

# THE TRAGEDY OF WOMAN IN THE WEST

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## A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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# The Tragedy of Woman in the West

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In history the ages of disintegration were usually the ages in which women had left the home. In fifth-century Greece, the high point of classical history, women stayed in the home. But after Alexander's time when city-states were breaking up, there was a feminist movement.

— Prof. Arnold J. Toynbee.

One of the most revolutionary movements of our times has been the movement for the "emancipation" of woman. It has been so dynamic in character, so cataclysmic in effects and so tragic in its results that it deserves a careful study by all students of sociology. The movement rose with the emergence of capitalism and spread like wild fire. It tore asunder the bonds of customs and religion. It set fire to the curtains which separated the male and female. In the present century the movement has reached its zenith. The results this movement has produced are now crystal clear. They are alarming and baffling and appalling. Even those who once paddled the movement now stand dumb-founded at the sight of the wretchedness and depravity which it has created.

But true to our traditions of slavery, we are now embracing the movement which has been probed in Europe to be a bear's embrace. It seems as if we are always behind the march of time. We believe in what Europe believed half a century ago and what its saner elements have already begun to spurn. We only wear those thought-garments which seem to be Europe's refuse.

Now in the Muslim world this movement of women's so-called emancipation is firmly afoot. Efforts are being made to smuggle women into the rough and tumble of socio-economic life. They are being made to leave their hearth and home. *Purdah* is being discarded and free mingling of both the sexes is encouraged. It is time that the conscientious men and women of our country give thought to the problem. We invite them to 'know the tree by the fruits it has already brought forth'. The effects of this movement are only too clear on the European way of life. Let us not play with fire,

like a blind man. Let us think, for:—

"Moral sense is almost completely ignored by modern society. We have, in fact, suppressed its manifestations. All are imbued with irresponsibility. Those who discern good and evil, those who are industrious and provident remain poor and are looked upon as backward. The woman who has several children, who devotes herself to their education instead of her own career, is considered weak-minded . . . Robbers enjoy prosperity in peace. Gangsters are protected by politicians and respected by judges . . . Homosexuality flourishes. Sexual morals have been cast aside; . . . (and thus) despite the marvels of scientific civilization, human personality tends to dissolve." (Dr. Alexis Carrel: *Can the Unknown*.)

Imposing upon woman the obligation of earning her bread by working laboriously in mills, in factories and on farms has proved to be a great liability. It has struck a fatal blow to the family life. An acute disintegration has set in. The once noble institution of the family, the guardian of culture and the protector of civilization, has collapsed like a house of cards. Women abandoned it. Men disliked it. Streets became the centres of activities. Restaurants and parks became the places of romantic ventures. This further fanned the flames of sexual fire. And today we have come to such a stage that even George Kyle Scott has to say:—

Today by far more than ever before in the world's history there are for the finding large numbers of girls of respectability who are willing for all sorts of reasons to meet men halfway for sexual excitement and satisfaction. *These are the amateur prostitutes of modern civilization.* (*A History of Prostitution*.)

This emancipation has not stopped here. Amateurism has further progressed. It has become a veritable threat to *Professional Prostitution*. A governmental report about Vienna says that the main reason for the decline of prostitution there is "that owing to the change in the sex morals now in vogue the young man no longer has the need which once existed for the use of prostitutes." (*Reuter-Dawn* — Jan. 7, 1952) Is this the fruit of emancipation of woman!

Peaceful married-life has become a mirage. Illegitimate births are on the increase. In France their number is more than 77,000

a year. About England, the report presented to the Diocesan Conference in 1946 is highly revealing. Its authors say:—

"At least one in every eight children born in England and Wales is conceived outside wedlock. One hundred thousand women in England and Wales are becoming pregnant outside of marriage every year. Of all the girls who marry under 10 years of age no less than 40 per cent are already pregnant on their wedding day."

Dr. Oswald Schwarz's estimates further endorse the same view. He says:—

"The average number of women who give birth to extra-maritally conceived children was for each year almost exact 80,000 (1 in every 8 of all first maternities). In 1938, 40 per cent of girls marrying under the age of 20 and 20 per cent of those aged 21 came under this category. These figures, impressive as they are, represent only those affairs in which something has gone wrong, that is to say, only a small fraction of those which actually have existed." (*The Psychology of Sex*.)

The Kinsey Report is even more revealing. About the American male population the findings are:—

"95 per cent of the population is corrupt according to the current moral standard."  
"Children are caught in the whirl-pool of sexual immorality even at the age of four and five."

