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STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

BY

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PREFACE

THIS work by the late Professor Bowman was already completed in first draft in 1924; but he kept it by him, and continued to revise it up to the time of his death. He left no directions for its publication. An account of its origins, of the stages by which it came to take its present form, and of the reasons which seem to have influenced him in deferring publication, is given in the Memorial Introduction. The one part of the work which, quite obviously, would have been amplified, had the author lived to supervise publication, is the final chapter. While in itself of great interest, closing the work in a not unworthy manner, it is briefer, and less substantial, than the preceding argument, with its fullness of statement and wealth of detailed illustration, has led the reader to expect. It has not, however, seemed desirable to attempt to supplement it from any of Professor Bowman's other writings.

I am responsible for the title finally chosen for the work as a whole, and for all the subtitles within each chapter. I have also, by subdivision of the longer chapters, increased their number from eighteen to twenty-six. Several of the author's statements, especially in regard to the teaching of physical science, quite clearly date themselves as belonging to the period in which the first draft was composed. These I have not attempted to recast.

Some of the questions dealt with in the *Studies* have been treated by Professor Bowman more at

length in the lectures which he delivered, under the Vanuxem Foundation, in Princeton University in 1934. These lectures form, however, a quite independent work on a plan of their own. They are being edited by Professor J. W. Scott, and will be published in the present year, by the Princeton University Press, under the title *A Sacramental Universe, being a Study in the Metaphysics of Experience.*

Mrs. Bowman has assisted me in the reading of the proofs, and has prepared the Index. I am likewise greatly indebted to Professor T. E. Jessop, Professor J. W. Scott and Mr. Idris W. Phillips for their advice and assistance throughout, and for the verification of the numerous references. To the Editor of *Mind* my thanks are due for permission to incorporate in the Memorial Introduction the substance of the notice which I wrote on the occasion of Professor Bowman's death.

NORMAN KEMP SMITH

EDINBURGH, *April* 1938

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MEMORIAL INTRODUCTION

BOWMAN'S cast of mind and ways of thinking obtain such adequate expression in these *Studies* that no attempt need here be made to give an account of his general philosophical outlook. But it is fitting that some brief account be given of the outward circumstances of his life, and of the man himself as he was known to his friends and colleagues.

Born at Beith, Ayrshire, on 4th April 1883, the son of a Congregational Minister, he counted himself fortunate in the circumstances of his early life. They were Spartan, judged even by the standards usual in Scottish manses in the nineteenth century. "My father," he has written, "who was a man of the finest and highest qualities, and who wore his life out in the faithful service of the community, married on £90 a year, and never rose above £100. On that my mother not only kept the wolf from the door and reared a family of five children, but even contrived to keep up what were called 'appearances', and which were considered a very sacred institution indeed." There must have been many traits common to father and son, and not least an inability to have even a minimum regard for their own personal claims when private duties or public issues were at stake.

Bowman was also wont to speak gratefully of the education he had received, first in the Academy and later in Spier's School, Beith, and especially of his work under three distinguished teachers—

nowhere in Scotland, probably, could fortune in this regard have more favoured him—Mr. John Foster, the Rector of the Academy; Dr. J. A. Third, the Headmaster of Spier's School; and Mr. John Millar, its Classical Master. When he came up to Glasgow University at the age of seventeen, he was already widely read in English literature, notably in Shakespeare and the Elizabethan dramatists, and had the confirmed habit of verse writing in which he 'indulged himself' (his own expression) through all his later years.

Just before the close of his schooldays, Bowman's father died suddenly, and he was called upon, as the eldest of the family, to share with his mother in the responsibilities of maintaining the home and of assisting in the education of his brothers and sister. He had failed to gain the School University bursary, for which there was a special examination; and the outlook seemed for a time hopelessly bleak. Happily the public spirit of Dr. Third and other Beith friends saved the situation. A private fund was formed, and this together with a bursary which Bowman won in the Entrance Examination opened to him the gates of the University. The family accompanied him to Glasgow; and there, with the aid of student boarders, and such earnings as Bowman could make by private tutoring, the household was held together, and a happy, if difficult, period began. The burden was eased, after a few years, by his gaining Scholarships and becoming a Lecturer, and as his brothers came to be of an age to collaborate.

Bowman graduated in 1905 with Second Class Honours in Classics and First Class Honours in

Philosophy. His teachers in Philosophy were Sir Henry Jones and Robert Latta; and he would also have wished to have record made of his debt to Phillimore of the Chair of Greek, and to Raleigh of the Chair of English Literature. The liberal resources of the Euing Fellowship and the George A. Clark Scholarship, supplemented by the Ferguson Scholarship which he also won, very happily enabled him to travel on the Continent. In 1906 he was recalled to his Alma Mater as Assistant and Lecturer in the Department of Logic and Metaphysics; and for the next few years he spent his long vacations in Germany, chiefly at the Universities of Heidelberg, Berlin and Leipzig.

Among his many interests at this time—occasioned doubtless by his residence in Germany—was an interest in the philosophy of war. What fascinated him was the sphinx-like character of the questions, at once intellectual and moral, with which it so unsuccessfully wrestles. He became a student of Clausewitz and used often to speak with admiration of de Vigny's *Servitude et grandeur militaires*. It was therefore no surprise to his friends—they knew also of his conviction that war with Germany was almost certain to come within a very few years—when he joined as a private the old First Lanark, transferring to the Glasgow University unit of the O.T.C. on its formation in 1908. How seriously he took his military duties is shown by his being almost immediately promoted to be a sergeant, and in 1910 to commissioned rank.

In 1912 Bowman moved across the Atlantic, on a call to the Stuart Chair of Logic in Princeton University. He had hardly, however, settled down

happily—his marriage also took place in 1912—when the War came with what was for him an irresistible call to active service. At the earliest possible opportunity, in the summer of 1915, he obtained release from his Princeton duties, and after a brief period of training received a commission in the Highland Light Infantry. His experiences in the War were many and varied; but however intolerable the conditions, physical and moral, might at times be, the one note that was almost completely absent from his letters was the note of depression. This was indeed, for his friends, in peace-time as in war, one of the most striking features in Bowman's character. Though his vitality was easily overspent and often ran very low, inner sources of inspiration seemed never to fail him, however untoward external circumstance might be. Thus in November 1915 he wrote: "In my hut there are eleven of us, and we are a frightfully tough lot. . . . It is very depressing but does not depress me." The strain on himself found expression only in such remarks as: "A touch of conscience carries men far"; and in March, 1918: "Without the idea of unconditional duty life would hardly be worth living these days".

In April, 1918, when the Germans broke through on the Lys, Bowman's company, which had been counter-attacking, was surrounded; and until the armistice he was in prison-camps. The life there was not made easier for him by his determination—a soldier's duty, as he regarded it—to seize, and if possible to create, the opportunity of escape. Though he failed in these projects, this was not for lack of perseverance; and they brought upon him all the rigours of a *Straf* camp. Dr. Karney, now

Bishop of Southampton, who was a fellow-prisoner with Bowman, and shared a mess with him for many months, writing in *The Times* (16th June 1937), tells of Bowman's characteristic scruples as to ways and means. " Once he came to me and said, ' Padre, I ought as a soldier to escape—I have a good chance as I speak German. It might be my duty to kill a sentry, as it is his to kill me—we are soldiers. But they tell me I can bribe them with chocolate or soap. What do you think ? I somehow don't feel I can; it is worse than killing, it is wounding their souls.' That was typical of one of the noblest men I have ever met."

