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INDISPENSABILITY OF SPIRITUALITY

Abstract: *The article Indispensability of Spirituality discusses the need of spirituality as a prevention of mass-destruction of the world. Thanks to the highly developed technology, the life of humanity has become easier, but not happier. The highly developed technology, that produced means facilitating human life, also developed and produced weapons of mass-destruction. Danger of mass-destruction is very real, and fear of it is felt, consciously or unconsciously, by individuals as well as by whole human societies. It is spread by mass media, film industry and even by some religious sects. The way for the world to escape self-destruction, recommended not only by the clergy, but also by some prominent scholars and scientists, is practicing spirituality, especially Christianity.*

Key words: *Christianity, Cosmic Catastrophes, Religion, Science, Spirituality; Weapons of Mass Destruction.*

Never before in its history did humanity have so many and so efficient means for self-destruction as it has today. They are referred to as WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction). There are atomic bombs, poisonous gasses, chemical and bacteriological weapons, and, of course quite perfected traditional weapons: canons, machine-guns, tanks, bombs and other.

A number of countries already possess the WMD, other are working on producing them. Common knowledge is that America, Russia, England, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea already have the weapons of mass destruction. Iran, Iraq, Libya and who knows what other countries have been working on developing them too. Recently, Mohamed Albaradei, the head of the International watch-dog organization related to the development of the Weapons of Mass Destruction warned that unless the proliferation of atomic weapons is stopped, we are heading toward the end of the world.

May this be the reason for fear being present, consciously or unconsciously in unbridled crowds, families, individuals, offices, schools, factories, and even in art. Formless, and for majority of viewers senseless images are often dominating in paintings and sculptures. Popular contemporary music is represented by deafening cacophony that should muffle out anxiety and fear in human beings. Cartoon-films for children are saturated with ugly, bestial, demonic images and violence.

Fear is systematically imbedded and intensified by various means. The media, television, radio and the press, play an important role in disseminating and reinforcing the fear. Front pages of countless newspapers and magazines are usually jammed with pictures and reports of armed conflicts, murders, robberies, rapes, frauds and thefts. Television and film industry keep the pace in this fear promoting campaign. Films we watch in cinemas and TV are filled with scenes of shootings, murders, killing, adultery, suicide, and violence

of all kind. The climactic ways of spreading fear are films of wars in which atomic bombs are used to destroy numerous cities or the whole human civilization. No less effective in disseminating fears are films about interplanetary invasions of earth.

Even institutions in which people should expect to receive comfort and encouragement corrupted into nests of fear. Thus, for example, in many Christian sects preachers preach more about the devil than about God. In that manner, they spread the fear in people, using the fear to lure adherents to their sects. It is then no wonder that in our epoch there are so many suicides and insanity. Some of these sects proved to be instruments of self-destruction. Members of some of them, acting in accordance with the teaching of their "pastors" and "teachers" commit mass-suicide.

As for the satanic cults, which exist not only in America, but in some European countries as well, they seem to be "the sign of our time". Physical deformity present in some works of art is most likely a reflection of spiritual deformity of a distorted Christianity of various sects and satanic cults.

Long time ago some serious and reputable scholars and scientists had expressed in their studies and books a serious concern for the future of the world. Among them are Arnold Toynbee, Spengler, Sorokin and many others. Some of them seem to have been prophets of an inevitable destruction of our culture and civilization:

Human intelligence with its ineffable capability for invention and with an abundance of technical means which surpass all other in history, is working on making the man capable to commit suicide. For the first time ever, the man begins to speak human kind being

Now able to commit collective suicide.¹

The well-known scientist Lecomte du Nouy observes that

Each year more people die in traffic accidents (cars, railway, ships, airplanes) than from the bites of poisonous snakes or yellow fever, and the number of victims of the war is larger than the number of those who die from contagious diseases. One day the atomic bomb may surpass all the records. We know that the intelligence, uncontrolled by some moral force, can turn against itself and destroy the man.²

In a letter Oppenheimer, the famous physicist, written to a member of the Congress of the Lower Saxon, he expressed his concern fearing that the scientists, once they have used the atomic bomb, will not be able to control future mass destruction caused by atom bombs.³

Politicians, too, are aware of the possibility of a total destruction of the world. Self-destruction of the world is a real possibility and, therefore, the fear of death, as well as the fear of life under these conditions, overshadowed joy and pleasure which technical inventions could otherwise cause.

