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THE CRISIS OF THE HUMAN PERSON

SOME PERSONALIST INTERPRETATIONS

By the same author

A COMMON FAITH OR SYNTHESIS

TEN MODERN PROPHETS

LEADERS OF MODERN THOUGHT

J. B. COATES

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SOME PERSONALIST INTERPRETATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

ON PERSONALISM

PERSONALISM is the name given to a number of philosophies which correlate the conceptions of personality and value, which conceive of personality as a unique entity in every human being which has a movement towards value and is the source of our knowledge of value.

In the philosophy of Hermann Lotze, God is regarded as a "personal" being, so that there is an analogy between the mental life of man and the nature of God. The distinctive characteristic of a "person", according to Lotze, is the possession of a unity preserved in the multitude of its states, and also of a uniqueness and an aspiration towards beauty and meaning. Lotze anticipated the existentialists in his criticisms of Hegel, and in his conviction of the emptiness of abstract notions; he finds reality only in the concrete existence of the personality in its movement towards value.

The concept of personality finds a central place in Holist philosophy, according to which there is a hierarchy of being, organic life displaying a higher level of integration than inorganic nature, and personality representing the culmination of a series. Like Lotze, General Smuts finds in the personality of every human being a "unique creative novelty", while the highest levels of personality, those which display the greatest integration, intensity and meaningfulness, are the highest known measure of value.

Max Scheler has similarly presented a thesis in which personality is correlated with value; personality he conceives as a new mode of being, emerging in humanity at a certain stage of its development, which shows a capacity for independence, creativeness and the discovery of value. The American Personalist, Borden P. Bowne, author of *Personalism*, *Common-sense and Philosophy*, expresses the same tendency of thought in his emphasis on the creativeness of the person in the spheres of knowledge and value.

In this book I am concerned primarily with a contemporary development of Personalism which, while it carries on the tradition of such thinkers as Lotze and Scheler, has arisen primarily

as a response to the social situation created by the growth of Marxism and of Communism and, more generally, by the new political totalitarianisms with their attack on the rights of the person. While at first the new Personalism might seem to be a mere defensive reaction concerned with the protection of the liberties and rights of the person against the new powers of the state, the thinkers with whom I shall be mainly concerned have put forward a positive faith and a constructive social philosophy. In this connection cardinal importance attaches to the thought of Nicolas Berdyaev, the examination of which assumes a central position in the studies in this volume.

Berdyaev was the Professor of Philosophy at Moscow University at the time of the Russian Revolution. It was inevitable that he should come into conflict with the Soviet authorities. To the Marxists who were the new rulers of Russia truth was a reflection of material and social conditions and in particular of the needs of the proletariat in their effort to gain power and consolidate it. While the Communists derived their ideas from the study of the objective world and an examination of the economic development of societies, Berdyaev derived his from his conception of personality and value. He cared intensely for social justice, but believed that it was his own inner life that determined his social attitude, not the social structure that determined his beliefs. There was no escape for it but that Berdyaev should forfeit his post and leave Russia, for he was uncompromising in his convictions. He left it with the firm assurance that what he had done was right and that the results in action of the standpoint of the Soviet leaders would be in important respects disastrous. He believes that the development of Russia in the last thirty years has sufficiently confirmed his diagnosis. In exile Berdyaev has written a series of brilliant and challenging books in which he has criticised the thought of the Marxist revolutionary intelligentsia and laid down the principles on which alone, in his view, a good society can be built.

A similar pressure to that to which Berdyaev was subjected has created, in the last few decades, a school of Catholic Personalism, with Jacques Maritain as its intellectual leader. Maritain's Personalism is first of all a rejection of Caesarism, of the claims which have been recently made by political states to control

the life of the human spirit. Maritain's defence of the person is marked by those precise distinctions which are characteristic of Thomist philosophy. He points out that while man is in essence free and independent and has an absolute right to freedom in his aspiration towards God and the good, from one aspect of his being he is a part of a whole so that he is bound by reason to submit his individual claims to the wider good where the lesser good conflicts with the greater. The fact that a person must be free in his aspiration towards the highest does not give him a claim to drive past a warning traffic light, and this principle has very wide ramifications which are little realised, in particular by those who have been trained in the tradition of liberal individualism. Thus Maritain's Personalism does not prevent him from recognising that new limitations have to be imposed to-day on freedom, for example on the rights of private property, and that an economic revolution is needed that will inevitably give new powers to the state. Similarly, Maritain holds that traditional individualism, or the tendency of persons to look upon themselves as isolated individuals without recognising those respects in which they are part of a social whole, is one of the worst evils of our time. Just as the Catholic personalists have defined more precisely, I think, than any other body of thinkers the necessary limitations of the freedom of individuals, so, by basing the freedom and rights of the person on a divine principle in him which has the right to obey its natural movement towards God and the good, they have been able to elaborate the doctrine of human rights more soundly and comprehensively than any other school. Thus Catholic Personalism may yet prove to be one of the strongest bulwarks of freedom in a world in which essential liberties are perhaps in graver danger than they have been since the age of the Inquisition.

Maritain's Personalism includes also a statement of the principles of a personalist social philosophy,[1] similar in character to the views of Mounier and Mumford that we shall later consider.

A fundamental aspect of the thought of both Berdyaev and Maritain is the distinction they make between the person and the individual, however differently they may express it. Berdyaev's distinction is based on the acceptance of a dualism in man between

[1] The social and political aspects of Maritain's Personalism are expounded in *True Humanism*.

spirit and nature. Spirit, which Berdyaev describes as a free creative, loving and integrating activity present in all men, if largely potential in many cases, has the right to complete freedom, and is the basis of the human person, but spirit inevitably finds itself in conflict with nature, with that aspect of man's being which is determined by physical and mental laws, which is subject to material necessity and social control as well as being dominated by the instincts. The spirit continually aspires to freedom but is in constant strife with those elements in man which tend to subject him to natural and social determination. Thus because man belongs to the sphere of nature as well as of spirit, while he has an aspiration towards freedom, he has also a disposition towards slavery. In particular he is often controlled by his instincts so that he feels himself free when most in chains. The individuality which a man builds for himself, partly out of his reaction to material and social influences and partly from his unconscious submission to his instinctive urges, tends to be an expression of egotism, for the instincts express in man the body-mind urges of the individual organism while man's reaction to environmental pressure is in the main a measure of self-protection. Man as an individual then cannot claim the freedom which he can claim for his *personal* life, which is the life of the spirit. Maritain's distinction between the person and the individual follows Thomist lines. It is based, first of all, on a recognition that because man has a need of his fellows to perfect his specific activity, he is on that account an individual part of a city or community, so that a submission of his own to the larger good, where the two conflict, is called for by reason. Also as a man, while possessing the faculty of reason, is often moved by appetite and irrational desire, he will frequently fail to recognise his natural and inevitable subordination to the community and must therefore be brought, sometimes by coercion, under the rule of law. But man is also a person, and as a person he is bound to follow the primary law of his being which is his movement towards God,[1] who is his ultimate end and the good of the entire universe. From this aspect of man's being, it is the city which must serve the human person. For in so far as man seeks God as through love or

[1] A humanist expressing an analogous conception would speak of a formative principle in man which has the right of freedom in its movement towards value.

through the quest for knowledge, he must not place any end whatever higher than his duty to God so that where the claims of the city are opposed to those of God he must resist its demands.

Berdyaev has been greatly influenced by the existential thinking of Kierkegaard, who himself reacted vigorously against Hegel. Hegel's philosophy was in essence authoritarian. To Hegel everything in the universe had significance only in its relation to the universal idea, the idea in God's mind. Thus each one of our thoughts had meaning only because it was bound to our personality, and our personality had significance only because of its relation to history, and every stage of history had significance only in relation to the movement, taking place by a dialectical process, of the universal idea. To Hegel everything that has existed, that exists, or that can exist, is an integral part of a vast system, the system of the Absolute or the Universal Idea, and the freedom of each individual was only his realisation of necessity, his recognition of himself as a part of the Absolute. To Kierkegaard the Hegelian system seemed to destroy freedom, to destroy the individual, who became a cog in a wheel. There was nothing surprising to Kierkegaard in Hegel's advocacy of the submission of the individual to the state. He believed that Hegel showed a quite inadequate recognition of the uniqueness and independence of the human person, his capacity for direct contact with and direct knowledge of God. Berdyaev follows Kierkegaard in his emphasis on the concreteness of individual experience as against the formal and conceptual system.

But while the thought of Berdyaev is thus in part a continuation of the existentialist tradition of Kierkegaard and his successors, with their reaction against the abstract character of the System, it is also a reaction against a later mode of thought which has tended to dominate the modern age, and is expressed in such terms as materialism, scientism and Marxism.

While Berdyaev finds reality in the free life of the person, the materialist holds that nothing exists but matter obeying mechanical or dialectical laws, whose nature must be discovered, not by intuition or direct apprehension, but by scientific investigation. To the materialist a person is only a physical entity, obeying the laws of matter, however much the particular form of the laws that determine his being may differ from those of inorganic matter The

materialist denies the existence of any such category as "spirit"; what is called "spirit" he holds to be either a merely mythical entity or a vague name for certain modes of human behaviour. The materialist is almost always an apostle of "scientism"; he believes, that is to say, that scientific method is the only valid and reliable form of thinking, it being merely superstitious to believe in what cannot be scientifically proved. The Marxist almost always accepts both materialism and scientism; at the same time he embraces a special doctrine known as historical materialism, according to which philosophical and ethical ideas are merely changing modes of reaction to the economic environment. The Marxist denies the existence of any binding or objectively true values such as Berdyaev draws from the inner consciousness; indeed the idea of true or false, as applied to ethical ideas, has little meaning to the Marxist. To him ethical ideas are merely facts, particular human reactions to particular conditions which will change as the conditions change.

Personalist philosophers are far from denying that the materialists, and Karl Marx in particular, have made valuable contributions to thought. But they regard these as being associated with certain limitations, and certain fallacies, which modern history is proving to have dangerous consequences. In particular the materialists, by assimilating spirit to matter, tend to fail to distinguish between the levels of man's being, and to neglect the distinction between the life of freedom in which man directs the whole of his being towards meaning and value, and the life of nature in which man is determined by natural and social necessity or the pressure of the instincts. The apostle of scientism, again, tends to sacrifice the whole of man's being to a part of it which should be instrumental to the whole. For what is called scientific thinking is only one mode of expression of the human intellect, and the intellect is only one aspect of man's life. What Berdyaev calls the spirit is the integrating faculty which directs potentially every part of man's being, not only his intellect, but his senses, his emotions, and his intuition, or his direct apprehension of reality. To make the spirit subordinate to the intellect instead of the intellect to the spirit seems to Berdyaev a disastrous reversal of the true order of thinking; it is making philosophy subordinate to science instead of science to philosophy. It is not surprising, in the

view of the personalists, that certain pernicious social and political tendencies have accompanied this over-estimation of science, in particular a tendency to regiment the human person, to regard him as a mere means to an end. An equally grave consequence has been a failure to recognise the value of certain forms of intuitive insight.

As against Marxism, personalism places the human person rather than the material environment in the centre of the philosophical picture. It points to and defines those faculties and potentialities in man which differentiate him both from inorganic matter and from mere organisms, in particular his capacity for freedom, for self-integration and self-transcendence. The truths of man's moral being, in this view, are discovered, not in the scientific laboratory, but by reflection or direct apprehension, or by revelation, for the wisdom drawn from man's inner life can be communicated to the masses of men by the prophet and seer. This wisdom, in the view of the personalist, is what man must live by; without it he cannot escape the moral decline which seems everywhere manifest in the modern world.

The philosophical roots of modern Personalism are to be found in Lotze, Scheler, Berdyaev, Maritain, and in the existentialists, notably in Kierkegaard, Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel. It is Emmanuel Mounier, however, who is the founder and inspirer of Personalism regarded as a movement. Starting from 1932 he has built the monthly journal, *Esprit*, into one of the most substantial and important journals of the modern world, while around the journal have collected the *Esprit* groups, increasingly European in their distribution. He has not only been throughout the editor of the journal and the prime organizer of the movement, but he has maintained a reputation so far unchallenged as the theoretician of Personalism. Some brief account of his standpoint and of its development seems indispensable for an understanding of the growth of contemporary Personalism.

The thought of Mounier is based, first of all, on a rejection of certain elements of the Marxian analysis. As against any purely economic interpretation of history, Mounier declares that civilisation is a metaphysical response to a metaphysical call, an adventure in the eternal order of things, man's response being

related to a conception of human transcendence and human destiny and not merely to contemporary political demands. While certain demands made of man do, as the Marxists point out, arise out of the economic set up of his time, there are also permanent values, permanent vocations of man. Marx wrote as if all ethical conceptions were ideologies or reflections of particular economic interests, yet many of the values that are most vital to human well being are a response to needs and situations which vary very little from society to society and century to century so that much of the ethics taught by Confucius, by the Buddha, by Socrates is valid to-day.

At the basis of Marxism is a fundamental denial of the spirit as autonomous, creative reality. Not only does Marxism deny Christianity and God, it gives no place to the person as the form of spiritual existence, or to its primary values, freedom and love. While Marx and Engels recognised indeed that ideas play a part in history, the ideas themselves, in their view, are the product of an economic determinism; of any other life of the spirit but the reaction of man to a particular economic situation there is not even a question. Marxism is indeed never entirely consistent, and Marx and Engels do in fact affirm a metaphysical faith, but it is a faith in the physico-mathematical interpretation of reality, so that it is in its belief in Cartesian rationalism that Marxism becomes a religion, a faith summed up in Bebel's "Socialism is science applied to all the domains of human activity". But, says Mounier, the growth of biological science and of the personalist and existentialist philosophies has dethroned Cartesianism, whose natural social fruit is an inhuman, centralised form of industry, and a form of planning which fails to take into account the nature of personalaty. Cartesianism and Marxism promote a concentration on the aim of controlling the forces of nature, but an improvement in material conditions does not necessarily liberate man; it may rather lead to the spread of the execrable *petit-bourgeois* spirit with its philistine worship of comfort and the machine. Mounier does not deny the value of a material revolution, but holds that it cannot be fruitful if it does not have a spiritual basis by positing other values than those of comfort and power. If man is not educated to free and responsible action instead of dissolving his human energies in a collective conscious-

ness, the entire social apparatus which he will create will only be a good tool in the hands of a bad workman whose effect will contribute to human degradation.

The Marxist optimism about the future of collective man, says Mounier, is based on a radical pessimism with regard to the human person. Man is assumed to be a helpless victim of the mystification of "liberal ideologies" so that he can only be transformed through the pressure of a state organised in the interest of the masses. But in this connection Marxism fails to distinguish between a social unity created by regimentation and the basic collaboration of free persons. "Personalism", says Mounier, "is the exact antithesis of this spiritual imperialism of the collective man." Men cannot be transformed by making them walk shoulder to shoulder. Mounier vehemently rejects the view that right human values can spring out of the experience of the masses.

Mounier himself puts forward a view of the human person that has manifest debts to existential philosophy. He describes the person as an entity characterised by a certain independence and a capacity for re-creation of itself by adhesion to a hierarchy of values which it has freely adopted, assimilated and lived by its own responsible activity and by a constant interior development. The distinguishing characteristic of the person is a capacity for unifying itself in liberty; the distinguishing value of personality is the maximum of initiative, of responsibility, of spiritual life. Personalism affirms the absolute value of the being who is possessed of such potentialities; it affirms also that because of its uniqueness, independence and creativeness the human person cannot rightly be regarded merely as part of a whole, as a mere unit in the collective; nevertheless the true life of the person does not consist in isolation and escape but rather in action and engagement, including engagement in the social and political sphere.

"The error of the mathematicians", Engels said, "was to believe that one individual could achieve by himself what can be achieved only by the whole of mankind in its constant development." Mounier retorts that the error of Marxism is to believe that the state can undertake what alone each person can and must undertake in his personal development.

Mounier follows the existentialists in holding that human destiny is marked by anguish, by an inescapable element of tragedy,

and that the full realisation of the potentialities of the person depends upon a capacity for embracing sacrifice, risk, insecurity and pain, but he rejects those excesses of certain existentialists who represent life as the plunge of the hopeless into nothingness; if life is anguish, it is also "radiance and superabundance, hope and love."

To affirm the person, he adds, is also an affirmation of mystery. There is a dimension of the person which transcends all that we can learn through logic and rationality; only he can become fully a person who can draw on undecipherable depths within himself, on an inner creative source of activity and of reflection.

In spite of his criticisms of Marxism many aspects of Mounier's thought are in the Marxist tradition. The criticisms which Marx made of religion in general Mounier directs against the "idealist" form of Christianity, which in his view has tended to prevail throughout the modern period, in which Christianity has ceased to concern itself with the ordering of social life. The business of philosophy, he holds with the Marxist, is to change life, which means also to transform the life of society, and he holds that the novelty of modern personalism, in so far as it is novel, is less in the principles that it affirms than in its endeavour to impinge on the historical situation in the light of the principles. Mounier joins with the Marxists also in his emphatic rejection of capitalism, which he condemns on the following principal grounds (1) that it tends to ignore the person and to organise society for a single quantitative and impersonal goal, profit; (2) that capitalist profit is parasitic in a twofold manner, firstly as being parasitic on gold, and secondly as being parasitic on labour; (3) that capitalism not only expropriates from the worker the legitimate product of his labour but also deprives him of the mastery of his own activity so that he cannot use his labour for the development of his potentialities as a person; (4) that capitalism, by denying the rights and dignity of the worker, has forced the proletariat to unite into a mass for opposition and power and to consolidate its class will; (5) that, finally, in the later stages of its development, capitalism has dispossessed even the free entrepreneur himself in favour of the power and profit of centralised trusts.

But, Mounier remarks, the last state of man will be perhaps even worse than the first if capitalism is replaced by the depersonalised collective structure, by " a society without a coun-

tenance, made up of men of no mien, a world of individuals without character, a world of general ideas, of vague opinions, of objective knowledge", a world of formulas derived from the masses, those amorphous agglomerates, a purposeless world, a world marked by a medley of anarchy and tyranny. A personalist society must be built on a recognition of the freedom, uniqueness, autonomy and responsibility of persons. Its ideal realisation would be a community in which the communion of all in the totality would be the living outcome of the free, responsible activity of each person, an activity based on the recognition that personality can only develop rightly through human relationships and love. The "we" of human community must not, in short, dispense with the "I"; the life of society must be built on the free life of the person.

Mounier's *Personalist Manifesto*, published in 1936, examines in some detail the conception of a personalist social structure. It would have, first of all, the negative aim of guaranteeing human rights, of preventing the state and other social institutions from encroaching on the distinctively personal domain of man's life. Positively, it would seek so to organise the machinery of society as to develop at every level the maximum of initiative, of responsibility and of decentralisation. Decentralisation in the cultural sphere would mean the right of religious bodies (including agnostics) to run their own schools, while, in general, the autonomy of cultural groups would be respected. The integrity of the family would be respected, for the family "as a natural community" is superior by its nature to the state which is only a juridical organisation, though Mounier adds that the state has a right to control the family with respect to those matters in which the family can rightly be regarded as a part of the social whole. The economic order should be as far as possible decentralised. Mounier says on this issue: "Even if it became evident that certain public services must be nationalised, this can never be anything but a concession on the part of personalism. In a collectivist economy, nationalisation is the essential goal, and any concession to a mixed economy a provisional and temporary departure. A personalist economy is an economy decentralised down to the person; the person is its principle and model. It tends everywhere to free all collective persons possessing initiative, relative autonomy and responsibility." Liberalism in the name of liberty tends

to destroy liberty and initiative by surrendering them to capitalist oppression; collectivism tends to protect society from the domination of particular interests but to bind liberty hand and foot to the dictatorship of a party or a group of functionaries. Personalism seeks to preserve both collectivisation and liberty by an autonomous and pliable economy in which the larger industries become largely self-governing institutions working under terms of reference agreed on by the community.

The thought of Mounier and his group underwent certain modifications during the crisis of the nineteen-thirties and the war years, and these are examined by Mounier in his *Qu'est ce que le Personnalisme?* published in 1946. In general the new analysis brings the Group nearer to Marxism, its earlier standpoint being criticised on three main grounds: (1) there had been a tendency to utopianism, to legislating for a future that had little relation to current political realities; this applied in particular to Mounier's speculations on the nature of a Personalist social structure. His analysis had a flavour of unreality in face of the political struggles of the Hitler period in which the need of resisting Fascism assumed a dominating importance; (2) Mounier's early work, in its reaction against Marxist ethical relativism, had been obsessed with the idea of purity of means, and had almost suggested that it would be better that there should be no social revolution than that it should be brought about by certain means. The later book remarks that effectiveness of action is also a spiritual value so that the earlier obsession with purity should perhaps be regarded, with respect of the development of the movement, as an "infantile fixation"; (3) the rejection of utopianism involved a new effort to "engage" in the contemporary political struggle. Thus *Esprit* increasingly adopted, in the nineteen-thirties, a precise political line on the great issues of French politics, the Popular Front, the Spanish War, Munich and the rest. Mounier remarks that the Group has never regretted its political decisions.

During the War *Esprit* emigrated to the south where, after some months, it was suppressed by Pétain. Mounier was sent to prison, while many of his collaborators were deported, some never to return. The *Esprit* groups joined the Resistance movement. When the Liberation came, *Esprit* was the first of the great

French journals to reappear; the reputation of the group was high and the circulation of the journal quadrupled. But the tendency of French Personalism to move closer to Marxism and to soft-pedal its original criticisms of Marxism had become more marked.

In a chapter in *Qu'est ce que le Personnalisme?* on the Ambiguities of Personalism, Mounier has attempted to give greater precision to the aims of Personalism. He first remarks that Personalism is the complete antithesis of individualism, for the life of the person must be regarded not as folded over on itself, but as movement towards and with others, and as movement towards and over the material world and the life of society. The name "personalist" is sometimes assumed by persons and groups who, perhaps under the banner of the Life of the Spirit, seek only to build for themselves some ideal of perfection, some haven, some little temple, in which they shelter themselves, as a refined or esoteric cult, from the disturbing problems of social and political life. Other so-called personalists are plainly motivated primarily by fear of the new collectivisms, by resentment against the restrictions imposed on them by what they regard as a new tyranny. It would indeed, says Mounier, be blindness not to show some anguish at the contemplation of a totalitarian society. But the fear that is felt is often based on illusory views and anachronistic hopes, on a failure to recognise that the new collectivist community is the necessary means to a widespread emancipation, and on a consequent devotion, to a sterile opposition to a great historical tendency, of energies which should be brought to the edification and personalisation of the new collectivisms instead of to an exaggeration of the deviations to which they are liable.

Individualism of the above type often disguises itself as philosophical anarchism; it is especially common among groups of artists who foregather in "morose chapels" or "comfortable hermitages". Their policies and manifestoes are compounded of bitterness, evasions and futilities.

Closely allied to such individualism is the "idealism" which builds an idea of perfection out of general concepts which have no relation to efficacious action in the objective and social world. This "idealism" often assumes a "Christian" or at all events a "religious" guise. Its advocates regard themselves as defenders of personal values in a disintegrating world. They are particularly

apt to use the language of catastrophe; they speak of their sacred function of building a microcosm of the world pattern which they believe it will be possible to create after the collapse of our civilisation. They judge the political movements of our time as from a superior moral station; they find no difficulty in justifying their abstention from action, their failure of decision in political struggles of great moment. Mounier describes as "black idealists", as "stakhanovites of anathema", some of the most conspicuous literary representatives of this school. They seem to him to conceal a form of psychological infantilism under their pretentious and moralistic phraseology.

The finest tradition of existentialism seems to Mounier to be virtually identical with personalism; it replaces the generalised man of the moralist and logician and the objectified man of the technicians by a man historically situated yet with a unique interior life, a man who cannot be summed up in concepts but must be seized existentially as a being incessantly recreating himself by "meeting", decision and "engagement". But existentialism has its deviations with which personalism must dissociate itself. In Kierkegaard existentialism shows a disposition, traceable in part perhaps to the influence of romanticism, to a systematic discredit of the objective world. Kierkegaard asserts, as for example in *The Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, that because one can never attain more than an approximate knowledge of the "world-historical sphere", any attempt to grapple with it is doomed to futility so that one's whole attention should be given to the life of subjectivity. Kierkegaard has never realised that to assure human balance and equilibrium, life in relation to the objective world must be accepted as complementary to subjective experience. To Kierkegaard the world was *de trop*. Thus the influence of Kierkegaard has been in the direction of political abstention and political indifferentism; the world of society is given over to the devil and his works.

If Christian existentialism, in some of its manifestations, is marked by "idealism" and solipsism, illustrated in Kierkegaard's dictum that "subjectivity is truth", the atheistic existentialism of Heidegger and Sartre is characterised by a metaphysical pessimism which seems to wish to deprive men of hope, joy and love, which develops the Kierkegaardian anguish into a complete gratuitous pessimism. Kierkegaard had turned away from the objective world

and found authentic being only in inwardness; in Sartre the thought of his inescapable "engluement" in the objective world fills him with nausea. Kierkegaard had spoken of the impossibility of genuine "existential" communication, of the tragical solitariness of man; Sartre not only denies the possibility of communion, but regards love as a slavery so that "hell is the others".[1] Sartre claims to teach a philosophy of responsibility and engagement while putting forth a metaphysic calculated to deprive man of all hope. Heidegger found in man the anguish of a being born solitary and defenceless for no apparent purpose and suspended over an abyss of Nothing to which he must soon return. To Sartre, similarly, man is *de trop*; he is in full sail in spite of himself on a fool's journey. Not only is he engaged in constant war to prevent himself from being enslaved by other people and the external world, but in turn he is tormented by the burden of his emptiness and loneliness. Also while his freedom is his most precious possession, it is at the same time one of the deepest sources of his anguish. For he is compelled to accept responsibility for his actions in a situation in which everything he does affects the whole world so that he must take responsibility for the whole world. Nor can he expect any help in this tragic position. To throw the burden of his decision on others is also a decision, though the decision of a "salaud"; to hold that one can be relieved of one's responsibility by God or by reference to "eternal" values is to show "bad faith". The Sartrian pessimism, however much it may embody certain ethical truths and express, while exaggerating them, certain "existential" realities, seemed to Mounier to be a distortion of the true existentialist tradition as one finds it in Jaspers, Berdyaev, Buber and Gabriel Marcel.[2]

In his summing up of Personalism, Mounier remarks that it is an error to regard it as a system; it is a perspective, a method, a demand. He stresses the essential fluidity and openness of the personalist approach. Personalism is a search, an adventure, an engagement with a continually changing and developing historical reality. It is based indeed on a certain precise body of values; it accepts man as an entity possessing a capacity for independence and self-integration, whose destiny is to transcend himself through

[1] This is the central conception of Sartre's play *Huit Clos*.

[2] Unfortunately, Sartre, and not Kierkegaard or Jaspers or Berdyaev or Marcel, has come to be regarded in this country as the chief exponent of existentialism.

the use of inner energies, through meeting with others, and through engagement with the objective world. It endeavours to seize human destiny in all its dimensions, "material, interior, transcendent"; it recognises the full amplitude and potentiality of personality, while holding that its true movement is towards the good of the whole of humanity. This inner spiritual force inspired by the love of all men has the task of continually estimating, with the greatest possible degree of objectivity, the contemporary historical situation and of impinging on it as effectively as possible.

But so broad a conception does not tend to express itself in any precise or fixed system, nor does it afford any guarantee that personalists will reach identical solutions on current problems, nor does it provide any protection against tactical errors. But the approach is no less fruitful, even if it cannot always lead to agreed remedies, because of the nature of the energies which it brings into play. Personalism, it should be made clear, is not merely a political philosophy; it is an attempt to view the human problem in its entirety; as such it cannot be judged by its success in the political sphere only.

Mounier's judgments on particular issues have been far from always commanding assent in personalist circles. In the early part of 1948, indeed, the London Personalist Group found itself at marked variance with a recent analysis by Mounier of the contemporary political scene. The London Group interpreted the system of the East under Russian control in terms of a closed system ruled by a secret police and a bureaucratic oligarchy using propaganda and psychological techniques to make a people in chains imagine they are free, and looked for hope for the future to co-operation between America, the British Commonwealth and Western Europe. Mounier, on the other hand, while recognising the evils of Stalinism, felt that the East, having achieved what the Mounier Group calls "the necessary revolution",[1] would move

[1] Maritain in his *True Humanism* argues that a personalist social structure will only become possible after the supersession of capitalism. Similarly, the Mounier group holds that the next step in human progress depends upon 'the necessary revolution', involving the collapse of bourgeois society. The phrase 'the necessary revolution', however, begs the question whether or not the far-reaching changes needed can or cannot be brought about by peaceful and evolutionary means. Berdyaev (see p. 50) argues that revolutionary violence is the price mankind has to pay for a failure to accomplish necessary changes by peaceful and orderly methods. As a method it is a *pis aller*, and its results are always tragically disappointing.

towards freedom, while America, whose influence was bound to dominate the West, had still to face her gravest internal crisis and would tend to become increasingly drawn to a policy of economic imperialism, fascism and war. The difference in view is a sufficiently grave one which illustrates Mounier's contention that Personalism provides no guarantee against important divergencies, especially on issues of political strategy. Nevertheless, in its broad lines, Mounier's exposition of Personalism occupies a position of great authority. This is perhaps because Mounier is less an independent than a representative thinker. His mind is fluid, adaptable and comprehensive; he interprets trends with masterly skill; he has held the *Esprit* group together over a period of sixteen years with a talent that amounts to genius. The commanding position which he holds in the Personalist world has been fully earned. The challenge recently issued to him by the London Group in no way bore on his general interpretation of Personalism but only on his analysis of a particular contemporary situation.

The story of the war-time development of Personalism is not without its colourful pages. *Esprit* groups were closely linked with the Resistance movement not only in France but also in such countries as Poland and Jugoslavia. The development of Dutch Personalism has been of especial interest and significance. While there were a few Dutch Personalists in intellectual centres before the war, the recent movement was born in a prison in the province of Brabant where some hundreds of Dutchmen, interned by the Germans, and belonging to various religious and political groups, formed the habit of discussing the great themes of the day. Conditions of privation and persecution have a powerful influence in removing intellectual barriers, in making possible a mental adjustment bringing age-old antagonists together. Catholics, orthodox and liberal Protestants, humanists and social democrats worked together on common problems and conceived the idea of drawing up a programme. In the middle of the discussions they were introduced to French Personalism. Copies of *Esprit* (passed by the German censorship which did not understand what the journal was about) found their way into the camp, and the prisoners became acquainted with the ideas of Berdyaev, Maritain and Mounier. Personalism seemed to provide precisely the synthesis of religious and political conceptions for which they had been searching. They formed the ambitious plan of attempting to

regenerate their country with the ideas of Personalistic Socialism. When they left the camp at the conclusion of hostilities, they found a ready ear in Holland for their propaganda. Analagous ideas had fermented in other prisons and camps; practically all the elements in the resistance movements were ready to listen, to discuss, to accept. A discussion of personalism became general in all the main periodicals, and a personalist journal, *Je Maintiendrai*, was published. From this has sprung what is known as the Dutch Popular Movement, founded on the 26th May, 1945. It is based essentially on what is called Personalistic Socialism, which has been defined in terms of three aims: (1) to save the European idea of man as a free, creative person; (2) to accomplish a necessary social and economic reconstruction so that the economic life of communities can be managed for the common benefit; (3) to release new spiritual energies.

The Dutch Popular Movement, like, at an earlier stage, the French *Esprit* groups, decided not to set up an electoral organisation but to act primarily as a body for education and permeation of opinion. Nevertheless it works in the political sphere for clearly defined objects, and its influence played a dominant part in the formation, on 9th February, 1946, of a new Labour Party in which were welded the old Social Democratic party, a new Democratic party, a Protestant Christian Party and considerable independent Roman Catholic elements. Thus the Dutch Popular Movement works for co-operation between Christian and humanist and Socialist elements for re-building the social order on certain spiritual foundations. It is noteworthy that in the new Dutch government elected in 1946 several members of the Dutch Personalist organisation occupy ministerial posts.

A recent Dutch correspondent writing in *Esprit* expresses his disappointment that Dutch Personalism has failed. This seems a remarkable statement in view of the rapid progress and considerable achievement of the Dutch Personalists. A careful reading of his letter provides a solution of the enigma; he was one of the Group who had cherished the hope of the regeneration of his country with the ideas of Personalistic Socialism. He now finds the Dutch party which gives expression, more or less effectively, to personalistic ideas, largely powerless through its minority position in the Dutch Parliament.

There is little doubt that the remarkable growth throughout

Europe after the war of Christian political parties, many of them Socialist in their economic policy, has been largely influenced by the development of Personalist thought.

In Britain the term "Personalist" has not been applied to organs of opinion and organisations till the publication of the series of Transformation books, edited by S. Schimanski and H. Treece, beginning in 1943, and the formation by myself in September 1945 of the Personalist Group and by Oscar Köllerström in 1946 of the Personalist Psychology Circle. But that is not to say that Personalist conceptions have not played an influential part in the development of British thought. To show their presence and influence was the main purpose of my book, *Ten Modern Prophets*, published in 1944. Four main movements of a personalist character have been observable. First of all there has been the tendency, summed up in Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxley, to a revival of mysticism, largely Eastern in inspiration; politically it has been pacifist and defeatist, and altogether has lacked the sanity and balance of the French personalist school. Secondly, there has been a renascence, under the influence of John Macmurray, of what he has called, "essential Christianity", which led to the formation of such bodies as the New Europe group and the Christian Left and exercised considerable influence at one stage on the Common Wealth Party. Thirdly, there has been the school of John Middleton Murry, editor of the *Adelphi*, expressing itself mainly in attempts to form communities to teach Socialism more as a way of life than as a political theory.[1] Fourthly, there have been the groups of "open conspirators", drawing their inspiration mainly from H. G. Wells but also from such men as Julian Huxley and Olaf Stapledon, who accepted the need in some sense for a religious revival, but believed that it must be humanist in character and must aim primarily at building a unified world with a universal system of education designed to achieve a new human adaptation. The end of the war, however, the relief of which has given place to a marked fear, brilliantly expressed in Koestler's *Yogi and the Commissar*, of totalitarian social organisation, has seen, not only the series of Transformation books, but a number of new journals of Personalist inspiration, such as *Vistas*, *Voices and Values*. 1946 has seen the first meeting between British and Continental Personalists at the International Congress Esprit. Perhaps before long

[1] See especially J. M. Murry's *The Necessity of Pacifism*, Chap. V.

European Personalism will be able to speak a clear message with one voice on the grave disorders of Europe and of the modern world.

What shall we say in conclusion of the objectives of the new Personalism which may well occupy the kind of position in the thought of the future that Marxism has occupied in the past? To deal first with negative considerations, it is highly important that certain dangers should be guarded against. Personalism should not be, as Mounier has shown, a new individualism, more or less disguised under specious rationalisations, based primarily on a new fear of the state, a new assertion of the desire of individuals for freedom from restraint. Neither should it be a new defeatism, such as we actually find in Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard and Arthur Koestler, a new despair of social organisation, a new intellectual retreat into private universes. Panic and loss of faith make a poor basis for any movement. Personalism should be, primarily, an interpretation of history based on a more valid standpoint than Marxism; it might indeed be better to describe it modestly as an attempt to add a rider to Marxism based on a truer understanding of man. Such a description would show a recognition of the value of the Marxist contribution, would show an understanding of the need to build on the foundations which Marx has laid. Three elements of the Marxist analysis should form part of any Personalism which can lay claim to realism or an understanding of the movement of history. First of all, Marx recognised that the achievements of science, and in particular the change science had made and was increasingly making in industrial production, were opening to man a new kind of freedom, of escape from economic necessity. But he recognised that this freedom, in the era of capitalist production, was largely the privilege of the bourgeois class which was the indispensable instrument of the new techniques of production. Marx saw then the necessity of a new phase in history in which power would be taken from the bourgeoisie and vested in authorities which represented the interests of the masses of the workers and sought to emancipate the whole of mankind. Any interpretation of history which does not recognise the historical necessity of gaining control from the centre of the economic basis of man's life, so that the new instruments of production can be exploited for the general benefit, shows a failure to grasp the significance of Marx's thought and to

understand the reason for his great influence, as well as a lack of that sense of history which it is Marx's achievement to have brought to sociological thought.

Secondly, personalists need to beware lest their emphasis on the freedom and independence of the personality leads them to forget the large element of truth in the Marxist view that man's thought is historically and socially conditioned. Marx's contention that social classes think by and large in terms of their economic interest is justified. Berdyaev recognises that freedom, independence and personality are, in the case of the majority of men, largely unrealised potentialities, and admits that economic exploitation and subjugation to economic necessity are among the main causes of human slavery. To talk in terms of the freedom of the human person, therefore, without recognising the need for effective social control of that material environment whose conditioning influence is so powerful, is to show that one is thinking of freedom merely in terms of the privileged.

Thirdly, personalists must recognise the fundamental importance, in the ethical and personal sphere, of the Marxist principle of the unity of theory and practice, of thought and action. If one grants that one of the prime tasks of the modern period is the control of the economic and social basis of life, then concrete standards of behaviour must be discovered, in part at least, in the process of carrying out the task. A person formulating ethical norms while standing outside the effort to rebuild the social structure will tend to fall into serious error through a failure to understand the social necessities which demand new moral standards and, perhaps, new laws. Mounier points out that while personalists accept in some sense an ethical absolute, it is not a fixed absolute; a belief in it is consistent with a recognition of the importance of adapting ethical norms to changing needs. These new needs will only be discovered in the practical work of living, and in the new world which is being created in which the form of production is social, through the task of building with others the new basis of social life. There is little doubt, for example, that some of the restrictions on freedom under the Soviet system which have been profoundly disturbing to Western liberals have arisen through the strains and exigencies to which Russia has found herself subjected in building her Socialist economy. A personalist who recognises, with Maritain, that from one aspect of

his being man is a part of a social whole with a duty to subordinate his wishes to the needs of the whole, will not be troubled about certain forms of interference with freedom which may seem alarming to the liberal and individualist.

A personalist who recognises these three important considerations will be in a position to add those riders to the Marxist view of history which are needed, and will therefore be able to indicate the strategy of action which is called for by the present situation. The cardinal error of Marxism arises from a particular element in its mode of thinking. It approaches the whole world of nature and of society from the standpoint of science; while it believes that the laws governing nature and society are dialectical, not mechanical, it yet studies nature and society objectively, after the manner of the scientist, to discover how they can be controlled. But man differs from nature in that he is the observer as well as the observed. Man cannot observe himself merely objectively, for in all attempts at such observation he is the creative subject as well as the object. All psychological investigation which studies man as if he were merely one of the phenomena of nature is bound to leave out a fundamental element of man's nature. Man in fact can be known truly only by a different method of enquiry from that of natural science. The information provided by scientific investigation must be seen in the light of a knowledge which man has of himself through direct apprehension, through the fact that he himself is the observer of the self that he observes, that he knows himself because he lives his own life, and experiences his own thoughts, feelings and purposes. The significance of this is that man has the capacity for a direct insight into himself, his nature and needs, his purposes and potentialities, which cannot be obtained by the method of objective study which is characteristic of science. Also this knowledge is of special importance in the field of the true ends of being, the true nature of man and of values; thus it is this knowledge gained by intuitive insight which must interpenetrate the planning of the social basis of life if the power which science is giving to man is to be rightly used.

It is, indeed, plainly not true that everyone is endowed with a direct apprehension of true values. Most men are hindered from true vision by their passions and desires, for men are notorious rationalisers. Many of the philosophies which have gained the widest currency can now be recognised as the projection of

dominant impulses of their progenitors. Distrust of the unfamiliar, or fear of independence, coupled with lack of insight and imagination, causes perhaps the majority of human beings to accept the customary morality of their class or race, even when this is repugnant to reason. A true knowledge of man's nature, then, is "revealed" to man by persons of special understanding and insight who have the capacity to overcome their passions and transcend conventional standards. This knowledge is as valid, as objectively true, as any knowledge of physical science, its test lying in action, in the capacity that it shows to integrate man's being and to create harmony, grace and fellowship in his social relationships. From this "revealed" knowledge we learn that we are members one of another; that love and the sense of community are the necessary means to the common good; that we are parts of a social whole while being endowed with a spirit of reason and natural benevolence through which we can control our appetites and identify ourselves with the whole; that the higher levels of personality depend upon self-direction from within replacing control from without; that man has a faculty of creative spontaneity through which he can discover new knowledge, create new beauty and realise new possibilities of experience; that meaning and value inhere in creative activity inspired by love or the devotion to truth or beauty. It is from this "revealed" knowledge that we learn to define personality, not in terms of a given datum but of a potentiality, and thus realise that man is called to the realisation of ends that transcend those of the political state so that he has a right, within the limits imposed by his social obligations, to freedom in the pursuit of those ends.

It may be said that personalists, in undertaking to attempt to teach the nature of the human person, are taking upon themselves the work of the Churches so that the very fact of their undertaking the task implies an assumption that the Churches are incompetent to perform their historic task. A number of observations seem to be called for on this issue. There is little doubt that the rise of such movements as Personalism is in large part a consequence of the failure of the Churches. Emmanuel Mounier's contributions to *Esprit* are even more critical of the "idealist" form of modern Christianity than of Marxism and materialism, and his view would be widely accepted among personalists. Almost everywhere to-day we find that it is the Communists who

have the crusading zeal and the Churches which are on the defensive. Such thinkers as Berdyaev, Buber and Macmurray, while recognising the value of the function performed by the Churches, hold that they tend to become ossified through the process known as objectification, so that the living spirit of a time may be found more in non-religious than in religious bodies. But it is an inexact statement to suggest that personalists tend to regard themselves as a Church. Personalism does, it seems to me, imply the belief in what Berdyaev has called a Second Middle Ages, a new period of history in which a common belief in the nature of man will be a basis for the unity of men. But to create such a period is not only the task of the Churches; it is the task of the political organisations, the task of the scientist and the inspired artist, the task of all who care for the future destiny of man. Perhaps Herbert Read is right in his view that a humanised Marxism is a more likely instrument of the new common faith than a regenerated Christianity. We do not know yet which organisation, which person or persons, which community will be most influential in building the new world. Personalists must be prepared to work with all persons and organisations which seem to be moving in the right direction. Their primary aim must be to retain the greatest possible degree of freedom of action and initiative.

Secondly, it must be recognised that a common faith, as personalists must understand the term, cannot be created by any form of indoctrination or external pressure. A fundamental principle of the life of the person is that growth must proceed through self-regulation through a spirit working from within and not through passive response to pressure from without, though that is not to say that development does not proceed best in a spiritual climate rich in influences. But the influences must be freely accepted. Personalists then must firmly reject cultural regimentation of the kind with which the totalitarian state has made us familiar.

Thirdly, in their efforts to increase what they regard as true understanding, personalists must use what seem to be the most effective means for the dissemination of ideas. The key to the solution of the cultural problem of the modern world is the right use of broadcasting. It is often said, indeed, that right personal relationships can only be fostered by personal contacts, by "good infection". But genuine "meeting", in Buber's sense, is possible over the air.

The "meeting", however, that it is most urgent to bring about

is not the meeting between personalist speaker and listener, valuable as that is—it is the meeting between rival leaders of thought, provided the meeting is regular and not merely occasional, and provided steps are taken to ensure a genuine contact of minds and real facing of issues. No question is nearer to the heart of the modern problem than this. The fundamental issue man has to face to-day is that of the true ends of personal and social living and the true relation of the new instruments of living provided by science to these ends. Now the division on this issue between the bodies most influential in forming opinion goes much deeper than is generally realised. It has gone so deep in the past that unity of effort for right ends in the great crises of modern society has scarcely ever been possible, or only under stress of war when action to prevent catastrophe was too late. Yet the means to remedy the situation is in our own hands. What is needed is regular meeting over the air on the part of the intellectual leaders of our time and the leaders of the main schools of opinion, not to attack their opponents, but to define and clarify issues, to elucidate points of difference, to work on common problems. It is, as I have said, of especial importance that this clarification, this co-operation, this attempt to achieve mutual understanding, should take place on the ethical and religious issue, for it is in the examination of that issue that the question of the true ends of living arises.

In Britain the chief obstacle to this true meeting of minds is the Christian monopoly of religious broadcasting, and the ridiculous principle that religion must not be made a matter for controversy over the air.[1] The hypocritical assumption is made that we are all Christians or must be made so by some sort of covert coercion. On the same principle Christian religious instruction is enforced as a statutory obligation on the schools. So far is the assumption of Christian unanimity correct that it is impossible to enter any assembly of persons who are in the habit of reading and using their minds without finding the doctrines of Christianity questioned on every hand. I am not discussing here the truth of Christianity. I am only suggesting that the true unity of belief and action that we so urgently need will never be achieved while there is maintained this hypocritical pretence of a Christian unity, this totally fictitious harmony. An open forum on religious

[1] It should be pointed out that recently in Britain there has been some relaxation of this monopoly.

issues, or what is more important, an earnest co-operative effort on the part of Christian leaders, of scientists, of humanists, of Marxists, to find a basis of unity through discussion over the air, has as much claim to air space as Christian propaganda and worship. It is in such discussions that those thinkers who have the insight to know and to teach the true synthesis that our world needs will have their opportunity; if, as I believe, personalism is that new synthesis, it is through the free meeting of minds over the air that personalists will be able to point to the true basis for unity. If the Christian Churches show a determination or disposition to hold on to their monopoly of religious broadcasting, if they are not prepared to meet the challenge of frank criticism through the broadcast medium, they can make no claim to give light and leading in man's hour of need and are betrayers of the cause of humanity.

I have spoken of the free contact of minds over the air as a domestic British problem. But the solution needed in Britain is of a piece with that needed to unite the East and the West, to narrow the dangerous cleavage of belief and interest between Russia and America, to prevent the drift to a Third World War, to build the common world faith that is the only effective guarantee of a peaceful and prosperous world. That kind of frank discussion and genuine facing of issues which is needed in this country between Christian and humanist is needed between Russian Communist and British democrat, between Buddhist and Roman Catholic. What is more important indeed than the clarification of points of difference is the co-operative attack on concrete problems, the pooling of insight on great ethical, educational and social issues. I do not know by what means the present dangerous division between the minds of the great peoples of the world can be broken down, by what means in particular the present intellectual isolation of Soviet Russia can be remedied. But it is to this issue and to those which are ancillary to it that personalists should give priority of attention.

I have dealt with this problem as it appears at the political and cultural centre, as effective solutions in the modern world must be solutions at the centre. But the principles determining right solutions at the centre are applicable also to local issues, to the problem, for example, of building genuine fellowship in the school, in the local community centre. A society which sought to build true unity by the method of "meeting" would not fail to

establish machinery for building the local cultural centre and the local listeners' groups to follow up the wireless discussions.

It is clearly also of use, in defect of the possibility of effective action at the centre, to build the local community, if only to serve as a model of what we may hope to achieve later on a wider scale. But local activity must not take the place of pressure to secure effective action at the centre, for it is only by such large-scale action that world problems of the dimensions that we are now witnessing can be tackled.

Just as, in the defect of large-scale action, local initiative is valuable, so it is of the greatest importance that a nation which is able to set an example of true intellectual co-operative effort over the air, of a true meeting of minds, should do so. It may well be, indeed, that at the time when Britain is inevitably losing her ascendancy as a world empire, she may gain a new ascendancy, the ascendancy of right spiritual initiative, the ascendancy gained through the building of a new kind of national fellowship. Britain may well be capable of that genuine breaking down of barriers between classes, that genuine combination of the spirit of tolerance with deep seriousness, which is the counterpart in the cultural sphere of the capacity that I believe she will show for building a Socialist commonwealth without violence, without harsh treatment of the traditionally privileged, without too painful and abrupt a breach with the past, without cultural regimentation, and without the suppression of local initiative. It is to be hoped also that Britain will show that capacity for sympathetic understanding of both Russia and America that will make it possible for her to act as a mediator between these two great rival powers, and that her wisdom will eventually succeed in breaking down Russian isolation. This may indeed be wish-fulfilment thinking. It serves in any case as an indication of the true objectives of British personalists, for whether or not it will be possible to prevent the division between East and West from breaking out into open hostility and war, every effort should be made to attempt to prevent this disastrous culmination.

The studies of personalist thinkers in this volume, of such men as Nicolas Berdyaev, Martin Buber and Lewis Mumford, are little more than summaries, though summaries which are designed to bring into relief the salient ideas of these great thinkers. In writing of men to whom I owe so much I have no wish to criticise—I wish only to report. But in estimating the thought of certain

other writers, of Gerald Heard, Harold Laski, Karl Mannheim, Herbert Read and others, I have passed certain judgments. From these judgments indeed I have been unable to escape—they follow from the personalist standpoint which I have been led to adopt, for in Personalism I have found in recent years that synthesis for which I have long been searching and to which it seems to me the whole thinking world is moving with greater or less consciousness. Personalism seems to me to embody that correction of Marxism which must be accepted if we are to avoid Burnham's managerial tyranny.

In making the criticisms of the thinkers in question, I hope I have been able to convey the debt I owe to them. For there is no thinker discussed in this book to whom I do not owe much in intellectual help and stimulus. If one ventures a criticism of Laski or Mannheim or Read, one does it with a sense of admiration for the ability and learning, for the integrity and devotion to humanity, of the great men concerned. And one does it with the sense that one may very well be wrong. I hope that my criticisms will be accepted in that spirit.

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Huit Clos

2

INTERPRETATIONS

PERSONALISTS

I. *Nicolas Berdyaev*

NICOLAS BERDYAEV was banished from Soviet Russia because of his disagreement with Marxist philosophy. He asserted the existence of truth and goodness as idealist values which were independent of the class struggle, social conditions and the rest, regarding truth and justice as determining his attitude to social reality and not as determined by it. Lunacharsky, the Soviet Commissar of Education, an old comrade of Berdyaev's in Marxist circles, held that a belief in disinterested truth, in the independence of the intellect and the right of private judgment, contradicted Marxism, which regarded truth as determined by the needs of the proletariat in the class struggle. Berdyaev describes himself as a bitter controversialist; his attitude in any case was to him a matter of deep conviction; in the circumstances there was no place for him in Russia. He believed indeed that his special task as a philosopher was that of criticism of the Left revolutionary intelligentsia; he was a Socialist and sympathised with Socialist aspirations towards social justice, but he believed that the Russian Left had no reverence for the dignity of personality, no belief in the rights of human creativeness, no love for the freedom of the spirit. He believed that the moral results of victory in Russia, and perhaps also elsewhere, for the Left revolutionary intelligentsia, would be unattractive if not disastrous. He accepted it as his special mission to teach the doctrine of the freedom of the spirit and the creative vocation of the independent personality.