Bowman's *Sonnets from a Prison Camp* (published in 1919), and the testimonies of those who shared his hardships remain to show how his moral energies triumphed over his frail physique and sufficed for others as for himself. His knowledge of German made him an invaluable intermediary with the authorities. This, however, was the least of his services to his fellow-prisoners. In the almost complete absence of books and other facilities, he proved himself, with his wonderful memory, a veritable Faculty of Arts in his own person. He lectured on literature, on history and philosophy, and in more detail on topics that specially interested him, on Shakespeare and Dostoievski, on Russia and America. His lectures on Roman history he made dramatic by appearing—in the heat of the German summer—dressed only in a blanket draped toga-fashion. He even lectured on hypnotism with not unsuccessful demonstrations on his fellow-officers, though his closest previous acquaintance with it had been solely through the medium of print.

In these months Bowman found himself in many ways. The constant practice, in the timeless leisure of prison-life, in addressing men who were of his own age or senior to him, and of all types and vocations, gave him a confidence in powers which his modesty had hitherto masked. He confirmed himself too in that ease, forcefulness and felicity of expression which made him so welcome a speaker, alike to academic and to non-academic audiences, whether on social or on more formal occasions. It also made him a supremely effective teacher—he had always been a decidedly good teacher—in the large classes with which he had to deal in Princeton and in Glasgow.

Bowman came out of the War, as he had entered it, a lover of peace but not in the strict sense a pacifist. He had little sympathy with those who find in the physical and mental sufferings of war a sufficient reason for a conscientious refusal to bear arms. It was the ambiguous *moral* requirements of war—the *duties* of deception, the 'dirty tricks' in bayonet practice, the necessity of arousing public spirit by the rough and ready methods of propaganda, and the consequent exacerbation of national hatreds which accompany and follow upon war—that in his eyes presented war in its most evil light, as raising problems to which there is, he held, no present solution short of at once working for peace and preparing for war. He was therefore in no danger of being disillusioned by the difficulties and the temporary defeats which from the start he foresaw as inevitable in the pursuit of the League of Nations ideal. But it had no more ardent and convinced supporter. It was chief among the causes in

which he spent himself, in spendthrift fashion, in his last years.

After a period of service on the Rhine, Bowman obtained release from the army in time to resume the duties of his Chair in Princeton, in the autumn of 1919. His courses were largely determined by the needs of the Department from year to year. Accordingly he had frequently in the period 1919–26 to change the subjects of his courses, lecturing on Greek Philosophy and on Ethics as well as on subjects appropriate to the title of his Chair. For this reason, and also because in 1921 he had to shoulder the responsibilities of the Chairmanship of the Department of Philosophical Studies, he had comparatively little leisure for his own independent writing. None the less, it was in these years that the present work began to take shape, and by 1924 the first draft was completed. This first draft, as revised and extended in the years 1924–6 and again in 1929, is in substance that of the work now published. His letters to me during these years make reference, from time to time, to the progress of the work. Some excerpts from them will indicate the stages through which it passed. The long vacations, some of them spent in Canada, were especially auspicious.

ST. ANDREWS, FIFE, 28th July 1920: "At present I am working with profit and pleasure on Pascal and Sainte-Beuve's *Port-Royal* and hope to follow out your suggestion by making a start with Troeltsch in the near future. I must also find time to read Whitehead's two latest books. The title of the most recent, *The Concept of Nature*, suggests that it may have some bearing on a problem

at which I was working—the value of the conception of a ' universe '."

PRINCETON, N.J., 17th October 1920: " My work goes on very pleasantly. Not for years have I been in so good form. At present I am busy with the Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and above all Augustine. I am devoting a lot of attention to the political history of the Middle Ages. Hibben has prevailed on me to inaugurate a course on the Ethics of Christianity; but I have made it a condition that I don't start till the second term of next year. When my reading has advanced far enough, I hope to link up my patristic work with *Port-Royal* and Pascal. . . . I have also resumed my reading in the original of Aristotle, and have made a beginning with a writer who seems to me very important—Sextus Empiricus."

PRINCETON, N.J., 31st May 1921: " This year has been a truly splendid one—in some respects at least. My forthcoming book still looms some way ahead, but I have amassed a fair amount of material and my thinking crystallizes out from day to day. Unfortunately teaching has been very heavy."

GUYSBOROUGH, NOVA SCOTIA, 24th July 1921: " Since coming here I have finished my reading on some of the Fathers, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria. I have gone through Tertullian's *Against Marcion*, and am half-way through Origen. On the whole, from the standpoint of work, this is the best summer I have ever had."

GUYSBOROUGH, NOVA SCOTIA, 24th August 1921: " If I had the means I'd feel a strong temptation to buy this property and settle down

on it for life. Never yet have the conditions been so propitious for my own special work. I can settle down to it with a sustained zest and an enjoyment that could hardly be excelled, and the absence of distractions and interruptions is pure bliss. The physical conditions are splendid, and I think I feel younger in a bodily sense than I have ever done. In order to get complete restoration after a few hours' work I have only to cross a couple of fields, and plunge into the delicious waters of the cove. The hills and the woods crowd down to our very doors, and nature is pressing in on one at every moment."

PRINCETON, N.J., 13th February 1922: "I share to the full your feelings with regard to von Hügel. His spiritual insight, his power of synthesis, his sense of historical reality—all these mark him out as a master-mind of his generation. Incidentally he has done me a service for which I cannot adequately thank him. He has enabled me to precipitate into clear consciousness the theme of my book. Did I tell you it is to be entitled: *Naturalism and the Supernatural*? A title in itself doesn't mean much, but in this case it has furnished a rallying point and a point of view which has given unity and coherence to a great mass of heterogeneous material which had long been pressing together in my mind. . . . Our plan is to stay on here as long as the heat permits, so that I can work steadily at my book and be near the library. Then we'll go for a little to the Laurentians. If I may say so with modesty, I appear to be becoming somewhat of a (local)—well, I don't know how to put it, but it amounts to this, that I am simply unable to keep

up that seclusion which is so dear and so necessary to me. . . . In addition to this, requests keep coming in for public lectures. . . . It is simply spoiling my book, and most of all, I don't see how I can disentangle myself from it all."

PRINCETON, N.J., 8th April 1922: "For the time being nothing really interests me but the completion of my book. Naturalism is a thing for which I have come to have a profound respect, and I find it necessary to take it seriously even from the standpoint of getting beyond it."

LAC MANITOU SUD, QUEBEC, 3rd September 1922: "Since coming here I have spent the most laborious summer of my life. . . . Most of the time has been spent on Aristotle's physical treatises, on Irenaeus and Hippolytus. The air of the Laurentian mountains is amazingly stimulating, and my capacity for work has gone up in an almost incredible degree. My chief difficulty is in succeeding in tiring myself sufficiently to get to sleep at night. The great benefit of staying so near the water, is that one gets concentrated exercise in the form of swimming with a minimum loss of time. The children have both become proficient swimmers, and are already fearless in the deep water. Our latest exploit is to paddle out into the lake on a catamaran, from which we practise diving, and we have very merry family bathing parties. . . . The forthcoming session looms up grimly before me. . . . The one thing I insist on is that we must all work hard at our subject and leave the department to look after itself."