Pre-marital sex relations have assumed baffling proportions. The doctors say:—

"Among the males going to college about 67 per cent have such experience before marriage. Among those who go to a high school, about 84 per cent have such intercourses, and among the boys who do not go beyond the grade school, the accumulative incidence is 98 per cent." (*Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male*, p. 552.)

Regular violation of marriage-bed is a common feature of American life. Nearly 50 per cent of the males succumb to it.

Homosexuality is on the increase and one in every three males has some such experience.

Even contacts with animals are rampant and one male out of every twelve is involved in such dirty affairs. (*Ibid*, p. 670.)

On the whole the doctors hold that according to the current laws 95 per cent of the

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American males should be behind the bars as they violate the law in one way or the other.

As regards the Female population of America, the Kinsey Report says:—

50 per cent of the American women (of all ages) lose their virginity before marriage.

More than 25 per cent violate the marriage-bed and feel no regrets for betraying their husbands?

20 per cent have Homosexual relations.  
62 per cent masturbate.

95 per cent succumb to petting.

The rate of sexual violations and malpractices is high among the college-girls and educated women.

43 per cent of the women have learned the malpractices from printed or verbal sources primarily designed to discourage the practices.

The above statistics prove beyond any shadow of doubt that, under the spell of materialistic creeds, morals dwindle, manners deteriorate, corruption increases and vulgarity becomes the order of the day. The English psychologist Mr. Noel Brain rightly remarks:—

"In fact the thing that really stands out of Dr. Kinsey's reports both on the American male and the American female is that all of them are living in a corrupt and frustrating society".<sup>3</sup>

Addressing himself to those Englishmen who want to import the American morals and manners to their country, Mr. Brain declares emphatically:—

"Nevertheless the picture he (Kinsey) presents is enough to show once more how far the American Way of Life is from being a civilization we want either to import or to emulate.

"Dr. Kinsey's girls and boys are deeply to be pitied for what they have done to themselves. But we don't want them over here till the American people find a cure."<sup>4</sup>

The Kinsey Report has shown that the world is immensely in need of moral values — and never was that need so imperative as it is today. The Western society seems to be approaching journey's end. Only the re-discovery of morality can give it a new lease of life. It must be clearly understood that the current moral chaos in the West is not an accidental growth. It is not a thunderbolt but only the natural (although bitter) fruit

of the seeds sown by the so-called "emancipation", "freedom from morals" and the materialistic attitude towards life.

### The Reaction

These results have shocked all thinking minds. In the West itself a strong reaction has set in. Some of the Western thinkers are themselves condemning this mad craze for immorality. They have become doubtful of their own ideology and standards, and they have now started saying what the Muslims have been saying all along. Thus, for instance, Bertrand Russell says:—

"Within the classes that are dwindling, it is the best element that is dwindling most rapidly. It seems unquestionable that if our moral standards remain unchanged, there will be in the next two or three generations a rapid change for the worse in the character of the population in all civilized countries. The problem is one which applies to the whole Western civilization." (*The Principles of Social Reconstruction*).

A learned woman medical scientist, Mrs. Hudson Shaw, advocates the need of Marriage in the background of the evil of "anarchy in the following words:—

"In all this argument I have tried to reach those realities of human nature on which human morality must be based. I believe that the fundamental things which we must take into account are, first, that complex nature of human beings who have body, soul and spirit to reckon with and who cannot neglect any one of these without insincerity, and secondly, the solidarity of human race which makes it futile to act as though the 'morals' of any one of us could be his personal affairs alone. It is because of this solidarity that marriage has always been regarded as a matter of public interest to be recognised by legal contract." (*Sex and Common-sense*, p. 49-)

The views of this lady might irritate our ultra-modern women who aspire to imitate the West, because it is a fact that she has administered a slap on the face of all those who want to popularise the Western conception of sex relations in our society. Thus she says:—

"Now when our civilization is indeed tottering on the verge of collapse we see that in fact the last decades have been

"In truth thy Lord destroyed not the communities unjustly while their folk were doing right."  
(*Al-Quran 11:117*)

marked by a choice of licence for both sexes rather than discipline. The result has been an enormous waste of creative power. Prostitution and promiscuity, combined with any kind of creative results whatever, homosexuality in both sexes, and various forms of abnormality, represent to us the unwholesome swamp into which the waters of energy have flowed. "Is this a Symptom or a Cause of our Collapse? Both, I think." (*Sex and Common-sense*).

### Historians' Verdict

Modern thinkers of almost all shades of opinion now think that the Western society is becoming an awful place to live in. They have begun to visualise a dismal future for it. The historians are warning them in most clear terms.

