelings that are a legacy from the food-gathering age when men lived in small, separated bands and acquired a tribal sense of "insiders" and "outsiders".

With the rise of civilization, man, impressed with his sensational victory over nature that enabled him to build cities, took to worshipping his own collective human power, that is he took to glorifying himself by idolizing his own political community. The gods that had previously represented the forces of nature now came to represent also cities and states. The wind-god Nanna became as well the god of city-state of Ur as later the olive-goddess

Athena would become the deity of the city-state of Athens. An element of religious devotion became injected into a person's feelings for his city. Thus in ancient times there already existed a relationship between nationalism and religion and a potential for fanaticism.

Toynbee seeks to comprehend modern nationalism by relating it to developments as old as man himself. Thus he sees nationalism infused with sentiments inherited from a food-gathering past. In Toynbee's spacious approach to history, nationalism represents a continuation of tribal patterns that extend back to the dawn of man. And since the food-gathering stage constitutes 99 per cent of human history, "it is natural that a human being's alienation from fellow human beings who are not his fellow tribesmen should have become an ingrained habit during this relatively immense period of time."⁵ Those original sentiments that separated tribes and later villages endured with the creation of man's first civilization. The divisiveness that showed itself in Sumerian civilization persists on a wider scale in the contemporary world. While this glance into man's distant and even remote past might provide some insight into the attraction and durability of parochial attitudes, to understand the nature of nationalism that has spread throughout the globe in our century, it is necessary to examine its evolution within the context of Western Civilization, for contemporary nationalism is one of the

exports of the West to the rest of the world.

Hellenic society duplicated the Sumerian pattern of a politically fractured civilization engaging in fratricidal warfare. Hellenism's failure to transcend a traditional parochialism, we have seen, caused its breakdown and eventual disintegration. Hellenism repeated a second error made by the Sumerians. It also committed an act of hubris by deifying collective human power, by having an ancient nature-god serve also as the god of a local city-state. To Toynbee this was a form of man-worship, for the Greek drew the morally sinful and intellectually arrogant conclusion that his polis, a man-made institution, deserved to be idolized. Moreover, the worship of the parochial community which was now represented by a god, injected an element of fanaticism in inter-city relations that could culminate in wars to the death. Worshipping a parochial community is a form of self-centeredness

and is consequently infected with the intellectual mistake and the moral sin of treating a part of the Universe as if it were the whole. . . . Since self-centeredness is innate in every living creature, it wins allegiance for any religion that ministers to it. It also inhibits any living creature that fails to break away from it from loving its neighbor as itself, and a total failure to achieve this arduous moral feat has a disastrous effect on social relations.⁶

Since God alone is worthy of worship this act of hubris had to end in disaster. Idolization of the local community, a false god, raised the psychological temperature of city-state warfare, a pattern that would be reproduced in other

civilizations and with a similar result -- breakdown and disintegration. And, Toynbee never fails to remind us, worship of the parochial community, with all the zeal that it is capable of arousing, has become the dominant religion of the modern world.

The Roman Empire ended fratricidal warfare by imposing order over the Mediterranean world. When the Roman world-state collapsed, the barbarian successor-states in the West did not immediately attract the allegiance of their subjects who looked back longingly upon the Roman universal state. It was not these post-Roman local states that won men's hearts, but the Roman Church which had replaced the Roman Empire as a force for unity and an object of loyalty. For much of the Middle Ages spiritual unity predominated over political parochialism. Local rulers were restrained in their narrow ambitions by the superior attracting force of a universal Church. However, conflicts between an over ambitious and misguided Church and proud princes culminating in the Babylonian Captivity and the Great Schism undermined the prestige of the Church. Neither the Holy Roman Empire nor the Catholic Church could overcome divisive political forces that began to emerge in the Middle Ages. Nor would the future belong to city-states modeled on a Hellenic pattern. In the fourteenth century, city-states began to decline leaving the field to the nascent national states whose fortunes had already begun to wax. The unity of Latin Christendom that began to show cracks in the Church-state

conflicts, was ultimately shattered by the Reformation, which

found instruments and allies in the parochial sovereign states as against the ecumenical Western Church, and in the parochial vernacular languages as against the oecumenical Latin language; and this movement towards putting treasure in parochial institutions was not confined to countries that were Protestant. Catholic Venice was equally insistent in asserting her local sovereign rights against the Vatican, and even Catholic Spain jealously maintained the patronage of the Crown in ecclesiastical appointments in the new Spanish Empire overseas.⁷

Modern nationalism sprouted on soil fertilized by the wreckage of Latin Christendom during the era of Renaissance and Reformation. The Renaissance's revival of classical culture, one of whose elements was a fierce devotion to the city-state, "raised Western nationalism to a new pitch of intensity."⁸ Modern man has remained infatuated with the Greeks and Romans, says Toynbee, because the ancients taught him how to infuse citizens with patriotic fervor, organize armies, and build a powerful state.

This pagan deification of the parochial community was imitated by the citizens of Florence, Milan, Genoa, and the other Italian cities, who allowed loyalty to their local city to predominate over allegiance to Respublica Christiana. Machiavelli gave intellectual expression and moral approval to this new outlook. From Machiavelli, says Toynbee, was derived the principle that

if the worship of a parochial community constituted the whole duty of its subjects, then any community which was the object of such worship must be a moral

absolute -- a moral universe in itself which could be subject to no transcendent moral law in its physical collisions with other representatives of its own species.⁹

In absorbing and surpassing Hellenic parochialism, the modern West has behaved according to the Machiavellian precept that the state was a non-moral institution. The revival of Hellenism, says Toynbee, ministered to Western man's "insatiable lust for power which was the inevitable ruling passion in hearts that had relapsed from Christianity into a pagan worship of a Collective Humanity," and he pushed "this resuscitated political ideology of Hellenism to extremes that had never been approached by the Hellenes themselves in their self-immolation on the altar of an idolized Leviathan."¹⁰ In elevating the state over Christian morality, the West expressed a defiance of its Christian heritage while conveniently ignoring the principal lesson of Hellenism, namely, "that this inordinate divisive mindedness was the chief cause of Hellenic civilization's downfall."¹¹ And the same fate will befall the modern world, insists Toynbee, if it fails to "exorcise this demon resolutely."¹²

A revived Hellenism was one fuel that has fed the furnace of nationalism. Modern Western nationalism, asserts Toynbee, has also been overheated by Christian fanaticism. The terrible ferocity of the Wars of Religion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries alienated humane people from Christianity. The devotion withdrawn from Christianity

was transferred to technology and secular ideologies -- nationalism, individualism, communism. Of the three post-Christian ideologies,

Nationalism is the most obsessive. At any rate, Nationalism usually prevails over the others when these come into conflict with it. The devotion that has been transferred from Christianity to Nationalism has detached itself from what is good in Christianity but has clung to what is evil in it. It has repudiated the ideals of love, self-sacrifice, and concern for mankind as a whole that are Christianity's virtues; it has retained the fanaticism that is the common vice of the religions of the Judaic family; and this sour wine, poured into Nationalism's constricting bottle has fermented there with explosive effects.¹³

Toynbee regards modern nationalism as a lower religion that worships collective human power instead of a higher spiritual reality. That man has been willing to sacrifice himself for this modern cult is an indication that nationalism "was in truth a religious revival in the spiritual vacuum left in human hearts by the evaporation of a higher religion."¹⁴ As a neo-pagan religion that mistakenly worships Leviathan instead of the One God, modern nationalism has undermined Western man's moral and spiritual development; it has led him away from Christianity, which Toynbee regards as the soul of Western Civilization.

Because modern nationalism has been power-driven by a fanaticism inherited from Christianity, it "is tribalism with a difference. The primitive religion has been deformed into an enormity."¹⁵ Convinced that they were in possession of the true faith, religious fanatics during the Wars

of Religion sought to impose spiritual unity by force; regarding the nation as the highest good, nationalist fanatics have sought to impose national unity by persecuting minorities and regimenting the population. The fusion of a revived Hellenic parochialism with Christian fanaticism aggravated fratricidal warfare and gave Western parochial sovereign states the capacity "to ruin their common civilization by ruining one another."¹⁶ Nationalism transformed the human community into a god, warfare into a holy crusade, atrocities into pagan sacrifices, traitors into heretics, citizens into true believers.

We have seen that for Toynbee religion is a perennial need of man, a component of human nature. Through religion man tries to comprehend and reconcile himself to the awesome reality of life and death. A human being, whether he admits to it or not, insists Toynbee, cannot live without some form of religion. When he rejects a higher religion that stresses selflessness, love, and universalism, he will only embrace a lower religion that heightens his innate egocentricity. Thus Toynbee interprets modern nationalism as a lower religion, for it selfishly worships the collective human power of an expanded tribe at the expense of the rest of humanity. Whereas a higher religion emancipates man from his innate self-centeredness, nationalism intensifies the brutal, irrational, and selfish side of human nature. Nationalism and higher religions are competing faiths. Christianity has sought to free man from the self-

destructive idolization of human power; by deifying the state, a human creation, nationalism has enmeshed man in sin. Christianity has aspired to a brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God while nationalism represents the "lamentable victory of parochialism over ecumenicalism."¹⁷ Although the spiritual message of higher religions is infinitely superior to the sin and idolatry evoked by nationalism, the power nationalism exercises over man has not been broken by the higher religions. In 1971 Toynbee concluded:

. . . in my belief, the worship of the collective human power of a fraction of the human race at the expense of the rest of the human race -- nationalism, in other words -- is the real religion today of a majority of people. Nationalism has been superseded only nominally by the 'higher' religions, each of which aims at converting the whole of mankind to its own prescription for putting the individual into touch with ultimate reality. Whether we profess to be followers of one of the historic higher religions or not, almost all of us are nationalists under the skin.¹⁸

Nationalism has surpassed in power and influence both individualism and communism, the other post-Christian ideologies. And in common with these other ideologies, it has been a poor substitute for Christianity, for it is "incapable of helping human beings to preserve their personalities,"¹⁹ which is a basic need of all men. Both competitive individualism and ant-like collectivism deprive the individual of his dignity by regarding him as an object. So, too, does tribal-minded nationalism.

Democracy is still another force that has increased the intensity of modern nationalism. At first glance,

observes Toynbee, it appears that democracy represents universalism not parochialism, the rights of man not the special destiny of a people. Democracy is characterized by

a spirit of fraternity which knows no bounds. . . . The natural field of action for Democracy is a field that embraces all Mankind; and it is on this range that its spiritual potency is beneficent. But when this potent spiritual driving-force is diverted into the mechanism of a parochial state, it not only ceases to be beneficent but becomes malignantly subversive. . . . Democracy imprisoned in parochial states degenerates into Nationalism.²⁰

By turning democracy into an agent of nationalism the parochial state system poisoned the political life of the modern world.

It is in the area of warfare that democracy has caused the most havoc. With the breakup of the religious unity of Western Christendom in the sixteenth century, war became infused with a sectarian religious fanaticism that magnified "the evil of war into an unprecedented enormity."²¹ By the eighteenth century there had been achieved a divorce between war and religion, the immediate effect of which was to reduce the intensity of warfare to the lowest level ever attained in Western history. Warfare in the eighteenth century was relatively civilized -- "temperate and moderate,"²² said Gibbon. Wars were waged for limited aims, casualty rates were low, and the civilian population remained uninvolved. The ferocity and mass emotions that had characterized the Wars of Religion had ended as warfare had been transformed into the 'sport of kings', a game played for limited stakes and devoid of passion. Armies were not

recruited by conscription and they did not live off the countryside; peace terms were not crushing and countries were not wiped off the map. Princes were forced to wage moderate warfare for there existed no great passion that could rally the nation to a total effort. In the eighteenth century many people regarded war in much the same manner as slavery--an ancient curse that was rapidly dissipating. It was the spiritual power of democracy that restored to war the ferocity displayed during the Wars of Religion. Democracy transformed the 'sport of kings' into la guerre totale. The limited warfare of the eighteenth century turned out to be only a brief interlude between two bouts of fanaticism, the earlier Wars of Religion and the later Wars of Nationality. Once the people had become a "nation in arms" fighting for national survival, warfare could no longer remain temperate and undecisive. During the French Revolution war became an ideological struggle and the flames of hatred fanned by mass emotions could not be extinguished by the rational and universal spirit of the philosophes. Parochial sovereign states now had the capacity to destroy their common Western Civilization.

The temperate warfare of the eighteenth century proved to be only temporary. Indeed this was to be expected for "the history of the first five thousand years of so-called 'civilization' provides ample evidence that in a society that is fragmented into a number of sovereign local states, contests between these states do not remain temperate even if

in tacit agreement they have been kept within bounds in their earlier stages."²³ The cultural benefits derived from political diversity are outweighed by the destructive capacity of fratricidal warfare which was the reason why "the histories of Sumerian, Syrian, and Greek societies. . . turned out to be tragedies."²⁴

Compounding the danger of democratic warfare was the emergence of militarism which made war into a cult, something desirable in itself and worthy of human worship. In the years from von Moltke to Hitler, states Toynbee, young men embraced the military virtues because they had been

starved of other kinds of spiritual bread. . . . These latter-day Western worshippers of the 'military virtues' are the epigoni of generations which were nurtured in the 'Christian virtues'; and they began to be starved of the traditional Christian morality, upon which their forbears had been brought up, when, at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the unbelief of a cultivated minority in the Western World began to infect the less sophisticated masses.²⁵

Rejecting the creed of Isaiah and Jesus for a barbaric cult of the sword--could there be a more depressing example of spiritual back-sliding?

Toynbee has called attention to a crucial development in the evolution of modern nationalism. In the process of feeding off democracy, nationalism destroys democracy's essential ideals. Liberalism nurtured nationalism and contributed to its success, but the momentum of nationalism could not be contained by liberal principles. World War I

and Nazism were the terrible fulfillment of the dangerous trends in European nationalism.

Another force that has contributed to nationalism's "demonic dynamism" is industrialism. Like democracy, industrialism is ecumenical in spirit, for it "will not work freely or effectively or beneficently except in so far as the World is organized into one single field of economic activity."²⁶ But when industrialism made its appearance, the Western world was already broken up into a multitude of petty political-economic units that erected barriers to economic integration. Entangled in the web of parochial states, industrialism, like democracy, has been unable to fulfill its essential nature. Instead of building a world order, industrialism, like democracy, has fortified the parochial state which seeks to promote its own economic interests at the expense of the rest of humanity.

Toynbee views the Industrial Revolution that began in the West during the eighteenth century as the "unmistakable counterpart of the economic revolution that had overtaken the Hellenic World in the sixth century B.C."²⁷ At that time the Greek city-states were becoming economically interdependent while remaining politically divided. Such an incongruity created intolerable tensions that triggered endemic interstate warfare. With the Peloponnesian War the Hellenic World entered its Time of Troubles which it never survived despite the reprieve granted it by the Roman Empire. The Western world has also become economically

interdependent, but, remaining politically fractured, it has waged ferocious fratricidal warfare.

The parochial-minded national state, created in a different social context, was not prepared to cope with the ecumenical forces of democracy and industrialism. The attempt to confine these new and dynamic forces within the framework of the national state, concludes Toynbee, resulted in the totalitarian state. Only a modification of parochial sovereignty could have dealt creatively with industrialism and democracy; perverted by their imprisonment within the national state, these two ecumenical forces contributed to the power of totalitarian nationalism.

The dangerous tendencies in modern Western nationalism culminated in National Socialism which was a repudiation of "the moral and religious essence of Western Christian culture."²⁸ In rejecting Christianity for their human god, Hitler, and his goddess, the German state, the German people had adopted a perverse neo-pagan religion. Toynbee believes that Nazism was not a peculiarly German phenomenon but a German expression of the crisis in Western Civilization--the rejection of Christianity and the pursuit of false gods. In the late seventeenth century enthusiasm for religion began to wane in a Western world disillusioned and disheartened by generations of religious conflicts. The decline of Christianity created a discomfiting spiritual vacuum which was filled by post-Christian ideologies, of which nationalism was the most powerful, and Nazism its

most malignant expression. The essential reason why Nazism won over the youth with astonishing ease was not force or propaganda but latent idealism searching for a cause. The spiritual vacuum that emerged with the decline of religion could not be filled by liberalism for its stress upon self-interest, utilitarianism, and commercialism "seemed to be extinguishing the vision without which society cannot endure."²⁹ To many young people National Socialism was a new faith. Toynbee wrote in 1933:

The truth seems to be that the enlightened skepticism of the eighteenth-century elite . . . had produced an immense and intolerable spiritual void--with the consequence that any new spiritual force, however primitive and crude, could count upon a welcome in the house thus swept and garnished. Viewed with a sympathetic eye, the neo-pagan movements might be regarded as a pathetic effort on the part of twentieth-century Western Youth, to begin again, from the bottom, the ascent of the spiritual ladder, by setting its foot clumsily on the lowest rung. The tragedy of the Western World, in this age, was its division against itself through a conflict between an ancestral Church which had lost its hold over the masses, and a generation which had gone a-whoring after false gods under the delusion that it was recapturing its lost spiritual birthright.³⁰

The experience of National Socialism contains lessons for the West in particular and mankind in general. The Nazi era demonstrated anew the precariousness of civilization, the fragility of reason, and the immutability of original sin. The glorification of Teutonic ancestors and the racial delusions about the "blond beast" indicated that a Germany disillusioned with Western Civilization was retreating into the darkness of the primeval forest where

the German tribes had originated. The conversion of the barbarians to civilization had not rooted out barbarism from the Western midst; in the form of National Socialism, barbarism "was taking its revenge by finding its way into the souls of its Western conquerors."³¹

But Nazism, insists Toynbee, was not merely a German response to defeat in World War I. "It marked the consummation. . . of a politico-religious movement, the pagan deification and worship of parochial human communities which had been gradually gaining ground for more than four centuries in the Western world at large."³² That a Western people could fall so low indicates that the West had not risen so high, that it is continually menaced by a morally perverse barbarism that it harbors within its own breast. For Toynbee, Nazism represented "one phase of the struggle between the spirit of Western Christendom and the spirit of a European barbarism which Christianity had sometimes charmed and had thereby partly tamed, but had never wholly exorcised."³³ The Nazi experience reinforced Toynbee's belief that civilizations are still experiments in which man has sought to rise above the level of the primitive and that these experiments often end in failure.

The moral catastrophe of Nazism, insists Toynbee, demonstrates the inadequacy of reason. The secular values of the Enlightenment, unbuttressed by Christian spirituality, are insufficient to restrain man's basest impulses. When

the West discarded Christian dogma in reaction to the savagery of the Wars of Religion, it also dispensed with Christian love, a loss both unforgivable and unendurable. After the Nazi experience it has become "impossible to retain Modern Western Man's latter day dogmatic belief in the inevitable progress of a secularized Western Civilization and in the self-perfectibility of a graceless Human Nature."³⁴

While Nazism emerged within Europe among a people that had been Christians for more than a thousand years, it was as much a human problem as it was a purely German or Western one, for within humanity there lurks

a vein of Original Sin in human nature everywhere to which Hitlerism makes a strong appeal. The moral is that civilization is nowhere and never secure. It is a thin cake of custom overlying a molten mass of wickedness that is always boiling up for an opportunity to burst out. Civilization cannot ever be taken for granted. Its price is eternal vigilance and ceaseless spiritual efforts.³⁵

The institution of the national state, and the ideology of nationalism have spread from their birthplace in Western Europe throughout the globe blazing "a trail of persecution, eviction, and massacre."³⁶ Nationalism which historically "has been by far the commonest cause of mortality among civilizations,"³⁷ has become the religion of most of humanity in the contemporary world. While the problems that threaten human survival can only be solved by a global effort, the number of parochial sovereign states has increased and the temperature of nationalism remains high. In a world that desperately requires global thinking, says Toynbee, we continue to worship "the collective power of a

fraction of the human race at the expense of the human race."³⁸ The lower religion of nationalism continues to be "the prime conditioner which enable the 'establishment' to turn men into soldiers and train them to kill their fellow human being without personal animosity but also without compunction."³⁹ War is an institutionalized form of violence that did not exist prior to the appearance of states; wars are waged by people who have achieved a large degree of political organization. Regarding war as "a parasite on the institution of local sovereignty,"⁴⁰ Toynbee insists that only by destroying the host can we eliminate the parasite. The need for a world-state has never been more pressing than today, for the persistence of nationalism in an age of global pollution, world-wide overpopulation, and atomic weapons is, for Toynbee, nothing less than "a death wish."⁴¹

In Toynbee's scheme, communism, like nationalism, is a post-Christian ideology; it is another form of **man-worship**, another example of the crude worship of Leviathan. Whereas the nationalist worships a part of humanity, his own parochial community, the communist worships collective humanity, but his faith is without the spiritual values that underlie the universalism of the higher religions. It is within this framework of religion that Toynbee has sought to explain communism.

