

OSWALD SPENGLER
PHILOSOPHY OF MAN & CULTURE

Spengler published the first volume of his epochmaking work *The Decline of the West* in 1918 and the second appeared in 1922. The first volume was complete before the first world war broke out. Spengler declared boldly in the book that with the appearance of Napoleon Western Culture has entered into its last phase and is approaching its inevitable destiny, the death. To substantiate his prophecy he propounded a general theory of culture. Culture, according to him, is like living species which takes its being in the body of living organism, and determines their form. Everything living is subject to two laws — first that it expresses a form, an idea, which fulfills itself through it; Second, that it takes birth, having lived through its life dies out. To substantiate these basic theses he presents a detailed and penetrating study of European and Greek Cultures and sketches of some other cultures and in the final analysis establishes that all of them have died and the West is doomed to meet the same fate. Danilevsky in his *Russia and Europe* (1871), had anticipated the outline of Spengler's theory of culture. But Spengler's thesis, that every culture is an internally governed harmonious personality, a process of realization of an exclusive Idea, a becoming, an isomorphic system and so on, is quite new, atleast not as much emphasized by Danilevsky as by Spengler. To apprehend culture as an expression of a prime idea was, indeed so novel but this idea is not itself new. It was first uttered by Goethe in his *Morphology of Plants*.

Before discussing Spengler's theory of history and culture we shall discuss in short some of his basic ideas about the nature of Man and Society which he puts forth in his book *Man and Technics*.

What is life? from his various formulations it would appear that it is plain and simple pursuit of Power. This naturally directs our attention towards Nietzsche who propounded a thesis of Will to Power, which according to him is the only fundamental driving force in man. And Spengler in fact elicits Nietzsche in this context. "This battle is life — life, indeed, in the Nietzschean sense, a grim, — grim, pitiless, no quarter battle of the Will to Power"¹ Further he says, "Man is a beast of prey. Acute thinkers like Montaigne and Nietzsche, have always known this".² But Nietzsche's concept is subtler and more comprehensive than Spengler's and therefore different for that reason. Nietzsche considered pursuit of power as unworthy of man. This view he never seems to have changed. He was against any kind of physical power, the power that oppresses, that is why he was against even the state, as it symbolizes power. In "*The Dawn*," he equates physical power with barbarism and eulogises reason against it,— "Victory over strengths ..till one lies on one's knees before strength—according to the ancient habit of slaves—and yet, when the degree of worthiness of being honoured is to be determined, only the degree of reason in strength is decisive; one must measure in how far strength has been overcome by something higher and now serves that as tool and means."³ Though Nietzsche accepts will to Power as the sole explanatory principle and eulogised it but it has been put to the metaphysical status. For example, when he analyses asceticism as a way of willing power he equates it with oppression. He calls it "the most sublimated expressions" of the "defiance of one self." For him asceticism is a way of "tyrannising over certain parts of one's own nature." "This division of one self... is actually a very high degree of vanity."⁴ From this it is amply clear that he decries this will, though in the final analysis he finds this will every where. And when it becomes the force behind the creation of beauty, good and truth then its nature is of course not beastly. In *Thus Spake Zarathustra* he says,

“will to Truth” you call it.....? A will to the thinkability of all being. This I call your will. All being you want to make thinkable for you doubt, with well founded suspicion, whether it is thinkable. Yet it shall yield and bend for you...that is your entire will...a will to power...also when you speak of good and evil and valuation.”⁵ But the hardest resistance against this power is one’s own beastly nature, the Dionysus within us, and so the most powerful is one who comes himself, or say, “who becomes a self.”⁶ But in Spengler this ethico-metaphysical insight is lacking. Unlike Nietzsche he traces the origin of the will to Power to the animal world. And for Spengler the very dignity of man consisted in his relationship with that genera of animate nature which preys, kills and devours the flesh of other animals — “But above this (i. e. herbivorous life) there is a second kind, which lives on other animals and whose living consists in killing.....The animal of prey is the highest form of mobile life.”⁷ It implies a maximum freedom for self, an extreme of necessity where that self can hold its own only by fighting and winning and destroying. It imparts a high dignity to man, as a type that he is a beast of prey. Then further he talks of herbivorous ethics and carnivorous ethics.-- The only kind of ethics available to man. But when man is a beast of prey, how is it that some members of his species come to acquire the ways of herbivorous? Further, what is then the meaning of “responsibility”? How a beast of prey is more responsible to himself than the herbivorous animal, who is according to him, by implication, is not at all responsible to himself, or to anybody else for that matter? What is the meaning of ‘dignity’ here? It can not be in the sense of Kant or of Nietzsche. When the dignity belongs to him because he is a beast of prey then it must also belong to cat, wolf and tiger.