GUYSBOROUGH, NOVA SCOTIA, 10th September 1923: "I had hoped to be nearer an end with my work: but a series of interruptions has broken the

continuity of my effort, and I still see a few months of work ahead of me. Up to about three weeks ago I was progressing rapidly, and have nearly completed seven chapters. I wrote with a flowing pen and with a degree of ease that surprised me. One reason, I think, is that I decided to write in the style that is natural to me, and not to try for a compression which I greatly admire but which seems to be beyond my power. The result is a somewhat diffuse book, which I would willingly see reduced, if I knew how to reduce it without destroying it altogether. Having completed it, I intend to proceed to publication forthwith. . . . This book, I should say, is *not* the one on *Naturalism and the Supernatural* which you advised me to complete. To this task I am not yet adequate. But I intend to go on writing—to begin with, a book on *Naturalism and Idealism in Greek Philosophy*, which will enable me to utilize a great mass of stuff I have on Aristotle. All this will be training for the more ambitious work—which I intend to make my philosophical 'credo'."

PRINCETON, N.J., 24th December 1923: "My book is moving steadily to a conclusion. Much the greater part of it is written, but I have still five or six chapters to complete."

PRINCETON, N.J., 30th March 1924: "I must at all costs finish up within the next month or so. The Bross Foundation offers a prize of $6000 for a book on religion, and I intend to offer mine."

PRINCETON, N.J., 26th June 1925: "I have received a notification from the Bross Foundation that the prize has gone to another man. My failure confirms me in the impression that had deepened

during the past months, that my book required very considerable revision. The revision, I feel, must be done at once."

From 1924 onwards Bowman had been giving more of his attention to the body of evidence accumulated by anthropologists and others bearing on the origins and early forms of religion. He had immersed himself in this literature; and while he groaned over its bulk and dubious quality, he was already, as he believed, beginning to find his way about in it, and to see light on those of its issues which specially concerned him. It was mainly in the years 1924–6 that his first draft of the anthropological chapters was written.

LAC MANITOU SUD, QUEBEC, 20th August 1925: "The revision of my book goes on slowly but steadily. I have added a chapter on Totemism, and intend to add one on the transition from ghosts to gods."

PRINCETON, N.J., 7th December 1925: "The revision of the book proceeds slowly. The chapter on the transition to gods has involved a prolonged excursion into Egyptology. The twilight charm of anthropology lays its spell upon me. Altogether the work has grown too large for a single volume; and my idea is to bring it out, not as a two-volume book, but as two books—one dealing with the *concept* of religion and the other with the *validity*. The first would be largely anthropological; the second would be chiefly an analysis of experience in its objective and subjective aspects. The two might be linked together by some such title as *The Logic of Religious Belief*."

The above has been a record mainly of his work-

ing hours. It gives no adequate picture of his life as a whole. In these happy and tranquil years—as indeed always—he delighted in seeing cities and men, keeping in close touch with a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, and sharing to the full in the interests of a busy and happy family life. As the Rev. A. C. Craig, the Chaplain of the University of Glasgow, has written of him: " Learned scholar and profound thinker as he was, he was also blithe-hearted, delighting in simple things, catholic and unfailingly generous in friendship, and full of human kindness ".

Had Bowman remained at Princeton his *Studies in the Philosophy of Religion*—to use the title which has finally been chosen—would very probably have appeared, at the latest, within a few years. But further work upon it had to be deferred when he accepted an invitation from the University of Glasgow to its Chair of Logic. This invitation faced him with a decision which he found almost intolerably difficult. Only those who have enjoyed the privilege of life in Princeton, and have shared in the academic and social life of that delectable little town, can know the strength of the spell which it casts upon the dwellers within its bounds. Had Bowman followed merely his personal inclinations he would certainly have remained. As it was, he first cabled a refusal. But no sooner had he done so than his conscience asserted itself. He felt that in choosing to remain he was shirking the harder path where his duty lay, and he revoked his previous decision. This at once brought down upon him such pressure from the University authorities and from his Princeton friends that after much mental distress he yielded, and returned to his first decision.

But this again was not the end. In a letter to his friend Dr. Jacobus, a trustee of Princeton University, he explained the reasons and motives of his final acceptance of the call. "As a matter of fact my mental distress was greater than ever. . . . The truth is, I wanted to stay on in Princeton . . . where I had so many dear friends, and where the happiest years of my life had been passed. I could not contemplate a change without dismay. And I'll be bound to admit that you had persuaded me that there was a real call for me here. None the less, my conscience troubled me sorely. I thought of the old country, impoverished, economically crippled . . . and assailed by every spiritual danger. . . . The responsibilities that lie upon a teacher of philosophy there are of a very peculiar kind. It is not that they are greater than here in America. It is that the situation is more desperate. . . . When I thought of these things, I felt I had shrunk from a call which was more urgent than the call of America. . . . Just then, to my utter surprise, a fresh cable from Glasgow arrived, urging me to reconsider my decision; and as I then saw things, I could not but feel that this was a sign for which I had eagerly scanned the horizon. . . . So I acted at once. Having committed myself to President Hibben, and President Hibben being away, I could not go back upon my word; but I cabled Glasgow that if they would wait a year I'd accept. . . . Had they replied that they would not wait, I'd have settled down with a clear conscience to Princeton. But the reply which reached me almost immediately was to the effect that I had been unanimously elected—to begin duty in October 1926."

Princeton conferred upon him, at its June Graduation, 1926, its Honorary Litt.D.; and in 1930 it made a renewed effort to persuade him to return, with flattering inducements of the most favourable possible conditions of work and leisure. But the reasons which he gave in 1925 still held him to his post in Glasgow, though now he knew even better than he did then, the price it demanded. "As for my reasons," he wrote on 24th June 1930 to Dr. Hibben, President of Princeton University: "I can only say that the considerations which led me to return to Scotland in 1926 are even more pressing to-day. Here in Glasgow we are in the centre of what Lloyd George has called 'the derelict north' . . . It is simply a case of the greatest need. I can never forget how when the war broke out you divined what must be passing in my mind, and in words of sympathetic understanding, offered me the release for which I longed but hardly dared to ask. Only, this new war which has begun is one which will last my lifetime, and in which I am much better qualified to render effective service."

Installed, as the Bowman household now was, in one of the large five-storied houses in the Glasgow University Quadrangle, the boundless hospitality in which both Mrs Bowman and Bowman himself delighted had fewer limits set to it than their own comfort and quiet ought perhaps to have required. Their household consisted of the three children—two sons and a daughter—and now also of Bowman's mother and aunt. Even so, there remained the guest-rooms, and they were seldom empty; while a constant stream of callers, friends, students and others, poured through the house. Latterly Bowman

was driven from his first-floor study to seek refuge in a makeshift study in an attic room.