For Toynbee the dynamic elements within the Marxist creed came not from Hegel but from Christianity and Judaism.

He considers communism to be less an applied philosophy and more a Christian heresy and only as such can it be properly understood. Marxists may repudiate religion in general, and Christianity in particular, but their faith "could have been produced only in a Christian environment."⁴² Marxism began as a Western Christian heresy that attacked a professedly Christian society for not adhering to the ideals of social justice proclaimed by early Christianity.

From Judaism, Marxism derived the apocalyptic vision of an inevitable and irresistible revolution decreed by God himself and designed to carry the Chosen People from its low position to an exalted one. Post-Exilic Jews dreamt of establishing through force and with God's approval a great worldly kingdom that would unite all Jews driven into exile. "Marx has taken the Goddess 'Historical Necessity' in place of Yahweh for his omnipotent deity, and the internal proletariat of the modern World in place of Jewry; and his Messianic Kingdom is conceived as a Dictatorship of the Proletariat."⁴³ Both Post-Exilic Jewry and Marxists conceived their messianic kingdom as a material kingdom of this world; both expected it to be achieved through violence. While the communists have dispensed with the belief in God they have retained the Judaic belief of the Chosen People. In the same way that Nazis regarded Germans as the chosen race, communists have viewed the proletariat as the chosen class, says Toynbee. Perhaps this predestinarian aspect of communism can be better understood by

comparing it with Calvinism, another predestinarian sect. Marxism supplied the proletariat of the nineteenth century, continues Toynbee, with the same weapon that Calvinism supplied the bourgeoisie of the sixteenth century. The doctrine of historical materialism gave the proletariat confidence that they were favored by the forces of the universe in the same manner that the doctrine of predestination gave assurance to the Calvinist bourgeoisie that they were the Elect.

The Christian element in Marxism is an ecumenicalism that has led Marxists, like Christians, to become missionaries of a 'Church Militant.' "'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,' is an injunction which Marx feels to be laid upon himself and which he lays in turn upon his followers. . . . It is not merely a revolution but a world revolution that the good Marxian is in duty bound to strive for."⁴⁴ Having dwelled in a Western society, Marx and Engels acquired the Christian precept, which they never questioned, of converting others so that all might be saved.

Besides this imperative to win converts, Marxism also derived from Christianity the ideal of social justice, asserts Toynbee. In the Acts of the Apostles there is depicted an authentic communist commonwealth:

The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. And with great power gave

the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the Apostles' feet; and distribution was made⁴⁵ unto every man according as he had need.

While the Church did not in fact establish an enduring communist community, this concern for one's brother became a part of the Christian tradition. Toynbee insists that a basic tenet of socialism--"'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs' was a genuine and important element of original Christian doctrine."⁴⁶

Communism's appeal, Toynbee feels, has stemmed from its religious nature. It fulfilled a spiritual need created by a declining Christianity; it appealed to man's idealism by giving him a noble cause to which he could dedicate body and soul.

Man is spiritually frustrated if he cannot invest his petty transient personal life without abiding spiritual significance by devoting it to some cause that manifestly transcends it in spiritual value; and Communism proffered to Man an objective that might seem worthier than any that had been visible on his mental horizon since the latter-day eclipse of Christianity. Communism called upon post-Christian Man to cure himself of a childish nostalgia for a justly discredited otherworldly Utopia by transferring his allegiance from a non-existent God to a very present Human Race to whose service he could devote all his adult powers by working for the attainment of an Earthly Paradise.⁴⁷

In addition to an ecumenical spirit and an ideal of social justice, says Toynbee, communism has torn out of the book of Christianity an unfortunate Christian practice, that of

fanaticism. In their conviction of the rightness of their cause, communists "had raised the emotional temperature of a political 'ideology' to a religious heat."⁴⁸ In becoming as fanatic as Christian zealots in the Wars of Religion, Bolsheviks displayed some of the worst qualities of human nature and soiled what had been a legitimate struggle for social justice. The Bolsheviks also acquired from Christianity (and from Russian tradition) an authoritarianism that deals ruthlessly with deviation from orthodoxy. Whereas during the seventeenth century the West had revolted against the passive acceptance of authority, this authoritarian component in the Christian tradition had not eroded in the East, with the result that "a nineteenth-century Russian revolutionary who had rejected the tenets of Eastern Orthodox Christianity might not have shaken off the Christian tradition of authoritarianism."⁴⁹

Communism's relationship to religion is demonstrated in still another way, states Toynbee. In a world where historic religions have been losing their influence over men's souls, communism has become "a convincing replacement of a no longer convincing devil."⁵⁰ Communism has performed a service for the Western world (and conversely capitalism for the Communist world) formerly performed by the Devil--frightening people into behaving and believing in a certain way.

While both the socialist and ecumenical features of

Marxism are rooted in Christianity, a crucial Christian element is not included in Marxism. Early Christian socialism, says Toynbee, taught that a Christian's concern for another's welfare that leads him to share his worldly goods, "is not a mere love of Man for Man. . . but is a spiritual relation to which God is a party as well as his human creatures."⁵¹ Christianity teaches that the brotherhood of man cannot be achieved without recognizing the fatherhood of God. Before man can reform his earthly city he must first be a citizen in the City of God.

Communism, in contrast to the higher religions, asserts Toynbee, cares nothing for the individual human personality, his dignity and his need for personal spiritual consolation and uplifting. Marx took a Christian principle and applied it exclusively to the material plane of life while he denied or ignored Christianity's spiritual message. The Marxist heresy substituted the pagan method of force for the Christian doctrine of love to achieve its mutilated vision of universalism. Nor has it come close to realizing its millenarian vision. Lenin claimed that communism, as it spread throughout the globe, would overcome differences between classes, nations, and races and unify mankind. We now recognize clearly, concludes Toynbee, that Lenin's vision turned out to be a new myth; communism has not proved capable of overcoming the age-old habit of parochialism.

Communism began as a post-Christian ideology that worshipped the idol of collective humanity. However, under Stalin Soviet Communism became wedded to Russian nationalism and the worship of the tribal divinity predominated over the idolization of collective humanity. Nationalism won out over communist internationalism. The victory of Stalin the nationalist over Trotsky the internationalist demonstrated that the ideology of nationalism is both incompatible with and stronger than the universal elements within communism. Communism had prostituted itself to the interests of the Russian fatherland.

Stalin's victory over Trotsky presaged what has become a world-wide phenomenon, the triumph of national communism over international communism. "Communism has now been worsted by nationalism," wrote Toynbee in 1967, "as decisively as liberal democracy has been. Within the Communist part of the world nationalist rivalries are today as bitter and as divisive as they are within the non-Communist part. . . . Communists, as well as liberal democrats, usually prove to be nationalists first whenever a conflict of interests arises between their ideology and their country."⁵²

From their inception Toynbee viewed Soviet communism and Nazism as two forms of idolatry that worshipped God's creation, man, instead of the Creator himself, "and by

comparison with the fundamental point of likeness, the diversity in the shape of the idols which they respectively set up was a difference of minor importance." Both ideologies "erupting out of the mysterious lower depths of the soul of Man,"⁵³ were expressions of an original sin that is a component of human nature. Both sought victory over liberalism, the third post-Christian ideology, which had been triumphing in the West.

The liberal conception of personal liberty, asserts Toynbee, originated in the Christian belief of the sacredness of the individual soul. However, as a post-Christian ideology, liberalism had removed a religious sanction from the ideal of individual rights. In separating freedom from its Christian context and interpreting it only in secular terms, insists Toynbee, liberalism could never capture men's souls the way Christianity had; it was destined to remain an uninspiring doctrine. While liberals preached enlightened self-interest, the totalitarian ideologies offered a dynamic faith, an anti-liberal

ideal which sounded some of the notes of the theistic religions. The common gospel of Communism and Fascism was that, after a spell of unfruitful and ignoble sloth, Man was now at last waking up again to his true nature, which was to live dangerously for mighty ends that transcended the life of the individual. And a convert to this post-war pagan faith might perhaps persuade himself that the stirring times which had sunk into torpor towards the close of the seventeenth century... were now returning, and that the new 'ideologies' which were the harbingers of this inspiring revolution in human affairs were destined to carry all before them.⁵⁴

The Western belief in the sacredness of the individual, maintains Toynbee, derives from the Christian precept that a soul has supreme value in the sight of God. If Western liberalism is to maintain itself against the onslaught of totalitarian ideologies, freedom must mean more than just secular civil liberty; men must again feel with conviction the original meaning of liberty in the West--respect for the individual because he is a precious child of God.

In repudiating a religious sanction for individual liberty which had been provided by a Christian belief in the value of each and every soul in the sight of God, a post-Christian Modern Western homo democraticus had reduced his pretension to individual liberty ad absurdum; for the claims that were now being put forward by this homunculus merely in his own right, and no longer in God's name, could not stand against the claims of a totalitarian state to sacrifice the individual liberty of any and every homunculus on the altar of an idolized corporate humanity, the great beast-god Leviathan.⁵⁵

These post-Christian ideologies are not only in conflict with each other, they are also in conflict with the higher religions. The ideologies are all variants of man-worship and consequently in opposition to the higher religions that worship only absolute reality. Only the higher religions can offer man the spiritual sustenance that he requires; only they respect man's dignity, in contrast to the totalitarian ideologies in which the

human being is reduced to being a human ant in a human ant-heap. This is contrary to human nature. Man is not a social insect; he is a person. In liberating his personality, the higher religions have put him, at long last,

in possession of his human birth-right. Man does not exist for society's sake. His goal is communion and harmony with ultimate spiritual reality, and society exists for the sake of this personal spiritual quest. The higher religions have taught Man this truth about himself. It seems improbable that the ideologies will be able to make him forget it."⁵⁶

FOOTNOTES

1. Change and Habit, p. 173.
2. Study, 1: 9.
3. Study, 4: 407-8.
4. Study, 9:442.
5. Change and Habit, p. 102.
6. An Historian's Approach to Religion, pp. 35-6.
7. Ibid., p. 21.
8. Change and Habit, p. 109.
9. Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs, 1936 (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 116.
10. Study, 9:3.
11. Change and Habit, p. 109.
12. Hellenism, p. 253.
13. Change and Habit, p. 110.
14. Study, 7b: 521.
15. Study, 5: 161.
16. Study, 9:443.
17. Ibid.
18. Surviving the Future, p. 65.
19. Experiences, p. 325.
20. Study, 4: 162-63.
21. Study, 4: 143.
22. Experiences, p. 203.
23. Arnold J. Toynbee, ed., The Crucible of Christianity (New York: World Publishing Co. & London: Thames & Hudson, 1969), p. 39.
24. Ibid.

25. Study, 4: 645.
26. Ibid., p. 169.
27. Study, 9: 444.
28. Change and Habit, p. 18.
29. Study, 7b: 520.
30. Survey of International Affairs, 1935, pp. 133-34.
31. Study, 9:450.
32. Survey of International Affairs, 1933, p. 111.
33. Ibid., p. 202.
34. Study, 7b: 289.
35. Acquaintances, p. 294.
36. World and West, p. 280.
37. Study, 9: 442.
38. Surviving the Future, p. 65.
39. Ibid., p. 116.
40. Experiences, p. 84.
41. Change and Habit, p. 41.
42. Ibid., p. 179.
43. Study, 5: 178-179.
44. Ibid., p. 179.
45. Acts IV. 32-5, cited in Study, 5: 582.
46. Survey of International Affairs, 1934, p. 356.
47. Study, 8: 469.
48. Study, 7b: 535.
49. Arnold J. Toynbee, et. al., The Impact of the Russian Revolution 1917-1967 (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 78.

50. Ibid., p. 31.
51. Study, 5: 585.
52. The Impact of the Russian Revolution 1917-1967, p. 5.
53. Survey of International Affairs, 1936, p. 29.
54. Ibid., p. 23.
55. Study, 7b: 543, ftn.
56. Change and Habit, pp. 176-77.

CHAPTER VI

TECHNOLOGY: ANOTHER IDOL

In Toynbee's scheme, the spiritual vacuum created by the West's turning away from Christianity, particularly after the disastrous Wars of Religion, was filled by the false god, nationalism and inadequate Christian heresies, communism and liberalism. Still another idol, technology began to attract the Western soul alienated from its ancestral religion.

Toynbee matured in an age when advances in science and technology were considered the finest achievements of Western Civilization. While most observers equated these advances with progress, Toynbee has consistently focused on the dangers of technology. In the first volume of the Study, Toynbee stated that "there is no assurance that the modern Western Industrial System is the best regime under which to live and labor."¹ By disposition Toynbee feels uncomfortable with gadgets and machines; through study and reflection, he has concluded that improvements in technique are not the criteria by which to measure a civilization's progress, for there are many examples of improvements in techniques in static and declining civilizations.

While the technical advances of the Neolithic Revolution prepared the way for the emergence of civilization, nevertheless, it was still an act of human will, a

creative leap of the human spirit, that enabled the Sumerians to advance to civilization. All the arrested civilizations attained a high level of technique but these civilizations remained static. The Polynesians, for example, excelled as navigators and the Eskimos as fishermen, but these achievements did not spur growth. Advances in technique, are often a token of decline particularly since man has demonstrated an unhappy talent for channeling technological advances into the service of the military machine. For example, the military technique of the Ancient World attained its zenith in the time of Caesar yet "the same generation saw the Hellenic Civilization enter upon the penultimate stage in its decline and fall." The histories of other civilizations provides significant evidence that "it is not the growth of a civilization but its arrest and breakdown and disintegration that goes hand in hand with the improvements in its military technique."²

It is not surprising that progress in military techniques hinders social progress because war is "so manifestly an anti-social activity,"³ but there are numerous instances where improvements in agricultural and industrial techniques are accompanied by a decline in the level of civilization. The introduction of large scale plantation agriculture in Rome with the accompanying increase in slave labor increased production but the social effects were grave--the destruction of an independent

peasantry and the emergence of an alienated urban proletariat.

The triumphant march of physical science worries Toynbee more than it impresses him, for it is moral and spiritual growth that he most admires. Moreover, human nature's capacity for evil has been greatly heightened by placing at man's disposal technical facilities of enormous power. While man has expressed enormous pride in his technology, he needs constant reminder that "it is not the essence of humanity, and is not even the feature of human nature that is the most crucial for mankind's existence, survival, and well-being."⁴ For Toynbee man is more than homo faber, the tool maker:

The distinctive spiritual features of human nature, which are the most significant marks of being human, are known to us, not through any material products of human work, but through a human being's spiritual encounters with his fellow human beings, with himself, and with the ultimate spiritual reality in the Universe.⁵

Toynbee regards moral and spiritual growth as far more important for mankind than science and technology. Morality is the foundation of human society; and without society even science and technology would not have progressed, for they require the cooperation that society provides.

While morality is more necessary to society and to man's well being than is technology, states Toynbee, man has been brilliantly successful in manipulating nature and less than adequate in his relations with his fellow man. While man has demonstrated an extraordinary talent for

comprehending and mastering physical nature; he has not shown the same talent for spiritual and moral development. There is an imbalance to man's nature; he has been endowed "with much greater ability for understanding and mastering non-human nature than for mastering himself, learning how to live in peace and friendship with his fellows, and putting himself in spiritual harmony with the presence behind the universe."⁶ Since pre-historic times there has existed a morality gap which is "growing wider as technology has been making cumulative progress while morality has been stagnating." By a morality gap Toynbee means that "we have never been adequate spiritually for handling our material power."⁷ Our possession of material power requires a spiritual counterforce, but our spiritual development has not kept pace with our mastering of nature. And in the last three hundred years the gap has widened. Because of our moral backwardness, our lack of love and wisdom, we have turned technological advances into social calamities.

In the Middle Ages the inspired saint was the ideal of Western Christendom; in the modern age the technician has replaced the saint as Western man's personal ideal. This transference of allegiance from saint to technician began in the seventeenth century and has had enormous implications for mankind. Repelled by the violence and fanaticism of the Wars of Religion, disillusioned intellectuals withdrew their allegiance from Christianity, and

sought to fill the vacuum left in their hearts and minds "not by some alternative authoritative system but by an experimental and a technological bent that were latent in the genius of Western Civilization and, indeed, in Human Nature itself."⁸ This transference of interest from religion to technology and the accompanying rejection of authority in favor of the open mind of science was both morally and intellectually a revolutionary act. The principal motive behind this altering of human goals was the displeasure with religious fanaticism and theological debate; the former was destructive of human life, the latter barren of intellectual stimulation. Science and technology offered more promising opportunities for the human intellect than did theology.

In the West technology gained a momentum unprecedented in human history. The ground had been cleared for the deification of technology and the idolization of the technician. Exhausted by a hundred years of fratricidal religious Wars, the West would now push religion to the background and concentrate instead upon physical science. Henceforth technology would advance without the restraining hand of religion; utility would not be instructed by the spirit. The seventeenth-century prophets of technology called for man's progressive conquest of non-human nature, a goal which seemed close to realization by the twentieth century. As technology moved from triumph to triumph it came to be "admired as a magic key which was going to unlock

the door into an Earthly Paradise by solving all the problems that, in pre-Newtonian 'Days of Ignorance', had either baffled Man or been ignored by him."⁹

For Toynbee this redirecting of the intellect away from a traditional concern with religion to the domination of physical nature was "a testimony to the strength and to the repulsiveness of Original Sin;"¹⁰ it was man again behaving as if he were the highest spiritual presence in the universe. And because man remains as sinful as ever, he has misused his technological power. Toynbee urges man to shift his intellectual energy away from conquering physical nature to understanding and improving human behavior, and to treading that spiritual path that leads to God. Towards this end, the mental tools forged by science and technology should not be discarded, but should find their principal use in the liberal arts and social sciences not the mechanical arts.

Since the beginning of human history, some three million years ago, man has sought to gain control over his environment, to become the master rather than the slave of physical nature. In the past three centuries technology has not only subdued nature, it has also created an artificial environment fraught with danger to the human spirit.

Man has now decisively overcome Nature by his technology; but the victor has been technology, not Man himself. Man has merely exchanged one master for another, and his new master is more overbearing than his former one, Man is still the slave of his environment; but this is now the environment that he has created for himself, not the environment with which Nature originally

endowed him. Nature used to chastize Man with whips; Man's own technology is now chastizing Man with scorpions.¹¹

This new man-made environment "is more uncongenial, tyrannical, and psychologically disturbing than the old one, and this exchange is one of the causes of the present world-wide unrest, conflict, violence, and mutual frustration of human wills."¹² In his own life, says Toynbee, he "has seen the most advanced devices of science and technology misused for the cold-blooded, well-organized commission of crimes that have surpassed all previous crimes of which we have surviving records."¹³ Can man cope with the problems thrust upon him by accelerating industrialization? Can he use intelligently the enormous power at his disposal?

The subconscious, emotional, irrational component of the human psyche, says Toynbee, cannot keep pace with the hard driving intellect, the other layer of man's psyche. Man is finding it increasingly more difficult to adjust to the rapid cultural transformations caused by technology's momentum. The mounting gap between what our intellect conceives and what our heart is capable of absorbing is causing a psychic catastrophe, for we are finding it more difficult to adjust to rapid and revolutionary cultural upheavals resulting from the explosion of science and technology. The emotions of urban man have been shaped by more than two million years spent as a food gatherer and hunter, but "the head--rational-minded and well-informed though it boasts itself to be--has long ago

forgotten the pre-agricultural Garden of Eden in which the heart is still dreamily roaming. Till the head understands the heart, it cannot hope to influence it."¹⁴ The technological revolution initiated by the West has turned into a "psychic tidal wave" that threatens the whole of mankind, for the techniques of Western Civilization have spread throughout the globe. The quantity and rate of cultural change demanded by this ferocious march of technology is causing mankind to reel.