With these strange concepts of “dignity” and “responsibility” Spengler talks of inner strength--strength of the soul--which is the reason for the solitary and independent nature and of the beast of prey. “The more solitary the being and the more resolute it is in

forming its own world against all other conjunctures of worlds in the environment, the more definite and strong the cast of its soul. What is the opposite of the soul of a lion ? The soul of a cow. For strength of individual soul the herbivorous substitute numbers, the herd."⁸ From this it naturally follows that the soul of a lion is stronger than a cow's and of a hawk's than a dove's. But the term 'strength' has different meaning where man is concerned. The 'strength of human soul' is never understood in terms of physical power and aggressiveness. For if this be accepted then the soul of Hitler and Idi-Amin would be far more superior and stronger than that of Socrates, Christ, Buddha and Goethe. Instead, the people of the former variety are considered as far more inferior than even an ordinary person. In fact, in a beast, 'soul' is the synonym of activity and muscularity, that is, life-force, while in man it means autonomy of idea or will to accomplish that what one is, or in Nietzsche's words 'willing the self.' Thus it is not the impulse to prey, to kill and destroy which is essential to man but reflection, reasonability, i. e. overcoming the ego, transcendence, insight and consideration. That a philosopher of culture, that Spengler is, should show the lack of understanding this and should glorify that which is just opposite of culture, is surprising. Talking about earliest man he says, "Earliest man settled alone like a bird of prey---The soul of these strong solitaries is warlike through and through— It knows the intoxication of *feeling when the knife pierces the hostile body and the smell of blood* and these sense of amazement strikes upon the exultant soul. Every real "man", even in the cities of late periods in the cultures feels in himself from time to time, the sleeping fires of this primitive soul."⁹ The underlined parts of the above quotation betray the sadistic pleasure in blood and aggression, here his "real man" is not the man who overcomes his non-self but the man who has the thirst for real hot blood gushing out of the body of the prey. Of culture also he talks in terms of "hunger for power and booty." He says : "The Faustian, West European Culture— is the

most powerful, the most passionate and—most tragic of them all.” Tragedy lies in the fact that it aspires for victory over “God of Nature”... by creating a world of its own which would obey man alone. “To build a world oneself, to be oneself God—that is the faustian inventor’s dream, and from it has sprung all our designing and re-designing of machine to approximate as nearly as possible to the unattainable limit of perpetual motion. The booty idea of the beast of prey is thought out to its logical end.”¹⁰ Spengler seem to be so obsessed with this image that he never talks of art, philosophy or religion in “*Man and Technics*.” Only once he mentions religion, that too, to decry it. “Only the ceremonious Solemnity of idealist philosophers and others--Theologians have wanted the courage to be open about what in their hearts they knew perfectly well. Ideas are cowardice. And yet from the works of these one could call a pretty anthology of opinions that they have from time to time let slip concerning the beast in man.”¹¹ Here he has not desired “beast in man” but the non-recognition, the rejection of the “grand fact” which imparts “high dignity to man.” According to Spengler, besides beastality, man has two more qualities which can be said as differentia of him and which make him far more powerful and capable of plundering than any other animals can even dream of. These qualities are the possession of hand and speech. Man came to be man through the genesis of hand. “To the eye of the beast of prey which regards the world “Theoretically” is added the hand of man which commands it practically.”¹² Here the assignment of genesis of the “theoretical” to the “eye” (i. e. “look”, of the beast of prey) is noticeable. Spengler does not seem to understand that “theoretical” is the detached and inverted comprehension of the ideal and is basically opposed to the particular object-centered look of the beast of prey. In this disposition the whole being of the animal is directed against the particular to catch hold of it, as against the theoretical “look” which suspends the particular, returns from object and contemplates the essence. As far as hand is concerned, his