Then there was Glasgow, 'the second city of the Empire': Bowman certainly lived up to the motives which he assigned for his return to Scotland. He treated Glasgow almost as if it were a diocese attached to his Chair, labouring faithfully through most of the week-ends of all the winter months, chiefly in the local branches of the League of Nations Union, but also in general in aid of every humanitarian, semi-political, social and religious work that appealed to his sympathies. He especially delighted in the kind of audience in which in those years there was wont to be a sprinkling of cloth-capped hearers—the cap stubbornly kept on, by a kind of inverted Quakerism, as a sign of independence, a manifesto against all the powers that be. It was precisely to these hearers that he most liked to address himself, and sometimes he had the satisfaction of having them pay him the tribute of doffing the headgear. In his politics Bowman, so far as he belonged to any party, was a Liberal; and on the very week before he succumbed to his last illness he was assisting Sir Godfrey Collins, then Secretary for Scotland, in his electoral campaign in Greenock.

But it was for his class-teaching that he reserved his chief energies; and it was indeed for this reason that he did his best to limit his outside activities to the week-ends. His Logic class numbered over 500. At the time of his transfer to the Moral Philosophy Chair—the year after his coming to Glasgow—the class in that department numbered about 300, but gradually increased to over 450, until,

with the diminution of the number of students in the University, the number declined somewhat. There were 320 in it in the session preceding his death. From 1928 onwards, he divided the class into two divisions, repeating his lecture, given three days each week, in successive hours, 10 to 11 a.m., and 11 to 12 noon. On two of these days he also met his Honours Class from 9 to 10 a.m. The following account is from a member of his class in the session 1932–3. "The subject he taught is one that appeals to few, even among the proverbially philosophic Scots. To most of the class Moral Philosophy was a subject that had to be taken to complete the Degree, something to be conquered in as little time as possible, and without undue neglect of their Honours group or their social activities. Nor was the personality of Professor Bowman at first sight an arresting one. He was denied the specious advantages of a fine physique and a commanding presence. At the beginning of the Course he was quiet, almost dull, and made no attempt to gain our favour, as for several days he concentrated on giving us a philosophic vocabulary. At this point one was impressed by his patient understanding of our ignorance and his efficiency in getting through a necessary piece of work. But it was not for nothing that he had developed to perfection the technique of lecturing. Very soon the flat country began to be left behind, the scene became rich and varied. He would explore enticing by-paths, in physics, psychology and anthropology, that were as fascinating as the main topic of discussion. The highway to which he ever returned was nothing less than a search for a policy of life.

"He showed something like genius in his admixture of the serious and the gay. Realizing, doubtless, how his devotion to his ideas and his high seriousness of purpose might, if unmixed with humour, excite the jeers, not the emulation, of the more careless of his hearers, he was careful to relieve the tension through constant variation of tone as well as of topic.

"His illustrations were largely drawn from his own varied experience. With perfect modesty he told us of events in his life, and what they had meant to his philosophy. Thus we came to feel that we knew him intimately and had shared his travels and his prison-camp sufferings. At times he presented his class with a picture of himself in the most incongruous situations or unexpected places (I remember Hollywood as one of them), and asked us to laugh at him with him. It was a voluntary relinquishment of professorial dignity, that brought in a rich harvest of affection, breaking down the last defences of the more cynical of his hearers, and completely disarming the jesters of the class. If at the start the members of the class were alike in that they were very vague as to what Moral Philosophy was, and most of them decidedly lukewarm in their desire to know, by the end of the session, when the magic lectures were over, they were equally alike in feeling that they would never completely forget the clearer air and bright clime through which they had made their philosophic pilgrimage."

Unable to be present at the closing meeting of his class (19th May 1936), Bowman sent a message to be read, from which the following is taken:

"I am very sorry that for the first time in my experience it is impossible for me to be with the class on the closing day of the session. I could not drag myself up those many stairs without carrying my pleurisy with me; and my advisers have decided against this policy. I cannot, however, let the occasion go without telling you how deeply I appreciate your kindly considerateness throughout the year. You have been an ideal audience, and you have given me all the attention any teacher could desire. You have even had the manners to laugh at my jokes.

"To the prize-winners and the recipients of special certificates I offer my congratulations and my thanks for the admirable work they have done. At the same time I would admonish this favoured band not to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. Academic honours are not everything in life; and of those who attain them it may be said that 'they have their reward'. What remains is something infinitely greater and more important—namely, life itself; and I shall consider this year's course in Moral Philosophy utterly vain and worthless, unless in the years to come you shall find the principles I have tried to expound in theory of some value for the grim and relentless business of actual living.

"From the *élite* of the class I pass to the average student and to the student who is less than average. Towards these I entertain a persistent emotion, disposition or sentiment which might be described as cordial fellow-feeling. Their reward is still to come. I hope a first instalment of it may be vouchsafed them on the 27th of this month, or failing that,

in September of this year. Should their hopes be deferred beyond this latter date, I beg of them not to be unduly discouraged or to give way to the illusion that all is vanity. That is a proposition that rests upon fallacious hedonistic premises, and it is not to be thought that any student of this class will succumb to the blandishments of Koheleth, Aristophanes, Hegesias, Epicurus, Omar Khayyam, Bentham or John Stuart Mill.

" My best wishes go with you all, both in your efforts to overcome (or to circumvent) the immediate obstacles which I have devised for you, and in the larger problems of life which remain to be dealt with when your college days are over. I shall feel greatly rewarded if anything you have learned in this class, or anything which as a result of stimulus you have thought out for yourselves, will prove of service in your hour of need, and in that warfare from which there is no discharge—the moral life."

Bowman seemed well on the way to recovery; his death came suddenly on 12th June 1936.

As I have already indicated, Bowman's life in Glasgow allowed him all too little leisure for his own studies or for writing. He had only been one year in the Chair of Logic when he was transferred to the Chair of Moral Philosophy, with consequent complete change of all his lecture-courses, both Pass and Honours. He took his share in the burdens of administration—he served on many committees and for three years was Dean of the Faculty of Arts —but to them were added the innumerable calls for service in the wider civic community, appeals to which, unfortunately as many of his friends thought, but in duty bound as he himself believed, he con-

tinued to the end to give unstintedly of his time and energies. There was also yet another reason why the final revision of his book was delayed, and why his published work in philosophy consists only of some not very representative articles in *Mind* (1910, 1916) and the *Philosophical Review* (1914), an article in the *Aristotelian Proceedings* (1933), and a few semi-popular occasional papers. Had he reserved his surplus energies for the revisal and completion of the *Studies*, they would have sufficed.