Regimentation is one price we pay for sociality. Even food gatherers and hunters who did not live severely regimented lives developed social organizations that imposed requirements on the group. Beginning with the first economic revolution, the Neolithic Revolution of 9,000 years ago, man has had to submit to greater regimentation in order to enjoy his greater affluence. It required an enormous amount of discipline for the hunter to settle down to the regimented life of the farmer. With the advent of mechanization the screw of regimentation tightened even further; the urban artisan and merchant were less free than the farmer. Technology has enabled man to vanquish inanimate nature, but in doing so man has become a slave to his own creation. For the new working class of ex-agricultural workers the industrial plant "bore harder on human souls than any tyranny of Inanimate Nature to which they had ever been exposed."¹⁵ Toynbee views early working class efforts to resist technology's demands for

discipline as "an heroic struggle to keep human souls free from regimentation by Leviathan." Workers resisted the regimentation of the factory system because it took all the zest out of work. In the pre-industrial age artisans had derived a sense of accomplishment from the finished product that they had created. This joy of craftsmanship was denied the modern factory hand whose work "had become intrinsically impersonal, monotonous, and infantile."¹⁶

In the twentieth century the middle class, which has been abandoning private **entrepreneurship**, its traditional field of endeavor, in favor of public service or employment in large corporations, has also felt the pernicious effect of the industrial system. This change from self-employment to working for giant impersonal agencies has altered the ethos of the middle class, for tending "the machinery of a highly organized state administering many millions of subjects was, indeed, as soul-destroying a task as stoking a furnace, minding a powerloom or performing a repetitive act of scientifically managed physical movements in an assembly plant."¹⁷

Urban industrial workers and office workers, unlike skilled artisans of the pre-industrial age take no pride in their work. Having lost their enthusiasm for work, they live only for salaries and for recreation:

'Recreation' is a very significant word.
Re-creation: the suggestion is that work

dis-creates the worker, that it makes him sub-human or non-human, and that therefore he has to spend his time when off work in making himself human again. Before the Industrial Revolution work itself was recreation.. . . This divorce between work and zest makes for unhappiness.¹⁸

Work has become psychologically sterile, devoid of the excitement experienced by the hunter and the feeling of accomplishment derived by the farmer. The psychic strain resulting from the daily monotony of factory and office leads some people to turn to violence for relief. Urban violence is one of the consequences of work that is psychologically unfulfilling.

It is not surprising that the bored factory-worker's 'recreation' in his leisure hours sometimes takes the form of anti-social violence and destructiveness. This irrational behavior can be explained rationally, even if the victim of mechanization is himself unaware of the reason why he is running amok. He is taking his revenge on society for an injury that society has done to him; and this injury is a serious one.¹⁹

The monotony of work is only one cause of the psychological distress that marks our lives in mechanized cities. There is also the spiritually stultifying effects of pollution, noise, traffic jams, dirt, ugliness, and the separation from nature. We earn our livelihoods in the cities but seek to escape from them. We live in suburbs, vacation in what remains of the countryside, and spend our retirement in distant regions. We are alienated not only from the work we do but from the cities in which we labor. In 1969 Toynbee suggested that perhaps we have fashioned a new type of warfare, which may in reality be

the Third World War, "a war not between states or peoples, but between personality and technology."²⁰ Underlying student riots, separatist movements, black militancy, and the unrest of the poor, stated Toynbee, "is the effacement of the human personality by the 'brave new world' that has been conjured into existence"²¹ by the advance of science and technology. The Third World War in which we are now presently engaged is a revolt against depersonalization, an expression of rage against a tyrant technology that turns a person into a thing.

Historically, only a minority within a minority has had the self-discipline and intellectual curiosity to make use of leisure creatively, and they gave mankind unique achievements in the arts and sciences. The attitudes and interests of this culturally creative minority are not easily transmitted. Toynbee fears that the lavishing of leisure on the unprepared masses leads to cultural deterioration. "The outcome of this ruinous cultural 'new deal'" could lead to "the spiritual wilderness which Plato had dismissed as a "Commonwealth of Swine" and Aldous Huxley had satirized as a 'Brave New World.'"²²

Technology is creating an abundance of leisure, but industrialized man "often positively dreads leisure because it confronts him with his own self, isolated terrifyingly in the 'lonely crowd.'"²³ Modern man spends his leisure in a "sub-human" way, principally as a passive spectator of television and sporting events. In this coming age of

leisure Toynbee wants man to preserve his human birthright by engaging in intellectual, artistic and, above all, spiritual activities.

The mechanized city of the industrial age has replaced the kind of city that had been familiar to man for 5,000 years. Until the outbreak of the Industrial Revolution cities occupied only a small part of earth's surface. "The general pattern of human settlement was a sprinkling, at wide intervals, of market-towns, each surrounded by its own narrow circle of fields and pastures and each insulated from its nearest neighbors by the wilderness."²⁴ Industrialization has altered this pattern. The size and number of cities have increased. Mechanized cities are coagulating into megalopolies which themselves are spreading out and approaching each other. The megalopolies of the world are beginning to coalesce to form a new type of city, an Ecumenopolis -- a world encompassing city broken up only by "surviving remnants of greenery." The new wilderness will not be forests but something more fearful -- "a continuum of streets and buildings." Without intelligent planning the coming Ecumenopolis threatens to become a "world-wide shanty town."²⁵

There is also the enormous psychological adjustment confronting uprooted peasants as they stream into the cities. "To be catapulted into megalopolis straight out of Arcadia is to be given a shock that may turn an innocent countryman into an urban criminal lunatic."²⁶ The

new conditions of work are intolerable for a former farmer; they distort his human nature.

Man is not a cipher, not a reference-number, not a computer-card; he is a living soul. To make his working conditions tolerable for him is necessary, and to achieve this is much, but it is still not enough. Man cannot live in a state of spiritual rootlessness; deracination threatens to drive him mad or to goad him into taking to criminal courses, and this threat hangs over all the hundreds of millions of human beings who are now streaming into the slums and shanty-towns of rising World-City out of the villages in which they and their ancestors have been living since the invention of agriculture.²⁷

Historically man has felt a close attachment to his city, regarding it with love and pride. Thucydides, Saint Paul, Cicero, Machiavelli, Goethe all expressed warm sentiments for their native cities. Inhabitants of modern mechanized cities do not possess these feelings of affection. Congestion, pollution, traffic jams, urban violence and the impersonal nature of modern city life which reduces people to objects and IBM cards have all contributed to the general malaise that pervades our mechanized cities. And the future Ecumenopolis threatens to be a welter of slums broken up occasionally by clusters of factories and offices and islands of middle-class housing. Its inhabitants will be divided even more strongly by racial tensions and class conflicts for the increase in material wealth accruing from technology has benefited only a minority of the world's population. The Industrial Revolution has by no means eliminated that inequality of wealth which has

existed since the onset of civilization.

Technology has led to three man-made menaces that threaten the survival of mankind: nuclear weapons, pollution, including the using up of irreplaceable natural resources, and overpopulation. Some thirty thousand years ago man's technological advances enabled him to gain the upper hand over non-human nature. Neither non-human life nor inanimate nature could eliminate the human species armed with technology. Man's future existence seemed assured. Because technology has grown into a Frankenstein, "Man. . . is a vastly more formidable enemy for man than any non-human enemy that man has yet encountered."²⁸

Toynbee consistently has warned that we should focus on the limitations of science and technology rather than overrate their achievements. "Our greatest need is for spiritual improvement in ourselves and in our relations with our fellow human beings, but this is a need that science and technology in themselves cannot meet."²⁹ Science has not provided the answers to man's most distressing problems. It has not cured man of his sinfulness or alleviated his sense of insecurity. "Above all, it has not helped him to break out of the prison of his inborn self-centeredness into communion or union with some reality that is greater, more important, more valuable, and more lasting than the individual himself."³⁰

The solution to the problems presented by modern technology, Toynbee argues, is not the continued acceleration

of technology; growth for its own sake operates like a cancer cell. Perhaps said Toynbee, in 1956, rather astutely, there will develop in the later decades of the twentieth century "a revulsion against Science and Technology, like the revulsion against Religion in the later decades of the seventeenth century." Former devotees will repudiate what they had adored because they will realize that technology proved "to be a shocking vent for Original Sin and a serious threat to Man's welfare and perhaps even to his existence. If Voltaire were to cast himself for an avatar in the twentieth century, perhaps his war-cry, this time, would be: 'La technique, voilà l'ennemi! Écrasez l'infâme!'"³¹

In the fifth century B.C., Socrates, finding the theories of the Ionian natural philosophers inadequate for dealing with human problems, turned away from a study of nature to the study of man and society. Toynbee calls for a similar reorientation. He yearns for a modern Socrates who would convince man to channel his energies to developing his moral and spiritual potential, who would instruct man in the proper use of technology. The techniques and tools created by man's intellect can be enormously effective in bettering the human condition but "we have not the spiritual power or understanding or goodness to use these tools right. . . . We need another Socrates."³²

Consistent with his philosophy of history, Toynbee

sees a heightening of spiritual energies and a slowing down of the pace of technology as the answer to the dilemmas of the industrial age. We should not regard technological progress as automatic. Man can choose technological regress but this requires a radical reorientation of our attitudes and priorities.

A heightening of spirituality will turn us away from idolizing wealth and power which we purchase "at the price of individual unhappiness for ourselves and of discord with each other."³³ It will lead to a rehumanizing of education stressing the study of man for the purpose of improving ourselves and bettering our relations with others. Particularly, if we learn from Eastern religions which unlike Christianity do not regard nature as something that God gave man to exploit, we might treat the natural environment and non-human life with greater care and respect. Toynbee considers it possible that a new generation of intellectuals, following the example of Socrates, will focus on narrowing the morality gap rather than pushing forward the frontiers of science and technology. He sees signs of such a reorientation occurring in the United States in the last third of the twentieth century.

It should be made clear that Toynbee is not urging a reversion back to a pre-industrial way of life. Without modern technology we could never support the planet's exploding population which is itself a result of advances

in science. He does call for a technological slowdown and a redirecting of our interests and talents towards human needs. Guided by a renewed spiritual awareness and by new insights into human nature and human society arrived at by the transference of intellectual energy away from technology and towards the liberal arts, man may yet humanize the coming world city.

To humanize Ecumenopolis, says Toynbee, it will have to be broken up into numerous small, self-contained, sub-units, the size of an ancient Greek city-state or a medieval town. Each of these sub-units would be adjacent to a country area that would remain permanently undeveloped. Within these cities there would be still smaller units, wards that would promote a sense of neighborliness. They would be so designed that youngsters could go to school and housewives shop without having to cross streets travelled by autos. The closeness of the rural village will be transplanted to urban areas and men "will have a chance of becoming once more a member of a community."³⁴ By decentralizing the world-city we can cure the loneliness of city life and ease the transition for the multitudes of new city dwellers arriving from the countryside. By restoring a sense of community to inhabitants of cities, by treating them as persons and not as things, serial numbers or ciphers, and by not ignoring their legitimate grievances, we can reduce the level of violence.

The principal present cause of violence . . . is the effacement of human personality by the more and more impersonal organization of human affairs. We have to find ways of enabling people once again to participate personally in discussions and decisions that are of personal concern to them. . . . Man's personality is now being dwarfed by the quantities, magnitudes, and speeds with which his triumphant technology has overwhelmed him.³⁵

To survive the future we shall have to alter the notion that the fruits of technology belong only to the immediate producers; instead we shall have to share with the whole of mankind the material wealth produced by technology.

We must also change our attitude towards work and unemployment.

We shall have to overcome the feeling that it is almost disgraceful to be unemployed in the technical sense of not being employed on work for which one is paid a salary. The Buddha and Jesus were unemployed in this sense -- that is to say, in economic terms. They would have been labelled in the present world as being unproductive economically and therefore unsatisfactory. But no one would venture to say that they were in fact unproductive. It is only if we were to confine our definition or productivity to material production that we could call the Buddha and Jesus unproductive.³⁶

The world-city must not only meet man's material needs, but it must also provide him with an outlet for his spiritual energies. Technology should assist man in achieving the true purpose of life which is spiritual. Towards this end we shall have to reeducate industrial man enabling him to make proper use of his leisure, to find satisfaction in "thought and art, and religion. . . the

fields in which the spiritual side of human nature can find infinite scope. . . . If we can succeed in doing this, we may see a new flowering of culture-- a second Renaissance -- instead of the development of a parasitic society, which, like the urban proletariat in the Roman Empire, lives for 'bread and circuses' and turns savage if it is not given to them."³⁷

Mankind possesses the administrative and technological means to solve the problems of our industrial age. The principal barrier to effective action is a political one. Although the whole of mankind is being knit together economically and culturally by the outpouring of Western Civilization in the past few centuries, it remains divided politically and ideologically. But dealing with the complex and interrelated problems of the world-city requires a world government. The survival of mankind depends upon our ability to create a global federation.

No state on any geographical scale that falls short of the global scale can contain and administer a World-City whose geographical ramifications are going to be global by definition. The coming of the World-City is a certainty, but the creation of a world-government is not; and if we allow ourselves to be overtaken by the arrival of the World-City without having set up, to manage it, the world-government that it requires, we shall bring catastrophe on ourselves for certain. We have therefore to act before we find ourselves confronted with the terrifying prospect of the World-City's coming to birth in an administrative chaos. This means, in the first place that the 125 sovereign independent states that now divide between them the land-surface of our planet will have to reconcile themselves into a world-wide federation.³⁸

In his analysis of the relationship between technology and civilization Toynbee reaches conclusions consistent with his philosophy of history. Advances in techniques are not, indices of progress; a civilization may be in decline despite its technological achievements. Technology has become for modern man an object of worship. By idolizing technology, which is after all merely a human creation, man has diverted his energies away from God, who alone is worthy of human worship. Today we are paying the price for this idolization of technology; we now realize that in technology we have created a monster that can deaden our souls, destroy our bodies, and ruin our planet. Nuclear weapons, pollution, and overpopulation, all products of technology, threaten mankind with extinction.

Toynbee, as we have seen, regards man's higher religions as a superior achievement than his technology. By revitalizing our lives with the spiritual insights of religion, he claims, we can acquire the compassion needed to cope with the problems of an industrial age; by redirecting our intellectual energies away from machines towards human needs, we can acquire the knowledge and wisdom to deal effectively with these problems. A technological slow down, a spiritual revival, and the entrance of our finest intellects into the liberal arts and social sciences offer mankind a hope for surviving the future.

In the seventeenth century man began to explore the

universe from a mathematico-physical orientation, breaking with the spiritual world view of Christianity. Now, three centuries later, insists Toynbee, we must wrench ourselves away from a singular attachment to mathematics and physics and make a fresh start with a spiritual approach. Of course this does not mean reverting to a pre-Copernican view of the universe or abandoning the mental apparatus developed in the last three hundred years but utilizing reason for real, not artificial human needs.

We live in a world that is being increasingly united economically and culturally by the exporting of Western science, technology, administrative methods, and education. But the planet remains divided politically because of nationalism, another Western export. The problems posed by technology are not capable of piecemeal solutions, asserts Toynbee, but require a world-wide effort. A prerequisite for this global effort is international cooperation on a political level--some type of world-state.

FOOTNOTES

1. Study, 1:3.
2. Study, 3: 167.
3. Ibid., p. 168.
4. Change and Habit, p. 11.
5. Ibid., p. 11.
6. Surviving the Future, p. 40.
7. Ibid., p. 41.
8. An Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 184.
9. Ibid., p. 233.
10. Ibid., p. 288.
11. Experiences, p. 326.
12. Surviving the Future, p. 30.
13. Experiences, p. 292.
14. Change and Habit, pp. 58-9.
15. Study, 9:565.
16. Ibid, p. 567.
17. Ibid., p. 573.
18. Surviving the Future, p. 32.
19. Change and Habit, p. 217.
20. Arnold J. Toynbee, "A Substitute for War," Long Island Press, May 3, 1969, p. 13.
21. Ibid.
22. Study, 9: 612.
23. Surviving the Future, p. 93.
24. Arnold J. Toynbee, Cities on the Move (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 33.

25. Ibid., p. 34.
26. Change and Habit, p. 208.
27. Cities on the Move, p. 245.
28. Arnold J. Toynbee, "For the First Time in 30,000 Years," World View 15 (March 1972): 5.
29. Surviving the Future, p. 47.
30. Ibid., p. 46.
31. An Historian's Approach to Religion, p. 238.
32. Surviving the Future, p. 43.
33. Ibid.
34. Cities on the Move, p. 245.
35. Arnold J. Toynbee, "Mankind's Moral Malady," in Larry Ng, ed., Alternatives to Violence (New York: Time-Life Books, 1968), p. 159.
36. Surviving the Future, p. 95.
37. Ibid., p. 96.
38. Cities on the Move, pp. 215-16.

CHAPTER VII

THE WEST IN ITS TIME OF TROUBLES: HUBRIS AND SIN

Toynbee's understanding of the crisis of Western Civilization derives from his conception of higher and lower religions, his theory of challenge-and-response, his interpretation of Hellenism, and his identification of the true spirit of the West with Christianity. Is the West in decline? Is it caught up in a similar rhythm of breakdown and disintegration that ruined Hellenism, the parent of the West? Before turning directly to Toynbee's analysis of the crisis confronting the modern and contemporary West, let us summarize his conception of the nature and course of Western history.

Toynbee sees Western Civilization emerging on the ruins of the Roman Empire's western provinces about the year 700 A.D. Christianity served as the midwife for Western Civilization when Hellenic civilization had collapsed in the western Roman Empire. For Toynbee, Christianity not Greek humanism or modern liberal humanism is the distinctive feature of Western Civilization. The emergence of Christianity he sees as a spiritual advance; the thrust towards secularism beginning with the Renaissance is a lamentable example of spiritual retrogression, for it has transformed the West into a civilization of the same order as pre-Christian Hellenic civilization. The West's enduring achievement, insists Toynbee, is not its science

but its religion, Christianity, which "will continue to be a living spiritual force in the World for thousands of years after our Western Civilization has passed away."¹

The medieval Church, to its credit, says Toynbee, aspired to establish a Western commonwealth bound together by Christian ideals. Such a society could have dealt creatively with war and politics, two traditions of Western Civilization that did not originate with Christianity but derived from ancient Greece, Rome, and the Germanic warbands. However, to succeed in unifying the West under a Christian banner, the medieval Church, says Toynbee, would have had "to resist the temptation to oppose force with force, it would have to draw its inspiration from the Christian vision of God as being love, and to reject the Christian vision of God as being a jealous God." It would have had to demonstrate the spiritual power of a St. Francis, "the greatest soul that has yet appeared in our Western World."² But the Church did not fulfill this mission of uniting Western Christendom in love. Instead it became imbued with a desire for power and wealth; consequently, over a four hundred year period beginning in the later part of the thirteenth century, "it became a source of hatred and strife instead of being the source of love and unity which it had aspired and intended to be. . . .The eventual consequence of this long series of scandals in the history of the Christian Church in the West was a progressive reaction in the West first against the Papacy and then against the Catholic Church, and then against Christianity

itself."³ The failure of the Papacy to unify the West discredited the ideal of Christian ecumenicalism preparing the way for parochial states to assert themselves. The growth of national states was also furthered by the Renaissance which revived not only the literature, art, and architecture of the ancient Greeks but also their worship of the city-state.