characterization of it as the first step in the process of the development of tools and techniques is absolutely convincing, but to say that man came to be what he is through the genesis of hand cannot be accepted without qualifications.¹³ In fact, the appearance of hand or say, the mutation in the consciousness which brought forth hand with some other development in the morphology of organisms, started with apes and evolved through chimpanzee to man.¹⁴ Therefore, hand cannot be said to be the differentia of man, because then even the best scientist is not basically different from ape in this regard. It is only man's capacity to reflect, to suspend the objective mode of consciousness, to comprehend actual as an instance of the ideal and to experience the realm of values which make him man.

Now a brief examination of Spengler's concept of human individual. Spengler thinks that man's belonging to the lineage of beasts of prey makes him solitary and responsible to himself. "The less one needs others, the more powerful one is. A beast of prey is every one's foe."¹⁵ Here Spengler seems to be an individualist who takes society to be an imposition. But in his theory of culture, individual is so insignificant that he says-- "But each and everyone of us, intrinsically a null, is for an unnameably brief moment, a life-time cast into the whirling universe. . . . And what is more, the destiny of each of these individuals consists in his being, by birth, not merely brought into this world-history, but brought into it in a particular century, a particular people, a particular class --- this destiny --- dooms us to certain situations, views and actions. There are no 'men in themselves', such as philosophers talk about, but merely men of time, of a locality of a race---."¹⁶ This in fact is his real thesis about the place of individual in society or better say, place of the 'surrogate of the individual' in society. Individual, for him, is internally vacuous-- a null, an algebraic variable. We shall point out the contradictions involved in his concept of man as "a solitary being" and as "a social unit."

Theory of Culture and History

Spengler's *Decline Of The West* contains his philosophy of culture and this work is considered to be one of the most outstanding contribution on this subject. As we have noted earlier that his philosophy of history in its basic tenets resembles that of Danilensky's. But Spengler's way of thinking and expounding and the character of the work are essentially different from Danilansky's. The greatness of Spengler's work does not lie in the basic skelton of his theory but in the conception, development and enunciation of this theory.

It is not possible here to outline his theory which is rich because of his erudition and wideness of comprehension. We shall discuss some of the salient features of his philosophy and try to point out the difficulties in accepting them.

The main philosophical presupposition of his theory is that a man of culture synthesises his experience in one of the two basic divisions of reality i. e. the world-as-Nature and the world-as-History. "Nature is the shape in which the man of higher cultures synthesises and interprets the immediate impressions on his senses. History is that from which imagination seeks comprehension of the living existence of the world in relation to his own life, which he thereby invests, with a deeper reality."¹⁷ This does not mean that every man or every society has this dualistic frame of apprehension, but these are the two frames available to man—"man, thus, has before him two possibilities of world formation. But it must be noted at the very outset, that these possibilities are necessarily actual—. It makes a great difference whether any one lives-under the constant impression that his life is an element in a far wider life course that goes on for hundreds and thousands of years, or conceives himself as some thing rounded off and self contained. For the later type of consciousness there is certainly no world-history, no world-as-history."¹⁸ This means that one can systematise one's total experience in either of the