Prof. J. D. Unwin says that disintegration and moral laxity have always gone hand in hand. His marvellous book *Sex and Culture* is replete with eye-opening historical illustrations.

Anthony M. Ludivici says that "the mere fact, that in all periods of decline woman has always come to the fore shows (the historical fact) that feminism is undeniably a phenomenon of male disintegration" (*Woman: A Vindication*).

Prof. Arnold J. Toynbee proclaims that:—

"In history the ages of disintegration were usually the ages in which the woman had left the home." (*World Review*, March 1949).

The author of the articles on "Feminine Influence in Politics" arrays a wealth of detail from the histories of Greece, Rome, England, France, etc., to prove his theme that the disintegration of civilization has always coincided with baneful feminist movements and their influence in social and political life and that:—

"The hey-day of their (i.e., the women's) power happened to coincide with greatest degree of degeneracy among the male population." (*Universal History of the World*, Vol. VII, p. 3985)

The author believes in separate spheres of work for men and women and concludes with the remark that:—

"All that our thesis and the historical data collected above entitle us to argue is that at the healthiest periods in the history of all peoples the male population appears to distinguish so sharply between

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its public functions and duties and its relationship to women that no such phenomenon as direct or indirect feminine influence in politics is possible. Feminine domination is as a rule only an accompanying symptom of the general decline."

(*Ibid*; p. 4004.)

### Woman Dewomanised

The historian is not alone in his condemnation. The philosopher, the scientist, the journalist, the social reformer, all are raising their voices against the tragedy of woman's life in the modern West. For instance, Dr. Henri C. Link is alarmed at the mounting divorce-rate and says:—

"The divorce rate, certainly an aspect of social harmony, is at an all-time high, more than one in every five marriages, and promises in twenty years to be one in every two marriages." (*The Rediscovery of Morals*, p. 17.)

The journalist, Dorothy Thompson, very frankly declares that:—

"Woman put on precisely the same level as man has been dewomanised."

And who can refute the learned lady who is saying this after much thought and experience!

Prof. C. E. M. Joad, once an enthusiastic supporter of the Feminist movement and the leader of the "Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement" now repents over his mistakes and declares that the real place of woman is not the social circus but the home. In his autobiography he argues by giving an example and says:—

"If you want to build a bridge or a town-hall you don't pick up a chance-collection of persons out of the street and ask them to undertake the job; you call in an expert engineer and an expert architect. But if you want to build what is after all more important than a bridge or a town-hall, namely, a modern citizen, you leave the job to any chance-couple of persons who are able to produce one. Now any pair of persons, provided they be of opposite sexes, are capable of producing a citizen — the job is indeed all-too-fatally easy. But the ability to produce does not connote any ability to educate, to build a character, to guide an intellect, to develop a personality. Very much the contrary! And it is just because we leave

the task of making citizens to chance-couples that our bridges are so much better than our citizens and we ourselves are on the whole the grubby, unworthy, ill-shaped, ill-named and meagre-minded lot that you see around you." (*The Book of Joad*, p. 26.)

This belief of Dr. Joad has been further strengthened lately. In a recent interview he says:—

"I believe the world would be a happier place if women were content to look after their homes and their children, even if somewhat slight lowering of the standard of living were involved thereby." (*Variety*, Dec: 1, 1952.)

Prof. Fulton J. Sheen is also of the same opinion. He says:—

"The disturbance of family life in America is more desperate than at any other period in our history. The family is the barometer of the nation. What the average home is that is America. If the average home is living on credit, spending money lavishly, running into debt, then America will be a nation which will pile national debt on national debt until the day of the Great Collapse. If the average husband and wife are not faithful to their marriage vows, then America will not insist on fidelity to the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms. If there is a deliberate frustration of the fruits of love, then the nation will develop economic policies of flowing undue custom, throwing coffee into the sea and frustrating nature for the sake of economic prices. If the husband and wife live only for self and not for each other, if they fail to see that their individual happiness is conditioned on mutuality, then we shall have a country where capital and labour fight like husband and wife, both making social life barren and economic peace impossible. If the husband or wife permits outside solicitations to woo one away from the other, then we shall become a nation where alien philosophies will infiltrate as Communism sweeps away that basic loyalty which was known as patriotism. If husband and wife live as if there is no God, then America shall have bureaucrats pleading for atheism as a national policy repudiating the Declaration of Independence and denying that all our rights and liberties come to us from God. It is the home which decides the nation.