The revulsion against the fanaticism, intolerance and slaughter of the Wars of Religion, we have seen, led Western intellectuals to transfer their energies from religious controversy to science. By the Enlightenment the attack upon religious fanaticism turned into an attack upon religion itself. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it seemed that fanaticism had been extirpated from Western life but we now know that it "had merely gone underground until it could find a new object to which it could attach itself. In the twentieth century, fanaticism has come back into our life, animating this time not our ancestral Western Christianity but our twentieth-century Western ideologies, Nationalism and Communism." These are regarded by Toynbee as "merely new variations on a very old religion, the religion of man-worship of collective human power, which is an older religion than Christianity and was, in fact, in the Roman Empire Christianity's earliest adversary."⁴ To Toynbee the world in 1971 resembles the age of the Wars of Religion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which were notorious for their "intolerance

animosity, unrest, and violence, both in the domestic life of each local sovereign state and in the international relations between these states."⁵

Thus, in Toynbee's structuring of Western history, the emergence of a modern secular Western Civilization of a medieval Respublica Christiana marks the beginning of the crisis of the West. The rise of a secular Western Civilization from the womb of a medieval Christian West was "a monstrous birth",⁶ for it revived the Hellenic world's idolization of the parochial community, a lower religion that could not be harmonized with Christianity which values every human soul.

In Toynbee's pattern, the late seventeenth century is the decisive period in Western history, for it signifies Western man's apostasy from Christianity. There occurred a spiritual revolution whose consequences because of the outpouring of Western Civilization, have influenced all mankind. Toynbee grants that there was a positive side to the secular spirit that began to predominate in the West in the closing decades of the seventeenth century; religious toleration, freedom of conscience, a respect for the rights and dignity of human beings, a higher standard of social responsibility, and social justice. However, these advances have been offset by total war and totalitarianism which for Toynbee are also consequences of this spiritual revolution. First the physical universe was subjected to the rule of reason eliminating any divine

interference with nature; then the philosophies of the Enlightenment removed God's hand from human history. These Western intellectuals committed an act of hubris and treason in cutting "our Western culture off from the possibility of Spiritual life--by trying to shift the rising edifice of our Western Christian Civilization from a religious to a secular basis. This was the original act of hubris which is being requited in our day by an ate that has been accumulating for centuries at compound interest."⁷ Most distressing, to Toynbee, has been modern Western man's rejection of the notion of original sin as a way of demonstrating his emancipation from Christianity.

Underlying Toynbee's interpretation of Western Civilization is a belief in the inadequacy of secular humanism, the notion that man is the measure of all things. To Toynbee this is arrogance; it is man acting as if he were the center of the universe, as if he could properly order his life without reference to God. The values of the Enlightenment, maintains Toynbee, are insufficient to satisfy the needs of the individual or of society; when men dispense with God they bring ruin upon themselves and the social order, for they behave as separate individuals acting only from self-interest. Men of religion, on the other hand, see beyond themselves; illumination from the City of God allows for the proper fulfillment of the human personality and the establishment of an effective social order.

Even the ideal of liberty that was championed by the Enlightenment is inadequate because it was not defined in Christian terms. The ideal of personal liberty loses its hold over men's hearts when it is divested of its religious foundation; in the process of becoming secularized the ideal of liberty has become depotentiated. If freedom is to be re-invigorated it must be formulated in religious terms--something due each man as God's child.

A secularized modern Western Civilization, asserts Toynbee, has not transformed human nature which is still given to periodic outbursts of original sin; only now the power of man's primeval wickedness has been greatly increased by modern methods of technology and administration. The crimes committed by the modern West, particularly the enslavement of Africans and the extermination of Jews, compel a post-Christian Western man to be less complacent and enthusiastic about the blessings of secularism. Was it indeed a mark of progress that the West articulated itself into warring national states, created a bourgeois-dominated urban society, and came to dominate the planet? Did not the break with Christianity take the West down a path that has led to total war, totalitarianism, and atomic weapons? Has not a technologically-oriented Western Civilization failed to overcome the two evils that have been the ruin of other civilizations--warfare and class conflict? Has Western man's conquest of physical nature enabled him to overcome the spiritual and moral problems of dealing with

himself, other men, and God?

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Westerners were certain that they had created an orderly, rational, and satisfying way of life that would endure. They adhered to Gibbon's view that what had befallen Rome could never happen to the West, for, as Gibbon said, the West had experienced too much progress in knowledge and industry and the tenacity had been taken out of warfare. Brimming with confidence that they were different from other men, Westerners were certain that the mishaps that had ruined earlier civilizations would not afflict them, that they would continue to progress automatically. Toynbee recalls that before World War I he and his parents

expected that life throughout the World would become more rational, more humane, and more democratic, and that, slowly, but surely, political democracy would produce greater social justice. We had also expected that the progress of science and technology would make mankind richer, and that this increasing wealth would gradually spread from a minority to a majority. We had expected that all this would happen peacefully. In fact, we thought that mankind's course was set for an earthly paradise, and that our approach towards this goal was predestined for us by historical necessity.

By the middle of the twentieth century, however, the West had lost "faith in a self-complacent outlook which had previously been taken as a matter of course."⁹ World War I had shaken the complacency of the Western bourgeoisie and the crimes of the Nazi era revealed a "criminality... festering foully below the surface of life in the Western World."¹⁰ No longer believing in linear progress, "we have

awakened to the truth (how, one wonders, could we ever have been blind to it?) that Western man and his works are no more invulnerable than the now extinct civilizations of the Aztecs and the Incas, the Sumerians and the Hittites."¹¹

But to what extent is the West caught up in the rhythm of **break down** and disintegration? We have seen that for Toynbee a civilization begins to breakdown when it suffers a failure of self-determination, when the society can no longer respond successfully to challenges. A broken-down society falls into "bondage to some idol of its own making." This phenomenon now exists in the West.

Mid-way through the twentieth century of the Christian Era the Western Society was manifestly given over to the worship of a number of idols that had been the bane of other civilizations in the past; but among these, one stood out above all the rest, and this was the cult of the institution of Parochial Sovereignty embodied in parochial states that were being worshipped by their respective subjects as very gods and that were demonstrating their demonic power over their devotees by exacting from them human sacrifices of ever greater enormity in cycles of fratricidal war of a violence that was increasing in a geometrical progression.¹²

If the rise of ideologies and the resultant warfare are signs of breakdown what symptoms are there of disintegration? We recall that in a disintegrating civilization the internal proletariat withdraws its mimesis from a dominant minority that is no longer creative and an external proletariat intensifies its attacks upon the dying civilization and finally overruns what has become a corpse. The West is not threatened by an external

proletariat beyond its boundaries for primitive peoples are few and impotent. Thus the West is not confronted with the same situation that faced a disintegrating Hellenic Civilization--hordes of barbarians eager to penetrate the borders of a more advanced civilization. However while the West "was conquering the barbarians in the flesh," barbarism, in the form of fascism and National Socialism,

was taking its revenge by finding its way into the souls of its Western conquerors. . . . And this evil had not been exorcized from Western souls by the military overthrow of Italian Fascism and a German National Socialism; for this perverse Western manifestation of Original Sin was an occupational disease of a semi-educated urban lower middle class that was as ubiquitous as the Western Civilization itself, and there was perhaps no province of the Western World in which this class was not in some danger of succumbing to this malady.¹³

Thus the barbarism that threatens the West does not take the form of warrior bands beyond the frontiers; rather it manifests itself by a barbarous attitude of mind that has particularly afflicted the lower middle class. Indeed, according to Toynbee's pattern of breakdown and disintegration, the Western lower middle class between the wars appears as a major component of a Western internal proletariat. Disillusioned with the leadership of the West's liberal dominant minority, it embraced a lower religion, fascism, unlike the internal proletariat of a disintegrating Roman Empire which adopted a new higher religion, Christianity. The attraction of

some variant of Nazism, insists Toynbee, remains an ever present danger in the West.

Toynbee sees the ranks of the Western internal proletariat being swelled by recruits drawn from the masses of the non-European world "that had been caught, like the last barbarians, in a world-encompassing Western net,"¹⁴ from uprooted peoples, particularly the American Negroes, from the intelligentsia, especially a university educated lower middle-class that has no opportunity to use its education. Also included in the ranks of the Western proletariat are ex-farmers forced to move to the cities in search of a livelihood.

. . . the transfer of population from the countryside to town has produced the same cancer in the Western as in the Hellenic body social: the cancer of an urban proletariat which has lost its roots in the country, has struck no roots in the town, and is reminded--every time that it draws its dole--that it is 'in' but not 'of' the society which has to serve as the unwilling 'host' of this unhappy social parasite.¹⁵

And this is a world-wide phenomenon because Western Civilization has become global. Aggravating the tensions between the Western dominant minority and its global internal proletariat is a color bar. There is irony in the fact that the Western dominant minority has "been recruited from the Teutonic-speaking descendants of those White barbarians who had battered on the carcass of a dead Hellenic society some fifteen hundred years in the past."¹⁶ Uprisings of a Western proletariat (Jacobins, 1793, Communards, 1871) have been dwarfed by insurrections of a Western proletariat of non-Western origins, so that "a

world-wide proletarian revolt against a world-wide Western ascendancy had now become a possibility with which the West had to reckon; and, for a Western Society at bay, this prospect was daunting."¹⁷

In still another way Western Civilization conforms to the pattern of disintegration. Hellenic civilization had experienced two ruinous paroxysms of warfare, the Peloponnesian War and the Second Punic War. The West had its counterparts: the Wars of Religion and the Wars of Nationality (principally the two world wars). The Wars of Religion, symptoms of social breakdown, were followed by a rally made possible by the spread of religious toleration. But the rally proved abortive for the principle of toleration, without a spiritual anchor, could not succeed. "The spirits that presided over its conception and birth were Disillusionment, Apprehension, and Cynicism, not Faith, Hope, and Charity; the impulse was negative, not positive; and the soil in which the seeds were sown was arid."¹⁸ That the West's Wars of Nationality have been more destructive than the Wars of Religion

is perhaps the most alarming of all these points of congruence with Hellenism. Our survey has shown us that, as a rule, the paroxysm which follows the intermediate breathing-space is more violent than the paroxysm which precedes it; and this rule is certainly exemplified in our Western case if the Wars of Nationality are to be taken as the second paroxysm of our seizure and the Wars of Religion as the first.¹⁹

The most distressing feature of Western Civilization that

enables us to see a pattern of breakdown and disintegration is the "series of two paroxysms punctuated by one rally" for "that had been the regular rhythm of a Time of Troubles in the histories of civilizations that had run through the whole disintegration process from breakdown to dissolution."²⁰ However, even if the West is in the midst of a second paroxysm of a Time of Troubles what is more significant in terms of its current and potential health is that a universal state has not been created by force, a condition that was avoided by the defeat of Germany in two world wars.

While Toynbee does see some signs of breakdown in the West he does not believe the collapse of the West must follow, for man is not at the mercy of an inexorable fate; he does have the capacity to make intelligent choices and to root out those malignancies that have ruined other civilizations.

There is nothing to prevent our Western civilization from following historical precedent, if it chooses, by committing social suicide. But we are not doomed to make history repeat itself; it is open to us, through our own efforts, to give history, in our case, some new and unprecedented turn. As human beings, we are endowed with this freedom of choice, and we cannot shuffle off our responsibility upon the shoulders of God or nature. We must shoulder it ourselves. It is up to us.²¹

Although Toynbee holds that the history of the West bears a significant relationship to Hellenic Civilization, he is wary about predicting the future prospects of the West. Rejecting determinism, Toynbee insists that "patterns in the course of human affairs afford no basis for predictions about the future."²² While maintaining that a pattern of

breakdown and disintegration can be discerned in the histories of dead and moribund civilizations, Toynbee does "not believe that this pattern was predetermined or inevitable in any single past case." Unlike Spengler, he does not postulate "a fixed pattern to which the history of every civilization is bound to conform." Because "the course of human affairs is not predetermined" Toynbee is unwilling "to predict that the Western Civilization will go the way that a number of its predecessors have gone."²³ The history of Western Civilization "is today still an unfinished story."²⁴

Thus while Toynbee sees symptoms of decline in the West he also recognizes signs of health that make it impossible to predict whether the malady inflicting the West is either incurable or lethal. One principal sign of health is the fact that the West has not yet entered into a universal state created by force. A second sign of health is that while the internal proletariat might well secede there are "forces of reconciliation and recuperation that were in the field against the forces of schism and disintegration."²⁵ For example, the fact that Venetians and Lubeckers had been able to transfer their loyalty from their local city to a larger grouping, the national state, is an indication that Western man, indeed all mankind "might one day transfer their allegiance to a universal state between whose provinces war would be impracticable."²⁶ Towards this end, the movement for

European integration is a hopeful sign. Another optimistic sign is that the West has eliminated slavery "an evil that had thus proved almost as puissant as War in defeating other civilizations in the past." This is "impressive evidence of moral health in a latter-day Western body social."²⁷ Also encouraging for the West has been the compromise between free enterprise and socialism being worked out in a number of countries. Unbridled individualism leads only to the domination of the great masses by a masterful minority whereas "a moderate dose of socialism was a prophylactic against the danger of the society's succumbing to a totalitarianism that would have imposed on human beings the social justice of the ant-heap and the beehive at the cost of forcibly depriving them of Man's distinctive birthright of freedom."²⁸ While the spread of education in Western lands has given mankind a new hope, it has also exposed it to a new danger. The danger is that semi-educated masses would be manipulated by propaganda skillfully prepared by political parties, governments, and businesses; the hope lies in the possibility that an educated populace will acquire the intellectual capacity to detect propaganda. Another reason for encouragement is that Christianity continues to retain some vitality in Western hearts. "This persistent vitality of a higher religion. . . was an element in the Western situation in the twentieth century of the Christian Era that had been conspicuously absent in an otherwise comparable

Hellenic situation in the last two centuries B.C."²⁹

Despite the signs of breakdown, the verdict for the West is not yet in. But if the West is not to go the way of Hellenic civilization it must return to its spiritual roots, for neither our modern ideologies nor science can answer man's need for God. Toynbee likens late modern Western man to wanderers in the wilderness, "astray from their forefathers' One True God"³⁰ who had succumbed to the temptation of "such devils as Nationalism and Fascism and Communism."³¹ In its youth Christianity had fought against the worship of the Roman Empire and the Roman Emperor. Two thousand years later it was engaged in struggle with a modern form of Leviathan-worship, the post-Christian ideologies. That the West has awakened to the dangers of these ideologies is also a reason for optimism. Not only must Western man's spiritual rebirth enable him to overcome ideologies, it must also help him to end his obsession with technology, "his unduly prolonged child's play with clockwork."³² Toynbee clearly states his prescription for saving the West.

In politics, establish a constitutional co-operative system of world government. In economics, find working compromises (varying according to the practical requirements of different places and times) between free enterprise and socialism. In the life of the spirit, put the secular³³ super-structure back onto religious foundations.

At the heart of Toynbee's remedy for coping with the crisis of a post-Christian West is the need for a spiritual

reconversion, but this cannot be satisfied by conventional Christian orthodoxy. "The impulse to indulge in a second bout of traditional religion is, indeed, merely a manifestation on the religious plane of an Archaism, which, on all planes, we have found. . . to be a bolt-hole that is always a trap because it invariably proves to be a blind alley."³⁴ The West cannot reverse history and undo the experience of intellectual enlightenment. It can not dispense with the rationalism that has characterized late modern Western history. Christianity must not serve as an escape, a hiding place for lost Western souls who would forsake critical thought and make a virtue out of blind authority. Toynbee does not wish to revive the institutional power of churches. The essential principle with which he wishes to reinvigorate Western man is following Jesus' example of love of humanity. This would be a true spiritual revolution whereas a return to traditional orthodoxy that denigrates reason would be a dead end. To imitate Jesus requires suffering, but that is the necessary price of learning. And the rewards are great, for "under the aegis of Religion, Western Man might find himself able to handle with spiritual impunity the material power thrust into his hands by the mechanization of Western technology. A neo-pagan Frankenstein who had been enslaved by the monster that he had made might live to become this monstrous mechanism's once more Christian master."³⁵

And if Western man "prayed God to grant him a pilot for the perilous passage, he would find the bodhisattva ...whom he was seeking in a Francesco Bernardo of Assisi, who was the most god-like soul that had been born into the Western World so far."³⁶

While the kind of progress that men must aspire to is the "cumulative increase in the means of Grace at the disposal of each Soul in this world,"³⁷ Toynbee recognizes that important reforms must be introduced in the secular sphere; without such reforms man might never have this opportunity for spiritual rebirth. However, he insists that taking the salvation of the individual soul as the supreme aim of life also furthers social progress; there is no antithesis between following God and trying to help one's neighbor.

In other words, the spiritual progress of individual souls in this life will in fact bring with it much more social progress than could be attained in any other way. It is a paradoxical but profoundly true and important principle of life that the most likely way to reach a goal is to be aiming not at that goal itself but at some more ambitious goal beyond it. . . . Therefore, the replacement of the mundane civilizations by the world-wide and enduring reign of the Church Militant on Earth would certainly produce what today would seem a miraculous improvement in those mundane social conditions which the civilizations have been seeking to improve during the last six thousand years.³⁸

All the higher religions teach us that our wants exceed our needs, that excessive self-indulgence is an obstacle to the pursuit of spiritual aims, and that man has a moral duty to consider his neighbor's needs--attitudes which

promote social progress.

In two ways Toynbee sees Western Civilization as unique. Firstly, of the seven extant civilizations only the West does "not show indisputable signs of being already in disintegration."³⁹ Secondly, Western Civilization has spread throughout the globe. Thus the destiny of the West has become tied to an emerging world civilization, the product of the outpouring of European ideas, institutions, and technology that began in the late fifteenth century. By adopting Western techniques and the Western state system, the non-Western world has become drawn into Western Civilization's spiritual crisis. But from this worldwide spiritual crisis, hopes Toynbee, there will emerge a universal state imbued with prophetic ideals. This is of critical importance in Toynbee's philosophy of history. From the beginning of human history mankind has been fragmented into different bands, tribes, states, civilizations. And now the West, without intending it, has become an agent of global unity, making it possible to realize the universalist visions of the prophets.

FOOTNOTES

1. Christianity Among the Religions of the World, p. 63.
2. Ibid., p. 73.
3. Ibid., pp. 74-75.
4. Ibid., p. 79.
5. Surviving the Future, p. 108.
6. Study, 7b: 539.
7. Study, 5: 411.
8. Surviving the Future, pp. 106-7.
9. Study, 9:421.
10. Ibid., 9:433.
11. Civilization on Trial, p. 37.
12. Study, 9: 441.
13. Ibid., pp. 450-51.
14. Ibid., p. 451.
15. Study, 5: 164-65.
16. Study, 9: 453.
17. Ibid., p. 455.
18. Study, 6: 317.
19. Ibid., p. 618.
20. Study, 9:464.
21. Civilization on Trial, p. 45.
22. Study, 12: 518.
23. Ibid., p. 519.
24. Ibid.
25. Study, 9:461.

26. Ibid., p. 446.
27. Ibid., p. 447.
28. Ibid., p. 448.
29. Ibid., p. 461.
30. Ibid., p. 450.
31. Ibid., p. 449.
32. Ibid., p. 629.
33. Civilization on Trial, p. 45.
34. Study, 9: 631.
35. Ibid., p. 641.
36. Ibid., p. 644.
37. Civilization on Trial, p. 229.
38. Civilization on Trial, p. 216.
39. Study, 9: 411.

CHAPTER VIII

SALVATION THROUGH SPIRITUALITY AND UNIVERSALISM: THE COMING WORLD-STATE

The crisis of the West has now become part of a world-wide crisis; it is no longer a question of the West declining but of mankind perishing. For a humanity threatened with extinction by the lower religion of nationalism and the power generated by an idolized technology, Toynbee prescribes a universal state and a revitalization of spiritual ideals.

Because of war, maintains Toynbee, civilizations can only be regarded as experiments in which man has sought to rise above the level of the primitive. Just when it seems that man has pulled ahead, he again defeats himself by succumbing to war. And what has exacerbated warfare and wrecked civilizations more than anything else is the absolute sovereignty and unqualified loyalty demanded by states; it is imperative that mankind break with the system of parochial states.

