

OCCIDENTAL MARTHA

BY LLOYD MORRIS

THE fundamental disparity between the Occidental and Oriental races is their respective qualities of mind. The former is objective and pragmatic; the latter, subjective and rational. The one, introspectively exercised with the interpretation of spiritual reactions to phenomena, starts with God; comes deductively to phenomena; and, returning in upon itself, effloresces in spiritual sublimations. The other, concerned with phenomena as they affect material being, essays by induction to dislodge an Oriental Creator from an elaborated Occidental Paradise, and elevate itself to the godhead of a suspicioned mechanical universe.

The material expressions of these differing reactions of consciousness are correspondingly dissimilar. Upon their polarities of the abstract and the concrete have been superimposed two social systems—the introvert organization of the East having its zenith in the Sermon on The Mount; and its nadir in the products of an inconsequential attitude towards physical life; and the extrovert civilization of the West having its highest expression in sanitation; and its lowest in penitentiary ethics, a ballot box intelligentsia, and the psychological confusions comprising the christianity of Christendom.

These extremes of sociological development are quite a normal expression of the consciousnesses from which they rise. It is logical that the Orient seeing the spiritual as the only reality and truth, should condemn ephemeral materialities and the physical sequences of filth and disease and suffering thereby incurred. To Eastern thought, human life and relations present themselves as without any sanctity: mere shadows of infinity incapable in themselves of hurt: soilable with impunity. The human race itself is seen as no glorious acme of a supernal creation central and all-dominant to a servitor

universe, and mystically to be conserved in eternity of type to a prime necessity.

It is equally logical that the West worshipping the concrete should glorify physical being; and, regarding the Infinite myopically, either fail to perceive it, or deny its spiritual content in an attempt to measure it by material standards. To Western thought the Human Race is sacrosanct and eternal; the cosmically revered apex of a finished creation. It is beyond the orbit of Occidental apprehension to conceive Humanity a failure; or that equivalents or superiorities might be substituted for it; and that somewhere between evolutionary sea and evolutionary shore the Cosmic Purpose took a wrong turning; and reorienting itself went on; leaving the Human Race as excreta of a Divine Necessity pursuing its further aliment in an eighth day.

It is obvious that of necessity the great religions of the world originated and came to flower and perfume in the Orient. It is equally apparent that of necessity they would come to decay on their importation into the West; where the Occidental mind treating them as phenomena, reduced their spiritual reality:—at the best, to philosophy and metaphysics; at the worst, to the vulgar inanities of evangelism. The word and deed teachings of the Syrian Christ became mere raw material at the ports of entry of the West which erupted factories in the form of theological seminaries for processing the crude Asian product into academic pabulum; theocratic hierarchies; and the volume production of an evangelistic proletariat grafting and paying graft to a Supreme Being whose largest implication in christian doctrine and ritual, invests the Christian God with the attributes of a Celestial Traffic Cop. The manufacture of the Christ into Christianity for home consumption and reexport, is today one of the major Occidental industries; possessing in the Roman Communion the strongest and oldest of Trades Union.

It is obvious that of necessity the employment of poison gas in the high concernment of warfare; the exploitation of the atom; hospitalization; chivalry; eleemosynary coordination and plumbing originated in the Occident. It is equally apparent that upon their full importation into the Orient they will result in—What? some future Liao Yang?

Between states of mind so opposite there can be no sympathy of understanding; even though or because they share a degraded like-

ness that exhibits the pure and simple precepts of religious founders as no more pure, no longer simple, but overlain by doctrine and dogma to the point of obscurity; warped by prejudice and fanaticism to travesty; brought into disrepute by the conduct of their fiduciary interest; and their simple, beautiful spirituality reduced to dialectical scholasticism, degenerate superstition and lugubrious sentimentalities.