three following ways (1) One can organise his total experience in the frame of nature, i. e., the thing become, dead, time less extension, which is the proper object of theoretico-empirical knowledge, object of understanding, or (2) in the frame of history, that is in the frame of life, destiny, duration, incessant becoming which can be comprehended through sympathy, intuition, living with, or (3) part of the experience in the image of nature and part of it in the image of history. Now, which of these frames is the proper frame? Kant, for instance, preferred the third way: he organised the sensible experience in the image of nature, as expounded by him in his *Critique of Pure Reason* and the life experience and the art experience in the image of history, as he expounded in his *Critique of Judgement*. Bergson, on the other hand, preferred the second way as is evident in his works like *Creative Evolution*. Most of the philosophers, generally organised the experience in the image of nature, as their method was mainly theoretical. According to Spengler the method of intuition and empathy was the only proper method. Tracing the development of the methods of apprehending reality he says, "The picture that we possess of the history of the earth's crust and of life is at present still dominated by the ideas which civilized English thought has developed since the age of enlightenment in place of incalculable catastrophies and metamorphises --- they put a methodical evolution over very long periods of time and recognise as causes only scientifically calculable and indeed machinical utility causes ---. We are skeptics in regard to any and every mode of thought which explains causally. We let things speak for themselves, and confine ourselves to sensing the Destiny immanent in them and contemplating the form manifestation that we shall never penetrate. The extreme to which we can attain is the discovery of causeless, purposeless, purely existent forms underlying the changefull picture of Nature."¹⁹

One can be in agreement with Spengler in his contention that theoretico-mechanistic scheme is an inappropriate scheme

and it only distorts our vision of reality, but Spengler himself can not consistently contend this thesis, as according to him approaches to or constructions of reality are necessarily relative to cultures, and therefore every approach has equal claim over truth. Secondly, there is not even the possibility that one can think of a standard which may not be relative to a culture and thus not be a standard at all. This relativism is so basic to Spengler's notion of history and culture that according to him not only such creations as philosophy, music and poetry etc ---, are integral parts of the organic unity of a culture but even mathematics, technology and chemistry are internally related to the foundational symbol of a culture. Each culture is based upon its own major premise or prime-symbol, which differs entirely from other cultures. "The choice of prime symbol in the moment of the culture-soul's awakening into self-consciousness of its soil-decides all—. There is a plurality of symbols. It is the depth-experience through which the world becomes, through which perception extends itself to world. It's significance is for the soul to which it belongs and only for that soul.....All fundamental words like our mass, substance, material things, body, extension are emblems, obligatory and determined by destiny..... From the purest analytical spaceto the most somatic reality of Athens, there is a series of prime-symbols each of which is capable of forming a complete world out of itself."²⁰ Now when a culture is internally constituted by a definite meaning pattern, a definite form or symbol, it would be essentially different in all of its aspects from other cultures, so no common standard is possible to comprehend all cultures. And, therefore Spengler's claim that the "historical approach" or say "destiny idea" is the only proper approach seems farcical. Further, when this approach—destiny idea—sense of history—is peculiar to Faustian culture and it is not available to classical and Indian cultures or many other cultures. Spengler's approach would obviously be a culturally subjective construction. In fact he admits this and says "... ..I can then call the essence of

what I have discovered "true"— that is, true for me, and as I believe true for the leading minds of the coming time, not true in itself as dissociated from the conditions imposed by blood and by history, for that is impossible."²¹ But still his whole venture is to claim the knowledge of absolute Truth.

Similarly, he asserts that no culture can borrow forms and ideas from other cultures, nor a person belonging to one culture can understand the creation of other cultures. But Spengler himself makes observations about other cultures and that too very pertinent. And thus Spengler transcends the limits of his time, place — and blood, though, as he believes, one cannot do this. And most important of all is that, if a culture is the working—out of a prime—symbol and every culture is related to experience or reality through their symbolic systems then how the construction of the world-as-history, that is the Faustian construction of the experience, is the only right approach?