Toynbee believes that a political system's merit depends on its ability "to rid human social life of the violence that is the price of anarchy."¹ Judged by this standard, world-states have been considerably more successful than city-states or national states; they have succeeded in providing a large measure of domestic order

and unity while engaging in relatively few wars with states beyond their borders. For example, in the two centuries after 27 B.C.

the Roman Empire endured not more than half-a-dozen years of internal warfare. . . . War seemed to have been banished from the center of civilization to its periphery and to have been transformed into police-operations against barbarians beyond the pale; and even on the single frontier where, along the Euphrates the Roman Empire marched with another organized state, the total number of war-years during these two centuries was hardly more than fifteen.²

To build a world-state is the great challenge facing mankind today, insists Toynbee. But if it is to succeed and endure such a state must rest upon a spiritual foundation, for the

brotherhood of Man presupposes the fatherhood of God--a truth which involves the converse proposition that, if the divine father of the human family is ever left out of the reckoning, there is no possibility of forging any alternative bond of purely human texture which will avail by itself to hold Mankind together. The only society that is capable of embracing the whole of Mankind is a superhuman Civitas Dei; and the conception of a society that embraces all Mankind and yet nothing but Mankind is an academic chimera.³

While political divisiveness is as old as the first hunting bands, world-mindedness is a relatively recent phenomenon making its appearance only after civilization had already established itself. A world-state was formed when one state delivered a knock-out blow to its competitors, but the age-old habit of divisiveness inherited from the early days of pre-history persisted long after its establishment. Often defeated peoples rejected the

peace and stability imposed by the world-state and rose in nationalist revolt. In our own day, the subordination of the universal elements of communism to the demands of Russian nationalism is another indication of the greater attraction of parochial-mindedness. Yet world-states have not been without their appeal as evidenced by the loyalty Rome received from the different peoples that composed the Empire.

While tribalism is a deeply ingrained and formidable habit, it is still a product of culture and not an ineradicable trait of human nature. Toynbee feels that man can be taught to regard a world-state as a superior form of political organization and he can learn to subordinate local loyalty to a world-wide loyalty. And since 1500, certain developments have served to push mankind together into the direction of a single society. The agent in this movement towards globalism has been the West. This is ironic, for while Western Civilization achieved cultural unity, it has been notoriously plagued with political parochialism.

Historically world-states were established during a Time of Troubles through conflict and conquest at a prohibitively high cost with the result that "unification by conquest has sometimes postponed the dissolution of a civilization but it has seldom averted it and, insofar as the dissolution of a forcibly united civilization has

been postponed, the civilization has been preserved in petrification."⁴ World-states succeeded in imposing universal peace upon a war-stricken society but the price was prohibitive for the self-inflicted wounds incurred during the Time of Troubles never healed. The world-state could not cure the spiritual disorders caused by centuries of war; nor could it reverse, only temporarily arrest, the society's downhill slide. For Toynbee, the solution for the problems posed by national sovereignty is the creation of a world-state by consent, not by force, before the process of breakdown and disintegration is well advanced. Modern weapons rule out the traditional way of creating a world-state, for atomic warfare would only unite mankind in death. Nuclear weapons, pollution, and overpopulation currently threaten human survival; solutions to these global problems require a global approach attainable only through some form of world unity. Despite the persistence of nationalism, and even its growing intensity in some parts of the world, the achievement of a world-wide political unification is not beyond man's capacity. A number of unifying tendencies exist today powerful enough to overcome formidable historical and psychological barriers to a world-wide state.

Since 1500 the West has been spreading its technology, institutions, and ideas throughout the globe. At first these Western exports were conceived by non-Westerners as

foreign intrusions "but gradually they have begun to become common possessions of all mankind. From being something specifically Western, they are turning into something generically modern to which the living non-Western civilizations are making increasingly important contributions."⁵ A common culture is now bringing together the once separate societies. This cultural unity, spurred by the annihilation of distance resulting from modern transportation and communication, might serve as the prelude to political unification.

Spearheading the global diffusion of Western civilization and world cultural unity is a world-wide intelligentsia comparable to the Hellenizers who served as the medium for the cultural unification of the ancient Mediterranean world. Perhaps the modern intelligentsia, many of whom already think and behave as world citizens, will serve

as the social and cultural cement for the holding together of a world-state....The homogeneity of the contemporary intelligentsia is remarkable. In every liberated country in which the intelligentsia is in power, it is using its new freedom of manoeuvre for the pursuit of an identical purpose. It is using it to carry farther the process of Westernization, and it is Westernizing its people's life more rapidly than the preceding native autocratic or foreign colonial regime ever did. The current policy of the intelligentsia is the same everywhere, and this policy is arriving everywhere at the same result. It is producing nation-states standardized on the Western pattern, and these units are going to be uniform enough to serve as cells for the construction of a world-wide world-state, as the city-states

standardized on the Hellenic pattern once served as cells for the construction of the Roman world-state.⁶

Another promising sign for future world unity is the growing economic and political consolidation of Western Europe since World War II and the discrediting of romantic nationalism. This radically new departure "is a good augury, considering how deeply ingrained is nationalism in the tradition of Western European peoples and how often one or another of them has tried to subjugate the rest by force. If the Western European peoples can unite with each other voluntarily, as they are now demonstrating they can, a voluntary unity of mankind, on a global scale is not a utopian objective."⁷ Since World War II Western Europe has also displayed a distaste for militarism, a psychological revolution reversing a tide "that had been flowing, save for one pause in the eighteenth century, since the opening of the Modern chapter of Western history."⁸

A world society requires that people share ideals and manners. Can mankind attain a stable political unity without at the same time achieving ideological and religious unity? Does a world political federation require a uniformity of ethical standards and ideals? Toynbee does not believe that ideological and religious variety are incompatible with political unity so long as there is no accompanying animosity and competition for power. Is this possible? The answer to this question is related to the

larger matter of Toynbee's vision of the coming world-state.

The future world-state will not be greatly centralized, says Toynbee, for the peoples of the world will only support world government reluctantly. Moreover in an era of atomic weapons recalcitrant national states cannot be coerced into accepting world authority. States will not put themselves out of business, but will surrender some prerogatives for the sake of self-preservation. Realizing that the alternative may be self-destruction, declares Toynbee, mankind will choose a form of world government, but unlike the world-states of the past, which were unitary states imposed by force, the coming world-state will be a voluntary federal union. However, it must have the power to prevent local units, driven by parochial loyalties, from engaging in war. It is possible that over the years the loyalty that had once been directed to the national state may be transferred to mankind as a whole.

There is the possibility that the coming world-state will be a dictatorship, for periods of social anarchy are often followed by autocratic rule as was the case of the Roman Republic in the first century B.C. Toynbee sees the state of the world in twentieth century as resembling nineteenth-century tsarist Russia. "The only cure for the decay and collapse of the Tsardom was a more ruthless form of dictatorship. I suppose that many people in Russia do not like the Soviet regime, but they tolerate it because

they would like anarchy still less."⁹ Writing in 1971, Toynbee feared that by the year two thousand the world would be held together "by an atrociously tyrannical dictatorship," controlled perhaps by cliques of military men from different regions. This future dictatorship might be imposed on the majority by a ruthless, efficient, and fanatical minority, inspired by some ideology or religion."¹⁰

While the lessons of history seem to indicate that the coming state will be a highly tyrannical dictatorship controlled by a minority, Toynbee still holds out hope that it will be brought into existence by voluntary agreement and would allow for participation in government which "is one of the natural human rights of every individual."¹¹ But because self-annihilation looms if we fail to unite, "we cannot afford to wait till we can be sure of being able to build democracy into the world-state's original constitution."¹² If it were a choice of being "red" or "dead", Toynbee would opt for the former.

Ideally, Toynbee envisions an eventual world government with sufficient power to abolish wars and with national states serving as federated sub-units and still smaller political units, wards or neighborhoods, within the world-city (which will be coexistent with the world-state) in which people "will all be able to know each other personally and to transact local public business with each other direct."¹³

Besides his affiliation to a local ward in the coming world-city and his loyalty to the future world-state in which he holds citizenship, there is still another community to which the individual could belong and from which he could derive gratification-- a world-wide diaspora of people sharing common professional interests. Russian physicists, for example, have more in common with their American counterpart than they do with Russian farmers. Similarly the world's doctors, mathematicians, musicians, artists all form a community of their own that crosses frontiers of states. These people, meeting in international societies and communicating by letter, phone and on television screens, will serve as another medium for world unity.

To facilitate an attitude of world-mindedness, schools will have to require fluency in at least one foreign language and attempt to reduce race consciousness. While race feeling is an obstacle to the unity of mankind, there are many examples of peoples--Hawaiians, Mexicans--who are relatively oblivious to racial differences. The bonds of common culture and common religion are strong enough to overcome differences in race.

On the basis of historical experience, Toynbee does not want the future world-state to suppress completely local variety and autonomy "for the benefit of a standardized culture and centralized government in a unitary empire coextensive with the whole domain of a civilization."

These conditions tend to produce cultural deterioration and social stratification. "The Roman Empire prospered under the principate, when it was administered as a commonwealth of still autonomous, but no longer sovereign, city-states; it decayed with the decay of local autonomy and with the transformation of the world-government from an instrument for keeping the peace into an agency for the centralized bureaucratic administration of local as well as common affairs."¹⁴ Toynbee believes that the proper end of statesmanship is the "harmony between 'national' and 'universal'" but if this harmony is to endure and succeed "the authority of the 'universal', and the loyalty paid to it, must be paramount."¹⁵

Religious or ideological variety will not be obliterated by future political unity. Through education children will learn about all the world's ideologies and religions, and, hopefully, differences will become a stimulus for choice rather than a cause for irrational hate. Moreover the problems confronting mankind--"urbanism, pollution, psychological disorientation, and outbreaks of irrational violence... transcend the traditional differences between ideologies."¹⁶ And as both capitalism and communism become more flexible and pragmatic, ideological issues will seem less important.

Consistent with his interpretation of history, Toynbee believes that the coming world polity needs a religious base. Only by expressing devotion to God can man overcome

the limitations of parochialism and live in brotherly unity. Western technology is an inadequate scaffolding upon which to construct a world-state. Only by turning to the religious prophets of universalism--Isaiah, Jesus, Buddha, Gandhi--can man shape an enduring world order, for "there can be no unity of Mankind without the participation of God."¹⁷ The leap from tribalism to ecumenicalism requires, above all, a spiritual force that post-Christian ideologies with their limited view of humanity and inadequate conception of the purpose of life cannot provide. The key to peace for Toynbee is a religious revolution, but he recognizes that man is still far from this stage.

According to Toynbee's world-view, wars between states sharing a common civilization and conflicts between classes have been the principal causes for the ruin of civilization. The future world-state must not only be powerful enough to save humanity from committing suicide through nuclear warfare, it must also promote human welfare through a radical redistribution of the planet's goods. For the past five thousand years, states Toynbee, "the masters of the civilizations have robbed their slaves of their share in the fruits of society's corporate labors as cold-bloodedly as we rob our bees of their honey."¹⁸ The achievements of civilization have been built on the backs of peasants, but these unfortunates have continued to live at a starvation

level. The favored few have defended their selfishness by insisting that they were trustees for all future generations. In a world of scarcity, the fruits of civilization had to go to a few or there would be no fruits at all and humanity would be deprived of its future. While this plea might have had some validity in the past, says Toynbee, our unprecedented advances in technology make it invalid today. Yet some 3/4 of humanity currently live below the poverty line struggling for survival as did our early ancestors. In the past the exploited mass of mankind had docilely accepted poverty, but in the twentieth century this habit of resignation has been broken. For Toynbee, the world revolution of the peasantry for social justice is not only the dominant theme of the age, it is also "the most glorious secular revolution"¹⁹ in world history. Throughout the world the poor are abandoning their fatalism and are demanding freedom from want; the cry for economic and now sexual equality can no longer be silenced. This emancipation of the world's poor and oppressed, Toynbee is certain, will "stand out in retrospect as the epoch-making event of our age."²⁰ It is the West that deserves credit for this hopeful development "for it has not only conceived the ideal of social justice; it has also conjured up the material means for translating this ideal into practice."²¹

Toynbee finds in the Judaeo-Christian tradition the source of the Western concept of social justice that is now becoming world wide. Christianity has preached the

dignity of every human being regardless of wealth or status; it has proclaimed that all men are entitled to spiritual justice. In the eighteenth century "the demand in Western Christendom for social justice overflowed from the religious into the secular province of social life."²² The philosophy of the Enlightenment and the anti-slavery movement were secular applications of the Christian principle of social justice. But this secular statement of social justice would have been only utopian had not the Industrial Revolution simultaneously given man the tools by which he could realize the ideals of social justice. There has been a tragic facet to the movement for social justice. While it began within the bosom of religion and then overflowed into the secular arena, the established churches did not take an active part in this new orientation, but "stayed within their customary ecclesiastical bounds and left the cause of secular social justice to be championed by laymen who were indifferent to religion if not positively hostile for what seemed to them a callous betrayal of its mission."²³ If religion is to regain its former influence, concludes Toynbee, it will have to campaign more vigorously for social justice.

How is the ideal of social justice to be realized in the future world-state? Certainly not by any dogmatic allegiance to either capitalism or communism. Toynbee

rejects the doctrine that private profit making is a sacred human right: "untrammelled freedom for economic private enterprise means freedom in this line for the small minority that commands the economic means for taking advantage of freedom here."²⁴ But for the great mass of ordinary people it does not mean freedom at all.

In a society where there exists extremes of incomes

there cannot be complete freedom simultaneously for everybody. Society has to decide how much freedom, in what fields, each income-group is to have. This is a question of humanity and social justice that cannot be settled a priori on theoretical lines without inflicting intolerable wrongs and hardships. The least unsatisfactory solution that has been found up to date is a mixed system of private enterprise and socialism, with the ratios of the mixture determined ad hoc and always subject to modification in response to the constant change that is of the essence of all human affairs. This is, I believe, the direction in which the World as a whole is going to move.²⁵

In the political aspect of his utopian vision Toynbee seeks a golden mean between the unrestricted sovereignty of national states and the unrestricted authority of a centralized world-state. Similarly in the economic aspect he favors a mean between unrestricted private enterprise and unmitigated socialism. The American ideology, says Toynbee, stresses individual freedom but is not sufficiently concerned with social justice; on the other hand, the ~~Russian~~ ideology stresses social justice and dispenses with individual freedom. The middle way, which Toynbee sees developing in Western Europe, might prove to be the model for the non-Western world. In Toynbee's view,

wise statesmanship will not attach itself to an ideology, capitalist or communist, that "presents a social 'blue print' as a panacea for every conceivable social ill in every known set of social circumstances," but will try

to strike that note in the gamut that tunes in with the particular social circumstances of ... time and place; to find the right mixture between free enterprise and socialism....What the world needs above all now is to get the issue of free enterprise versus socialism off its ideological pedestal and to treat it, not as a matter of semi-religious faith and fanaticism, but as a commonsense, practical question of trial and error, of, more or less, circumstance and adaptation."²⁶

Toynbee values individual liberty but feels that left uncurbed it leads to oligarchy, for it gives "a free hand to a minority who, in an unrestricted competition of all against all, are more than a match for the rest of the community in physical strength, mental ability, wealth, or political power."²⁷ By giving full scope to personal liberty, social justice is violated. But to pursue social justice with single minded devotion is to suppress personal liberty which "is an indispensable condition for any human achievement."²⁸ In his hostility to fanaticism, in his opposition to doctrinaire thinking, in his stress upon balance, and moderation, Toynbee displays some of the qualities of British pragmatism.

Toynbee believes that the gap between rich and poor could be narrowed by a world-state sufficiently strong to tax the richer nations for the benefit of the poorer ones. As an immediate step, he urges the poor nations to form an international union that would emulate the successfully

demonstrated militancy of labor unions: "If the poor majority of the World's countries were to strike collectively, by refusing to sell to the rich countries their labor, their raw materials, and their foodstuffs, except on more equitable terms, I believe that they could compel the richer countries to change the terms of trade to the poorer countries' advantage; and this would be a victory for justice."²⁹ Both developments--the taxing of the rich and the growth of the power of labor unions--have, in Toynbee's life time, helped to close the gap between the classes in England. They now need a world-wide application.

Other proposals to promote social reform in the future world-state include government sponsored birth control, expanded education, and the redirecting of funds away from armaments and space exploration towards feeding and clothing the wretched of the planet. Toynbee regards the space program as a great adventure, but likens it to the pyramids and the palace of Versailles--masterpieces of human skill and cooperation built at the expense of the poor majority and therefore morally offensive. We should also stop manufacturing products that satisfy bogus wants conjured up by Madison Avenue and direct our productive capacities towards fighting a world-wide battle against poverty.

Toynbee warns that the struggle for social justice should not be accompanied by educational egalitarianism which stifles gifted children and reduces schooling to the

lowest common denominator. The doctrinaire egalitarians damage the public interest for exceptional individuals have always been civilization's pacesetters. Hopefully, the individual with unusual ability will recognize his "moral obligation to use his gifts, not in Napoleon's way, just for his own selfish advantage, at his less gifted fellow men's expense, but, if he can rise to this height, in a bodhisattva's way--that is to say, at his own expense for the benefit of all other sentient beings."³⁰ In this way he achieves self-transcendence.

Ultimately the solution to human problems requires a religious orientation. That these problems could only be solved "by lifting them from the social to the religious plane was as true in a twentieth-century Westernizing world as it had been true always and everywhere since the transfiguration of Sub-man into Man."³¹ God, as Saint Paul proclaimed, had "made of one blood all nations of men," and in the same spirit Saint James taught "that he who loveth God love his brother also." It is in this spirit that man must approach the problem of social justice.

For Toynbee, the true end of human life can never be the accumulation of enormous amounts of consumer goods as dictated by a morally wicked advertising industry. What distinguishes man from non-human creatures with whom he shares the planet is that only he has a spiritual purpose in life. In pursuit of this spiritual end, we need only a small quantity of consumer goods. Man's wants have always exceeded his real needs even before advertising inflated

them. Higher religions have consistently cautioned us "against excessive self-indulgence in the satisfaction of our material wants because they hold, and rightly hold, that this is an obstacle to attaining the true end of Man--the true end of Man being the pursuit of spiritual aims."³² All the higher religions have exhorted man to recognize his moral responsibility to his fellow man and to care not only for his own needs but also for those of his neighbor. In today's world, says Toynbee, this commandment is directed especially towards the rich Western minority. Toynbee urges Westerners to abide by the religious virtue of self-denial in order to care for the suffering poor throughout the globe. If American could take the lead the rest of the Western world would follow, guided "by the voice of religions."³³

Future generations, says Toynbee, may look back upon the present materialism of the West with feelings of astonishment and even disgust and shame that so much energy was squandered trying to obtain immoderate amounts of material possessions. They will have arrived at a much healthier estimation of the amount of goods a man really needs in order to allow for spiritual development. Western man who has sacrificed his soul by an over enthusiastic concentration upon material goods, can redeem himself by utilizing his technology for the good of all humanity.

If the future world-state manages to rid itself of

war and class conflict that have traditionally wrecked civilizations and succeeds in coping with pollution and over-population, the next problem confronting mankind would be the role of leisure in a mechanized world. In the past only a minority of "a minority had made the creative use of Leisure that had been the mainspring of Civilization. . . .The inestimably precious spiritual treasures that this minority had eventually created had been ripe fruits of self-education and self-discipline, and these had been the cumulative spiritual achievement of a series of consecutive generations."³⁴ As leisure has been bestowed on a Western working class, it is not surprising that a cultural proletarianization has resulted. Leisure lavished on a proletarian majority that has not yet developed a nucleus of creative individuals leads to cultural deterioration. What irony it would be if the reward for the elimination of war and class conflict turns out to be the wallowing for ages in a 'Commonwealth of Swine'. To prevent the coming world-state from becoming Huxley's Brave New World or Plato's Commonwealth of Swine, mechanization must not succeed in crushing the spirit. Leisure looms so large because it is "the arena in which this spiritual battle would be lost or won."³⁵ The society of the future must provide an educational system that stimulates aesthetic and intellectual growth so that leisure may be used creatively. But only a relatively few people possess the intrinsic gifts required for art or thought.