Berdyaev's philosophy takes its rise from his conception of the spirit. He rejects as a monstrous error the materialist view that mind is merely a name for certain kinds of reaction of the human organism to stimuli, the view that man is conditioned by his economic and social environment. Man, it is obvious, does receive influences from his material and social environment as well as from the experience of man in history. But in his response to

these influences he is in essence a free, active, creative being. Even in the lower levels of his consciousness it is only in reflex action that his behaviour is automatically determined like that of a machine. But man must be estimated by the higher levels of his consciousness, by what he is capable of becoming. From this point of view we have to recognise that he is possessed of a creative spirit. His spirit can co-ordinate and synthesise his activities; it can freely determine his course of action; it can use the material provided by nature, society, and history, and build from it something which expresses the uniqueness of man's individual quality; it intuitively recognises the existence and binding validity of ethical values; far from being merely determined by his environment man can re-create his environment in terms of his own conceptions. To fail to recognise the fundamental difference between the realm of spirit, the realm of the free, creative activity of the human person, and the realm of nature, in which phenomena are mechanically or dialectically determined, is, in Berdyaev's view, to misunderstand the whole problem of man.

Man's intuitive recognition of values, his sense of an obligation to express the principles of love, freedom, creativeness, truth and beauty, springs, in Berdyaev's view, from the fact that man is made in the image of God. Thus while man is in essence creative, and his creativeness may take the form of the creation of new values, the form of the values springs from the nature of God, the values are thus supra-personal, and man's highest aspiration is towards God. But the spirit of man is not itself God or a part of God. Berdyaev teaches what he calls an existential philosophy. Each man's spirit is an independent existence, a monad, with its own rights and potentialities over which God himself has no control. Berdyaev is opposed to all those philosophies which either deny the right of the spirit to independence and freedom, or which belittle man's powers and potentialities, teaching, for example, as traditional theology has done, that man is himself essentially evil, or which look upon man as a mere part and instrument of a universal spirit, as did Hegel and Schelling.

Berdyaev accepts the doctrine of vocation, the conception that each man is called by God to the realisation of the full stature of his personality. He holds that one of the defects of materialist philosophy is that it blunts in man the sense of vocation. In par-

ticular man is called to the life of freedom. Liberal philosophy has regarded man's freedom as a right. It is indeed a right, in Berdyaev's view, as his opposition to Marxism and Lunacharsky indicated. Nevertheless it is a superficial view to regard it primarily as a right. Freedom is an obligation. Man can only achieve his true vocation by being free. Freedom involves responsibility, and it is man's duty to accept responsibility. Every person has unique potentialities and gifts which he is capable of realising; everyone has a capacity for independent judgment which he is able to use. The development of his personality, and the exercise of his creativity and independence, are contingent on his freedom. The man then who refuses his gift of freedom is denying his true nature, is throwing away his spiritual birthright.

But while men desire freedom and have a capacity for it, they also fear it; they fear it because they fear responsibility. History is largely the record of man's eager efforts to throw away his freedom. Erich Fromm wrote an able historical as well as contemporary analysis of this fear of freedom in man. Berdyaev's great work, *Slavery and Freedom*, deals with the problem of man's disposition to slavery. Berdyaev holds that man has numerous ways of enslaving himself and that he seldom recognises his own enslavement. The realisation of man's potentialities depends on freedom, but the achievement of freedom demands heroic struggle and effort; it means the acceptance of tragedy. Berdyaev rejects and despises hedonistic ethics. To pursue pleasure is to accept one of the most insidious forms of slavery. Man's creative powers, his capacity for the full and free expression of his whole being, cannot be realised while he is an addict to the satisfaction of appetite, to the appetite for comfort, success, money, power, or sexual pleasure. Freedom to Berdyaev means freedom for the creative, the synthesising principle in man, that principle which is capable of directing his whole energies into beneficial channels. But there is a dualism in man's nature. The full expression of the spirit cannot be achieved without struggle. The full attainment of the freedom of the spirit is man's historical goal, and the primary problem is that of the struggle against these forces, coming both from within man and from external influences, which seek to enslave him. Among these influences are man's appetites and cravings.

Certain kinds of metaphysical theory tend, in Berdyaev's view, to enslave man. Deterministic theory tends to enslavement, indeed all theories which regard man as an object among other objects equally controlled by law, which fail to recognise in man a creative subject which does not obey the laws which determine the nature of objects. False notions of God enslave man. Men have always tended to build God in their own image, and men with slavish minds look upon God as an all-powerful Being whose rules man is bound to obey or be punished. Berdyaev asserts that God is not a master and that no power is inherent in him. God is a spirit and spirit knows nothing of the relation of domination and slavery. God is freedom and love. God does not determine man's actions; while God seeks the love of man, he only desires such love as man gives freely.

The most serious form of man's slavery, however, is his slavery to society. In primitive society personality is entirely engulfed by the community. Historical development has seen a great increase in the differentiation of human personalities, an increased recognition of the potential uniqueness of each individual. The fundamental truth at the heart of Christianity is the recognition that each person has value as an individual in the eyes of God, that everyone has at the heart of his being a potentially loving and creative spirit which has the right to free and independent expression. Berdyaev regards all sociologists as reactionaries who affirm the primacy of society over personality, who teach a doctrine of the moulding of personality by society; the reverse is in his view the truth, that it is the function of the personality to create society. Similarly those sociologists are reactionaries who find the criterion of good and evil in law and custom, in the beliefs which are most widely accepted in any society. The true nature of good and evil is revealed in the depths of the human soul, in man's creative insight. Berdyaev holds that everything that springs from society tends to be enslaving, while everything that proceeds from the spirit is liberating, but he recognises that man idealises society and the state and builds myths about them, so enslaving himself.

Man is also enslaved by civilisation and technique. He is overwhelmed with the complication of existence and the multiplicity of things, becoming involved in a web of activity none of which

seems to express his spontaneous needs; he becomes a mere means to an inhuman process, technical and industrial. The problem of man's slavery to technology has become particularly acute in the modern period. Life has undergone a frenzied acceleration to which the human individual finds it difficult not to respond. The era of technology is entirely orientated towards the future; the instant ceases to have value in itself but becomes a means to the succeeding instant. When individuals are so swept away by the torrent of time they have neither leisure nor energy to affirm themselves as free creators of the future. Contemplation, some practice of which is an indispensable condition of an independent and creative personality, becomes increasingly more difficult in an age whose tempo is determined by the machine. The effect of life lived at high speed is the disintegration of the human ego, its division into a series of unco-ordinated mental states.

There is no remedy for man's slavery to a technical civilisation in the conception of the "happy savage". There is a remedy, however, for those who can take it, in contemplation and the interior life of the spirit. A more universal solution can only be found through the spread of personalist ideas, through a recognition that man must control the machine instead of being controlled by it, through a realisation that it is man's function to create his environment instead of being determined by it.

The most insidious form of slavery is man's slavery to himself. In the first place, as we have seen, man often freely consents to his own slavery. In the totalitarian states in which all the people are slaves, a considerable proportion of them accept their slavery willingly if not gladly; their outward slavery is only a projection of the servile pattern of their consciousness. Egocentricity is a great source of slavery; it imprisons a man within the circle of his own consciousness, prevents the soul from expanding, from receiving influences from the souls of others both living and dead, hinders the expression of man's loving and creative impulses. Ibsen's Peer Gynt displays the dialectic of individualism with genius. Peer Gynt wanted to be himself, to be an original individual, and he entirely lost and ruined his personality and became a slave to himself. Men enslave themselves to ideas; an emotional attachment to an idea or to a cause will fix development at a low level. Religious ideas have been great slave-makers and still are so

to-day so that to be free of religion may be the first step to the building of an independent personality. An enthusiasm for orthodoxy is especially enslaving. Religion as a social instrument, as a means to social organisation and mystification, tends to enslave the mind. We have seen that men frequently become slaves to their appetites. The will to power is a great source of enslavement, a man's whole energies becoming mobilised to one end, the pursuit of mastery, success, or glory. Sensual addictions, and the love of sexual adventure, are frequent forms of slavery. Aestheticism may also be an enslaving influence.

Man can only escape the various forms of self-imposed slavery through the activity of the spirit, the synthesising factor in man. Either a man integrates his experience through the spirit or he undergoes disintegration so that he becomes the slave to some particular impulse or craving, or is a slave now to this impulse, now to that. A personality either integrates itself or it dissolves into separate self-affirming intellectual, emotional or sensory elements, thus breaking up the core of man's being. Man has no protection against the urge of his appetites when he can oppose to them only the disintegrated elements of his being and not a unified personality.

One of the most terrifying forms of slavery known to history, says Berdyaev, is the slavery to the modern totalitarian state, which seeks to regiment the souls of men, to exercise absolute dominion over conscience and thought. Slavery to the modern state is slavery to an evil power of immense strength. All that has been considered most vile in personal conduct is considered legitimate when carried out by the state, violence, espionage, falsehood, intimidation, murder, terror, torture. These evil means are supposed to be justified by exalted ends which are in actual fact never realised and soon become forgotten. Although the Christian ethic would condemn a man who devoted himself to his own power and glory, actions are considered noble which contribute to the power and glory of the state. Berdyaev denies that it is permissible to execute a single innocent person for the sake of so-called safety and well-being of the state. He sees in the worship of the state an evil of stupendous dimensions, yet the state must be accepted as to a large extent an exteriorisation, a projection of the condition of the people themselves. Thus

Berdyaev finds no real remedy for the evils created by the state and by the worship of the state but a personalist transvaluation of values.

One of the most fundamental conceptions of Berdyaev's philosophy is that man enslaves himself by a mental process which Berdyaev calls objectivisation. Man is a creative entity or subject, but the subject creates the object, the concept. The concept then becomes the basis of social ideas and institutions. For example, Christian dogma, a system of concepts, becomes the basis of the organised Church; other systems become the basis of law and the state. Man then tends to enslave himself to the institutions of the Church, of law, and of the state which have been created by his own objectivisations. For example, he comes to confuse membership of the Church with genuine communion, which is a relationship between creative I-s, and fails to distinguish between belief in orthodox doctrine and living experience expressive of love and creativity. Social customs and conventions are objectivisations; conceptions of social duty and duty to home and family are objectivisations. The process of emancipating man is the process of replacing an ethic based on the acceptance of such objectivisations by the ethic of the spirit, or the free expression of loving and creative impulses.

The family sometimes exercises a tyranny even more terrible than the tyranny connected with the state. The family will make the moral judgment which should be made by the free personality, and will endeavour to impose it on each member so that the person who rejects it is regarded as a rebel and an outcast. The maintenance of the integrity and harmony of the family is held to justify a vast amount of falsity in family relationships. "How conventionally false", says Berdyaev, "the relations between parents and children, husbands and wives often are, so that hypocrisy acquires the character of a family virtue." It is important that the relationships of the family regarded as an imposed social routine should not be mistaken for relationships of love. Only in so far as family relationships attain genuine brotherhood is it possible to avoid enslavement within the family. Society, and also the Christian Church, have frequently condemned free love. But it is an absurdity to speak of love as being other than free. Society can enforce moral obligations within the family but

it cannot enforce love. There is then frequently a conflict between the family and the free spirit of love in which the family seeks to destroy love. The Christian Church has frequently spoken of love as if it were a merely biological and sociological phenomenon; Berdyaev says that St. Augustine's tractate on marriage is highly reminiscent of methods of cattle-breeding. Thus the spiritualisation of love, and the raising it above considerations based on the needs of the family as a social institution, have come from secular sources, as from the troubadours and the poets. Christian theologians have seldom had anything to say about love but commonplace trivialities; they have seemed to be unaware of the existence of love as living intensity and ecstasy, as a highly individualised experience, as a creation of the free spirit.

While love can express the free spirit, it can also be the greatest slavery, both within and without the family. Woman is inclined to slavery and has also a will to enslave. The love of woman demands everything for itself and clashes with the principle of personality. Women are thus more often enslaved than men to jealousy. Berdyaev says that jealousy frequently assumes a demoniacal character in women, who can turn to furies. But while love and the family can enslave, they can also, in so far as they express a personalist ethic, manifest the spirit of freedom.

The family tends to enslave because it is an objectivisation; there are also physical and material processes which are objective, while instinctive urges are objective in the sense that they do not necessarily express the free action of the spirit but take place in spite of it so that they may enslave it. Eroticism may be enslaving. Marxist materialism has this truth in it, that man tends to be enslaved by objective material processes, while Freud has revealed the extent to which man is dominated by instinctive urges, such as the Id, the masochistic and sadistic impulses, and the superego, the primitive and archaic conscience. Technology is the supreme result of objectified knowledge, and we have already seen how it tends to enslave the creative subject. The essence of Berdyaev's teaching is that it is man's vocation to emancipate the creative subject from the process of objectivisation. The process of emancipation is a movement from social relationships to relationships of community in which one creative subject has mutually helpful relations with another; it is a process by which man

re-creates society and the social environment instead of submitting himself to it; it is a process by which the person synthesises his various urges instead of being controlled by them; it is a process by which the individual achieves a unique expression through the free use of the materials provided by nature, society and history instead of accepting a formal system of thought or knowledge. Berdyaev calls himself a personalist. This is because he holds that the values of the rightly developed personality should determine all our beliefs and actions, both in ethical and political matters, and denies that the state has rights over the human personality or that it is the true function of the state or of society to mould the personality. Personalism differs fundamentally from individualism. The individualist is concerned primarily about the unrestricted expression of his desires; he often feels a fastidious aloofness from his fellow-creatures. The personalist, however, teaches the need for a sense of vocation and of service. He recognises that personality can only develop rightly through love, through the sense of community, through creative activity directed to the general good. The personalist is a socialist. But he holds that Socialism must be achieved through interpenetrating social institutions with personalist values, not through the imposition of a system by a bureaucracy.

The personalist realises the great evil to which the state power is liable and believes that this can only be checked through the spread of personalist values, but he is not an anarchist and recognises that there are important functions which only the state can perform. Some of these functions are liberating; in fact, rightly used, the state power is always liberating. Only the state, for example, can free the worker to-day from economic oppression. Marx was right in holding that the capitalist system was a system of exploitation which dehumanised the worker, turning him into a robot and a mere instrument of the profit of the privileged. Only the state is strong enough to attack unjust privilege; only the state can guarantee individual rights, not only in the economic but in the political and cultural spheres. The expression of personalist values in the field of industry depends upon industrial self-government, but while the owner of industrial property has an unrestricted right to determine the uses of his property, effective self-government in industry is impracticable. It is the state

which has the power and the opportunity to take away the dictatorial privilege of the property owner and make democracy in the industrial field a practical proposition. The fact that man is prone to evil makes the state necessary also for the administration of the restraints of law. Anarchism is based on illusory conceptions of the natural goodness of man. The truth embodied in anarchism is that the state of perfection would be one in which the restraint of law was unnecessary and in which there was no power of man over man. The kingdom of God must be regarded as a state of freedom where man has no power over man and law does not exist. It is, however, a shallow optimism to imagine that the kingdom of God can be realised here and now by political means.

What it is important to recognise is that the state should not concern itself with the life of the spirit, which is the realm of freedom, and that the state has no rights over against the conscience and the freely developing personality. The state should be regarded as an instrument which administers checks and safeguards in certain limited spheres, which mediates, which secures order, and which guarantees the free development of autonomous life. However, bureaucracy and centralisation of power are tremendous evils and dangers in the modern state; personalist social philosophy stresses the importance of decentralisation and advocates a pluralist society.

Berdyaev holds that it is important to recognise that the state becomes inevitably contaminated with human sin and error and that political utopias are false in essence. This is not, however,to deny the possibility of relative improvements, which are often concerned with limiting the state power. The modern period, however, is one in which it is necessary for the state to exercise new initiatives and assume new power, as in the field of industry and education. But the state should only take on these powers in order to hand them over as soon as possible to organisations of workers and educationists operating freely within a given framework.

The Church in history has committed no greater error than to attribute a sacred, theocratic character to the kingdom of Caesar. Thus the Church has been on various occasions one of the greatest forces contributing to human slavery.

We have seen that Berdyaev makes the centre of his system the idea of the free, creative personality, which must not be regarded

as a mere means to an end, so that the state should rather be regarded as a means to the end of the free and full development of personalities. In Berdyaev's view even a dog or a cat has more claim to be regarded as a personality and as the end of our striving than any collective entity such as a Church or state. All real existence is in the free life of personalities. Berdyaev has written with great insight on personality and the laws of its development. He maintains that at the basis of all true philosophical knowledge lies the experience of the philosopher; his own experience of personality lies at the basis of his own system. Berdyaev finds in himself something elemental and primitive, a refusal to accept any kind of imposed system, a spirit which resists the compulsion of the world, which rejects compliancy. This elemental something it is which by its reaction to environment builds up the unique, individual personality. It is what Berdyaev calls an existential centre; all that is real is found in the intimate life of such centres. This unique personality has a right not only to life but to possess the universal content of life. A personality is a potential all; it has the capacity to receive into itself the whole universe of human experience and to create from it what is individual in its form. Personality is not an object; it is an abiding subject which grows and develops without losing its identity. It is not a ready-made datum; it is the posing of a question, an ideal to be achieved. A man's true aim is the achievement of the fullness, wholeness and unity of his personality. Thus personality is a category of value; the achievement of the full potentiality of personality is the basis of all values.

Personality must be accepted, however, as effort and conflict, as victory over slavery. A man can only realise his capacities through the conquest of self and of the world; without struggle and suffering there is no true development of personality. The man who is compliant, either to external forces, or to his own appetites, ceases to be able to develop, ceases to be a free being. Personality can only develop truly through the sense of vocation and through love, which should be regarded not as mere sympathy but as fire and energy devoted to helping others and enriching human life. Personality is a revolutionary element in society through its acceptance of higher values than are realised in any actual state. True personality is a rare achievement. In the im-

mense majority of people personality is only potential, being destroyed by disintegration, by compliance with society, or by the domination of appetite. Thus the full development of personality implies an element of asceticism, of control of impulse, and detachment from desire.

The review Berdyaev has given in a number of his works of the history of philosophy brings into relief what he regards as distinctive and important in his own standpoint. Greek philosophy, in his view, concentrated its attention on the object and its form; it failed to grasp the significance of the experiencing subject as a free, creative entity. Thus Christianity had a profound emancipating influence; Berdyaev regards himself as a Christian thinker, and his Christianity is based on the importance which he attaches to the revelation by Christ of man as a loving, creative being capable of direct communion with God. Berdyaev goes on to say that Christianity, as it developed, became hellenised; it adopted the canons of the Aristotelian philosophy; thus its influence came to be in the direction of enslaving the creative spirit. Modern philosophy is to Berdyaev more essentially Christian than mediaeval scholasticism, which refused to accept the emancipation of the Christian consciousness so that the doctrine of the immanence of God has always worried the Church, which fears that a God speaking to man in the depths of consciousness will utter words which contradict official teaching. Berdyaev rejects Thomism, maintaining that Thomist philosophy, although maintaining a façade of independence, was in reality completely servile to official opinion which rejected the freedom of the spirit.

German philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries got philosophy once more away from the objective world, but in doing so, in Berdyaev's view, it denied freedom. Hegel always speaks of the universal spirit expressing itself through man; he never looks on man as a free creative entity. Hegel in fact inherited the Lutheran doctrine of grace, according to which whatever is good in man is always the work of divine grace, never of man's own spirit. It was partly because Hegel failed to recognise the existential reality of the human spirit that he was only too ready to subordinate the individual to some higher power such as the state.

Philosophers not of the German school, for example the British school of philosophers starting with Francis Bacon, emancipated themselves from theology only to subject themselves to what Berdyaev calls an "inferior power", that of science. Berdyaev uses the term "scientism" to describe the process by which science has endeavoured to suppress philosophy and metaphysics. Berdyaev condemns scientism in no measured terms; he speaks of it, with Scheler, as the product of a slavish mentality seeking to enslave the higher powers of the soul to one of its subordinate faculties in the interests of what are called practical activities. Berdyaev asserts that the philosophical mode of cognition is distinct from and higher than the scientific mode. Philosophy has an intuitive basis; every true philosopher has an original intuition of his own. Philosophy is based on the maximum experience of human existence, an experience which must integrate man's intellectual, affective and volitional life; science is merely the expression of one aspect of the experience of the intellect. Value is a matter of feeling, yet values have a central place in philosophical knowledge. The significance of science must be determined by philosophy, using criteria of value which science itself is unable either to supply or to judge. Knowledge of a scientific kind corresponds to a lower degree of community among people seeing that it is knowledge of the objectified world and not the existential world of the creative spirit, the world of communion between persons. Scientific knowledge in fact establishes communication between people who are isolated in spirit; it corresponds to a world of dissension; it is the appropriate mode of communication of the spiritually disintegrated. It seems paradoxical indeed that the universally binding character of cognition is found in the highest degree in mathematics and the physical sciences where cognition depends least on men sharing a spiritual community. Science has contributed to the human control of matter, but the disastrous consequences of making science supreme over religion and philosophy is being seen in the tendency to look upon human beings as means rather than ends and to deny the rights of the individual. The fault will be in part attributable to scientism if the human race in the modern period is largely destroyed.

One of the major manifestations of scientism is Marxism.

Marxists have rightly taught that philosophy should change the world, but have given this great conception a foundation of materialist philosophy. Materialism tends to look on man as the creature of his social environment; the result has been that Marxists have taught that society should dictate to philosophy instead of recognising that philosophy should dictate to society. To the Marxist, religion, spirituality, culture and art are the merest accidents of matter in motion so that it is not surprising that their value and independence should be disregarded. The tendency to disregard the rights of the personality has been particularly marked in modern Russia where Marxist ideas have become supreme.

Berdyaev holds the attempts made by Marx and others to create a scientific sociology to be an absolute absurdity; he regards a scientific theory of society as a mere game in analogy, for as society consists of persons who are free, creative entities the endeavour to apply merely scientific categories to it is bound to fail. The dictatorship of ideas carried out in Russia under Marxist auspices is based on the assumption that the spiritual life may be dealt with on exactly the same basis as the material life, that the spirit and thought and the creativeness of culture are susceptible to the same sort of organisation as political or economic life. The only effect in practice of organising a unity of thought is to strengthen the police and espionage organs of the state. The dictated world view is not a real elimination of chaos, but only a formal organisation of chaos, "a superficial despotic order under which chaos never ceases to reign".

Marxism and scientism always involve a projection of human life into the future. Existing life is considered to be wretched, but with the achievement of the social revolution and the application of science to society a state of endless happiness and well-being will be ensured. History shows that revolutions are realisable; actually wise gradual change is much more difficult to achieve than revolution, and catastrophe is much more realisable than the peaceful development which guards faith and traditions; it is because mankind fails to achieve evolutionary change that violent revolutions come about; thus revolution is a judgment of God of man. But revolution never achieves the benefits that it promises; always revolution offers freedom and humanity, and

gives violence, enslavement, cruelty and murder; always it promises future paradise while affording a present nightmare. Revolution promises a new man, but in fact it does not break very much with the old; the old makes its reappearance with a new mask on. Revolution lets loose sadistic instincts and demoniacal forces; the leaders of revolutions suffer from an insanity of fear, which leads to endless shootings. Personal judgment and personal conscience are always weakened in a revolution.

Revolutions exact terrible sacrifices for very small results, and the main ends which they seek are never realised. Nevertheless revolution is an inevitable price that society must pay for an inability to achieve desirable change peacefully. Marxist Socialism involved particularly grave dangers in that it concealed utopian illusions under a superficial appearance of humane and rational thought.

We have seen that Berdyaev describes his interpretation of life and history as Christian, and he would regard himself as being in the main stream of Orthodox Christian tradition. Nevertheless he makes far-reaching criticisms of institutional Christianity, and in particular of the Roman Church, especially in so far as it tends to present truth as being "objective", in the sense that it can be accepted without the believer feeling any divine call or any awareness of the life of the spirit. In his view the practice of the Catholic Church has been too much influenced by the political tradition of Ancient Rome so that the sanctions of the Church have tended to take on an almost legal character. Also Catholic thought has been too much influenced by Greek and in particular by Aristotelian thought. The Greeks were dominated by the idea of formal perfection; the idea of free life and dynamism escaping from the limitations of form was foreign to their thought. The Catholic Church similarly has tended to seek to impose a definite form on the Christian life and experience; it has not accepted the view that the free spirit must constantly interpret Christianity anew, that the spiritual life is a creative becoming.

Traditional theology, says Berdyaev, has tended to deny the divine nature of man, not to recognise that man is made in God's image. Man can only do good, says traditional theology, through divine grace. This is equivalent to saying that only the divine spirit possesses existence, to a denial of the existence in man of a

creative spirit possessing a unique form and an existential reality and a capacity for good. This doctrine that man is inherently evil, that he can do nothing without God, has a depressing influence on man's creative powers. Man could not accept the divine grace if he had not something good in him with which to do so.

Roman Catholic doctrine, in Berdyaev's view, is authoritarian and legalistic; thus the Roman faith tends to undergo a process of ossification, to sink into a religion of habit and custom. It is wedded to a metaphysic which seeks to stereotype the mentality of a particular historical period (that of Aquinas) as if it had immutable significance. It fears the creative energy of the mind and is suspicious of mysticism which it recognises as the source of new revelation which might be disturbing to tradition. It tries to protect the people from too much intellectual development which, it recognises, might disturb their faith in the teaching of authority. It is based altogether too much on the principle of "not offending the weaker brethren". In sum, the Catholic Church tends to be less a religion than a political body existing to serve a particular collective interest and to protect a particular form of authority over the minds of men.

In *Freedom and the Spirit* Berdyaev criticises the Catholic Church for its hostility to freedom and argues that both St. Augustine and St. Thomas specifically rejected freedom and that the attitude of St. Augustine underlay the persecuting attitude of the Church as embodied in the Inquisition. The Church sought to bring men into the fold by the method of coercion.[1] Berdyaev maintains that in the spiritual world compulsion is out of the question, and that the attempt to enrol Christians by compulsion is the sin against the Holy Ghost. The denial of freedom means the extinction of the spiritual life in man.

The legalistic, authoritarian tendency of much institutional Christianity is reflected in the tendency to look upon God in

[1] I think Berdyaev would admit that these criticisms are not intended to apply to the Church as a whole; that, side by side with the legal-political tradition that he deplores, there was another tradition that affirmed freedom and the presence in man of the divine image. If it is true, for example, that in some sense St. Thomas denied freedom, it is also true that in general he vehemently affirmed it.

terms of an oriental despot who issues commands and demands severe punishment if his laws are not obeyed. The doctrine of justification assumes that God demands satisfaction from men because of their sins so that men must make atonement by accepting punishment. The doctrine is only made worse by the addition that Christ can take on man's punishment for him. Berdyaev remarks that we may well ask whether a justification of man is necessary as far as God is concerned.[1]

Berdyaev believes that the Christian revelation should only be regarded as a stage in universal revelation, that new truth is revealed to man through the immediate contact of experiencing souls with the divine mystery, and that to-day a revolution within Christianity is needed. He considers that there is no longer any room in the world for a mere external form of Christianity based on custom and authority. The age of the religion of the spirit is at hand. St. Thomas confused the actual historical form of Christianity with its ideal form; Berdyaev emphasises the distinction between the actual Church and the mystical Church, or the form that the fellowship of true believers takes in the souls of men. If the historical Church is to remain alive, it must be subject to frequent transformation through the living spirit, the mystical Church. Religious dogmas should be regarded not as final truths, but as symbols of religious experience. Symbols grow out of date; if then they are not replaced organised religion tends to become a reactionary force, having failed to keep pace with the creative soul of man.

One of the greatest errors of the Church has been to fail to attach importance to man's innate creativeness. It has thus failed to recognise the significance of creativeness in the fields of art, philosophy and the sciences. There has thus sprung up a separation between the sacred and the secular, art, philosophy and the sciences being relegated to the secular sphere. Creative humanity has thus been unchurched. A regenerated Christianity would seek to create a new harmony between the sacred and what has been called the secular.

The recognition of creativeness means a recognition of the

[1] It is only fair to say that the interpretation of the doctrine of justification to which Berdyaev objects has had a limited range and influence in the Church, which has usually interpreted the conception in a very different sense.

importance of the individual, for creativeness is always an expression of personal values. Christianity was for a long time blind to the significance of individuality. To be individual in all one's actions, says Berdyaev, is an absolute moral imperative. It is virtually the same thing as to be sincere. The ethics of creativeness involve a recognition of the good as the expression of love regarded as a universal vital energy, and of the impulse towards knowledge, truth and beauty also regarded as an energy. Berdyaev has little faith in the universally binding laws of morality to which the Church has attached so much importance, and values very little the arid, abstract virtue which consists in avoiding error. Almost every case of conduct differs from every other; the noblest deeds and the highest values are creative acts of men, the expression of a living spirit. A quantitative and qualitative increase in life's intensity and energy is one of the criteria of moral valuation but it is one that the Churches have said little about.

The attitude of the Church to creativeness has affected and been affected by its attitude to sex. Traditionally the Church has condemned sex or has only justified it as a means to the propagation of children. But the energy of creativeness is connected with the energy of sex, which is the primal source of creative energy, and may assume many forms besides the gratification of physical pleasure and the release from tension. Christian teachers have said too much about sinful passions and the need to struggle against them. The passions provide the energy which may be transformed into a higher and more dynamic content of life. Virtue has been made too often to appear a dull and lifeless thing, and there has been a failure to recognize that the passions may enter into positive qualitative states in a sublimated form.

The values created by the human spirit need not belong to the moral order. Indeed, the more the personality becomes free and integrated, the more it is directed towards harmony and beauty rather than towards goodness. Thus the final end of man must be thought of in terms of beauty rather than of goodness.

Berdyaev accepts Christianity, in spite of his vigorous attacks on the historical Church, because the essential Christian doctrines seem to him to be symbols of fundamental spiritual reali-

ties.[1] Christ as the God-man symbolises to Berdyaev what he regards as the eternal truth of the dualism of spirit and nature in the mind of man. Man is a natural being, subject to natural necessity, dominated by instinctive urges, but he is also a spiritual being, capable of freedom, love and creativeness. Christ to Berdyaev is a symbol of the truth that the spiritual man can interpenetrate the natural man, so that the whole of man's life, including the life of his appetites and instincts, becomes imbued with the spirit of love and creativeness. Man's purpose in history, in Berdyaev's view, should be to seek to create the kingdom of God in which the spirit in man would completely interpenetrate the natural man so that all men were like Christ. As the value to Berdyaev of the doctrine of Christ as the God-man is symbolic, it is a matter of indifference to him whether or not the actual Christ of history was a perfect man. Berdyaev gives a similarly symbolical interpretation of other Christian doctrines. The doctrine of the Fall symbolises the truth that man's nature is fallen, that he has largely forfeited his freedom, and in particular has become the slave of time and of his cravings. In the kingdom of God, says Berdyaev, eternity prevails over time. In the world of time we are dragged willy-nilly through a seeminglessly endless chain of meaningless events; in the world of eternity everything is significant, every event has meaning and beauty. In so far as spirit subdues nature life becomes full of significance.

Spirit to Berdyaev is not something apart from the body; the body may express the spirit, and a bodily act may be imbued with spiritual significance. The human face "is the summit of the cosmic process". The spirit is not an object at all; it is a creative subject, an activity that expresses itself through objects.

The crucifixion to Berdyaev symbolises the truth that the victory of the spirit involves the death of the natural man, though

[1] With respect to Berdyaev's strictures on official ecclesiasticism, it has to be borne in mind that he himself is a loyal member of the Greek Orthodox community. But Berdyaev holds, with Martin Buber, that all human institutions, including the Church, are liable to certain errors and abuses through the mental process which he calls objectivisation, and one of the main purposes of his work is to warn us against them. But his recognition of the inevitable abuses to which institutional religion is subject does not diminish his loyalty to the Church, to which he owes his own religious background, and to its tradition.

that victory should not take place through the destruction of natural impulses but through their interpenetration by the spirit. But that does not affect the truth that a man cannot live the life of the spirit if he is concerned mainly with the full and free expression of instinct. Thus the life of the spirit means a dying to the natural life and a rebirth.

Berdyaev's comments on the Western Church must be seen in the light of the fact that he himself is imbued with the Eastern tradition. He holds that Eastern Christianity, having been more influenced by Plato than by Aristotle, is more sympathetic to the mystical approach which regards Christianity as always susceptible to new creative actualisation; he describes the Aristotelian principle as that of restrictive form and achieved actuality. He remarks that Christianity in the East has been more speculative than in the West in which the tradition of Roman legalism has in general prevailed, in which problems of organisation have always assumed great importance, and a spirit of militant proselytism has been widespread. The idea of Christianity as a religion of redemption and personal salvation has been more characteristic of the West. Berdyaev remarks that the doctrine of the beatitude of the elect and the damnation of the rest of mankind is one that has been widely held in the West but is foreign to the Eastern mind. Similarly, little is heard in the East of justification. The East looks upon the true being of man as rooted in God; the West is more inclined to regard man as separated from God and bound to accept God's judgment and authority; thus in the West the criterion of authority assumes great importance, and Catholicism seeks to submit the religious life to discipline, while Orthodoxy has more faith in spiritual forces that are not organised. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit has always been emphasised in the East, which thinks of the spirit as transfiguring man's nature, while it is more characteristic of the West to think of man as being *justified* by divine grace.

The idea of the salvation of the individual soul tends, in Berdyaev's view, to dominate the West, while the distinctive religious conception of the East is *sobornost*, the idea that in the Church we are saved, not by ourselves, but with our brethren, all together. Thus Orthodox Christianity is more eschatological, looking to a universal salvation and a transfiguration of the cosmos.

'Orthodoxy", says Berdyaev, "is resolutely anti-individualistic, but Catholics do not understand this."

In Berdyaev's *Meaning of History* his ethic and metaphysic are ingeniously interwoven into a highly individual and idiosyncratic interpretation of history. He regards the Jewish race as the first people to build a system of thought based on a conception of history and an apocalyptic vision. The Greeks had no sense of history. Oriental thought regarded the historical process as evil; all Oriental philosophies are founded on the idea of escaping from history into the depths of the inner life. Berdyaev's holds that Christian thought develops further the Jewish conception of history as having a meaning and purpose to which individual lives should be related.

Marxism also has a view of history based on the belief that both matter and social institutions obey dialectical laws. Berdyaev thinks that Marxism deprives history of its soul by holding that the fundamental historical reality is the materialistic economic process.

Berdyaev, first of all, follows Jewish and Christian tradition in regarding history as having an end. To regard history as an endless chain seems to him to deprive it of all meaning. History then moves onward to some great climax. What is the meaning which Berdyaev finds in history? First of all, he believes that terrestrial history can only be understood in terms of celestial history. As there is a dualism of spirit and nature in man, so there is a dualism in history. There is a celestial history, that is, a history of spiritual beings, which interpenetrates terrestrial history through the action of spirit. By the end of history he means only the end of terrestrial history, which lasts only for certain aeons, but the end of terrestrial history will not mean the end of celestial history. Berdyaev frequently refers to the end of terrestrial history as when he says in *Slavery and Freedom* that one day the whole of the terrestrial universe will be burned up.

It follows that Berdyaev finds the meaning of history in the dynamic struggle between spirit and nature. Spirit seeks to overcome the determinism of nature; it seeks to interpenetrate the whole of man's being with its own freedom. The fully developed personality would be the man (could such a person exist) whose

whole life was free in the sense that his every activity was directed by his creative spirit. The struggle against nature is also a struggle against time. In terrestrial history man is caught up in time which drags him through a process of events which only here and there find meaning through the action of the spirit. The life of eternity to Berdyaev is the life which is made significant through the spirit, so that eternity enters the life of time in so far as the spirit gives meaning to the life of time. The past might seem to be over and done with, but the spirit may find meaning in it, and so it may escape from time and be eternal; the future does not exist yet, yet it may exist in the eternal moment of the free, creative spirit. Berdyaev insists that what is significant in life is always the present moment, because the moment can always be made eternal through love and creativeness. He who learns how to live in the moment achieves conquest over time. Berdyaev maintains that one of the worst evils of modern thought is its tendency to project its hopes into the future. Only by learning to give significance to each moment can man learn wisdom.

Berdyaev thus views history as a struggle between eternity and time, perhaps culminating in one tremendous struggle, often featured in Christian writings as a battle between Christ and anti-Christ. But this does not mean necessarily that there is a steady progress in history, showing an increasing triumph of the spirit. Berdyaev rejects the view of history which holds that the universe has been so made that happiness and perfection only arrive in the latter ages of time, so that the early generations of humanity suffer that posterity can be happy. On his view every individual throughout history has had the potentiality of achieving eternity in every moment so that the meaning of history must be found in each moment.

Berdyaev divides terrestrial history up to date into four periods. The first is the pre-Christian era; the second, culminating in such a figure as Thomas Aquinas, was the era which produced the mediæval synthesis in which the Catholic Church assumed control over every aspect of human life, or at all events, made efforts to do so and in most spheres succeeded. The mediæval period was ascetic, for the mediæval Church made war on man's passions; this asceticism strengthened man's spiritual forces while denying them freedom, for the Church imposed severe limits on man's

creative expression. The third period, starting with the Renaissance and Reformation, released human creative energies so that there has been a wonderful flowering of man's spirit in the fields of art, science and culture. But the humanism of the modern period, while it began by releasing man's energies, has ended, in Berdyaev's view, by enfeebling them. This Berdyaev holds as due to the defects of humanism itself.

Humanism sets up man as the centre of the universe, affirms his right to the total expression of his individuality, and his absolute right to freedom of thought; it thus sets man along the path of self-affirmation and creation. But while seeming to elevate man, it abases him, for humanism no longer conceives of man as God's child, as being made in God's image, as being able to find the divine grace and the divine spirit in his heart. Humanism brought man nearer to the life of nature, to animal life, regarding man as the creature of natural urges and instincts. Thus the further humanism has become removed from the mediæval Christian tradition, the more the self-affirmation of man has tended to mean the affirmation of the rights of his instinctive urges, the more man has lost the power to integrate his personality and canalise his energies which a realisation of his divine vocation can give. Berdyaev thus holds that humanism has become a disintegrating factor in man and in modern civilisation; disintegration involves enfeeblement, and both man's spiritual and his creative energies have shown signs of impoverishment in the modern period.

Berdyaev calls the fourth period of terrestrial history the New Middle Ages, and it is this period in his view on which we are now entering. This period will end the period of humanist disintegration, and will see the creation of a new synthesis, which will differ from the mediæval synthesis in the respect that it will pay to freedom and creativeness. The new synthesis will end the period of separation between the sacred and secular; it will bring science, philosophy, art and social life once more under the ægis of the religious life. It will be marked by the rediscovery of the spiritual man, the God-man, as an integrating factor in human society; it will see a personalist transvaluation of values, a religious transfiguration of life. It will see a new flowering of art and culture; a new humanism, no longer enfeebled by the division in

his psyche which has weakened modern man, will make its appearance. It will bring with it the will to perform miracles. Political and economic difficulties which at present seem insuperable will be readily overcome; projects now felt as utopian will become merely inevitable.

The New Middle Ages will mean a great renascence of mystical religion. The heart of religion will be recognised as being a dynamic relationship between God and man. It is necessary to have faith in man as well as faith in God. Berdyaev deplores those theological conceptions which degrade man's nature and regard him as essentially sinful and debased. God created man because God needed man and had to create him, and God still needs man to participate with Him in the never-ceasing work of creation, in the work of the creation and organisation of the world. The interior life of God, says Berdyaev, is realised by man and the world. He quotes Leon Bloy who said, "God suffers and bleeds when He fails to find in man an answer to His love." But if God needs man, man also needs God. Without God he can find no centre to his life, no sense of vocation. Only through the divine idea and the divine energies can he realise the unfulfilled capacities of his personality.

Thus Berdyaev looks for a decline of what he calls "herd Christianity", the Christianity which stereotypes and ossifies religious forms, as if the world were an extinct volcano, and looks for a revival of the mysticism which is a way of illumination, an expression for the surging ecstasy of human nature. But Berdyaev in several places in his works has made a vigorous attack on false mysticism. The mysticism which condemns and hates the world and displays an indifference to the movements which take place in the world is merely a mark of self-sufficiency and a failure of love. The mystic who finds the source of all evil in human cravings and the desires of the flesh starts by abhorring himself and has difficulty in not ending in abhorring his fellow-creatures. The notion of sin, and of escape from it by mortifying desire, finds too large a place in some forms of mysticism and asceticism. The absorption in sin tends to become an absorption in self, while repressed passions, as Freud has shown, tend to have morbid outlets. Also a concentration on the aim of annihilating sinful passions means a failure to direct the energy of these passions towards

positive creation. Sinful passions can best be combated by the awakening of man's positive, creative and spiritual forces, by directing man's will to higher ends. Negative and destructive passions can be transformed into creative passions serving spirit. The annihilation of the will and the cravings which Eastern mystics frequently sought, involving as they believed the union of the spirit with God, did in practice mean annihilation of the personality—the saint who had attained Nirvana ceased to be a creative force for good in the world, ceased to be an agent with God in the achievement of his purposes.

The supreme goal of mysticism, says Berdyaev, is indeed union with God, but also, because of this very union, a turning outwards of the self towards every creature. It is the realisation of love and creative energy, for love is creation and must reveal itself by the expression of man's diverse gifts. False mysticism plunges the human spirit into self-abasement and despondency. True mysticism absorbs the natural and human sphere into that of the spirit so that the opposition between the elements ceases, and everything in a man's life is experienced as the expression of something in the profoundest sense within himself. True mysticism also needs some capacity for detachment from appetites, some ability for concentration of the energies of one's being, but the integration of the personality which is its aim it seeks to secure through creativeness and love.

In this essay I have merely summarised the philosophy of Berdyaev with scarcely any comment or criticism. I find myself so impressed with the soundness and wholeness of his fundamental intuitions and with the fervour of his prophetic vision, that the impulse of criticism in me is stifled. Berdyaev is a man of supreme genius, of immense intellectual powers, but his greatness springs primarily from the breadth and intensity of his experience. His thought is not derived from the examination of concepts, from an analytical process. He is an intuitive thinker; his philosophy is the expression of his inner life, his deepest emotions and apprehensions. At the heart of his thought are certain burning convictions, certain inescapable intuitions; with these as the nerve centre of his system he has brought into a synthesis the whole record of history, the total heritage of thought both ancient and

modern, and his concrete experience of the modern world, the world of politics, the world of science and philosophy. All the significant thought of our time, indeed, takes the form of a synthesis, but I find Berdyaev's system of superlative worth because of the penetration and depth of the experience which is at its heart, and because of the comprehensive character of the content of knowledge and of life which it permeates. Berdyaev's most significant ideas spring from his profound understanding of religious experience. They will take longer to enter the general body of thought than the more superficial interpretations which have dominated the thought of our time, such conceptions, for example, as Marxism and materialism. But their final influence cannot but be immense both in scope and in significance.

With respect to the validity of Berdyaev's conceptions, if one has a knowledge, within oneself, of the spirit as an integrating creative energy, giving meaning and direction and intensity to every activity and producing a capacity for continuous growth and self-transcendence, it becomes impossible to doubt the truth and significance of one's experience and of the framework of thought which is its natural and inevitable expression. Those to whom Berdyaev has succeeded in communicating something of his own life and his own intuitive understanding find it difficult not to feel that they have come close to the heart of the human problem.

The political implications of Berdyaev's thought are of the greatest importance. To-day the most active and influential sections of opinion are completely absorbed in the problems of political and economic organisation; perhaps indeed, in view of the extreme gravity of our social problems, it would be surprising if this were not the case. But an absorption in problems of social organisation brings with it its own nemesis. The more men become preoccupied with problems of power and of administration, the more they tend to become what T. S. Eliot called Hollow Men, the more the springs of their inner life tend to dry up, the less contact they have with God and with spiritual realities, the less able are they to judge rightly of human ends, the more prone they are to descend to unworthy means. The paradox of our time is that the Communist and near-Communist parties, which have the most passionate urge to bring the political and

economic order under some kind of wise human control, are at the same time the most divorced from religion, from the inner life, and from a sense of values and of the meaning of personality. Thus political idealism tends to give rise to the totalitarian state, to an immense power which crushes the individual and destroys his spiritual independence.

In relation to this problem Berdyaev shows great insight and a balanced judgment. He is not tempted, from a fear of the state power, to become either an anarchist or a defeatist. He fully recognises that the modern world needs a powerful state, that effective control at the centre in the political and economic sphere is imperative. A true understanding of his thought is indeed a salutary check against political illusions, and in particular against the illusion that the individual can live free from social restraint. Berdyaev recognises the necessity of the restraints of law, while seeing that the new powers which the modern state has to assume may involve certain extensions of the field of law, certain new forms of restraint. His ideas in no sense make for political and economic reaction. He has indeed recently declared his confidence that the next generation will see a revival of true humanism in Russia. A true personalist is indeed a man devoted to social justice and the common good who also knows how to achieve a concentration of his energies which few men can attain.

But while the personalist is concerned about social and political ends, he has that insight into the true character of such ends which enables him to judge rightly of political means and estimate rightly the limits which must be placed on the state power. Above all, he recognises that the health of the state depends primarily on the inner life of the people, on the extent to which their lives are inspired by that loving, creative spirit that is potential in all. He recognises, in short, that the only true remedy for our evils is what Berdyaev calls a "personalist transvaluation of values". The world is under an immense and irrepayable debt to Berdyaev for the great works in which he has pleaded this cause with such fire and eloquence.

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II. *Martin Buber*

MARTIN BUBER's little book, *I and Thou*, with its hundred and twenty pages, first published in Germany just over twenty years ago, was not translated into English till 1937, but its influence on the Anglo-Saxon religious community has already been immense. Many thinkers regard it as one of the epoch-making books of our generation. It seems to go to the heart of the problem of the religious life, and for that reason, to the heart of the problem of our civilisation. *I and Thou* is not easy to read; its style is less that of a religious or philosophical treatise than of a prose poem; also, like most original writers, Buber uses an individual and characteristic idiom which does not give up its secrets at the first reading. But there are few books so well worth re-reading, so rich in passages of great vividness and beauty.

Buber describes man's world as being twofold in character, in accordance with his twofold attitude. There is first of all the world which Buber indicates with the combination *I-It*, the relationship between man and the world of objects. This includes what Buber calls the I-He and the I-She, or the relationship between man and other human beings in so far as he regards them as objects, as things, as mere instruments of his purpose. Secondly, there is the relationship which Buber indicates by the combination I-Thou; this denotes certain kinds of relationships with Nature, real relationships between persons, and the relationships between man and God. In real relationship between persons there is genuine mutuality; each seeks to give to the other with his whole being and to understand and receive from the other, and neither seeks to use the other as a means. Buber considers that reality and meaning can only be found in the relationships which he indicates by the combination *I-Thou*. Our primary problem as individuals, then, and also the primary problem confronting the world, for all human problems, in Buber's view, turn on the one fundamental problem, is the discovery of I-Thou relation-

ships, or such a reversal of our prevalent mental states as will make I-Thou relationships the living centre of our lives.

The world of the I-It relationship, we have seen, is the world of the relationship between man and things, or between men and persons experienced as things. Buber describes this as the world of experiencing and using. Continuously the world of things is present before us; we see it as a world of objects and events, we acquire knowledge of it, we read about it and store up ideas and information about it. Our scientists set to work on it; they study it analytically; they classify its parts and discover the laws which determine its nature. We learn to use the world of things for our purposes, and do this more effectively with the help of science, and, as we have seen, we may also treat people as things and use them for our purposes. The world of things is a reliable world. Any part of it can be brought out and examined again and again and its believed character verified, and its trustworthy character is witnessed in the triumphs of science. The objects in the world of things are common to the experience of all so that we can easily make ourselves understood when we speak about them.

In this world of things, the world of It, Buber points out, there is no true relationship between the I and what is experienced. When a man experiences the world, he finds the world in himself, but there is no mutual influence exercised between himself and the world. The world has no part in the experience; it merely permits itself to be experienced but has no concern in the matter. The world does nothing to the experience and the experience does nothing to the world. This conception, that in the world of I-It, in the world of the attitude of the self to objects, there is no mutuality and therefore no real relationship, is one of the most fundamental in Buber's thought.

There is, however, also the world of I-Thou, the world of relationships in which there is action and reaction. This world of real relationships, says Buber, is threefold. There is first of all the world of our relations with Nature. Our attitude to natural objects, as to trees, flowers, animals, the clouds, the winds, can be of two kinds. We can regard them as part of the world of It, and examine them scientifically; we can enumerate their parts and study their structure, their mode of growth. But we can also

enter into dynamic relationship with nature, as Shelley did with the skylark, or Wordsworth with the green linnet. A tree, a bird, can speak to us, can convey a meaning to us. The meaning is not a matter which science can deal with. It is the creation of a dynamic mutual relationship between the tree or bird and the particular individual who is involved. A scientific fact about the tree would have the same meaning for everyone and would take its place in the common world of objective knowledge. The living relation between nature and the human spirit and the knowledge and meaning which it conveys belongs to a different kind of world, the world of Thou.

Secondly, there is the world of art, the world of what Buber calls intelligible form. Buber maintains that the intelligible form is not the offspring of the soul of man. It is a form which exists independently of man and offers itself to him and asks to be made into a work. But this can only happen in so far as man speaks the word of relationship—man must *meet* the form which offers itself to him. A thing which belongs to the world of objects, the world of It, man cannot help experiencing; it belongs to a world that is common to all. But the form of beauty, the intelligible form, depends upon the creative action of man on meeting it, in entering into relationship with it, in perceiving its beauty and significance. When out of the whole of his being man speaks what Buber calls the primary word, the word of relationship, then the power streams from him to embrace the form and make it into a work.

Buber insists that man does not create the significant form. It is there even if man never finds it, waiting to be called into the world of things. The form, says Buber, longs as in a dream for the meeting with man, that for a timeless moment he may lift the ban and clasp the form. Then he goes on his way and experiences what there is to be experienced: it is made in this way, or this is expressed in it, or its qualities are such and such, and so it takes its place in the scheme of things. Buber denies that man can describe the form which meets him; if he attempts to describe it, he only enumerates its parts but the form itself is lost. He can only bring the form forth. Yet he beholds it, splendid in its radiance, clearer than all the clearness of the world of objects. It is not a thing, it has no objective character that science can deter-

mine—it is merely present existence. But if I bring it forth in a work of art then it becomes an object—it becomes a thing that anyone may experience, it enters the world of It. But, seeing that the object is an embodiment of an intelligible form, it can once more become a Thou, it can once more enter the world of relationship to a receptive beholder. Thus the true work of art endlessly becomes Thou again, endlessly inspires and blesses.