This dualistic division of reality is even more difficult to digest. He himself admits that only two cultures Egyptian and Faustian, have the sense of history. That means all other cultural constructions of experience are Naturalistic approaches, which is far from being true. Take for example the Indian culture. It lacked sense of history, true indeed, but then, did it have the sense of nature? Its prime symbol Nirvana is as non-natural as ahistorical; causality for this culture is as much an intellectual illusion as becomingness. In fact it had a different concept of causality to explain the origin of phenomena from Nirvana or reality, i.e. Vivarta, which denies both becomingness and causality. Same is the case with Apollinian or Classical culture. "The sensuously present individual body" as the prime symbol of the classical culture is difficult to accept, because, then Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle would not be the representative philosophers of this culture. As the first two have denied all reality to the senses and the third considered it as something which has the potentiality to become real

by transforming itself according to the idea which resides in it to realize itself in the process. But even if the 'sensually present individual body as the ideal type of the extended' be accepted, how the "nude statue, the sensuous cult of the olympian gods, the politically individual city state, the doom of Oedipus and phallus symbol" can be characterised as Nature, is not clear. Now let us take another example to show how Spengler's own assertions imply that cultures after all are not all that coherent as he claims. He criticises modern psychology for it does not study a living soul, or consciousness or mind, but the dead mechanism of these, which has nothing in common with the ineffable, inexpressible ever becoming pure experience. But, this analytical psychological concept of soul is inherent in the very basic structure of the Western mind.²² Then, how could he along with Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Bergson have an entirely opposite view about the reality of soul? In fact, as we know the phenomenological existentialist schools of philosophy, which are quite dominant in the Continental Europe today, have almost similar points of view towards reality. Darwinism which Spengler attacks, because of its Nature — approach towards the genesis of life and species, is a Faustian product and yet is incongruent to the European cultural idea. And when it is so then how could Darwinism get hold of the European mind and become the sole principle of truth for biological phenomena? The evolution idea is Faustian through and through, so much so that it comes "to be the a priori form rather the discovered principle of our Nature — picture".²³ Then how Goethe could have just opposite concept of evolution? Spengler's answer is : this (Darwinism) is due to the turn of culture to the civilization. But then how could he reject Darwinism during the times which had further travelled toward civilization? Not only this, he is against the very notion of evolutionism and declares that everything happens in the nature suddenly, without any cause or process. "There is no more conclusive refutation of Darwinism than that furnished by palaeontology...." Any form, any species are suddenly

there in their definite shape. They do not develop or alter to adopt themselves to the pressures of nature, rather they go out of existence when not suited to environment."²⁴ In *Man and Technics* he expresses same idea while talking about the origin of what he says that the hand, like any thing "decisive in world history" must have suddenly come into being. The whole human form, "the hand, upright gait, the position of the head and so forth" had been there suddenly and not had developed gradually.²⁵ Here Spengler seems more fascinated by theoretical imagery than real and deep insight. But still he makes a very important and pertinent remark which would naturally be ignored by this age of scientism which understands physicalistic — mechanistic terminology. The point made here is that we can not understand the inner meaning of the life-form, the unity of the spirit, which, with its irrepressible impulse to express itself takes possession of matter and transforms it into various units of activity with diversity of organs but all possessed by one single passion—will and Idea, until we ourselves do not delve into the deeper streams of consciousness and place ourselves at the very source of all meaning.

Spengler's second most important thesis is about the birth and development of culture.

"Cultures are organisms"²⁶ themselves and he does not see them on the analogy of an organism. And accordingly he thinks that cultures have the stages of their growth. "It is possible to find in life itself — for human history is the sum of mighty life courses which already have had to be endowed with ego and personality in customary thought and expression by predicating entities of a high order like "the classical" or the Chinese culture." "Modern Civilization is a series of stages which must be traversed and transversed moreover in an ordered and obligatory sequence. For everything organic, the notions of birth, death, youth, age, lifetime are fundamentals"²⁷ These unambiguous assertions notwithstanding Kroeber, unlike Toynbee and Sorokin thinks

that Spengler's treatment of cultures as organism is metaphorical. When in fact cultures are organisms for Spengler that is why he could talk of the corpses of the dead cultures lying petrified for centuries.