If man is to use leisure "in the service of some high calling to which all men would find themselves able to devote their lives, then Mankind must turn again for salvation to Religion, "which provides "an infinite spiritual scope to Everyman."³⁶

Is Toynbee optimistic about the future? While granting that in the twentieth century material wealth has increased and in many instances conditions for the poor have improved, he notes that there has occurred, what nobody foresaw in 1914, a "great moral regression in people's treatment of each other." In the year 1971 the Western World was "much less humane than it was in 1913. We have to face the possibility that the World will become still more inhumane by the end of the present century."³⁷ Our Westernizing world in the twentieth century, says Toynbee, reveals extraordinary contradictions. At the same time that humanitarian feelings, as expressed in a concern for the human rights of all people, have risen to new heights, the cruelties of class warfare, nationalism, and racialism have sunk to their lowest depths.

However, despite the difficulties burdening the world, Toynbee remains hopeful. We have the intellectual know how to cope with war, overpopulation and pollution, but the head must persuade the heart to cooperate with it. The heart must be persuaded "to renounce the two cherished institutions of national sovereignty and war and to break with the ingrained habit of breeding to the limit."³⁸

Human beings have the capacity to choose life over death, good over evil and in the methods of Gandhi and Martin Luther King we have a "revolutionary breach with ingrained custom which is making, not for death and evil, but for life and good."³⁹ Toynbee feels that man, however reluctantly, tardily, or sulkily, will choose life over suicide by renouncing the institutions of sovereignty and war, so dear to human hearts. If humanity forsakes tribal-mindedness and false gods and becomes imbued with universalism and spirituality from its sufferings it would have acquired wisdom.

FOOTNOTES

1. Change and Habit, p. 24.
2. Survey of International Affairs, 1928, p. 4.
3. Study, 6: 9-10.
4. World View 15 (March 1972): 9.
5. Ibid., p. 6.
6. Change and Habit, p. 155.
7. World View 15 (March 1972): 9.
8. Study, 9: 491.
9. Surviving the Future, p. 112.
10. Ibid., p. 113.
11. Ibid., p. 105.
12. Arnold J. Toynbee, America and the World Revolution and Other Lectures (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 67.
13. Experiences, p. 378.
14. Study, 12: 618.
15. Ibid., p. 619.
16. Surviving the Future, p. 142.
17. Study, 7b: 511.
18. Civilization on Trial, p. 34.
19. America and the World Revolution, p. 86.
20. Ibid., p. 40.
21. Ibid., p. 41.
22. Ibid., p. 161.
23. Ibid., p. 199.
24. Arnold J. Toynbee, Between Niger and Nile (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 84.
25. Ibid., p. 85.

26. Civilization on Trial, pp. 134-35.
27. Study, 9: 593.
28. Ibid.
29. Surviving the Future, pp. 134-35.
30. Experiences, p. 347.
31. Study, 9: 594.
32. America and the World Revolution, p. 145.
33. Ibid., p. 149.
34. Study, 9: 610.
35. Ibid., p. 614.
36. Ibid., p. 618.
37. Surviving the Future, p. 107.
38. Change and Habit, p. 39.
39. Ibid., p. 45.

CHAPTER IX

TOYNBEE AND LIBERAL HUMANISM

We have viewed Toynbee's thought as a passionate response to the catastrophic world wars, dehumanizing totalitarianism, and monstrous technology that have threatened Western Civilization in the twentieth century. After 1914 only the naive could interpret history as linear progress, cling to the comforting notion of man's essential goodness, or retain confidence in the ability of reason to subdue permanently the dark forces of the irrational. Increasingly advances in science and technology were no longer equated with progress. The liberal credo which was already becoming suspect in the closing years of the nineteenth century seemed less convincing or inspiring after the Great War. As old values disintegrated, man searched for new faiths. Awakened to the fragility of Western Civilization by World War I, Toynbee found the origins of the West's spiritual crisis in the era of the Renaissance, Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and Enlightenment which saw the breakdown of medieval religious unity and the transformation of the West from a Christian into a post-Christian civilization. While many expressed their dissatisfaction with traditional liberal values by becoming communists or fascists, Toynbee turned to religion. Since the outpouring of Western ideas and institutions has ensnared the non-European world in the West's spiritual dilemma, Toynbee has

also advocated a world-state. Toynbee does not stress the primacy of religious values in order to escape from the awesome problems of the twentieth century, but steadfastly maintains that in the spiritual values of the world's great prophets mankind has the means with which to set aright the earthly city. While man has forged the most sophisticated and dangerous technology, spiritually he is an adolescent and therefore a threat to himself and to his fellows; the path to spiritual maturity runs through the terrain of religion not science.

Another issue concerns us. What does Toynbee consider the historical achievement of a secular Western Civilization? What in the experience of a post-Christian Western Civilization does he regard with admiration and believe worth saving? It is on these points that Toynbee's work has been challenged and even reviled. Critics have assailed Toynbee as an enemy of the liberal-rationalist tradition of the West; they have accused him of advocating and welcoming the decline of the West.

H. R. Trevor-Roper maintains that Toynbee "is fundamentally anti-rational and illiberal." Everything which suggests the freedom of the human reason, the human spirit, is to him odious. . . . To Toynbee the Renaissance was the beginning of the irreversible decline of the West, and every further manifestation of human reason is to him yet another milestone on the road to ruin."¹ Toynbee's "dismal prophecies" that the West was in decline, continues Trevor-

Roper, contributed to the spirit of defeatism with which the West first confronted Hitler in the 1930's.

The West, they said was finished; why should it not surrender in the hope of saving at least those elements of Western Civilization which were worth preserving. Freedom of all kinds could be sacrificed provided the essentials of civilization -- the social hierarchy and the Church -- were saved. We have sinned, such men cried, we have eaten the forbidden fruit; let us repent and retire out of history, leaving the future to the Nazi Millenium. In future let us be good. . .we shall not try to think, but only to pray. The patron saint of such men throughout Europe was Marshal Petain. He was the patron of all those whose will had been sapped by the messianic claims of Hitler and the dismal certitudes of Toynbee. For Toynbee, insofar as he had any influence, was the unconscious intellectual ally of Hitler in the non-Nazi world, the true prophet of European Petainism.²

Trevor-Roper attributes to Toynbee an eagerness to see the West destroyed and for this reason was "even in 1939. . . blind or indifferent, to the particular threat of Nazi Germany."³ Because Toynbee "hungers spiritually" for the defeat of the West and "seems to . . . gloat over the extinction of our civilization," Trevor-Roper finds his work "hateful,"⁴ Toynbee would sacrifice Western ideals of justice and freedom, Western reason, Western art and literature so long as Christianity, or at least its Catholic strand, survives as part of a syncretic religion of a universal state.

Why should not our Western Civilization go to its doom, the sooner the better, carrying with it the rubbish with which human reason has by now fatally deformed it, provided that the valuable parts of it, its primitive pre-reformation

faith, can be preserved as one of the vitalizing ingredients of the new 'universal' state'?

.....
 Thus Toynbee is still the philosophically of any conqueror who will destroy the West. . . . Such, I believe, is Toynbee's philosophy. It is a doctrine of messianic defeatism. Toynbee defeats Western Civilization because it is basically liberal and rational. Detesting it, he wishes to see it destroyed, and he does not care who destroys it. On its ruins he envisages a new society, or rather the religion only of a new society. The new society itself, as far as he is concerned, can be the nightmare society of 1984, provided that the religion is the religion of Mish-Mash, of which he is the prophet and Messiah.⁵ And this he calls a great hope for the West!

Pieter Geyl expresses somewhat similar sentiments.

Toynbee "will have it that Western Civilization is doomed and indeed why should he care? Western Civilization means nothing to him."⁶ Geyl dismisses Toynbee's assurances that he believes in free will and considers the future as an open question. This assertion, insists Geyl, is as invalid as Toynbee's other often repeated claim that his generalizations derive from an empirical study. By holding that only a return to Christianity can save the West, an unlikely and unsatisfying remedy indeed, says Geyl, Toynbee is condemning all our efforts to futility; it is, in reality, a death sentence. These early indictments by Trevor-Roper, Geyl and the many others who fall into this camp, have been echoed by more recent critics. Sidney Pollard concludes:

Basically, Toynbee is opposed to rationalism. . . . Toynbee is instinctively opposed to all that liberalism stands for: freedom to differ, a pluralist society,

suspicion of authority, a belief in the values of this life, pursued by rational means, within ethical concepts justifiable on human rather than mythological or divine terms. Toynbee, on the contrary, prefers feeling and intuition to analysis; a monolithic God to a pluralistic society; fixed, chartered course to chance or human initiative; and a miracle to partial, piecemeal reform.⁷

These critics see Toynbee's basic hostility to reason in his methodology which belies the empiricism that he claims for it, what Geyl calls "the pretence of an empirical investigation."⁸ Toynbee's orientation, say his critics, derives not from an objective analysis of concrete facts but from the inspiration of myths taken from the Bible, Greek tragedy, Goethe's Faust, and other works of world literature. Toynbee imposes mythical conceptions of sin, hubris and Fate upon the course of human events and searches always for moral explanations for the decline of civilizations. So intent is Toynbee upon superimposing his structure upon the raw material of history, continue his critics, that he selects facts arbitrarily and abuses and distorts them. Specialists have no difficulty in uncovering errors and questionable conclusions.

While Toynbee undoubtedly regards the liberal-rational tradition of the West as inadequate, it is too simplistic to view him as essentially illiberal and anti-rational. Toynbee has tried to resolve a fundamental dilemma of the West--finding a constructive place for the non-rational in a world that is being increasingly rationalized. For this reason, he rebels against the reductionism inherent in the

Enlightenment conception of reason; he wants to rescue personality and feelings from reason, which, in its relentless drive to make everything intelligible, degenerates into soulless mechanism, materialism, and technocracy. He proclaims the value of life and personality in defiance of those who say everything is absurd, without meaning. Neither science nor ideologies, declares Toynbee, enables man to preserve his personality which is his most elemental need. Science reduces him to a cipher in a mechanized universe; communism and fascism transform him into state slaves. Because liberalism, divorced from Christianity, heightens selfishness and competition, it too is inadequate to satisfy man's spiritual yearnings or to assure the sacrosanctity of an individual soul. Man has an innate spiritual need that originates in the unconscious; it cannot be satisfied by science but by poetry, art, music, and, above all, religion. Religion ministers to the psyche's elemental need for expression, asserts Toynbee. It enables man to channel the sub-conscious into a creative and constructive effort; it restrains man's basest feelings which also originate in the unconscious.

But in affirming man's spiritual nature and espousing the cause of higher religions, Toynbee does not wish to scrap the liberal-rational achievement of the West. In recognizing and condemning the moral failings of institutional religions and in refusing to accept dogma as revelation or to fight science with theology, Toynbee does not

appear as a simple-minded obscurantist seeking security in the orthodoxy of the Middle Ages. A strong element of humanism and humanitarianism pervades Toynbee's religious orientation. He does not celebrate the irrational but insists that reason, unilluminated by a prophetic concern for humanity will destroy human values with computer-like indifference. He does not negate this world for some unknown after life, retreat into fruitless despair, champion the cause of a sectarian church or shape a new theology. Toynbee does not espouse life-long quietude, the withdrawal from worldly life. Essential to his interpretation of the rise and fall of civilizations is the dictum: create or perish. Throughout, he insists that the ideals of the City of God do benefit the City of Man. By setting our foot on the spiritual path we can make ourselves better and improve our relations with each other. And, for Toynbee, the City of Man is a true cosmopolis; it embraces all mankind, not just Christians or Westerners. In developing this world-view Toynbee has demonstrated a humanitarianism and tolerance which, says Hans Kohn, resembles that of Tolstoy, Schweitzer, and Lessing. Like Lessing Toynbee has said that actions and an ethical spirit matter more than dogma. "As Lessing saw in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam," continues Kohn, "variations on a single theme, so Mr. Toynbee. . . sees all universal religions. . . as equally sharing in their great message to mankind, the message of unity beyond all ethnic divisions."⁹

In universalism--a world government that would overcome the pernicious tribal-mindedness that has kept men divided and at war--and in spirituality--a love for God which has as its corollary a love for man--Toynbee believes that the West and a Westernizing world can save themselves from annihilation.

It is out of a concern for human dignity which has been threatened by technology and totalitarian ideologies that Toynbee urges man to revitalize the spiritual values of the prophets. If by liberal we mean protection of individual rights, the rule of law, legitimate parliamentary government, freedom of thought, toleration, social justice, then Toynbee must be adjudged a liberal. "Toynbee is in many ways rather typical liberal-democrat-socialist," concludes Roland Stromberg. "He wants the welfare state and the United Nations and racial equality and all the rest."¹⁰ In Reconsiderations, published after both Geyl's and Trevor-Roper's critiques, Toynbee makes clear the liberal strand of his thought.

As against my emphasis on the original negativeness of the seventeenth-century Western revolution, Hans Kohn emphasizes the positiveness of the virtues it developed. On this point I agree with Kohn. I ought to have done more justice to this revolution's positive side. In the light of Kohn's critique I will try to make amends now. Toleration spelled freedom of conscience and the new respect for this spelled a respect for the rights and dignity of human beings. This brought with it a new standard of social responsibility, social justice and humane feeling. Noble monuments of this new ideal of human fraternity have been the abolition of the slave-trade and of slavery itself and the legislation for protection of the poor and weak that has eventually been consolidated in 'the welfare state.' This has had the beneficent

positive effect of spreading the amenities of civilization more widely, and that has been made practically possible by the increase in wealth resulting from progress in technology.¹¹

To be sure Toynbee's liberalism is not unqualified.

Like many other disillusioned liberals he has doubts whether "ordinary human beings have the virtue to choose what is best, as well as the intelligence to see what is best,"¹² for civilized man has not conquered his original sin. Moreover, liberalism divested of Christian love degenerates into selfishness and competitiveness that lead to social injustice. And, most importantly, a secular statement of freedom is insufficient to protect the individual against the claims of the state; only when personal freedom is conceived as God's intention for mankind will individuals have the spiritual strength to resist totalitarian ideologies.

Is Toynbee an enemy of reason? Clearly he is no Nietzsche or Sorel glorifying primitive feelings; even modern music he finds distasteful. His personal life style, which includes world travel and writing about contemporary affairs, is that of a sophisticated Englishman, not a life-denying mystic. He declares that Christianity had erred grievously when it fought the Copernican Revolution with theological doctrines derived essentially from Hellenistic thought which had nothing at all to do with the essential meaning of the religion of Jesus. He does not wish to abandon reason or to subordinate it to theology. While he seeks the victory of the higher religions over secular

ideologies he does not want reason crushed in the process:

Reason as well as Religion is one of the essential faculties of Human Nature, and the historical precedents indicated that, when a higher religion routs an intellectual enlightenment, it pays the penalty of degeneration into a lower religion. Religion cannot deny scientific truth, or suppress free and disinterested scientific inquiry, with impunity. When Religion commits this crime, the society that is the victim of it becomes petrified; for a civilization that allows itself to be castrated intellectually is allowing itself to be deprived of part of its creative faculty--in which intellectual activity is an essential element.¹³

After the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, maintains Toynbee, the modern West can no longer accept dogma uncritically. Since a post-Christian intelligentsia cannot be expected to give up its intellectual independence, the higher religions will have to de-emphasize unessential dogmas, accidental historical accretions that do not enhance their spiritual mission.

But if Toynbee would not deny reason, he does not grant it complete autonomy or place full confidence in its effectiveness.

I am now more alive than I once was to the limitations of human reasoning powers. I believe that the answers to the questions that matter most to us can be found only beyond the reason's limits, if they can be found at all. So I am no longer entitled to call myself a rationalist if the label commits one to holding that human reasoning powers are capable of answering all questions that one needs to ask (capable of proving, for instance, or disproving, the existence of an absolute spiritual Reality beyond the phenomenal world).¹⁴

Reason, insists Toynbee, must be guided by spiritual values that enhance not trample upon human dignity. By itself reason is insufficient to protect man from himself;

it is no match for individual self-centeredness and group tribal-mindedness. Nor can it answer man's need for spiritual comfort, a need which man will never dispense with for he is born to trouble. Neither can it compare with religion in evoking man's noblest sentiments--love and compassion.

When statesmen and scientists in the manner of Socrates begin to ponder the moral implications of their activities, and, in the manner of Isaiah, begin to feel compassion for all God's children, then reason will be an instrument not of human destruction but of human betterment. It is this spirit, and not any Tertullian anti-rationalism or Hitlerian anti-intellectualism that underlies Toynbee's attitude towards reason. What else is Toynbee's hostility to nationalism and fanaticism but a recognition of the dangers of irrationalism and a desire to combat it? He believes that the liberal-rational tradition of the modern West, because it does not arouse the soul, is inadequate to counter dangerous outbreaks of the non-rational, particularly as manifested in nationalism. Because Toynbee questions the effectiveness of reason to control the brutal side of man's nature, or to give him the personal comfort that his spirit requires, it is inappropriate to call him an enemy of reason. Toynbee maintains that "it is human nature that threatens Mankind with extinction." Faced with this dilemma, he urges "the study of human affairs in order to bring them under control,"¹⁵

that is bringing the dangerous irrational components of the human psyche under the control of reason and its ally, spiritual values that unite man in love and compassion. In the struggle between good and evil which rages in every soul and in society, Toynbee views reason and spirituality not as opponents but as allies. Reason needs this spiritual ally, Toynbee insists, for unless man's will coincides with God's will, which is love, all rational efforts at reform will be defeated by human self-centeredness and all efforts to curb the dehumanizing excesses of reason will fail.

For Toynbee, man achieves freedom through self-mastery and self-determination, when he is able to break the "cake of custom," overcome habit, and meet new challenges. The highest form of freedom is spiritual growth leading to communion with God; when man guides his conduct according to God's values he has successfully responded to the greatest challenge of all, that presented by his own nature. God has provided man with this challenge at the same time that he has given man freedom of choice. In rejecting God's law of love, man brings about his own disaster; he is overwhelmed by the irrationality inherent in his own nature. Freedom requires continuous acts of creation; for man must always transcend the limitations posed by human nature. In doing so, he not only performs an act of self-transfiguration that brings him closer to God, he also acquires the capacity to improve society.

Toynbee does not seek to return to the Middle Ages or to encase reason in a straightjacket of dogma. Rather, he feels that the liberal tradition of freedom--which he ultimately finds rooted in Christianity--and the methodology of reason--which he does not reject but hopes will serve man--can best be preserved and prove most fruitful if they are inspired by the teachings of the prophets, humanity's noblest souls. While he is not a thoroughgoing rationalist, neither is he an anti-rationalist. Like many others in the twentieth century he is keenly aware of the limitations of reason and the need to provide for the non-rational components of the human psyche. If we require a rubric, perhaps Toynbee's own definition of himself as a trans-rationalist is best.

I would describe myself as...a 'trans-rationalist'. I believe that one must follow reason as far as reason will carry one, and that the findings of reason. . . must be accepted without reservation. Where well-established findings of reason are in conflict with traditional religious dogmas, reason, I hold, must be followed and the dogmas must be given up. I also hold, however, that reason has not explained, and probably never will explain more than a fragment of the mystery of the universe, and that the fragmentary picture that reason gives has to be supplemented by intuition. I believe that human beings cannot be without this wider 'trans-rational' vision. At the same time, I believe that intuition cannot give the verifiable and demonstrable knowledge that reason can legitimately claim to give within its own limited field.¹⁶

It is not any illiberalism or anti-rationalism that is at the center of Toynbee's thought. In his humanitarianism, cosmopolitanism, and concern for social justice, Toynbee has absorbed much of the Western liberal tradition;

in his willingness to accept the conclusions of science and in his insistence that man, through intelligent planning, can utilize technology to improve the quality of life, he shares in the rational tradition of the West. While Toynbee does lament the ascendancy, in the modern West, of a secular spirit over the religious, he does not favor either the disintegration of the West, the abandonment of its scientific achievement, or the negation of liberal ideals, but insists that the values of liberal humanism are insufficient to protect man from fanaticism, irrationalism, and a persistent tribal-mindedness or to give him the inner strength with which to confront the anxieties and depressions that burden every human soul. Toynbee would have no quarrel with liberalism or rationalism if they were guided by love for God and therefore, a love for man, that comes only from adhering to the message of the prophets of higher religions. A religion of love, not of dogma, can do what reason has hitherto failed to do--provide a life-affirming outlet for the non-rational side of human nature. Man has successfully met the challenge presented by physical nature; guided by God's law of love, he might succeed in overcoming the far greater challenge presented by his own human nature.