Of the three gateways to the world of relationship, the main portal, into which the side-gates lead, is the world of personal relationships, the world of fellowship, of love. In the personal relationship, one does not experience a person as an object in space time, or a conglomeration of parts, or a bundle of qualities. One experiences him as a Thou, and an experience of Thou, says Buber, is exclusive and fills the heavens. A melody is not a mere collection of notes, nor is a person a mere collection of parts. I may think of a part of a person, the colour of his hair, or the manner of his speech, and each time I do so he ceases to be Thou. In saying the word Thou to him, I stand in relationship to him as a whole. I speak to him with my whole being so that for the moment he is my whole world.[1]

[1] Buber's analysis of personal relationship owes much to Karl Jaspers. Jaspers says that only those are capable of genuine "meeting" who are capable also of being alone and of discovering themselves in solitude, of affirming in solitude the faith for which they stand. In relation to this Jaspers quotes Kierkegaard's "To believe is to be". It is this affirming self which must meet the other, and not the self which faces the other with some instinctive reaction as of aversion, distrust, fear or desire to dominate, or, on the other hand, of liking and attraction. A "meeting" must be without fear or reserve; one must present one's naked self, and similarly one must seek the real self in the other. One must have no ulterior motive, such as the desire to teach, to influence, to control; one's only desire must be to meet the other and speak the word which expresses one's whole being. One's demand of the other must be "Be yourself; don't imitate either me or anyone else; do not hide yourself under a mask of politeness." It is necessary, in fact, to go naked before the other. Meeting will often be combat, for it means facing the challenge of each other. But it is in such "combat" that we re-create ourselves. Thus it is in meeting that we make ourselves, yet it is also only through making ourselves that we are able to meet.

In meeting, besides combat, there should be love; each should feel pledged to the other; the merely capricious do not know how to enter into relation. Jaspers holds, then, that although meeting is compatible only with separateness and diversity, it involves also a genuine union of two persons.

Personal relationship and love, says Buber, should not be thought of as primarily a matter of feeling. Feelings may accompany love but they do not constitute it. What constitutes it is the reality of the relationship, the meeting of the beings as wholes. In the eyes of the person who loves men are set free from their entanglements in bustling activity—the real Thou is perceived underneath the superficial mask. From time to time, where love is genuine, in a wonderful way the moment of what Buber calls exclusiveness arises; it is the moment in which the real meeting of two minds shuts out the world of objects and embraces everything in itself. Then the lover can be effective, helping, healing, being helped, being healed. Love is the responsibility of an I for a Thou. Herein lies the likeness between all who love truly, and not in the character of the feelings experienced, which vary.

What then is the distinguishing characteristic of the world of relation? A true relationship is not a relation to a world of objects, but always to a single being, which may be a natural object, or an intelligible form, or a person. Nothing is present but this being, which, however, possesses supreme significance and implicates the whole world. This world of being is not reliable like the world of objects; it may take on a continually new appearance. It is not outside you, but stirs in the depth of you; if you say "soul of my soul", you have not said too much. While you have it, you have the present, and it is only the present that is real. Buber, like Berdyaev, points out that meaning and value are only to be found in the present so that the worst crime of thought is to project one's life and one's hopes into the future. We must find our life's meaning in our experience of the present in nature, in form, in persons.

In the chronicle of solid benefits given to us by the world of objects the moments of the Thou, says Buber, appear as strange lyric and dramatic episodes, seductive and magical, but tearing us away to dangerous extremes, loosing the well-tried content, leaving more questions than satisfaction behind them. It is not possible indeed to live all one's life in these moments of real present existence, but it is possible to live entirely in the world of objects, the world of It. But, Buber remarks, while without It, man cannot live, he who lives with It alone is not a man. It is

the world of Thou, the world of relationship, the world of the real present existence, which gives meaning to life.

Martin Buber does not regard the life of primitive man as a golden age as some anthropologists have believed. But he holds that primitive life was more real than that of modern man because less tied up with the world of objects. Human history, and the growth of what we call civilisation, has seen a progressive augmentation of the world of It. The world of objects in every culture is more extensive than that of its predecessor, and with its growth man's ability to experience and use objects increases. Unfortunately, however, the growth of his capacity to experience objects and to acquire and use objectivised and scientific knowledge tends to be achieved at the expense of his ability to enter into real relation.

Like Berdyaev, Buber describes the entity in man which enters into real relationships as spirit so that the life of the spirit is the life of relation, the life of the response of man to his Thou. Spirit, says Buber, is not to be found in the I, but in the relation between the I and the Thou. Two of the modes of the functioning of the spirit are through knowledge and art, but it is important to distinguish between living present knowledge in which the spirit enters into relationship, and dead knowledge, consisting in objective information and ideas recorded in books; similarly in art we must distinguish between the moment of meeting between the spirit and the intelligible form, or the moment when a form which has become an It takes life again through the response of a sensitive mind, and the world of objectified knowledge about art. But, in the life of the spirit, of more fundamental importance than the act of knowing or the act of meeting with the intelligible form is the act of willing, the moment of what Buber calls "pure effective action without arbitrary self-will".

Martin Buber's concept of the pure act of will is of crucial importance in his philosophy. He says that no man is capable of genuine decision, as distinct from arbitrary self-will, who cannot make contact with the Thou, the God within him. At the moment of such a decision the fiery stuff of all his ability to will, and all the possibilities that lie before him, seethe around him, still without actuality in the world. Alluring glimpses of powers flicker before him from the uttermost bounds, and the whole universe

tempts him, but there is one deed that aims at him, which it is his destiny to perform.[1] The charge is laid upon him to perform this one act. Yet that man only is truly free, says Buber, who can discover his destiny in these moments of pure will, in whom the response, the spirit, is for ever kindled within him so that he is able to find the deed he is called to do. Destiny and freedom are solemnly promised to each other. Only the man who achieves freedom also meets his destiny. For it only he who escapes slavery to causation. The actions of other men are caused, perhaps by some instinct, perhaps by external suggestion; this man only responds to his Thou, finds within him the impulse which expresses his whole being. He who forgets all that is caused and makes decision out of the depths, who rids himself of property and raiment and naked approaches the Face—he alone is the free man, he alone is capable of pure, effective action. It is he only who can speak the true word, the word which is teaching.

Causality, Buber remarks, possesses absolute sway over the realm of It, both the physical world and very considerable elements of the psychical world. But in I-Thou relationships, in the world of pure, effective action, man escapes from causality. Here I and Thou freely confront each other in mutual effect which is neither connected with nor coloured by any causality.

The true word resembles the intelligible form in that it can always come to life again, after it has been spoken or recorded, when it meets the responsive spirit. But most men to-day, Buber says, while fully equipped with information, are unfitted for living dealings. They pin the great teacher down in history; they codify his words. Nor are they niggards with admiration, with idolatry, admirably mixed with the jargon of psychology, as befits modern man. But the living contact they seldom make. Buber exclaims, "O lonely Face like a star in the night, O living Finger laid on an unheeding brow, O fainter echoing footstep".[2] How often indeed do the words which express the living spirit fail to meet a living response!

The life of the spirit is not to be found in the life of institutions,

[1] This view is typical of Jaspers and the existentialists generally. The "existential choice" is the choice of oneself, but when one has chosen oneself, one has no choice but to be oneself; to be oneself is one's Destiny.

[2] *I and Thou*, p. 42.

but neither can it be found in the life of feelings. Everyone realises to-day, indeed, how dead has become the life of institutions; this fact is the starting point of the need of the age. How we are all bound to the wheel of institutions which fail to express meaning for us! How most of us are slaves to a system, a machine, so that it is only in our short leisure (if indeed then we are not too exhausted and we escape from the machine of popular entertainment) that we can come to life! But Buber says that only a few people realise that feelings do not yield personal life. There is no remedy, in his view, for the mechanical state which binds citizens together on a merely functional and unreal basis, in setting up instead the community of love in which people out of free abundant feeling wish to live with one another. True community does not arise through people having feelings for one another (though indeed not without it) but through their taking their stand in mutual relation with a living Centre (which is God, the eternal Thou), and being also in living mutual relationship with one another. People often have feelings for each other without achieving mutual relation. The builder of true community then is the living affective Centre with which all the members of the Community are independently related, that is, God.

Buber belongs to the same movement of thought as Berdyaev in the emphasis he lays on the freedom of the spirit, and in portraying the modern world as full of powerful influences which are hostile to freedom. Not only is the growing multiplicity of objects dangerous to freedom, the increasing pressure on man of the external world; it is also true that the movement of modern thought is deterministic, its tendency being to regard the individual as entirely controlled by particular influences. Biological thought regards the individual as determined by the need to adjust himself to his environment and the struggle for existence; psychological thought looks on man as subject to the control of his urges and instincts, to the tension between the Ego and the Id. Historical materialism looks upon man's ideas and institutions as subject to the control of his material environment. When in olden times man was subject to the compulsion of the stars, ancient wisdom taught him how to escape from the slavery, but modern "scientism" will not admit any escape from man's slavery to causality. The modern dogma of process leaves no room for the

freedom of the person. This reveals the modern period as a period of sickness when the world of It has clamped itself tightly on the soul of man. In healthy periods of history there streams from men of the spirit new freedom and new life to all people, and from men like Berdyaev and Buber to-day there streams a channel of release from process, from economic, biological, and psychological determination. "The world of Thou", says Buber, "is not closed. He who goes out to it with concentrated being and risen power to enter into relation becomes aware of freedom, and to be freed from the belief that there is no freedom is indeed to be free."[1]

The opposite state to the state of freedom is that of arbitrary self-will. To escape from this state it is necessary to distinguish between the puny, unfree will which is controlled by the instincts and appetites, by casual impulses or external suggestions, and what Buber calls the grand will. The puny, unfree will is associated with relationships to such objects as the nation, money, power, art and sex. A man sunk in arbitrary self-will will make an idol, an absolute value of some such end as the above, though he may be unconscious of his real motives. Many men who live for power or success or prestige are not conscious of the real nature of their aims. The self-willed man is possessed with a feverish desire to experience and use the world so that he does not know how to enter into real relationship. He may wish to know people, but it is because he wishes to use them; he may love women but it is for the same reason. He has a highly developed individuality but he is not what Buber calls a person. He has no grand will, only self-will, which he passes off for real will. The way of escape for such a man can only be the way of reversal. Nothing less is necessary than for him to change the fundamental direction of his consciousness. The self-willed man seeks to differentiate himself as much as possible from other persons so as to acquire a sense of power or distinction; a man who is a person seeks rather to enter into relationship with others and to share with them. Sharing means first of all an unreserved meeting of one's whole being with that of another. All true relationships consist essentially in a sharing in reality. Sharing is an experience which I cannot appropriate for myself because it belongs to the

[1] *I and Thou*, p. 58.

person with whom I share as much as to myself. Individuality as distinct from personality is gained by building up a consciousness separate from that of others. No man is pure person and no man is pure individuality. But, Buber adds, there are men so defined by the pattern of their relationships that may be called persons, and men so defined by individuality that they may be called individuals. The more a man, or humanity, is mastered by individuality, the deeper he sinks into unreality.

Buber speaks of God as the eternal Thou, the Thou which cannot become an It. The eternal Thou in oneself is felt as a presence, a power, but not as having any specific content. But the Thou I find in myself is also in others; in any real relationship, in any relationship of love, I meet the Thou in the other person. It is through the Thou, through God, that real relationships come into being, through the fact that the reality I find in myself I can also find in the other. There is no way of finding the reality of another person except through the Thou which exists in him. Thus real love, real communion, implies a common centre of experience. People who say that we must find God in the depths of our soul often commit a gross error; they forget that we can find God in our relationships with others, and in our relationship with intelligible forms and with nature. He who looks only into his own heart and does not seek to enter into relationship with others and with the world impoverishes his life, and soon even the God in his own heart deserts him. Buber calls this the descent from spirit to false spirituality.

Buber says that all real relationships are exclusive, and fill the whole universe, nothing being able to enter the mind which is not an integral part of the experience. Thus he who achieves real relationship with God sees the whole universe in the light of that experience. To step into what Buber calls pure relation is not to disregard the world but to see the whole world in the light of the Thou, not to renounce the world but to establish it on its true basis. No man will find God by giving up the things of the world. There is indeed no such thing as seeking God as there is nothing in which He may not be found. How foolish and hopeless would be the man who turned aside from the course of his life to seek God; even though he brought to the search all the wisdom springing from solitude and a concentration of his energies he

would miss God. The man whose mind is turned towards relationship, instead of to the using of things and persons for his own ends, is composed before all things and makes contact with those who need and help him. How then can he turn from the world, seeing that it is in the world that he is finding the real! But the finding is never the end, only the eternal middle, of the way.

Some persons regard God as a being whom they infer, as from the order of nature or the purpose of evolution. However, we can only know God truly by knowing Him with the greatest possible closeness and directness in our lives and in our relationships.

We know in our hearts that we need God but we do not always realise that God needs us. The meaning and purpose of our lives, which is also God's purpose, can only be realised through our own creative action, the action of the I when it meets the Thou. We know unshakably in our hearts, in Buber's view, that there is a creative becoming of God to which we can contribute, that there is a divine meaning in the world and in our lives, and that the creative participation of the I is necessary to the realisation of that meaning. We know then that God needs us as we need God.

On the subject of revealed religion Buber says that he knows of no revelation and believes in no revelation but the direct presence of God as a source of strength and meaning in us and in personal relationships. The person to whom God's presence is revealed finds life heavier but heavier with meaning; nothing in his life can any longer be meaningless, and the meaning is a meaning of this life, not another life. This meaning can only be found by each person singly in his own experience. No other person can find God for us or find meaning for us. He can only teach us about God to give us hints by which we can find God for ourselves. Buber concludes on this subject: "the word of revelation is I am that I am, that which reveals is that which reveals. That which is is. The eternal source of strength remains, the eternal voice sounds forth, nothing more."[1]

Buber's discussion of mysticism, and of Buddhism and Eastern mysticism in particular, follows a line similar to that of Berdyaev. All mystical teachings are true, he says, in that they stress the need for some kind of unification or concentration of power with-

[1] *I and Thou*, p. 112.

in the self, so that all that is within a man is drawn into one current, is given a central direction. A man who is incapable of the effort, as by contemplation, to achieve a concentration of his power and energies is unfit for the work of the spirit. But the fundamental problem remains of the relation between the experience of concentration, of inner illumination, and the life of our earthly affairs. How does it profit a man to experience an abundantly rich, heavenly moment in concentration and contemplation if this heavenly moment has nothing to do with his earthly life; if his life is rent in two with no connection between the fissured halves! He has his life, in all seriousness to live, among everyday things. A spiritual ecstasy totally divorced from this life would sooner or later lose all sense of meaning and reality.

The solution of the problem favoured by Eastern thought is that man must escape from the earthly life, the life of desire; he must escape from the thicket of opinions and the illusion of forms, and in the depths of contemplation find unity with the divine. This doctrine, says Buber, is based on the illusion that spirit exists in man; spirit exists only in relationship, in personal relationships, in relationships with nature and intelligible forms. Solitude and contemplation may give a man strength if through them he masters himself and concentrates his energies, but if in it he merely conducts a dialogue with himself, seeking to enjoy the experiences of his own soul, that is the descent of the spirit into false spirituality. The Eastern mystics tended to fall into false spirituality. The goal of Eastern mysticism is annihilation of the self, of the "I". Buber condemns any annihilation of the "I". The creative "I" must remain, but in relationship with the Thou, in relationship with God, with persons, with beautiful forms.

However much a man may experience the life of relationship, he cannot escape an oscillating movement between actual and potential being. The I meets the Thou, as in love, or the revelation of beauty, but the bright Thou cannot maintain itself. Every Thou, except God Himself, becomes an It. The relationship with the friend whose contact has been so full of meaning sinks to a prosaic level; the magic Keats finds in the nightingale fades. How powerful, says Buber, is the unbroken world of It, and how delicate are the appearances of the Thou! Love and beauty indeed endure, but only in the interchange of actual and potential being.

Only God never ceases to be Thou. He who knows God knows very well remoteness from God, but he does not know the absence of God; it is we only who are not always there. But while every Thou in human relationships must become an It, the It can always be re-transformed into a Thou. The beauty of the significant form will be felt again, the meaningful contact with the loved one will be re-experienced.

The man who lives from the spirit in a sense escapes from duty, from the tension between what he wishes and what ought to be, for as he wills to live in accordance with the spirit, what he wills is also what he ought to do and he escapes from inner conflict. But, Buber says, this is no escape from responsibility. The man of the spirit has the mighty responsibility given to him by his love for the whole of mankind; he has to play his part before the Face of God with the motive force given him by a concentration of his energies; he has to practise decision in the depths of spontaneity, unruffled decision, made ever anew, decision to take action.

The world of political and economic relationships tends to become a huge system of slavery through being divorced from the life of the spirit; only from the spirit can meaning and joy stream into all work; only from its presence can everything that is worked and possessed, while remaining in the world of It, yet be transfigured and made into a representation of the Thou. It follows that those who teach the doctrine of the spirit must seek to bring about the permeation of the world of political and economic relationships with the spirit; nothing could be more foreign to this conception than that which divides life into independent worlds and puts the world of the spirit into a different compartment from that of politics and economics. Buber's social conceptions then imply a personalist political and economic policy.

While the eternal Thou, God, cannot by its nature become an It, nevertheless man, because of his human limitations, is constantly turning God into a thing. We make a Thou into an It, not only when we build beautiful things, but when we establish churches and organisations. Doctrines, formulæ, ritual, and religious institutions at first tend to be a genuine expression of relation, of the relation between the I and the Thou, but gradually faith in the form tends to replace the living relationship. Thus

life departs from churches and organisations. A complacent belief in an It takes the place of the continually renewed movement of the being towards concentration and real relationship; communal prayer and ordered devotional exercises replace personal prayer.

The corruption of formal organisations by the departure of the living spirit from them is no doubt an evil that it is difficult or impossible to avoid. It is inevitable that man should embody his Thou in an It even though the It will sooner or later be alienated from the spirit. But the essence of Buber's teaching is that man's relation with God should be renewed continually in the life of every day, so that the world of I becomes so penetrated with relation that relation wins in it a shining, streaming constancy. Only in so far, says Buber in an eloquent passage, as the I actually meets the Thou in relationship "can there arise and exist, round about the invisible altar, a human cosmos with bounds and form, grasped with the spirit out of the universal stuff of the æon, a world that is house and home, a dwelling for man in the universe".[1]

The ages of history have a difference of quality. There are ages when the true life of the spirit seems to be suppressed and buried, when the forms that earlier ages have set up lose their life. There is then a time of maturing, when the spirit comes to life with a vitality so urgent that it creates a new form of God in the world. Thus throughout history ever new powers of the world and the spirit are summoned to divine form, or rather a form which comprises the divine and the human. But, says Buber, the movement in history between the dead form and the living spirit is not a vicious circle; man is not destined to experience for ever precisely the same phases of decay and renewal. In each æon fate and the deadness of the spirit become more oppressive, and the process of reversal more shattering. To-day we are living in the greatest spiritual crisis of history; the phase of spiritual degeneration has been more extreme as the spiritual revival will be brighter and more intense. Also each movement of reversal brings men nearer to the inwardness of true religion, to a realisation that they must find God within themselves and in real relationships; increasingly we realise the Kingdom of God as within us and between us. "History", concludes Buber, "is a mysterious

[1] *I and Thou*, p. 115.

approach. Every spiral of its way leads us both into profounder perversion and more fundamental reversal. But the end that from the side of the world is called reversal is called from God's side salvation".[1]

Reversal, we have seen, involves relationships in the fields of nature and intelligible forms, human relationships, and direct relationship with God. These relationships can be symbolised by Goethe, Socrates and Jesus. Goethe expresses especially the mode of intercourse with nature; nature gives herself to Goethe and Goethe speaks unceasingly with nature; Goethe is also a sensitive medium for the intelligible form. Socrates's I is the I of personal relation, of endless dialogue. He lived incessantly in real contact with the minds of others, a contact bodied forth in dialogue which penetrates to the heart of man's life. The I of Jesus is the I of the relation in which man calls God father, in which he feels His close and loving presence. Thus Jesus speaks to man only out of that spirit in himself which he finds also in his Father and which He can meet in others through love.

Many who are prepared to regard *I and Thou* as an inspired pamphlet, a brilliant statement in brief of mystical experience, would nevertheless feel that mysticism in any form is largely irrelevant to the social issues of our time. It is important therefore to stress the view that to Buber the teaching of *I and Thou* is not merely for the few but for the many. Buber holds that the time has come for a new outpouring of the spirit, a revival of religious experience entering deeply into the lives of the masses. Such a revival would have important political effects and implications.

Many critics deny any objective validity or universal value to the insight of the mystic. Buber claims that his teaching is based on inner realities the validity of which can be tested and demonstrated by anyone who has the will to do so. Men can, if they wish, distinguish between "arbitrary self-will" and the instinctive urges on the one hand, and on the other a deeper self which stands outside the instincts and is able to co-ordinate and direct the total human energies. Numberless persons have given testimony to the experience in which the person who finds his deeper self is able also to draw on an inner source of love and strength

[1] *I and Thou*, p. 120.

and energy; this is what Buber speaks of as the meeting between the "I" and God. Because the self which meets God is detached from arbitrary self-will and from the instincts, it is able to seek universal ends, to draw the natural energies into the service of a wider good, to seek truth and significance and beauty.

The widespread response to Buber's book shows how far it is from being true that the experiences which he describes are reserved to a few "withdrawn" mystics. No doubt large numbers of persons to-day, particularly among the intelligentsia, are closed to his appeal by certain prejudices, by the influence of a particular intellectual background. But the spirit of our time is rapidly evaporating these prejudices and this influence. The widespread outpouring of the spirit to which Buber looks forward may well be at hand.

The development of science in the last few centuries has led to an outward instead of an inward direction of men's minds, has produced a concentration of energy on the aim of controlling matter. To-day it is creating a great effort to control society through what are called scientific laws, the assumption being that persons, like things, are subject to law and causation and so can be controlled with the help of scientific knowledge. The Marxists are right in holding that historical tendencies give rise to their opposites through the working of dialectical principles. The over-valuation of science, in the historical period which is now passing, is already creating its opposite through a reaction against the tendency it has shown to depersonalise the human species. The movement to resist the depersonalisation will come through the spread of the influence of men like Kierkegaard, Berdyaev and Buber, through a realisation that in so far as man becomes a creative I responding to a Thou he rises superior to causation. The idea of controlling, by scientific knowledge, a world of creative *I-s* is a manifest absurdity. The great issue of to-day is that of checking depersonalisation and re-energising persons, and there is great need to spread such teaching as that of Buber's. It would be a salutary measure if an enterprising publisher such as Victor Gollancz would help to give to *I and Thou* the immense circulation which has been given in recent years to such polemical works as *Tory M.P.*

Buber's teaching is far from being politically escapist. For no

right solution of the political issue is conceivable without a far-reaching education of human beings in the true character of human ends. It is on this most fundamental of issues that Buber's teaching shows the greatest ripeness of significance and wisdom.

Bibliography

MARTIN BUBER: I and Thou
Between Man and Man

III. *Lewis Mumford*

IN his *Condition of Man* Lewis Mumford pays an eloquent tribute to the man who was his teacher and the inspirer of his thought, Patrick Geddes. He was a man who was obscure in his lifetime and is hardly better known to-day, a man who produced no epoch-making book or series of books. Yet Mumford regards him as one of the great formative influences of the modern world; his insight was passed on mainly by example and oral communication, but it was passed on, so that his spirit is more alive, years after his death, than it has ever been.

Geddes was one of a number of modern thinkers inspired by the idea of a new synthesis. He wished to see a new co-ordination of knowledge and experience, effectively applied to the enrichment of life. Himself an enthusiastic biologist, who recognised to the full all that the scientific spirit could do for mankind, he yet fought against the narrowing specialisms of the scientists. He took all knowledge for his province, and it was one of his chief aims to promote the continuous interchange between the isolated provinces of thought. Citizenship to Geddes was even more important than science; he realised to the full that scientific knowledge not allied to right values might degrade instead of uplifting man. Thus, while he never gave up his original interests as a biologist, he turned more and more to an attempt to lay the foundations of a sociology which would synthesise the various special sciences and the thought of the various schools. He sought at once to lay a sound theoretical basis for the social sciences and to correlate scientific investigation with immediate social ends. He himself was one of the greatest of modern social diagnosticians. In 1911 he predicted the outbreak of the First World War which he said would take place not later than 1915. He was then planning a series of books on the Making of the Future in that spirit of earnest enquiry and prophetic vision that was characteristic of him.

Geddes believed that scientific research should be organically

and comprehensively planned. An unbalanced development of particular sciences unrelated to any wise plan for the social application of knowledge might have disastrous results. A true conception of social need used to direct the future of research might slow up the tempo of particular sciences, but such restriction might be of untold benefit.

Though his initial approach to human problems was that of the scientist, the great merit of Geddes was that he transcended the merely scientific approach. He recognised the value of religion, of art, of history. Perhaps his strongest impulse was a desire to enrich the human spirit with all the values springing from the experience of the best in all its modes and vitalities. He held that history should play a crucial part in the education of every citizen, for one of the noblest characteristics of human personality was its capacity to enrich itself by absorbing into itself the values created by the past. The spirit of Ancient Greece, with its passion for beauty and intellectual clarity, should become an integral part of the modern spirit, as should the spirit of love and sacrifice which was the soul of religion. Scientist as he was, a life bereft of the religious and æsthetic impulses seemed to him a meagre thing. He attached particular importance, also, to a coming together of the West and the East. Geddes had learnt from the Hindus the great value of withdrawal and contemplation; his biography of Jagadis Chandra Bose was a tribute not only to a great physicist but to an Eastern mystic. Geddes considered that the East and the West have suffered great impoverishment from their isolation from each other, the West having produced the Hollow Men, men engaged in feverish activity but having no inner life, while the East has failed to reap the substantial benefits which have sprung from the conquest of physical nature.

Geddes's ideal was wholeness of personality; too many modern men seemed to him to be less than half alive. But for fullness of being he held it to be insufficient to reap the harvest of the culture of the ages; it was necessary also to enrich the soil with the primitive elements of our civilisation. The roots of life lay deep; man's instinctive vitalities needed to find a full and appropriate if sometimes a sublimated expression. Geddes counselled youth to go out with the fishing fleet, to accompany the shepherd on his rounds, to stalk game with the hunter, gaining the benefit of the

discipline and the contact with wild nature which are part of these primitive occupations.

Thought, in Geddes's view, should always find its expression in action. He himself sought, on every possible occasion, to take vigorous action in relation to the problems of his time. Sociology in its practical aspect meant to him the planning of regions, though the region, of course, had to some extent to be planned in relation to the world-wide community. Geddes was a pioneer worker in the field of the regional social survey. But no one realised better than he did the evils of undue centralisation, the danger of plans imposed from the top which failed to afford free expression to individual and group activities, which failed to preserve the primitive and traditional elements in the social heritage. Geddes realised all that the machine had done and could do for man but he maintained that the machine must be subordinate to man, to human values. He shared with Ruskin and William Morris the belief that modern economic production had tended to wither the personality of the worker, to turn him into a thing, a mere tool. The values of modern production were often spurious, every true ideal being sacrificed to the profit motive. Industry would only begin to serve man instead of man serving industry when it gave to the worker the liberated vitality of the artist. Thus at the basis of all Geddes's plans for regional planning was the conception of the balanced personality, the whole man, who could live freely, vigorously and creatively in his work and in organic relation to his civic and social environment.

Thus to Mumford Patrick Geddes was "the Bacon and the Leonardo, perhaps the Galileo"[1] of the new synthesis which is the key to all wise thought and action in the modern world. In his personality a new mutation took place, and by his example and practice the path of development and renewal becomes clearer. In Mumford's own highly significant work he would not claim more than that he had attempted to work out in fuller detail the precepts and principles which Geddes taught him.

What is the urge behind the modern movement towards a synthesis of which Mumford, following Geddes, has become one of the chief exponents? It is, I think, the realisation of the urgent need in the modern world for a common body of values, a

[1] *Condition of Man*, p. 389.

common faith. It is no accident that modern history has already given us two major world wars and numerous violent revolutions. A number of penetrating thinkers in the last few decades have drawn attention to modern man's perilous maladjustment to the objective social situation. Traditional ethical values have collapsed when some basis of moral unity is imperatively needed to facilitate a settlement of serious clashes, both within and between states, which may wreck civilisation if left to the arbitrament of war. Immensely powerful social forces to-day are controlled by groups of men cherishing fanatical ideas repugnant to good sense and the philosophic mind, yet there seems no possibility at the present stage of achieving that measure of agreement on an adequate body of thought which would be capable of meeting the danger, through which barbarism and social disintegration could be checked. The need for unity to-day is infinitely more urgent than it was in the Middle Age when the Catholic Church sought to check the mediæval anarchy and to build the unity of Christendom.

In seeking a synthesis Mumford has first been convinced of the folly of limited, of incomplete conceptions, of diagnoses which only take into account particular perspectives, of doctrines which betray some fatal hiatus of knowledge and insight. The new synthesis must be enriched by all that both history and contemporary knowledge can teach. The need for finding a foundation in history is of fundamental importance. Mankind, says Mumford, has never consciously carried enough of its past with it. It has tended to stereotype a few sorry moments of it, instead of perpetually re-thinking it, re-valuing it, re-living it in the mind. It would be fatal to imagine that one can escape from its influence; if one fails to make conscious use of it, one is the more subject to its unconscious power. History is a reservoir of human creativeness; "without free access to that reservoir, the life of any single generation would be but a trickle of water in a desert".[1] We are living in a period of unmitigated confusion and disintegration and have each a part to play in the renewal of civilisation. But we shall not do this intelligently and creatively without understanding the formative forces at work in the modern world, and we shall not understand these without tracing them to their roots. Fuller and deeper knowledge of the living past then is necessary

[1] *Condition of Man*, p. 12.

to fashion the actors who are to play an effective part in the drama of the future.

In looking back to the forces which have built the modern world Mumford turns first to the life of Jesus Christ which seems to him undoubtedly a turning point in world history. But Christ and His teaching did not come out of the blue; there was a long underground germination. "Isaiah, Hesiod, Lao-Tse, Buddha, Confucius, Solon and Zoroaster were activators in a far-spreading ethical and mystical movement that set the stage for the Christian drama".[1]

Christianity came to a world in decay, the condition of which bore a marked resemblance to the world of to-day. The Jews reached the highest point of their culture in the sixth century B.C., their supreme figure being Isaiah. From that point a succession of catastrophes finished by placing them under the Roman yoke. The Greeks were at their peak in the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ. Then disintegration set in. During the life of Plato Greek decline was rapid. Plato's "Republic" was youthful and hopeful in spirit; it was a saddened man who wrote *The Laws*. The fourth century B.C. saw a dramatic collapse of the Greek power and civilisation. The Romans took over a series of great cultures in a state of dissolution and decay, the cultures of Egypt, Greece, Syria, Judæa and Persia.

Rome was not equal to the task of transforming the debris of these dying cultures into a unified and living organism. Roman power, Roman law, Roman administration, Roman engineering for a considerable period held her empire together. But in the time even of the greatest physical triumphs of the Roman order there was disorder and malaise in the human spirit. Then followed a period of physical decline and moral collapse. Roman citizens became unwilling to marry and have children. Violence gained the upper hand; slavery and sudden death were multiplied; helpless refugees and homeless aliens were found everywhere. The Romans ruthlessly exploited their conquests; "caught by the demands of their appetites in a predatory economy, the Romans finally became parasitic upon the peoples they ruled. One half of the population of Rome under the Antonines lived on public charity. Terrorism, violence, lust, cruelty came to be organised on a scale that passes belief. The Romans became 'aesthetes of

[1] *Condition of man*, p. 45.

torture', while the heightening of sexual excitement became the main purpose of most public entertainments. The Stoic creed which was the noblest product of this era was a philosophy of disillusion; it became the mark of the wise to know how to endure life with passivity, calm and cheerfulness."

Such a world was ready for the gospel of Jesus. Jesus and his followers were certain of their message; their faith gave new hope to a disillusioned world. Himself a carpenter, Jesus had plain words for simple men; his teaching spread rapidly among the workers of the crowded, world-weary metropolises of the Roman Empire. Jesus sought to transcend the limits of the Jewish national state; He aimed at a wider community united by love and a direct relationship between the soul and a God who was a loving Father.

On the foundation of the life and ideas of Jesus was built the Christian Church. Mumford remarks that, in order to survive, any idea must adapt itself to an impure medium, the medium of life; otherwise it is doomed to sterility. If it imparts form to new institutions, it will also in turn be deformed by existing institutions. The original ideas of Marx are hardly recognisable in the present Soviet system; the impressive structure of the Christian Church was also the tomb of Jesus. "Every formative idea, in the act of prolonging its existence, tends to kill the living spirit that brought it forth, yet without this death it would have remained inoperative." The Christianity which survived was a syncretic faith. The memory of Christ's life and example; the experience of community in the meeting of the faithful; the heritage of Greek philosophy; the influence of the mystery religions; the tradition of the Jewish national faith; the political needs which arose out of the organisation of Christian groups for the protection and for the more effective dissemination of their faith; the experience of tribulation and persecution, and the belief in the value of suffering after the pattern of Christ's suffering on the Cross; the spirit of asceticism arising partly as a protest against the aimless sensuality and cruel distractions of the Empire; all these played a part in building Christian practice, Christian theology, Christian institutions. By building from these diverse elements the Christian Church increasingly found a means of satisfying the multiform psychological needs of its adherents.

The conquest of the Empire by Christianity in the fourth century, Mumford remarks, was not the submission of a minority of die-hard Romans to an overwhelming majority of Christians; it was rather "the capitulation of a confused, self-distrustful, greedy, superstitious, defeatist majority to an organised minority that knew its own mind".

Christianity prevailed in the Empire, but the Empire itself continued to decay. The last Olympic Games were held in A.D. 394; after A.D. 404 the gladiatorial combats ceased; the School of Athens was closed in 529; water ceased to flow in the baths of Caracalla after 537. The Empire experienced a series of barbarian invasions. Society became so evil and insecure that the prevalent impulse was to withdraw from the world. In this world patricians became Christians and Christians became hermits and monks. St. Augustine taught that there was no hope for man in the state or in temporal society. Man must love and seek to possess only that which is above earthly corruption, that which is perfect, immutable, all-embracing, in short God, absolute being, that which is. St. Augustine praised the contemplative life as the highest expression of man's being; thus he sounded the note of retreat. From the third century A.D. there was a movement of Christians to the deserts where many lived as hermits. Later came the organisation of monastic communities. Life was perilous and evil. From the fifth to the eleventh century those who desired some secure and rational form of living could hardly expect to find it anywhere outside the monasteries.

Arthur Koestler has suggested that it may yet happen in the modern world that men will give up hope of social and political order, and, gathering together in small groups which Koestler calls "oases", will try to preserve the essential values of a civilised life while keeping aloof from politics. A similar note of defeatism is sounded in the recent writings of Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxley. In the monasteries there was certainly preserved some kind of basis for an orderly social life on which it was possible to build when affairs outside became secure enough to make sound construction possible.

The same conditions of extreme disorder which led men to escape from the world caused the Church, in the early centuries of its advent to power, to aim primarily at the increase of its author-

ity and the centralisation of its power. Berdyaev remarks that the essence of the life of the spirit is freedom and that even God has no *power* over a man's soul, yet the mediæval Church sought to rule over the minds of men, and the claim of the Catholic Church to exercise such authority has remained in essence unchanged since the time of Gregory the Great. From the sixth century the power of the Church over mediæval society was steadily increased and consolidated. The Church sought to control every aspect of the life of society, the political and economic as well as the cultural, philosophical and religious aspects, and its success was very considerable. Mumford mentions the end of the twelfth century as the peak of the internal unity and external influence of the Roman Church. The canon law was codified; vagueness in dogma was as far as possible eliminated and the seven sacraments were finally established; confession was made obligatory; the systematic persecution of heresy was introduced and for that purpose the Roman practice of torture was re-introduced; the Christian view of life was systematically expressed and embodied in cities, buildings, statues and paintings. "The Church visible administered its offices every hour of the day . . . filling the air with chant and prayer and song, giving the grace of art and ritual to every moment of life. The Church presided over birth and death and all the momentous crises between; the Church fed the hungry traveller, nursed the ill and the wounded, baptized the new-born infant and crowned the last moments of life with awful dignity."

Finally, with the help of the learning of the scholiasts and the genius of the great Aquinas, the Church systematised all thought. It might have been expected that a synthesis of thought and society wrought through the agency of religion would have created a stable social order on which increasingly glorious cultural achievements might have been built. But the medæval synthesis was destined to break up and the Catholic Church to lose the larger part of its power; philosophy, science, education, literature and art were to assert their autonomy; a great variety of religions and sects were destined to arise, asserting their right to independence of the papacy; similarly, the political states and the economic institutions of society were to claim and achieve autonomy. We have had to wait till the modern period for new conditions of social chaos to create a new demand for a synthesis,

for some kind of spiritual authority. Mumford remarks that a study of the causes of the break-up of the mediæval synthesis is of the greatest value in relation to our own problems.

The issue is a complex one. It should be noted first that the source of authority in the Middle Ages was placed, not in the knowledge of truth and of the divine will that is increasingly revealed to man's earnest strivings, but in the historical Church and its concrete formulations. Aquinas appeared to appeal primarily to reason, but a reason that feared to question in any particular the authority of the Church was built on shaky foundations. Aquinas asserted that "it is unlawful to hold that any false assertion is contained in the Gospels or in any canonical scripture". Thus he made the truth itself unlawful. Aquinas's mind was acute, powerful and comprehensive; the modern revival of Thomism is an indication that we have much to learn from him to-day. Nevertheless a doctrine of authority which in fact denied to reason the right to enquire into particular fields lest official pronouncements should be brought into question was bound sooner or later to be attacked with fierce suspicion, and where criticism is accompanied by resentment much that is good tends to be discarded with the bad. So that authority should not be questioned Aquinas virtually denied reason in the name of reason. The result was a rebellion against any form of religious authority which has had a profound effect on the whole intellectual development of the modern period.

The authority of the Church was undermined, also, by the growing corruption that accompanied its enormous increase of wealth and power. The Church had become increasingly a machine for manufacturing salvation in return for money or its equivalent value. Mumford writes, "Salvation was protected by exclusive monopoly patents, the Christian dogma. Out of its holy offices and rites the Church had created at long last an organisation which was committed largely, not to spreading the gifts of the spirit, but to offering magical substitutes for them to those capable of making cash payments." Mediæval Christianity became full of grave contradictions. It held up an impossible ideal for men to follow, but when they sought to appease their guilt by the performance of external acts and the giving of material gifts, the manifest contradiction between the high spiritual ends which

were never openly disavowed and the triumph in practice of the baser motive deepened the guilt. The increasing sense that the Church was corrupt strengthened doctrinal doubts.

Mumford describes brilliantly how there grew up within the mediæval order habits of thought and living which were to build the "capitalist personality". The new type of character, concerned as it was with material ends and the acquisition of wealth, was in essential opposition to the saintly ideal which characterised mediæval life at its best. The acceptance of individual self-seeking as a consciously or unconsciously pursued ideal gradually took the place of the belief in the Church as a spiritual authority or moral arbiter.

With the undermining of Catholicism came Protestantism, and with its growth, however much Luther and Calvin proclaimed a new principle of authority, came the spread of the belief in private judgment. The outcome of the doctrine and practice of private judgment, says Mumford, has been perpetual schism, a perpetual splitting off of one sect from another, and eventually extreme individualism and indeed nihilism. However true it may be that the voice of God can be heard within the soul of man, however true it may be that man's highest intuitions are the creation of the individual personality, it is also true that human judgment is subject to corruption, that man frequently mistakes for truth the rationalisations of his passions, that men are abundantly misled by pride and ignorance. It is true, no doubt, that there are times when a man must stand by his own vision against the verdict of society; it is also true that wise men will recognise the individual liability to error and the value and necessity of the perpetual checking up of private thought by the collective effort of the human race. As Protestantism grew, man seemed to move further and further from any basis of unity; thought and society became increasingly atomised. With the chaos of the twentieth century the need to reconstitute the unity of civilisation became the most urgent of issues, and as religion seemed to have lost the capacity to create it, politics became a rival claimant as the source of authority; politics became a substitute religion.

The release of the individual that was a consequence of the collapse of mediæval authority, however much it tended to an ultimate anarchy, effected a great enrichment of life and of cul-

ture. With the Reformation and the Renaissance came a great new development of artistic and cultural forms, a great upsurge of individual genius, a great flowering in particular of the human libido. A new cult of love, of the passions and senses, led at once to a growth of sensuality and to its refinement. At the same time the growth of the free personality of the artist led to a new conception of education which emphasised both creative spontaneity and the disciplined intellectual effort which leads to æsthetic skill and sensitiveness. At the same time the growth of freedom in the sphere of the intellect led to the development of science and of rationality. The harvest of the new liberty in art, science, literature and philosophy has been one of extreme abundance and luxuriance, while there has grown at the same time a wholly new degree of differentiation and individualisation of the human ego. Burckhardt declared that while in the Middle Ages man was only conscious of himself as a member of a race, people, party, family, corporation, with the Renaissance he became "a spiritual individual". Mumford rejects this view, declaring the "spiritual individual" to be a "romantic ghost". "When one strips man of all his functions as a 'member of a race, people, party, family, corporation' one reduces the very province of personality, for personality emerges, not by a rejection of social ties, but by their more complete assimilation and incarnation." It seems clear, nevertheless, that an increased differentiation of personalities has marked human beings from the time of the Renaissance, and that the change has been a distinct advance. At the same time it is true that to-day there is need for a new sense of community, a new sense of the extent that man attains the finest flower of personality through relationships, through mutuality, through both receiving from the community and giving to it; in the first place, through receiving from the community, and in particular the wider community of history, all the great spiritual wealth that it can give; and, in the second place, giving back to the community by a creative response all that the individual's spontaneous powers can give.

Perhaps the most tremendous consequence of the new freedom was the growth of science. Science has created a mature technique for controlling the external world and enlarging man's powers. But unfortunately man himself has not attained maturity. Leonardo, says Mumford, deliberately suppressed his invention of

the submarine because he felt it was too devilish a contraption to be placed in the hands of wicked man. To-day science has placed infinitely more devilish inventions in man's hands but man has shown no advance in wisdom. "What was needed", says Mumford, "was a positive cultivation of humanistic knowledge, as vigorous, as extensive, as energetic, as that of science. Unfortunately the economic motive was lacking." Thus the new world picture of science left out the problem of who was to control the controllers of nature, while "this weakness disguised itself as scientific purity, and the new moral irresponsibility as a godlike concern for truth alone".[1]

For two centuries or more science concerned itself almost exclusively with the control of matter, while the knowledge and understanding of the inner life diminished. "The New World, as conceived through the mechanical sciences", says Mumford, "was a world of isolates, presided over by isolates." The depersonalised scientist was at his best in a world from which the personality itself had been removed, his own first of all. Great new sciences were created which were "masterly symbolical fabricates"; unfortunately the symbols of science were treated as if they represented a higher order of reality when they represented only a higher order of abstraction. The scientist, without realising it, tended to discard the complex data of actual experience; whatever was unmeasurable was, to him, unintelligible. The necessarily limited and abstract nature of scientific knowledge would not have been a problem if the general body of scientists had not embraced the fallacy of "scientism", regarding science as the only valid means of access to knowledge. Thus the sum total of the effect of science on the human personality has tended to be a shrinking of the inner man while his outer being has flourished. Unless this process can be reversed, in Mumford's view, unless there can be a development of man's spiritual energies and a relative decrease of the mere urge to control matter, an escape from the tremendous catastrophes of the modern age is unattainable.

In his interpretation of the modern world Mumford rejects the Marxist view, that our evils are a mere consequence of economic maladjustment, as a perversion of good sense. Political and economic disturbances, in his view, are the final symptoms of a col-

[1] *Condition of Man*, p. 244.

lapsing civilisation, and are preceded by a period of inner decay. Historians of the Roman Empire who lay stress on the political and economic difficulties which became more and more evident from the third century often tend to forget the long period of moral disintegration which had preceded it. Similarly the modern period of political and economic collapse follows a period of spiritual decline. This has been evidenced first in the decay of religion. Belief in the Christian creed among the educated classes virtually disappeared in the twentieth century. The causes of this religious collapse were complex. In the first place, the Churches were unable to meet the challenge of the spirit of science and rationalism. This could only be faced by a full and wholehearted acceptance by religion of the spirit of reason and science, and the creation of a new synthesis; of this the leaders of orthodox opinion were incapable; they took refuge in an ostrich-like traditionalism. Secondly, the Church had lost its universality and had become parochial; it had increasingly fissured itself and multiplied its sects. No Christianity can survive to-day, says Mumford, which is not as broad as the mind of Emerson. It must embrace the experience and culture of the East as well as the West; it must embody the scepticism as well as the animal faith of humanity. Instead of becoming more universal, the Church has become more sectarian. The largest single Church, claiming direct succession from Jesus through Peter, has become a predominantly Italian body, linked to the political exigencies of a particular nation state. The Pope's Concordat with Mussolini in 1928 and his support of Franco were a betrayal of civilisation. There has been a tendency also in most countries for the Churches to be linked to the forces of reaction. The movement to bring the economic framework of life under wise control has sprung from secular not from religious sources.

In the nineteenth century, says Mumford, people were living to a large extent on the spiritual capital of the past, but this was not realised, so that the belief in democracy, in Socialism, and in science, which was actually a flowering of Christian culture, was attributed to natural goodness. This illusion has been destroyed by the twentieth century when, with the widespread dissipation of religious faith among the masses as well as among the educated classes, the mass man has been revealed as a passive barbarian,

uncreative, without values, a creature of mass amusements, living on a level of mechanical activity and animal pleasure, and so easily swayed that a man like Hitler can mould him to his evil will.

Mumford finds a major evidence of the spiritual collapse of the last century in the vogue of what he calls "pragmatic liberalism", based on a false conception of liberty and of the individual as an isolate. The liberal was preoccupied with power, with science, with the betterment of external conditions. He identified religion with superstition and believed man to be naturally good; his ignorance of human corruption and evil was astounding; it is not surprising that American liberals have had no use for a profound thinker like Niebuhr. The liberal failed to realise that immature personalities, irrational personalities, demoralised personalities are inevitable where there is no insight into the nature of personality, and no conscious effort is made to integrate personalities and develop them wisely. Mumford contrasts pragmatic liberalism with "ideal liberalism", with its respect for creativeness and intellectual liberty, its recognition of the need for personal responsibility, its respect for law, its belief in truth and justice. To-day, what is needed is a synthesis of the finer spirit of Christianity with "ideal liberalism," at once a recognition of the supreme value of love and of the dedication of the personality, and an acceptance of reason, of creativeness, of scientific method.

Mumford finds in Marx, behind the elaborate framework of scientific and scholarly investigation, a deep religious impulse, a messianism, a passion for social justice. His hatred of capitalism was in the main inspired by admirable motives, in particular a recognition of the depersonalising influence of an industrial system ruled by the profit motive, and a desire to restore the wholeness of the personality. But in emphasising, under the influence of Hegel, the contradictions in historical development and the opposition between social classes, he failed to recognise the importance of other methods of growth besides conflict, that co-operation and mutual aid play an important part in history. Marx's belief in the inevitability of violence has tended to increase the element of violence in recent history. Mumford believes also that Marx's own personality, with its powerful urge to domination, its arrogance and bitterness, its immense capacity for the vilification of opponents, has set an evil pattern for Communist

leadership which has proved to be better adapted for planning for absolute power than for welding together groups with slightly different backgrounds and purposes. "The one-party state and the one-man government were the almost inevitable fruit of Marx's character."[1]

Thus Socialism in Russia has taken an authoritarian form; espionage, punishment without open trial, secret imprisonment in remote concentration camps or equally secret death, forced labour, the suppression of free speech, the creation of an official ruling class as remote from the masses as the capitalists and bureaucrats they supplanted, all these new attributes of Communism have betrayed the spirit of Socialism. The spiritual revival needed in our time cannot spring, in Mumford's view, from the spirit and aims of Russia.

Fascism is the natural creation of the vacuum of values which is characteristic of the modern mass man. Numerous thinkers have laid the foundations of Fascism, from Hume with his dissolution of the personality into impulse, to Nietzsche and Pareto, but Marx's contribution must also be admitted, many characteristics of German Communism having lent themselves naturally to Fascist exploitation and development. No man, however, in Mumford's view, summed up the nihilism and barbarism of Fascist thought better than Spengler, the author of that "saga of barbarism", *The Decline of the West*. "Spengler's day is not yet over. These are ominous times, and Spengler is like a black crow, hoarsely cawing, whose prophetic wings cast a shadow over our whole landscape. The spirit of Spengler will only be conquered when the democratic peoples have conquered in their own hearts the barbarism which unites them to the totalitarian forces."[2]

In the passive barbarism which America now boasts under the cover of technical progress Mumford finds no promise whatever of victory or even of survival. "Without a deep regeneration and renewal, the external triumph of American machinery and arms will but hasten the downfall of the Western world."

Mumford believes that Freud has been one of the principal contributors to the vacuum of values of our time. Freud displayed brilliance and originality in his analysis of the dark, repressed side

[1] *Condition of Man*, p. 339.
[2] *Condition of Man*, p. 375.

of life and of the role of sexuality, but his mediocrity as a philosopher was as striking as his originality as a psychologist. He accepted without question the materialist tradition of the philosophy of his youth and regarded religion as a supreme illusion. In his view the moral censor, the super-ego, was archaic, retributive, repressive, a denial of spontaneity and happiness, a source of irrational guilt; to him the primary function of psycho-analysis was to reduce internal conflict by lessening the oppressive weight of the traditional, primitive super-ego. Freud's interpretation is poles apart from that of a thinker like Berdyaev to whom the moral impulse is essentially a free, creative spirit, releasing the energies of the whole human being while diverting the instinctive energies into beneficial channels rather than repressing them. To Freud morality was merely restrictive and the work of psycho-analysis was to remove barriers and repressions. The influence of Freud on morality, which has been profound, has been to set free the primitive "id", and incidentally to reject all the ideal claims which culture and religion have made on the human person. The Freudian analyst will often reduce what is noblest in man to a compulsion-neurosis, thus tending to regard the man with an exceptionally sensitive conscience as a person overburdened with guilt feelings. The Freudians seek to relax tension. Mumford remarks that a life without tension is a life without direction, "a life without any headwaters of energy, spilling aimlessly in every direction, undammed, uncanalised, and therefore incapable of creating power or light".[1] Freud's cardinal error, in Mumford's view, was to regard the super-ego as merely restrictive, not to realise the creative role of the individual and communal super-ego. But he believes also that Freud, in spite of his pretensions to science, has created new myths with little basis but fantasy, founded more certainly on illusion than the religion which Freud despised. The Freudian myths are dangerous because they claim the status and prestige of science; the layman is not capable of unmasking their bogus character.