For each others material expressions, also, neither can have the kindly tolerance that flows from the accord of charity. Their nearest approach to outward similitude is the sundering difference of manner in which each purposes to lure God from the skies by repetitive liturgies; and imprison Him in barbaric temples or, with mouldy ancestral bones, pompous vestments, and such other indica of Christianity housed in ecclesiastical edifices of tawdry brick and iron Bethels, decomposing stone Minsters, and imposing cathedrals whose flamboyant heaven-aspiring architecture rises above jerry-built and scamped foundations.

Though temple bells call never so sweetly in Asian lands; though turbaned heads be prostrate in their millions at prayer; these things of worshipful devotion do but advertise a benighted, uncivilized heathendom to the superior Occident; which is stimulated to redress by missionary enterprise the balance of spiritual obligations incurred in the past. Clerical bagmen, however, drumming out of the West with their samples of sectarian religion have failed to "put it over." High pressure methods applied in the form of military force challenging the poor heathen at the cannon's mouth with a stentorian, "civilize, civilize," have been equally unproductive—except for repulsive statuary commemorating successful robberies under arms. The Druses are still Druses in their Hauran; the Moslem still usher in the dawn with the significant ending to the clarion call, "Muhammad al Akhbar; the Brahmin still is disdainful; the Buddhist indifferent; the Hindu malevolent; the Confucian contemptuous of the manner and matter of the products of Western theological factories and secular accomplishments.

Where ideal is opposed to ideal, judgment lies arbitrarily in the accepted point of view, and Truth perhaps in some transcendental arbiter who, looking upon the diversities comprising human effort, sees none of greater delusion than another. Therefore, seeing that they of the East and they of the West have each their grovelled

being with no orientation beneath the stars, it is matter for small wonderment that their appraisal of each other can only be distorted and provocative of controversy; and their own self-criticism either prejudiced to sightless worthlessness, or blatantly hypocritical.

The unutilitarian Orient spectacularly castigated in its material being by physical improvidences, denies its sores. The Occident with its braggadocio criterion of bank balances, number and luxuriousness of automobiles, political influence, astuteness of legal spoliation, and every other pretentious vulgarity and applauded baseness whereby the suffrage of Occidental approbation is canvassed and gained—it, with hypocritical smirks and flatted eyelid, disclaims its own self-chosen touchstone of externalities; protests to neutral criticism that the standard of Western comity is not material, nor its glory in phenomena; denies that the seamless white robe of the Christ has become the imperial purple of Christendom; with more of mortal crimson than cerulean blue in its tatterdemalion patchwork.

Quasi historically we have the eminent authority of Jesus of Nazareth sustaining the Oriental viewpoint in his discrimination between the characters of Martha and Mary. Under that Oriental ruling Oriental Mary has *hitherto* chosen the better part; and Occidental Martha lies under the rebuke of nourishing inferior ideals.

Contemporaneously we have the self-styled dominant European peoples declining to accept the rebuke of its professed spiritual ideal, and being primly censorious of Sister Mary. In this attitude Christendom in sober fact rams the lie down the throat of its Christ.

While the superiority of differing ideals is matter of opinion, their expression in conduct is matter of fact; and the disparity between profession and performance is a measurable quantity of pragmatically successful hypocrisy, or honest failure, susceptible of graphical representation.

To be true, however, the factual picture of any cross-section of sociological phenomena must extend to all the facts as they are *in situ*. There must be no selectivity nor composition; and the medium employed must have the necessary field of vision and present no distortion of image; and, though in sight of the Absolute there may be naught but delusion, yet for finity's sake there must be laid down some plane of reference; in order to establish a comparative value in addition to an evaluation of intrinsic worth.

It is when such critical standards are applied to the West's judgments of the East, that the unsoundness of Occidental picturization of the Orient emerges; and no more completely does it become manifest than in the book, *Mother India*; whose status as a best seller entitles it to be considered the accredited champion of Western ideals.