While Toynbee is not hostile to liberal values or an enemy of reason, his attitude is another expression of that loss of confidence in the Enlightenment tradition

which is at the root of the crisis of the West. In rejecting a secular definition of freedom, in postulating the existence of a realm that reason cannot penetrate, in insisting that reason without the guidance of spiritual values will fail man, and in stressing communion with God as the prime aim of life, Toynbee has expressed a disillusionment with the Enlightenment conception of man and society. Humanism unto itself is insufficient. Even when the humanist creed encompasses non-religious spiritual values, as was the case with the philosophes, it will not succeed. In his attempt to cope with the dilemma of Western Civilization, Toynbee has looked beyond the Enlightenment to the Christian tradition. But no obscurantist, and hostile to dogma, he does not retreat into orthodoxy. He would retain the liberal tradition, for he sympathizes with its ideals, and would advance the cause of knowledge, for he respects the power and utility of the intellect; but he denies the absolute self-sufficiency of reason or the validity of a purely secular formulation of liberty. The liberal-rational tradition, in Toynbee's view, cannot by itself rescue the West; to be truly effective, it must be guided by values that bring men close to God and therefore closer to each other.

Toynbee is representative of an age that has lost much of its belief in reason, linear progress and the essential goodness of man. When reason fails, man reverts to myth which is an older and alternative way of viewing

the world than that offered by science. In troubled times myth breaks through the barriers imposed by a rational civilization and returns man to his elemental nature. In urging mankind to seek sustenance in higher religions, Toynbee is championing the highest creation of the mythical mind; but he does so not from ignorance, not from tradition, not even from the vantage point of mystical experiences (although he hints at having them) but on the basis of reflection. Toynbee, as we have seen, is very much aware of the power and danger of the non-rational. In higher religions, he believes, man has a satisfying, constructive, and valuable way of expressing the non-rational. If the feelings are not channelled into higher religions, they will express themselves destructively in ideologies.

Toynbee would use religion not to subvert the liberal-rational tradition but to protect it from dangerous anti-rational and anti-liberal ideologies and from the creations of reason--technology and bureaucracies--that distort human personality. Furthermore, holding firmly to the belief that a human soul is a precious creation of God that cannot be violated in the interest of any human institution or ideology, Toynbee could hardly be called the spiritual ally of any sword-bearing, flag-waving, ideology-spewing, would-be conqueror of the West. He warns against the coming world-state being made into an Orwellian 1984 and his hatred of Hitlerism and Stalinism was expressed very early. During

the 1930's he advocated collective security through the League of Nations and considered it "the most vital necessity to shape the international order as far as possible in accordance with these ideals of the democratic rule of law as contrasted with the kind of order that might, and perhaps will, be imposed by a dominant military power. "¹⁷

Toynbee does not advocate a universal state because he has no use for Western Civilization and seeks its end; rather he hopes that the Western achievement will merge creatively with an Islamic achievement, a Sinic achievement, a Hindu achievement, so that mankind will fulfill its destiny and become the family that God intended it to be. In the coming world-state there is a place for both the Western secular and religious achievement. Toynbee expects that Western science, technology, and administration will provide a decent standard of living and a psychologically satisfying environment in the coming Ecumenopolis and that Christianity will help to erect a stable spiritual foundation, without which a universal state would become an Orwellian catastrophe. Toynbee can best be described as a Christian humanist whose world-view has also been greatly influenced and broadened by the spiritual orientations of all the higher religions. By looking beyond secularism for values and inspiration, he wants a Western and Westernizing middle class ruling elite to act creatively; in this way the pattern of breakdown and disintegration can

be broken and humanity can climb to a higher ledge. For Toynbee a brotherhood of man knit together by the recognition of the fatherhood of God would be a creative response to the challenges that threaten human survival; it would give meaning to all past suffering, to all human history. It is a true definition of progress. This vision of a union sacrée contains no small amount of Biblical utopianism. Man gains redemption when he conquers idolatry--the deification of himself and his handiworks--and adheres to God's law of love.

If Toynbee does not call for the abandonment of the Western liberal-rational tradition, why then have critics regarded him as fundamentally an enemy and hater of the West? It is because Toynbee's interpretation of the world wars and totalitarianism as the terrible fulfillment of the modern West's apostasy from Christianity and unreserved embracing of secularism has caused him to undervalue the achievement and understress the uniqueness of the West. Herein we feel lies the explanation for Toynbee's seeming anti-liberalism, anti-rationalism and hatred of the West. To one who has imbibed deeply from both Hellenism with its notions of hubris and ate, and Christianity, which inherited the Hebrew view of history as a conflict between sinful man and God's law, it seemed that World War I, and later the rise of Hitler were cataclysmic scourges that the West had brought upon itself when it deserted Christianity and became captivated by nationalism. In Toynbee's eyes, the

entire achievement of the modern West has to be evaluated in terms of the end result of this apostasy from Christianity, namely totalitarianism and world wars. There is some truth to Geyl's observation that Toynbee has "hardly more than a grudging word, now and then, about Western Civilization's positive achievements. The great European thinkers and poets and scholars. . . as far as his estimation of Western Civilization is concerned might as well never have existed. . . .The scientists. . . are never valued for what they helped to make of Western Civilization; the atom bomb seems at times to outweigh all their merits."¹⁸ Overwhelmed by World War I and Nazism Toynbee came to see Western Civilization since the Renaissance as moving in a straight line towards the battlefields and ideologies of the twentieth century. Thus immediately after Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia, Toynbee, in a passage that illuminates his thought, vented his anger against the Italian dictator and the Western Civilization that spawned him.

...Mussolini's deliberate personal sin might be almost eclipsed by his involuntary historical role of exposing the moral perversity of the once Christian society which had confessed its apostasy in the act of raising him to power. The perversity of the modern Western ideal of nationalism was shown up by an Italian Imperialism which was the aftermath of an Italian Risorgimento. The perversity of the modern Western intellectual feat of Physical Science was shown up by the application of chemistry and aeronautics to the devilish device of spraying poison gas from the air. The perversity of the modern Western commercial spirit--a worship of Mammon from which the nineteenth-century philosophers had naively expected a redemption

of the World--was shown up by the greed with which. . . the businessmen of even the best behaved countries of the Western World rushed in to make their profit by catering for the aggressor's military requirements.¹⁹

The world wars and the totalitarian dictators dimmed Toynbee's enthusiasm for Western Civilization and caused him to undervalue its essential achievement. While no one could quarrel with Toynbee's categorizing of the atrocities committed by the modern West (conquest of New World, Wars of Religion, slave trade, racial discrimination, imperialism, world wars, genocide of Jews), one must take issue with his assertion that Western ideals of justice, freedom, and humanity were not a unique achievement.

When I ask my fellow Westerners what the West stands for, and am told, as I usually am, that it stands for justice, freedom and humanity, I ask if there is any civilization on record--not excluding those once represented by the Assyrians and the Aztecs--that has not also claimed to stand for the self-same virtues. Surely these are the virtues to which all human beings feel themselves constrained to pay homage, but to which no human beings have ever succeeded in living up.²⁰

For Toynbee, nothing that the West achieved when it switched to the secular track could compensate for the evil destination to which secularism had steered it. To Toynbee the West has little reason to pride itself on its science and technology; whatever benefits have accrued from them have been largely nullified by their adverse affects--weapons of mass destruction, totalitarian rule, worldwide alienation. Nor in the Toynbee scheme should the West overesteem its secular ideal of liberty which was paraded and heralded at the same time that Africans were enslaved,

American Indians massacred, and world wars and totalitarianism brewing. And by contributing to the success of nationalism, liberalism itself shares some of the responsibility for the emergence of the world wars and totalitarianism. This is consistent with his interpretation of Hellenic civilization. While liberal-humanists are enamored of the triumph of the Greeks in conceiving the ideals of freedom and reason, Toynbee concentrates upon the failure of Hellenes to surpass parochial-mindedness, upon their idolization of the polis, a human institution. Whereas liberal-humanists have taken pride in the achievements of the Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment, Industrial Revolution, and the spread of democratic reforms, Toynbee chooses to concentrate upon the failures of the West: world wars, totalitarianism, run-away technology. The West devoid of its Christian ancestry appears to Toynbee as a revival of Hellenism, a secular civilization that broke down because it overvalued man's creations. This attitude is clearly conveyed in Toynbee's rejection of the view held by Geyl and Kohn that Nazism and communism are not products of Western Civilization, but aberrations that reject the core values of the West. "If these ideologies that are so abhorrent to modern Western liberals such as Kohn, Geyl, and me are not products of the modern Western Civilization, as our liberalism is, where have they come from? They have not come from Russia or India or China or the Islamic World or a no longer darkest Africa."²¹ To disguise Nazism as a

purely German phenomenon, insists Toynbee, is to miss the essential lesson of the Hitler years. "For us, the non-Germanic Westerners, the true moral of Hitlerism is: This is what any of the rest of us might have done, and may still do, but for the grace of God. This is what the children of our Western Civilization are capable of when they abandon the worship of the God who is love."²²

It is not that Toynbee repudiates the liberal and rational tradition of the West; rather he compels us not

to flinch from facing the truth that, in the course of the quarter of a millenium that has now passed since the seventeenth-century Western revolution, the modern Western Civilization has displayed not only a bright side but a dark one, and that in our time this dark side has been darker than the darkest stain on the pages of Western history in the Middle Ages or even in the Age of the Wars of Religion.²³

Toynbee recognizes and approves of what technology can do to provide social justice for the world's poor; he favors liberal doctrines that promote humane feelings and recognize human rights and dignity; he applauds advances in knowledge and wants reason to serve man. But he refuses to define Western Civilization only by its bright side, insisting that its achievements must be evaluated within the context of the other products of Western society that have trampled upon human dignity and have made possible the annihilation of mankind. The anonymous reviewer of the Times Literary Supplement was quite correct to describe A Study of History as "a vision which expresses the despair

of a liberal who has seen the liberal dream turn to ashes as well as the hope of a liberal who has turned again to God."²⁴ If few liberals of the interwar years found hope in a return to the religion of their fathers, many shared Toynbee's disenchantment with the course of Western history.

There is a second reason why critics have interpreted Toynbee as fundamentally opposed to liberalism and rationalism and that is because they have focused almost exclusively upon A Study of History through the publication of Volume X in 1954. These volumes reveal the essential but not complete Toynbee. To understand the unity of Toynbee's thought it is necessary to examine Reconsiderations and other major works published since the completion of Volume X. The arguments of early critics like Trevor-Roper and Geyl have generally been uncritically adopted by more recent commentators. Any comprehensive study of Toynbee must deal with the evolution of his thought. The first six volumes were written with the memory of World War I still strong and when it appeared that a worn out democracy might well succumb to one of the two dynamic totalitarian ideologies. That the modern West could spew forth such evils as World War I and Nazism convinced Toynbee that Western Civilization was now far into its Time of Troubles. In Volumes VII-X, written in the afterglow of World War II and in the intense heat of the Cold War, Toynbee still had some doubts about the vitality of the West and its ability to escape from

the rhythm of breakdown and disintegration. However, with the growing importance of the Third World, he appeared more as a prophet of world integration than a harbinger of doom for the West, a theme that has been expanded in his writings of the 1960's and 1970's. In these later works Toynbee appears more and more as a Christian humanist who would utilize the liberal and rational traditions of the West to help build a world society capable of achieving peace and social justice. On this point we are in agreement with Pollard:

And so, in recent years, we have heard less of ...dying civilizations, and much more of the concrete, but this time soluble problems of the West, and the challenge of the underdeveloped world. It is, at times, as if the Study of History had never been written. In strong contrast to that study, we now find, for example, a much greater positive role given to the rise of technology and the consequent growth of material wealth. . . .The middle classes, once thought of as presiding over a decline going back to the Renaissance, have still plenty of creative life in them. . . .It is hard to avoid the view that the success of the liberal bourgeois West in the war of 1939-45, in its economic recovery since, and in leading the development and industrialization of much of the rest of the world, has given hope to one who had come to believe that the role of his society and his class was played out.²⁵

Pollard, however, errs in holding that Toynbee now sees "some salvation in social justice rather than in religious myth."²⁶ What gives unity to Toynbee's thought remains that vision of the community of man, united in the love of God. Toynbee has never broken with either universalism or spirituality. While he now devotes greater attention to the fruitful role that both liberalism and rationalism can play in the coming world society, he holds steadfastly to

the view that these great legacies of the Western tradition are simply inadequate to bind man together in peace and fellowship; they still cannot permanently restrain man's original sin which manifests itself in wars amongst peoples and in conflicts between classes. The liberalism and rationalism which the coming world-state will make good use of must draw inspiration from prophetic values.

Trevor-Roper and Geyl wrote their critiques of Toynbee before the publication of his later works which are only tangentially concerned with defending a grand structure and, moreover, are written in a more subdued tone. While both critics might not have altered their original position, it is conceivable that this last phase of Toynbee's thought might have evoked a less vitriolic attack.

Still another reason why liberals have been hostile to Toynbee is the fundamental antipathy of the liberal mind to any religious world-view. Liberals are discomforted by religious explanations for social problems especially when written in exalted tones and supported by long quotations from the Bible, St. Augustine, Bishop Bossuet, Henri Bergson. The liberal mind agrees essentially with Geyl's fundamental criticism of Toynbee: "The problems. . . which... have to do with the health and prospects of survival of a civilization have always been tackled and will always be tackled on a different plane from that of religion."²⁷ Many

of Toynbee's passages that seem to preach against the pagans offend the liberal temperament; his plea for spirituality and his analysis, in religious terms, of the ills of modern society are reminiscent of St. Augustine to whom liberals do not turn for inspiration or guidance. There are numerous parallels between The City of God, written when Rome was dying, and A Study of History, written when the West seemed near collapse. Like Augustine, Toynbee measures progress by spiritual advances, man moving closer to God. For Augustine history was preparation for entrance into the City of God; for Toynbee history is moving towards the unification of peoples and the harmonization of religions in a grand spiritual orchestra. With Augustine Toynbee holds that doing without God ends in the undoing of man.

One final question remains. Will future generations admire Toynbee's effort or will it "be only a curiosity in 20 or 30 years"²⁸ as Bruce Mazlish suggests? Toynbee's work will always remain as the most passionate personal expression of the torments and anxieties that have afflicted the West in the twentieth century. It also deserves praise for its innumerable stimulating and illuminating insights, comparisons, and interpretations, for its wealth of data, for its extraordinary learning and for being a courageous and inspired attempt at universal history. If our planet does become increasingly more unified, then Toynbee will be heralded as one of the spiritual ancestors of world-

mindedness. "To have stressed. . . the fundamental oneness of mankind," says Kohn, "will be a lasting merit of Mr. Toynbee's work and vision."²⁹

Toynbee will ever remind us that theoretical reason, the great achievement of the Greek mind, is not the only component of Western Civilization; there is also the Christian tradition. For Socrates knowing oneself meant that man's reason and will were autonomous; the human mind did not depend on forces outside itself for defining values and guiding conduct. Christianity represents an alternate and essentially opposing world-view. It teaches that man through reason alone cannot arrive at moral standards, that man cannot fully know himself, that the cause of sin, suffering, and sorrow is man's separation from God, that man cannot without God's grace overcome his sinful nature, and that the cure for an ailing humanity is reunion with God. To regard this anthropology as ignorance or superstition is to misunderstand entirely the persistence and granite might of the non-rational, the well-spring of religious thought. Human nature will resist the complete rationalization of life; it will not discard every mythical explanation or reduce all belief to objective knowledge. To expect it to do otherwise is to misread the historical record and to oversimplify man's being.

Nevertheless, while it is true that reason can only dent but never batter down the primordial fortress of the irrational, is it likely in the generations ahead that

reconversion to higher religions will be the principal means of expressing the non-rational? In a world being transformed by secular modes of thought, Toynbee's call for a religious reawakening seems largely unrealizable. When the modern West submitted nature and society to rational analysis and, even if incompletely, to rational control, it did so by breaking with a religious world-view. Advances in the rational comprehension of nature and human affairs have evoked a corresponding decline in commitment to religious dogma and institutions. In urging that the coming world-wide religious revolution be unencumbered by intellectually untenable dogma and by an authoritarian church, Toynbee himself reflects this attitude of the modern West. But can a spiritual transformation be achieved when the religious world-view has been shattered, its dogmatic and institutional foundation subverted, when God's very existence is doubted? Can prophetic values unsupported by the mystery and authority of theology and the power of an institutional church sustain a spiritual revolution? Higher religions have survived because the inspiration of their prophets was transformed and hardened into dogma. Not Jesus' Sermon on the Mount but the Pauline doctrine of a resurrected savior-God became the centerpiece of Christianity and made its triumph possible. A religion of love not rooted in dogma and protected by priests may inspire sporadic outbreaks of spiritual idealism but that is all. The religious revolution that Toynbee seeks --

"a conversion of the soul away from the World, the Flesh, and the Devil to the Kingdom of Heaven"³⁰-- cannot be achieved through prophetic love alone.

In a post-Christian scientific age in which a religious world-view has crumbled and in which Christianity has evidenced little ability to reconvert Westerners to their ancestral religion, Toynbee's hope for a contemporary St. Francis to lead wayward Westerners back to the God of love seems an expression of piety not reality. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why Toynbee in his later works seems increasingly more enamored of Eastern religions; the East, less scientific, industrialized and secularized, and traditionally more introspective, might prove more receptive to a religious revolution than the West. Even if the equation between an accelerating rationalization of nature and society and a decreasing adherence to traditional religious beliefs, can be upset, how could a religious reawakening take place? On this point the judgment of Hans Morgenthau seems most perceptive:

But even if it were true that the return to religious faith can save Western Civilization, can a civilization recover its religious faith by an act of will? . . . Neither a teacher nor a whole civilization can by an act of will create the symbolic and ritualistic expressions of religiosity thus restored; least of all can they create them out of the fragments of religions, whose decline has made the restoration of religiosity necessary in the first place. What religions will grow from this new religiosity man must leave to fate. He must be content to be ready, and to make others ready, to see the signs and to read them aright when they appear.³¹

Toynbee's vision of the harmonization of the world's higher religions also seems doubtful, for it is based on the questionable assumption that these religions are spiritually equivalent, that their common concern for a higher reality outweighs disparities resulting from theological differences and separate histories. Toynbee also holds out the possibility that twentieth-century man's "quest for the recovery of religion" may lead to new forms of religion "that will be so different from the traditional forms that, at first sight, man's new religion may hardly be recognizable."³² On this point we shall have to reserve judgment as we shall on the prospects or merits of a world-state.