In his diagnosis of the central problem of our civilisation Mumford's standpoint is the antithesis of that of Marx. To Marx our problem was a problem of the control of the material environment; Mumford maintains that the inner basis of our civilisation

[1] *Condition of Man*, p. 376.

must be sound before the outer problem can be satisfactorily met, that our first task is a correction of ideas and of values, a rebuilding of the human personality. Our ideal in his view must be that of wholeness, of balance. We must learn to draw on the inexhaustible riches of experience, through history. At all costs we must avoid onesidedness, excessive specialisation. In the modern personality must be integrated the Greek conceptions of harmony, of physical beauty and proportion, of mental integration through reason; the Christian doctrine of love and sacrifice; the Renaissance emphasis on creative spontaneity; the baroque cultivation of the sexual super-ego with its sensitiveness to feminine charm and sensual delight; the scientific spirit with its respect for fact.

We must realise that balance and discipline are as necessary as richness and intensity. The accumulation of materials may easily exceed the individual's capacity to assimilate them into the internal basis of his being. Thus an individual may become poor by his wealth, functioning as "a distracted atom in a growing chaos". A renewal of civilisation depends upon that study of the personality which will teach man how to integrate his being under conditions of unparalleled internal and external wealth. Wealth is always a temptation and a danger. Man has to learn the art of simplification; without simple-mindedness and clearness of purpose the very richness of modern civilisation may be the cause of his decay.

This internal discipline in a world of immense potentialities is not easy to achieve. It is not a matter of allotting definite amounts of time and energy to each department of life that needs attention; it means a way of functioning of the personality as a whole, directed by an aspiration to values and by the spirit of community. The problems of our civilisation are incapable of solution, in Mumford's view, unless a sufficient number of individuals can undertake this inner renewal, can achieve this complex and luxuriant but balanced and controlled inner growth. But the change must not be thought of in terms of a mass movement, but rather as a new leaven permeating society from a number of individual points of growth.

"To-day our best plans miscarry because they are in the hands of people who have undergone no inner growth. Most of these

people have shrunk from facing the world crisis and they have no notion of the manner in which they have helped to bring it about. Into every new situation they carry only a fossilised self. Their hidden prejudices, their glib hopes, their archaic desires and automatisms—usually couched in the language of assertive modernity—recall those of the Greeks in the fourth century B.C. or those of the Romans in the fourth century A.D. They are in a power dive and their controls have frozen. By closing their eyes they think they can avoid a crash."[1]

All outer changes in the modern world will fail, in Mumford's view, if this inner renewal does not take place. But that does not mean that outer changes are not needed. Indeed a full development of the personality is only possible in an environment conducive to right growth. The problem of the control of the material and social environment has to be seen under two main aspects. It is first necessary to recognise that the machine must be brought effectively under human control. The machine has tended to dehumanise man, so that never have machines been so perfect and man so debased as in the twentieth century. The worker exhausts himself in uncreative labour whose character is dictated by the rich; he then diverts himself through mass amusements adapted to his devitalised condition, amusements which combine immense technical skill with an adjustment to the needs of depersonalised beings. Mumford's great work, *Technics and Civilisation*, discusses with thoroughness and insight the relation between man and the machine. He recognises that it would be an error to look back to the days of hand production, however much we may expect to see a revival of numerous crafts in the increased leisure of the future. The products of the machine can have their own characteristic beauty; the progressive artist will make the greatest possible use of the new techniques which depend on the machine; a new marriage of art, industry and the machine is needed. At the same time we must move towards the greatest possible degree of rationalisation of the technical processes of production. Mumford holds that the development of machine production will not be in the direction of the increased robotisation of the worker, for to an increasing extent the unskilled elements of production will be done by machines, a greater pro-

[1] *Condition of Man*, p. 422.

portion of workers being highly skilled persons in charge of a group of machines.

Secondly, it is important to recognise the need to stabilise the economic process; the age of equilibrium must replace the age of expansion. The urge to indefinite expansion was the characteristic psychological trait of the capitalist system with its dynamic of profit. Mumford quotes John Stuart Mill in support of the view that a condition of economic equilibrium, while it may be dreaded by the profiteer, is precisely the condition required for translating mechanical improvements into social welfare. Mumford believes that Mill's observations were prophetic. The purpose of the new "economics of equilibrium" must be to provide everyone with an adequate material basis for life, thus turning men's energies towards living rather than producing, towards the renewal of personality and community, towards the expression of inner energies and cultural needs. The value which should determine the character of the new economy must be an increase in the ratio of higher needs to lower needs, an increase in the energies devoted to life-fulfilling activities and a comparative decrease in those devoted to the service of material needs. It should be increasingly possible to provide the basic needs of the community for food, shelter and education free of cost. The attainment of these should never be the primary aim in life of any person.

Mumford believes that with the stabilisation of economies a new type of regional planning will become possible, its aim to provide in every region the optimum conditions for the expression of the full potentialities of human life. For the realisation of these potentialities, in his view, we need a renaissance of the family, for the very core of a true culture is the family and all it implies, responsibility in mating, development of the erotic ritual, rational spacing of births, the nurture of parents and children together, the growth of the arts of the household, from home cooking to the part-singing of madrigals, the keeping and cherishing of family records. The adequate nurture of the family means the planning of spacious houses with gardens. But the planning of town and country is also of fundamental importance. Towns must be handsome and spacious but must not be allowed to become too large, while community and cultural centres must be provided so that the life of the family can be enriched by the

life of the local community. Regions must be planned so as to preserve a proper balance of agriculture and industry, to ensure that contact with wild nature is not lost, and to provide a focus for that kind of local patriotism, that pride in the material and cultural product of one's immediate locality, which is an enrichment of life so that it can never be entirely superseded by devotion to a wider world society.

Mumford's sociological writings seem to me to be the finest flower of modern American thought. They show that balanced estimate of the inner and outer problems of man which is the mark of a valid synthesis; they are conspicuous for solidity of knowledge as well as breadth and comprehensiveness of vision, and are not lacking in flights of imaginative insight. Mumford is no metaphysician, and displays a tempered agnosticism in his attitude to the problems of ultimate reality, but the inspiring influence of Geddes, wedded to his own temperament which combines an essential soundness and balance with nobility of aim and a grasp of concrete reality, has enabled him to give invaluable help in building the synthesis the modern world needs on a firm and right foundation.

Like Patrick Geddes, Mumford has sought to play a vigorous role in relation to the immediate social issues of his day, a number of his polemical works, such as *Man Must Act* and *Faith for Living*, having been tracts for the times. Yet it is in relation to the future, to larger perspectives, that his work has most value. No one has written more fully and knowledgeably on the problem of building the future world society on a personalist basis.

His literary style suffers from diffuseness, yet his work is full of passages of great vividness and beauty, of marked eloquence and nobility, so that he has contributed notably to the world's literature as well as to social science. His picture of Megalopolis in *City Development* is one of the greatest passages of modern prose.

His primary work, no doubt, is in the field of sociology. But his scientific work has been inspired by such qualities of insight and vision that his reputation is rather that of a seer than of an analytical and scientific investigator. He can certainly be accepted as a great and representative thinker of the modern age.

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I. *Karl Mannheim*

THE basis of the first of the three major works of Karl Mannheim which have been published in English, *Ideology and Utopia*, is directly derived from Marx. Marx's doctrine of historical materialism explained all thought in terms of the economic structure of society and the economic interest of social classes. *Ideology and Utopia* starts from the similar assumption that thought is sociologically determined. Mannheim attributes little importance to the part played by outstanding individuals in the creation and development of thought. He holds that the individual derives the urges, the needs and the valuations which determine the essential character of his thought from the consciousness of the group to which he belongs, and that any particular individual contributes only a comparatively insignificant amount to the social heritage of knowledge, and that only in terms of the categories which have traditionally determined the thought of the group. Thus the character of any particular body of thought is determined by the emotional urges of a group, which are determined in turn by the concrete situation and social needs of the group. Thus all the significant thought in history is, to use Mannheim's phrase "situationally based", and the vain hope of discovering truth in a form which is independent of a socially determined set of meanings will have to be given up. Thus Mannheim categorically denies the possibility of arriving at insights which are independent of particular perspectives, and capable of formulation in laws which are eternally valid.

This method of thinking, as we have seen, implies the rejection of all absolutes, of all beliefs in a sphere of "truth in itself". Mannheim vigorously attacks the view that religious revelation or mystical insight has revealed or can reveal truths whose validity is independent of particular social factors. Mannheim's works are an ambitious attempt to lay new foundations for a systematic sociology, and in making this attempt he denies that sociological

thinking need concern itself with the problem of ultimate truth, asserting that the historical relativity of the elements of meaning has now become so universally recognised that it has almost come to be taken for granted. Mannheim even imputes motives to the thinker who accepts the validity of absolutes, declaring that he is usually the kind of man who pretends to be superior to others and who feels comfortable and smug under the *status quo* and wants to keep things as they are. Thus, says Mannheim, the absolute "which was once a means of entering into communion with the divine" has become an instrument used for unworthy motives to distort the meaning of the present. With regard to the mystics Mannheim remarks that they "are unable to demonstrate the truth of their statements", while their belief in a world of eternal truth revealed to them in their inner consciousness causes them to overlook those lessons of history which are only apparent to a person who studies thought in relation to its social background.

As Mannheim thus regards thought as a social, not an individual creation, he attacks liberalism for its emphasis on the individual, both on the freedom of the individual, and on the value of the achievement of individuals. Using terms which Marx might have used, he speaks of liberal individualism as a function of the bourgeois and capitalist economic structure, speaks of the fiction of the isolated and self-sufficient individual, and maintains that highly individualised thinking is only found among privileged social classes, implying that such thought is corrupted by privilege. Thus he regards the person who thinks of himself primarily as an individual with special needs and demands as a social danger. All should realise their dependence, spiritually as well as physically, on the group, so that the anarchic individualism may be checked which threatens to disintegrate modern societies. In attacking in this early work the "individualistic undirected society" and pleading for a more organic, a better planned social order, Mannheim is anticipating the conclusions of his later works.

While owing much to Marx in certain fundamental elements of his thought, Mannheim departs from Marxism in certain highly important respects, and it is these departures which have become the foundation of what is distinctive in his thought. He maintains that while Marx recognised the situational basis of thought in the

thought of his political opponents, the upholders of the capitalist system, so that we owe to Marx the conception of an ideology, a body of thought which has been distorted by psychological factors, he failed to recognise that all thought, including that of the Marxists themselves, is sociologically determined and conditioned, and so failed to develop consistently and comprehensively the principles of his own thought. The thought of Marx, says Mannheim, became imbued with a spirit of partisanship which caused it to turn away from self-examination, to evade any discussion of the question of how far Marxism itself was characterised by ideological distortion. Thus while Marx indicated the basis for a comprehensive study of the sociology of knowledge, he never proceeded to build soundly on that foundation, and indeed showed a lack of the true scientific spirit. Thus while Marxists are always speaking in terms of ideologies and exposing the false basis of ideological thinking, in practice all their arguments are directed to one sole purpose, that of unmasking the thought of the advocates of capitalism, and they are quite unconscious of the factors producing a distortion of their own thought.

A consequence of this limitation of Marxism was that Marxists failed to recognise that there are two antithetical urges which may lead to distorted thinking, the urge which makes us seek from some interested motive to maintain the *status quo*, and the urge which impels us to remould this sorry scheme of things and build it nearer to the heart's desire. Mannheim thus points out the existence of two main forms of distorted thinking, ideological thinking, springing from the impulse to preserve the *status quo*, and utopian thinking, springing from discontent and the urge to destroy and rebuild. A large section of *Ideology and Utopia* is an attempt to give an analysis which Marx failed to give, an analysis of the sociological basis of the various types of utopian thinking. Mannheim shows how this kind of thinking also is subject to distortion due to the emotional urges which spring from the needs and conditions of social groups. This section of Mannheim's book, however, belongs to the more negative aspect of his analysis. Let us turn to its more positive and constructive aspect.

We have seen that Mannheim holds that Marx's political partisanship prevented him from arriving at a genuinely scientific sociology. Nevertheless the Marxist conception of an ideology

indicated the way in which it was possible to proceed to a true science of politics. For just as the student of psychology, who can recognise in himself as well as in others a widespread tendency to rationalise his desires, is able to acquire an unusual capacity for objectivity and for conscious control over his thought processes, so the sociologist who can perceive the relationship of different systems of thought to particular social situations is able to transcend the limitations of what Mannheim calls partial thinking and to arrive at conceptions on a much higher level of truth and significance. The sociologist then must learn to recognise and allow for the limitations of particular thought perspectives, and so arrive at an integrating type of thought, a thought related not to the urges and needs of particular groups in particular situations, but to the character of the human situation as a whole and to the urges of what Mannheim calls the collective unconscious. Mannheim's primary aim is to achieve this interdependent thinking, this integration of perspectives, this new synthesis, this thought which recognises the interdependence of the various elements of the human problem, which realises that all traditional thought is partial in that it is coloured by a perspective deriving from a particular limited situation. But if we admit that it is possible for an individual thinker to transcend partial and distorted thinking, the question remains whether there exists in society any significant group which can become an instrument for making the new synthesis effective in the concrete social and political sphere. Marx held that the instrument of social change must be a class which is rising to power through a change in the character of the instruments and relationships of production. Mannheim believes that Marx grossly over-simplified the problem of the nature of the social groups in modern societies. There exists, in particular, in all modern communities, a class usually described as the intelligentsia. Following Weber in this matter, Mannheim maintains that the intelligentsia is a relatively classless social stratum. A sociology which, like that of Marx, is orientated only in relation to economic classes will never adequately understand the position of the intelligentsia in society. In so far as this class displays homogeneity in any sense it is due not to its economic position but to educational influences and to its responsiveness to new thought tendencies. A characteristic of almost

any modern society is that intellectual activity is not confined within any particular socially defined class but is recruited from every branch of social life. This socially unattached intelligentsia Mannheim believes can be the new instrument of a new synthesis, for there is an increasing probability that the élites which occupy the key positions in society will be drawn from this class, so admirably fitted to transcend both ideological and utopian thinking and achieve the integration of perspectives which is needed.

In this connection Mannheim refers to another important limitation of the Marxian analysis. While Marx maintained rightly that technical developments affecting the conditions of economic production have far-reaching social and cultural repercussions, he failed to realise that the development of technology in non-economic fields may have equally important social effects. For example, an important invention in the field of military technique, or in administration, or in the methods of education or propaganda, may have revolutionary effects. To maintain a doctrine, as the Marxists still do, of the absolute supremacy of the economic factor is out of date and tends to hinder investigation of the significance of the non-economic spheres. The only scientific approach to-day, says Mannheim, is a pluralistic approach, which reviews objectively all the various factors affecting social development and is able to recognise how each sphere varies in importance from time to time in response to technical and other factors. This less dogmatic approach makes social thinking more realistic and more empirical; a new intelligentsia thinking on these lines would have a much truer understanding than has been possible in the past of the sources of power in any society and might exercise immense influence on political development.

Ideology and Utopia seems to me to mark a considerable advance on Marxism, but it embodies a grave defect which it derives partly from Marx and partly from modern materialist philosophy in the tradition of which Mannheim was educated. Mannheim adopts a deterministic approach; he regards thought as being sociologically determined. But if society determines thought, if the thought of mankind, or of any considerable group of mankind, is determined by the nature of the situation in which mankind or the group finds itself, why should Mannheim trouble to make his analysis? Why should any of us concern ourselves with social

issues or try to influence the course of events? Actually the conception that thought is situationally determined (to use Mannheim's phrase) is as near to being meaningless as any conception can be. For all thought is thought by individuals, so that, to be exact, the conception must mean that all individuals in any particular group think alike. This, however, they plainly do not do. Mannheim might say that all he means is that the majority of persons in any group think alike. However, even if this were true, and it might well be disputed, the question still remains whether the views of the unconforming minority are not more important in relation to mankind's development than those of the orthodox many. Mannheim's references to the unattached intelligentsia would suggest that he himself thinks so. But if so, what happens to Mannheim's principle of the situational determination of thought, seeing that it is the characteristic of the member of the intelligentsia that his thought is not determined by the needs and urges of the social group to which he happens to belong, and is also highly individualised.

On analysis, the conception that thought is socially determined becomes either meaningless or a source of inescapable contradictions. It might be argued that Mannheim's formal acceptance of the idea does not matter as he clearly does not believe in it for he persists in thinking freely as an individual instead of accepting the views of any social group. But in fact the error is a serious one which has had a pernicious affect on the whole development of Mannheim's thought. It is unfortunately true that he who believes, or believes that he believes, that society determines thought is only too ready to recommend that society should determine thought. This mode of thinking leads directly to totalitarianism; it is dangerous in the highest degree to freedom. It is not surprising, then, that Mannheim's next work, *Man and Society*, should reveal tendencies making for a totalitarian organisation of society. Believing that society determines thought, Mannheim is deeply concerned that society should determine thought in the right way. But society can only determine thought in the right way (in the sense Mannheim has in mind) by controlling thought. *Man and Society* is, in essence, an analysis of the problem of how society can control thought and yet control it in the right way.

The years between the publication of *Ideology and Utopia* and *Man and Society* were years of mounting world crisis, and the latter work was orientated more explicitly in relation to the concrete political situation, in particular to the danger which faced the world of German totalitarian world domination. At that time the totalitarian regimes, both in Germany and Russia, seemed to be gaining both power and prestige at the expense of the democracies, which seemed to display weaknesses which might prove fatal. There is no doubt that Mannheim, as a refugee from Nazi tyranny, realised to the full the hatefulness of totalitarianism. But he believed that the democracies had to learn from the totalitarian regimes the necessity of a greater degree of social integration. Planning he believed to be inevitable, and he had come to the conclusion that some social control of psychological factors was an essential condition of success in planning.

Mannheim believed that if the democracies were to meet the challenge of the totalitarian states they must display something of their unity; a common mind and purpose were necessary. But, as we have seen, he considered also that thought was socially determined. The new unity of purpose, then, must be achieved by consciously directed social influences. *Man and Society* is concerned with the problem of how a common pattern of thought can be created in the democracies by sociological means, by an influence consciously exercised by society on the individual, without destroying freedom of thought or the democratic form of government. For if the new social unity was to be achieved through planning, the planning authorities would clearly have to set themselves certain psychological and cultural objectives, involving certain forms of control exercised by the political authorities, either directly or indirectly, in the psychological field.

Mannheim was aware that the conception of psychological planning was abhorrent to traditional liberalism, with its emphasis on freedom and individual values, and in *Man and Society* he returns to the attack on liberalism which had been a feature of *Ideology and Utopia*. He refers to the incompetence of German liberal democracy, adding that its false idea of freedom was a major factor in Hitler's success. He points to the danger of regarding freedom and democracy as abstract ideological postu-

lates. Liberals tended to accept freedom as an ideal without analysing its nature sociologically, so as to discover both the concrete forms in which freedom did and could exist in society and the conditions on which the retention and strengthening of the forms depended. Liberals had attempted to prevent war, he argued, without ever making a sociological examination of the causes which produced war; their attitude to other issues was equally abstract. The victory of the Nazis in Germany had been preceded by a psychological breakdown in the course of which the emotional ties binding the individual to society were destroyed, and neurosis became rife, but the liberals were not interested in a scientific examination of this problem. Mannheim referred with contempt to these "old-fashioned liberals" who still believed it possible to give free rein to social forces without any planning or co-ordination. Such liberals were still under the delusion that their thought and life pattern were their own creation, oblivious of the part society had played in moulding their thought, or the extent to which a better social order depended on a wise control of the influences which had affected them, however little they were conscious of the process.

We have seen that Mannheim believes that planning, including psychological planning, can be combined with freedom, and it is, indeed, with the idea of planning for freedom that his name is especially associated. To know how to combine planning with freedom, in his view, a thorough sociological analysis of the concept of planning must be made. In *Man and Society* Mannheim attempts this analysis with characteristic German thoroughness. It is first necessary, he says, that thought should be integrated on the level of planning. This means first of all a recognition of the interdependence of the aspects of the social problem, involving an attempt to overcome the limitations of the various specialisms, the specialism of the economist, of the psychologist, of the educationist, of the anthropologist, of the theologian. It means that in the formulation of plans, the invention or reform of particular institutions should be replaced by the regulation and mastery of the relationships between institutions. It implies also overcoming the division between theory and practice in the work of the sociologist, whose theory, in the past, however plausible, has seemed to have nothing to do with social action. It means, again, a recog-

nition that there exist key positions in the planning of the social structure, and an analysis of the problems of strategy in relation to the control of these positions. It involves an understanding that the unit of planning is always the total social situation, which has to be grasped in all the complexities of its structures, for, as Mannheim constantly reminds us, the thought which we wish to control is situationally determined. Lastly, it is of paramount importance that the acceptance of planning should not involve a belief that it is necessary to plan every aspect of social life. The planner must know where to stop. Many of the most valuable qualities of experience, Mannheim reminds us, depend upon individual spontaneity, so that any interference with liberty in these spheres would be highly pernicious. But the planner should not only be wise enough to know when to let well alone, he should also endeavour to plan for an increase of spontaneity by taking measures to destroy those irrational restrictions and taboos which have hindered freedom in the past, for it would be an error to imagine that the traditional unplanned society was always favourable to spontaneity.

Thought at the level of planning, again, involves the detailed examination and assessment of the techniques in use in the various types of social institutions from the point of view of their influence on ethical and cultural as well as on material factors.

In view of the manifest dangers involved in psychological planning, it is important to see what precisely Mannheim has in mind in this sphere. First of all he attempts an analysis of the factors which lead to the growth of irrational elements in a society, remarking that a wise society would know how to keep in check irrational forces of a dangerous character, while recognising at the same time that the irrational is the source of man's most valuable powers when it acts as a driving force in creating cultural values or heightens the joy of living as pure élan. He argues that moral and cultural values must be planned. The planner should aim both at a basic conformity and at "citadels of self-determination". He will aim at the conscious inculcation, though more by training than by hortatory methods, of such virtues as collective responsibility, the ability to identify oneself with others, and habits of tidiness, industry and reliability, but he will also seek to promote individuality. Mannheim argues that sociology

has already reached the stage at which it can say what social forces in history have fostered individuality, so that the planner, if he makes use of the advice of the sociologist, will be able to create independence of character, and increase individual differentiation. Mannheim recommends the deliberate creation through planning of types of character, for example the types needed to perform particular social functions, and holds that the sociologist in the future will be able to forecast behaviour with a high degree of accuracy. It is of especial importance in this connection to train the élites on whose competent handling of the key positions of society the right function of the social organism will depend. This is an aspect of the problem described by Mannheim as planning to create the best possible human types. We have seen that the planner will seek to remove unnecessary taboos and inhibitions; with the help of the psychologist he will plan the cure of neurosis. He will also plan the incentives to work, while not neglecting the guidance of the leisure of the masses. These measures will need what Mannheim calls an "active, managing outlook" in the planner, very different from the passive and contemplative approach which accepts things at their face value. Lest all the above suggestions should seem alarming, Mannheim reminds us that the planner will recognise the value of intellectual liberty as well as of creative and æsthetic spontaneity, so that the "managing attitude" will accept a self-imposed limitation.

With respect to the cultural field Mannheim holds that the disintegration of modern society has entailed a process of cultural confusion and decline. In traditional societies certain élites were accepted as being the leaders of art and culture, the competent receivers of inherited values, the worthy contributors to a rich and noble tradition. But in modern society, with the breakdown of the traditional élites, no leadership in the field of culture is anywhere recognised. The élites of our time exhibit a complete lack of cohesion so that the tendencies to which they give rise cancel each other out; thus they can give no effective reply to the onslaught of cultural barbarism. Thus Mannheim holds that we shall be unable to get along without planning in the cultural sphere also. The nature of this planning is blessedly left undefined, though Mannheim assures us that it will not mean a dictatorial attempt to supplant the creative afflatus of the artist.

Mannheim writes also of the great value of propaganda scientifically used for the right moulding of character, for the rescuing of children and adults from the various abortive influences which now cancel each other out, such as the church, school and home. Mannheim refers to the "enlightened dictatorship of the masses" in Russia and the great importance of the "skilful manipulation of mass psychology". He sums up on this issue by saying that most of us would gladly consent to considerable interference in the educational and cultural field at strategic points, if it confined itself to fostering those elements in human nature which make for peace, understanding and decency. He looks eventually to an international agreement to co-ordinate education and propaganda so as to secure in the world community at least a minimum sense of decency and moral obligation.

Mannheim describes the aim he wishes to promote as that of planning for freedom, but the implications of the view which I have just summarised seem to me to be totalitarian. For Mannheim is asking for an authority in society which will plan human character and personality, which will direct leisure, which will plan propaganda, which will manipulate mass psychology, which will plan the removal of complexes, which will teach values, which will remove old taboos and create fresh ones, which will decide precisely what are the true fields for human spontaneity. Now such an authority can only be either a religious or a political authority, and in the modern world only a political authority, and nothing seems clearer than that political authorities are by their nature unfitted to exercise spiritual power. It seems to me, indeed, to be an egregious error for a Church to endeavour to strengthen its hold over the minds of men by the use of coercion and of the secular power, so that I regard the statutory rule imposed on the state schools in Britain to teach Christianity as indefensible. But the Church can at least claim the right of freedom of teaching in any community, but a political authority cannot rightly make even this claim. The only right policy for political authorities, as far as the field of ethical and cultural values is concerned, is to let it alone. That is not to say that the state may not have certain duties with respect to the social and economic conditions which affect the ethical and cultural spheres. The state is not entitled to interfere with the freedom of the

composer of opera, but it may legitimately subsidise an opera house so as to help to create the conditions under which operas may be presented. The state should not interfere with the free pursuit of knowledge in the universities, but it may and should ensure that no student fitted for higher education is debarred from it through inability to pay for it. The state should not use its authority to teach a particular ethic, but it may and should create conditons which will promote a free dissemination of ethical and religious ideas. The true function of the state, in the cultural sphere, is essentially of this limited and somewhat negative character. But Mannheim envisages a much more positive action on the part of the state in the controlling of human personality and human culture.

There is a fairly obvious reason why planning of the type Mannheim envisages must end by destroying freedom, however much it may wish to preserve it. For Mannheim mentions specifically that the purpose of the psychological planning which he advocates is to create a basic social uniformity, to achieve what he calls a new social integration, to co-ordinate human ideals and impulses within the social framework. But if one sets oneself some moral and cultural end of this kind one must make up one's mind to succeed; otherwise one must admit failure. But how can one succeed in achieving a basic uniformity by planning if influential forces are at work seeking to counteract one's efforts, if there exist, side by side with the state organs of propaganda, rival organs working against the purposes of the state? A state which sets out to create any kind of uniformity of opinion or ethical belief must end by putting a ban on the dissemination of ideas which might defeat its purpose.

Mannheim refers to but slurs over another fundamental difficulty that faces any attempt at psychological planning. Such planning implies agreement on a body of ethical conceptions and cultural values. But is such agreement possible in a liberal state? Russia can achieve an appearance of such agreement by adopting Marxism as the official creed and banning anti-Marxist propaganda. But the problem is radically altered in a state in which it is widely believed (Mannheim himself claims to believe it) that intellectual liberty must be preserved at all costs. Mannheim says that the planning must only be with respect to certain funda-

mental values with which everyone is in agreement. But does the agreement exist which Mannheim presupposes? For example, do not the Marxists, the pragmatists, the ethical relativists, deny that values have any objective validity, on the ground that all values are merely human adjustments to particular situations? Mannheim himself speaks of the situational determination of thought, clearly implying that ethical values must vary seeing that the social situation of individuals varies. From the opposite point of view, do not the Christians maintain that to teach values without teaching the metaphysic which provides their driving force and sanction is to stultify one's efforts, thus dividing themselves on a fundamental ethical issue from the humanists and positivists? The assumption that there is any unanimity on the ethical teaching which modern societies need is completely unwarranted. To plan, then, for this "basic agreement" of which Mannheim speaks would be to give a monopolistic position to some school of thought.

What has led Mannheim in the name of freedom to espouse what seems to be plainly a totalitarian solution? There are two main reasons. Firstly, his doctrine of sociologism, his belief that all thought is socially controlled, or situationally determined, has led him to think in terms of the social control of thought, and finally to seek to control it. But his assumption is false; thought is not socially controlled; it grows and develops by the spontaneous and creative acts of individuals, of men such as Mannheim himself. It is true that the individuals who are the creators of thought owe very much to society, but that is not to say that in any valid sense society controls their thought. At times society has attempted to control thought but always with harmful results.

Secondly, Mannheim has embraced a fallacy to which many thinkers were led by the totalitarian menace, the fallacy that totalitarianism could only be effectively resisted through the democracies achieving some integration of their spiritual forces similar in character to that achieved by Germany and Russia through cultural regimentation and terror. But the strength of the democracies lies precisely in their freedom, in their unwillingness to submit to the kind of social integration of the totalitarian states, an integration which, in fact, is incompatible with freedom. I do not believe that history will show the totalitarian

communities to be tougher and stronger than the states which retain their freedom. There is insufficient evidence for such a belief, which would be a counsel of despair. When Mannheim wishes to plan for freedom, he has in fact lost faith in freedom, for it is precisely freedom which cannot be planned for, or at all events only by largely negative and indirect measures, and not by the psychological planning and social control of morality which Mannheim recommends.

In his *Diagnosis of our Time* Mannheim's ideas achieve a remarkable *reductio ad absurdum*. He expresses with a new fervour his belief that the democracies must achieve a new spiritual and social integration; they must acquire a militant faith in the ideals of democracy. These ideals must be taught to the youth of the nation, for the mobilisation of the potential spiritual resources of the nation is one of the great tasks of youth, whose pioneering function, says Mannheim, can only be achieved in a nation-wide movement. Thus the latent forces of a nation can only be mobilised if they are integrated; this means, in Mannheim's view, that youth must step out together, moved by a common ideal, using its dynamic energies to ensure effective action. But Mannheim realises that there is at present no such pioneering enthusiasm among the masses of our people, young or old. He is gravely perplexed as to how the needed spiritual energies can be mobilised. It is obvious, he remarks, that the new faith can only be created if the deepest sources of human regeneration assist the rebirth of society.

He thus comes to the conclusion (a new conclusion for him, perhaps influenced by his frequent contacts with Church leaders in the war period) that it is in religion that we shall find these deeper and more potent sources of spiritual energy. So Mannheim turns to the theme of the planning of religion and urges the need for an entirely new co-operation between the theologian and the sociologist. He complains that the religion of the past has been too abstract—it has not been translated in terms of the Great Society, the large-scale modern society with its co-operative and planned economic structure. He praises Thomism because the Thomists did elaborate a sociology in which the various social institutions were defined in terms of their functions, which themselves were defined in terms of basic ethical principles. Our reli-

gious leaders must do for the modern world what Aquinas did for the mediæval world—they must formulate, with the help of the psychologists and sociologists, a new casuistry, a new code of personal and social ethics, indicating the rights and duties of individuals in the modern world and the true function of social institutions.

But it is necessary, he adds, to plan the deeper sources of the spiritual life. He makes an analysis of the various forms of religious life and experience, mystical experience, personal communion with God, fellowship, communal worship and ritual. It is not surprising that he comes to the conclusion that all the various forms of religion have some value and that it would not be desirable to attempt to impose any particular form of religion as being universally valid and appropriate. But where, then, precisely, are we to find the sphere for the planning of religion? As was to be expected, Mannheim's conclusions on this theme are somewhat nebulous. He remarks, "The problem of planning for these things consists in realising the variety of these forms as they co-exist and as they aid and hamper each other. . . . There are different remedies according to whether you feel that opportunities for privacy, inwardness and ecstasy have to be created or whether you feel that the right conventions are essential." He does not discuss the question of the nature of the authority which is to be responsible for this indefinite kind of planning, and it is just as well that he fails to do so, for the attempt would expose the absurdity of the whole conception of the planning of religion.

The development of Mannheim's thought in his *Diagnosis of our Time*[1] is very much as follows. He holds a basic social integration to be necessary and believes therefore that a new spiritual dynamic must be created to achieve it, so that a religious revival must be planned. In relation to the planning of religion he is wise enough to see that in practice all that we can do is to give the various forms of religious life, the various Churches and ethical societies, freedom to develop, but he apparently fails to see that this destroys the whole fabric of his argument. For if one cannot plan a revival of religion, neither can one plan a new spiritual dynamic, neither can one create a new social integration through the dynamic. This means, in fact, that at the basis of Mannheim's

[1] *Diagnosis of our Time*, p. 128.

thought is a fundamental error, the belief that the spiritual evils of our society can be remedied by planning.

Mannheim's contact with Church leaders, however, has not been without a salutary influence on his thought, and there are passages in *Diagnosis of our Time* which display a deeper insight than anything in his earlier works. In a critical estimate of pragmatic and utilitarian ethics Mannheim points out that according to these standpoints ethical values are modes of adjustment to particular concrete situations which must clearly change as the situations themselves change. Now in identifying right behaviour with successful adjustment the pragmatist forgets that there may be, in any situation, different modes of adjustment which might be regarded as successful. For example, Stalin and Bevin have both, in recent months, been adjusting themselves to a particular international situation, yet, both with a sense of inward rightness no doubt, have been adjusting themselves in different ways and on the basis of different principles. Thus the idea of successful adjustment does not in any sense determine the ethical issues at stake. Now a Christian thinker in a position demanding some adjustment would not regard himself as having to adapt his ideas to the situation. Rather he starts with what Mannheim calls a particular paradigmatic experience and bases his conclusion on the bearing of this experience on the situation. For example, if the paradigmatic experience is the experience of the indwelling Christ, the situation is interpreted in the light of the spirit of Christ. This, Mannheim rightly points out, is a final answer to those who deny that religious experiences have an effect on conduct, for the person who acts under the influence of some paradigmatic experience will tend to act differently from the person who sees an ethical problem merely in terms of some such conception as efficient adjustment. Mannheim mentions that the conduct of mankind through the ages has been directed largely by paradigmatic experiences associated with archetypes or primordial images such as Redemption, The Good Shepherd, or The Cross. The evaporation of the belief in these images, involving the dissolution of the experiences associated with them, is a major cause of the breakdown of values from which we are suffering to-day. A rationalist may rejoice in the passing of the faith in these archetypal images, but the man to whom such ideas as Re-

demption and the Cross mean nothing often finds no meaning or purpose in life so that his life becomes a search for sensation or material advantage, or he finds an emptiness in existence through the lack of a satisfying faith.

Mannheim's final comment on this issue is that perhaps a new understanding may before long emerge between those who recognise the value of that religious spirit which adds depth and transcendence to experience and those who exalt the importance of the spirit of reason and science. Such an understanding is certainly desirable but Mannheim shows no grasp of the synthesis through which alone it can come about. His treatment of this theme is vitiated also by his tendency to regard the paradigmatic experiences to which he refers rather from the standpoint of their utility than their truth. There is no help to be found to-day in such a paradigmatic experience as, say, the practice of the presence of God unless God truly exists and can in actual fact dwell in the human soul, and unless experience and reason give increasingly irresistible testimony to this truth. The real issue, in other words, is that of the metaphysical truth on which the experience, if it is not an illusion, depends. Mannheim is writing on this as a man who is himself without religious faith and who rejects (or is agnostic about) a theistic metaphysic. As such he is unable to penetrate to the heart of the problem.

During the war years Mannheim acquired some reputation and a considerable following for a number of reasons. The belief he expressed in the spiritual weakness of the democracies, the feeling, expressed in the phrase "negative democracy", that the democracies were lacking in a positive faith capable of countering the fanaticism and unity of the totalitarian regimes, were widely shared at a time when it seemed as if Nazism might conquer the world. Thus his works, notably *Man and Society*, aroused an immediate response. Further, *Man and Society* was published at a time when a vigorous reaction against Marxism was being felt; the Marxist emphasis on the economic issue seemed to be leading to a neglect of spiritual factors and to an increasing tendency to identify ethics with expediency. While the foundation of Mannheim's thought is essentially Marxist, he had pointed to certain defects of Marxism and in particular had stressed the importance of giving independent consideration to spiritual and other non-

economic factors. Mannheim's phrase "planning for freedom", also, echoed a prevalent sentiment. There were widespread fears, based on the experience of Russia and Germany, that a planned society would be totalitarian, and a thinker who claimed to show how planning could be reconciled with freedom was sure of attention. Also Mannheim's works have substantial merits; if heavy and written in the German style, they are solid and full of thought-provoking things. Thus the excitement with which I myself read *Man and Society* in 1940 was widely shared.

But I think we can now see that Mannheim, solid and conscientious thinker as he is, must be numbered among the false prophets. In spite of his insistence on the idea of planning for freedom, the psychological planning which he advocates is in fact incompatible with freedom. When he asks the planning authorities to set out to build in society a basic moral conformity, he is asking for what the Nazis and Communists have in fact attempted to do, and the pernicious fruits of their efforts are the inevitable concomitant of any such attempt. We have seen how Mannheim came increasingly to feel, as in his *Diagnosis of our Time*, that the moral dynamic he wished the democracies to possess must come from religion, but still clinging to the belief in a remedy through planning, he conceived the abortive idea of the planning of religion, however little he was able to suggest concrete measures in a field where the inescapable condition of life and vitality is freedom.

Mannheim is right in holding that the remedy for the spiritual weakness of the democracies must be found in a revival of religion, but such a revival cannot be the work of planning authorities. It can only come from free movements of thought and the independent action of religious organisations.

My study of Mannheim has led me to the conclusion that a serious fallacy is inherent in certain aspects of the reasoning of his last two important works, *Man and Society* and *Diagnosis of our Time*. Perhaps I have exaggerated the importance of this error, if error it is, considered in the perspective of his works as a whole. It has at all events to be remembered that Mannheim was perpetually readjusting his standpoint in the light of further researches, and his *Diagnosis of our Time* certainly shows him as reaching on many issues, especially the religious issue, a new insight. Also we

must bear in mind the sense of urgency and impending disaster that lay behind Mannheim's recent works. It is to his lasting credit that he should have felt so intensely the need to create a dynamic to counter that of the new totalitarianisms, and that, while never losing sight of the spirit of science, he should have sought to discover what sociology could contribute to this great practical end. He is far from being the only great modern figure whom the gravity of our human plight has led to certain errors of judgment. Also, if his conception of "planning for freedom" led him to recommend measures that I feel would be highly dangerous to freedom, he at least did so from a genuine love of freedom, and it is true also that the idea of planning for freedom has plain merits to set beside its dangers. The states which care for freedom have to learn how to plan, and to plan in such a way that freedom will be made more secure instead of being increasingly threatened, and Mannheim did recognise the need for planners to accept a self-imposed limitation with respect to certain spheres. Also the *Diagnosis of our Time* does include a *de facto* recognition that the sphere of religion is one of the spheres that must be left free to follow its own laws.

Perhaps, after all, what is significant in the work of Mannheim is not the particular judgments that he made, as in relation to the crisis created by the totalitarian menace, but the spirit and purpose of his whole enterprise. What Mannheim was seeking to do was to build a synthesis which would take into account the new human sciences, such as those of anthropology and psychology, but which would not only bring their contributions into service, but would see them in their inter-relatedness. This great conception of a new synthesis is what has inspired most significant modern thought, and Mannheim's grasp of the main fields of knowledge in their mutual relationships is second to none. Also Mannheim, as we have seen, while he approached his studies from the materialist standpoint, was able increasingly to appreciate the value of the insight of religion. His career has been lamentably cut short while he was in his prime, but there is no doubt that his solid achievement will be a great source of inspiration to future investigators.

Probably nothing in Mannheim is more valuable than his masterly analysis of Marx. He has certainly laid the foundations of

sociology on a more solid foundation than Marx left them, while starting with what was valuable in the Marxian contribution. In an age when the inspiration of the more active political elements is still so largely drawn from Marx, this is a valuable service. In realising, in his last work, the crucial importance in our age of the religious issue, perhaps Mannheim did not appreciate sufficiently that a religious revival must depend upon the work of men of prophetic insight, such as Nicolas Berdyaev and Martin Buber, and upon developments within the sphere of religious thought, rather than upon any contribution that sociology can make. Nevertheless in his recent work he showed an appreciation of the bearing of the religious contribution on the sphere of social study that is rare among sociologists.

The source of the weakness of Mannheim's thought is its basis in materialist philosophy. His initial assumption, made explicit in *Ideology and Utopia*, is that thought is determined by society and so can be controlled by the knowledge to be gained from sociological investigation. But this is treating mind as if its properties were like those of matter, as if its contents were determined by ascertainable laws and so can be predicted and controlled by a knowledge of those laws. It is to fail to recognise the personal nature of the human being, to fail to understand that a person differs fundamentally both from a piece of inorganic matter and from a mere organism. A person is a free, creative, self-regulating being, capable of self-transcendence through love and aspiration towards ideal ends. While much of man's behaviour, especially on its lower levels, is socially determined, man yet embodies a free principle, and it is this free spirit which creates the higher values. Thus to attempt to bring this free spirit under social control (a vain effort indeed) is to seek to determine the higher nature by the lower.

In his attempt at a diagnosis of our time Mannheim starts with the assumption, which was also that of H. G. Wells, that man's problem to-day is that of adapting himself to a new kind of large-scale human society which has been essentially the creation of science, the society which Mannheim calls The Great Society. Like Wells, also, Mannheim assumes that a spiritual as well as a political and economic adaptation is needed, and, like Wells again, he believes that we must plan for this spiritual adaptation.

Now it is by no means obvious that a large-scale society does need a higher level of ethics for its efficient management than the smaller states we have known in the past. A unified world, having modern techniques of control and of the dissemination of information and ideas at its command, could probably be managed without any appreciable improvement in the level of ethical behaviour. It is important not to confuse the more complex methods of administration needed in a large-scale society with a spiritual adaptation.

Nevertheless it is true that the modern world displays a spiritual crisis as well as a crisis of economics and politics. The crisis has been created by the impinging of materialist philosophy and of scientism on traditional conceptions of the nature of man and of God. Also the cause of the spiritual crisis is, to some extent, the same as that of the political and economic crisis, for both are largely traceable to the achievements of science, which in the spiritual sphere have contributed to the belief that the scientific mode of thinking is the only valid mode, and in the material sphere have revolutionised the economic framework of society. But Mannheim has committed the grave error of imagining that the spiritual crisis can be dealt with by planning. Planning can only affect the formal structure of society, the techniques of control, but a spiritual crisis must be met by spiritual means, by attending to its causes which lie within the realm of thought. The task of dealing with the problem is that of religion and philosophy. The movement known as Personalism, with which this book is primarily concerned, has as its primary purpose the formulation of the synthesis on which a valid solution must be based, and the building of the spiritual forces which will seek to regenerate society on this new foundation.

Bibliography

K. Mannheim: Ideology and Utopia
Man and Society
Diagnosis of our Time

II. *Harold Laski*

THE British Socialist movement has remained, on the whole, obstinately non-Marxist. Marxism is an elaborate sociological and metaphysical system, characteristically German in its intellectual character, which purports to provide not only the theoretical basis for valid thought in every field but also a strategy for political action. British Socialism is more pragmatic and opportunist; it lacks an elaborately worked out theoretical basis; it has no use for the Hegelian dialectic, for the categories of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The Communist Party has struck no deep roots on British soil. The British Labour movement has nevertheless its Marxist professor in Harold Laski; in a recent Fabian pamphlet he rebuked the Labour Party for its excessively pragmatic attitude, its lack of a philosophy, its indifference to the broad theoretical issues of sociology and politics. He rebuked the leaders in particular for their failure to appreciate the significance of Marxism; an understanding of Marx, in his view, would have given Labour a more realistic attitude to the conquest of real power. Professor Laski has a highly adaptable intelligence and he has succeeded in working in considerable harmony with his non-Marxist colleagues within the party; nevertheless there have been not infrequent incidents in which Mr. Laski's Marxist leanings and his public utterances have led to important differences between him and the party chiefs, and have sometimes seriously embarrassed the latter.

Mr. Laski's numerous works are attempts to apply Marxist categories to the multifarious problems of modern sociology and politics. His analysis of the problem of the state follows Marxist lines. The capitalist state is to him essentially the guardian of the interests of the propertied classes. In his treatment of the problem of law he has rejected the view that the validity of law is based on reason and the law of nature; he maintains that we must ask the question whose reason it is that operates in the legal sphere; we shall then find, in his opinion, that the purpose of law,

in the case of capitalist society, is to defend the interests of the class which is privileged in that society, or at all events that this purpose gives a marked bias to the operations of law. In his discussion of the problem of war and of national sovereignty he has argued that the sovereign state is an expression of class domination so that to supersede national sovereignties it is essential first to destroy the power of capitalism. He has maintained that the problem of liberty and democracy is bound up with the struggle for the state power, basing his analysis of this question on the assumption that the capitalist class will attempt to destroy democratic liberties as soon as its privileged position is seriously endangered. In a word, all the main political issues resolve themselves in Professor Laski's mind into the issue of which social class shall administer the state power in its own interests, and in the main, like the Marxists, he holds that the process taking place in society is a relentless struggle between capitalists and proletarians.

In essence Mr. Laski's *Grammar of Politics* is founded on the Marxist conception of the withering away of the state. In this monumental work Professor Laski looks forward first to the destruction of the power of the capitalist class and then, with the state ceasing to be the instrument of privilege, to a process of decentralisation of the state functions, there resulting a pluralist system in which a large variety of local and of functional bodies perform with a considerable measure of autonomy the services on which a healthy and vigorous social life depends.

Mr. Laski thus arrives at similar conclusions to those which follow from a personalist political philosophy; the ethical basis of his system is, however, different from that of personalists, for he assumes, as do most Marxists, a natural goodness of man which will assert itself when the corrupting influence of capitalism is destroyed.

Mr. Laski finds the Marxist analysis adequate to account for the growth of Italian and of German Fascism, and speaks of Mussolini and Hitler as condottieri of the capitalist interests. He realises, indeed, that Hitler, after his advent to power, proceeded to deliver mortal blows to the capitalists, and that he succeeded partly through being an expression of German nationalism. Nevertheless he holds that the help given by Big Business was a

crucial factor in Hitler's success, while it was only through the widespread sense of frustration created by the decline of capitalism, a decline based essentially on the fact that in a declining capitalism the relations of production are in contradiction to the forces of production, that Hitler was able to win widespread support from the German masses.

Professor Laski's thought, unlike that of certain other Marxist professors, has retained the merit of a large element of independence. He has been able to criticise certain tendencies of Marxism, such as its under-emphasis of the importance of nationalism as a factor in modern historical development. In particular he is not a Communist, and has frequently been a bitter critic of the Communist Party line and also of the policy of Soviet Russia. He has recognised the danger, in the development of Russia, of the power of the new doctrinal aristocracy; he sees that in Russia, with the breaking of all political opposition, supremacy of power, with its accompanying privileges, has passed into the hands of the protagonists of a new orthodoxy. He admits that the new Russia is a dictatorship, and expresses a full awareness of the dangers of the abuse of its power. He accepts as dangerous the emphasis in Communist thought on the necessity of violence, fearing that parties which believe violence to be necessary will make insufficient effort to achieve necessary change by other means, and he recognises the extreme difficulty of emerging from a period of violence into something better, seeing that violence begets violence. In his *Communism*, which contains an excellent early examination of the Soviet system, he wisely poses the question, "Can a regime that is built on hate and fear and violence give birth to an order rooted in fraternity?" He shows how the insistence among Communists on ideological orthodoxy inevitably pays a penalty in the destruction of intellectual independence and creativeness, and refers to the "heavy inflexibility of Communist literature". He recognises also that the disposition of the Russian leaders to the methods of dictatorship was partly due, neither to necessity nor to their attachment to Marxist theory, but to the conspiratorial tradition to which they were accustomed and their lack of understanding of the political democracy of the West. He realises also that the possibility of building up a genuine democracy in Russia has been prejudiced by the creation of a strong

vested interest on the part of Stalin and his associates in the state power. Mr. Laski has frequently referred to the grave crimes and follies of the Soviet state, to the error of the foundation of the Communist International with its disruptive effect on the Socialist movement in every country, to the cruelty and brutality of the treatment of the Kulaks and of Stalin's political opponents, to the grave errors of the Stalin-Hitler pact, the attack on Finland, and the policy of revolutionary defeatism, inspired by Stalin, by which in effect the Communist Party in every land worked, until Hitler attacked Russia, for the victory of Hitler.

But these criticisms of Russia, important and far-reaching as they are, do not alter the essentially Marxist character of Professor Laski's thought. He holds that it is the system of productive relationships in any country which exercises the paramount influence, not only on its social conditions, but on its ethics and on its legal institutions and cultural life, and that the abolition of capitalism, and the consequent revolutionary change in the relationships of production in the Soviet Union, have laid the foundation for social and cultural developments of a highly beneficial character, and have prepared the way, in fact, for a new era in human destiny.

Mr. Laski's *Reflections on the Revolution of our Time* was published in 1942, his *Faith, Reason and Civilisation* in 1944. In the years between Russia had shown her capacity to check the advance of Hitler's troops; the vast German army was irresistibly, if at times slowly, forced back out of Russian soil. The Russian achievement had a marked effect on Professor Laski's attitude to Russia and the Soviet system; the note of doubt and suspicion unmistakably voiced in *Communism* and the *Reflections* became considerably muted; a new note of confident praise and acclamation is heard. In *Faith, Reason and Civilisation* Mr. Laski maintains that the spectacle of Russian heroism has convinced the common man, all over the world, that the Russian Revolution of 1917 has a magic and a meaning applicable to his own concerns and his own society. He asserts that the idea of the Soviet society satisfies the conditions that any system of values needed to give a new faith to mankind must possess. The principle of the Russian order ensures to the common man a rising standard of welfare, a society in which the individual's status is conditioned by the function he performs

and not by inherited privilege, a society in which men are unable through the possession of wealth to exercise power over other men, a society which offers to all a new sense of individual fulfilment. The Russian Revolution has built, Mr. Laski tells us, the elements of a universal fellowship; it has evoked "a religion of service to the community which has elevated the men and women who compose it". An adequate modern faith, Mr. Laski adds, must provide a drive for the improvement of the material circumstances of the masses, for internal fulfilment, in the case of the majority of men, must await the provision of satisfactory external conditions; the Russian faith is a faith directed to the material betterment of the masses. A faith thus orientated to economic well-being has a far greater importance, in Mr. Laski's view, than any creed which crusades for the regeneration of human nature.

