

# MODERN TIME: THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

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What is the modern time? When did it begin? And what are the particular characters of this time which is unique in history? How do the historical conditions at present time restrict and condition the evolution of man? How should we try to recondition it and reshape it in order to fulfill the ambition of evolving towards the stage of a “higher-man”? These are some of the questions I shall discuss here.

My definition of modern time will be the point of history when industrialization started in the world, and the world got divided into the two-groups of nations: one enjoying economic advancement due to industrialization and the other succumbing into poverty, injustice, exploitation and colonial dominance by the rising industrial nations. It began with the unprecedented advancement of science and technology, which facilitated production, transport of goods and labor force at large distances from homeland. It brought economic hegemony of a few nations over the rest who had no access to these scientific knowledge and technology. Equipped with the power of innovation and technology, they colonized nations in order to gain control of resources of raw materials and cheap workplace. With rising scientific knowledge and technology, the disparities as regards military power increased in an accelerated speed, which brought the world under knees of a handful of Western nations. The greed for power and wealth of these economically more successful nations generated economic systems of exchange of more abstract nature, which produced values out of “nothing”, which could be lent out to debtors who had fallen in economic difficulties. These debts generated even more monetary values out of “nowhere”. The world turned into a Devil’s Casino and a paradise of wealth and prosperity for a few and a hell of poverty-stricken life for the majority in the world. The modern banking system introduced abstract ideas, which in essence, became a way of generating capital out of “no production”, “no work”..... Simply “nothing”, and thus strengthened platform of repressive political and economic systems in the world since the nineteenth century. This monetary system also became a way of grabbing valued properties, once the debtors could not return the debt with interests back in due time. Above all these odds, the colonizing powers introduced taxations systems, which became another ploy of the Devil. Not only the disparities between rich and poor nations increased, but also the social systems fueling exploitation and grab for properties increased the class differences inside the colonialized nations. The collaborators of the colonial powers in the local societies found their “stage of history” as opportune moment to accumulate wealth and grab properties from their own fellow citizens.

Moreover, using the point of supremacy of the colonial power the Western European nations, took to the means of introducing Western values and cultures in their colonies. It brought waves of cultural transformations where the Western culture was viewed by the elites as the desired transformation the societies should follow. The man possessing economic power, who also harnessed most political power, decided the premise of the new cultural development in the society. It shook the cultural arena already being transformed under stress due to improvisation, and pre-colonial migrations and conquests. Thus it set pace of rapid changes in pre-industrialized economic and cultural system based on feudalism.

The rapid development and expansion of banking and investments in the industrial productions, meant to bring high profits, set the stage of the modern time. Parallel to the scientific innovations, banking growth, and expansion of the economy to the colonies, the new ideology of capitalism grew. Its proponents saw in this ideology the best way to preserve and serve the cause of human freedom. It was the philosophy of private ownership of the means of production, profits, savings and rights to operate in the economic sector without any intervention from anyone.

It was argued that the mutual agreement between the employers and the laborers about wages, and the price and production of goods based on demand will be the best way to safeguard human freedom. Capitalist philosophy was pivoted on the idea of ownership and the possibility of making maximum profits by using cheap labor. These profits were the reinvested to create more profits and thus accumulate wealth. The collusion between the powerful greedy bankers and the capitalist class changed dramatically the dynamics of the modern civilization.

The servitude of the mass to the feudal class was now replaced by the slavery of the workers under their capitalist employers. This economic bonanza made the Western hemisphere the region of political and economic power of the world. However, capitalist power did not remain in the hand of one country. Several western nations, where industrialization advanced quickly, competed with each other, for money, investment, market and labor.

These competitions soon generated the seeds of world wars and rise of the contending ideologies, which came to challenge capitalism.