Past Catastrophes

Catastrophes of huge dimension have occurred in the past of humanity, too. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Flood at the time of Noah and many other

1 Toward Christian Civilization, A Draft Issued by Christian Union of Professional Men of Greece, Athens: The Damaskin Publication, 1950.

2 Lecomte du Nouy, Human Destiny, Signet Book Edition, p. 145.

3 Morgenpost, February 4, 1955, Hamburg, Germany.

catastrophes are mentioned in the Bible, where also the extinction of whole tribes are recorded. "Awareness of epochs which ended by violent changes in nature is omnipresent in the entire world."⁴

Ancient writers, Consorinus, Anaximen, Aristarch, Diogenus, Heraklit, Democritus, Epicures and many other, wrote of the successive destructions and creations of the world. It appears that Aristotle shared this idea.

According to the Hindu holy book Bhagavata Purana, as well as according to books Ezvur Vedam and Bagha Vedam, humanity was several times close to its total extinction. According to these books four worlds before ours were destroyed.

The book Visuddhi Marga names three elements that contributed to the destruction of previous worlds: water, fire and wind. It mentions seven catastrophes that already had occurred.

"Chinese call the destruction of worlds Kuo and they enumerate ten Kuo from the beginning of the world up to Confucius. In the ancient Chinese encyclopedia Sing-li-tsin-chi is written about the general disorders in nature."⁵

Civilizations destroyed by natural catastrophes are well known in oral traditions of Aztecs, Inca, Maya, and Mexico. Jews know of six civilizations that preceded ours and they name them: Eretz, Adama, Arka, Haraba, Yabasha, and Tevex. The present civilization they call Heled. Babylonian sources also contain tradition of the Flood. On a tablet it is written that god Enki, disappointed in man, decided to send a flood on the world. He informed god Nintud about his decision. The flood lasts nine months. Tag-tag was the only man who had survived that flood.

Babylonian epic about Gilgamesh mentioned Ut-napishtam who, according to another version, was the only man survived the flood sent on the world by gods. A great number of Babylonian sources contain tradition about the flood.

There is almost no nation in the world that possesses either oral or written tradition about catastrophes by which the previous worlds were destroyed. However, there is a big difference between catastrophes that had happened in the past and the one that may possibly happen in the future. In the past the humanity had a more or less role of a passive observer and was the object of catastrophe, without a way and means to prevent the catastrophe. The catastrophe and destruction in the future will be the act and responsibility of man. Today, he is, more than ever before, capable of preventing, but also of causing catastrophes. Exactly because of this he was never before in such a precarious situation.

Is There an Escape?

The question tormenting all those who are aware of the possibility of self-destruction of the human kind is: is there a way to avoid the self-destruction? Can we prevent humanity from committing collective suicide made possible to him by technology? Do we have ways and means to halt the blind destructive power of technology which, deprived of spirituality and morality, leads toward the destruction of our civilization?

It is interesting that many scientists and religions give an identical answer to these questions. The answer is: the only escape and salvation lies in Christianity!

Arnold Toynbee, one of the most popular historians in our century, believes that Christianity is the most vital element of our culture. It survived many catastrophes in the

4 Immanuel Velikovsky, *Worlds in Collision*, Garden City, N.Y. Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1959, p. 29.

5 Velikovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

past and is capable of surviving those in the future.⁶

Lecomte du Nouy, a very reputable biologist, openly proclaims Christianity as the road of salvation for the human kind, the only road from animal to human.

This is not a new idea for the Serbian people. Our tradition, our folk philosophy contained in our folk-poetry our ethics, never taught anything different from this. We were never confused and misled by the fame about "progressiveness" and modernism. We were never ashamed of our religion, our cross, our Christianity. A small number of our intellectuals abandoned the proven truths for which our people lived and died and were attracted by materialism and atheism. They were, and still are, a very insignificant minority.