A good society, Professor Laski tells us, needs a common faith; it must be a society "in which the great ends of life are held in common". To-day capitalist societies are societies of declining faith; the victories of Mussolini and Hitler would have been impossible but for the decay of faith, a decay which had an economic cause in that it is impossible, under the conditions of capitalism in decay, to secure a full exploitation of the forces of production. The literature of Britain between the two great wars has been symptomatic of the decay of faith; only in a degenerate society, in Mr. Laski's view, could T. S. Eliot be accepted as the dominant influence in poetry and James Joyce as the greatest figure in the novel. Professor Laski notes in T. S. Eliot his horror of the common man, his fastidious sensitiveness which regards whatever is connected with the masses as in its nature vulgar and ugly and barbarous. Mr. Eliot has never sought to make his music heard by ordinary people; he has scarcely cared whether he had an audience to address or not; he has made little attempt to interpret current problems, to be, in Shelley's words, "the unacknowledged legislator of the world". The poet who cuts himself off from his fellows, says Mr. Laski, is cutting himself off from life and, in so doing, is denying that life has meaning; the poet who denies the necessity of the fullest communication open to him is denying that he has anything essential to say. Mr. Eliot, sums up Mr. Laski, has gone into self-chosen exile because he fears the battle which is raging; his poetry is a betrayal of life; he is as

deserving of condemnation as any of the writers whom M. Benda impeached.

Professor Laski finds James Joyce even more deserving of rebuke, even more a morbid symptom of a declining society. In a novel like *Ulysses* Joyce shuts out the whole of reality except the stream of consciousness in Leopold Bloom, a more or less worthless figure to whom the whole of the major problems of modern life have neither interest nor meaning. Thus Joyce pushes the subjectivism, the individualism of contemporary culture, to a point where it is drained of all social meaning. Joyce was deliberately concerned with an attempt to escape from reality; it is perhaps not surprising that he finished by rejecting the normal language of communication, thus consciously separating himself off from all but a tiny élite. Mr. Laski finds the pessimism, the defeatism, even the pacifism, of Aldous Huxley an equally convincing testimony of the decadence of our intellectuals in a decaying society. Mr. Huxley seems to him to contemplate the lives of ordinary people with a mixture of despair and disgust, the remedies he proposes being only available to a few chosen souls who deliberately alienate themselves from the life of the masses.

Only in a society with a new faith and hope, then, in Mr. Laski's view, shall we see a renewal of the sources of great literature, a society in which "the great ends of life are held in common". Such a society, Mr. Laski confidently asserts, is modern Russia, so that it is to Russia that we must look for the idea that will inspire the masses of humanity in the future and provide the conditions for an artistic and literary renaissance.

No one who has followed the development of Harold Laski's thought or had contact with him personally can doubt, not only that he is a man of great ability and integrity, but that he is a passionate lover of mankind and of social justice, and a firm believer in independence of thought and personal creativity. Yet his political prejudice and his devotion to Marxist principles have led him to embrace, more particularly in his recent work, the most pernicious of heresies. He now specifically asks us to find the ethical values which our society needs, not in any ideal of personality or conception of human regeneration and transcendence, but in an economic reconstruction of society resulting in

a drive to the increase of material benefits, and he counsels us to look to Russia for the principles of the new society. No country can, indeed, illustrate so forcibly as Russia the fallacy of the idea that superior ethical and social standards result merely from a change in the economic basis of society. Mr. Laski speaks of Russia as a society in which a man's efforts are relevant to his own standard of welfare. The truth is that, nearly thirty years after the Revolution, differentiation of material rewards goes much further in Russia than in capitalist societies, so that the efforts of the masses of the Russian workers, on the basis of a standard of living below that of the worst-paid British workers, accrue to a considerable extent to the benefit of the privileged classes of bureaucrats, technocrats, and Stakhanovites. To Mr. Laski Russia is a society in which wealth does not confer power over other men; the truth is that the newly privileged classes in Russia, able now to leave their wealth to their descendants, have complete power over the Russian worker, who has not only lost all political rights but has lost also the right to agitate for improved conditions through his trade unions. The Russian Revolution, Mr. Laski tells us, has built a new human fellowship. So little is the Russian system built on fellowship that increasingly fear and greed have tended to become primary incentives in industry,[1] while the privileged eat in separate restaurants and buy from separate shops, have their own schools whose fees the poor cannot afford to pay, and increasingly assume the badges of an exclusive caste. Mr. Laski finds the literature of capitalist states in a state of decay, yet Britain and America can name some dozens of writers of outstanding ability and originality in the last two decades, in which period creative originality in Russia has been largely destroyed by the servile submission of authors to the state and an effete and degrading worship of Stalin. To sum up, Professor Laski wishes us to look for our future faith to a society in which one of the foundation elements of morals, the right to freedom of conscience

[1] I do not wish to imply any condition of moral decline in Russian society. Fear and greed are primary incentives in capitalist society, while, of course, other motives which can be unreservedly admired play a considerable part in the Russian system. I am only rejecting Professor Laski's assumption that a change in the relationships of production in itself creates higher ethical standards. The Marxist faith itself contains certain elements which are ethically dangerous and others which are salutary.

and of expression, has been rejected, in which honesty of thought and character is at a discount seeing that all men must submit themselves, on pain of grievous persecution, to the demands of a party that brooks no opposition.

On what grounds are we to explain the acceptance of so dangerous a doctrine by a man of the intellectual and moral calibre of Professor Laski, a thinker whose works are by no means lacking in wisdom, in penetration, in high excellence? In the first place, while Mr. Laski's writings on ethical issues abound with unconscious contradictions, for he has never wholeheartedly embraced the cruder forms of Marxism, he has continued to hold that the ethic of a community is a function of its economic system. I only wish to make one or two brief comments on this view. In any community but the most primitive widely different ethical beliefs tend to be held. There tends indeed to be a widely accepted morality of custom, which, however, differs considerably in different social groups, but besides this morality of tradition, of habit, there arises in souls of especial purity and insight a morality based on a vision of the higher destinies of mankind. This higher level of morality—in Christian thought it is spoken of as the morality of the spirit as distinct from the morality of law—tends to permeate morality on the lower levels, although human beings possess a marked resistance to change which gives very considerable stability to the morality of custom. Now it is clear that the ethical ideas held in any community are facts; and that the nature of these facts is influenced by the economic environment. But what is important about the ideas, from the ethical point of view, is which ideas we shall regard as right, which ideas we shall hold it as our special responsibility to teach and disseminate. Shall we take our stand, for example, by the morality of custom, or shall we hold the view that the progress of humanity depends upon the extent to which customary morality becomes permeated with the life of the spirit? Now on such issues as this, and they are the only issues which matter when we are dealing with problems of ethics, the statement that the ethic of a community is a function of its economic system gives no help at all. In actual fact, also, the ethical standards of any community are to a very large extent the creation of its religious organisations, which, while they are themselves, no doubt, in some measure influenced by material con-

siderations, are originally the work of a prophet who has some vision of the true destiny of mankind. The Christian Church, for example, cannot help keeping alive Christ's vision, however obscured at times, of the brotherhood of man and the Kingdom of God. Now the assertion that the ethical ideas are determined by material factors is to leave totally undecided the question of the rightness or wrongness of the principles on which the religious organisations are based. But clearly this question of the rightness of ethical ideas is of fundamental importance unless we are to take the view that the only factor which is of any importance is that of the material interest of the dominant class in a community. Professor Laski clearly does not take this view, or he could not speak as he does of the moral health of communist society and the decadence of capitalist society.

But if we are unaware of the crucial importance of the question of the rightness and wrongness of prevailing ethical ideas, and if we fail to grasp the fundamental significance of the part played by religious organisations in teaching an ethic based on some vision of man's destiny, we shall neglect these issues in our projects for building a better world. Having regarded ethical ideas primarily as facts related to the material environment rather than as questions of right and wrong, we shall either fail to make up our minds about them or shall at all events neglect the fundamentally important task of teaching an ethic. We shall be inclined to leave the working out of a new ethic to the free play of material forces. Also we shall give insufficient thought to the problem of the right performance of that crucial social function which has been performed in the past by Churches. The neglect or misunderstanding of this problem may well prove the rock on which our plans will be wrecked.

The Marxist contention, then, which Mr. Laski, fortunately with only one half of his mind, accepts, that ethical concepts are epiphenomena, or secondary factors determined by the social environment, leads to ethical relativism, the belief that significant ethical ideas are based on the needs and wishes of the ruling class of any society, or to ethical nihilism, the denial of objective validity to any ethical ideas, for example, to ideas based on a conception of personality or a belief in a true destiny for man, or to ethical pragmatism, the belief that a right ethic is what "works"

or is convenient in any particular social order. The ethical relativism of Marxism, which in theory Mr. Laski apparently shares, is not unconnected with the disposition of the Communist Party and the new Russian rulers to justify any measures, however cruel or destructive to freedom, which seem useful on grounds of expediency, and with the failure of the Russians to lay a sound ethical foundation for their new society. This failure, again, has led to an effort, inspired partly by panic, to fill the moral vacuum by illegitimate means, a remedy which has only aggravated the disease. We have seen, indeed, that at times Mr. Laski has seemed to appreciate these dangers of Communist thought, but some of his recent writings betray a willingness to believe that the Russian ethic is better merely because a change in the distribution of economic power has taken place.

Secondly, Professor Laski's attitude to religion is such as inevitably to prepare the way for disastrous lapses of ethical and social judgment. In his remarks on religion he seems always to have in mind the religion which Marxists refer to as "opium for the people", a religion based partly upon the desire of the privileged to use their control of education to put off the common people from their just rights by imaginary satisfactions, and partly on the wish-fulfilment of the masses themselves. But he fails in any adequate recognition of the connection between the more developed forms of religion, between the religion of the spirit, and the highest and noblest standards of conduct. The distinction between the "prophetic" and "priestly" forms of religion, and the immense importance of "prophetic" religion in leavening the ethical standards of communities, are factors of which Mr. Laski takes quite insufficient account. Both in his *Reflections* and his *Faith, Reason and Civilisation*, he is at pains to deny that religion has a beneficial effect on conduct. Also, in saying in the latter book that there is no way out to-day through the ascetic ideal, on the ground that asceticism has no appeal to the masses, he shows a tendency, as elsewhere in his writings, to estimate ethical ideas on their political and social success, or their immediate prospect of it, and indeed no other criterion is in harmony with the general tendency of his thought, though much of what he has written, it is true, contradicts this view. To sum up on this issue, a writer who fails to recognise the part played in human development by "prophetic"

religion is quite unable to understand the forces which work for moral regeneration or decay in any people.

Fortunately, Mr. Laski tends to be largely saved by his contradictions. One half of him does not know what the other half doeth. With one part of his being he is fanatically devoted to ethical verities, the objective validity of which he intuitively recognises, to justice, brotherhood, truth of fact, freedom of the mind. A man whose deepest intuitions are so soundly grounded will tend to recover from his mistakes.

In his interpretation of the political situation in Britain and America Mr. Laski does not express the view that revolution by violence is inescapable. But his works published during the Second World War did voice considerable scepticism as to the possibility of a revolution by consent, especially if the revolution was not achieved when the common danger gave the psychological impulse to agreement among all classes of the community a dramatic validity it would not possess under peace-time conditions. Laski's forecast of the future of American politics is that unless the destruction of the economic power of the traditionally privileged can be achieved by peaceful means, and he clearly regards that as highly improbable, there will be a huge development of economic imperialism almost inevitably accompanied by the end of democratic life. Mr. Laski's Marxist leanings thus lead him to put primary emphasis on the transfer of economic power from the capitalist class and to be disinclined to the view that the transference can be made peacefully. The danger of his analysis is that by laying all his stress on a transfer of power which can in any case be regarded as inevitable, he tends to fail to recognise the priority of importance of the safeguarding of liberty and democratic rights, whatever political and economic stresses governments may have to meet. For if the fundamental human freedoms are lost in Britain and America, it may well be that generations will elapse before they are regained.

Professor Laski's general analysis of the contemporary situation leads him to find the true pattern of social development rather in Russia than in the democracies. Yet the evidence is overwhelming that our hope of preserving intellectual freedom with all that that means in the retention of liberal values and liberal culture must be founded on the democracies. I am not sure we shall not even

find a better pattern of social justice to-day in Britain and America than in "Socialist" Russia. The primary political issue of our time would seem to be the preservation and strengthening of the democratic pattern of community and the fortifying of the spiritual forces whose natural political expression is in democracy. Mr. Laski has always regarded the issue of capitalism versus socialism as more fundamental than that of democracy, and has repeatedly expressed grave doubts of the possibility of retaining democracy in this age of transition; he has even suggested that a British Socialist Government might be well advised temporarily to suspend democratic procedure in order to safeguard its power and facilitate its projects in a transitional period. This aspect of Mr. Laski's thought is highly dangerous, and has frequently worried his Socialist colleagues. I have already suggested that if democracy is lost in Britain and America, freedom and liberal culture may be lost for a period whose length we cannot at present estimate. Moderate policies achieved by consent are to-day infinitely to be preferred to more far-reaching courses which can only be achieved at the price of revolutionary violence.

For similar reasons it is highly important that the people of Western Europe should look for inspiration in the future rather to Britain and America, to the pattern of a liberal democracy, than to Communist Russia. The cause of freedom may be lost or saved in the next ten years by the character of the political development in Western Europe. It would be untrue to suggest that Mr. Laski does not recognise the merits of the methods and ideals of liberal democracy. But he does a poor service to the cause of democracy when in such works as *Faith, Reason and Civilisation* he exalts the ideals and ethical and cultural standards of Russia at the expense of those of Britain and America.

What seem to me to be the errors of Mr. Laski's thought spring from the errors of his sociology and metaphysics. He has followed Marx in placing primary emphasis in social development on economic factors. But it is precisely these factors which are most subject to social determinism so that it is they which are least worthy of emphasis in any society which expresses the will of free men. Thus Mr. Laski makes his primary social aim the supersession of capitalism which is in any case doomed through technological causes. Mr.

Laski also has adopted the unconscious messianism of Marx, the belief that the end of capitalism will usher in a new and splendid era for mankind. This is clearly a case of the wish being father to the thought, while a social analysis which leads to the under-emphasis of the free, spiritual factors which help to determine social development is calculated to make an emergence from our troubled age to a happier one less likely. The canons of Mr. Laski's social thinking lead him to deny or under-estimate the danger stressed by Burnham, that capitalism will pass over into a managerial economy of a totalitarian type; to fail to realise this danger is to fail to take steps to prevent it.

The errors of Professor Laski's metaphysics are indeed graver than the errors of his sociology. Mr. Laski is indeed no metaphysician, and it is perhaps for this reason that he has become a perfect example of, and warning against, the scientism of the modern age, the belief that science provides valid categories of thought in every field, and that philosophy and metaphysics are mere logic-chopping, and religion wish-fulfilment. Mr. Laski's metaphysical innocence perhaps explains certain illusions to which he seems to me to be subject, an undue faith in the goodness of the "common man", a belief that a high ethic arises in any community, not out of the teachings of religion, but out of a social effort directed to material benefits, his assumption that traditional religion and traditional theology, with the framework of philosophy to which they have been attached, are fading away in the clear light of science. Mr. Laski has never recognised that the essential elements of religion, with the values to which they give sanction, are based on a form of experience which is insusceptible to the assaults of science. But while the validity of the values remains unaltered, their power over man has been weakened by the widespread impression, fostered by such thinkers as Professor Laski, that science has destroyed traditional morals and that a new ethic must be built up with science as a basis. Thus an ethical nihilism has sprung up, for as no one knows in what the new ethic taught by science consists, ethics has tended to become a matter of convenience and expediency.

Perhaps I have exaggerated the difference between the standpoint of Mr. Laski and that which I have described as Personalist. For his Marxism is combined with independence and discretion

and an aversion to Stalinism, while his devotion to mankind's highest moral and intellectual traditions is beyond dispute.

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III. *James Burnham*

JAMES BURNHAM'S two books, *The Managerial Revolution* and *The Machiavellians*, have caused some perturbation in the Left, and have not failed to influence opinion in its more intelligent and less hidebound sections. Socialist opinion has always assumed that capitalism would sooner or later be superseded, and that it would be followed by a democratic society whose economic structure was communally managed on behalf of the workers. Marxists have held that the dialectic of history would, inevitably, replace capitalism by a system in which the proletarian class was supreme. Non-Marxian Socialists, while less disposed to believe in any law of historical development, have had an equally firm conviction that democratic Socialist regimes would succeed capitalism. Burnham has given important reasons for doubting this long-undisputed assumption.

Burnham thinks to some extent in Marxist categories, and like the Marxists, holds that capitalism must terminate through its own inner contradictions, and that the change will involve a transfer of power to another social class. Burnham believes, indeed, that the key positions in world power have already largely passed out of capitalist hands. But he denies the Socialist assumption that power will pass or is passing to the workers; in his view it is virtually inevitable that a position of dominance in the new regimes will be held by what he calls the managerial class. A good deal of *The Managerial Revolution* is devoted to showing the extent to which this change has already taken place.

Burnham's argument is based mainly on an analysis of the systems of America and Russia, and that of Germany before her collapse. He successfully refutes the view that the system of Nazi Germany was a form of capitalism; effective power in the German economy was clearly in the hands of the Nazi bosses, not of those capitalists who still retained titular ownership of industrial property.

More significant is his analysis of modern Russia. He shows that only that section of the Left which is determined to deceive itself (unfortunately a large and fanatical section) can hold any longer that power in Russia has passed into proletarian hands. It is doubtful, indeed, whether there is any country, except Germany before her defeat, in which the worker is so completely deprived of power as in Russia. Not only has the worker lost all vestige of a right to organise himself either politically or economically, but the state power is increasingly being used to create and strengthen economic and cultural privileges.

Again, in Burnham's view, a realist view of America and Britain must admit the extent to which, ever since the world slump of the early nineteen-thirties, effective power in the economic sphere has been passing from the property-owning class into the hands of the political administrators and business managers. In America, in the prolonged war between Big Business and the New Deal, the latter was victorious all along the line. This tendency to create a managerial economy has been immensely strengthened by war-time necessities, while Burnham believes that any considerable movement to reverse the process in the post-war world would have such disastrous repercussions that a fierce reaction, perhaps accompanied by revolutionary violence, would sweep away the last vestiges of capitalism in a series of emergency measures.[1] But Burnham does not believe that the movement away from capitalism in America and Britain is giving power to the workers any more than it did in Russia and Germany. His conclusion, then, is that while we are undoubtedly seeing to-day the rapid disintegration of capitalist regimes, what is taking their place is the "managerial" state, a state in which effective power is in the hands of political chiefs or business managers. Increasingly, in Burnham's view, the business managers will be supreme because it is only they who will be capable of directing efficiently the forces of production. But how will the managers ensure their power when it does not rest, as did that of the capitalists, on the ownership of industrial property? It will

[1] The above was written in the autumn of 1939. Since then we have seen a Republican victory at the polls. It remains to be seen how far the New Deal legislation will be repealed and also how far, should that happen, the reversal of policy will have the repercussions which Burnham forecasted.

depend, Burnham maintains, on their ability to control the state power and use it in the furtherance of their interests and policies. Any class or group which is able to control the power of the modern state will have in its hands a more unlimited power than the capitalist class ever possessed. Thus Burnham regards the managerial class as a much greater danger to freedom than the class it is rapidly superseding; thus, in his view, we are compelled to recognise the danger that capitalism will be succeeded, not by democratic Socialism, but by despotisms of a power and efficiency previously unknown to history.

Burnham's analysis has serious limitations. He is too ready, for example, to assimilate the systems of the American and British democracies to that of Russia, and to assume, accordingly, that democratic control of political and economic power in these countries is completely unreal, or at all events is becoming unreal, so that effective democratic control of their new managerial economies is impracticable. Nevertheless he has given a salutary warning, to Left opinion in particular. The Left has never sufficiently realised that planning must create a considerable class of bureaucrats and experts, with interests by no means identical with those of the masses, who may well be in a position to exploit the apparatus of the state power in their own interests. Adulation of the Russian economy as the first great Socialist experiment has deprived large sections of the Left of objectivity, and blinded them to the danger to freedom of a system in which the state has a monopoly of economic power. To be aware of dangers is often to be able to avert them. Burnham resembles the Marxists in speaking too frequently of the inevitability of a particular mode of economic or social development. But we can be grateful to him for sounding a note of grave warning.

One of the dangers of our time is that considerable sections of the Left continue to repeat the slogans of a generation ago, especially in asserting that the primary issue of our time is the destruction of capitalism; others still regard any reference to the eclipse of freedom, democracy and equality in Soviet Russia as an unpardonable heresy. Such a situation is far from favourable to the preservation of cultural and political freedom.

Burnham's thought is rather neo-Marxist than anti-Marxist. Like

Marx he holds that every form of society has been dominated by a class whose rule is based on conserving and strengthening its own economic interests. Like Marx he holds that history moves by a dialectical process involving the gradual emergence in each historical era of a new social class destined to rise to dominance. He differs from Marx, however, in denying the possibility of a classless society. In this respect he seems to be more consistent than Marx. In Burnham's view, certain forces in human nature, especially the great differences in natural ability, and the widespread love of power, are bound to cause the emergence of groups (and of one dominant group in particular) which become separated off from the masses and assume a position of political and economic privilege.

Burnham has been greatly influenced by Pareto, from whom he has come to accept the view that the forces which mould human society are essentially non-rational. Societies are held together, in Pareto's view, by myths, which are beliefs devoid of any rational or scientific basis or objective validity, which nevertheless satisfy the emotional needs of the masses, while being in harmony with the interests of the privileged. There is clearly a close analogy between the "myths" of Pareto and the "ideologies" of Marx. Burnham holds that with the emergence to power of the managerial class we are witnessing the dissemination of managerial "myths", which will before long become dominant. They will cement the loyalty of the masses to the new order and facilitate their economic exploitation.

The Managerial Revolution seemed to forecast an inevitable development of what can only be called world Fascism. Managerial groups controlling the state and motivated by economic interest could not be expected to refrain from using the state power to propagate their ideologies. This would mean the setting up of one-party systems, either in name or in fact. It is difficult to see how genuine freedom of speech could exist in such states, for the dominant party would hardly be content to countenance the undermining of popular belief in the managerial "myths". *The Managerial Revolution* forecasts an era of "managerial" wars, which could have, on the basis of Burnham's analysis, no other culmination than the setting up of a world state in which the masses of the people would be systematically deceived by the

propaganda of their all-powerful rulers, and as systematically exploited.

Burnham seemed to be alarmed both by the gloomy picture he had painted in *The Managerial Revolution* and by the criticisms he received, and the sub-title of his *The Machiavellians* is "Defenders of Freedom". He now teaches that freedom may be preserved in any state if influential opinion is sufficiently awake to the conditions on which its preservation depends. The first condition is the existence in the state of two rival forces, neither of which is strong enough to crush the other. Burnham has in mind in particular the two-party system as it has prevailed for a long period in Britain and America. The two-party system, however, has been a characteristic of capitalist societies, and Burnham fails to discuss whether its maintenance is consistent with the new centralisation of economic power and control. The great political parties in Britain and America have arisen as the natural expression of the interests of powerful social and economic groups. Such parties cannot be artificially created, nor is it clear that a two-party system would arise naturally, given a high degree of centralisation of economic power. On the premises stated by Burnham in the earlier book, a government controlled by managers, who were responsible for the co-ordinated control of economic and cultural development, would be unlikely to tolerate an opposition power of any strength, especially as, on Burnham's view, the control of the state would be associated with considerable economic privileges which a powerful opposition would threaten. This first condition stated by Burnham could, indeed, only be fulfilled given the existence of two rival groups of managers, neither strong enough to crush the other, and both prepared to play the political game according to democratic rules as it has been played traditionally in Britain and America. Seeing that the prize of victory in this case would be the control of a monopoly of economic power, the fulfilment of the condition seems to be out of the question.

Two other conditions of freedom, in Burnham's view, are the acceptance by general opinion of the principle that the law is superior to the state (Burnham points out that all parties in America have been prepared to conform to the principles of the American constitution), and the free circulation of élites, or

the acceptance of such social and educational institutions as will ensure that there is a free passage of persons of ability from the ruled to the ruling class.

It seems clear that the recommendations in Burnham's *The Machiavellians* are inconsistent with the social analysis of *The Managerial Revolution*. The earlier work assumed as its basis that a particular class must become dominant in any society, that it will be ruled by self-interest, that it will not tolerate an effective challenge to its power, and that in securing its ends it will think any means justified; such a class will not be deterred by reverence for any general principle of law. We can accept as desirable such social ends as the career open to talents and the subordination of the state to law without seeing on what grounds we can believe, assuming that non-rational motives among the masses and self-interest in the ruling élite are the determining principles of social development, that these ends can be secured in "managerial" states. Burnham argues that the ruling class in a managerial society might well be imbued with the scientific spirit, seeing that the management of such a state depends on scientific technique, and that a scientific élite would recognise the necessity of a free circulation of talent and the free expression of creative energies and interests if powerful forces making for weakness and corruption in the state were to be checked. At the same time he admits that rulers doomed to rule by the propagation of "myths" (by definition beliefs that no rational man could accept) might soon cease to be moved by the scientific spirit. It is fairly safe to prophesy, indeed, that any body of men in key positions in a managerial state, who were genuinely inspired by the spirit of science, would soon rebel against the loathsome task of deceiving the masses of the people by lies. The idea, in fact, of a state ruled at once by "myths" and by the spirit of science is contradictory. Burnham's later book thus does little to remove the impression of pessimism and defeatism created by *The Managerial Revolution*. His books call attention to factors to which it is important to pay attention, and which are often forgotten. But despair about the future will only be averted through conceptions to which Burnham attaches little or no importance.

I have suggested that Burnham's books put a salutary emphasis on certain neglected factors in the modern social situation.

Nevertheless it seems to me that the spirit and attitude inspiring his views should be roundly condemned. They should be condemned because they are conducive to cynicism, to a belief that the only possible future is one in which the masses, consisting of fools, are cheated by a predatory few, consisting of clever knaves. They should be condemned because they discourage, with insufficient reason, the view that human ideals can influence the social structure, and so depress social effort based on these ideals. They should be condemned, again, because, by assuming that the ideas which influence human conduct are mainly non-rational, they depreciate the part played by rationality in human affairs, and so discourage the spirit of science just as they depress that of humanity and of sane and noble idealism.

While Burnham has rejected certain elements of Marxism, he has accepted other parts of the Marxian analysis, and in particular that part which is least reputable, its attitude to ethical values. By maintaining that social development and ethical standards are affected mainly by material factors Marx under-emphasised the part played by that creative element of the human spirit which transcends particular social situations, and by the ethical and cultural values taught by that creative spirit. By regarding all systems of thought as projections of the economic interest of social classes, Marx in effect denied all validity to those supreme ethical ideals which have been the greatest inspiration of the human mind in the historical struggle. This not only tended to depress human idealism, but led influential political elements to concentrate their attention on the seizure of power by whatever means rather than on the expression of ethical values in their personal lives and social relationships. It is hardly surprising that a further development of the same mode of thinking has led to the unlimited use of bad means to secure political ends, and has culminated in the police state, with its frank brutality, its abolition of freedom, its annihilation of the creative personality.

In their ethical aspect Burnham's views seem to have the defects of Marxism without its merits. Whatever the errors of Marxist theory, Marx himself and considerable elements of the Marxist parties have, in fact, been inspired by the love of humanity and by liberal ideals, while aiming at greater realism than had been shown by the sentimental Socialists. But the tendency of

Burnham's thought is to drain political life of all ideal inspiration. Burnham has no word of condemnation for his "managers" who deceive the masses by "myths" in order to exploit them. He complacently accepts the inevitability of a future of unlimited oppression, and of a scientifically planned deception of the unprivileged multitude.

George Orwell maintains that Burnham's books, in spite of their pretensions towards scientific objectivity, are in fact plain expressions of that worship of power which seems to Orwell to be so widespread among modern intellectuals, especially in Marxist or neo-Marxist circles. He says that Burnham never condemned Hitler and Nazism, and in the early days of the war complacently assumed the inevitability of something like German world domination, while in a later article called "Lenin's Heir" he turned to an equally naïve form of Stalin worship, no less disgraceful from the ethical standpoint. Both Burnham's books, indeed, seem to him to be rationalisations of the love of unlimited power, the cruelty and dishonesty involved in the achievement of power being complacently accepted and justified.

The defects both of Marxism and of the neo-Marxism of Burnham spring from their materialist conception of history. If values are functions of material conditions, they are merely facts relating to a particular social structure and have no objective or compelling validity, no claim on our love and allegiance. If the only real existences are material entities obeying mechanical or dialectical laws, and history is made by the conflicts between powerful social groups motivated by economic interest, any prospect of a saner or juster society is plainly illusory. A wiser, as well as a more hopeful social philosophy would seem to depend upon the recognition of the existence of a formative spirit in man, a spirit which is the creator of values whose validity is not determined by the social environment, a spirit whose function it is to re-create that environment, to re-build it in accordance with man's high purpose and destiny.

Burnham, following Pareto, recognises the irrational determinants of many prevalent ideals and social practices. To make an analysis of the causes leading to irrational beliefs and practices is clearly valuable, if it is made the basis of an effort to promote greater rationality. To Burnham and Pareto, however, the irra-

tionality of the human animal is fundamental and permanent. To face hard facts about human nature, its egotism and irrationality, is no doubt salutary. But Burnham and Pareto fail to recognise the importance of those creative elements in the human mind which are passionately attached to the spirit of reason and strive dynamically to bring peace, freedom, love and justice to a stricken world. A clear recognition of these qualities of the awakened human spirit and intelligence, and an acceptance of the compelling force of the ethical ideas to which this free spirit of man becomes attached, would produce some modification of Burnham's analysis.

With Burnham the belief in the realisation of the Kingdom of God, the belief in a high destiny for man to be achieved through the spread of the spirit of love, through the fuller expression in man of the creative spirit, evaporates from political thought. The relation between pessimism and the adoption of merely scientific categories of thought has never been better demonstrated. Berdyaev remarked that there is a fundamental absurdity in the conception of a scientific sociology, and it is, indeed, difficult to see how a scientific estimate can be made of the part which has been played in history, or the part that will be played in the future, by man's creative afflatus, and the devotion it can display to ethical absolutes.

In conclusion, Burnham is valuable as a corrective to certain forms of utopianism, and as a counterblast to those modes of Socialist thought which assume an inevitable development to a classless society through the supersession of capitalism. Burnham shows convincingly that the mere play of material forces is more likely to lead to new forms of economic privilege, perhaps involving an exploitation and tyranny more far-reaching than has existed in the past because more efficient. But his analysis provides no valid argument against those who, while rejecting utopia, reject also the idea of an inevitable social development or a logic of history, and believe that the future depends upon the play of free, creative human forces. The fact that these forces are free means that the future cannot be confidently predicted. But it also means that a responsibility falls upon man to exercise his freedom rightly, to recognise his vocation, to listen to the call that comes to him to work for the achievement of man's high potentialities.

To believe in an inevitable social utopia is to fail to recognise the part that man's freedom has to play; to believe that human society cannot proceed to greater justice and well-being is a blasphemy against the creative human spirit. However, Burnham has warned us of real dangers; it is of the highest degree of importance that the political expression of human idealism should be accompanied by a realistic estimate of social tendencies. A true estimate of the human situation, however, depends upon a recognition of actual and potential spiritual forces of which Burnham takes no account.

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I. *The Annihilation of Gerald Heard*

PERIODS of war and revolution tend to be periods of intense thinking, and persons with a sensitive conscience and an active intelligence tend to display a rapid movement of their intellectual position. Gerald Heard provides a striking illustration of this tendency. His writings began by emphasising the psychological aspects of our social problems. Himself inclined to asceticism, he saw tremendous dangers in the self-assertiveness of the liberal intelligentsia, their confident belief in a reason which they used to rationalise their insistent egos. There was no solution for the problems of our time, in his view, unless a sufficient number of sufficiently influential persons could learn to transcend their egotism. He attacked liberalism and rationalism on the ground that they did not provide an adequate theoretical basis for a mastery of the self; he attacked the Socialists, also, because they believed that the problems of society could be solved by environmental change; a psychological adaptation was, in his view, imperative. At first he saw the problem in terms of group psychology; he felt that individuals must escape from self by identifying themselves emotionally with a larger whole, and he felt that the process must begin through a loving relationship with the members of a small group. At this stage Heard wrote an ambitious survey of world history (and of evolution) to show that life was moving towards a stage in which the individual would transcend self-consciousness, would learn, with the help of energy derived from unconscious sources, to identify himself with the good of the whole of life, and would eventually acquire a kind of cosmic consciousness.

Later, as the danger of a Second World War grew more imminent, Heard turned his main attention to pacifist propaganda. He was convinced that violence, even when used to put down violence, could only aggravate our social evils. No remedy was of

any avail, in his view, which did not deal with the fundamental causes, which were ethical and psychological. For the same reason he attacked the advocates of revolutionary violence, and the Marxists and Communists in particular. He believed that the Russian Revolution, through its espousal of violence, had created evils worse than those of the Czarist regime. At the same time he was convinced that practically nothing was impossible to those who used spiritual weapons with real faith in their efficacy. Privileged persons, he argued, could be shamed into abandoning their unjust privileges freely; aggressive persons and sadistic tyrants could be cured of their neuroses; he even argued that saintly persons could tame the fierceness of the carnivore. He cherished boundless hopes of what could be realised by a comparatively few "adepts" who had attained through mystical practices what he called an expansion of consciousness, by such men as Mahatma Gandhi and Dick Sheppard. He spoke of the possibility of religious movements spreading rapidly through whole populations as by some telepathic process. Thus he came to concentrate more and more of his attention on the problem of the training of saintly persons, his *Pain, Sex and Time*, published just before the beginning of the Second Great War, containing a history of the practices of spiritual and mystical training. He believed that by training, suitable persons could acquire supernormal powers, involving an increase in understanding and insight, and a new power to effect a regeneration of others.

The Second World War, with its eclipse of pacifism, brought a somewhat chastened mood to Mr. Heard. He no longer expected tangible results to spring from pacifist propaganda and the activities of saints. But he gave up no jot of his essential convictions. Having lost hope so far as the short-term political field was concerned, he became a prophet of evil, of evil to be followed by some distant apocalypse. The political courses being adopted throughout the world could only result in worse and worse disasters. But some day, he declared confidently in his *Man the Master*, the appalling catastrophes produced by human folly would cause the rulers of nations to seek the aid of the pacifist and mystic. In the meantime his attention became more exclusively concentrated on the training or *ascesis* by which adepts could be created, by which appropriate persons, after achieving a release

from the peremptory urges of the "ego", could build for themselves a new consciousness.

Throughout the period which we have reviewed Mr. Heard was displaying a movement away from thought of a distinctively Western type to the thought of the East. In his recent book, *A Preface to Prayer*, he appears to have reached the furthest limit in his acceptance of the characteristically Eastern type of mysticism, or, it would be accurate to say, of one of the most extreme of its forms. It is a change which seems to me to mark not a true development of his powers, but a decline.

One of the indications of the new stage in Mr. Heard's thought is a marked change in his attitude to the problems of society and of contemporary politics. In his earlier works Mr. Heard showed an intense zeal and anxiety to assist the modern world, though the character of his proposals made it impossible for him to give any concrete help. In *Man the Master* he was still attempting to legislate for society, while admitting that further cataclysmic disasters would probably be necessary before the world could be persuaded to take advantage of his wisdom. But Mr. Heard is now completely preoccupied with the problem of his own perfection, his own escape from self, his own achievement of what he calls the unitive state. If he desires to help others, it is only in the hope that he may persuade a few fit persons to follow him on the path of the annihilation of the ego. He now expresses impatience with the view that the novice following the path of prayer and "enlightenment" should turn aside to do good works or to interpose in the social or political sphere. He laments the decline of asceticism among the monastic orders; referring to the present attitude among the Spanish Carmelites of regarding contemplation as a technique for recharging the soul with fervour to be used in good works, he speaks of it as evidence of a serious deterioration, a failure to realise the true purpose of prayer and spiritual exercises. Incidentally Gerald Heard speaks with regret of the decline of the Carthusian monasteries, one of the most famous of which, just south of Rome, has not had a novice for over forty years, while only seventeen Carthusian Houses remain of a once flourishing order. While arguing for the doctrine of universal salvation (on the ground that it is inconsistent with divine law that any person should be eternally damned), and maintaining that the Great

Initiates, those select souls who attain the unitive state, will devote the rest of eternity to helping humanity to gain salvation, he remarks that, after all, the rest of eternity remains for the process of salvation to be accomplished, and that no good purpose is served by a person who himself has not gone far on the way to perfection being over-anxious to save others. The prime duty of each person then is to work for his own perfection, his own salvation, nothing being more ridiculous than to imagine that haste, or over-eagerness to do good works and to help others, will be of any use in the end. Fifteen or twenty years of a life given over to the effort to achieve self-purification is little enough, in Heard's view, nor does it matter if the whole of one's life is given over to preparation, with the time for serving others reserved for future existences. God is never pressed for time, says Mr. Heard, and contrary to current suppositions, the world situation is never out of hand. Worry and over-anxiety, alarm at the atomic bomb, at the prospect of world famine or a third world war, show a lack of faith in God, and a neurotic condition. Mr. Heard then holds that it is wrong to hurry back prematurely from our learning of the process of purgation through our desire to help humanity. What we teach, if we teach before we are really fit for the work, will be distorted by our egoism. Mr. Heard's *Preface to Prayer*, at all events, gives no evidence of any special concern on his part over the present grave distresses of mankind.

Thus Mr. Heard now expects the salvation of humanity to be accomplished by the saints who, by decades or ages of self-purgation, have attained the unitive state. It does not matter that man does not know who his benefactors are, that he is unaware of their help, that the really decisive action comes from the spiritual and invisible world. Mr. Heard admits that his philosophy would make no sense without the existence of a future life (or rather lives), without the existence of other worlds. He remarks, "If this world were all, and ethics the essence of religion, then High Prayer (which his book is written to commend) would be a hypertrophy." Thus Mr. Heard has embraced, as a matter of faith, a modification of one of the Eastern systems of cosmology. The Mahayana believed in the existence of five worlds, the present sense-apprehended world called the Middle World or the Third

World, and two paradisal and two purgatorial worlds. The two purgatorial worlds were the World of Beasts, the world of beings which create for themselves a beast-body and are imprisoned by their lusts, and the World of Phantom Terror, the world of those who are "not merely self-imprisoned in a more brutalised vehicle" but are full of an inescapable fear. The two paradisal worlds were the World of the Gods and the World of the Titans. The World of the Titans was the abode of those who had reached a high level of goodness without attaining the beatific vision. We have seen that Heard regards those who are concerned rather with good works than with the achievement of self-purification as on a lower level of development, and it is such persons who pass on from this world to the World of the Titans, the World of the Gods being reserved for those who have attained the unitive state, involving a complete destruction of the Ego. Mr. Heard regards as "superstitious" certain elements only of the Vedantic conception of the Five Worlds. He rejects, for example, the orthodox Vedantic view that only in this, the Middle World, is it possible for the soul to change its condition by its own efforts. He holds also that a man may in this life accomplish a complete spiritual revolution, so that he may be already fitted to pass into the World of the Gods, the world which those enter whose will is entirely united with that of God, who wish only to know and to obey, not to render God's will in their own terms.

I have no comment to make on Mr. Heard's cosmology, except that I see no reason to believe it to be true, and am repelled by a conception which leaves the main work of helping humanity to be carried out by the hypothetical saints living in the alleged worlds of the Asuras and the Devas, the Titans and the Gods. I should feel it regrettable if any sensitive souls devoted to humanity's cause were led to diminish their helpfulness in order to fit themselves to enter this World of the Gods, from which they would presumably assist mankind from the spiritual world. Mr. Heard's acceptance of the Vedantic cosmology I cannot help regarding as a lamentable lapse in a mind which I once respected and admired.

An interesting and useful section of Mr. Heard's book is devoted to a history of prayer and contemplation, and of the practices which have been associated with them. He deals fully

with the part that has been played, in that history, by various ascetic practices, by fasting, the denial of sleep, and in particular by flagellation. He holds that a main factor in the extensive use of flagellation as an expression of Christian piety was a certain corruption and perversion of the Christian gospel for which St. Paul must take a considerable measure of blame. The original teaching of Jesus stressed the need for the steady progress of the soul through conscientious living, through the growth of a sense of the presence of God, and the increase of the spirit of love and goodwill. But the doctrine that salvation could be obtained, without long and sustained spiritual effort, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross was a much more popular doctrine. Paul gained numerous converts, especially among the Gentiles, by teaching that men could be saved by believing that God had appointed Jesus as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of humanity. An element in the growing success of Christianity came to be the belief that it offered a quick way of salvation by another's merits instead of by the hard path of one's own. By 100 A.D., says Mr. Heard, the essence of Christian teaching, for perhaps the majority of believers, had come to be the death on the Cross and its value as an atonement, rather than the sayings of Jesus. Hence arose the belief that if one loved Jesus, one must share His suffering, one must suffer with Him; hence also arose the conception that one acquired merit by inflicting suffering on oneself, that God was pleased both with Christ's sacrifice, and with torture that was self-inflicted out of love for Christ. The practice of scourging spread rapidly from the second century and later became a standard practice in Catholic monasteries, in many of which it is still in use to-day.

Heard maintains that, however wrong were the motives which led to the institution of flagellation as an expression of Christian holiness, its long continued use was largely due to its effectiveness in inducing states of high devotion and intense concentration. It was widely believed that long sustained and intense prayer, and the release of psycho-physical energy thus effected, could not be achieved without the help of self-inflicted torture. Gerald Heard himself has no doubt that flagellation achieved results of real value. He describes in detail the case of a certain unintellectual saint, a Curé D'Ars, who achieved an immense reputation for

single-minded devotion, holiness and also the possession of supernormal powers in the early part of the nineteenth century, and who was an intense vigil-keeper, faster, and self-scourger. Nevertheless Mr. Heard condemns flagellation and self-torture as an aid to effective prayer, to self-purgation. While in the monasteries it often gave valuable results, it also frequently drove men mad or ruined their physical constitution. It is undoubtedly true, Heard admits indeed, that flagellation has frequently produced remarkable results in a shorter time than could have been achieved by any other method, but, he adds, spiritual short cuts are dangerous. I feel relieved that Mr. Heard, in his regret for the passing of many ascetic practices in the Catholic monasteries, does not at all events regret the diminution of flagellation and other forms of self-torture.

Mr. Heard holds that prayer is achieving to-day the status of an exact science, a precise psychological praxis, in which dangerous short cuts can be avoided. He regards prayer as a technique by which man learns to escape from the prison of his own ego, of his own body-mind cravings and desires, and gradually extends within himself a "free, detached consciousness" which is concerned with supra-personal ends, until eventually the mind is united with the universal consciousness and has lost a sense of any aims distinct from those of God. The problem involved, in its early stages, is that of escaping from greed, fear and ignorance. The initial problem is the overcoming of greed, although the three great forms of evil in the ego are involved in a vicious spiral, greed increasing fear, and fear increasing ignorance. The overcoming of greed is a question of giving up; we have to give real evidence of our wish to be freed, by renouncing objects of fervent desire. Our love of prestige must be overcome by doing everything anonymously that we have been accustomed to do to gain face and credit; our love of gain must be conquered by frugality, by cutting down our standard of living and our comforts to the indispensable minimum; we must practise continence and refrain from all forms of bodily indulgence. The process of achieving the conquest of greed, then, is a process of purgation, a purification of the self from insistent desires and appetites. Mr. Heard describes the second stage of development, that in which fear is overcome, as the state of proficiency. Man here loses the sense of

fear and shame, for he now feels the presence of God within him, and knows that he who has God's help can lose nothing that he cannot very well do without. Mr. Heard argues, in a remarkable section of his book, that in this period of his development man gains a positive knowledge and assurance that through prayer he can achieve total immunity from physical accident. Mr. Heard asserts that it is an actual fact of observation that men whose souls are in harmony with God are curiously immune from accident; he also puts forward *a priori* reasons why this should be so. God, he argues, sees objects extended not only in length, breadth and thickness but also in time; he sees the "time tracks" of every object in the universe; to him past, present and future are as one. But it has been proved, says Mr. Heard, as by Mr. Dunne in his *Experiment with Time* and other works, that man also possesses some measure of prevision though he can seldom consciously use it. But the more men free themselves from absorption in the ego and the phsysical world, the more their capacity for the over-seeing of time increases. Thus, "as we rise towards God", we enter His time-free consciousness, and we are able to overlook a whole span of time. This clearly means the elimination of accident, of unpredictability.

The highest state which prayer can bring to man is the unitive state, the state gained through contemplation, the state in which the soul is one with God. Contemplation in the true sense, says Mr. Heard, cannot be achieved without keen athletic discipline and concentration; the body must be made preternaturally fit so that fatigue can largely be overcome and the amount of sleep greatly reduced, say to two or three hours a day, with the metabolism so active that a meagre diet is sufficient for a high standard of health. The unitive state necessitates what Mr. Heard calls the silence of the senses and also the silence of the intellect and will. All interest in the world of the senses, all delight in intellectual activity, all projects, must be abandoned; it is essential that all desire should be overcome. God's will only must be sought, and that is impossible while any vestige of self-will remains. The soul must not seek answers from God in terms of what itself knows and desires; it must strip itself of all sense of self-fulfilment, of all ambitions, even the noble ones, which it has cherished in the past. The potential adept must aim at giving all his attention to

God, to That Presence whom he cannot understand, while knowing well that if his attention to God becomes complete, he will be unable to bring back any knowledge of what he has experienced, for there would be no suitable words at his command to utter it.

In this unitive state, this supreme achievement of prayer, in which no self-will interposes between the soul and God, the mystic experiences what Mr. Heard calls the Prayer of Simple Regard. This is a state of alert passivity, of extreme openness of mind, in which the soul feels itself in a current of divine Reality so that God speaks directly to it. It is a state of going forward with a full willingness and abandonment to be led. Prayer has ceased to be a technique for manipulating consciousness; it has become the reality of the Divine Presence. The ego consciousness has been corrected; the individual consciousness has become absorbed in the all-embracing consciousness; the annihilation of the individual ego has been accomplished.

It may be because my own mind has been too much moulded by the thought categories of the West, but I cannot help regarding the kind of mysticism which Mr. Heard has recently embraced rather as a perversion of true thought than as a form of its legitimate development. The criticisms of certain modes of Eastern mysticism which have been made by Nicolas Berdyaev and Martin Buber seem strikingly applicable to Mr. Heard. Berdyaev has pointed out that the tendency of Eastern thought is to regard the historical process as essentially evil, so that it is the object of the thinker and seer to escape from reality into a heaven of speculation, Berdyaev contrasts this with what he regards as the immeasurably superior tradition of Christian thought. Both Judaism and Christianity have regarded the historical process as having a meaning; these religions are apocalyptic and regard history as moving to some great culmination. Man's duty on this view is not to escape from history, but to play a creative part in the process. Macmurray, for example, holds that it is God's purpose to build, with man's co-operation, the Kingdom of God on earth. He is convinced that the coming of this divine kingdom is inevitable because evil is self-defeating, and because God's purpose must axiomatically be realised. Berdyaev holds rather that man's

interposition in history must take the form of building the eternal moment, of making the present significant through the triumph of spirit over nature. But the tendency of all Christians, and, indeed, of all Western thinkers, is to emphasise the creative part that man can play in moulding and building the material of history.

Berdyaev thus would regard the mysticism of Heard as evil and perverted in its denial of man's creative vocation in history. He would also differ fundamentally from Heard in his attitude to the self. Heard seeks to annihilate the self; Berdyaev affirms the self. The fundamental postulate of Berdyaev's philosophy is the existential reality of the individual spirit. What could be a more fatal error, argues Berdyaev, than to destroy the individual spirit or deny its value, seeing that all value, all truth, all meaning, all beauty, must be the fruit of its creative activity?

Berdyaev emphatically rejects the view that the self is essentially evil. Every natural energy, says Berdyaev, can be turned to good. What Berdyaev calls the spirit, that free, loving, creative energy which we can find within ourselves and which can synthesise and integrate our activities, can transform all human experience into beauty and meaning. Berdyaev points out that the tendency to regard the desires of the self as evil, and to make a continual effort to escape from their urgency, involves us in absorption in the self (and a consequent denial of love) and also in a concentration on the idea of sin. Thus all the energies of the self become involved in a negative, a fruitless, a self-consuming and self-destroying struggle. Nor should the mystic, deeply involved in his fight against craving, imagine that he can escape the evils which result from the repression of instinctive desires into the unconscious. Freud has taught us once for all that repressed desires avenge themselves. Also the mystic who regards himself with aversion, feeling that he is at incessant war against his self regarded as evil, finds it difficult to avoid regarding his fellow men as evil also. He is fortunate if he escapes from a misanthropical distaste for the whole human species. That aversion to common humanity we can observe in Aldous Huxley, who has accompanied Gerald Heard for a great part of his spiritual way.

Martin Buber's treatment of this problem does not differ substantially from that of Berdyaev. He quotes the following

description from the Upanishads of the state of Nirvana: "If a man, sunk in deep sleep, rests dreamlessly, this is the Self, the Immortal, the Assured, the Universal Being." This state Buber thinks is truthfully described as one of annihilation, a state where no consciousness reigns and whence no memory leads. He suggests that it is our duty "with holy care to foster the good of our reality, that is gifted to us for this and perhaps for no other life that is nearer truth". The Eastern mystic is giving the world over to evil, not using his energies and his power of love to rescue it from evil. Buddha speaks of the illusion of forms and of the need for the night of the senses, as if the world of the senses were evil and illusory, but, Buber points out, it is in the world of the senses that we find beauty and significant form. Heard, and certain Eastern mystics, seek to find in themselves a subject separated from any object. Buber insists that a subject deprived of its object has no reality, that all reality consists in relationships, that in lived reality there is not something thinking without something thought, the subject thinking being as dependent on the thing thought as the latter on the former, so that it cannot exist without it. Thus in seeking to deprive the self of objects, the mystic deprives it of existence. The unitive state so lauded by Gerald Heard becomes thus a state of non-existence.

Buber adds that all worth-while living depends upon the ability to say Thou to the significant form, to the other person, to God. But it is only the I that can utter the Thou. Heard seems as if he would extinguish the I which utters the word of relationship.