He seems, however, to have found that presupposed in these inquiries are certain more fundamental questions, and that until he had come to terms with them, he could not satisfactorily complete this earlier work. Accordingly he set it temporarily aside ; and from about 1929 onwards it was upon another, more ambitiously conceived work that he was engaged—nothing less than a system of metaphysics that should serve as basis to his ethics and philosophy of religion. His conscience as a teacher had also probably much to do with this decision—this latter work being the more imperative of the two, as being required for the teaching he was called upon to give, day by day, in the classroom. I have before me, in his manuscript, two versions of the lectures given to the large Degree Class—one version as used in the years 1931–4 and the other as used in the years 1934–6. The later version is a rearrangement of the earlier version, with omissions and extensive additions. Both have as their central theme the metaphysical foundations upon which, as he believed, an adequate ethics can alone be based. This, of course, is in accordance with the tradition which had prevailed in the Glasgow Moral Philo-

sophy Classroom since the time of Caird. In all other respects, however, Bowman's teaching was very much his own. It was realist in its view of physical nature, dualistic in its view of the relation of spirit and nature, non-secular in its attitude to the ultimate questions of ethics and religion. A quite central position was given to the problem of time. Both versions end, however, before the completion of the course, and both end abruptly at the same point; and seemingly for the reason that he had not yet sufficiently satisfied himself in his answer to the ultimate questions. It was his habit to avoid, if at all possible, writing on any subject until what he sought to say had so defined itself in his mind that he could straightway write it down in final form. Until this stage was reached he preferred to commit nothing to paper. He appears to have become more and more confirmed in this method of working as the years passed. His papers show surprisingly few erasions or alterations; and once he had formulated an argument or piece of exposition, it usually passed unmodified into any later version. The unhappy result is that we have no finished record of the conclusions to which his mind was moving in these last years; and only the notes of students to indicate how in free and rapid semi-popular exposition, in a few concluding lectures, he rounded out his teaching.

The last occasion, it would seem, on which he was able to devote himself continuously, over a period of time, to the revision of the *Studies* was in 1929, when he enjoyed six months' leave of absence, and was acting as Mills Lecturer in the University of California. (He had also visited the University

of California in the preceding year as Lecturer in its Summer School.) There he was able to avail himself of the specially rich library resources in the field of anthropology, and seized the opportunity of revising, and elaborately recasting, his early draft of what is now Part II of the *Studies*. The changes and additions he entered in a number of note-books, but with precise indications as to where and how they were to be inserted in his earlier manuscript. There has, therefore, been little difficulty in deciding how they are to be incorporated, and what should be the passages they are to displace. They represent, it would seem, the only main change of outlook that took place in his views after the revision of the first draft in 1924–6. While still insisting upon an evolutionary treatment of religion, he is now clearer as to the qualifications which he would wish to make in the deductions ordinarily drawn from the anthropological material. It is of this revision work that he was speaking when he wrote:

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, 10th December 1929: "My sojourn in Berkeley is drawing to a close, and in a few days I turn my face eastward. It has been a very profitable time for me and a blessed respite from the all-but-impossible conditions of life in Glasgow. I have enjoyed the blessings of seclusion, and have been able to accomplish a good deal both in reading and in writing."

In 1932 he was invited by Princeton University to give the Vanuxem Lectures; and for this purpose he set himself to prepare a statement of his views on some of the metaphysical problems that were then occupying his mind. The lectures were de-

livered in the spring of 1934. But here again the manuscript of his lectures as revised for publication stops short of the crucial concluding chapters. He had had a threatened breakdown in health early in 1934; and during the session 1934–5 his medical adviser forbade him all public engagements other than his teaching duties. How poor a chance, however, he gave himself and how incredibly much he continued to do, is shown in what he wrote to me in a letter dated 23rd May 1935. "As usual at this time I am very tired. In spite of the medical embargo on all outside activities I have found this a hard year—possibly because I have completely rewritten my class lectures and have worked up a new Honours course. This work has also militated against the completion of my book [he is here referring to his Vanuxem Lectures]—on which, indeed, I have done no work at all for some time. I hope to finish it in the summer. I have also been plagued by an old and familiar demon—the irresistible love of poetry, and have written a volume of verse which I may publish later on—not at present, however, as I should not like to have it precede my Princeton Lectures."

Bowman's death at the early age of 53—a working life shortened by the war and latterly by ill-health—thus means the loss to British philosophy of what was to have been his chief work, possibly with the title of his former choice, *The Natural and the Supernatural.* With a few years of really good health, provided always that his conscience had abstained from imposing too many outside duties upon him, he would probably have brought it to completion. Happily, there are those other two

works—his *Studies in the Philosophy of Religion* and his *Vanuxem Lectures*—which he has left sufficiently far advanced to allow of publication. Though they close much more abruptly than he had planned, and lack the many happy touches that his own final revisions would have given to them, they are yet a worthy record alike of his scholarship and of his powers of independent, constructive thinking. They show how he combined critical powers with a creativeness of mind which is incomparably more rare. They will make available to the wider audience of readers at least a portion of what has hitherto been reserved for his pupils and friends.

I have left to the last what is most difficult of record. In sheer intellectual gifts many may have been his equals; it was the combination of intellectual with moral qualities that gives him a quite unique place in the memories of his friends. His was an extraordinarily integrated character, with a purity of motive and a singleness of purpose which obtained almost immediate recognition even from casual acquaintances, and which were only confirmed for those who were so fortunate as to be associated with him in a closer manner. He habitually lived with entire naturalness and simplicity on a spiritual level to which all but a very few attain only by effort and intermittently; and he had in supreme degree the power of awakening and quickening in others what was so real to himself. He was at once gentle and inflexible, with a peculiarly characteristic ability to be both at once. This, in turn, seemed to connect with a further no less distinctive quality—his capacity to

combine fastidiousness of standard in matters alike of intellect and morals with generosity of temper and whole-hearted participation in practical affairs. For so far was this fastidiousness from dulling the edge of his ardour for practical activity, that it served rather to give it a piercing quality and a disinterestedness so evident as to disarm opposition. Prodigal of himself when service was demanded, he was self-effacing to the point of sainthood in all other respects. These are great qualities, and they were in keeping with all the many other traits that drew to him the warm admiring personal affection of his associates and friends.

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PART I

THE APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT

CHAPTER I

PREREQUISITES TO ORIENTATION

In the study of religion the philosophical standpoint differs in one fundamental respect from all others. The difference depends upon the distinction between what might be called the data on the one hand and the defining concept on the other. History, psychology, anthropology are all concerned with religion as a phenomenon of human experience, but only in its superficial aspect as a more or less clearly distinguishable group of tendencies which made their first appearance in remote antiquity, and have continued, under many changing and even incompatible forms, to maintain a certain ascendency over the human mind. Beyond this, which is the standpoint of fact, these disciplines do not seek to penetrate. With philosophy it is otherwise. Here we have to do not only with the facts (and it is essential that we should have as extensive and as exact a knowledge of these as possible), but with something supposed to lie behind the facts themselves, something of which the facts are thought to be the variable, and not always adequate, expression. It is this something beyond the facts which has just been referred to as the ' defining concept ' of religion.

The Notion of a 'Defining Concept'

Our first business will be to make as clear as we can and, if possible, to justify the notion of a defining concept and the stand which philosophy takes regarding it. The concept which we have in view is of course that of religion—religion considered in itself and distinguished from the various *religions* of mankind and from anything which in the light of the fully defined concept may prove to be merely auxiliary and adjectival. To this latter category would naturally belong those manifestations which are best denoted by the epithet *religious*—a religious emotion, disposition, movement. To what extent such adjectival manifestations are fundamental to religion itself is certainly a very real question, and one which it might be hard to answer with any degree of exactitude. But even at the outset and without further inquiry it seems clear that whatever may be the mutual implications of the substantival notion and its adjectival accompaniments, such things as a religious movement or disposition are not the whole of religion.