When the authoress of *Mother India*, representative of the foremost Western nation and herself completely progressive, set out to view India, it was *sine qua non* she would employ for her examination only the highest and most up to date methods of Occidental devising. What was the medium through which she scrutinized the lined linaments of aged India? Was it a spiritual eye that vivified with lively delight the vision of a civilization already compassed when the loins from which the authoress sprung were naked to gaze or dressed in raw pelts? Was it a spiritual ear whose convolutions perpepuated in a replication of sweet sounds the song of the *Bhagavad Gita*? Was it a votive mouth to intone in praise the everlasting harmonies of Vedic hymns? It was none of these. In metaphorical epitome it was a length of sewer pipe.

Normally at the end of a sewer pipe one expects to find sewage—the book, *Mother India* found it. Normally at the end of a sewer pipe one does not expect to find a quintessence of spirituality or philosophy, but a well known public utility. The *Mother India* book found neither; and as the pipe was perfectly designed and fabricated, and of course perfectly manipulated, obviously *Mother India* was naught but the foulest of foul old hags.

No other portraiture was logically possible from the view point taken; and if demand be any indication of majority opinion, we are to accept the *Mother India* technique as the acme of Occidental skill and vision of artistry *where the Orient is the subject*.

Whatever of our sublunary life be viewed through material values, material values alone will appear in the field of observation; and material values are the accredited resources the West knows and has at its command. Man however does not live by obstetrics, feminism, social statics, eugenics, and main drainage alone; he may die of them; and under Oriental eyes the West may appear as worse than dead—putrescent. For if the Orient apply its ideals as a standard in a critical survey of the West; then as equally distorted

a portrait will result as did that of the Orient under Western limning.

East and West should each be judged according to its own standards, and the result given in terms of defection from their respective ideals. But the West declares there is only one standard—that of the West. Oriental Mary therefore must spy out Occidental Martha in Martha's own fashion; and in doing so an image considerably more dubious than *Mother India* comes into view.

In a little green island in the west appear bold clear outlines of little grey homes where the ubiquitous hog shares the peat fire with its human companions; and the sprightly cock waking among the smoke blackened rafters greets the dawning of the day with a shrill clarion but never a "gardy loo;" Kathaleen ni Houlahan is seen obviously no winsome colleen with emerald green skirts and dear grey eyes, beneath brows and lashes smeared on as with a sooty finger; but as a wrinkled old crone; dirty and given over to leprechauns, bogles, a low bred intolerant priest caste, assassins and corner boys.

In Scandinavia we get as a decaying custom of the country the unabashed tubbing of male guests by serving maids; and pre-martial sexual relations esteemed a superior bridal asset over mere virginity.

Slavonic Europe becomes nationalized atheism; and the Latins synonymous with erotic libertinage, illiteracy, dirtiness, ignorant priesthood, and religious proscriptions.

The Commonwealth of Australia running true to Botany Bay form intrudes upon the eye as an impudent repudiator of state borrowed moneys. The Dominion of Canada assumes prominence as a confiscator of private railway property; a manipulator of audits; and the gestured expositor of national independence and equality which it condescends to permit the Mother Country to pay for in the shape of naval and military protection: just as the little dog full of valiance beneath the belly of the big fellow, dins dogdom with yelping asseverations of its tykedom.

England with its slums, its Protestant illiberality, its sottish lower classes, and its imperial rapacities for territorial aggrandisements, is seen yielding her dark eminence in all these aspects to the United States of America.

Founded in religion and starting with a virgin land, this great nation is exhibited to day as an international spectacle of political

and moral corruption; dominated by a debauched Press, big business, and a cynically nefarious administration of Law. Its cities are heard resounding to the clamor of the scions of Brian Boru, contending with the descendants of noble Romans, the glory that was Greece and the débris that was Poland; for the possession of city halls; the exclusive right to assassinate policemen; and follow the gainful occupation of peddling poisoned liquor, narcotics, venereally diseased prostitutes and abducted virgins.

Its self-vaunted states of southern gentlemen strut across the scene in character of flippantly bilking payment of their foreign borrowings, like any common sneak-thief.

From breaking solemn and sacred treaties entered into with its Indian wards; and embezzling their estate; the historic panorama of the United States of America's idealistic integration moves sturdily on from mere shystering misfeasance to the ampler aspect of an international fence purchasing territories it knew to have clouded titles; and continuing its career of humble abnegation to the assumption of its majestic orbit of an imperialism so thinly veiled under hypocritical explanations as to be insulting to the most ordinary intelligence.