The exploitations of the workers with long hours of labor and less wages pushing them to live in wretched living conditions led to Russian Revolution. Economic warfare between France and England against Germany became the hidden cause of the First World War. After the war again the world economy boomed as result of speculations and “casino-culture” of making profits from “nothing”, which could in turn be turned into industrial assets. It gave rise to the economic crash (the bursting of the bubble), which

sent reverberations throughout the world. It ended up in the rise of Nazism and Fascism in Germany and Italy respectively. The idea of “Superman” and strong state who would guide people to come out of the miseries gained ground. They clashed with the capitalism which saw intervention of state in economic affairs as detrimental to human freedom and synonymous to evil. The rising conflicts of ideologies gave rise to the Second World War when Hitler and Mussolini declared war against France and England. The communists joined the fray. World saw brutality of unprecedented scale on the European soil. Finally with the help of the United States, France and England and the Capitalist World came out as victorious from the war.

After the demise of Nazism and Fascism, the communism gained in strength and spread its power across Eastern Europe and parts of Asia. With the weakening of the capitalist forces in England and France in a post-world war era, US came out as a fan-bearer of capitalism and the Super-power of the world. Its only enemy became the communists, who increased its military strengths to counter balance US hegemony. During this period of geo-political competitions, many colonies became independent and free. This generated a new chapter in the evolution of history in the modern World. State controlled socialism competed with capitalism as rival political ideology in the newborn post-colonial states. This challenge to capitalism brought world to the edge of “Cold War” where both sides increased their nuclear arsenals and intercontinental ballistic missiles which could be delivered on the opponents. The fear of nuclear annihilation of Earth gripped the world. The United Nations was formed to safeguard the security of the world, and bring justice in the World System divided into extremely rich part of humanity exporting the rest of the world living in poverty and dismay. To gain power in the world became the synonymous with gaining technological know-hows, which had remained the monopoly in the hands of the West.

The newly freed colonial states, one needed money, investment and technology from outside for the development of their economy. The capitalists kept their hegemony by controlling land manipulating this flow. They established World Bank and International Monetary Fund to the cause of development (World Bank is presided by the US citizen while France leads IMF). The development aid became a political strategy of the capitalists to contain the march of the communists in the poor parts of the world.

After the Second World War, the communication and media rose as the way of spreading propaganda messages to people with a hope to win their confidence in one, or the other ideology. Capitalists emphasized on the freedom of the individuals, while the socialists stressed on the rights of the people and benefits of state control in securing the basic needs of people in the poorer nations. Satellite technology was introduced to spread messages to the remote corners of the world with the help of radio and television.

This media revolution opened up new economic frontiers. The capitalist class started investing in the radio and television industry. It became the easiest way to reach the maximum number of consumers across the globe. The mushrooming of the radio and TV channels brought a new dimension to political and economic control and maintaining hegemony of the capitalist ideology. The power of money brought power of advertisement and strength to manipulate the views of the less informed population of the world. With it the windows of the consumption industry got opened to the mass. To keep capitalism alive one needed to generate demand from the population. While the poor could not consume the high-priced luxury goods, they were offered the enjoyment of mass entertainments like sports, crime movies and soap operas etc. Media now entered the economic and political game of the nations, being contested by different ideologies. Film-stars, sport-heroes, media magnets and entertainment show managers started becoming politicians. More fun, more “drink-and-dance”, and more private and obscene movies, pictures and stories brought more profits. The world was left to follow the capitalist principles of supply and demand and exploit opportunities which could bring monetary profits as the final result.

In the face of the glittering advertisement, entertainment and media show of the capitalists contending against the state controlled propaganda TV of the communist and socialist countries, while their showcases of the consumer goods were nearly empty, the capitalist philosophy of individual freedom triumphed, and the bastions of socialism and communism gave way to the methods of the capitalists. The communist nations too adopted the free-market mechanism. This opening brought more money and investment from the capitalist countries and economic development in an accelerated pace.

When Soviet Union collapsed in the early 90s and lost its grip of power over the countries of the Eastern Europe, the newly freed countries of Eastern Europe rushed to join the Capitalist club. By then the nations of Western Europe, who had waged two World Wars in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, had formed a union, in order to avoid any world war in the European soil in the future. Some of the freed Eastern European states were given membership to this union (first created by France and Germany).