Culture, being an organism, is not merely a physical body understandable in causal terms, a thing which can be dissected and then re-assembled, but an unanalysable living unity, a form fulfilling itself, a becoming, whose origin is mystical, it "is born in the moment when a great soul awakens out of the proto-spirituality of ever childish humanity.....". Once born it remains attached plantwise to a limited landscape where its soul actualizes its possibilities. And this process "is an inner passionate struggle to maintain the idea against the powers of chaos without and the unconscious muttering deep down within... It is not only the artist who struggles against the resistance of the material and stifling of the idea within him. Every culture stands in a deeply symbolic, almost in a mystical relation to the Extended, the space, in which and through which it strives to actualize itself."²⁸ Having achieved fulfilment it meets its death. Here a sudden shift from the analogy of artistic creation to organic is noticeable. But for Spengler both are one and the same i. e. self fulfilment of form. An organism for him is as much a process of realisation of an idea as the process starting with the germination of an idea in the mind of an artist and its culmination in statue or painting. Here he is apparently following Goethe who conceived the phenomena of plant growth as the fulfilment of form.

Now, is the idea of form fulfilment organismic in nature? Even a superficial inspection will show that it is not. Take for instance Spengler's own citation of the artistic idea seeking its fulfilment through a painting. How is this idea organismic in character? Is it in the sense that it starts its life-history from childhood and then enters the process of youth, maturity and old age and death? The fulfilment of an artistic idea lies in its attaining more

and more articulation in an alien medium — word, rhythm, colour, or stone, etc. When this gets incarnated it fills this medium with life, but by this very act it gets self-alienated and becomes object. But the act of incarnation does not necessarily terminate in self-alienation, if the artist after creating the object, returns to the origin with this added dimension then it becomes the journey of the discovery of hidden meaning, the journey of self-discovery. But Spengler could not see this for he was obsessed with Cartesian dualism of Mind and Matter, the property of matter being extension. But even Cartesian dualism does not suggest that the process of expression of the Idea is like the life-span of an organism.

This is even more patently true of prime-symbol which is embodied in the personality of a culture. A personality can be an expression of an idea, as Spengler would say, but how a person can be identified with his organic body which grows young, mature, old and finally dies. A personality can be a process of realization only if the person has self awareness and employs himself to overcome himself as Nietzsche would say. A person devoid of self awareness can not be said to be fulfilling his form, he in fact does not have history (an animal does not have personality and history), he is like that proto-culture which for ever remains childish. The same is true of cultures which are “born in the moment when a great soul awakens out of proto-spirituality of ever childish humanity, detaches itself, and becomes a form from the formless..... “And this process, history, or becoming of self, cannot be understood in the terms of biological becoming; this has no meaning.

Spengler's third main thesis is the principle of “Contemporaneity” of cultures. This principle depends upon the second thesis discussed above. Every culture behaves similarly in its childhood, youth or old age. Therefore their ages and time should be composed isomorphically. This thesis is dependent upon the previous one, which we already have refuted, therefore, this automatically stands refuted. Here I would like to make some observations

concerning the history of Indian culture. In table I Spengler cites Sankhya and Carvaka as materialistic tendencies and sitting-in of the Winter period of Indian culture. Now, while it is absolutely wrong to characterise Sankhya as materialistic it is equally wrong to say that Carvakism ever dominated in India. Sankhya is a dualistic philosophy; true, but its concept of Prakriti is such that it stand to be over come, and it is not synonymous with 'Nature' which is extensional. Gita also cites Sankhya as a path of attainment of real self Similarly, his characterization of Sankhya Sutras and Buddha and later Upanishads as "Belief in Almightyness of Reason" also shows his lack of understanding of these systems. In Sankhya, reason is a modification of Prakriti and therefore to be discarded. For Buddha also reason is illusion created by objective mind-Buddhi—Vikalpa and reality lies beyond the reaches of reason.

Here I am not pointing out Spengler's lack of understanding of these systems but to his wrong periodization. As we know great systems of philosophy, art, literature and religion emerged in India during the period of so called death. As late as 14th and 15th centuries A. D. great saints, poets and philosophers appeared in India and their poetry resembled the poetry of the first and second phases of Spenglerian culture.