This is the West as it appears when viewed after the manner the book, *Mother India* viewed the Orient. Is it a right picture? Most certainly it is not; because it is not the whole picture. Nor was the book, *Mother India* the whole picture; yet the Orient was condemned by it with an unreserved opprobrium; the image depicted was accepted a good and faithful portraiture and the mirror reflecting it, a good and true glass. Then, will the Occident acknowledge its own image as reflected in that same glass of sociological fashion, as good and faithful portraiture also? With an unanimity equal to its own large approval of the book, *Mother India*, it will deny in its own case the truth of the glass. Only when turned towards the Orient does the derogative effect of Western perception obtain. Directed upon itself, it lapses into a vacant stare; or estatic contemplation: habitude of its own stercoraceous self, transmuting its unsavoriness into aureate excellence.

The book, *Mother India*, was intended as a condemnation of the Orient. Little logic, however, is required to see that in effect it is, also, a mirror wherein the West is reflected in all its essential grossness and hypocrisy. It is the most cruel and brutal *expose* of Occidentalism of modern times.

If such thing as neutrality could be within the compass of our Finite days; what could be its utterance when pondering upon these twain East and West. Until the last decade the Orient was as it was when the Christ walked beside the Gallilean sea; and the Buddha sat under the Bo Tree; Lao Tsze passed through the Western Gate; and Muhammad came down from Mount Hira in the dawning, and raising his hairy throat, pealed up to the paling stars the scarlet cry of Islam that has come down through the centuries. The Sermon on the Mount; the Noble Eight Fold Path; the Tao Teh King, and the Fatthah were uttered by men who lived, moved and had their being in an environment exactly as depicted in *Mother India today*—an environment of caste prejudices, child marriages, female chattelage, septic obstetrics, no main drainage, and the poverty and disease which the founder of Christianity ruled of no moment in comparison with things of the Spirit.

Has the West out of its sanitized ideals ever produced men such as these founders of religions in the East—the Eastern Garden of thought which *Mother India* finds so lamentably revolting? Among all the effigies that disfigure Western concourses, is there one commemorating a character worthy to stand beside Jesus of Nazareth, or Gotama, Confucius? Instead we lay wreaths of immortelles in adulation before Light Horse Harrys, Iron Dukes, Stonewall Generals, cabbages and Kings.

Out of the East; the insanitary East—Divine Man. Out of the sterilized West—machine gun politics; bribery, graft, perjury in high places and low; a progressive spectacle of murders, suicides, deaths by starvation of women and children; rape, sodomy, sadism, incest nymphomania, satyriasis, lesbianism; nude sons of coal black mammys burnt alive at the stake, while blonde Occidental misses jump hysterically round the *auto da fé* and pump lead into the shrieking bodies; millions of men staring up to the sky, their trailing guts gnawed by rats paddling in the red pudding of brain oozing through eyeless sockets; priests of Christendom blessing the lethal weapons that tore out men's bellies, blew the faces off boys of fourteen; sent them to gibber in psychopathic wards; broke mothers' hearts, and damned to biological abnormality fatherless whelps of human infancy littered before their time; Sicilian Vespers, Saint Barthelomews, Bloody Marys, weltered shambles on Albigenian mountains, New England Witches, Covenanting cruelties, Puritan

infernalities—but no Rig Veda, Upanishads, or Buddha; no Christ: only the East, the despised uncivilized East, has these.

It has, also, the Suttee; but the suttee has at least the sanction of a religious ideal. What sanction has lynching, and white misses participating in the game and play of barbecued nigger? It has the purdah system; but it has not a tithe of the sodomy and incest and other unnatural sexual intercourse practised by Occidental men and women. The purdah and child marriage have at least the sanction of a revered moral custom; what sanction has the promiscuous and fugitive coitus which sends high school girls with easy nonchalance from the co-ed class room to the secret temple of parturition; or to the quack medicine man who with equal readiness will guarantee an abortion, or a cure for their venereally infected vagina? It has its caste system which is no less justifiable than the color line which provides Jim Crow cars, and easy alibis for Nordic pugilists; or which separates the local four hundred in any city from the mere *hoi polloi*.