It is well known that times of great social disorder tend to produce a renaissance of other-worldly mysticism, which is the reaction of certain sensitive minds to tremendous universal catastrophes. That Mr. Heard should have reacted as he has done is, after all, not surprising. In the years before the war he believed with fervour that no attempt to escape from the dilemma of our civilisation could have any success if it did not deal with fundamental causes, which he was convinced were ethical and psychological. But he found himself in a world which was not interested in his diagnosis. Throughout the modern period the main body of progressive opinion has been consistently Marxist, in the sense that it has held that the problem we have to face is one of the

form of social organisation, not primarily one of ethics or psychology. Heard's *Man the Master* revealed that in the early years of the Second World War he had already lost hope of the modern world. He looked upon mankind as persisting in the kind of behaviour that had brought it to its impasse; such persistence he believed could only carry it to new and worse evils. Thus Heard came to look in himself for the perfection which it seemed hopeless to attempt to find in the world; no path was open, then, for a man of his sincerity and intensity of feeling, but the path of escape, the path of the modern equivalent of a monastery or hermitage. But he thus becomes involved in a vicious circle, for in seeking perfection within himself by separating himself from the world, he tends to destroy himself, for all that is real in himself is dependent on his relationship with the world. I have called my essay the annihilation of Gerald Heard, for Mr. Heard seems to me to have chosen one path to the annihilation of the personality. There are two ways of annihilating the personality, both equally hateful to the true personalist. One way is the way of Mr. Heard, the other is that of Adolf Hitler, the way of regimenting the individual by subjecting him to the state power. The former way is clearly the less dangerous, for in essence it is a perversion of a great truth, that an increase of the energy of the personality can be achieved through a concentration of its powers through contemplation. Thus a return of Mr. Heard from annihilation is not difficult to conceive.

A large part of the error of Mr. Heard's thought is due to his inability to recognise that politics is inescapably the sphere of the lesser good. Mr. Heard has devoted years of his life to advocating political remedies which are inherently impossible. If the solution of the problem of world order depended upon the acceptance by the world of the authority of Mr. Heard's mystics, the prospect would indeed be hopeless. But social order does not depend upon such utopian solutions. History records cases of communities which have enjoyed centuries of order and progress without the help of religious revivals and mystical practices. The problem of setting up an effective world government to-day is difficult enough in all conscience, but Mr. Heard's extreme defeatism seems unwarranted, for human nature has shown a capacity in the past for creating the conditions of social order, and while the

problem of order in large units may be more difficult than in smaller communities, yet the technical means of building social order are more efficient to-day than they have ever been before. But whether this "lesser good" of an orderly world can or cannot be achieved depends upon the energies of men of outstanding ability such as Mr. Heard, whose insistence on unattainable solutions thus weakens the cause he has at heart. Mr. Heard combines immense energy, fanatical zeal, and great nobility and integrity, with an extreme lack of judgment in practical affairs. He should beware of falling into Bacon's category of men who are so good that they are good for nothing.

Whether or not *A Preface to Prayer* is on certain large issues mistaken, it also contains much that is useful and wise. Mr. Heard's criticisms of Christian cosmology seem to me valid and valuable. The Christian Church has often been content to provide an easy way to God's favour, a popular salvationism, instead of a spiritual discipline, a training in high thinking and right living. It has been content with recommending what Mr. Heard calls Low Prayer (that is petitionary prayer) instead of instructing its members in High Prayer, the name given by Mr. Heard to those exercises which produce a concentration of inner energies.

Mr. Heard tells us that the next stage of evolution depends upon the spread of the practice of High Prayer. High Prayer involves an increase of the ability to detach oneself from impulse, from craving, so that the integrating principle in the mind can canalise the mind's energies. There is no doubt that such detachment is capable of controlling impulse and concentrating man's powers, and that the power thus created can help to solve man's problems and forward human evolution. The secret of this power gained through contemplation is perhaps something which the East can help to teach the West, and we can thank Mr. Heard for helping the West to learn the lesson.

But the West cannot afford to follow the East to the destruction of the Self, the spiritual annihilation which Mr. Heard commends to us in considerable sections of his book. Nor can the world afford the annihilation of spirits so pure, so intense as Mr. Heard himself, nor can it afford to lose his help in the great struggle which we have to wage in the modern world for an orderly and progressive world civilisation. But we have seen that the spiritual

annihilation of which I have been speaking is one from which there is a possible return, a re-birth. Mr. Heard, who has only recently reached his fifties, may yet have surprises in store for us.

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II. *Aldous Huxley: The Metaphysical Minimum*

I AM not sure that a passionate political defeatism does not provide the key to the mood and impulse of Aldous Huxley's latest works, his brilliant novel *Time Must Have a Stop*, and his religious survey *The Perennial Philosophy*. The note of defeatism was already strongly marked in *After Many a Summer*. In that work Propter remarks on the intensity of his desire to help mankind in its grave plight, but adds that it is impossible to help people who persist in the false thinking and wrong behaviour which have got them into their trouble. In *Time Must Have a Stop*,[1] Huxley pursues the political idealist, John Barnack, with an intensity of aversion that amounts to loathing. He is not given a single human or lovable trait. He is a man ascetically devoted to political ends, with immense information and practical experience. Huxley shows him as harsh and hypercritical, wrapped up in an impenetrable armour of intellectual complacency. The springs of his being are dried up; he becomes more and more sapless as the bitterness due to political frustration increases. Seen through the eyes of his son Sebastian, the mystic, he is a repellent figure.

"Old, tired, bitter. But that wasn't all, Sebastian said to himself, as he watched the deeply furrowed, leathery face and listened to the now incongruously loud and commanding voice. That wasn't all. In some subtle and hardly explicable way his father gave an impression of deformity, as though he had suddenly turned into a kind of dwarf or hunchback. 'He that is not getting better is getting worse.' But that was too sweeping and summary. 'He that is not growing up is growing down.' That was more like it. Such a man might end his life, not as a ripened human being, but as an aged fœtus. Adult in worldly wisdom and professional skill; embryonic in spirit and even (in spite of all the stoical and civic virtues he might have acquired) in character. At sixty-five

[1] *Time Must Have a Stop*, p. 298

his father was still trying to be what he had been at fifty-five, forty-five, thirty-five. But this attempt to be the same made him essentially different. For then he had been what a busy young or middle-aged politician ought to be. Now he was what an old man ought not to be; and so, by striving to remain unmodified, had transformed himself into a gruesome anomaly. And, of course, in an age that had invented Peter Pan and raised the monstrosity of arrested development to the rank of an ideal, he wasn't in any way exceptional. The world was full of septuagenarians playing at being in their thirties or even in their teens, when they ought to have been preparing for death, ought to have been trying to unearth the spiritual reality which they had spent a lifetime burying under a mountain of garbage. In his father's case, of course, the garbage had been of the very highest quality—personal austerity, public service, general knowledge, political idealism. But the spiritual reality was no less effectually buried than it would have been under a passion for gambling, for example, or an obsession with sexual pleasure. Perhaps, indeed, it was buried even more effectually. For the card-player and the whore-monger didn't imagine that their activities were creditable, and therefore stood a chance of being shamed into giving them up; whereas the well-informed, good citizen was so certain of being morally and intellectually right that he seldom so much as envisaged the possibility of changing his way of life. It was the publicans who came to salvation, not the Pharisees."[1]

Sebastian suggests to his father that it might be of some use, in a world whose political problems have got out of hand, to attend to matters which are under our control, to the problem of ourselves, our attitude to God. John Barnack assumes an expression of pitying contempt, bursting into a peal of laughter that sounded like a scrap of iron being tipped on to a dump. He asks ironically what use some high-class thoughts about the "Gaseous Vertebrate" would be against 400 divisions of Russians turned into a helpless instrument of nationalist ambition, and when Sebastian suggests that a religious change might be infectious, he turns another load of scrap-iron down the chute. Sebastian this time joins in the laughter.

"Yes", he admitted, "it *is* pretty funny. But, after all, a chance

[1] *Time Must Have a Stop*, p. 303.

of one in a million is better than no chance at all, which is what you look forward to."[1]

Thus Huxley sees no hope at all in merely political solutions of our problems. Even John Barnack himself, after a life nourished on political hope, can hardly enumerate the stupendous and intractable problems facing the world without a despairing bitterness. What was the prospect? "An England, a Western Europe, an America, hardly more populous thirty years hence than at the present time, and with a fifth of their inhabitants drawing old-age pensions. And contemporary with this decrepitude, a Russia of more than two hundred millions, preponderantly youthful, and as bumptious, confident and imperialistically minded as England had been at a corresponding point in her own long-past phase of economic and demographic expansion. And east of Russia would be a China of perhaps five hundred millions, in the first flush of nationalism and industrialisation. And, south of the Himalayas, four or five hundred millions of starving Indians, desperately trying to exchange the products of their sweated factory labour for the wherewithal to survive long enough to add an additional fifty millions to the population and subtract yet another year or two from the average expectation of life.

"The main result of the war . . . would be the acceleration of processes which otherwise would have taken place more gradually and therefore less catastrophically. The process of Russia's advance towards the domination of Europe and the Near East; of China's advance towards the domination of the rest of Asia; and of all Asia's advance towards industrialism. Torrents of cheap manufactures flooding the white men's markets, and the white men's reaction to those torrents would be the *casus belli* of the impending war of colour. . . . And what that war will be like . . ."[2] remarks John Barnack, leaving the sentence unfinished.

Sebastian, listening to a wireless talk about the future organisation of the world, comments, "God help us all! Do they forget what Lord Acton said about power! Power always corrupts." He contrasts the saying of traditional wisdom, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you"

[1] *Time Must Have a Stop*, p. 300.

[2] *Time Must Have a Stop*, p. 295.

with its modern version, "Seek ye first all the rest—social reform, instructive chats on the wireless, scientific gadgets—and some time in the twenty-first or twenty-second century the Kingdom of God will be added." Is it possible, in the view of Sebastian and Huxley, that such idolatrous worship of means instead of right ends can do anything but bring cataclysmic disasters?

In the modern period which, Huxley remarks, has abolished God, the intelligentsia have been divided in their allegiance between political utopianism and æstheticism, both "God-proofing"! In Eustace Barnack he brilliantly portrays the æsthete. Eustace is a man of learning and taste, genial, urbane, cynical, sensual. More human and more likeable than the ascetical John Barnack, he helps Sebastian to obtain the dress suit he needs to attend dances and meet the women who attract him, when his father will not let him have the money. Yet Huxley sends him to Hell. When Eustace dies in a lavatory from over-indulgence in rich food, Huxley, in a series of brilliant passages, follows Eustace's soul as it desperately clings to the remains of its beloved ego while being unable any longer to hide itself from the intolerable divine radiance which it had successfully evaded while in the flesh. But Huxley clearly regards Eustace with more indulgence than he does the hated John. Men of Eustace's type are lacking in the Pharisaism and intellectual complacency of the planner, and perhaps the sins of the flesh are the least dangerous of the sins. Also in displaying so richly the personality of Eustace, Huxley is revealing a large part of his own earlier self. Among the gods worshipped by the Huxley of *Do What You Will* were Venus, Bacchus and Apollo. The Huxley of *Time Must Have a Stop*, indeed, is not so "non-attached" to his own sensuality that he can refrain from continually stimulating the sensual nerve.

Indeed, however much Huxley may condemn his past self, most of the types of his earlier novels reappear and are regarded with some indulgence in *Time Must Have a Stop*. The early works contain a series of portraits of Satanists, of men who, knowing the good and the beautiful, are irresistibly attracted to evil and ugliness. There is Coleman in *Antic Hay*, Chelifer in *These Barren Leaves*; there is Spandrell in *Point Counter Point* who smashes the foxgloves with his cane because of their beauty, who, while having the vividest realisation of the beauty of the sublime and of

the grace of God, commits a senseless and objectless murder out of sheer attraction to evil. In *Time Must Have a Stop* we have the female Satanist, Veronica Thwale, who seduces Sebastian because of his poetical sensitivity and youthful beauty, and who teaches him, not the sensuality which is the expression of love and tenderness, but that which is the conscious search for physical gratification, preferably in perverse forms. Veronica had been brought up in a home where everyone insisted on behaving like early Christians, so that she felt she had no choice; this seemed to her a kind of spiritual blackmail. Sensitive and intelligent, she found that she preferred wickedness to goodness. She could not resist the temptation to corrupt the hypersensitive poet, Sebastian.

Huxley's dead selves may live again in *Time Must Have a Stop*, but its teaching is sufficiently clear. The soul must seek God, and God only. A devotion to political reconstruction is idolatry; the love of beauty itself may express an intensification of the ego, an indulgence in day-dreaming, a preoccupation with one's moods and feelings, an exaltation of the appetites, in fact an alienation of the soul from God.

The abolition of God by the Humanists, Huxley remarks, left a void into which poured the lunatic pseudo-religions of nationalism, Fascism, Marxism and æstheticism. But, he adds, the traditional revealed religions are far from satisfactory, are a hotch-potch of good and evil. The various Christian Churches have, for example, throughout history, been possessed of an intolerant, persecuting spirit based on the assumption that a particular form of religious practice and organisation is the only true one, so that all other bodies must be condemned. On this issue Huxley quotes a fine passage from William Law.

"Selfishness and partiality are very inhuman and base qualities even in the things of this world; but in the doctrines of religion they are of a baser nature. Now this is the greatest evil that the division of the Church has brought forth; it raises in every communion a selfish, partial orthodoxy, which consists in courageously defending all that it has, and condemning all that it has not. Thus every champion is trained up in defence of their own truth, their own learning and their own church, and he has the most merit, the most honour, who likes everything, defends everything, among themselves, and leaves nothing uncensored in those

that are of a different communion. Now how can truth and goodness and union and religion be more struck at than by such defenders of it! If you ask why the good Bishop of Meaux wrote so many learned books against all parts of the Reformation, it is because he was born in France and bred up in the bosom of Mother Church. Had . . . Oxford or Cambridge been his Alma Mater, he might have rivalled our great Bishop Stillingfleet, and would have wrote as many learned folios against the Church of Rome as he has done. And yet I will venture to say that if each Church could produce but one man apiece that had the piety of an apostle and the impartial love of the first Christians, . . . that a Protestant and a Papist of this stamp would not want half a sheet of paper to hold their articles of union, nor be half an hour before they were of one religion. . . . Ask why even the best amongst the Catholics are very shy of owning the validity of the orders of our Church; it is because they are afraid of removing any odium from the Reformation. Ask why no Protestants anywhere touch upon the benefit or necessity of celibacy in those who are separated from worldly business to preach the gospel, it is because that would be seeming to lessen the Roman error of not suffering marriage in the clergy. Ask why even the most worthy and pious among the clergy of the Established Church are afraid to assert the sufficiency of the Divine Light, the necessity of seeking only the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit; it is because the Quakers, who have broken off from the Church, have made this doctrine their corner-stone. If we loved truth as such, if we sought for it for its own sake, if we loved our neighbour as ourselves, if we desired nothing by our religion but to be acceptable to God, if we equally desired the salvation of all men, if we were afraid of error only because of its harmful nature to us and our fellow-creatures, then nothing of this spirit could have any place in us. . . . There is then a catholic spirit, a communion of saints in the love of God and all goodness, which no one can learn from that which is called orthodoxy in particular churches."[1]

To-day we have seen the growth of the Œcumenical Movement and there is clearly a stronger impulse towards unity among the Churches. Yet the Œcumenical Movement is boycotted by the

[1] *Perennial Philosophy*, p. 225.

Roman Church, the most powerful of the Christian Churches, while among the bodies which show most zeal for unity there is little disposition to accept as "open" rather than "dogmatic" numerous formulæ the insistence on which is an obstruction to a wider fellowship. Huxley remarks on how far the Churches have departed from the true foundation of religion in what he calls the "perennial philosophy"; and how far they are attached to words and formulæ rather than to God.

Huxley believes that one of the most corrupting elements in Christianity has been the view that Jesus is the only Avatar, the only person in whom the Word of God has found living expression in human form. It is this doctrine, which Huxley holds to be false, that has caused Christian history to be disgraced by more and bloodier crusades, interdenominational wars, persecutions and proselytising imperialisms than has the history of Hinduism and Buddhism. "The spirit of intolerance between the Christian Churches is less serious to-day than the universal assumption by Christian thinkers of the superiority of Christianity to the religions of the East, an assumption greatly facilitated by the extreme ignorance of Christian theologians of the doctrines of the East." "There are many honourable exceptions", says Huxley, "but the rule even among learned Protestants and Catholics is a certain blandly bumptious provincialism which, if it did not constitute such a grave offence against charity and truth, would be just uproariously funny. A hundred years ago, hardly anything was known of Sanskrit, Pali or Chinese. The ignorance of European scholars was sufficient reason for their provincialism. To-day, when more or less adequate translations are available in plenty, there is not only no reason for it, there is no excuse. And yet most European and American authors of books about religion and metaphysics write as though nobody had ever thought about these subjects except the Jews, the Greeks and the Christians of the Mediterranean basin and Western Europe. This display of what, in the twentieth century, is an entirely voluntary and deliberate ignorance, is not only absurd and discreditable; it is also socially dangerous. Like any other form of imperialism, it is a menace to permanent world peace. The reign of violence will never come to an end until, first, most human beings accept the same, true philosophy of life; until, second, the Perennial Philosophy is

recognised as the highest factor common to all the world religions."[1]

The wise men of the East, Huxley suggests, show their superiority in at least one respect, their greater humility and tolerance. It was an edict of an Eastern king, Asoka, not of a Western monarch, which was issued with the especial object of inculcating religious humility. "His sacred Majesty the King does reverence to men of all sects, whether ascetics or householders . . . a man must not do reverence to his own sect or disparage that of another without reason. Depreciation should be for specific reasons only, for the sects of other people all deserve reverence for one reason or another. . . . He who does reverence to his own sect, while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the glory of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect. Concord therefore is meritorious, to wit, hearkening and hearkening willingly to the Law of Piety, as accepted by other people."[2]

Huxley holds that the Christian belief that Christ is the only Avatar and that the Christian revelation is unique has caused an undue preoccupation on the part of Christians with events in time, seeing that they regard particular events as providing the evidence and basis of their faith. Thus they have failed to realise that matters of fact are in themselves without significance, that what is significant is the process unfolded in the heart of man, that, as Berdyaev has pointed out, the crucifixion of Christ has significance only as being symbolical of a spiritual truth, which would be no less significant (and no less known to men of spiritual insight) if Christ had never existed.

Christian mystics have often tried to liberate Christianity from its unfortunate servitude to historic fact (or, says Huxley, "to those various mixtures of contemporary record with subsequent inference and phantasy which have, at different epochs, been accepted as historic fact"), but on the whole with little success. Thus Christianity has remained a religion in which the "perennial philosophy" has been overlaid, now more, now less, with an idolatrous preoccupation with events and things in time—events

[1] *Perennial Philosophy*, p. 225.

[2] *Perennial Philosophy*, p. 227.

and things regarded not merely as useful means, but as intrinsically sacred and indeed divine.

The belief in Christ as the sole Avatar has led also to a tendency for Christian devotion to assume too exclusively the form of an emotional love of Christ instead of union with the God who is spirit who is found in the human heart. Lovers of Christ frequently fail to find the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit; thus they have a more direct access to God which they ignore. Also in following too closely the pattern of Christ they tend to follow a pattern which is in many respects archaic. Jesus, conditioned to a large extent as he was by the needs and state of development of his time, was little interested in philosophy, art, science, politics and economics. Many Christians who follow too closely his pattern tend conspicuously to undervalue artistic creation, philosophical thought and the scientific spirit, and to display a political indifferentism.

To conclude on this issue Huxley points out that there are three aspects of the divine, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Those who concentrate exclusively on the second aspect of the Godhead limit in advance their apprehension of the divine.

Huxley makes a further criticism of historical Christianity, that Christian theology, especially that of the West, has been the product of minds too much imbued with Jewish and Roman legalism. The immediate insights of Christ and the saints have been rationalised into a system by metaphysical jurists. Huxley asks whether any of the many fantastic and mutually incompatible theories of expiation and atonement which have been grafted on to the data of a divine incarnation can be regarded as indispensable elements of a sane theology. Throughout Christian history there has been (and still remains) a tendency to the over-valuation of words, of particular formulæ, and a confusion between words and the experiences of which they are an imperfect expression. To know Truth-as-Fact and to know it unitively, "in spirit and in truth-as-immediate-apprehension", says Huxley, is deliverance, but to be familiar with the verbalised truths which have been accepted at particular times as the symbolical expression of Truth-in-Fact—this is not salvation, but the study of a branch of philosophy.

Our problem to-day, concludes Huxley, is to draw out of the historical religions their quintessential element, those fundamental truths, "the perennial philosophy", the wide acceptance of which can be the only foundation of world unity.

This essence of religion is summed up in the appendix of *Time Must Have a Stop*:

"That there is a Godhead or Ground, which is the unmanifested principle of all manifestation.

"That the Ground is both transcendent and immanent.

"That it is possible for human beings to love, know and, from virtually, to become identified with the Ground.

"That to achieve this unitive knowledge, to realise this supreme identity, is the final end and purpose of human existence.

"That there is a law or Dharma, which must be obeyed, a Tao or Way, which must be followed, if men are to achieve their final end.

"That the more there is of I, me, mine, the less there is of the Ground; and that consequently the Tao is a Way of humility and compassion, the Dharma a law of mortification and self-transcending awareness."[1]

Aldous Huxley seems to me to be a wiser and more balanced interpreter of religious experience than his close associate, Gerald Heard. In making the whole difference between good and evil rest upon the distinction between union with God and satisfaction of the Self, his testimony conforms precisely with that of Buber. He fully recognises the danger of the inward-turning mysticism of the East and recommends not a suppression of outward-turning tendencies but a transformation of them so that they become sacramental. He is discreet in his recommendation of spiritual exercises, recognising that many who use them make no spiritual progress, and quotes with recommendation a remark of St. Francois de Sales that to neglect any urgent call of charity or duty to practise spiritual exercises would be wrong. He points out that there is a risk that the mystic's one-pointed contemplation of God will result in the atrophy of the unemployed capacities of the mind. He advises theocentric contemplatives to go out and act in the world, since it is only the actions which *they* would recommend which can do any real good. He speaks of the risks of

[1] *Time Must Have a Stop*, p. 289.

self-mortification, remarking that the fact that the mortified are often much worse than the unmortified is "a commonplace of history, fiction and descriptive psychology".[1] Physical austerities are plainly a standing temptation to vanity and the competitive spirit of record-breaking; indeed in the practice of mortification, Huxley remarks, true advance is along a knife-edge, on one side lurking the Scylla of egocentric austerity, on the other the Charybdis of uncaring quietism.

Huxley stresses the importance of tolerant understanding of different modes of religious approach, showing how men's attitudes vary with their physical structure and psychological make-up. The three main paths which can lead to union with God are the way of works, the way of knowledge, and the way of devotion, and it is right that we should follow the way to which we are temperamentally disposed. But all ways should lead to the highest form of spiritual experience which is contemplation. For while there are born devotees, born workers, and born contemplatives, even those whose temperamental idiosyncrasy is most marked are capable of making use of other ways than that to which they are drawn, and all should recognise the same goal.

In *Ends and Means* Huxley spoke with some disapproval of ritualistic religion, and of religion marked by an emotional love of a personality, such as that of Christ. In the *Perennial Philosophy*, however, he expresses a more balanced judgment, recognising that there are persons who find ceremonies and sacramental rites an aid to spirituality, and that for others the best approach to the path of enlightenment is through the emotions; the fact that these forms of religion are subject to abuses and dangers should not lead to their outright condemnation.

Berdyaev and Buber have spoken in critical terms of the religious practices of the East, arguing that they display a contempt for history, an aloofness from action, and a tendency to encourage retirement into an inner heaven, which are a mark of false spirituality. Huxley expresses a more balanced view, while displaying some bias towards the East. He argues that there is a wide recognition in the East of the dangers of quietism and self-annihilation, and if the West has been less disposed to these forms of false mysticism, it is at the same time more prone to

[1] *Perennial Philosophy*, p. 115.

worship action for its own sake, not recognising that action "taken away from the life of prayer" is uninspired and unguided and frequently harmful, while the West is also disposed to a superstitious reverence for particular events in time. Huxley is surely right in arguing that much of the Western condemnation of the East is based on ignorance of its literature and scriptures. The time has now come when the world must unite or perish, and when, accordingly, a common world faith is one of its most urgent requirements. Huxley's appeal then for a world-wide acceptance of a metaphysical minimum seems salutary and wise.

Huxley attaches four correlative conditions to man's emergence from the present era of disorder and violence; there must be a world-wide acceptance of the essentials of a common faith; the faith itself must have as its core what Huxley calls "the perennial philosophy" or "the metaphysical minimum"; the current idolatrous time philosophies must be abandoned, the philosophies which attach importance, not to processes in the soul of man but to particular historical events; and finally the political pseudo-religions which are the especial mark of our own era must be rejected. The fulfilment of Huxley's conditions may seem very remote, but to embrace less fundamental solutions because they seem easier of attainment will, in his view, only lead to disillusionment.

Huxley's judgment of our age, to conclude, is that it is an age of idolatries, idolatries much more dangerous than the primitive forms which it prides itself in having transcended, idolatries all the more dangerous because they are idolatries of men who believe they have emancipated themselves from idolatry. There is, first of all, the worship of the machine, the belief that, in connection with gadgets, we can get something for nothing, that it is possible to enjoy the advantages of an elaborate technology without having to pay for it by corresponding disadvantages. There is, secondly, the worship of science, with its accompanying tendency to sacrifice ends to means. Thirdly, there is moral idolatry, or man's worship of his own ideas. Huxley holds that the humanist who worships his own moral conceptions without seeking God is only too apt to set up for reverence an idea which is the creation of his own desire, to fail to distinguish between appetite and wisdom. Thus the various moral systems of the

humanists, from pragmatism, hedonism and utilitarianism, to Freudianism, dialectical materialism and the gospel of self-expression and self-realisation, tend to be manifest rationalisations. Finally, there is political idolatry, and it is this for which Huxley has conceived the strongest aversion. The belief in some utopia to be achieved by administrative acts he finds to be as stupid in principle as it is disastrous in effect. Huxley finds nothing surprising in what he regards as a fact, that the first Socialist "utopia" in Soviet Russia should have been instrumental in largely destroying the personalities of whole nations and of making a few hundred millions of men the instruments of a corrupt bureaucracy. The first condition then of a true world civilisation is, to Huxley, to rescue the intelligentsia from this gross form of modern superstition; like Arthur Koestler, then, Huxley calls for a new political defeatism, so that men may turn attention to more fundamental remedies. His last two works are to a large extent dedicated to this end.

Aldous Huxley's political defeatism, as I have said elsewhere, seems to me open to certain grave objections, notably that it tends to discourage worth-while political effort. Politics is the study of the possible and can never be based on pursuing the highest ideal only. Policies based on the assumption that the masses are capable of a high level of spiritual enlightenment must be ruled out of court. No doubt Huxley realises this. But it remains true that the difference between the best and the worst of the attainable policies is often immense. Huxley has ceased to think it worth while to advocate the best of the attainable policies.

Huxley may hold that, in the spiritual climate of our times, even the best of the attainable policies must entail disaster. On such an issue only time can decide whether he is right or wrong. But in Huxley's estimate there are certain subjective factors which perhaps tend to distort his judgment, in particular his misanthropical aversion to the average man, his unconquerable distrust of mass action. I do not believe that Huxley's defeatism shows that quality of "realism" in its estimate of the human situation which he would claim for it. It seems to me nearer the truth to say that Huxley has been led by the limitations of his temperament to espouse a standpoint which is little short of a betrayal of the best political endeavour of our time.

But if on political issues Huxley is an unreliable thinker, on religious questions he displays great ripeness of wisdom and of vision. No cause to-day equals in importance that of seeking to create the common world faith for which Huxley has pleaded in his recent works.

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III. *Arthur Koestler: The Russian Myth*

THE newspaper correspondent has been described as the modern equivalent of the seventeenth-century freebooter. Arthur Koestler's experience as a political journalist and foreign correspondent has led him into many adventures and tight corners. He has suffered in a Spanish prison under Franco, and has experienced the appalling conditions of the Verney concentration camp in the corrupt France of the year before her capitulation. The horrors he has not known in his own person he has experienced with sufficient closeness through his intimate contacts with the victims of political persecution. C. E. M. Joad in his *God and Evil* has told us of the new realisation of the evil in the heart of man that has come upon him through the historical developments of the last two decades. Few men have had closer contact than Koestler with these extreme forms of modern evil which, impinging as they have done on a highly sensitive medium, have deeply coloured the mood of his work and given a characteristic bent to his intelligence. His five novels are all concerned with the political problems of an age of revolution, but all lay primary stress on those forms of gross evil and bestial cruelty, so extreme that a generation ago they would have seemed incredible, which have defiled political history. Koestler spent some years in the Communist Party and has described himself as an incorrigible left-winger. But his recent works tell a story of political disillusion which has left him in a position not far removed from the defeatism of Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxley.

It is scarcely necessary to defend Koestler's artistic use of such incidents of bestiality and terror, extreme as is the impression of horror which they produce on any sensitive mind. He believes, and rightly, that it is salutary for us to be made to realise, with as much intensity as possible, the sufferings which have been inflicted by man on man in these days of an advanced liberal and Christian and scientific civilisation. In *The Yogi and the Commissar*

Koestler refers to a well-known London publisher who had the habit, before addressing a political meeting, of locking himself up in his room and imagining the sufferings of people, in Poland and elsewhere, who were suffocated by chlorine gas in a death train, or dug their own graves before facing a machine-gun. Koestler deplores our lack of real awareness of such cruelties and sufferings. One of the aims of his work is to heighten this awareness, to feed the public "with the assimilated products of a bitter and poisonous harvest".[1]

Koestler's *Spanish Testament* and his novels reveal, perhaps with greater poignancy than any other contemporary works, the agonies which have been inflicted and endured in the modern period in the name of some political creed. His *Yogi and the Commissar* tells a story which to Koestler seems no less tragic, the story of the collapse of World Socialism. The saddest page in this story is not the overthrow of Socialism in Spain, nor the elimination of the Left in Italy and Germany, but what Koestler regards as the eclipse of Socialism in the country still often spoken of as the First Great Socialist State, in Soviet Russia. Like most men of the Left, Koestler built great hopes on the great Russian experiment in Socialist planning, and looked to Russia to build a model for the future. But as a writer and artist he has endeavoured to retain integrity of vision and objectivity of judgment; he has sought to form a faithful picture of the Russian scene. His first-hand experience of totalitarian regimes and his intimate acquaintance with political refugees, such, for example, as the band assembled in Verney, have made him in any case less liable than most to be deceived by propaganda. Also his deep sympathy with suffering, and his own not inconsiderable hardships, have made him less prone than many men of the Left to pass over, as if it were of comparative unimportance, the cruelty inflicted by political persecution in Russia, as in other totalitarian states. Thus his knowledge of the intensity of the Russian terror, especially under Stalin, has hardly prejudiced him in favour of the regime. Koestler in fact has become a fierce critic of Russian policy and Russian social development under Stalin, who in his view has planted reaction firmly in the saddle with liberalism and Socialism in full flight.

[1] *Yogi and the Commissar*, p. 35.

More than a hundred pages of *The Yogi and the Commissar* are given over to an examination of the present state of Russia. Koestler tells us of immense increases in economic privilege, of directors and administrators who receive 300 times the minimum wage and 100 times the average wage in the industrial undertakings which they control; of colonels in the army who receive 240 times, and lieutenants who receive 100 times, the pay of the privates (in the British Army in the latter case the rates would be 4 to 1, and in the American Army 3 to 1); of the associated rapid rise of all kinds of new privileges, the officers in the army now dining in separate messes, and the Stakhanovites having separate dining rooms in the factories (as well as 20 times the average pay of the worker); of the increase of educational privilege, secondary school fees having been recently imposed so that millions of Russian workers can no longer afford to send their sons to the secondary schools, while special schools have been set up for the children of the bureaucracy and the sons of officers; of the abolition of all progressive tendencies in the school from co-education to the encouragement of individuality, variety and experiment; of the denial to the workers of any means of redress of grievances, capital punishment being the official punishment for strikers, while the trade unions have become instruments, not for raising the pay and status of workers, but for imposing discipline upon them; of the complete destruction of political democracy, the Soviet electorate's only function being to write "yes" or "no" to a single list of officially appointed candidates; of the abolition of the freedom of the press, the only newspapers printed in every town being a Government paper and a Party paper, both advocating an identical policy, foreign newspapers being totally forbidden; of the failure, while the bureaucracy and technocracy buy at special shops, feed at special restaurants, and live luxuriously, to raise the level of nutrition of the masses, still lower than in pre-revolutionary Russia; of the re-introduction of the free right of the wealthier classes to leave their wealth to their children; of the increasing abandonment of progressive penal legislation and of social therapy, and the revival of public hangings, film close-ups of strangulation being provided; of the abandonment of progressive sexual legislation, the policy of forbidding abortion and so driving it underground having been

re-introduced, while divorce is now virtually restricted to the wealthier official classes; of the new restrictions on liberty of movement, Russian citizens being denied the right to move freely in their own country, an absence from home for twenty hours or more having to be reported to the police; of the iniquitous Russian trials with their extorted confessions; of the condemnation of real or imagined opponents to the regime to labour and concentration camps where they live under unspeakable conditions.

What is Koestler's judgment on the great Bolshevist "experiment"? In the first place, in his view, the Russian development demonstrates conclusively the falsity of the Marxist thesis that the cultural and ethical conditions in any state are epiphenomena, or mere superstructures automatically determined by the character of economic conditions, so that if the relationships of production are changed in a Socialist direction, a "Socialist" ethic is automatically created. Marxists have taught that when capitalist production was superseded, a new "socialist" ethic and new "socialist" incentives, the precise character of which could not be foreseen, would inevitably arise to take the place of bourgeois ethics and the profit incentive. What actually happened, in Koestler's view, was that the incentives needed to give good results from the new Socialist relations of production proved not to be forthcoming, nor did Marxist Socialism contain in itself the ethical dynamic capable of producing them. The government then tended to fall back on a forthright appeal to the basest motives, in particular to the motives of fear and greed and nationalism. Koestler comes to the conclusion that Marxism, as it has been interpreted in Russia at all events, has shown itself inadequate to inspire "a new human creed, new ethical values, a new faith for which to live and die", and that this was partly because Marxism began by denying that ethical values have any objective validity, and partly because Marxism was traditionally associated with an arid rationalism which has proved inadequate to nourish the human spirit, so that its vogue among the intelligentsia is one of the causes for the mortal disease that afflicts Europe to-day.

Koestler sums up on this issue: "The new springs of action which the revolution of 1917 had planted into the hearts and brains of the masses have worn out in the corroding climate of insincerity which the Stalinite regime created. They were new

and precarious psychological forces which needed constant encouragement, a warm and fraternal human climate in which to grow and become stable, and finally to transform the whole habitus of man, to create the new type of *Homo Sapiens liber*. The regime, grown from the roots of a nineteenth-century materialism and economism, never recognised the decisive importance of the spiritual factor. Based on the axiom that the end justified the means, quickly tired of the inertia and dumbness of the peasant masses, they treated the living people as raw material in a laboratory experiment, working on the tender malleable mass with the hammers, chisels, acids, and showers of propaganda rays of ever-varying wave-length. For the superficial observer the method worked. The people apparently believed all that was said to them, hailed their leaders, worked like robots, died like heroes—like the robots and heroes which the Germans and Japanese produced. But inside them the new springs had snapped and had to be replaced by the old ones, fetched from the dusty shelves of the lumber room."

Koestler thus holds that the Socialist experiment in Russia has failed, largely because its spiritual foundations were rotten. He feels that the situation which has now been created is so serious that a remedy will be hard to find. There is, first of all, the possibility, perhaps the probability, that a regime so totalitarian as that of Russia, especially in view of her rapidly expanding population, will display marked imperialist tendencies in the period immediately ahead. No means but war was found of checking the imperialism of Germany and Hitler; it would be an unparalleled disaster if a similar situation arose in respect to the Russia of Stalin or his successor. Secondly, there is the danger that Russian power and prestige, combined with the existence, within all European states and in China, of Communist parties irrevocably committed to follow Russia's lead, may lead to the spread over a considerable area of Western Europe,[1] as well as of Asia, of the Russian type of policy and one-party system. With respect to Western Europe, Koestler's hope is that it will react fiercely against totalitarian rule and build up a new Socialism cherishing democratic ideas as

[1] Since this was written, this prophecy has come true. Poland, Eastern Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Roumania, Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, the Baltic States and Albania have been integrated in the Soviet system.

the most sacred element of its doctrine, and building for itself a spiritual dynamic founded on freedom, which Communism does not possess. That dynamic would need a different philosophical basis from that of nineteenth-century liberalism and rationalism. It would need a different basis from that of Marxism. The concluding section of *The Yogi and the Commissar* makes some tentative suggestions as to what that basis might be.

Koestler's analysis resembles that of Burnham in that he believes that the regimes which are in fact tending to supersede capitalism are not Socialist but "managerial". They are ruled by a newly privileged class possessing greater power than the capitalist class ever possessed, so that the danger, not only of tyranny, but of economic privilege, is greater than in the past. But he rejects Burnham's moral pessimism, his economic materialism, his disbelief that ethical values can play an important part in human history. Koestler's view is closely analogous to that of Drucker. Drucker holds that the primary defect of Marxism was its acceptance of the concept of Economic Man, its belief that material conditions are the fundamental determining factor in human society and human history. Drucker argues that in the heyday of the capitalist era it was right that economic life should be free from political control and that men should be valued to a large extent on their economic status, for the capitalist *entrepreneur* did play a creative role and was a progressive force. But we cannot understand recent historical developments except by realising that modern societies can only show vitality and healthy progress in so far as the determining principles of social organisation are drawn from the ethical and not the economic sphere. In Drucker's words, the End of Economic Man is in sight. Hitler revitalised German society, though it was an evil vitality, through the ideal of Heroic Man; it was an archaic ideal which could only cause untold disaster. But we can learn from German experience that societies will no longer work on the basis of economic interest, but that an ethical or religious idea must provide the foundation of society. Koestler thus maintains that the present era of war and revolution will only end with the clear emergence of new ethical values. Thus a new "spiritual spring-tide will mark the end of our historical era, the period", says Koestler, "which began with Galileo, Newton and Columbus, the period of human

adolescence, the age of scientific formulations and quantitative measurements, of utility values, of the ascendancy of reason over spirit. Its achievements were gigantic; the spasms of its death struggle are terrifying. But they can't last much longer; as the frequency of the convulsions increases, the amplitude of their violence grows; the point of exhaustion has come within measurable range. There might be one or two more world wars but not a dozen; it is a question of decades, not centuries."

In the short-term political sphere Koestler wishes to see the emergence of what he calls a new pessimism. There is needed an active fraternity of persons who no longer aim at radical political solutions, which in our present spiritual climate would be disastrous. This brotherhood of pessimists would seek to create "oases", which, while in places they might consist of no more than a few friends often holding aloof from current controversies, would strive to ensure the continuity of civilisation, acting as repositories for values, performing a function like that of the monasteries in the Middle Ages. Britain, Koestler thinks, is perhaps the best suited of all countries to develop an oasis climate. He is thankful that Britain seems unlikely to fall under the rule of political Commissars; he would infinitely prefer a blimp to a Commissar, who would shoot him without hesitation. Koestler is thus thankful for our moderate governments which are set on accomplishing necessary social change without political convulsions, and are determined even that no privileged person shall be dispossessed without generous compensation.

The Yogi and the Commissar was written partly to burst the bubble of "the Soviet myth". In the last two decades, in Koestler's view, Russia has satisfied the craving of persons on the Left for faith, for an emotionally satisfying belief; it has filled the gap created by the loss of faith in Christianity. The Soviet myth has become the new opium for the people; it has become heresy among important sections of the Left to criticise the Soviet system, to doubt that Russia is the hope of the future, to question that Russia is the one country planned in the interests of the workers. But *The Yogi and the Commissar* was also written to counter what Koestler calls the philosophy of the Commissar, the philosophy which has tended to develop within Russia, whether or not it is logically implied by Marxist premises. Koestler con-

trasts it with the philosophy of the Yogi, which is selected as being at the opposite pole of thought. Both the Yogi and the Commissar believe that it is necessary to change human nature. But the Commissar thinks that man must be changed from without, by social organisation and social pressure. He believes that once revolution has given him effective power, he can remedy all material and psychological ills through a control of economic production and of educational and cultural activities. Complexes can be destroyed as effectively as poverty. But to will the end involves willing the means. It is unfortunate that these means so often include unlimited lying, treachery and violence, and the use of the secret police for the supervision of the lives of all individuals, but it can't be helped. The Commissar pays no particular respect to individual values; these are only what particular persons have been conditioned to accept, and they can be induced by various means to accept new ones. The Commissar would condition them to believe in the ideas which are convenient to the state power. Thus the Commissar regiments the whole nation and hinders free expression of individual creativeness, for that would cut across his plans. Thus to abolish evil by changing Man from without the Commissar robotises and dehumanises the human species.

This attitude tends to reduce to the status of complete worthlessness ethical virtues of immense merit and importance, such as courage, disinterestedness, unselfish love, a high degree of personal integration. The belief that such virtues have value in themselves is regarded by the Commissar as merely a response to a faulty environment. A similar effect in the reduction of ethical values may be produced, in Koestler's view, by psycho-analytical theory. While Marxism reduces traditional values to mere responses to the material environment, Freudianism reduces them to such categories as sadism, masochism, nemesism, or the expression of the death instinct. In Koestler's *Arrival and Departure*, the courage of Peter Slovak, so extreme as to have become a myth, is reduced by his analyst to a compulsive impulse to martyrdom springing from an unconscious guilt feeling based on an infantile act. When Peter was two or three years old, he had wanted to injure the eyes of his baby brother because he was jealous of the affection given to him; he had noticed that a doll

which had lost its eyes had been thrown away and he imagined that his brother also might be thrown away if he had no eyes. He did not touch his brother's eyes as his brother screamed and his father came in, but he had intended to do so. Also, when Peter was about five, and he was quarrelling with his brother in an old fishing boat, his brother had fallen right on to the point of a rusty boat-hook, which had gone into his eye. Peter had, of course, not intended this to happen, but he had hated his brother and could never get out of his mind the feeling that wishes could move boat-hooks, so that his wish was the cause of his brother's accident. Thus, all through his life, though he had forgotten these early incidents (till the memories were brought back by analysis), he had suffered from a sense of guilt as he felt he had not been punished sufficiently for his crimes, and that was the explanation of his almost superhuman courage. The rubber tubes in his nostrils, the burning cigar, the brutal strokes on his body, gave him a kind of obscene satisfaction because he felt he had been cheated of just punishment for his early sins. When the cause of his breakdown was revealed by the analyst Peter felt that all his reputed courage was a fraud; he had not suffered *for the cause*, but had suffered because he wanted to suffer. Also his life of devotion to his ideals was not based on the compelling force of the ideals, but he was the type who craved for martyrdom, so that suffering for a cause was necessary to him.

While analysis cured Peter's neurosis and the paralysis which it had produced, it also deprived him of a sense of purpose in life, as he felt that his earlier purpose had been founded on an irrational compulsive impulse. But Koestler makes Peter return to his earlier life of devotion, and he dies in a heroic act. The moral is that courage does not cease to be courage because it may have an irrational root, and ideals should not lose their compelling force because irrational impulses may be mixed up with the rational ideas which motivate them. But there is a tendency, on the part of certain psycho-analytical writers and their followers, to think that a virtue or ideal has been explained away when it has been attributed to an irrational unconscious source.

Koestler describes the attitude of the Yogi as the attitude which believes in changing man from within. The Yogi believes that the End is unpredictable and that the Means alone count. He

thus rejects violence under all circumstances. He regards those who believe that the world can be changed by external organisation as escapists who will not face the real problem, that of changing their fundamental beliefs and attitudes. He believes that each individual soul is attached to God "by an invisible umbilical cord", and that his creative force, his goodness and his real usefulness can be nourished only by the sap which reaches him through the cord.

Koestler is satisfied that contemplation, when it is genuine, is a better guide to ethics than rule of thumb criteria of social utility. The Yogi method, it is true, has its dangers. Koestler distrusts what he calls "crank-philosophers", "the hacks of Yogi-journalese", who dispense a minimum of information about breathing technique, wrapped up in a maximum of obscurantist bombast, and apparently numbers Gerald Heard among them. He fears that the Yogi is prone to a naïve and amateurish approach to social problems, as well as to sink into a state of contemplative inertia. Nevertheless the technique of contemplation is a technique which the Western world has to learn, and which will give an insight into values and a source of creative energy which are urgently needed.

One of the dangers of the modern period has been the tendency to look upon the application of scientific method to human problems as a panacea. Koestler finds hope to-day in a new scepticism among scientists. Science has been forced by its own development to recognise its limitations. A new attitude among the more far-seeing scientists is expressed in the doctrine of a hierarchy of levels. In the early years of the century a crisis of scientific determinism arose from the observation of something which seemed very much like free will on the part of atomic nuclei. The collapse of radio-active atoms seemed to be spontaneous, in the sense that the most complete description of the atom's condition in physical terms did not enable the observer to draw any conclusions as to its future behaviour. This is now explained on the theory that behaviour on the sub-atomic level is on a different level of organisation from behaviour on the atomic level, so that laws derived from one level are not applicable to another level. In the same way James Needham has shown that behaviour on the biological level of organisation cannot be reduced to behaviour

on the physico-chemical level, so that no amount of knowledge of the physico-chemical laws applicable to a living organism will explain its behaviour on the biological level. The same applies when we come to the psychological level. Psychologists have attempted to explain ethical and æsthetical phenomena by the methods of scientific determinism, by quantitative measurement of psychological facts, by explaining wholes from the character of the parts that have gone to their formation, so that the æsthetic achievement of Leonardo is explained in terms of a combination of ego and id impulses. But when we know all that psychologists can tell us about Leonardo we know nothing that is to the purpose on the æsthetic level. The attempt to explain the phenomena on the higher level in terms of those of the lower level tells you nothing about the higher type of phenomena that is of any use on the higher level. In the same way a description of the modes of conditioning that have contributed to the acceptance of an ethical concept gives no information at all about the meaning and value of the concept.

The recognition of this, by a few scientists, is preparing the way for the realisation that significant knowledge in the sphere of ethics cannot be obtained by the methods of quantitative measurement and analytical investigation. This involves the acceptance of the supreme importance of the intuitive and contemplative approach to ethical issues.

Koestler thus arrives at the conclusion, which has become a commonplace among the more perceptive thinkers of the day, that there is no emergence from the disorders of the modern world except through a synthesis of the scientific and religious approaches. This realisation is a comparatively new one for Koestler, and he appears to have given little thought yet to its implications. He says, "If we are in earnest we should not be frightened of aiming at a stage when contemplation is taught in schools side by side with science and P.T., and instead of religious dogma". But to do this would imply a new totalitarianism with Yogis in political control. The belief that a religious change can be expedited by political means is a fallacy to which thinkers are liable who have been recently converted, as Koestler has been, to the importance of the religious approach. The urgency of the problem provides some explanation, if not a justification, of the

error. Koestler says, "Whether we are capable of achieving it (the new synthesis) I do not know. But if the answer is in the negative, there seems to be no reasonable hope of preventing the destruction of European civilisation, either by total war's successor, Absolute War, or by Byzantine conquest, within the next few decades".

Koestler's criticism of Marxism and scientism contains nothing new, but his exposition is brilliant and provocative and is likely to have a profound effect on opinion. However, the constructive elements of his thought, the implications of which he has not thought out, are defective. We shall look in vain in him for the intuitive insight, the faith and assurance, the passionate sense of vocation we find in Berdyaev and Buber. The Yogi, no doubt, provides an effective antithesis to the Commissar, but Koestler's description of the Yogi is given with an externality, which shows a lack of genuine understanding of the experiences of which he speaks. To define detachment as Koestler does in terms of the sacrifice of volition is to fail to recognise that the mark of the truly non-attached man is great creative energy inspired by love and a sense of responsibility. His conception of "oases", of groups of persons who act as repositories of values, is valuable in so far as it recognises that society must be regenerated from below through the influence of groups and communities of believers, but such groups will inspire little but contempt, if they are 'fraternities of pessimists", if they are lacking in social purpose or a capacity for defined and heroic action.

A French critic of Koestler suggests that perhaps his greatest misfortune has been to find, after his hard experiences in Spain and France, a safe refuge in Great Britain where he has been cut off from the European drama and has tended to fall into that anarchical individualism which still flourishes more in Britain than anywhere else in Europe. Thus his philosophy of disillusion may be an unconscious compensation for the regret that he feels at having been removed from the centre of the European Resistance Movement at the very time when it became general, and when heroic struggle was most called for. The critic remarks that those who have lived through the ordeal of the Resistance have seldom finished as pessimists; Guillain de Benouville's *Le Sacrifice du Matin*, that admirable chronicle of the Resistance, is a

book of hope, a liturgy of the dawn, and de Benouville's book is typical. It was in the prison camps, in the hour of persecution, that Dutch Personalism was born in such remarkable vigour. Koestler's gloomiest predictions have been the product of days of comparative security, comfort and prosperity.

I believe the view is right which attributes Koestler's bitterness and disillusionment more to subjective than to objective factors, factors which perhaps would have been removed if Koestler had continued to have the stimulus of sufficiently heroic action. It must be recognised, also, that Koestler has lost the utopian illusions of his Marxist days without being able to rest on a belief in any religious interpretation of the universe; defeatism and disillusionment of the type of Koestler's is practically always a cover for a conscious or unconscious hedonism, a desire that life should be comfortable and pleasant and a sense of frustration when pain and evil are found to be ineradicable. To accept evil with cheerfulness and resignation demands a philosophy of a Christian type.