Regretfully, we Serbs are too small a nation to be heard and listened by anyone. They consider and treat us as primitive, uneducated barbarians' savages. History, as they write it, emphasizes our shortcomings but does not even mention our virtues. There are statistics showing how many illiterate persons are there among the Serbs, but it is written nowhere that these illiterate persons are often wiser than many most learned. It also does not mention that various foreign occupations, some of which lasted for centuries, we were prevented to have schools and obtain formal education. However, life experience and innate intelligence of our people is no less valuable than the formal school education. We learned through hardships and suffering, through persecutions, hunger and enslavement. In this way we learned that without God there is no life, no freedom, no brotherhood or anything good and important. We often do not know the differences between various Christian sects, nor even to explain the dogmas of our faith, but we know how to live in accordance with Christian principles, and that is certainly as important as the knowledge. Our Christianity, our Orthodoxy is not a theory but it is life.

A Potentially Offensive Question

There are probably some Christians, the true as well as hypocritical ones, who would probably be offended if someone asked them to explain what is Christianity. Answers to this question would be very different.

Some Christians have their own Christianity. Christianity of some Christians consists in their quotes from a few, only a few pages of the Bible. Some have created Christianity without the Holy Scriptures, even contrary to the Holy Scriptures. Some even confess a Christianity even without Christ! They know of and accept Jesus and Mary, but not Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God and Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. Some Christians are familiar with Christianity as a doctrine, similar to other doctrines, neither better nor worse. The number of Christians who live Christianity is rather small. The greatest tragedy of Christianity is most likely the fact that it has so many Christians who are so little Christians.

Because of unchristian life and behavior of some Christians, it was abandoned by some who did not seek and find its importance and beauty in Christianity itself, but aware of sinful life and faults of some Christians, alone. Regretfully, many never even tried to learn from Christ what is Christianity, but left is because of some unworthy representatives of Christian Church. They, like inquisitors before them did not understand that Christianity is not the massacre of non-Christians in the name of Christ. It is neither burning of witches, or extermination of heretics, nor persecution of the Jews, nor compulsory conversion achieved by bloodshed and death of thousands of human beings. It is even not the donation left on the collection plate, not even the building of churches if along with it the life itself is

⁶ Arnold Toynbee, *The Study of History*.

not a testimony of our faith and the heart true and continuous abode of the Holy Spirit.

Christianity is an admission ticket to paradise if it is not a genuine conviction. It is neither isolation nor self-complacency. It is neither a sterile discussion nor a word play. It is not a burden for minds, but a liberation of souls. It is not a rite and prayers only; it is not a verbal exercise. Christianity, in our belief, is every-day, every minute emulating of Christ in the course of entire life. It is a boundless love for all human beings, a love which converts an enemy into a brother. It is a love which embraces all nations, in which all dividers are erased and all names are forgotten. It is a love that even excludes the concept of enemy, and still does not mean indifference toward evil, nor approval, nor acceptance of it. That love simply makes the existence of hatred impossible.

This kind of all-embracing love is incomprehensible to the contemporary man. It always scares him. Yet if the spiritualized man, true Christian becomes a reality, that love, that Christianity will also become reality, will be something that is natural and indispensable.

Christianity is the path from semi-man to true man. It has not been realized yet, but it is not on the very beginning of its realization either. It is an omnipresent and ever-present path of humanity, a continuous growth of human beings. It may be misinterpreted, unjustly condemned, persecuted, but it cannot be erased as a reality. It can be abused, criticized, rejected, but it remains eternal. Some may attempt to adopt it to the dimensions of human weaknesses, to lower it to the level of shortsightedness and blindness of minds fogged by hatred, but that genuine, true Christianity remains always the same, wonderful, life-giving. Friedrich Nitsche was too naïve when he declared that the last Christian had died on the Cross - on Golgotha. True Christians existed in every century, even if in a small number.

Who is our God?

It is important to remember that the salvation of self-destruction of the human kind can come only from the true God. However, there are persons who have their own gods, and these gods lead into temptation and insanity that ends with self-destruction. Regretfully. Because in our time many false gods are worshipped, the only true God is often forgotten.

The "God" of science, who is capable of creating the world, but unable to govern it and cannot hear the prayers of a grieving soul and does not know the difference between the good and evil, is a false and unacceptable god. 'A god who is incapable of thinking and feeling, who is not a Living God, who is equaled to electricity, that blind, irresponsible force, cannot be the true God for man. Neither the selfcomplacent god of Spinoza can be God of human beings. Our God, the Holy Trinity, is the only true God of faith, hope and love.