The withering of traditional religion has not meant the triumph of reason, the victory of logos over mythos. Surely the experience of the twentieth century teaches us that the vitality of myth endures, that when man ceases to believe in God he is capable of believing in anything and everything else. Herein lies the ultimate significance of Toynbee's effort. He forces us to confront the irrational, to find a constructive outlet for its creative energies and to cope with its destructive capacities. Who could deny his insight that man's religious sentiments have not been eradicated but have been rerouted into lower religions: the cult of the state, the cult of the race, the cult of the leader, the cult of the party, the cult of the machine? The non-rational is a permanent component of

human nature that reason cannot obliterate; the human psyche will not submit to the total rationalization of life. It is an axiom of Toynbee's thought that if man is deprived of higher religions that stress love and compassion he will embrace lower religions and dangerous myths whose capacity to destroy civilization has been historically demonstrated. On this point we have no assurance that Toynbee is mistaken. Toynbee compels us to consider if the source of evil is not within man himself, if human nature is not indeed afflicted with a vein of wickedness and aggressiveness, what religious thinkers call original sin. He requires us to question the assumption that traditional liberal humanism offers the best defense against dangerous eruptions of the non-rational. He reminds us that religion is not something that we can simply reason away and forces us to reflect upon the meaning and utility of prophetic teachings for a secular but troubled age. He prods us to ask where is science taking us and admonishes us to recognize that reason can be a curse as well as a blessing, that it can both ennoble and demean human personality. He demands that we find meaning in what many consider a meaningless universe, and cautions us that reason alone cannot provide this meaning, cannot grasp life in its fullness. He warns us that the bedrock of civilization is not man's dominion over nature but the moral mastery of his own nature and the quality of his relations with his fellows. And while he parades before

us abortive, dead, and dying civilizations, he urges us not to surrender to despair, for man does possess the intellectual and spiritual resources to improve himself and his society. In an age that has seen reason soar and collapse, optimism blossom and wilt, Toynbee has raised the essential questions. Whether he has suggested viable solutions or properly assessed the historical merit of higher religions is another problem.

FOOTNOTES

1. H.R. Trevor-Roper, Historical Essays, pp. 300-301.
2. Ibid., p. 305.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., pp. 320-21.
5. Ibid., pp. 309, 322-23.
6. Pieter Geyl, Debates with Historians (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), in Montagu, ed., Toynbee and History, p. 363.
7. Sidney Pollard, The Idea of Progress (London: C.A. Watts & Co., 1968), p. 173.
8. Montagu, ed., Toynbee and History, p. 361.
9. Kohn, Political Ideologies of the Twentieth Century, pp. 269-270.
10. Roland N. Stromberg, Arnold Toynbee Historian for An Age of Crisis (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), p. 82.
11. Study, 12: 529-30.
12. Arnold J. Toynbee, Democracy in The Atomic Age (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 7.
13. Study, 7b: 479.
14. Study, 12: 75.
15. Study, one-volume edition, p. 47.
16. Arnold J. Toynbee, "The Future of Religion," Twentieth Century 17(Autumn 1961): 114.
17. Arnold J. Toynbee, "After Munich," International Affairs 18 (January-February 1939): 16. Here and in the Survey of International Affairs Toynbee warned of the dangers of totalitarianism. In May 1938 he wrote in International Affairs:

If the world cannot be made safe for Democracy unless these anti-democratic movements are defeated, the democratic peoples certainly cannot afford to leave to Chance to do their work for them. . . .

Chance only favors people who are prepared to 'take a chance'. Mussolini took a most hazardous chance when he committed aggression. . . and, conversely, we had the chance of a life-time in our hands when the weakest of the Great Powers committed a flagrant act of aggression and did this in an area where strategically we were in a position to strike. But we flinched from taking our chance so Mussolini got away with his. . . . For the totalitarian state, war is regarded not only as inevitable or as a base means to a desirable end, but as a positive good in itself. . . . These men mean what they say, and do what they mean to do. . . . And do we ourselves want to retire into neutrality if that would mean leaving the destiny of the world to be decided by people who hold the totalitarian doctrine? What seems to be at stake is not just political and social liberalism but Religion itself.

Nevertheless, Toynbee's strong condemnations and stern warnings did not prevent him from being pro-Chamberlain and pro-Munich in 1938. "What made me pro-Munich at the moment was just the enormous sense of relief at being let off immediate war. This was perhaps natural but it was not estimable. . . . It was a short moment of relief and I am now ashamed of it." Arnold J. Toynbee and Phillip Toynbee, Comparing Notes: A Dialogue Across a Generation (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1963), p. 122.

18. Pieter Geyl, Debates with Historians (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956; reprint ed., Cleveland: World Publishing Co., Meridean), p. 191.

19. Survey of International Affairs, 1935, p. 3.

20. Study, 12: 626-27.

21. Ibid., p. 532.

22. Arnold J. Toynbee, "Pharisee or Publican," Sewanee Review 63 (Winter 1955): 10.

23. Study, 12: 531.

24. Montagu, ed., Toynbee and History, p. 110.

25. Pollard, Idea of Progress, pp. 175-177.

26. Ibid., p. 177.

27. Pieter Geyl, Debates with Historians, p. 159.

28. Bruce Mazlish, The Riddle of History: The Great Speculators from Vico to Freud (New York: Minerva Press, 1968), p. 363.
29. Kohn, Political Ideologies of the Twentieth Century, p. 275.
30. Study, 3: 192.
31. Hans J. Morgenthau, "Toynbee and the Historical Imagination," Encounter (March 1955), in Montagu ed., Toynbee and History, pp. 198-99.
32. Arnold J. Toynbee, "The Challenge of Our Era," in New Frontiers of Knowledge, a symposium by distinguished writers, notable scholars, and public figures (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1957), p. 24.

EPILOGUE

At the outset I stated my intention not to challenge Toynbee's historiography or his religious world-view but to penetrate the meaning of his effort. Toward this end I have tried to structure Toynbee's thought around an integrating principle, the crisis of the West, and to draw from a vast panoply of ideas those which make Toynbee a thinker worthy of study. While there is much in Toynbee that I dispute or reject, I have not attempted to quarrel with him but to understand his work. One of the principal benefits derived from a study of Toynbee I have indicated, is that he compels one to think expansively and conceptually about the past. In doing so I find myself in fundamental disagreement with Toynbee's comprehension of the course and meaning of Western Civilization. In particular, I cannot accept his interpretation of the rational tradition of the West. Toynbee, as I have stated, is not an enemy of reason; he is not in the camp of irrationalists who glorify the feelings and disparage the intellect. But by upholding the existence of a higher realm of reality as a source of value, he does deny the autonomy of reason. Consequently, he interprets the Western odyssey as a movement toward and away from a higher spiritual reality; I prefer to see it as a gradual progression toward a rational understanding of nature and society. For Toynbee the tragedy of the West has been its inability to preserve its Christian heritage; for me it has been its failure to realize the promise of reason.

The Western tradition is a confluence of Greek humanism and Christianity. With Toynbee I value the Christian heritage and recognize its profound importance to Western history. By preserving the Hebrew prophets' ideal of the dignity of man and moral autonomy, Christianity helped to shape the Western conception of human freedom. By synthesizing elements of Greek philosophy and Roman law and institutions, Christianity became a civilizing force after the collapse of Rome. But Christianity also represents a world-view that differs fundamentally with the outlook of classical humanism and the modern West. I do not believe that the Christian world-view, so central to Toynbee's historical consciousness, represents a promising approach to studying history or to solving the crisis of the West. Religion can do many things, some of them inspiring of awe, but it cannot arrive at a science of nature or a science of human culture. Only the instruments of reason, first forged in ancient Greece, make this possible. Theoretical reason is a distinctive feature of Western Civilization; it is our inheritance from Greece and between Athens and Jerusalem there will always remain an irreconcilable conflict as demonstrated by the thought of Socrates and Saint Augustine.

For Socrates, achieving moral excellence required self-knowledge and self-mastery; it meant that a soul must submit to the rule of reason. Through reason the individual gains knowledge of the Good, takes control over his own life, and becomes a morally free agent. The Good is not revealed to man in the form of divine commandments but must be discovered by the individual himself through critical analysis, for it is the essential condition of being human that man continually

scrutinize his life. This is what Socrates meant when he said that "the unexamined life is not worth living." Nor does one pursue the Good in order to escape from worldly affairs into the realm of pure thought; it is never intended that one seek the Good merely as an exercise in abstract philosophy. To be sure the Good is a universal standard apprehended through thought, but it is also a way of life. One's behavior must accord with the ideals of the Good. This is precisely the way Socrates conducted himself at his trial.

Philosophy originated with the Ionians who attempted natural non-magical explanations to account for change within nature. The natural philosophers employed rational thought to make sense out of nature; Socrates insisted that man use reason to make sense out of his own life. Reason gives man the power to direct his own human nature, to keep from being a slave to his own desires, to differentiate between higher and lower forms of behavior, and to resist the threats to his liberty and autonomy. In urging man to think rationally about the problems of human existence, Socrates offered no systematic ethical theory, no list of ethical precepts; what he did supply was a method of inquiry, dialectics, or logical discussion. A dialectical exchange between two people is the key to knowledge for it forces men out of their apathy and smugness and compels them to examine their thoughts critically, to confront head on illogical, inconsistent, dogmatic, and imprecise assertions. It implies that since man is a rational animal, reason is meant to be used in relations between men, that men can learn from each other. It

implies further that the human mind can and must make rational choices. It is precisely this capacity to formulate rational questions and to give rational answers that defines man's nature; to deal rationally with oneself and others is the distinctive mark of being human. It is through thought that man makes ethical choices, imposes rules upon himself, and gives form to his existence.

Socrates wanted to subject the whole of human nature to the clear light of reason; in this way he would remove ethics from the realm of tradition, dogma, superstition, and myth. Socrates believed that to the most crucial problems of human existence -- the question of good and evil -- the only proper guide is reason. For Socrates the highest form of excellence is taking control of one's life and shaping it according to ethical values reached through reflection. Morality does not originate in the decrees of gods or in traditions handed down from the past; it originates within man himself and all men through self-examination and self-discipline must try to grasp it. "Socratic humanism not only locates all value in man. It also places the greatest demand on his shoulders; the demand to be a whole man on his own and by his own effort, a self-controlled, self-affirming, self-overcoming and self-fulfilling human being."¹ Socrates made man the center of the universe, reason the center of man, and moral worth the central aim of human life. In Socrates Greek humanism found its highest expression.

As confidence in rationalism and hope for happiness in this world waned in the last centuries of the Roman Empire, a new

outlook began to take hold in men's consciousness; it stressed escape from an oppressive world and communion with a higher reality. Christianity was one response to a declining Hellenism; its triumph marked a break with classical antiquity and a new stage in the evolution of the West. Augustine was the principle architect of the Christian outlook that succeeded a dying classicism. Augustine repudiated the distinguishing feature of classical civilization, the autonomy of reason. For Augustine, ultimate wisdom is derived not through rational thought, but through faith in God; without faith there can be no knowledge, no understanding. Philosophy has no validity if it does not first accept as absolutely true the existence of God and his Revelation. Reason by itself cannot formulate valid ethical standards; moral values are not deduced logically by man but are revelation of the living God. Christian truth does not rest upon theoretical excellence, upon logical consistency; it is true because its source is God. Man is dependent upon God not only to act right but to think right. Contrast this with Socrates who insisted that man himself through rational reflection arrives at standards of good and evil. Whereas Socrates considered reason to be man's highest faculty, his noblest privilege, Augustine regarded reason as suspect, its power limited. Socrates held that man can perfect himself by submitting to the rule of reason, Augustine maintained that man alone lacks the capacity to regenerate himself morally. Without God he can neither reason nor behave properly. With Augustine the man-centered outlook of

classical humanism has given way to a God-centered universe; the fulfillment of God's will, not the creative development of all man's potentialities, becomes the central concern of life. To the classical view which asserted the primacy of reason, Augustine opposed the primacy of faith. "No Greek philosopher could have dreamt of making religious faith in some revealed truth the obligatory starting point of rational knowledge."² But this is not to say that Augustine regarded reason as a necessary enemy of faith. Had he called for an end to philosophy he would have been a simple-minded devotee, not the architect of an impressive Christian system of thought. Augustine respected the power of thought; what he denied was that reason alone could attain wisdom. The fundamental limitation of classicism, maintained Augustine, was that it strove for truth without a correct starting point, without a prior faith in God. He upholds the value of reason if one first accepts the principle that faith is a necessary precondition for all understanding. Unilluminated by faith, reason is deficient; it cannot attain knowledge of man or of the proper way to live. God and Revelation must always remain the standard of objectivity. For the next thousand years this attitude would dominate Western consciousness.

From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment European thought moved away from the medieval division of the universe into a higher realm of perfection and a lower realm inhabited by man. Gradually reason again asserted its autonomy. In maintaining that nature was uniform throughout the universe, Galileo broke

with the medieval dualism and made possible a mathematical understanding of the outer world. What Galileo accomplished in scientific thought, Machiavelli initiated in political theory. For him religion was not a source of higher truth that had been revealed to man from above; it was only a useful means of maintaining social order. Galileo shaped the modern mentality by removing the study of nature from any theological framework, Machiavelli by secularizing political thought. By the Enlightenment nature was conceived as self-sufficient, operating according to laws that the mind could grasp and explain in the language of mathematics. To comprehend nature the mind does not rely on the testimony of scripture; it does not allude to spiritual forces above nature. The mind alone provides man with an understanding of the natural world. Like nature, the intellect too is self-sufficient; it depends upon no powers beyond itself. What the mind did for nature it could do for society -- through reason uncover those general laws of nature that govern the social world. The Enlightenment sought to emancipate the intellect from any dependence upon a transcendental realm and to liberate the individual from accumulated traditions that could not meet the test of reason. It was this confidence in the power of reason that underlay the reforms of the French Revolution and nineteenth-century liberalism. And it was a disenchantment with reason and a diminishing commitment to freedom that underlay the spiritual crisis of the twentieth

century and contributed to the success of political myths.

In religion Toynbee finds a solution to the West's spiritual crisis and an effective defense against destructive eruptions of political myths. By holding that reason is not self-sufficient, that it cannot by itself solve the problems of the human community, that it must be guided from a transcendent realm, Toynbee, of course, is reversing the route traversed by modern thought since the Renaissance. In advocating a return to religion, the highest creation of the mythical mind, in opposing destructive myths with noble myths, Toynbee, I believe, confuses our understanding of critical problems. As I have pointed out, Toynbee is not hostile to reason but his religious orientation is another indication of the West's loss of confidence in the effectiveness of reason. To warn of the dangers inherent in the religious glorification of states, leaders, or machines is one thing, but it is quite another to advocate a religious solution to society's ills. It is praiseworthy to stress the persistence, power, and danger of the non-rational in human affairs, but is it helpful to propose semi-mystical ways of confronting the non-rational and to write history as theodicy? Regardless of his intentions, Toynbee's effort does have the effect of weakening the rational foundations of the West.

Nazism was not the terrible fulfillment of the West's apostasy from Christianity but a consequence of its turning away from the values of the Enlightenment. Nazism sought to

regulate men's actions by controlling their minds. As such it is in the mental sphere that the battle must be waged. With Toynbee I believe that we are not done with such monstrous expressions of the non-rational. Our best means of defense, however, lies in renewing respect for our rational tradition and understanding our adversary. Perhaps it is true, as Cassirer reminds us, that "it is beyond the power of philosophy to destroy the political myths. A myth is . . . impervious to rational arguments."³ But we can check their power and tame their viciousness by carefully studying their nature and methods. And for this task the traditions of the Enlightenment provide the most effective approach. What Cassirer wrote in 1932, a year before Hitler took power, still applies:

More than ever before. . . the time is again ripe for applying. . . self-criticism to the present age, for holding up to it that bright clear mirror fashioned by the Enlightenment. . . . The age which venerated reason and science as man's highest faculty cannot and must not be lost even for us. We must find a way not only to see that age in its own shape but to release again those original forces which brought forth and molded this shape.⁴

While I respect Toynbee's generous sentiments, his humanitarianism and cosmopolitanism, I fear that his religious approach weakens our respect for logos at a time when reason needs all the assistance that the intellectual community is capable of providing.

With great clarity Toynbee has highlighted a danger inherent in reason; it can go berserk, creating the means whereby man becomes the slave of his own instruments. Our rational

faculties have fashioned a technological society, which, in its relentless pursuit of maximal efficiency and output, threatens to rob man of his feelings and to transform him into a robot. Currently this specter seems more dangerous than the worn totalitarian ideologies. Faith in the computer has begun to exercise a powerful hold over us almost comparable to medieval man's faith in God and the true believer's faith in the Party and the Leader.

With Toynbee I want to humanize technology. To do this we must enlarge our understanding of the meaning of reason along the lines suggested by Erich Fromm:

Logical thought is not rational if it is merely logical and not guided by a concern for life, and by the inquiry into the total process of living in all its concreteness and with all its contradictions. . . . Reason flows from the blending of rational thought and feeling. If the two functions are torn apart, thinking deteriorates into schizoid intellectual activity, and feeling deteriorates into neurotic life-damaging passions. . . . In the social sciences it has become fashionable to think about human problems with no reference to the feelings related to these problems. It is assumed that scientific objectivity demands that thoughts and theories concerning man be emptied of all emotional concern with man.

.....
It is of vital importance to distinguish between a psychology that understands and aims at the well-being of man and a psychology that studies man as an object, with the aim of making him more useful for the technological society.⁶

With Toynbee I hold that the historian has a calling: as to the nature of that calling I agree with J. H. Plumb:

Man's success has derived from his application of reason, whether this has been to technical or to social questions. And it is the duty of the historian to teach this, to proclaim it, to demonstrate it in order to give humanity some confidence in a task that

will still be cruel and long -- the resolution of the tensions and antipathies that exist within the human species. . . . Hence the historian's opportunity is similar, although far from identical, to that of the philosophers of the Enlightenment. They too were slipping off the shackles of the past, destroying its pretensions and its follies, but they also attempted to create out of the debris a more extended, a more rational, a more detached sense of human destiny. And so by his writings, by his thinking, even by his example, the historian today should be similarly engaged.⁶

Although the times are dark reason provides us with a ray of hope and a way of proceeding. If the rational foundations of civilization are eroded we are more likely to experience an intensification of political myths that appeal to primitive feelings than a religious reawakening of the kind that Toynbee seeks.

With Toynbee I regard moral autonomy and self-determination of the individual as the highest ideal of human civilization. Two routes to ethical freedom lay open, the way of Isaiah and the way of Socrates, obedience to God's revelation or pursuing values arrived at through thought, the primacy of faith or the primacy of intellect. Toynbee's hope of realizing a religion of prophetic values divorced from dogma is contrary to our historical experience. Prophetic teachings, as I noted earlier, cannot avoid hardening into dogma and dogma requires the authority of priests and established churches. When this happens reason is confronted with a formidable opponent which Toynbee himself recognizes and that is why he favors a religion free of dogma. While such a religion of love might refrain from challenging science, it will soon lose its hold over the

human heart, for without mystery and authority religion fades. Better than anyone Freud understood that against the power of his instinctual life, man's intellect is a feeble weapon. Yet Freud still urged the life of reason. "The voice of the intellect is a soft one," he wrote, "but it does not rest till it has gained a hearing. Finally, after a countless succession of rebuffs, it succeeds. This is one of the few points on which one may be optimistic about the future of mankind." And the same aims one expects from God, says Freud, "namely the love of man and the decrease of suffering," are the aims that the intellect will set for itself. Thus there may be no ultimate antagonism between the aim of the prophets of higher religions and the aim of Socrates, but "an illusion it would be to suppose that what science cannot give us we can get elsewhere."⁷

FOOTNOTES

1. Laszlo Versenyi, Socratic Humanism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 175.
2. Etienne Gilson, Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), p. 17.
3. Cassirer, The Myth of the State, p. 296.
4. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955; German edition, 1932), pp. xi-xii.
5. Erich Fromm, The Revolution of Hope (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), pp. 42, 48.
6. J. H. Plumb, The Death of the Past (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970), pp. 142, 144-45.
7. Freud, The Future of an Illusion, pp. 87, 92.

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The bibliography is divided into three sections: 1) Selected Works on the Crisis of the West; 2) Selected Works of Arnold Toynbee; 3) Selected Secondary Works on Toynbee's Thought. No attempt is made to provide a comprehensive bibliography on the crisis of the West; only those works found particularly useful by the author are included. A complete listing of Toynbee's writings and all the secondary literature on Toynbee would cover many scores of pages. Here too we have had to be selective. A useful bibliography of Toynbee's works is Popper, Monica. A Bibliography of the Works in English of Arnold Toynbee 1910-1954. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1955. A listing of works about Toynbee may be found in Rule, John C., and Crosby, Barbara S. "Bibliography of Works about Toynbee in Western Languages, 1946-60." History and Theory 4 (1964): 213-33. Toynbee, himself, in volume 12 of A Study of History has compiled a bibliography of most of the reviews and articles dealing with his project.

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