Even in the recent times we see another spurt in the spirit of India. 19th Century saw the awakening of the spirit of India and accordingly the burst of creative energy in all spheres; here we see a vast and forceful social, religious, and political movements and many very great leaders in these spheres with original ideas emerging; there was immense creativity in the spheres of literature, art and philosophy. This lasted till 1947, when all of a sudden with the attainment of political independence everything came to an abrupt end. This phenomena of sudden pause or dampness, and that too with the victory at the end of a crusade is rather inexplicable. Perhaps it happened due to the consummation of spiritual energy

and the consumptive personality of India, could not stand the shock of sudden achievement of liberation, so much so that it foreshook even the leader (Gandhiji) who had led the political movement and who embodied the Indian spirit, the real essence of India. Gandhism is the name of the way of life, thought and feeling-tone which is essentially and creatively Indian. After independence India abandoned it in favour of the Western way of life and thinking.

Now we come to his fourth major thesis: that no culture can borrow from another culture. Culture, for Spengler, is one single indivisible insulated whole, a world in itself. It may pick up this or that idea from another culture but it either remains a minor adjunct to it or undergoes a fundamental transformation before it is a part of the borrowing culture. Lee Whore after Spengler, has presented a detailed study of the languages of primitive societies, to support the same thesis. This thesis of Spengler is basically true as far as it goes, but extended to the further limits it would miss the apparent point of communication or if it is impossible for cultures to learn from each other then it would be impossible for two persons to communicate with each other, some thinkers especially empiricists, contend that other minds are unapproachable, every body is insulated within himself, therefore, it is impossible to know others' minds.

Here we can not enter into a discussion concerning the knowledge of other minds but we may say that the possibility of the culture is based upon the fact that human psyche has a transpersonal dimension; even in an act of perception while a man occupies a definite individual point of view with respect of the object, he at the same time is conscious that this object is at the centre of innumerable possible points of views and that his perception or the point of view has no privilege over the others. This is even more true of higher concepts taking shape in arts, mythology, religion, mathematics and philosophy. These are evidently universal in nature.

It is true that these concepts have the nuances and contexts which are culturally determined, but these are not impregnable boundaries. This is proved by Spengler himself by making valuable and objective observations about the Cultures other than his own. Redfield²⁹ has observed, the understanding of other cultures is possible only through sympathy and compassion, and, one may add, by overcoming one's cultural ego.

In the end we must add that the *Decline of the West* remains one of the most outstanding works of the 20th century; full with insights, erudition, vastness of comprehension and very rich in objective imagination.

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NOTES

1. Man and Technics, p. 16
2. Ibid p. 19
3. The Dawn, 548
4. Human, All Too Human, 137.
5. And Thus Spake Zarathustra 11-12
6. Human All Too Human, 366
7. Ibid.
8. Man and Technics, pp. 25-26.
9. Ibid. pp. 42-43.
10. Ibid. p. 85
11. Ibid. p. 19
12. Ibid. p. 35.
13. Ibid. p. 35.
14. E. L. Russell in his book "*The Behaviour of Animals*" Edward Arnold & Co. London, 1946. (pp. 153-166.) has recorded the experiments of

- Kohler, Haan and Mc Dugall with monkeys and chimpanzees which show that these species are capable of handle things and learning to operate them according to the demands of the situation. See the chapter on "Insight Learning."
15. Spengler, *Ibid*, p. 26
 16. *Ibid*. p. 16.
 17. *The Decline of the West*, Oswald Spengler tr. C. F. Atkinson, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London, 1954, Vol. I. p. 8.
 18. *Ibid*.
 19. *Ibid*, p. 31
 20. *Ibid*. Vol. I pp. 178-80.
 21. *Ibid*, Preface to the Revised Edition, p. xiii
 22. *Ibid*. Vol. I p. 319.
 23. *Ibid* Vol. I 370.
 24. *Ibid* Vol. II p. 32.
 25. *Man and Technics* pp. 36-37.
 26. *Ibid* Vol. I. p. 104.
 27. *Ibid*. Vol. I. P. 3.
 28. *Ibid* Vol. I. p. 106.
 29. Robert Redfield, *Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture*, University of Chicago Press, 1960.