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Modernity, Inter-Religious Conflict and Buddhism

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Buddhist paradigm for new world order, global peace and prosperity can be understood in better way by considering the status and role of Buddhism in the present scenario of modernity and inter-religious conflict. Modernity has now a days taken a shape of world civilization. It is a universal proposal of secular world view by delimiting the autonomy of reason. The project of modernity is to eliminate the divine aspect of life and world, and therefore, the genesis and growth of modernity is to be seen in sharp opposition or contrast with religion. Hence, the human life is to be controlled and regulated not by religion or religious faith rather by reason or rationality. Max Weber¹ has rightly pointed out that modernity is a civilizational process and it is a rupture of substantial reason from religious consciousness. The clash of modernity and religion or reason and faith leads us to a predicament expressing itself in the form of fundamentalism. Religious fundamentalism has twin outlets—that is, on the one hand, in the form of inter-religious conflict, and on the other it expresses itself in the mode of religious terrorism contesting with universal proclamation of modernity². We can categorize religion into two—namely protectionist and expansionist in orientation. Hinduism, Judaic and Avesta religion can be placed under protectionist religion which tries to preserve the religion of their own. Hence, protectionist religions do not participate in inter-religions conflict. They seem to be defensive in their protectionist spirit. The expansionist religions include Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. It is only expansionist religions, and at that Christianity and Islam actively participate in inter-religious conflict. There is a tendency to propagate one's own faith inherent in the nature of these religions. This underlying tendency of religions finds its elevation due to the limitless expansion of modernity.

Christianity divides the entire human race into Christian and anonymous Christian and this is based upon the conviction that the crusade of Jesus Christ was for the redemption of entire humanity. Hence, those who have shown their gratitude towards Christ and started living as per the path shown by Christ are Christians, while those persons, who are reluctant at present in expressing their gratitude will repent one day for ungratefulness by proclaiming even themselves to be Christians, are dubbed as a