Koestler is a sensitive and intelligent social observer and one of the few novelists of any significance writing to-day. In *The Yogi and the Commissar* he gives an admirable analysis of the function of the novelist. He illustrates the novelist's situation from a report made about one of the great Russians (perhaps Turgenev) that he could only write with his feet in a bucket of hot water and his chair placed by an open window. In Koestler's parable, the hot water stands for creative inspiration, the open window for the outside world on which the novelist can draw for his material. Now the novelist has four possible courses open to him. He can close the window. This symbolises the attitude of the author who retires into his inner consciousness, who seeks inspiration from contemplation, from fantasy, from memory, from pure invention. Such authors give up the attempt to interpret the outer world and the world of politics in particular; in that sense they are the escapists. Another possibility is that the author can take his feet out of the hot water and become so fascinated by the events in the street that he begins "to gesticulate, to shout, and declaim". A novelist of this type has lost touch with his unconscious, with the true fountain of inspiration which he must find in his own soul; he becomes the reporter or the propagandist, his novels read like dispatches from war correspondents or Communist

pamphlets. The third situation is that in which the window is not entirely closed but is left slightly ajar or with the curtains so drawn as to expose a small section of the world outside, a section chosen because it suits the author's vision or purpose, because the more painful and menacing sights are excluded and a pleasing and diverting picture only revealed, perhaps a picture of a girl in a garden reading Proust. Here Koestler has in mind a certain type of novelist who does indeed study the outside world but confines his attention to some portion of it which is not disturbing to his peculiar sensibility. The novelist in the great tradition, in Koestler's view, is not represented by any of these three situations. He keeps his feet in the hot-water bucket because the true source of his inspiration is his unconscious. But he keeps his window fully open because he wishes to have a full and all-embracing vision of the outside world. He does not shut out the world of politics merely because that would be so painful and disturbing. The great temptation of the artist in the modern world, in Koestler's view, is to cease to care about politics. But he must remain the artist and not be a mere propagandist. That means, first of all, that he must impinge on the world of politics primarily through entering into the spirit and bones of his characters. His business is not to propound panaceas, but to understand and to feel. He must not, for example, be concerned with the concentration camp merely as an element of a political problem; he must become in feeling and imagination the very person who has suffered in such a camp.

In Koestler's novels he has put into practice his own beliefs about the true function of the novelist in the modern world, and I doubt whether any other novelist now writing in English has written with more intensity and poignancy about the inner tragedy of the modern situation. There is no doubt that Koestler is in the tradition of the great masters of the novel, the tradition of the great Russian novelists in particular, of Dostoevsky, of Tchekov, of Tolstoy. One can believe with some confidence that his greatest works are still to come.

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ANARCHIST

Herbert Read

IN recent years Herbert Read has gained a considerable following among the younger intellectuals, a group of whom have paid tribute to him in a useful book, *Introduction to the Study of Herbert Read*. He represents, in the first place, the spiritual, and more especially, the æsthetic revolt against totalitarianism and its subjection of the artist to the state. The vogue of Marxism among artists and intellectuals has recently experienced a marked decline, and Read's writings have provided some kind of rallying point for those who feel an increasing distrust of political and "scientific" planners.

On the negative side this school is fiercely critical of the treatment of artists in Soviet Russia. Read does not find it surprising that when poets and artists in Russia are compelled by the pressure of the state to adapt their art to the immediate political line of the Communist Party as well as to conform their style to the taste of the masses that so many artists and poets, including the greatest of the poets of the Revolution, should have committed suicide. The new propagandist art of Russia, says Read, exhibits a "rhetorical realism, devoid of invention, deficient in imagination, renouncing subtlety and emphasising the obvious". Any art in Russia that is not conformist is denounced as "leftish distortion"; originality is described as "petty bourgeois individualism". While I am writing this essay, a fresh attempt is being made in Russia to mobilise artists behind the new party line based on the glorification of the merits of the Communist regime and the exposure of the evils and errors of capitalism and of the new western "imperialism". Such regimentation of the artist is, in Read's view, incompatible with the creation of any art possessing real vitality and significance; he holds indeed that no considerable works of art have appeared in Russia since about the year 1924.

On its positive side the school of Read gives priority in its scale of values to the intuitions of the artist. Read has told

us that his profoundest experiences have been æsthetic, not religious. Their vividness has convinced him that in them he has a key to the structure of the universe. All works of art have an underlying structure best described in such terms as "rhythm", "balance" and "proportion". Read quotes the high authority of Whitehead in support of the view that nature and life also exhibit this quality of rhythm and proportion. Thus Read holds that there is an order of nature which is essentially similar in its laws to the order we find in art, so that the order revealed by the artist can claim to reveal the nature of reality. Read similarly adopts æsthetic criteria in his judgments of moral issues. Like Keats, he believes goodness to be synonymous with beauty. "Goodness is living beauty, life ordered on the same principles of rhythm and harmony that are implicit in a work of art. Vulgarity, then, is the only sin, in life as well as in art." Thus the highest ethical achievements are enacted on a plane which transcends reason, in which the æsthetic vision reigns supreme. "The impulse which moves a man to irrational action", says Read, "I have called the sense of glory, a phrase which is sometimes misunderstood but which I find too appropriate to abandon." Thus Read rejects traditional morals and denies that there are known standards having a truth and validity proved and supported by a supernatural sanction. He finds the basis of ethics (and of philosophy) in the acts of intuitive apprehension of the artist, viewing the term "artist" in that special sense which includes all men capable of acts of creative originality.

This attitude which places the artist above the philosopher, the theologian, the seer, and the mystic, whom Read mistakenly regards as the "artist in morality", raises important issues. In *Time Must Have a Stop* Huxley diagnoses æstheticism with good reason as one of the most dangerous moral and intellectual aberrations of our time. The mark of the religious man, as distinct from the æsthete, is that he is guided by a spirit which is the integrating principle within man. The spirit seeks God and the universal, not merely the ends of the particular mind-body entity which it directs; it is inspired by love; it seeks relationship. One of its functions is to direct the æsthetic faculty. But the devotee of the æsthetic principle tends to mistake a part of the human being for the whole; he is often an egotist, lacking in love and in

aspiration towards the universal good. It is the Spirit, which by its nature seeks community, which should govern man, not merely the sense of beauty, which is a part of man. The artist is no more free from the danger of glorifying his particular specialism than the scientist or any other kind of specialist, and Read, in spite of his endeavour to achieve a synthesis, does tend to be confined within the particular specialism of the artist. He has admitted that he has no religious experience which can compare in intensity and vividness with his æsthetic experiences, but this implies a limitation in his apprehension of reality which perverts his judgments on ethical and philosophical as well as æsthetic issues.

Read remarks that if one gives absolute authority to the æsthetic vision, to the "sense of glory", one is using an argument that may be employed by any megalomaniac inspired by a lust for power. It can also, however, be used and is constantly used by the artist who, without being a lunatic, is often a self-worshipper, adoring his own individuality, his own powers and gifts. This tendency to make æsthetic talent and susceptibility a mere instrument of the self alienated from God is, as we have seen, one of the great evils of our time. Its fruit is seen in the debauched loves of the artists we see depicted in such a novel as *The Tropic of Cancer* and in the nihilism of some of the French Existentialists.

The religious vision is the co-ordinating vision; it is concerned with the whole of the problem of the relation between man and man and between man and God; it accepts the value of the æsthetic vision and also the scientific vision, but it integrates these various partial views with other relevant aspects of the total problem. This integral vision derives its character from man's need for community, his need to transcend himself in his aspiration towards God. The artist who does not learn from religion a conception of the whole being of man, a conception which includes that of duties and responsibilities, is readily disposed to give himself over to the worship of one part of his being, or even to worship irrational and demonic powers. Herbert Read himself, as in his writings on surrealism, has not been slow to defend the worst aberrations, the most perverse expressions of egotism, the extremest glorifications of irrationalism, that have marked the modern artist. There is no doubt a sense in which it is possible to identify the beautiful and the good. But it does not follow that

a person with a high degree of æsthetic sensibility has necessarily a good personality or that the sense of glory of which Mr. Read speaks may not be accompanied by a gravely impaired moral vision.

Mr. Read's reaction against totalitarianism has led him to anarchism, and he has become the literary apostle of that recent revival of anarchism which has fluttered the dovecotes of Bloomsbury without achieving the smallest degree of political significance. Mr. Read's anarchism follows familiar lines. Like Marx and Engels, he believes that man is naturally good but that he has been corrupted by bad social institutions, so that the fundamental problem is to free him from his subjection to the state and the institutions deriving their power from the state. To-day, says Mr. Read, we live in a state of economic slavery and moral inhibition, of economic slavery to large-scale industry and to the state, of moral slavery to the Church which places moral blinkers on man through its control of the schools and of broadcasting. Our first task, then, should be to abolish the state. Industry should be handed over to free, self-governing guilds or syndicates which will set up co-ordinating committees to adjust their relationships. Mr. Read believes that the establishment of anarcho-syndicalism will mean the abolition of poverty, and of money, the exchange of goods being carried out by barter. As the state will no longer exist, nations, as we understand them, will also cease; there will thus be an end to nationalism and war. Human nature will no longer be perverted, and turned to hatred, destructiveness and sadism, by tyranny and oppression; under such conditions man's spontaneous goodness and creativeness will assert themselves. The new basis of the organisation of society will be the small self-governing agricultural community or industrial unit, though the small units will co-operate through guilds or syndicalist bodies which, Mr. Read adds, will be fully alive to the advantages of machine production. Mr. Read's anarchism, unlike that of William Morris, involves the fullest possible use of mechanical power; this again, Mr. Read points out, is fully consistent with the greatest possible application of art to industry. His *Art and Industry* deals ably and comprehensively with this great theme.

Mr. Read remarks, I think with little justification, that the

poet is necessarily an anarchist; "the agent of destruction in society is the poet", and his chief task in the modern period is to help in the overthrow of the state. If, in Mr. Read's view, the state does not destroy itself by disintegrating society through modern war, it must be overthrown by the workers using their natural weapon of the general strike. It is on this weapon, and not that of political democracy, that anarchists pin their faith.

I cannot exempt Mr. Read's anarchism from the charge of a naïve utopianism. His conception of a natural goodness in man which will abolish war and poverty and establish harmonious free social institutions once the state has been overthrown is mere wish-fulfilment thinking. Man himself has created the institutions which, in Mr. Read's view, enslave him. As Berdyaev points out, man has a profound disposition to enslave himself, a disposition which can only be checked in so far as freedom is understood in a deeper sense than that in which Mr. Read understands it, that is in the sense of mere freedom from restraint. Mr. Read urges the need for individual independence and freedom from subjection to the authoritarian father and his inner embodiment, the super-ego, but the super-ego is man's own creation and cannot be destroyed, if at all, by any political change. We can all recognise the evils of bureaucracy and of the abuse of the state power, but little is gained by merely wishing away such evils, or by imagining that similar evils would not arise in the very guilds and syndicates which to Mr. Read are the instruments of freedom. The effective organisation of a general strike would itself be impossible without placing the workers under the control of a centralised bureaucracy within the unions. In *Poetry and Anarchism* Read speaks of the responsibility of the state (or its anarchist equivalent) for supplying the instruments of culture through Ministers of Education and of the Fine Arts without realising, apparently, that the very possibility of effective action on the part of such ministries depends on their use of the state power with its ability to collect taxes by coercion. It would be absurd to imagine that the sums needed could be raised by voluntary levies.

In his essay, "The Paradox of Anarchism", in an endeavour to rebut the charge that anarchist social conceptions are incapable of realisation in practice, Mr. Read remarks that anarchism is founded on reason, and that what is established by right reasoning

cannot be surrendered to expedience, however apparently chimerical and utopian its conclusions may be. This argument is a plain sophism, for if the conclusions reached are chimerical and utopian, somewhere there is a failure of right reasoning, for politics is the study of the possible. The fundamental fallacy of anarchism is its failure to understand the nature of man, and its naïve assumption of natural goodness, an assumption which Niebuhr has so effectively attacked. The basis of social order is never mere voluntary co-operation but the restraint of law. The necessity and justification for law is based on the fact that the irrational elements in man prevent him from always accepting voluntarily the restraints which follow from the fact that he is inescapably a part of a social whole.

Anarchism embodies certain truths, truths which have been accepted by personalists and have been worked out in detail by a number of thinkers whose ideas have been expounded in this book. Among these are the importance of political, economic and cultural decentralisation and the value of autonomous industrial and cultural associations. We can recognise also in the renaissance of anarchism a salutary reaction against totalitarianism. Unfortunately anarchism tends to be a disguised individualism, a mere expression of revolt against the authority of the father. A dislike of being ruled must not be confused with a serious political analysis.

Mr. Read has expressed a widespread tendency in his attempt to build his thought into a modern synthesis, a co-ordinated system throwing light on all our problems. He has recognised that the conception of a synthesis implies the need for a new common faith, capable of creating a change of heart in a significant sector of the people of the world, for only if the far-reaching social changes needed express changes in people's minds can something in the nature of a managerial tyranny be avoided. In considering the possible agencies for the new faith Mr. Read can find only two serious claimants in the field. Either the new faith will be a modified Marxism (Marxism unmodified, or modified on the lines we have witnessed in Russia, will give us a totalitarian world), or it will be the expression of new religious forces springing either from a revolution within the Churches or from a new religious movement. Mr. Read finds himself unable to believe

that the Churches can be the agent of the new faith. For this would imply, firstly, the reunion of the Christian Churches, for while they are divided as at present they cannot act effectively; secondly, the abandonment by the Churches of all worldly power, and their identification with the cause of the poor and oppressed; and thirdly, their abandonment of the archaic dogmas to which they still cling and their adoption of a morality which takes into account the teachings of science. These difficulties seem to Mr. Read to be quite insuperable. It seems evident to him, and he remarks that this was the final conclusion of Soren Kierkegaard, that before Christianity can once more become a religion of love, a religion which also embraces wholeheartedly the spirit of truth, the Churches as we know them will have to disappear.

As a cell of good living to-day, Mr. Read continues, the Church simply does not exist. He therefore looks for a change of heart which is pagan and secular in its agency. The choice, he says, is between "one ideal which is Christian and has a supernatural background, and another ideal which is humanistic and has a background of reason and natural law", and it seems to him that in the existing state of opinion more people can be found, or could be found, to follow nature (and all that that implies) than to follow God (and all that that implies).

Mr. Read's choice in this matter is based on his rationalism, his faith in science, his rejection of the idea of divine guidance or supernatural revelation. He finds the basis of all rational thought in the discovery of an order of nature, which he declares to be the same kind of order that we find in the mind of man and in works of art; thus the mark of the rational mind is the acceptance of and submission to this order.

Mr. Read's interpretation of this fundamental issue embodies certain confusions which are also at the root of his lapse into anarchism. In the first place his remarks on the insuperable obstacles to right action by the Churches are hardly to the point seeing that the obstacles to effective *right* action coming from official humanist and Marxist sources seem equally insuperable. The position at the moment is that the action of the Marxist parties throughout the world moves in the direction of enslaving mankind while it is the Churches everywhere that are

making a stand for the rights and the autonomy of the human person. While it is true that a new common faith, if it springs from religious sources, must arise in part from a revolt against official Christian leadership, it is equally true that a revolt springing from humanist organisations would need new inspiration and new leadership. The real issue is as to the true basis in thought for the movement needed. On this issue Mr. Read states an antithesis between reason and nature, on the one hand, and God and irrational faith on the other. Such an antithesis is somewhat disingenuous. It assumes, for example, that a new synthesis springing from religious sources would involve a rejection of reason and science. No reputable religious thinker to-day would admit that the acceptance of God means the rejection of reason, of science, of nature. Let us all agree, by all means, that whatever synthesis becomes the basis of a new common faith, it must imply the desirability of the full employment of reason, and the full use of the scientific method for the investigation of the problems of nature. In stating an antithesis between religion and reason Mr. Read is speaking in the terms of a generation ago.

This principle having been agreed, which is to-day no more than a platitude, the real issue remains to be faced. That Mr. Read has not yet faced it is seen in his ambiguous use of the term "nature". In speaking of an order of nature to be discovered not only by the scientist but by the artist and philosopher, he is failing to distinguish between the mechanical regularities of physical nature, and the order of the mind, which is founded on freedom and conforms to spiritual laws. Berdyaev's affirmation of a dualism of spirit and nature is based on truths of experience which it is impossible to question, by whatever means it may be possible in the realms of theology and philosophy to reconcile the contradiction. In taking his stand with the humanist Mr. Read seems unconsciously to identify himself with that materialism which fails to distinguish between the personal world which is known by direct apprehension and the world of physical nature known largely by the methods of science. The fundamental cleavage between the Marxist and the religious approach is between one which looks primarily to science with its discovery of uniformities in nature, and one which, while it recognises the value of

science in the exploration of one aspect of reality, accepts the nature of man as a personal being possessing creative spontaneity and a movement of his being towards God and towards value. Mr. Read does not seem to be fully conscious of the implications of his view, but in essence his rationalism and his rejection of God imply all the fallacies of "scientism". He quotes Kierkegaard's attack on the Churches but fails to mention Kierkegaard's insistence on the inadequacy of the humanist approach, his conviction of the fundamental significance of man's religious experience and his intuitions of the nature of God. In dealing with æsthetic experience, indeed, Mr. Read recognises the existence of an intuitive apprehension which transcends reason without being contrary to it, but he fails to realise that, similarly, religious intuition transcends reason without being contrary to it.

It is the ambiguity of Mr. Read's conception of "nature" which leads him to teach that man must be free to follow nature and must therefore destroy the state. Mr. Read assumes an innate harmony in nature and man's nature in particular which external authority destroys. But there is rather a natural disharmony in man, a disharmony springing from two main sources. In the first place, man is a being living in two worlds, the world of nature and the world of spirit, two worlds which cannot escape conflict, though they are capable of an ultimate harmony. Secondly, man's nature as a social being exposes him to a conflict between those appetites and urges which express the needs of the individual body-mind organism and that spirit of reason and benevolence which leads him to recognise that his own interest must be subordinated to the interest of the social whole. All valid thinking in the ethical and political sphere must be based on a recognition of this inherent dualism in man.

Mr. Read rejects both the Spirit and the Word, or the belief that the nature of God has in some measure been revealed to man. This is one of the main sources of his subjectivism. In the modern world in which, as Aldous Huxley has pointed out, God has been abolished, subjectivism reigns supreme among those who reject the pseudo-religion of Marxism, and its reign is almost undisturbed in the field of modern art in particular. Reason is no protection against subjectivism, for it is readily

enslaved by the creative subject. Mr. Read's own defence of reason has not saved him from the most extreme manifestations of romanticism, as in his defence of the supremest irrationalities of the super-realists. Mr. Read's subjectivism is seen in his primary conviction as an art critic, the belief that the artist must follow the law of his temperament. In his *Education Through Art* he correlates the main schools of modern art with the four main types of human temperament which he subdivides into sixteen types. We have seen that his æstheticism and his confessed incapacity for religious experience make him draw his philosophical criteria from the experience of the artist. But this means to him the experience of the modern artist, of whom he is a staunch propagandist and who is a subjectivist, denying the Word, denying the existence of a spiritual authority. Thus Mr. Read is the strenuous advocate of a condition of art in which the artist, recognising no spiritual laws, freely and fully exploits his own temperament. This is a far cry from the artist called by God to the service of man and the expression of the divine glory. The typical artist of the modern period, far from wishing to serve men, is often even indifferent to the problem of finding a language through which he can communicate to them. Aldous Huxley remarks in *The Perennial Philosophy* that while the mode of man's approach to God must be through his temperament, his aim must be to escape from his temperamental limitations which inevitably hinder him from the full realisation of the divine. The artist to-day is too often the prisoner of his temperament because he recognises no need to transcend himself and fails to recognise the natural movement of his being towards God. A fundamental law of good art indeed is sincerity; the artist must express what he is at any particular time. Thus the principles of æsthetic education stated by Mr. Read in his *Education Through Art* are in essentials valid, in particular the view that the child must develop as an artist through the spontaneous expression of his temperament and must not have any particular style imposed on him. But the need for an idea of perfection which will conduce to the transcendence of temperamental limitations should also be recognised.

Mr. Read's greatest merit as a critic of modern art is his catholic taste, his ability to enter into sympathy with the spirit

and aims of all the modern schools. He is also not without a recognition of the grave disability from which the modern artist is suffering through the spiritual anarchy of the period, through the lack of a common faith, the lack of any bond of feeling uniting the artist to his audience, and the consequent lack of æsthetic symbols having a universal emotional appeal capable of providing a basis for a school of art which would express a new social unity. But perhaps Mr. Read is too apt to approach the outstanding figures of the modern school with an unmeasured enthusiasm which fails to recognise the extent to which they express a civilisation in decay, a society threatened with moral dissolution, rather than the spiritual forces which must be the means of renewal. The evidence of moral decline in the artist is, as we have seen, a subjectivism, an exaltation of the ego, and that form of humanism which replaces God in the centre of man's universe by man himself, and whose typical expression in art is in a rationalisation of man's instinctive drives in some form of megalomania or in a complacent satisfaction with the products of man's corruption. Lewis Mumford's judgment of certain schools of modern art shows a shrewder insight than that of Mr. Read. "Those who had no taste for action could only carry the processes of decay further by a passive acquiescence and an inner corruption, seeking nourishment from the spiritual products of decomposition. The incoherent language of Da-da and the irrational forms of surrealism made their entry at the same moment; further symptoms of an emptiness and a debasement that was not uncoupled with technical ingenuity, even æsthetic mastership. These artists had a twofold audience; the connoisseurs of illness and the connoisseurs of violence; and a positive antipathy to beauty, wholeness, or health was a qualification for discipleship."

Read's first important work of criticism, *Reason and Romanticism*, was written from the standpoint of classicism. He declared that ideas were the main source of his inspiration as a poet, and he praised metaphysical poetry, believing that poetry which gave adequate expression to philosophical ideas was art in its highest form. With respect to criticism he argued that it was essential that it should reach out beyond the impulse to defend one's preferences to the realm of the universal, to the realm of prin-

ciples, declaring that what was wrong with criticism was not too much dogma, but too little, and that there are norms, even ethical norms, to which art should be subjected, and that there is a greater congruity between science and poetry than is generally recognised. Later Read became a convinced romanticist, declaring his preference for an art that entirely abandons the realm of conscious reason. The classical ideal came to him to be "a contradiction of the creative impulse, the intellectual counterpart of a political tyranny", while the romantic spirit was the creative spirit of life and liberation. Surrealism to Read was "a reaffirmation of the romantic principle". Read was also greatly influenced by Freud and the psycho-analytical movement; significant art came to him to depend upon the release of impulses coming from the unconscious. Read speaks of the Romantic Movement as part of that immense renewal of human faith and courage which had its political counterpart in the French Revolution, and holds that the same spirit is present in the arts to-day. We should not, therefore, in his view, take up a moral attitude to our own period, condemning it as a period of decadence. What seems to be decadent may be merely a necessary preparation for a new renaissance, and that renaissance will continue the impulse of the romantic period of a century ago which has not yet reached its apogee.

Read illustrates the antithesis of the classical and romantic ideals in the distinction he makes between character and personality. A man who possesses mere character has subjected his life to certain principles of order and is ruled by his super-ego, but in doing so has dammed up the creative flow of his being. The man with personality must not be thought of, in contrast, as a man with a disordered mind; his ego achieves a coherent, if continually changing, organisation of his mental processes; the sum total of his memories and sensations fuse into an inner judgment, an inner perspective; but this perspective is always changing through the activity of the creative faculty of the artist who constantly enriches his conscious life from the unconscious. The man who has personality thus imposes no restraint on the free play of psychic impulses but a will to inner organisation and harmony. Above all, he retains the "innocent eye", the ability to see things freshly, the simple life of the senses, the undimmed power of apprehension.

In these critical judgments Read carries on the spirit of Rousseau, and he renders himself subject to those criticisms which perhaps no one has expressed better, in relation to Rousseau, than Jacques Maritain. For what is this ego which Read refers to as the inner principle producing order in the artist's sensations but his feeling, his Sense of Glory, his self triumphing in its mastery? And can we escape from the dilemma of our times except through the artist (who is so much a leader of men) knowing how to escape from self, to subordinate self to God? Read looks upon the reason of the classical artist as a tyranny, suppressing the free play of imagination. Maritain would rather look on reason as one of the primary expressions of the divine in man, and would say that there is no opposition between right reason and right imagination. But the divine call which comes to man, and to the artist, and also the rational principle in man, should exercise some control over the impulses which come to him from unconscious and irrational sources.

Read remarks, in defence of his rejection of the religious approach, that the "weakness" of the latter is its demand for "a voluntary emotional surrender, or alternatively an intuitional recognition of absolute values". He prefers to take his stand on what he calls reason (though in his defence of romanticism he exalts the irrational above reason), on the appeal to natural laws, to an external objective standard. He wishes to discover these laws by observation and experiment, the method of science, and by self-observation, the method of the Taoists. We should then, as the Taoists did, seek to live in harmony with natural law, and to create a society in which all men can live naturally.

Read has been attracted to Berdyaev and Kierkegaard, to the latter of whom in particular he has given some study. But he has not been led to the direct apprehension of God and of absolute values that we find in these authors; Kierkegaard in his *Either—Or* held that we must choose between the æsthetic and religious approaches to life's problems and believed that the acceptance of the æsthetic approach meant despair. Read has accepted the æsthetic approach and built on it a philosophy which inspires him with cheerfulness. But in doing so it seems to me he has forfeited the opportunity of bringing order into his ideas (which are full of contradictions) or of suggesting a true basis for that new common

revolutionary faith that he has so often declared to be necessary. For without God and objective values the artist (and the man) remains imprisoned in his subjectivity. The basis for universality has evaporated.

I have criticised Mr. Read's anarchism, but it is clear that many of the social and political aims which he has outlined are also those of the personalists. Like the personalists he stresses the freedom and independence of the personality; like the personalists he believes that society must be reformed from below and not from above, by the building of free patterns of autonomous life; like the personalists he teaches that the life of thought, the creative work of the artist, the religious life, must be set free from political control. But he differs from the personalists in his conception of the human person; he fails to recognise either that natural subordination of the individual to the civic good which has been so well defined by the Thomists, or that sense of the call of God to the soul which is the heart of the teaching of Berdyaev and Kierkegaard. The error is a grave one and a source of serious aberrations in his thought; but it is an error in a body of thought which contains very much that is sensitive, wise and noble.

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THE CASE OF MR. C. S. LEWIS

MR. C. S. LEWIS has built up a considerable reputation, not indeed as an original thinker, but as an expert publicist of orthodox Christian thought, and he laid the foundation for this reputation in his brilliant little book, *The Problem of Pain*. The greatest obstacle to the belief in God is the existence of pain and evil in the universe, and Mr. Lewis writes with great ability and ingenuity on this important issue. To the convinced materialist, who finds the hypothesis credible that the order of the universe is fortuitous and does not imply an Orderer, his arguments will no doubt seem unconvincing, but to the wavering mind or the mind inclined to theism they will carry great weight. Given the belief in some Intelligent Principle behind the intricate order of nature, the hypothesis that this Mind responsible for so much design and goodness and beauty is malevolent will not appeal to a well-disposed mind. Once one is inclined to accept the goodness of God, the traditional view, which Mr. Lewis endorses, that this is the best of all possible worlds, that if God could have created a better world He would have done so, will not seem unreasonable. Once this step has been taken, most, if not all, of Mr. Lewis's arguments have a compelling force. Evil is seen as the inevitable consequence of the decision that it is better for human beings to be free personalities than machines, and that it is necessary for the development of their powers that they should live in a world of objects other than themselves and have relationships of community with other human personalities. Mr. Lewis argues that God's omnipotence plainly does not include the power to do what is intrinsically impossible, and it seems reasonable to hold that it was intrinsically impossible to create a world of free personalities in which there was no pain or evil.

There is a clear relationship, in Mr. Lewis's view, between the possession by men of a free personality and the sin of pride, which is the first and chief of sins which brought all others in its trail. For a free being is naturally tempted to think that he can live his life as he pleases, and this brings with it the temptation to

infringe the Tao, or Divine Law, on which right living depends.

C. S. Lewis holds that while God saw that it was better for man to be free, He also wished man to be redeemed; He wished man to learn freely that it was better to follow God's law than his own will. But there was no way by which man could learn this lesson freely except through evil, through the pain, the retribution, which follow evil courses. Thus the value of pain as a warning against sin, "the terrible necessity of tribulation", is only too clear. If the lesson seems a hard one, we have to remember the teaching that men are made perfect through suffering; Kierkegaard maintained that personality is only possible through suffering; we must remember also that the happiness of the person who cheerfully accepts hardship and difficulty is of a deeper, firmer and intenser character than that of the man who is used to having his every wish indulged and feels aggrieved if any wish of his is thwarted. It is almost certain that the happiest persons are those whose characters have been strengthened by some measure of discipline, and that indeed only those achieve genuine serenity as well as a capacity for scaling the heights of experience who have learned the virtue of acceptance. C. S. Lewis always speaks of the path of the Christian as one of joy. He is always telling us that no persons laugh more or perform the common tasks of life with more positive gaiety and lightheartedness than those whom he regards as true Christians.

Many of Mr. Lewis's arguments seem somewhat strained and over-ingenious, and this is particularly noticeable in his discussion of pain among animals. He suggests that animals may possess sentience but not consciousness, so that while it may be true to say that "pain is present in this animal", it may not be true to say, "this animal feels pain". He himself, indeed, feels a difficulty in applying this argument to the higher animals, which have every appearance of possessing a rudimentary consciousness and intelligence. He suggests, again, that the devil, in whose existence Mr. Lewis fervently believes, was perhaps at work in the universe before man appeared on the earth, and was responsible for the corruption of the animals and for their carnivorous habits. Seeing that the problem which disturbs people and which Mr. Lewis is discussing is the undeserved suffering apparently experienced by animals, it would hardly reconcile people to the suffering to

believe that it was due to the work of some great evil power which no animal could be expected to resist. Mr. Lewis argues, again, that just as man's life has no meaning except in relation to God, so the life of animals can only be understood in relation to man. In other words, man has been appointed by God to have power over animals, so that the only animal which is fulfilling his true function is the "tame" animal, the whole of whose life is lived in relation and in subjection to man. The wild animal on this view has, like man himself, a "fallen" nature, while the tame animal has achieved salvation.[1] The relation of this ingenious speculation to Mr. Lewis's argument is that he believes that tame animals may achieve a sort of personality and selfhood through their relationship with man, so that they may also achieve an animal immortality, being raised to heaven as a part of the whole homestead to which they belonged, so that in heaven a dog, for example, may recognise his master and the master his dog. Thus in such an immortality God could compensate an animal for undeserved suffering. Mr. Lewis is indeed not happy about this argument either, feeling it hardly pious to imagine omniscience compensating animals for suffering in this way, "as though God trod on the animals' tails in the dark and then did the best He could about it". Altogether Mr. Lewis's arguments on animal pain do more credit to his ingenuity than his sense. I doubt whether they will convince anyone.

One of Mr. Lewis's most ingenious arguments is that the problem of pain is not made any more grave by the multiplication of instances, so that when we have found the maximum amount of pain that one person can suffer we have found all the suffering there is in the universe. "The addition of a million fellow sufferers adds no more pain." This argument illustrates the jesuitical character of Mr. Lewis's intelligence. His argument is that if x is the maximum amount of pain anyone can suffer and a million sufferers each suffer x, then the suffering indicated by a million x does not exist, because "no one suffers it". But if no *one* person experiences a million x, a million persons do experience it. Common sense, which so often fails the ingenious Mr. Lewis, leads us to reflect that if, as, for example, in a hospital ward, we do something to lessen

[1] It is interesting to compare this view with that of W. H. Hudson, to whom the tame animal was perverted and had forfeited its true nature.

the number of sufferers, we do something to reduce the quantity of human pain. On Mr. Lewis's argument a condition of widespread misery would be no worse than one in which a few casual evils, such as, say, painful diseases, exist.

The Problem of Pain is, however, a useful book. It is vigorous and stimulating and in the main its arguments are both lucid and cogent. If Mr. Lewis's reasoning at times would seem more true and convincing if it were less lively and clever, it is at least a great virtue to write on metaphysical issues without ever lapsing into dullness.

The atheist is frequently the Marxist, the scientific planner, the man who believes that traditional values are a function of a material environment which science is revolutionising, and that science will help man to rebuild society on the basis of new values which he himself has made to suit his new needs and desires. In *The Abolition of Man* Mr. Lewis attacks vigorously a number of closely associated views which deny the objectivity of moral truth: firstly, the view that values are merely individual and subjective; secondly, the view that they are a function of the material environment; thirdly, the view that values must be continually modified to suit man's convenience and his changing needs; and fourthly, the view that scientific discovery has radically altered human values. He first shows convincingly the dangerous effect on education in general, and English teaching in particular, of the view that the beauty of art and literature exists only in the eye and mind of the beholder or the reader, so that all æsthetic judgments are merely subjective responses. He maintains that civilisation depends upon the conviction that there is a right and appropriate response to things and works which are good and beautiful, a response the basis of which is an inherent quality of the good or beautiful object; and that when teachers cease, because of their lack of belief in objective truth, beauty and goodness, to be able to call from their pupils the appropriate responses to great works of art, we are on the slippery slope to barbarism. But Mr. Lewis is mainly concerned with a more dangerous heresy, the root of which, however, is the same as that of the error already mentioned. Mr. Lewis holds that there exists a Tao, a Way, a body of principles of Practical Reason applied to conduct, a system of "ultimate platitudes", which has a final validity. These "platitudes" have been affirmed by wise men from

the beginning of time; we find them in Confucius, in the wisdom of Ancient Egypt, in the Gita, in Buddha, and in the Gospels. They assert such principles as the law of beneficence, the duty to parents, to one's countrymen, and to posterity, the law of justice, the duty of honesty, the law of veracity and good faith, the law of mercy, the duty of magnanimity. This does not mean that there is no change at all in human conceptions of value. The duty to one's neighbour, for example, may grow with the development of scientific technique and the widening of human contacts and communications, till it becomes the duty of world citizenship. But the development is from within; it does not alter the essential character of the Tao but modifies it in certain directions which are in harmony with its spirit and inner meaning. Now it is held by many men to-day who teach the new gospel of "scientism" that through science man learns to transcend traditional morality and to gain a new power over himself and his destiny. Thus by pre-natal and post-natal conditioning, by the mastery of educational technique given by the new science of psychology, by the control of the material environment, and finally, it is believed, by eugenics, man will be able to make of himself whatever he will. To the advocate of scientism, values are merely natural phenomena, human reactions to social conditioning, so that with the increase of the application of science to social problems, they will be revolutionised to meet the needs of a human species which has achieved self-consciousness and the capacity to build its own life and destiny.

C. S. Lewis points out that in practice this new conception of scientific planning means that the conditioners are going to plan the conditioned, for the person who will decide the character of the new expert psychological technique will not be the whole of the human race. But the question arises as to how the conditioners are going to be motivated. Are they going to be motivated by the Tao? In that case they will not be re-creating man's values at all; they will be merely recognising that there is a moral law which one ought to obey, and that it is the same law as past generations have obeyed. But the danger is that they will be moved by the longing for power or pleasure, that they will tend to impose on the people whom they control standards which they find it convenient for the ruled to accept. No doubt it is possible that those

who wield power over others will use their power wisely, but C. S. Lewis doubts whether history shows us one example of a man who, having stepped outside traditional morality and achieved great power over men, has used his power benevolently. The doctrine, then, that science can rebuild man's values tends in practice to create a system in which the whole human race becomes subjected to a comparatively few men who, having themselves rejected the Tao, are subject only to irrational and self-regarding impulses. The full social application of this doctrine involves what C. S. Lewis calls the Abolition of Man. The doctrine has already been applied in Germany and we have seen its appalling results. But the doctrine of the re-creation of man by science is held by Marxists, and even occasionally by men who call themselves Democrats, as well as by Fascists. It is the supreme heresy of modern times. The little book in which Mr. Lewis has brilliantly exposed this false doctrine is one for which we should be grateful.

One of the most brilliant of Mr. Lewis's fantastic romances, *That Hideous Strength*, is a skilfully invented and vividly written allegory on the thesis of *The Abolition of Man*. The devilish clique who gain control of the university and town of Edgestow, by methods with which Nazis and Communists have made us only too familiar, look upon traditional values as mere chemical reactions which can be readily changed by appropriate techniques to meet the wishes of the group which has assumed dictatorial power. The way the sweet milk and concord of the placid university town is rapidly turned into a hellish broth of intrigue, hatred and violence by the "scientific" planners is painted by Mr. Lewis with an imaginative power which makes certain sections of this book worthy of comparison with the best of Wells and Stapledon. Regarded as a social satire, *That Hideous Strength* is admirable; where it moves into the sphere of the occult and the supernatural, however, I find that it loses both meaning and interest.

Mr. Lewis is a theist and a Christian, but many humanists will endorse the conclusions of *The Abolition of Man*, and will recognise also that Mr. Lewis's broadcast talks which have been published in a number of slim volumes contain much that is sensible and wise on issues of practical morality. Perhaps few persons have expressed more vividly than Mr. Lewis, in terms that the common man can appreciate, the idea of the good life as a rebirth, a

death of the life centred on the self, on cravings and ambitions, and the formation of a new life resting on God. Yet shrewd sense and, in places, deep wisdom seem to be mixed with much that is doubtful validity if not positively harmful. Mr. Lewis has reacted vigorously against the atheism which he once accepted and has much that is convincing to say on the corruption of "rationalist" thought by scientism. But as a champion of Christian orthodoxy he is less successful; his arguments have often that strained and casuistical quality which we have already noted in *The Problem of Pain*.

Let us examine, for example, Mr. Lewis's arguments on the subject of the Atonement. He tells us that the central belief of Christianity is that Christ's death has somehow put us right with God, given us a fresh start and washed out our sins. All Christians, he says, accept this as a fact, though there are different theories as to how the process works. He remarks that it doesn't matter which theory we accept, but that we must take the one that helps us. One theory is that man owes a debt to God because of his sins, a debt which Jesus, because of his immense spiritual assets, is able to pay for us. He admits that he used to find this theory silly, but adds, without telling us why, that he now finds it perfectly sensible. But he repeats that what is important is the "undoubted fact" that Christ's *death* has got rid of the burden of our sins.

Mr. Lewis's argument seems to me to be both logically inadequate and ethically unworthy. The idea that it does not matter which particular theory of the atonement we adopt provided we find it useful suggests that the truth and logical validity of one's arguments are of no importance provided they give useful results, a purely pragmatic argument which Mr. Lewis would vehemently reject were it used for any purpose but bolstering up orthodoxy. Berdyaev and many others have pointed out that certain traditional views of the atonement are founded on unworthy conceptions of God as a kind of oriental despot who demands satisfaction for all breaches of his laws. The implication of such views is that what is important is that someone, either the offender or a person who takes his place, should suffer to assuage God's wrath, rather than that there should be a change of heart in the offender. Mr. Lewis insists that what is important is Christ's *death* atoning for our sins and giving us a fresh start with God, not the pattern of Christ's life enabling us to live our lives with a new

heart and a new spirit. Berdyaev aptly remarks on this kind of doctrine that it is doubtful whether the justification of man is necessary as far as God is concerned. The doctrine which Mr. Lewis defends belongs to that earlier dispensation of the law which Jesus sought to supersede through the life of the spirit.

Mr. Lewis speaks of the means of spreading "the Christ life" in the world and says that there are three things which do so, baptism, belief, and "that mysterious action which different Christians call by different names, Holy Communion, The Mass, and the Lord's Supper". He adds that he cannot see why these should be the conductors of the new kind of life, but he believes that in fact they are so. He believes this on Christ's authority because Christ taught his followers that the new life was to be communicated in this way. Mr. Lewis here argues that believing on authority in a case like this is the same as believing on authority that atoms exist or that the Armada sailed in 1588. Mr. Lewis in fact knows well enough both that the reliability of texts may reasonably be considered doubtful and that the interpretation which has been placed upon texts by the Church is often highly controversial. The belief that baptism and holy communion are an essential means to the Christian life is inconsistent with an understanding of the inwardness of spiritual experience, with a recognition of the religious life as a spiritual rebirth through which man's conduct comes to be inspired with the spirit of love. No such error is made by any truly inspired interpreter such as Berdyaev or Kierkegaard. John Middleton Murry in *Adam and Eve*, interpreting Christianity in a spiritual sense where Mr. Lewis interprets it formalistically, declares outright that the belief that the Christian type is established by the sacrament of baptism is shown to be a gross superstition by the simple pragmatic test of the behaviour of Europeans after a period of nineteen hundred years in which the overwhelming majority of them have been baptised. Mr. Lewis's standpoint on this matter, as on others, shows his inclination to the religion of authority rather than the religion of the spirit.

Mr. Lewis has indeed defended vigorously the conception of authority in religion in many places in his work, and notably in his masterly Preface to *Paradise Lost*. He quotes with approval Milton's view that man's primal sin was disobedience, the Fall

consisting essentially in disobedience. "The apple", he remarks, "was not bad or harmful except in so far as it was forbidden, and the only point of forbidding it was to instill obedience, which virtue in a rational creature is the mother and guardian of all virtues."

This concept of obedience, Mr. Lewis maintains, belongs to the ancient orthodox tradition of European ethics and springs from Aristotle. It is a part of what Mr. Lewis calls the hierarchical conception. According to this conception degrees of value are objectively present in the universe. Everything except God has some natural superior; everything except unformed matter has some natural inferior. The goodness, happiness, and dignity of everything consists in obeying its natural superior and ruling its natural inferiors. When it fails in either part of this twofold task we have disease or monstrosity in the scheme of things until this peccant being is either destroyed or corrected.

Aristotle taught that to rule and be ruled is according to nature, the soul being the natural ruler of the body, the male of the female, reason of passion. In the spiritual sphere every being is a conductor of superior love or agape to the being below it, and of inferior love or eros to the being above. Such is the loving inequality between the intelligence who guides a sphere and the sphere who is guided.

Discipline and order, both to Milton and Mr. Lewis, are characteristic even of the life of beatitude. Milton features his whole universe as a universe of degrees, "from root to stalk, from stalk to flower, from flower to breath, from fruit to human reason". He delights in the ceremonious interchange of unequal courtesies, with condescension, a beautiful word which has been spoiled, on the one side and reverence on the other. He shows us the Father "with rayes direct" shining full on the Son, and the Son "o'er his scepter bowing" as He rose; or Adam "not aw'd" but "bowing low" to the "superior Nature" when He goes out to meet the archangel, and the angel unbow'd but gracious, delivering his speeches of salutation to the human pair; or Adam smiling with "superior love" on Eve's submissive charms, or the beasts duteous at the call of Eve.

On this principle the angels themselves, though they are never tempted to disorder, are distinguished into their celestial princedoms, according to the imperial decrees of God.

This conception of an objective order which the rational being will always obey belongs equally, in C. S. Lewis's view, to the field of art. Thus, as we have already seen, there are right responses to particular artistic achievements; Milton's technique, Mr. Lewis maintains, depends upon an appeal to "stock responses" which, in a period in which taste has not become barbarous, will be readily forthcoming.

How far this hierarchical conception of Mr. Lewis is consistent with Berdyaev's philosophy of freedom is a matter of some importance. Mr. Lewis quotes Milton as asserting that discipline is the necessary means to a free life. Thus the discipline of Heaven exists "that our happiness may work itself into a thousand vagrancies of glory and delight and . . . be, as it were, an invariable planet of joy and felicity". It is no doubt true that it is frequently the man whose inmost soul is freest who is most willing to accept those disciplines which spring both out of social requirements and out of the orderly patterns of nature and being. There is nevertheless, it seems to me, a great danger in over-emphasis of the conception of an externally imposed authority as opposed to the spirit of love and freedom. The loving and creative spirit disciplines itself, but discipline is often found without the presence of the free spirit. Berdyaev points out that where, as in the history of the Church, the legal and political spirit of the Romans prevailed with their insistence on a formal and external discipline, the free life of the spirit has been lacking. The emphasis placed by Mr. Lewis on obedience and authority certainly seems to show in him a very different spirit from that of Berdyaev.

We have seen that Mr. Lewis is not only inclined to give unquestioning faith to traditional religious authority but that he accepts the authority of particular texts. Thus he substantiates his belief that Christ was God on the authority of a text. Jesus said He was the Son of God and therefore must have been either God or a lunatic, "like a man saying that he's a poached egg". (C. S. Lewis is often distressingly breezy and colloquial on these issues), or again, like the Devil of Hell, for to make such a claim falsely would be a diabolical action. C. S. Lewis continues, "You must take your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and hail Him as a demon, or you can

fall at His feet and call Him God. But don't let us come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He hasn't left that open to us. He didn't intend to."

C. S. Lewis is a fellow of Magdalen College, but many of his arguments on theological issues would seem to be addressed to the simple-minded listener and uninstructed reader rather than to the well informed. Few thoughtful students of Christian teaching to-day will be satisfied to base their interpretation of the great issues of doctrine on the authority of a text. Nor, if Christ made any false claims or seemed to cherish mistaken expectations, is it necessary to believe that He was "a lunatic or the devil of Hell". We have the support of no less a person than Albert Schweitzer for the view that Christ was under the sway of contemporary Messianic hopes and thus was led to believe that He was the Messiah and that His triumph, after a period of tribulation and persecution, would take place in the lifetime of Himself and His disciples. Questions of biblical and textual interpretation are notoriously difficult and contentious, and Mr. Lewis can hardly be unaware of the great differences of opinion there are on these issues among those best qualified to judge, yet he has a cavalier way of disposing of thorny issues that can hardly be defended.

Mr. Lewis's religious writings and broadcasts have undoubtedly given comfort and reassurance to the orthodox, the devout, the simple-minded; he appeals especially to those whom Berdyaev describes as finding freedom too great a burden to bear so that they gladly hand over their judgments to the Church and to cheery and persuasive advocates such as Mr. Lewis. But he evades and confuses the real issues. Help will come to-day only from Christians who genuinely face the intellectual difficulties of non-Christians and who realise that a religious synthesis for our times must be based on contemporary religious experience and not on any particular traditional interpretation of disputed texts.

Mr. Lewis frequently expresses the view that man's nature is fallen and evil so that he can do good only through divine grace, through letting God have His way with him. On this view God has given to man only the natural life, the biological life, which is evil, which, to quote Mr. Lewis's words, is "self-centred, something that wants to be petted and admired, to take advantage of other lives, and to exploit the whole universe". Thus by expressing

his natural tendencies man can do nothing that is good, but, Mr. Lewis argues, by the exercise of his free will he can let God do good through him, he can give his will entirely to God. Sometimes Mr. Lewis says that we can do good only through letting God do the good through us; sometimes he says that we are powerless unless Christ lives and works in us; but however he envisages the relationship between God and Christ and ourselves, he insists that it is not our job to climb to goodness by our own efforts (which can only be evil).

Mr. Lewis's view of man's fallen nature is one which Berdyaev has frequently attacked with intense passion. The cause of virtue is ill served by giving man a poor view of his own gifts and capacities. Berdyaev insists that man is made in the image of God, that he is endowed with a free creative spirit which is capable of the greatest heights. There is indeed a sense in which everything[1] in man is given and comes from God, so that man only does good through that spirit which is either God immanent in man or an entity in man akin to the nature of God. It remains true that to teach that man can do nothing good by himself is to depress and discourage his efforts, to slander his divine essence, and to lead him to expect help from some magical source instead of through the exercise of his own creative capacities. Man will not find the true God except through plunging into the depths of his being with the help of his intelligence, will and creative powers; neither God nor Christ will help the man who does not know how to use his own gifts.

It is difficult not to feel that Mr. Lewis's treatment of this and allied themes is not without kinship with certain of the forms of spiritual servitude characterised in Berdyaev's *Slavery and Freedom*. Mr. Lewis's God who has created man with an essentially evil nature and who wishes man to abase himself completely and deny his own capacity for good seems to me a repulsive figure who tends to inspire loathing and fear. Berdyaev insists that Christianity needs to be constantly re-interpreted by the loving creative spirit which breathes in man and comes from God; Mr. Lewis is contemptuous of the "liberal" Christians who are not content to abide by the Church's authority but seek modern revaluations. He never really faces the intellectual doubts which preclude so

[1] i.e. including what C. S. Lewis calls man's biological or fallen nature.

much informed modern thought from the acceptance of orthodoxy. His religious broadcasts were designed for the simple who will certainly not become appreciably less simple through his influence. His style is lively, breezy, slangy, abounding in homely phrases and illustrations. I find some of his more racy illustrations and excursions into slang in somewhat doubtful taste. My susceptibilities are affronted when, as in the broadcast "Let's pretend", I am advised to "dress up as Christ" although it seems "outrageous cheek" to do so, and when I am told that "to get the hang" of what God did for man by sending into a woman's body His only begotten son, I must think how I'd "like to become a slug or a crab". However, Mr. Lewis clearly understands the audience to which his words are addressed, for his popularity and success cannot be disputed.

I have no special capacity for estimating the literary qualities of Mr. Lewis's satires, his *Screwtape Letters*, his *Pilgrim's Regress*, his *Great Divorce*. They have been highly praised. W. J. Turner compared his *Screwtape Letters* with *Pilgrim's Progress*. They are indeed lacking neither in wit and humour, nor in understanding of character, nor in liveliness, ingenuity and invention, nor in sound morality. Mr. Lewis's most recent satire, *The Great Divorce*, has the merits of the earlier works while being refreshingly less breezy and colloquial. Also in an age when most of the notable literary men have been sceptics, it is good to have the tables turned, to see the shafts of satire well aimed at the humanists and rationalists, the "advanced" thinkers. Satire is, of course, always *ex parte*, and it would be unreasonable to ask Mr. Lewis to be fair. The agnostics, atheists, and "progressive" persons ridiculed in such works as *The Screwtape Letters* are "superficially intellectual", "brightly sceptical" persons who are flippant about virtue, who have a dozen incompatible theories floating through their brains, who are engaged in a perpetual search for sexual or intellectual titillation, and who are full of illusions about inevitable progress and a glorious future. Mr. Lewis's Christians, on the other hand, are intelligent, sincere, kindly, joyous and public-spirited. My own impression, certainly widely different from that of Mr. Lewis, is that there has been in the modern period, broadly speaking, a high degree of correlation between religious agnosticism, on the one hand, and an active intelligence, a sense

of intellectual integrity, and a keen social conscience; and between religious orthodoxy, on the other hand, and timidity, conventionality, and political conservatism and indifference. This is not to deny that many of Mr. Lewis's arrows hit their mark. His criticism, as in *The Screwtape Letters*, of those schemes of thought, such as Creative Evolution, Scientific Humanism, and Communism, which "fix men's affections on the future"; his satire of the tendency of many so-called "Progressives" to identify what is true with what is "useful" or "contemporary" or "advanced"; his criticism of the modern worship of sex, "uncontaminated by generous and imaginative and spiritual concomitants", and of certain aspects of psycho-analysis; his ridicule of the view that places the hope of the world in some "trained minority of theocrats" are all largely justified. *The Screwtape Letters*, it can be agreed, is not lacking in witty, brilliant as well as profound passages, while its judgments on conduct and motives in concrete human situations are in general shrewd and penetrating.