The extremely critical character of these preliminary inquiries becomes apparent as soon as we consider what a definitory concept implies in the case of such a subject as that with which we have to do. If it is possible to define religion at all, it is so under certain conditions determined by the nature of the thing to be defined. But what that nature is, is precisely the question at issue. We are trying to discover what religion *is*, and until we have done so we are in no position to formulate the concept.

It follows that the definition of religion, unlike those definitions that furnish the starting-point of mathematical science, must await the completed investigation : its place is at the end rather than at the beginning of the inquiry. This of itself might appear to be a very real difficulty. For how, it will be asked, can we hope to explore the nature of religion, unless we are first able to define the field ?

We have here to distinguish two things which are equally implied in the very notion of *inquiry*. On the one hand, there is the possibility of knowing what we are inquiring into. On the other, there is the knowing of that into which we are inquiring. The latter form of knowing is possible only as the result of a completed investigation; the former is a necessary presupposition of any investigation whatever. That it is possible to know what a problem is without knowing the solution of it is shown by the existing science of mathematics. It creates its problems by defining them in advance; the definitions in question precede and condition the process of research. While, then, it is true that we cannot exactly define the subject of an inquiry until the inquiry is complete, it is also true that we can in a proleptic fashion and in a highly general way define the conclusion in terms derived from the preliminary definitions. Thus the body of inquiry known as the science of mathematics may be defined as the group or the sequence of investigations arising out of the definitions, axioms and postulates which furnish the starting-point in mathematical research. Of course it must be admitted that in the process of development the original definitions may be found to be in many ways defective. There may be too many of them, and they may involve too

many assumptions. This is presumably so in the case of Euclidean geometry as contrasted with the arithmetical system of Peano. But the discovery of the way in which mathematical science can be made to rest upon a minimum of assumptions is a product of the earliest attempts at the same thing; and there is no reason why the definition of mathematics in terms of an earlier and still faulty attempt to formulate the presuppositions of the science should not, with certain obvious qualifications, be made to apply to the subject as thought out by the modern mathematician. Thus it is possible to define mathematics as the science that has developed, by processes of insight that were not always strictly logical,[1] out of a growing apprehension of the theoretical implications involved in the first attempts at mathematical reasoning.

If we apply these observations to the study of religion, the question that arises is this: What are the presuppositions which underlie the total process, of which religion, as it develops, is the outcome? To answer this question, and the further questions that arise out of it, is one of the main purposes of this work. But before we can come to close quarters with our subject, there are certain considerations of a purely general nature that must be dealt with. These considerations have to do with procedure and with logic, and are by no means peculiar to the study of religion. To these, even at the cost of considerable

[1] Mathematicians have not hesitated to draw attention to the illogical character of their science in its historical development; *vide* the little volume by the late Philip E. B. Jourdain, on *The Nature of Mathematics*, p. 24, where the writer points out that from the revival of letters to the middle of the nineteenth century "no science was less logical than mathematics".

delay, we must devote our attention in this and in the following chapter.

One thing will be clear at the outset. The presuppositions of religion are not, like those to which we have been referring, theoretical propositions which serve to define the field and the problems peculiar to it. The presuppositions of religion, although they include certain theoretical assumptions, are rather to be looked for in the major situations of human life and human experience. It is because human life is the kind of thing it is that human experience has called religion into being. The problem of religion, therefore, even on its theoretical side, that is. to say, the problem of its definitory character and its validity, is in part necessarily an historical problem. There is no way in which the question of *sanctions* can be raised which does not call for a consideration of the processes of thought and feeling by which religion as a varied historical phenomenon has come to establish itself in the lives of men. And this is the circumstance in which our preliminary inquiries have their origin.

The Defining Concept of Religion not a Class Concept

To begin with, then, I should like to dispose of an illegitimate assumption to which certain types of mind are too prone—the assumption, namely, that religion is only a class name for all religions and for whatever else may be brought under the term. In certain minds the tendency to think in this way seems to be almost ineradicable. Why this should be so is an interesting psychological problem; but

apart altogether from psychology there is an excellent reason, of an objective and logical character, for the class-view of concepts. It is that in a large and important group of cases the class-view is not only altogether right but is altogether adequate. There is therefore an element of truth in the common prepossession in favour of it.

This may appear a somewhat perverse and paradoxical way of stating the case. To those who deal professionally with certain truths which demand that the class-view be taken seriously (the mathematicians, for example), what is most obvious is not a common prepossession *in favour* of the view, but rather their difficulty in getting the view understood at all. In this they are not mistaken, as is shown by their desperate endeavours to make certain mathematical ideas clear to the uninitiated. The fact is that the two views in question have about the same weight of reason behind them. Each is true in the field or fields to which it belongs; and the reason why we find some minds incorrigibly prone to universalize the class-view and others apparently incapable of doing it justice is to be found in the tendency of minds to think too exclusively in terms of the field where their deepest interest lies.

'Number' a Defining Concept: 'Man' not a Defining Concept

To take an instance which should now be familiar to all philosophers (even the least mathematically minded), it has of late been repeatedly explained, for the benefit of the uninstructed, how the nature of number depends upon the nature of classes. The

number two, for example, is not the number of men, horses and other objects of which there happen to be two, but the number characteristic of all groups which contain this number. In a word, two is the class of all twos. In the same way, number in general is not the class of numerable things, but a class consisting of all *numbers*, a class, therefore, of classes. As Mr. Russell puts it:

> "*Number* is what is characteristic of numbers, as *man* is what is characteristic of men ".[1]

Now that man is what is characteristic of men is undoubtedly true, but it is not true in exactly the same sense in which number is what is characteristic of numbers. And when we say that number is the class of numbers we are not stating the same kind of truth as when we assert that man is the class of men. In the former case what we have is a genuine definition. The ' is ' of the statement is the definitory ' is ', distinct in meaning from the copula and from the verb ' to be ' in its existential sense.[2] This is not quite true in the other instance. The difference is due to the fact that when we say ' number is what is characteristic of all numbers ' we are stating the very important truth that a certain group of universals stereotypes itself by sheer logical necessity in a single universal of a higher order of generality ; whereas when we say ' man is what is characteristic of all men ', we are merely indicating the empirical fact that men constitute a class. In so far as this is

[1] *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, ch. ii, p. 11. Cf. *Our Knowledge of the External World*, pp. 187, 201.

[2] It is a circumstance worthy of note that logic, which has made so much of the ambiguities arising out of the failure to distinguish the copulative and existential uses of the verb ' to be ', should have tended to overlook the further distinction indicated in the text.

the case, it is no doubt proper to say that man is what is characteristic of men ; but it is *no less* characteristic of men to exist as individuals in the physical world ; and this is a truth that has no analogue in the case of numbers. The result is that we cannot possibly determine the nature of men, as we can that of numbers, by considering them exclusively from the standpoint of that characteristic which enables us to view them as a class or universal.