"So good women are those who are obedient (to their husbands) and guard in secret that which Allah hath guarded." (*Al-Quran* 4:34)

What happens in the family will happen later in the Congress, the White House and the Supreme Court. Every country gets the kind of Government it deserves. As we live in the house, so shall the nation live." (*Communism and Conscience of the West*).

### Necessity of Religion

This learned author is very much perturbed as the vulgarisation of family life. He sees no way out of the impasse except that of the return of women to the home and the revival of the family life. About this Dr. Sheen says:—

"America is a democracy; hence the only way — and the right way — we can arrest the rot is not by a Presidential decree, not by a uniform divorce law, not by handling the problem of juvenile delinquency in each new age without even stopping it at its source, HOME, — but only by a conscience enlightened by religion and morality."

These are the views of some of the leading thinkers of the Western world. Their reaction against their own sex-culture is now too manifest. They are baffled at the menace of sex-anarchy — the natural offshoot of the so-called movement of feminine emancipation which instead of restoring woman to her natural status "emancipated" her by driving her out of the home and the family-life, by auctioning her femininity in the streets and the bazars and by making her a society-toy. The West is realising the folly. But, alas! the westernised Muslim is still lost in his vagarism. He now wants to sexualise the society and to establish a Sex-Dictatorship in our society. It is time we open our eyes and learn to call a spade a spade. Let us ponder over the eye-opening views of Dr. Cyril Garbett and form our views as to what road we have to tread — the one heading towards anarchy, crime and corruption or the one leading to home, peace and prosperity. He says:—

"It is a matter of common knowledge that large numbers of men and women have sexual intercourse without any thought of marriage with their sexual partners. This is the result of the greater freedom between young people of both sexes, of the nervous strain of war, of life under conditions which make

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abstinence extremely difficult, and of the erotic atmosphere created by an unending stream of emotional novels and films. Only definite moral conviction based upon religious faith will give the necessary self-control.' (*In an Age of Revolution*, p. 76.)

This is the tragedy of woman in the Modern West. It is no better than the fate she was subjected to in the Medieval times. Under Christianity the West was on one extreme.

It denied woman her soul and personality. She was not treated as a human being at all. Hers was a miserable existence. Then the reaction appeared. Modern Western Culture moved to the other extreme. Woman was driven out of her home and was 'commercialised' and 'socialised'. She was not allowed to live and grow and act like woman. In short she was de-womanised. On this extreme too her plight is miserable. She has not discovered her real self. The middle path is unknown to her — to the West on

the whole. Her salvation lies in that way of life which strikes the Middle Path — in Islam, whose Prophet (peace be upon him) said:—

- <sup>1</sup> Best of the positions (in human affairs)  
<sup>2</sup> is that of the Middle.

### REFERENCES

1. Dr. Goodrich C. Schaefler, the gynecologist, who has had many year's experience in the treatment of young patients said: . . . . Youngsters, instead of being sheltered and disciplined as they once were, are now exposed to the sunny side of sex in its rawest forms before they have the faintest concept of its total meaning in life. We have only to look about us to realize that, as a nation, we are preoccupied — almost obsessed — with the superficial aspects of sex, with sex as a form of amusement. This is not true sex, with the corollaries of love, marriage and child bearing. It is an almost hysterical bandying about of sex symbols, coming close to fetish worship. (Consider the present over-emphasis of the breast, the streaking of erotic qualities in perfume)." Quoted in *The unfinished Society* (1963) by Herbert von Borch.
2. According to Herbert von Borch in his sympathetic *The Unfinished Society* over 1000 divor-

ces are granted every day in the U.S., twice the rate of Sweden, four times that of England. The reason: the sexual thrill of the first encounter with a stranger is taken for love and there is a demand that the same thrill should occur throughout life.

3. In this classic *The American Sex Revolution* (1956) the Harvard Sociologist Pitirim Sorokin wrote: "Whatever aspect of our culture is considered, each is packed with sex obsession . . . if we escape from being stirred by obscene literature, we may be aroused by the crooners, or by the new psychology and sociology, or by the teachings of the new Freudianized pseudo-religions, or by radio-television entertainment. We are completely surrounded by the rising tide of sex which is flooding every compartment of our culture, every section of our social life. Unless we develop an inner immunity against libidinal forces, we are bound to be conquered by the continuous army of omnipresent sex stimuli."

4. The American cure, however, remains not moral but utilitarian. Von Borch praising the Americans for their characteristic kindness and helpfulness writes:—"Special birth clinics have been established, arrangements are made for supervised adoption (which does not however, exclude a black market in babies), private sponsors assist the pregnant girls, who are thus enabled to bring their children into the world in protective anonymity". Pp. 186, 187.

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