Mr. Lewis as a man and a thinker inspires in me attraction and aversion in almost equal proportions. His criticism of modern pragmatism, materialism and scientism is just and important and is expressed with admirable clarity, vigour and wit. Also certain parts of Mr. Lewis's Christian apologetics are a useful contribution to current controversy. But his popular religious writings and broadcasts, however useful they may be in reassuring the orthodox and comforting the simple, tend to inspire distaste and aversion in the intelligent agnostic and humanist. I find it regrettable also that a man of Mr. Lewis's great gifts should so often write down to his audiences, and I find myself repelled by the jauntiness, the breeziness and the slanginess of his style.

But my fundamental disagreement with Mr. Lewis is on those issues on which he parts company with Berdyaev. Mr. Lewis is an authoritarian, a champion of orthodoxy, of the traditional forms of the Christian faith, while these he often interprets in what seems to me to be the less worthy sense. He is in particular disposed to denigrate the human person, who is, after all, made in God's image, who does possess an inherent capacity for freedom, love and creativeness which are divine attributes. God needs this very man, of whom Mr. Lewis thinks so basely, for the achievement of His purpose. Berdyaev finds the basis of true

religion in mystical experience, in a dynamic relationship within the soul between man and God, so that the spread of religion depends upon the rediscovery and the increase of mystical experience. Mr. Lewis attaches importance, rather, to the sacraments of the Church and to the authority of the Scriptures. I am not suggesting that the two approaches are incompatible, but an emphasis on the latter approach does tend to foster that religion of custom and tradition which must be transcended if there is to be a new outpouring of the spirit. Mr. Lewis makes the doctrine of the atonement the basis of the Christian system. It may well be that there is a way of interpreting this doctrine which is in harmony with the mystical approach, with the approach of Berdyaev and Buber, but Mr. Lewis does not appear to recognise the merely legalistic and immoral implications of many of the traditional and current interpretations.

C. S. Lewis's attitude to sex illustrates the authoritarian basis of his thought. To support the view of the indissoluble character of marriage he remarks that "wherever a man lies with a woman, there, whether they like it or not, a transcendental relation is set up between them which must be eternally enjoyed or eternally endured". But a real relationship between persons can no more be established by the mere fact of copulation than real entrance into the fellowship of believers can be created by the sprinkling of water in baptism. Mr. Lewis makes what is a plainly spurious mysticism a cover for a predilection for a legalistic conception of the binding character of the marriage relationship. A similarly spurious mysticism is expressed in certain of Mr. Lewis's remarks on the necessity of the presence of Jesus in the soul of the regenerated person. People can be regenerated only through a spiritual process involving a capacity for non-attachment and for self-integration through the activity of the spirit. To say that regeneration can only be gained through a certain historical person who lived 2,000 years ago entering into your mind and changing you tends to produce a belief in spiritual rebirth through some magical means instead of a realisation of the nature of the process on which true regeneration depends.

Reinhold Niebuhr has written a profound little book called *The Children of Darkness and the Children of Light*, in which he comments on the harm done by well-intentioned reformers whose

efforts are largely stultified by some form of blindness of vision. Niebuhr is especially concerned with those who think falsely through some unduly optimistic belief in human goodness, some failure to recognise the inherent corruption of human nature. Mr. Lewis is certainly inspired by a passion for the good, but his thought seems to me to suffer from a distortion which makes one doubt whether good intentions in his case mean an influence which can be described as beneficial. Mr. Lewis's prime weakness appears to be what Erich Fromm called the fear of freedom, a fear whose psychological roots I am in no position to determine. Mr. Lewis has a predilection for authority. To him Christian belief does not mean primarily a mystical experience; it means a submission to the life and the tradition of the historical Church. He is an advocate of "priestly" as distinct from "prophetic" religion, to use the terms to which Niebuhr has accustomed us. I am not sure that it would not be fair to say that it is religion of the type which Mr. Lewis so warmly advocates that Soren Kierkegaard attacked so fiercely in his later works. Yet we must recognise not only that Mr. Lewis has great gifts but that he is frequently also on the side of the angels. His chief title to fame, however, is probably more as a satirist than as a thinker. In this field he shows a liveliness, a wit, an inventiveness and an insight into character which are undoubtedly worthy of high commendation.

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3

A PERSONALIST VIEW OF SEX AND MARRIAGE

(with especial reference to John Middleton Murry and William Reich)

I PROPOSE in this essay to give some consideration to two thinkers who are alike in the importance they attach to sexual factors in their interpretation of the modern crisis. One of them, John Middleton Murry, might be described as a personalist; the other, William Reich, is the founder of a school of psychoanalysts which, while departing from Freudian orthodoxy, has retained the Freudian emphasis on the sexual issue. In his approach to ethical issues Reich makes characteristically anarchist assumptions. A comparison between Murry and Reich will serve very well to elucidate the principles of a personalist approach to sex and marriage.

Murry's fundamental attitude resembles that of Berdyaev. He looks for hope to a regenerated Christianity, a Second Middle Ages in which a common religion is once more the basis for the unity of men. Like Berdyaev, he believes that the new Christianity will be a mystical religion rather than a religion of authority; it will not be an attempt to extract a dogmatic system or a body of rules of conduct from the New Testament or the decisions of Church councils; it will be a renewal of a discovery by men in their own hearts of a relationship between themselves and God. If Murry, like Berdyaev, attaches importance to the Christian revelation, it is because Jesus symbolises to him that dying of the self which is necessary if the life of the Spirit is to be fully lived, if the individual is to become what Murry calls an experiencing nature, a person drawing ever new power and inspiration from a living centre within himself, a person who allows God to recreate him day by day.

In his *Adam and Eve* Murry puts forward the somewhat startling proposition that a regeneration of sex, a "regeneration of generation", may be the chief channel of the needed revival of religious experience. A revival of religion means to Murry a revival of faith in love. But by this he does not mean some vast impersonal love, showing itself in an effort to build conventions of peace,

international federations. He means a faith in the simple, intimate love between two human beings, and he believes it is most necessary for man to feel that love in his relationship with his partner in marriage. Unless founded on the simple, trusting love between man and woman, Murry declares, any great constructions of impersonal love in the form of international agreements will soon fall into ruins.

After nearly two thousand years of Christianity, Murry remarks, mankind has shown such an inability to relate Christian ethics to daily life that two great peoples, the Russians and the Germans, have recently discarded all official pretence of Christianity, and in doing so have done the honest thing. Murry boldly affirms that one of the chief reasons for this failure of Christianity has been its attitude to sexual love. The act of coition has been regarded for the best part of nineteen centuries as, in the literal sense of the word, obscene. Jesus did not give any clear teaching on sex. This was largely inevitable because he believed in the imminent end of the world. Nevertheless, in Murry's view, the Christian Church perverted his intention in holding that his teaching in any sense, or in any relationship of life, involved the desirability of celibacy. The gospel of love is as applicable to the man-woman relation as to any other personal relationship, so that there is no reason why sexual love should not express the Christian spirit. It is similarly a perversion of Christ's teaching to hold that he regarded marriage as indissoluble and prohibited divorce. Such conceptions are social conventions which have no relation to the inner life of personality and are thoroughly materialistic.

By the fourth century the Church had accepted the rightness of a celibate priesthood. In doing so, in Murry's view, it degraded sex. This degradation of sex was implicit also in the worship of the Virgin Mary, for although the mystery of pregnancy was worshipped through the Virgin, the doctrine of the Virgin Birth set a gulf between the mystery that was worshipped and sex as it was experienced in life. The Protestant revolution abolished the celibacy of the priesthood but showed that it retained a perverted view of sex by retaining a belief in the Virgin Birth. The wisest of the Reformers taught that Jesus was conceived in the natural way. If this idea had been accepted, a sanctification of sex might have been achieved. Also

people might have believed that Jesus began his life as an entirely human being and attained his sense of a sonship of God through a mystical relationship with God, so that we could all become sons of God in the same way. This idea, if it had been accepted, would have contributed to that regeneration of Christianity which has still to be achieved. But the teaching of Zwingli and Melanchthon was not followed. Sex was left in the mire, with the effect that the priesthood were degraded for their part in it. This was no improvement on the mediæval position.

Murry finds a profound significance in the experience of D. H. Lawrence as a man who was passionately desirous of giving value and dignity to sex and held that a regenerated sex relationship was the necessary basis of a regenerated society. But while urging the importance of individual sex fulfilment Lawrence attacked the Christian doctrine of love. Sexual love to Lawrence was the worship of the dark, sensual Gods; it was physical but not spiritual tenderness. Murry has no difficulty in exposing the contradictions of Lawrence's gospel, the archaic absurdity of his worship of "blood consciousness", the folly of separating physical from spiritual love. But Lawrence was right in what he attempted if extravagantly wrong in the means by which he thought the regeneration of sex might be achieved.

Murry attaches as much importance to sex as did Lawrence, but for very different reasons. Faith in love seems to Murry a condition of the radical change of values which the modern world needs, and he believes that large numbers of persons can most readily find the experience of love through marriage. Murry writes lyrically on the joy of true love, rebuking Keats for sacrilege for his lines:

> "Love in a hut with water and a crust
> Is—love, forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust."

Murry declares that *no* earthly riches can compare with the riches of the love life, that men and women in marriage can be happy on little where the fullness of their reciprocal surrender produces gaiety, joy and mutual trust. For what is most important in life is warmth at the centre of one's being, and this is created by the consciousness of a mutual faithful love. But this intense, happy love is difficult or impossible where a sense of shame is felt

in respect to physical love. The corrupt asceticism in matters of sex of the Protestant consciousness in particular went so far that immorality came to mean sexual indulgence, so that to many a Protestant even to-day, says Murry, Christianity means sexual puritanism and little else.

A generation has recently grown up which has thrown overboard traditional Christianity, and with it the traditional sexual taboos, but Murry does not believe that with the new freedom there has been much increase of sexual happiness. For people now think of love in terms of the physical pleasure which was denied them by the old morality, and Murry considers that true happiness is only possible where the basis of a sexual relationship is love and trust rather than a craving for pleasure. Nevertheless faith in love must be accompanied by a belief in the value of sexual fulfilment. Where Lawrence was wrong, in Murry's view, was in believing that the latter was possible without the former. When we have achieved faith in love, Murry continues, it may be possible to achieve faith in life. To-day the loss of faith in life is shown in men's reluctance to have children, for the family is a decaying institution. The family will revive when men and women come to feel that their love for each other gives significance to life so that it will make life worth while for their children for the same reason.

The basis of marital love, says Murry, should be a sensitive tenderness which reveres the individual person as a divine creation, a tenderness which can raise the act of coition to a level of delight without any reaction. This supreme delight cannot be achieved if love is regarded as a mere physical act, however pleasant. True love turns the orgasm into a supreme psychospiritual communion, an act in which the whole being is irradiated with tenderness. This fusion of the spiritual and the material, says Murry, is what is needed to regenerate society to-day, and we need to feel it first in this sexual relationship on which human happiness so intimately depends. True love differs from lust in that the lover does not degrade the partner to the level of a mere means to sensual gratification. He is tender of the loved one, making no claim for anything save that which the loved one wishes to give. Such love is incompatible with jealousy. The true lover trusts his partner and he lets her be; he wishes her to

realise herself in her own way. Like a true parent, he recognises the object of his love as a unique person, having a perfection of her own which cannot be realised without freedom. Love has a transfiguring vision; it sees the divine in man's handiwork and wishes to see its full realisation.

Murry maintains that the opposition between the spirit and the flesh in traditional Christianity is a false opposition; the true opposition is between the spirit and the self. He condemns also the materialistic doctrine of the Churches which makes Christian marriage depend upon the celebration of marriage in a church and formal obedience to marriage vows. True love is an enduring bond of disinterested love which can exist outside as well as inside both civil and ecclesiastical marriage.

We have nothing to learn from Freud's treatment of the sexual problem, in Murry's opinion. Freud speaks of sex either as a mere primitive urge or as the principle of life itself; either way of regarding it leads to its impoverishment by a failure to recognise the significance given to it by the presence of love and the action of the spirit.

Thus Murry attaches supreme importance to the "regeneration of generation" as a means to the solution of our modern problems. He holds that we must no longer dam up natural sensual delight and divert sexual energy into greed, acquisitiveness and aggressiveness. Also we cannot build a good society if the units of it, the individual men and women, are bad and corrupt. Now the individual will be bad if his personal and sexual relationships are bad. If, however, he can achieve tenderness and disinterested love in marriage, he will succeed in founding a family in which such love is the basis of the home; with such families it is possible to build a better society.

Murry sketches briefly the personalist social structure which he would like to see erected on the foundation of better sex and family relationships. The families must not be self-contained units. The principle of the community of families must be recognised; the family must care for more than its own good, must be pervaded with the love which seeks the good of the community of families of which it is a part. The life of the families will be enriched if they help to build up the communal life of the local society. The highest level of community life can only be achieved

if the social unit is sufficiently small for the families to have frequent contacts with each other; it is perhaps best achieved in a farming community in which the environmental conditions are conducive to frequent co-operation in concrete tasks. But it can be achieved in any community where the right spirit is present. It is essential, however, that there should be a community centre, a convenient block of buildings where the families can meet for a variety of cultural and other purposes.

A happy and vigorous local community life will only be possible if the workers are released to the greatest possible extent from the tyranny of the machine. This end can be achieved by increasing the efficiency of the machine, by using machines increasingly for the control of machines, and by reducing enormously the labour hours devoted to machines and stabilising machine production. The optimum use of machines calls for centralised control, but spiritual regeneration can only come through "good infection" from the small centres which have achieved a better pattern of living. Right social forms and true co-operative industrial and cultural organisations must be built around the regenerated family and the regenerated small community.

Murry recognises that the world he seeks is only possible through the conquest of war. While peace remains, as it has done in the last half century, merely a period in which nations prepare for the next conflict, the need to wage war efficiently will keep the masses bound to the industrial machine. Murry does not find the prospect immediately ahead a very cheerful one; he is impressed by Burnham's analysis of current tendencies and sees before us a period in which the world will be bureaucratically ruled by "managers" and in which "managerial" wars of a highly destructive character will take place. But at all events such a period will see that growth in the efficiency of machine production which is the path to the eventual release of man. The greatest danger is that managerial regimes will crush liberty. But if somewhere in the world (and what place is more likely than Great Britain?) loose ends of cultural and religious and social freedom can be retained, in those oases the springs of a "good infection" may flow. In the meanwhile we must learn to find fulfilment in the present, in the direct relationship between the soul and God,

in happy marriage, and in the harmonious community of families wherever it can be created.

In his analysis of our sexual problem William Reich starts from the assumption of the natural goodness of man. Man's vital energies under natural conditions, says Reich, regulate themselves spontaneously without duty or morality. Thus while anti-social tendencies to-day of course exist, they owe their existence to the suppression of natural sexuality, so that, given the freeing of the sexual impulse, man will be naturally good and creative and will take a natural pleasure in work.

It follows that the commonly accepted antithesis between nature and culture, instinct and morals, body and soul, is a false one. Natural behaviour is spontaneously social; the instinct of pleasure alone, in a person not perverted by sexual repression, will lead him rightly, so that the object of the psychologist and sociologist should be to replace morality by the sense of pleasure. Behaviour in a healthy society would thus be organised according to a self-regulatory principle. Self-control, the conflict between morality and instinct, would not exist; it would be replaced by a "self-regulation" following the natural laws of pleasure; this would not only be compatible with the free expression of instinct—it would be identical with it.

On this view, as we have seen, morality, and the anti-social impulses which seem to justify it, are the creation of sexual frustration. This frustration, in Reich's view, started in the patriarchal family and has been maintained by it. First of all, parents repress infantile sexuality and do harm by strict and premature training in excremental cleanliness. Since the children find their way to vital activity blocked by asceticism, they develop a parent fixation with all its sexual anxieties and inhibitions. But, says Reich, adolescents who find their way into a rich sexual life outgrow their infantile fixations, the importance of which has been over-emphasised. In general, however, the sexuality of adolescents is also repressed, as much by society as by parents; consequently it is at puberty that most neuroses and psychoses develop. Reich maintains that sexual frustration always breeds hatred and anti-social impulses. Also the pressure which has been brought on the child from birth to deny his impulses and accept authority

makes him timid and submissive, so that, at the second degree, morality is as much a product of man's servility as of his authoritarian training. Thus there is an intimate connection between sexual morality and the "fear of freedom", the disposition towards Fascism and the worship of dictators. Reich describes the character structure of the modern citizen as at once authoritarian and submissive; accustomed to self-denial with respect to his deepest desires, he comes to hate independence, freedom and responsibility. Reich argues that it has been proved that the earlier an adolescent takes up sexual intercourse, the less capable he becomes of conforming to the demand of only one partner for life, so that the purpose of enforced adolescent sexual abstinence is to make the adult submissive to the demands of the exclusive marriage.

Malinowski's researches, says Reich, have proved conclusively that sexual morality is sociologically and not biologically caused, that it is the creation of our institutions and can be altered by changed institutions. Our present morality, in Reich's view, creates neuroses *en masse*, almost the whole of humanity being psychically ill, with no fewer than from 60 to 80 per cent of our population suffering from severe neurotic ailments. Reich affirms categorically that there is only one thing wrong with neurotic patients and that is the lack of full and repeated sexual satisfaction, that it is impossible to find a single case of neurosis with undisturbed genitality, that psychic health depends on orgastic potency, that joy of living and orgastic pleasure are identical. He claims that clients of his who have attained full sexual satisfaction have at once exhibited beneficial character changes; men who in the past have been satisfied with mechanical employment now find routine unbearable and demand creative work; teachers begin to find the traditional mode of handling children painful and intolerable; men find themselves no longer capable of visiting prostitutes; women who have previously endured patiently living with an unloved man now are no longer able to do so. Reich adds that he observed that divinity students and clergymen, after treatment, found a serious conflict between their sexuality and the practice of their vocation, so that he decided not to accept them any longer as clients.

The principle behind Reich's treatment of all his patients is to

restore their capacity for full orgastic satisfaction. He describes how sexually repressed persons build up a character armour against their repressed impulses, and how this armouring is associated with certain bodily characteristics, the character armouring being functionally identical with muscular hypertension, with the muscular armour. Thus in breaking down repressions it does not matter whether one starts by breaking down the muscular armour or seeks by psychic means to affect the character armour, for the muscular and character attitudes serve the same function and can influence and replace each other.

I have no competence to discuss the scientific aspect of Reich's psycho-analytical views and work, for example his contention that neuroses can be cured by effecting certain muscular changes. They are taken seriously in some quarters and are mentioned with approval by A. S. Neill, and with respect by Dr. Flugel. My impression is that his "scientific" discoveries are unconfirmed and cannot be relied upon, and I am comforted by the knowledge that many persons more competent to judge than I am hold the same view. Reich speaks with contempt of metaphysics, religion and mysticism, and finds the remedy for all problems in the scientific attitude. What seems to me the totally unscientific dogmatism of numerous statements of his, of which I quote examples below, is all the more noteworthy:

"There is only *one* thing wrong with neurotic patients, the lack of full and repeated sexual satisfaction."

"Not a single case of neurosis with undisturbed sexuality can be found."

"The life process is identical with the sexual process—an experimentally proven fact."

"The anxiety experienced in fright is nothing but sexual energy which becomes suddenly jammed in the cardiac system."

"Fear of death and dying is identical with unconscious orgasm anxiety."

"Orgastic potency and sadistic impulses are incompatible."

"The adolescent is made neurotic and incapable of work by the sexual abstinence that is expected of him."

The scientific work of a writer so prone to incautious generalisations is always suspect.

The combination of a new dogmatism with the worship of

science, or of psychology, and with a disposition to wish-fulfilment thinking where one's private speculations or personal indulgences are concerned, is a tendency now rampant in "advanced" circles. Reich pleads for "a scientifically regulated social order" or what he calls "a planned economy of human biological energy". He has complete confidence in the scientist's ability to eliminate neuroses by the manipulation of the social structure. He asks, at the same time, for regulation of society by the scientist, and for complete freedom and spontaneity for the individual, yet this free individual is to be guided automatically and without conflict by his pleasure impulses. Such freedom is clearly the freedom of a machine. While speaking continually of freedom Reich gives a completely mechanistic interpretation of human personality. Not only does he regard the individual as conditioned by society, but to him bodily and psychic processes are only two different names for the same process, so that procreation, however much we may talk about love, is only an incidental result of the tension-charge process in the genitals. The intolerance and ignorance and insensitiveness of Reich's references to metaphysics, religion and mysticism are typical of a certain kind of "scientism"; he refers to mystical ecstasy as a form of masochism, "an unsuccessful masochistic attempt at sexual gratification".

Reich's determinism calls for comment. He says that the denial of sexual gratification *causes* destructiveness, hatred and cruelty, that insincerity and a fear of spontaneity *are caused by* lack of orgastic satisfaction, that spinsters are sharp-tongued, that ascetic moralists are cruel. He declares that he has never come across a genitally satisfied person with a sadistic character trait. If one woman at the menopause is free from hatred and another is malicious, the difference, says Reich, is always *caused* by their sexual past. He approves Freud's reduction of human behaviour to unconscious and irrational motives, maintaining that man's behaviour is always determined by the pattern of his sex life which creates a bodily and psychic structure of which the individual is unconscious. Reich thus denies any freedom to human beings or any capacity on their part for the formation of their character through a movement of their being towards values. Reich says that frustration *causes* hatred and destructiveness, but in my view there is no such law. If I am frustrated, I may allow

myself to hate, but I am free not to do so. I may believe in the value of a disposition to love and general benevolence, and may recognise in myself a capacity to control and conquer inclinations to anger caused by frustration. The personalist, far from holding that man's character is determined by social influences, believes that man is a free being with the capacity, if he chooses to exercise it, to integrate himself by a direction of his energies towards value.

Reich ridicules the idea that the partners to a marriage have any duty to give sexual satisfaction to each other; thus they should refuse intercourse if not sexually attracted. The assumption again is that one's sexual feelings are beyond the control of one's will, yet with an implication, itself inconsistent with deterministic views, that there is something disgraceful in an attitude in marriage which responds more to one's partner's needs than to mere appetite.

Reich confuses all the categories. Those scientists who have grasped the implications of the discoveries of the last generation recognise that laws derived from one order of reality cannot be applied to a different order, that biological phenomena cannot be explained in terms of physico-chemical laws, that psychological behaviour cannot be explained in terms of biological laws. Reich interprets all questions on the basis of an out-of-date mechanism.

Libertarian views of the type adopted by Reich, more especially when combined with a failure to understand human personality, produce, not the harmony which Reich imagines, but an increase of frustration and misery. The man who believes in following "automatically", to use Reich's term, his sense of pleasure will inevitably tend to expect his partner to be the instrument of his pleasure, and will tend to hate her when she refuses. All so-called love which regards the object of attraction as an instrument of satisfaction is readily transformed into hate. Thus the very freedom which in Reich's view eliminates sadism in effect creates it. Reich speaks of the happy marriages which result from orgastic satisfaction, but man, in so far as he is guided merely by his pleasure impulses, is polyerotic, and no marriage is likely to be harmonious where such impulses are followed without check. Reich always thinks of the human person as an indivi-

dual, but one cannot define a person rightly except in terms of his relationships. Anyone who marries by so doing becomes part of a whole, so that his actions react powerfully on the happiness and well-being of his partner. His behaviour to his partner should be based, then, not merely on his sense of pleasure, but on his natural reason and benevolence which should prompt him to identify himself with the good of the whole of the relationship of which he is a part. Similarly, every person is a part of the wider social whole of which the family is only a part, and the rightness of his sexual behaviour depends in part on its relation to the good of this larger social entity. Thus sexual morality cannot be profitably discussed without consideration of its bearing on the efficiency and social health of the family, and on population and racial problems generally. Reich is concerned only with the orgastic satisfaction of individuals and not with these questions of communal good. To assume that the sexual satisfaction of the individual is necessarily identical with the social good is a supreme example of begging the question.

Murry's treatment of the problem of marriage does not suffer from that superficiality in Reich which springs from his mechanistic interpretation of personality. But he resembles Reich in overestimating the importance of the sexual issue. A new outpouring of the spirit cannot come through a changed attitude to marriage. The reverse is the truth. A reform of marriage will only come through a revival of personalistic religion.

I will leave future historians of thought to discover the causes of the over-estimate of sex which has characterised modern thought since Havelock Ellis, Auguste Forel and Sigmund Freud. Philosophically it is a plain case of putting the cart before the horse, of confusing proximate and final causes. The sexual problem can only be solved to the extent that man's relationship to himself and to other persons is solved; the lesser problem is subsumed under the greater.

Nevertheless what Berdyaev calls a personalist transvaluation of values will have a profound effect on sexual morality. Many of the traditional sexual prohibitions cannot survive a wide dissemination of personalist attitudes. The personalist lives from a creative centre within himself, and it would be idle to pretend that the

inner God always gives the same answer as Mrs. Grundy and traditional morality. When Krishnamurti is asked questions of sexual ethics, he always gives the same answer, that the test of the rightness of relationships is whether they are an expression of true love, of a meeting of the I and the Thou. No one who has thought honestly of these questions can imagine that the application of such a test produces identical results with the principle that it is legal marriage alone which justifies sexual relationships. There is indeed no graver heresy than to identify the dispensation of the law with the dispensation of the spirit. Thus the spread of personalist ethics will entail in many respects the freeing of human and sexual relationships; it will bring a new freedom into marriage which to-day is sometimes a prison which enslaves the partners in body and soul.

But it must be added that a personalist ethic implies the need for those measures of self-discipline which spring, first of all, from a high level of self-integration and, secondly, from a willing acceptance of those natural obligations which spring from man's nature as a social being. The human person, as we have seen, is both free and at the same time a part of a social whole, having duties to the whole of which he is inescapably a part. In marriage a person is at first part of the whole formed by himself and his partner, and later of the whole formed by parents and children. He cannot claim the right to act sexually in ways that harm those to whom he is so intimately bound. Many of the advocates of sexual liberty seem to be under the impression that marriage need place no check on the free sexual activity of the partners to it. Such an illusion is bound to be fatal to the happiness of any marriage. At the same time the human person has an obligation to identify himself with the good of the whole community with respect to the pattern of its family and sexual relationships, with respect to its problems of population. A true view of the problem in this wider sense, as both Mumford and Murry point out, leads to a recognition of the importance of the family as a well-knit unit, the value of family ties and affections. The family indeed should be closely linked to the wider unit, to the local community of families, and the community centre is an invaluable check on family isolation, on clannishness. This does not alter the need for the free acceptance of those limitations on individual action

which spring from such loyalty to the family unit as is consistent with wider loyalties.

Personalist ethics can indeed only indicate the spirit which must determine the broad pattern of sexual relationships. It is not its function to lay down precise rules. Nothing, for example, could be less personalist than the forthright condemnation of all extra-marital relationships. As Berdyaev has pointed out, every case of conduct in its personal aspect differs from every other so that to judge it merely on the basis of general rules is to show a lack of understanding of the personal. The law indeed must lay down precise rules in those matters where human rights have to be safeguarded by law. But the true sphere of law with respect to sexual matters is much narrower than has been accepted by human societies in the past.

Reich is right in believing that sexual ethics in the past has been unduly restrictive in certain important respects, and n holding that in many individual cases beneficial results can be expected from the release of trapped libido. At the same time Murry is right in his warning that an increase of sexual freedom is often very disappointing in its fruits in human happiness. The problem can only be solved in the light of a true understanding of human relationships and of human personality; it is in this field that Reich has been hindered from true vision by his "scientism".

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4

THEISM AND HUMANISM

PERSONALISM has always gained its support from both theists and humanists.[1] The Continental Personalists have always included two sections which have succeeded in working well in harness, a section of Christian and Catholic Personalists, and a section of the politically active intelligentsia, mostly from the Left, who are concerned about the safeguarding of the values of the human person.

In his *Redeeming the Time*, Maritain defines the basis on which he holds that it is both possible and highly desirable that there should be co-operation in the secular and political sphere between Catholics and non-Catholic Christians, as well as between Christians and humanists. Both Catholics and humanists, he affirms, are often agreed on the value and importance of brotherly love, of the service of truth, and of the dignity of the human person with the rights that it implies; with regard to the worth of the human person, they are usually prepared to grant that that worth is independent of the race, the class, the nation to which anyone belongs. These values, Maritain maintains, correspond to spontaneous perceptions of our reason and to primary tendencies of our nature. While they may be differently understood by men of different persuasions, the agreement is real enough to make co-operation in the practical sphere a possibility; it is of the highest importance that that co-operation should take place.

Nevertheless it has to be admitted that theists and humanists tend to make uneasy bedfellows, that where an attempt is made to bring about co-operation between them, it is necessary continually to bear in mind the importance of tolerance and the theoretical justification of the association. Humanists find it diffi-

[1] I have used the term "humanism" in this chapter almost in the sense of positivism or agnosticism, that is to say, to express the view that values are man-made and do not depend on the divine nature or on revelation. But it should be pointed out that the term is used equally legitimately to express theistic and Christian views. Maritain's work, *True Humanism*, for example, argues that the full realisation of the human depends upon the inspiration that springs from Christian belief.

cult to refrain from attacking theism as a survival of primitive belief or a product of wish-fulfilment; they often regard metaphysical discussion as logic-chopping or barren disputation. At the same time, many, perhaps most theists, far from regarding the existence of God as in the least an academic issue, believe that the widespread rejection of God in the modern world is one of the chief causes, if not the chief cause, of the eclipse of values and the denial of the rights of personality, and are apt in their turn to attack humanists on the ground that no escape from the modern dilemma is possible until men's minds become God-centred instead of man-centred.

The fact is that the question which divides the theist and the humanist is an important issue; it may be the crucial issue of our time. I, writing as a theist, find it difficult to believe that any problem to-day is so important (speaking in a strictly practical sense) as that of spreading the practice of the presence of God. Consequently it seems to me highly important to endeavour to convince people of God's existence, for if people do not believe in God, they will not seek His presence.

Wath has happened in the modern world with respect to a belief in God seems plain enough. With the growing triumphs of physical science and the consequent increase of the prestige of scientific method there has grown an increasing tendency to believe that the scientific approach to truth is the only valid one, to think that if the truth of a particular idea cannot be demonstrated by the methods of science, it is the mark of an ignorant and superstitious person to accept it. Now a belief in God cannot be conclusively demonstrated by scientific method;[1] it has therefore tended to diminish. But with the disbelief in God has gone a tendency to reject the idea that there is any purpose in the universe; with this denial of purpose has gone a decrease in the disposition of individuals to attempt to adjust their wills to a divine design or an objectively valid law; with this again has gone an increase of a disposition to rationalise, so that we have

[1] The term 'scientific method' is here used in the sense of the inductive, the experimental method. But it should be realised that the term 'science' is often, and properly, used, as by Maritain in his *Science and Wisdom*, in a wider sense so as to embrace all orderly and logical thought, including deductive reasoning from axioms.

seen a great outcrop of philosophies which are conscious or unconscious rationalisations of the instinctive urges of their begetters. The connection between this immense growth of subjectivism and the collapse of moral standards is not hard to recognise.

I wish in this essay to put forward a few elementary propositions with respect both to the usefulness and to the truth of a belief in God, but a word seems to be necessary on the relationship between truth and usefulness. I should find it impossible to believe in God merely because I regarded the belief as useful; if it did not seem to me to be clearly true that God exists, I could not believe in God. Nevertheless it does not seem surprising that what is true should also be useful and that the belief in God, being the most fundamental of all true beliefs, should be also the most useful. It is, of course, often possible to show that false beliefs are useful in the short run or for particular purposes, but I should think it would be difficult to show that falsehood pays in the long run. Nevertheless it is first of all necessary for theists to give grounds for holding that their belief in God is true; it is, however, also of very great importance that men should realise the transcendent usefulness of a belief in God.

Two considerations it seems necessary to dismiss, to avoid ambiguity, before we come to the main part of our argument. With the eclipse of traditional conceptions of the deity there has grown up a crop of pseudo-Gods, which the trained metaphysician can recognise as more or less specious rationalisations. There is, first of all, the God associated with such names as C. S. Alexander and Bernard Shaw and the early Joad (who has since wisely recanted) who is a being who emerges at a certain stage in the evolutionary process as a projection of man's mind, so that God must be regarded not as the creator of the universe but as its goal or as a delayed by-product. This conception leaves unexplained and, indeed, totally inexplicable, how an evolutionary process which has gone on for millions of years without guidance and aim can suddenly become purposive and aim at a divine goal. All emergent conceptions of this type imply the contradiction that a process which is without a purpose can not only achieve a purpose but the noblest of all purposes; they presume the absurdity that intelligible purposes on a cosmic scale can be achieved by

accident. In Shaw this idea takes the ridiculous form of positing a "blind" and "stupid" Life Force which aims at brains, at self-conscious and intelligent self-direction, "its darling object", to use Shaw's phrase.

Secondly, there is the God of certain psycho-analytical writers who is a father-image which satisfies man's needs for a father substitute. On this view the transcendent deity is a creation of man through the psychological process known as projection, while the immanent deity *actually exists* in the sense that man, having first projected his God, proceeds to introject the divine image. Many psycho-analytical writers defend a belief in God in this sense as they regard it as both inevitable and salutary that man should think in terms of his psychological needs. To defend theistic beliefs on such grounds is surely a very grave error. The intellectual development of mankind depends on the ability to replace wish-fulfilment thinking by realistic and objective thinking. If ideas are to be defended on the ground that they satisfy psychological needs, there is no evil belief which cannot be defended, including the whole ideology of Nazism which clearly responded to deep-seated psychological needs of the German people. If we are going to accept as a justification for a belief the fact that a person wishes or needs to believe it, all discussion of the truth of beliefs falls to the ground and the words "truth" and "error" cease to have any valid meaning. A projected God may have a good effect on conduct, but to justify it for that reason is as dangerous an example of making the end justify the means as the defence of political terrorism on the grounds of the safety of the state.

By God I mean an intelligent and benevolent Being who is the cause of the universe and imbues it with meaning and purpose. I accept also the traditional view that God is both immanent and transcendent. It follows that I do not mean by God a concept or a projection of man's mind; I hold that God possesses a real and objective existence. I believe also that while it is clear that the nature of God must be in large part for ever veiled to man, God possesses certain attributes such as Love, Intelligence, Freedom and Creativity which man also possesses in reality or potentially, so that in a real sense man may be said to be made in the image of God, the nature of man, like the nature of God, being personal.

Now the primary value of a belief in God is in giving man's life a centre and a meaning, in helping him to find a valid purpose in life. The theist is bound to believe that the universe is intelligently and benevolently planned and is directed towards some end. It seems plain to him also that God has made man a free and conscious being able to direct his own activities. He believes also that man's true purpose is to co-operate freely with God in the achievement of the divine will. In saying man is free he means that he is under no external constraint to do this or that. Law, public opinion, his instinctive urges may press him this way or that, but he is free to oppose the law, to defy opinion, to resist his urges. But man cannot co-operate with God if he has no knowledge of the divine purposes. The theist therefore regards it as axiomatic that man has the capacity and the means to gain sufficient knowledge of the divine will for his own life purpose. He believes that God in some sense is immanent in man. Through meditation and detachment, or by direct apprehension, man can find in himself that entity called by some thinkers God, and by others a spirit made in God's image, the attributes of which are freedom, creativeness and love, and which, just because it is not itself one of man's instincts, is able to integrate man's activities and direct his instincts. A right theism seems to me to be founded essentially on the sense of the divine within the soul. The person who has this sense of the divine presence can distinguish between self-regarding desires and those which serve a larger end, which help God to achieve the divine purpose. A corollary of this recognition is a sense of God's need of man, a knowledge that God Himself cannot achieve His purposes without man's help.

Martin Buber's *I and Thou* portrays perhaps with more brilliance and penetration than any other modern religious essay the experience of the man whose life gains significance by being based, not on instinct or knowledge, but on the living centre within himself which Buber calls the "I", the life of which depends on relationship, the relationship with significant form in nature, the relationship with other persons and the relationship with God. Buber distinguishes between scientific knowledge, which is impersonal and universal, and the experience which he indicates by the sign "I-Thou", which is personal and marked by meeting, by

mutuality, by action and reaction. Buber speaks eloquently of the meeting between the person and God, the meeting in which the "I", the living centre within a man, receives love and meaning and power at the heart of his being. How futile it is, he remarks, to prove the existence of God by arguments, by the evidence of "revealed religion"! There is no revelation, in his view, but the direct presence of God as a source of strength and meaning in us, but once we have known the presence, nothing in life can any longer be meaningless. We have to find the meaning ourselves within ourselves; no one can find it for us, but it is there to be found. The experience involved is not indeed demonstrable by any formal or logical proof. The artist perceiving the significant form cannot demonstrate its significance to a person not sensitive to that kind of experience. Similarly the person who knows God has no sure means by which he can convince others of the reality of his knowledge. This, however, is not to deny that the capacity for the direct apprehension of God is potential in everyone.

Berdyaev and Buber point out that the man who knows God finds the meaning of life in present experience, in the Eternal Moment, in the ever-present activity of God within the soul, continually seeking meeting and relation, through fellowship, through the discovery of beauty, of significant form. Happiness does not depend for him upon the achievement of some remote social end such as Socialism or World Unity or in the attainment of some personal ambition. He finds happiness and meaning in the continually repeated experience Buber denotes by the term "I-Thou", in an inner realisation that nothing can destroy. His hopes are thus bound to a firm rock; he is capable of a serenity and assured happiness rising at times to ecstasy that is not to be gained by the person whose mind is centred on hopes and fears for the future, or for whom life has no meaning.

God, then, or the spirit in man made in God's image, is an integrating principle or energy in man which is by its essence free and creative, which has the capacity to evaluate and has a natural movement towards the apprehension of values, which seeks fellowship with others yet can distinguish between real relation and the mere desire to avoid loneliness or to use others, which seeks knowledge and yet can distinguish between living knowledge and merely instrumental or inert knowledge, which seeks

beauty and yet can distinguish between the meeting with the significant form and mere knowledge *about* art. To know and live from this spirit within oneself is, as I have said, to transform one's life. The utility of such knowledge, in the profoundest sense, is beyond price.

What then are the considerations usually urged by humanists against the view that a belief in God is useful and conducive to a high ethic? It is frequently argued, first of all, that theism is apt to produce quietism. For if God is in His heaven and all is right with the world, there is no urgent need for man to trouble himself about the world. Julian Huxley has remarked that humanism teaches man that he must rely on his own powers, that he is the creator of values and the builder of the future. The theist, says Huxley, tends to look to God to save him. The argument is clearly valid as against certain traditional and certain perverted forms of theism; it has no force against the conception I have described, according to which God works in man as a free, creative energy, integrating man's being and directing his energies to the realisation of life's limitless possibilities.

Some humanists argue that morals are plainly a creation of social need so that an ethic adjusted to man's needs tends to be built up in any community whether the belief in God is widespread or not. In recent years psycho-analysis has examined in great detail the psychological mechanisms at work in every society to build up the individual and communal super-ego. Morality in this view is a social and biological necessity which would persist were theistic beliefs to disappear from the universe.

This argument, plausible as it seems, begs the whole question of the value of theistic beliefs. Plainly morality has always existed in human society and indeed there are rudiments of it among animals. But it is clear also that it exists at very different levels. Wise men have distinguished from very early times between the morality of custom and the higher ethic, only attained in most ages by exceptional individuals, which is marked by independent judgment and individual insight and the creative act of the human person in his search for knowledge, truth and beauty. Thus while it is plain, as we have said, that some moral standards will be found in any community, it nevertheless remains reasonable to hold that the higher levels of behaviour and the higher levels of

personality depend upon a direct knowledge of God. It should be pointed out, indeed, that if ethical standards are to be regarded merely as the product of different modes of social conditioning varying in different communities, there seems no basis on which we can judge the comparative value of these standards and maintain, for example, that one society is more ethically developed than another, nor is it clear on what ground a person can justify his opposition to the prevailing ethos of the society to which he belongs.

Olaf Stapledon denies the value of theistic belief on the ground that the highest ethic is known intuitively to all, so that any discussion in relation to ethics of the existence of God, or of metaphysical issues in general, is superfluous. He maintains that man's nature is such that, unless he is spiritually unawakened or his development has been perverted, he cannot but will to achieve the spirit whose attributes are sensitive and intelligent awareness, love and creativeness. This statement of Stapledon's is unexceptionable, but again it begs the whole question. For the question of the usefulness of theism is precisely the question whether a belief in God does or does not help to awaken the spirit and so produce the sensitive and intelligent awareness, love and creativeness of which Stapledon speaks. There seems to me to be irrefutable evidence that the belief in God as an indwelling presence does do so, for God is believed to be immanent in man in the form of the very attributes of which Stapledon speaks, so that the good theist cannot but seek the loving, creative spirit and act in its light. Stapledon would reply, "Yes, but so does the good humanist". He may, as in Stapledon's case he does, but it is by no means obvious that he does so by virtue of his humanism. Many humanists deny the very existence of spirit; others, the hedonists and utilitarians, preach the quest for pleasure or happiness; some of these deny that man can help being motivated by the search for pleasure whether he realises the fact or not. Other humanists are pragmatists and identify ethics with what is useful in any given situation; others, the Marxists, hold that ethical standards are merely a function of the prevailing economic conditions, varying with the changes in those conditions; others, like certain psycho-analysts, regard the human conscience as the product of certain strains and stresses, as highly variable and

largely archaic and so of doubtful validity. Others, like Dr. Waddington, having in mind what they regard as the backward state of the social sciences, regard our knowledge of ethics as rudimentary so that the whole question calls for a new scientific investigation. Stapledon, indeed, as an ethical intuitivist, is a *rara avis* among humanists; most humanists are ethical relativists and deny that man has an intuitive knowledge of the highest ethic. I do not believe that the general mode of thinking among humanists is conducive to the awakening of the spirit whose attributes Stapledon has so well described.

Stapledon finds men's intellectual powers to be inadequate to arrive at any reasonable certainty on ultimate issues so that to him theistic belief implies wish-fulfilment thinking and a lack of intellectual integrity, and he feels that the highest virtues will not flourish where intellectual integrity is lacking. What does seem to me to savour of wish-fulfilment is Stapledon's supposition, as in *New Men in Old World*, that there could exist, in the modern world, an association of agnostic-mystics, of men who, on a basis of agnosticism, would dedicate their lives to the service of the spirit; mysticism does not seem to me to flourish on the soil of agnosticism. In accusing theists of a lack of intellectual integrity Stapledon is indeed prejudging the question of the logical validity of theistic arguments, and it is to that question that we will now turn.

Let us consider first the arguments that weigh most powerfully with atheists, agnostics and humanists in their rejection of God. It is widely believed, in the first place, as we have seen, that science has disproved the existence of God. This argument is dealt with, in my view with great acumen, in Professor A. E. Taylor's book, *Does God Exist?* I will summarise his argument briefly. He points out that the essence of scientific method is that we first frame a hypothesis and then proceed to test it by observation and experiment. Let us then frame the hypothesis that God exists and test it. It will at once be seen that the devising of an experiment to test the hypothesis is difficult—I think impossible. If it had been possible to devise some conclusive experiment to test the existence of God, it would have been devised long ago. We are thrown back then on observation, and the issue depends upon whether there is some observable and undeniable fact or body of facts of such a character that we can

say with certainty that if God existed these facts could not be what they are. The belief then that science has disproved the existence of God depends on the assumption that indisputable facts exist which could not be what they are if God existed. What are the facts that the humanist has in mind? He usually means one or both of two things. He means either that the presence of pain and evil disproves the existence of God, or that the superstitious character of primitive ideas of God, combined with the basis in wish-fulfilment of much modern belief in God, gives reason for rejecting all belief in God. The second of these objections is plainly a *non sequitur*. The existence of false beliefs on any question can never invalidate a true belief, so that the truth of the belief has still to be settled when the false forms of it have been demolished. The question of the problem of pain I will refer to later. But I should say here that the issue of whether the existence of evil is consistent with God's existence and divine goodness cannot be conclusively settled by any specific experiment or observation.

An advocate of the scientific approach to the problem might admit that it is impossible to devise an experiment which will conclusively settle the question but urge that the whole weight of modern knowledge and experience bears heavily against theism. However, no theist to-day would deny the need to take into account all available knowledge; a valid belief in God can have no basis but experience. But where, as in the case of the theistic issue, everything in the universe has a bearing on the problem, it is difficult, indeed impossible, to get the kind of agreement which scientists posit, when they speak of a scientifically proved hypothesis, on the fact or facts which shall be regarded as demonstrative; in other words, the question cannot be settled by scientific method. Both theist and non-theist base their conclusions on evidence drawn from experience, but they differ on the evidential value of the facts.

It is indeed true, on the other hand, that one cannot prove the existence of God by calling to witness a body of facts which will have the same degree of universal acceptability as facts observed in physical laboratories. I find the experience of Buber's "I-Thou" world a convincing demonstration of divine immanence, but this will have little weight with the person who thinks habitually in

terms of the world of "I-it". What it is important to recognise is that the modern theist thinks as much in terms of evidence as the scientist-agnostic, though usually with less dogmatism.

It is widely believed among humanists that Kant demonstrated once and for all the inadequacy of most of the traditional arguments for God, in particular the cosmological and teleological arguments. Kant held that the cosmological argument, for example, was based on a fallacy. The cosmological argument assumed that the existence of order and design logically implies the existence of a God, a First Cause, to whom is traceable the sequence of events. Kant said that we must not forget that all relationships of causation are relationships between one part of nature and another, so that we are not entitled to infer a causal relationship between something in nature, and something, say a God, which is not in nature, or between the whole of possible experience and something which is not an object of possible experience. In other words, while it is legitimate to infer the boiling of water from the application of a certain degree of heat to water because all the entities concerned are parts of nature, it is not legitimate to argue from nature to God, God not being a part of nature. Taylor replies to Kant that his argument assumes that we have no experience of causation other than that in which physical events are connected with other physical events. But the assumption is not true. Besides our knowledge of physical events, we have knowledge of ourselves, of our thoughts, purposes and values which, however much they may be connected with physical events in our brain, are not the same thing as those events, and indeed obey different laws. Now we all know from experience that thoughts affect matter, that if I think I would like to smoke, my thought can effect such things as matches and smoke. There is then nothing contrary to reason and science in positing a causal relationship between spirit and matter, between God and the physical universe.

But it may be said, assuming that Taylor's reply to Kant is valid, assuming that there is nothing contrary to reason and experience in assuming a causal connection between a spiritual entity and natural phenomena, why should we make that assumption? Why should we not accept the universe as an ultimate fact without positing the existence of some transcendental being?

Two points need to be made on this important issue. In the first place, one of the noblest attributes of man is his urge to understand, to seek an explanation of the world in which we find ourselves. Man thus must attempt to find an explanation of the wonderful and intricate order which is an unquestionable characteristic of our universe. There are two hypotheses we can frame about this order. One is that it occurs by chance, by some strange accident or some accidental concomitance of accidents; the other is that it is the creation of an Orderer, God. I know no third hypothesis. Now certain philosophers have argued that it is not unreasonable to suppose that the order of the universe is foruitous. Hume argued that if we assume the existence of a finite number of particles in an infinite time, it is probable that every possible combination of these units will take place, and one of them might be the orderly sequence that we observe. It has been pointed out in reply to Hume's highly casuistical, not to say disingenuous argument, firstly that his argument does not alter the fact that the chances against order on any considerable scale occurring by chance are virtually infinite, and secondly that the kind of order we find in the universe is in any case different from casual order. Where casual order exists there is no causal relationship between the units involved, whereas in the universe all entities are causally linked.

The second point is that there are important ethical and religious reasons why we should wish to show, if the proof can be established, that the order of the universe is not fortuitous. For if the order of the universe is fortuitous, there is no purpose in the universe with which man can co-operate, and the significance which man's life gains through the sense that he is helping that purpose is lost. But if there is a purpose in the universe, the purpose must be the purpose of God, for the universe, not being an entity possessing the attributes of personality, cannot itself have a purpose.

The argument against the existence of a beneficent creator which weighs most with the majority of people is undoubtedly drawn from the existence of evil. It is maintained that a God who is a Creator must be held responsible for the world He has created and that a good God could not have made a world in which there is so much pain, misery and injustice as in our

world. It is perhaps impossible to say anything new on this vexed question. Nevertheless it is little realised how strong the arguments are which claim to reconcile the beneficence of the Creator with the existence of evil.

There are two arguments which seem to me to have special weight. Firstly, if we assume that a world of free personalities bound by inescapable relationships is more desirable than a world of automata not so bound, is it in the nature of things possible (God being unable to do the impossible) to create such a world without evil being a characteristic of it? Secondly, is a world without frustration, in which all desires are fulfilled and life runs smoothly, necessarily better than a world which contains frustration, pain and evil? Does not a person of taste find a deeper satisfaction from the spectacle of tragedy than from a comedy or farce, and, similarly, may there not be a deeper joy, and a much greater realisation of the potentialities of personality, in a world which contains elements of tragedy than in an easy and pleasant world?

Nor is the argument without weight that if one rejects the hypothesis of a beneficent creator, one is forced to the alternative hypothesis of a world whose order and form are derived from mere chance, or from the working of some intelligent principle which is indifferent to human hopes and fears, or of some maleficent principle. These alternatives do not seem to me to commend themselves to right reason.

It is important to attempt to show that a belief in God is in accordance with right reason because modern atheism and humanism claims to base itself on reason, so that an attack on it must be directed largely against the validity of the reason which supports it. If the widespread confidence in the solid basis of this reasoning can be destroyed, the way will be paved for a realisation of the correlation between atheism and a sense of meaninglessness in life, between humanism and the tendency to confuse proximate with final causes, to confuse means with ends. The mind may then be prepared for a reconsideration of the case for theism.

Formal reasoning, however, will not in itself lead man to that experience of God as a dynamic centre which is the foundation

of the theism of Kierkegaard, Berdyaev and Buber, as indeed of the whole of the theistic branch of the personalist tradition. It seems to me indisputable that this experience of God can re-energise human souls, can make possible a degree of personal integration and detachment from self-regarding impulses otherwise unattainable, and can lead also to that capacity for heroism, that cheerful acceptance of tragedy, that willingness to take on oneself the sufferings of others, that is the basis of the highest human virtues and achievements. It is superfluous to point to the great need of this heroic virtue in this, the greatest crisis of human history. I have written this book in praise of personalism because I believe in its capacity to contribute to the creation of a world of intensely alive persons, persons not only alive to their social responsibilities and opportunities, but capable of giving meaning and significance to every moment so that even in days of disaster life is supremely worth while.

Berdyaev and Buber have spoken confidently of a new flowering of the spirit. Modern thought has certainly been characterised by that destructive attack on the philosophical basis of scientism that seems to prepare the way for a new synthesis on personalist lines. This book is a modest attempt to contribute something to this great and urgent task.

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