Thus, to sum up, the statement that man is the class of all men is not a definition of man—unless, indeed, the definition is of a merely *ad hoc* and verbal nature. But even then there would be no real analogy between the class of men and the class of numbers ; for the definition of number is by no means a verbal definition. It is an informative statement about something which has an objective and independent nature of its own. As a definition, it is, however, more than this ; and it would be a mistake to suppose that because it is informative and not verbal, the definition merely tells us something *about* number, something objectively true, but still only circumstantial or adventitious. The opposite is the case with the proposition about man. Here we are not really stating what man is: we are only making an assertion, and a somewhat trivial one, concerning him. We are asserting, in effect, that man, whatever be his nature, is a creature occurring in more instances than one, and that the generic name may be taken to indicate this fact. The point is that in the latter case the plurality in question is really a *circumstance*, a highly important circumstance, no doubt, but one which does not enter into the substance of the definition with the same kind of

determining force [1]—that is to say, a *logically* determining force—as in the instance of number.[2]

If we seek to discover the cause of the profound difference between the two things which Mr. Russell here with less than his usual caution brings together, we shall find it in the fact that in the one case we are dealing with a class of classes—with a class, that is, twice removed from the concrete individual—while in the other case we are dealing with a class of individuals or with the individual himself in his generic character. In fact the proposition which Mr. Russell advances in illustration of the definition of number is an exact illustration of what he informs us number is not. Numbers have nothing to do with the generic character of any individual. Hence it is that in the definition and theory of number we are not dealing with the plural aspect of things but with the conceptual character of plurality, whereas in the statement about man we are definitely attributing plurality to a subject.

In spite of these differences, the statement that

[1] At a later point we shall make much use of the fact that man's nature as a person is largely determined by the circumstance that he is not alone in the world, that there are other persons besides himself. This view, however, involves an entirely different aspect of the case from that which we are now considering.

[2] Of course in the biological sense plurality as implied in the fact of generation by kind is all-determining; but this again implies a different point of view. In the history of logic the two standpoints have become strangely entangled. This is particularly true of the Aristotelian logic as expounded by its founder, where the logical conception of classification by subsumption shades away into the biological conception of classification by natural kinds. It is possible to justify such a drawing together of ideas, but only on the ground that the truths of logic and the truths of nature are one, and that the truths of nature are best revealed in living things. These are propositions, however, which the exponents of modern logic would not accept. Mr. Russell should have been the last to seek to illustrate the nature of number by a proposition about man.

man is the class of all men is both legitimate and intelligible. If, however, we should seek to treat religion from the same point of view we should find ourselves at once involved in serious difficulties. The sense in which it holds good that number is the class of numbers is not more profoundly different from the sense in which man is the class of men than is the sense of this latter assertion from any in which it could possibly be maintained that religion is the class of all religions. The fact seems to be that we are here in a field of human experience where the class-view ceases to have any meaning whatsoever.

'Religion' not the Class of Religions

Perhaps the best way in which to make clear such a bold and challenging assertion would be to contemplate religion in relation to whatever there is in it or about it that suggests the possibility of considering it from the standpoint of classes. I maintain that religion cannot itself be considered the class of religions. Nevertheless it belongs to a fairly well-defined class—the class, namely, of all those human institutions which, while in no sense generalizations or the product of generalization, have about them something general in character. Such, for instance, are morality, science and art; and such, though with a difference, the state, the church, the family. In each of these instances it would be quite incorrect to say that what we have is a class. If this is not self-evident, it is only necessary to ask whether, for instance, by the state (as the word occurs in expressions like 'the theory of the state') we mean the class of all states. Clearly we do not mean any-

thing of the sort. When we seek to *define* anything as the *class* of Xs, the Xs that constitute the class must themselves be very exactly defined. As a matter of fact they are defined by the selfsame characteristic which enables us to treat them as a class and to define the class in question as the class of which they are the component members. This is very clearly so in the case of number. The definitory characteristic of any number as such is identical with the characteristic which constitutes it a member of a numerical series, and this is the reason why the class-view is so exactly appropriate to the standpoint of arithmetical science.

In the case of the state there is nothing analogous to the considerations which enable us to define the class in terms of its members and the members in terms of the class to which they belong. We cannot even be said to know the class of states in the exact sense implied by a definition. What we know is the individual states that have come into existence in the history of mankind, and certain truths of a more or less speculative nature which we suppose to express the nature of an ideal or hypothetical commonwealth.[1] But between our knowledge of the individual instances which is matter of historical fact, and our insight into the character of the ideal society, there is no such relation as that which obtains between the definition of any individual number and the definition of numbers in general. To know the class of states is therefore not to know the nature of the state, and the nature of the state is not given in

[1] Hence the danger of hypostatizing the philosophical idealization called ' the state ', and of forgetting that what exists is really a plurality of mutually antagonistic political societies.

the act of thought which enables us to view the commonwealths of history as a class.[1] We cannot, therefore, be said to know the state as a class at all.

What has been said of the state has been said only by way of illustration, and does not apply without some modification to religion. Before going on to deal more specifically with the latter, however, let us take one further illustration—the concept of science.

'Science' not the Class of Sciences

The accumulations of error and confusion that have gathered around this concept (more particularly when the attempt is made to relate it to philosophy) are enough to make one despair of getting clear thinking—the more so as the worst errors of all must be laid to the account sometimes of profound thinkers, like Hegel, and sometimes of clear thinkers, like Mr. Russell and Mr. C. D. Broad. These errors come to a head in the uncritical assumption that philosophy, in order to have any value at all, must be a science. It is taken for granted that we know what this means, that the nature of science is clear and unmistakable, that there is no difference of meaning that is worth dwelling upon between *science* and *the sciences* or between the notion of *science* and the notion of *the scientific*. It seems hardly to occur to certain thinkers that there may be all the difference in the world between saying that philosophy must be *scientific* and saying that there must be a science of philosophy, or that philosophy

[1] This is not to say that 'the state' is a metaphysical fiction or an *arbitrary* idealization. It may well have a reality of its own if we view it in the appropriate universe of discourse.

must be a science. May it not be that philosophy is scientific without being a science; that this is all we are entitled to ask of it; and that to demand of it that it should also be a science may be to destroy all that is distinctive and valuable in it?

The reason why these things are not seen by many thinkers of the present day is that in dealing with ideas like science and the scientific their minds are under the influence of the class-view where the class-view is least of all appropriate. The name 'science' seems to mean nothing but the class of sciences, and the word 'scientific' nothing but what is characteristic of science so understood. In this the enormous differences between the sciences—the incommensurability between their respective defining standpoints and between their respective methods—are lost sight of.

That such oversight should be possible for highly-trained minds is at first sight surprising; but among most of the thinkers referred to there is a strong initial bias in favour of one particular science or group of sciences, the mathematical and physical. It may well be that this bias is not at all a mere prejudice, that there are good grounds in the nature of physics and mathematics for according to these sciences a position of special consideration. But if so, it can only be because there is something about mathematics and physics (and more particularly about physics) which makes sciences of this sort a model for all the sciences. Such a point of view (and there is much to be said for it) would of course justify the practice of thinking all the sciences together and overlooking even the deeper cleavages which divide them. Only, be it observed, in this case we abandon the class-

view altogether in favour of another view which we might call the normative. That is to say, we bring the sciences together not as constituting a clearly-defined class, but as constituting a more or less vaguely discernible progression towards an ideal knowledge. Once we have arrived at this point of view, it remains only to notice that the ideal science of physics can no longer be considered *a fixed or final* ideal. In other words, the less advanced sciences do not aim at becoming one with physics, but merely at achieving for themselves and in their own way something of the ideal character which physics in another way exemplifies.

