

REFLECTIONS ON SPIRITUALIZED SOCIETY - II

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Spiritual Significance : The Future
(Photo Credit : www.blossomlikeaflower.com)

*Yet I know that good is coming to me, that good is always coming;
though few have at all times the simplicity and courage to believe it.*

– GEORGE MACDONALD

We live in a world that is longing for deep transformation, a world seemingly on the verge of both destruction and salvation. We are at a tipping point in human civilization and those of us who are awake to our current circumstances feel the balance of society shifting, but we are unsure if we will fall into turmoil and despair or if we will take flight and ascend to a new evolution of humanity. As for which way we will go, I am unsure. Perhaps we will have to fall in order to rise. Is it possible that our ultimate salvation as a human race will be as a fully-realized phoenix rising from the chaotic ashes of our former history? Or will we continue on a cycle of evolution that will lead to the realization of the individual and collective soul, empowering us to create a world of freedom, solidarity, and justice? I do not know what, if any, path we will take to our redemption, but I have hope. I have hope that we as individuals and as society will become our destinies: our true selves and our collective one true self. I have hope that through this self-realization we will create a society that is free of the oppression of greed and self-serving power, that is actively compassionate, and that seeks to love and be loved as the soul-beings that we truly are.

As I reflect on what this society would look like, how it would materialize, and what conditions would be needed to give birth to such a just, loving world, I am forced to look at our collective history. To the naked eye, humanity is a

confusing race; one that is capable of amazing accomplishments, from both a technological and a humanitarian aspect, but also capable of acts of depravity and cruelty only imaginable because they have actually occurred throughout history. Even in our modern world, we see examples of this diametrically-opposed behavior daily. We witness acts of compassion committed in the midst of horrifying wars. We see the opulent wealth of a concentrated few put before the needs of the multitudes in a world where there truly is “enough to go around”. Yet as we continue on in this confusing, destructive cycle of behavior, many of us know or at least feel there is something more, something that can quench the deep thirst of our weary souls. We know that there is a true nature, a deep and profound individual and societal being, which is yet to be fully realized. The great acts of justice and compassion that we have witnessed and continue to witness in society are but mere glimpses of this true self. Conversely, I believe the moments (despite seeming more common) that humanity has acted in malice and brutality, are a denial of our true nature, a denial committed in fear and ignorance of who we are supposed to become, who we truly are meant to be. These acts do not define our true humanity; rather they distract us from it. In my reflection on our modern society; on what it is and what it could be, I am reminded of a Martin Luther King quote regarding the arc of the moral universe being long but tending towards justice. As much as I admire and I am inspired by Dr. King, I feel the need to add to this most insightful statement. Though, at times, I am overwhelmed with despair and anguish over the future of our society, I do believe that the arc of humanity bends not only towards justice, but also towards compassion and love. While I know many would disagree, I believe that the seeking of justice, compassion, and love are the true natures of the human race. It is the realization of these true natures that define the act of becoming, the act of evolving into our individual and collective soul. It is in this ultimate evolution of humanity that I find the definition and meaning of the spiritualized society.

Walk out like someone suddenly born into color. Do it now. – RUMI

In order to give birth to a spiritualized society, we must acknowledge and begin to live in our spiritual nature, our true life. As a collective society we have traveled through ages of spirit, to ages of vitality to ages of reason. Throughout time there have been societies that truly understood the inextricable role of the spirit in the quest for finding their whole self. The spirit was not an essential part of this quest; it was *the* essential part of the quest to become whole. The indigenous peoples of many countries knew this to be true; they knew that while humans lived in and worked out of four quadrants: the physical, mental, emotional, and the spiritual, these quadrants were not equal, but rather the real self was in the spiritual quadrant, the soul. Yet, as we “progressed” (especially in western culture), we lost sight of our soul-beings, we became creatures of mere reason, vitality and emotions. Our spiritual nature was put on a leash to be let out on occasion by the socialized and, often bastardized, organized

religions of the day. Religions that often took relevant, profound teachings and twisted them to become tools of control and power. I feel we see no better example of this than in the usurping of the Christian faith by the right-wing of American Politics. We have substituted the life-changing teachings of Christ for the life-condemning judgments of a hegemonic power structure that seeks to control through fear and manipulation of faith. We have seen as a society where the denial of our spiritual nature has taken us. Our complete evolution can only take place if we acknowledge and begin to live in our soul being.