Some scientists attempted to sell their gods to men. Yet, the man could feel neither love nor hatred, neither respect nor derision for those gods.

In some states dictators succeeded in removing public worship of God from their states, but they failed to remove God from the hearts of people. In such states the conscious responsibility was replaced by slavery. The authority of God was replaced by the tyranny of state authorities. Brotherhood, which is natural and logical if we accept the fact that God is the Father of all of us, was replaced by a compulsory love for one social class or a party and with hatred for all who disagree. Police terror replaced the respect for human personality and divine principles. Self-discipline, one of even incompletely realized Christian ethics, was corrupted into a blind obedience imposed by merciless torture and killing.

God is a real and essential need of man, but only God who is worthy of worship. Worship is an element of the spiritual life and the true human being cannot be without it. The worship is the greatest difference between a man and an animal.

Max Nordan complained that the religion makes equal a nobleman with a savage. The fact is that Christianity raises a savage on the highest level of spiritual aristocracy, whereas the atheism lowers a nobleman much lower than where a savage stands.⁷

Every human being feels a need to worship someone or something. There where the worship of the true God is missing, man worships less valuable objects, and often himself.

Several thousand years before Christ, Babylonians, too, knew the truth that worship is an essential need of human beings. They even considered that worship is *raison d'etre* of human existence. On the sixth tablet of Babylonian epic *Enuma Eliish* (When on the Heights) it is written that god Marduk informed god Ea about his intention to create blood and bones and use them to create man so that there would exist being which would worship gods. It is quite clear that animals cannot do that and ha the man is the only creation that can worship. Could we, therefore, not say that only the man who worships is a man indeed.

Atheism is, therefore, foreign to human nature, enemy of human spirit. Besides, the true atheism is impossible! There is always some "god" worshipped by man. It can be money, position, glory, some doctrine, party, or own person. Even the most rabid atheists have their own gods. They, too, worship something or someone.

Various "deisms" and "-isms" are as foreign to the human spirits it is atheism. The true progressive minds exposed and rejected "scientific humanism" which for a while was the favorite of "progressive elements". In the column letters to editor a letter of some J. P. Mitchell published on January 1955 in the Observer in which he explores the problem of "scientific humanism". That letter contains the following paragraph:

Actually, if our scientific humanist would be honest, and if he were not too indoctrinated, he would begin to realize that the problem with the scientific humanism is that is neither scientific nor humane. It is unscientific because it based on an a priori reached through a process which ignores quite a few contrary proofs; and it is inhuman is simply because it does not find place for many facts concerning our human nature and our human experience.⁸

Scientific humanism, or, stated more correctly, false humanism, humanism without God, ushered into the world the most inhuman persons, such as Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin and other dictators. Love for man without love and respect for God is simply a fraud.

Science and Religion

There are persons who justify their indifference toward religion, or their hostility toward it, by the excuse that the science is against religion. They believe that science and religion are mutually in conflict.

They are wrong. Next to the main entrance in the Mount Carmel East hospital in Columbus, Ohio there is a plaque with the inscription: Science without faith is blind, religion without science is lame."

⁷ Toward Christian Civilization, p. 143.

⁸ Observer, January 1, 1955

The true science cannot be an enemy of religion. Besides, it has been proven that through the development and progress in the most recent time science came considerably closer to religion. It is not surprising that among the reputable, true scientists one meets persons who are at the same time sincere Christian believers. Moreover, atheism is presently found more often among the primitive, semi-educated and uneducated people than among the educated.

Even scientists are abandoning faith in science that for a while was so boastful and meddlesome. Those who expected science to provide answers for their questions became disappointed. Often they received wrong answers or no answers at all. Science did not answer convincingly the question on the origin of life, one of the most important questions. The only acceptable and calming answer on that question is given by religion. The answer the science provided us with does not explain either the beginning or the end of the existence. It has not yet given an answer to the question whether there are living beings on other planets or not. It actually did not answer the question what is gravitation.