Matters of opinion inevitably become matters of circumstance. Yesterday's theorizings, today's applied practice; and today's pleasant academic contentions, tomorrow's furious physical tensions.

Between Occidental Martha and Oriental Mary, time and space no longer intervene. Yesterday is yesterday, and today is here in which the West having rendered time and space feudatory, the two civilizations approach direct confrontation; and demonstration will soon be made—not which is the better or truer; but which, if either, will prevail.

The West proclaims its own offence, sweetness; or denies, or sustains it as an Occidental prerogative. But the East must first be debauched with Western liquor; infected with Western disease, and then—cleaned up. Mr. Roosevelt out of his great erudition and large experience of governing Oriental Races said so. Legions of other uniformable persons demand the East be—cleaned up. The authoress of, *Mother India*, out of her large knowledge of the immemorial East demands that India be—cleaned up. Crime, beastliness, cruelty, obscenity are to be the peculiar prerogative of the West; but the environment that produced and nourished the great religions must be abolished and Western atmosphere substituted. What will arise out of that?

The Orient is no fool. It has no lack of brain power; but in the past that great mentality has been absorbed in abstractions. It has been spent in producing Christs, Buddhas, Zoroasters and other spiritual leaders of the world. What will it produce when it is westernized?—some Asiatic Napoleon; some antipodal Attila who shall be a scourge among the smoking ruins of Western pride?

The East is becoming pragmatic and political. The bulwarks of subjectivism which protected its spirituality are disintegrating. The most sure and imposing sign of this are sporadic outbreaks of apparent religious revivals; and an apparent intensification of faith-jealousy. In this it is but paralleling the illustrious spectacle of Christendom whose facile declension from ideals is measurable by the amount of its remove from the still small voice to Boanerges. The still small voice is that tenuous echo from the Sermon on the Mount preached by an Oriental carpenter. Boanerges—well, you all do know Boanerges.

Failing and isolated voices in the Orient protest loud and shrill and earnestly against the decay and degradation of their faiths through admission into them of disintegrating heresies in the guise of broadening and vivifying movements; allegedly purposive of bringing them up to date and in line with modern conditions.

Here and there active Luthers emerge and strive to stay the weakening of the East's defence against Occidentalism: strive by reforming their faiths of intruding laxities, and bringing them back to an earlier purity—you fools! you dear Asiatic fools! can your Gotama, or the Book Quran teach you to weld and forge munitions of war equal to those of Christendom? Keep quiet! the Occident is forging that which you may presently paddle in Western blood as you did under the walls of Acre; as you did when man to man, breast to breast, courage to courage, thew to thew the Moslem rolled back the Paladins of Europe; chased the boasted chivalry of Frank and Hun in hacked confusion from the Mediterranean littoral to the lush plains of central France.

Invariably the zeal of these reformers brings them into collision with the material sovereignty carried aloft on Occidental bayonets; and in due season the zealots are suitably disposed of; either by the displayed might of the Western Power involved; or indirectly by their co-religionists suborned or coerced thereto by Western gold and Western tutelage.

The Senussi and Medani with their heads Sayed Ahmed and

Sheikh Omar Zaffar were scattered at Girba for impinging on British Western sovereignty; and today for one religious reformer in the East, there are ten million political rebels.

In the Nejd, Ibn Saud's political itch has been somewhat controlled by bribery which has been appraised at a figure much less than the cost of military coercion. In India the bribes so far offered Ghandi are insufficient in amount and unacceptable in quality. Turkey de-haremed, de-fezed, de-yashmaked, and altogether sartorially and calligraphically made over, is only implementing what several years ago a "Young Turk" member of the old C. U. P., expressed to the writer as their aim. Egypt too is only fulfilling carefully nourished aims often listened to a decade and a half since in ill-famed bazaars east of Suez. "Egypt," said the brilliant editor of a native paper, "Egypt did not care where the Califate was, or whether there was one at all; didn't care whether there was a Sultan in the Yildiz or a Khedive in the Kasr el Nil; but Egypt most emphatically did care that Egypt and the Sudan should be ruled by Egyptians."