The rapid growth of economics in Asia, which once fell back, as a result of rearrangements which had taken place since the end of the Second World War, and due to new economic strategies of the former socialist and communist states, the supply to the market of the consumer goods in Europe and America increased in leaps bounds. It brought the “live the life” lifestyle for the people in the richer world, while people in the others nations worked and produced. With the increased free time and wealth in the hands of the common people in the West, the tourism and travel industry boomed. Much of the tourism destination moved towards Asia, contributing to the rise of tourism as important contributor to the economic growth of some of these countries. Capitalists quickly moved to exploit this opportunity.

The spending spree on consumer articles, entertainment, travel and leisure by the rich is now generating growth in economics of the poorer nations too. The world economy is getting more and more globalized, where economic downturn in one part have consequences for the rest.

In this economy of consumer culture the central factor is the level of consumption. Until industrialization, the main energy source was bio-matter, like wood and cow-dung. After industrialization coal became the dominating energy source. After the Second World War, the increased fleets of automobiles and aircrafts have changed demand for the main energy source to oil. The increased urbanization, fast expansion of markets, and needs for transports to keep the chain of demand and supply in balance, in order to avoid economic crisis, is adding in polluting the environment. The air in big cities is becoming hazardous for health. Apart from that, some believe that the present economic system is contributing to the possibility of extinction of the human race. By burning fuels in larger and larger amounts every year, in order to run the industries, which keep the production chains going, and using vehicles transporting people and goods in even larger numbers, the pace of development is contributing in changing the natural climate on Earth. Many believe that by emitting gases, which develop from burning the fuels, we have already changed the climate pattern, which may have dire consequences as regards the survival of many species, including the human beings. The luxury of consumption and flights of leisure and pleasure (as one feels free to do), is making our chances for survival less and less in the long run. Capitalism can mean a death-trap for mankind. Already there are many signs of the danger as seen in the erratic weather patterns including hurricanes, floods and droughts of unusual character all around the globe.

The evil of the capitalist culture of consumption may have already slipped out of hand. While more and more people in the West is going over to bicycles (in order not to pollute the environment), the production of automobiles are increasing fast in the developing countries. In a country like China the demand for oil is soon going to reach the level in the West. The slowing down of economics in the West is being compensated by the fast economic growth rate in Asia. People call it as an “Asian Era”, where China and India may become the main motors driving the World economy. Both are pursuing the free-market track in order to keep up a fast rate of growth, while the Banking and monetary system are still running in the same old capitalistic way.

The essential elements, on which the success of the economic competition hinges on today, is the availability of energy resources-particularly oil. The geo-political game behind economic and political success in the future appears to be the success in controlling and securing the energy resources. The political success of ideologies depends on the economic success in securing work, income, property and health services to people.

It appears that the capitalism as an ideology is losing its stream in the Western countries. The increased standard of living condition and demand for luxury of living are making the availability of the labor-force more and scarcer in the West. Everybody wants to enjoy life and no one wants to work in the industries reminiscent of the past capitalistic mode. In Western Europe, more and more labor forces are coming from the newly freed Eastern Europe, who has lagged behind in economic development due to the control of the region by the Communist Soviet Union. High labor prices and costs of providing the social facilities, which the workers are entitled to in the west, are making the investors to look to Asia, in particular, for success. There the labor is cheap and responsibility to provide social benefits to the workers can be easily avoided. In this way the capitalists are making other nations as their breeding grounds outside the traditional dens, where industrialization once started. Multinationals are spreading their umbrellas wherever there are possibilities of profits one may make. Through establishing monopolies in the market they advertise themselves as the defender of human freedom — man and woman can now freely choose and consume according to their mental make ups and taste. With it the values in Asia is also changing. Now the motto of life is becoming: “Earn money, buy and enjoy life”.

The rise of the Asian economy coincides with the rise of the internet cultures, including social networking, which is becoming more and more a cyber-market of advertisement. Economic competitions have started looking into those places too, as potential grounds to explore for success. Here people leave their personal information related to their choices of consumption articles and nature of entertainments they prefer. Here people are also lured in leaving information about their political belief and philosophy of life, among others. These information are accessible for business class to freely analyze and then decide strategies to entrap customers for buying their products.