I only ask what way my journey lies – WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Yet before this collective transition to a spiritualized society can take place, we must as individuals begin the attempt to live into our own spiritual nature, to discover and nurture our individual souls. As I reflect on my study of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo, this is perhaps my most deep and resonant “learning moment”. The work I have done, currently do, and hope to do at a more powerful level is in the field of social transformation. My definition of a spiritualized society being one where the individual and the collective work to create and live in justice, compassion, and love, is not an abstract concept to me; rather the creation of this society is my *raison d’etre*, it is my purpose. However, in my efforts and desire to help the world “find its soul”, I neglected my own. My most painful and profound moment in this course was when I had this realization. I found myself weeping and asking “where is my soul? Where did I lose it? Where is my soul”? I have often believed that as I “help to make whole, I am made whole”. I still believe this idea, the notion that as we heal each other, we ourselves are healed. Yet, I know now that in order for the spiritualized society to occur, we must begin within our own life, we must begin to manifest our soul-being before we can begin to manifest the collective soul. Therefore, the journey to create a spiritualized society begins with the birth of the spiritualized self, the attempt to reach the Divine within.

*When compassion becomes our spirituality,
God’s waiting and God’s pain ceases.
God’s compassion, which waits for people to show compassion,
is now let loose – MATTHEW FOX*

As we begin to live in our divine nature, we will not only begin to create the conditions needed for the spiritual society to materialize, but we will also begin to give birth to this new society. Yet we first must seek this divine nature within ourselves and then begin to live it communally. The soul is both a precious flower and an unshakeable Oak tree. It must be given nourishing soil, sun, and rain to grow and blossom its beautiful, unique pedals, yet it also must be given the “room to grow” strong and tall. The soil is the act and art of both individual and collective contemplation and reflection, the sun is God, and the rain is the challenges of life that test and try our will to become our

true self. With these ingredients, our soul becomes the unique flower that adds its beauty and fragrance to the world. We give the soul “room to grow” into its full strength through the freedom to grow as an individual, both apart from and as a part of the collective. A true sign of a spiritualized society is one that is not threatened by individuality and individual freedom, rather a spiritualized society thrives on and encourages the unique offerings of the individual souls of which it is comprised. It is then, through the active and shared realization of the individual soul, the divine within us all, that we begin to collectively manifest the Kingdom of God in our world.

But when I wake at last into that life which, as a mother her child, carries this life in its bosom, I shall know that I wake, and shall doubt know more – GEORGE MACDONALD

When we as individuals and as a society begin to wake to and embrace our spiritual nature, then we will at last understand who we are meant to be, both to ourselves and to each other. Our reasoning, art, music, politics will reflect this awakening. We will see the soul as both the guide and the vehicle to individual and social transformation rather than as a passenger who is relegated to the backseat by our vital, emotional, and mental capacities. Yet we must reach a tipping point for this transition, this transcendence to begin.

I began this exploration into my views of what a spiritualized society means and how it will manifest with an uncertainty of whether or not we as a human race will achieve this blissful, society-saving state. I end it, as I end this course, with three certainties. I know that the only way to save ourselves, our children, and our earth is through the journey of the soul, the birth and active engagement of our individual and collective spirit. I know (whether we will or not) that we can achieve a spiritualized society. And, finally, I know that I will dedicate my life to the discovery and nurturing of my soul-being so that I may live into myself, my true self, and give this true self to society so that I might help to create a world of justice, love, and compassion.

Governments, societies, kings, police, judges, institutions, churches, laws, customs, armies are temporary necessities imposed on us for a few groups of centuries because God has concealed His face from us. When it appears to us again in its truth and beauty, then in that light they will vanish.

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