Science owes answers to many other questions as, for instance, how does the inner core of earth look like; where and how did fragments of palms come to the icy regions; what caused the extinction of mammoths who were better equipped for life than elephants, yet elephants survived. We are still waiting science's answer to the question of the origin of salt in seas, origin of planets, comets and mountains. We do not have an answer to the question why the Bronze Age precedes the Iron Age although processing of iron is simpler and it is available over the earth. By what mechanical means were the enormously large rocks brought on the huge heights of Andes? One is still waiting for explanation of certain psychological phenomena. Some answers given by science have only created many new enigmas.

Science has also given us some wrong or incorrect answers. It is not really true that all planets have to rotate and have days and nights. Even less true is that the duration of day and night together is a total of twenty-four hours. According to George Gamow, Pluto rotates from east to west.⁹ That means that for inhabitants of Pluto - if there are any there - the sun rises in the west and sets down in the east. Immanuel Velikovsky claims that it is not a general law for all planets that winter follows autumn and summer follows spring.¹⁰ A revision of textbooks containing "scientific truths" is usually undertaken shortly after they were published, because it is established that "truths" presented in them are not true.

It seems that agnostics and atheists are not disturbed at all by the fact that our organized living universe is incomprehensible without the hypothesis about God. Their faith in some physical element, of which they know very little, has all the features of an irrational faith, but they are unaware of it.¹¹

Science often requires its believers to accept without hesitation and without any examination many dogmas incomprehensible to our mind. Some of these dogmas are more irrational and less comprehensible to our "common reason" than some dogmas of religion. However, a rationalist never questions "scientific dogmas". The law of gravitation is difficult to grasp, but that is no reason for rationalists to reject it. Many scientific concepts exist only in the human imagination, as, for example: center, hard, soft, and tasty. These concepts only explain the reaction of our nerve system to something that does not exist by

⁹ George Gamow, *Biography of Earth*, 1941, p. 24.

¹⁰ Velikovsky, *op. Cit.*, p. 6

¹¹ Lecomte du Nouy, *op. cit.*, p. 135

itself. Nevertheless, we do accept the existence of center, hard, soft as if they existed in reality, because we cannot be without these concepts.

As for intelligence, which is symbolized by Lucifer, the Prince of intellectuals, it will always be opposed to the moral and spiritual development and will obstruct the search for true happiness. A rationalist, who for the past forty years had reason to doubt the omnipotence of the reason, accepts without blinking of an eye the break-down of physical theories which, in his youth were considered irrefutable. He accepts an ineffable space in which electrons move (a three-dimensional space for each present electron, thirty dimensions for ten electrons).

He accepts that the electron is "a wave of possibility". He accepts the existence of such particles as neutron and anti-neutron which were invented only for the sake of pure mathematical symmetry. He accepts, without resistance, existence, reality of these paradoxical entities of which he is forbidden to reason; yet on the other hand he stubbornly rejects the possibility of existence of supernatural, a creative force without which the greatest scientific problems are incomprehensible, simply because the models provided to him by physical senses do not make him capable of to imagine or conceive, although he is aware of limitation of these senses. He knows, and he even does not deny the fact that the image of the universe that he conceived is based on reactions determined in him by a short-lasting instant (less than 1. of hundreds thousands of billions, or 0,000,000,000.001 percent) of vibrations which surround him and which pass through him without even leaving a trace in his consciousness. There is nothing more irrational than a man who is rationally irrational.¹²

All stated above points to the fact that even the "liberals", known also as rationalists, are capable of believing, to believe even in a paradox and an absurd, provided those are "scientific paradoxes and absurd". Their common reason requires of them to seek palpable evidence from religion, but not from science. They even believe in miracles, provided these are not the biblical miracles. It may be that they reject religion simply because they are not ready for a higher moral and spiritual life.

There is no longer a scientific excuse for atheism. Today, when science and religion use similar, if not identical language, it is laughable to use science as an excuse for one's own weakness. "The common reason" is no longer an obstacle for acceptance of spiritual truths. "A certain amount of common reason is necessary, as the salt is necessary in our food; however its absence is more fruitful than its overdose."¹³

If the common reason were the promoter of human ideas and actions, the world would be still at the beginning of its development. The common reason does not allow intellectual jumps. It obstructs the visionary inspiration and is horrified by the invasion of the unknown.