With it, the investments are increasing in great speed in technologies related to delivering the social network of entertainment and advertisement of hand-held gadgets like mobile phones and tablets. The grip of the capitalist world is becoming more and more sinister and invisible. Computers can crunch out data and see patterns of social behaviors much more easily than it was possible any time before. Moreover, it can do it in no time. By looking at the existing social patterns and trends one can further inculcate in degrading humanity to choose a path of downfall as an “economic animal of consumption”. While the educated and the wise part of the population of the West, who is weary of capitalist values, may see through this sinister trap, the population in the parts of the world, where consumer culture is quite new, the temptation and danger of being swept by the devil’s ploy appears very high.

Not only the new technology is offering “freedom” to the young generation to chat, make fun, exchange private information with the world at no-cost, it is also playing its role as a mediator in the political evolution of the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Televisions, radio, newspapers, Governmental and non-governmental organizations, artists, businessman or anyone who has anything to sell, advertise or promote anything to a larger invisible community in the world, are all joining this fray of “social revolution”. In return of giving people the opportunity to chat and exchange private photographs and thoughts, or invite strangers to one’s private shows ( which may include art works, grimace, scenes of violence or sex), the new generations is delivering their future in the hands of the money-makers, who knows no other goal but making profits.

This cyber technology is also being used in the game of winning competitions in the geo-political stage. Social networking is being used in organizing movements against governments and political opponents. An organized small group has the possibility to send information including graphics and videos over the net in a lightning speed and multiply the recipients of this information in an exponential way. These are mostly being used in defense of “democracy and freedom” — of course, referring to the interests of the capitalist class. Most recently the dynamics of political upheaval in the Arab World is maintained by this cyber revolution. Channeling information, which carry much disinformation and give propaganda advantage against the governments, or opponents to be thrown, are becoming effective instruments for the countries promoting their interests by using the slogan of “human rights and freedom”.

By creating mass-protests which would inevitably be answered by violent means by the governments, the cyber revolution is being used to create public opinion in the world in support of military intervention by the West. In the face of competition and rising power of China and Asia, who side with Russia to curb the Western hegemony of economic and political dominance, and without being able to push through legal international supports through the UN (by arm-twisting other nations), West is inventing new strategies to intervene wherever its economic and political interests could be in danger. This is, at present, the case in Syria and Iran, two powerful countries in the Middle East, who may decide the geo-political fate of the West. This geo-political crisis is arising due to the competitions for access to oil and gas supply and its control. The winners in the region will have advantage in deciding the premises of the economic and political developments in the world in the near future.

The new revolutions in the Middle East are being instigated on the issues of age old religious rivalries among different religions divisions in Islam—particularly the Shias and the Sunnis. It is the old technique of the Western powers, which they have used in the past. The geo-political conflict with the purpose of

holding the age old political and economic hegemony of the West is bringing unprecedented brutality and suffering on the people in the region.

In an atmosphere of violence and chaos, more fundamentalist jihadist groups, a` la` Al-Qaida, are surging and coming in the forefront. The rise of this murderous force is freeing the power who wishes to get rid of the capitalist system itself, which is as a contradiction of history opening up the gates for their own demise. Thus the world is getting embroiled into a multiple levels of complexities and becoming more and more confusing to understand.

What the future may bring is not clear. However, the economic glooms in the West and the political chaos in the oil-rich Arab countries point to a glooming scenario for the near future. The stock-market crash in 2007, which resembled the one which occurred a decade before the World War II, and the long-lasting economic crisis plaguing the countries of the Eurozone these days indicate that a major change must occur in the world before the world order can get out of the mess in which it has got entrapped.

The social economic conditions of different countries in the world are reflecting this situation of history at the verge of taking a new turn: Here more than a billion of people are still buried under the poverty line of one dollar a day, without access to water, education and nutrition. Even after the economic growths in Asia, hundreds of millions of people are extremely poor in India and China (not to mention the less successful countries).