The East is changing; it is being sanitized, Occidentalized, Politicalized; and those fulsome publicists who have made a life long study of the Oriental question—in their libraries; those authorities who have studied it on the spot—as shepherded tourists, or in a year or two of residence; and all other Christian people may do well to stop, look, listen.

The Orient is learning the Art of Warfare. The nations of the West are teaching it that by demonstrations of its principles on each other; and by exercise of them in operations of territorial aggrandizement against the Orient itself.

Reluctantly, but with augmented sophistication the Orient is accepting Occidental tutelage; for as yet it knows that the swords of Christendom are sharper than those tempered in the Tigris, Nile, Brahmaputra, or Yangtse Kiang; that Woolwich, Krupp, and Creuzot artillery are more effective than any cast in Kabul or Anatolia; and that the cadet of St. Cyr, Sandhurst or West Point can organize volume production of human slaughter in a manner superior to the despised Asiatic.

But what will be the picture when Occidental generals can no more be heroically victorious at long range with their accomplished artillery against the man to man steel effectiveness of Asian armies?

What will it be when the East is letter-perfect in Occidentalism? when it has gun for gun? when it fully recognizes the mighty pre-eminence of the doctrines of Christendom as inspiration for rapine, pillage and the sublimation of materiality? and denying the immanent sterilities of its own Asian Christs, Eastern brains and Eastern men, which History displays as at least equal those of the West, organize warfare instead of spirituality?

In that day when once again the pot seethes and the scum rises to be skimmed by agents of God appointed—in that day will the West hypocritical and cowardly, lay hold on the horns of the Altar and cry, "Sanctuary, Sanctuary!" let us lay down our weapons, and abolish this unchristianity that is warfare!"

Christianity! what do you know of Christianity, Martha? Did Peter give you any? he was an obstinate man; and denied with scathing the promise to sit at the right hand in the Kingdom, he has built himself a temple and sits as God in the Vatican. Did Paul give you any? Paul the renegade Jew lawyer was ambitious and casuistical; and so enthroned in metaphysics he sits on a joint stool with Georgius Rex; and calls himself the Lord Spiritual.

Christianity died with the Christ; and so far is Christendom away from it, that if the Founder returned today Christendom in all its maze of warring sects would join as one to crucify Him for blasphemous imposture.

From President to parasite; Queen to scullery-maid, is there one among you who would not suborn in some particular, Justice for pelf or its equivalent in office or fame? Is there a woman who would not barter her virginity for adequate equivalent in chiffons, a jewel or their like in material worth?

Out of your own mouth you are condemned, Martha, by your own saying that every man has his price. And you, the immaculate, the superior, the Occidental Martha, have it on your conscience to make over Oriental Mary!

Send then, your drummers with plumbing specialities; your lobbied legislators with their flouted enactments; your sectarian bagmen with their samples of religion; your debauched police; discredited bench and bar; your out of work naval and military officers broken in your Christian wars—send them until a vision be seen of the World enthroned on poison gas, and the Sermon on the Mount crowned with a water-closet.

In that day will the West assume the discarded garments of the

East? Will some munition monger's son arise in the marts of the West to proclaim himself the forerunner of another to come the latchet of whose shoes he is not worthy to unloose? Will a dove be seen descending upon some Plumber's son beside Occidental waters; who will lift up this reeling world from the sewer to the spirit? Can any good come out of the cannon's mouth and sanitation? Will there come out of Occidental inductiveness an Occidental Christ who will lead us to a new and Occidental God? Or, at some final confrontation of the West and the Westernized East, will the Human Race perish from the earth and creation enter on its eighth day?