The question of acceptance or rejection of faith does not depend on scholarship. It is not primarily a question of scholarship, but the question of ethics.

When in the 19th century we were told that we should ignore Christian religion because the science so requires, that was said in error. But in the 20th century, although that error was discovered, the same statement is stubbornly repeated.¹⁴

Lecomte du Nouy sounds even more convincing when he states: "Every person who believes in God should know that no scientific fact, as long as it is true, cannot deny

¹² Lecomte du Nouy, op. cit., p. 100

¹³ Ibid., p. 130

¹⁴ Toward Christian Civilization

(the existence of, MM) God."¹⁵

The same scholar declares:

Pride of a scientist who, although not certain he will leave even the slightest trace in the history of science, decides that a Newton, a Faraday, a Maxwell, an Opre, or a Pasteur, is intellectually inferior to him, leaves an impression of someone who has reached a climactic paradox.¹⁶

We agree with the statement of the Professional Men of Greece who declared:

In exact sciences, in physics and mathematics, as well as in other sciences, the progress of contemporary research demonstrated that the attempt to create an impression that the science contradicts Christian religion has no scientific support. No one has the right to involve science on a plane where one finds great metaphysical question, and to use the name and reputation of science for attacks on Christian religion.¹⁷

Let us conclude this portion of the text with the words of Henry Bergson:

There are things which only intelligence is capable of explore, but It by itself can never find; these things can be found by instinct alone, but it will never seek them.¹⁸

Has Science Made Us Happy?

Can science make us happy at all? We have to admit that science has done a lot to make our life easier. We have many means that make our life easier which our ancestors did not have. With less physical effort we achieve more, because machines do our work. We have more time that we could use for ourselves, our families, our friends, and our activities.

There are many technical means that make our life easier and more pleasant. Inventions in medicine help our life lasts longer. Travels are fast and comfortable. In this respect, everything seems to be better than it was in the past. But are we really happier than the peoples from primitive societies are? It does not seem that it is so. On the contrary, the contemporary man leaves impression of being unhappy, anxious, helpless being. Every achievement gives birth to new desires that cannot always be satisfied. Happiness is not and cannot be the product of technology. A man in an oxen cart can be as happy as a man in the fastest airplane, and may be even happier.

It should be clear to everyone that the science cannot offer to man that which religion offers him. Religion and science together could realize the most favorable atmosphere in which happiness for humanity is possible. The task of science to make the human life comfortable, whereas religion helps him to be happy. Science satisfies human mind only, but not the soul. Only religion can address the soul and make it happy.

Conclusion

Without religion human life is empty and incomplete. Without religion the spiritual equilibrium is endangered and man is unhappy. Religion is the only road of spiritual evolution that is indispensable if people want to find the road to peace, freedom and happiness.

¹⁵ Lecomte du Nouy, Op. cit., p. i70

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 160

¹⁷ Toward Christian Civilization :Declaration, p.p. 6-7

¹⁸ Henry Bergson, The Creative Evolution

Human society, which is so close to its total destruction, made possible by achievements of a science based on negation, deprived of God and moral principles, has the opportunity for salvation only through strengthening of moral and religious aspirations and through a daily life according to those principles. The existence of the entire humanity depends on true, believing people. Acceptance and practicing religion means achieving security for human kind. And the task of Christianity is to root out the animal in the centaur - which the contemporary man is - and to help the growth of the human in people. Indispensability of religion is undoubted, because it represents for man wings that make him capable of reaching the greatest heights.

Матеја Матејић

НЕОПХОДНОСТ ДУХОВНОСТИ

У чланку Неопходност духовности разматра се реална могућност самоуништења света, захваљујући веома развијеној техници, живот је постао лакши, али не и срећнији. Техника, која је произвела средства за олакшање људског живота је, у исто време, изумела, развила и произвела средства за масовно уништење. Опасност од тоталног уништења веома је реална и страх од њега осећају, свесно или несвесно, појединци и читаве људске заједнице. Тај страх шире штампа, филмска индустрија, па чак и неке верске секте. Да би свет избегао самоуништење, препоручују, не само свештенослужитељи већ и многи угледни научници, да се практикује духовност, а особито хришћанство.