It will now be seen that the names 'science' and 'scientific', which we apply comprehensively to everything that merits the designation of 'a science', and to everything characteristic of the latter, are names which thus apply only in view of the ideal goal common to all the sciences. They are names for that ideal of exactitude and comprehensiveness at which all the sciences aim, and they must therefore be distinguished from the sciences which, each from its own point of view and under its own peculiar limitations, endeavour to hit the common mark.

If this is so, it is obviously an error to assume that philosophy, in order to be scientific (which it clearly ought to be) must at the same time be a science—that is to say, one among other sciences, distinguished by its limitation to certain kinds of data and to the special methods which go with these. To be scientific, to conform to the character of that which we call 'science', philosophy requires only to set before itself the same ideal of exactitude and universality, whether in observation or in reasoning,

which is the one ground on which the sciences themselves can claim their scientific character. That such exactitude and completeness are impossible except in a carefully delimited field is of course an arguable proposition, but it is hardly one which we know how to argue. What is obvious to us all is something rather different, viz. that the evidences of order and regularity in nature occur in a highly piecemeal fashion, leaving vast regions of experience, actual or possible, unaccounted for. What we do not know is to all appearances much more than what we know. If it were the business or professed purpose of philosophy to fill up these immeasurable lacunae, there might be some ground for the complaints commonly brought against her. But nothing could be further from her intention. Her business is not to add to the things we know but to review the knowledge we already possess, to go over again in main outline what the sciences have done in detail, and to see whether it is possible to discover in the results of the latter or in the trend of their endeavours anything calculated to throw light on the most general problems of thought.[1]

Relevance of these Considerations to the Case of Religion

Enough, however, and more than enough, has

[1] In what follows, the word ' scientific ' may be used in two senses, in the normative sense just explained, and in the other sense, as signifying what characterizes any of the distinct sciences. The meaning must in each instance be gathered from the context. When, at a later stage, I shall have occasion to contrast scientific and ' opposition ' thinking, I do not wish to convey the impression that the latter is *un*-scientific, and therefore of no account, but merely that ' opposition thinking ' is not the method of any science.

been said by way of illustration. It remains to apply whatever is relevant in the foregoing to the case of religion. Like science, religion is among the concepts that cannot be regarded as a class concept. Religion is not the class of all religions. Rather the individual religions are related to religion somewhat as the sciences are related to science. It is the ideal of which they are the fragmentary expression.

In order to know a class and to understand its nature, it is not always necessary to know its members individually. We do not hesitate to recognize a class of men although we can never know all men, and we have no scruples in accepting the definition of number as the class of all numbers, although there are bound to be numbers of which we have never thought. In some cases such detailed knowledge is quite irrelevant and may even serve to obscure the issue. Of course if religion is not the class of religions, these remarks do not apply to it. Rather, as was observed in the instance of the state, it behoves us to know as much as we can about the detail of the various religions. Only, it need not be supposed that such knowledge must be even approximately exhaustive. It need not even be of a highly elaborated or meticulous order. The important thing is that we should have a true eye for the details which count. For assuredly there *are* details which count more than others. On the theoretical side there are doctrines which are more essential and reveal a profounder insight: on the practical and personal side there are emotional states and acts of volition that mean more as an expression of the religious attitude. Here, however, we encounter a fresh set of difficulties. How are we to distinguish those special

doctrines and inward states? The question is one of those that seem hopeless, as involving some sort of circular process. In order to know what is significant in the religions of the world and in the religious experience of the individual, we must first know religion itself. But how are we to know religion except through its particularized expressions?

The difficulty is perhaps not so insurmountable as it looks. It has been made to appear much more formidable than it is in practice. The fact is that we have here an instance of a large group of problems which we are busy solving for ourselves all the time, but which become technically insoluble as soon as we formulate them abstractly. In practice there is no question of fact waiting for interpretation or of interpretation waiting upon fact. We do not begin with a perfectly opaque experience which we proceed to illumine with a principle already perfectly transparent. Every experience is given with something in the nature of a partial or potential elucidation. I cannot have a religious experience and I cannot contemplate a religious fact without gathering from it something of the ideal nature of religion. I cannot *know* anything of the ideal nature of religion without having my experience thereby enriched with something of religious significance.

None the less the distinction is a real one, and so is the difficulty which goes along with it. The illumination which accompanies experience, always partial, is in any case chiefly adapted to satisfy the practical needs of the situation, and is seldom adequate to the purposes of theory. Thus although in a practical way we may know very well what religion

is, it does not follow that we have any very well-defined *conception* of its nature. And yet it is precisely with such clearness and adequacy of conception that philosophy has to do. Short of this we may be profoundly religious, but we cannot have a philosophical understanding of religion. How is such an understanding to be acquired ?

The Sense of Historical Truth

In the first place the experience must of course be there, even though it will not of itself guarantee theoretical insight. Granted the experience, what we want is the power to analyse and assess it. We must have some capacity for seeing the bearing of one thing upon another, and for resisting the tendency to be drawn into blind alleys and along by-paths that lead nowhere. These requirements closely resemble those of the sciences. But in the case of religion there are other requirements that are no less essential. There is, for example, what might be called the historical sense, the sense of historical truth. This conception is far too subtle and elaborate to admit of successful summary treatment in an introductory chapter. In fact, so important is the problem of historical truth that the philosophy of history is rapidly becoming one of the main branches of philosophy itself. Yet in spite of the difficulties of abbreviated statement, something must here be said on the subject.

The word ' history ' is used in two senses. History is either the *course* of events or a *record* of events—more exactly, of the events in which the actions of men are involved. Thus we speak of the history of

Rome, meaning thereby either the series of events that constitute that history or a narrative in which the events are chronologically set forth.

This distinction is obviously a very real one, but it is not so absolute as might on first thoughts be supposed. Thus it would be quite wrong to suppose that when we have described history, in the first sense of the term, as a series of events, or as a series of events in which human actions are involved, we have said something so simple as to call for no further explanation. The physicist, as well as the historian, has to do with events; but events as he understands them are very different from events in the historical sense of the term. What makes the situation more significant is the fact that the physicist has discovered that events are of enormously greater interest than had ever been suspected until quite recently—that they are the very stuff of which the physical world is made. Now when the physicist speaks of an event, he means neither more nor less than what occurs in space and time, with exclusive reference to its space and time relations. What actually occurs there may be something inconceivably complex; yet in its general features it is bound to be relatively simple. The content of space and time, whatever that may be, changes position in the four-dimensional manifold. The complexity is due to the fact that the number of possible positions in space and time is infinite, and that in determining specific positions a great many relations must be taken into account. If we consider the movements of a single human body, even those that are most of all of a routine and repetitive character, it is easy to conceive that no two of them ever delineate exactly the same path

in space. Furthermore a completely expanded mathematical expression for any one such movement would involve an infinite number of factors. Considered as physical events, then, the simplest possible movements of the body are infinitely complex. Yet these movements may be of the sort that we commonly describe as simple and monotonous, and the life-history composed of them may be what we call *uneventful*. Obviously it is not in the sense of physical events that we think of the events of history. In what sense is it?

The answer that comes most readily into the mind is that historical events are events of human experience. If this is so, experience will be the factor that distinguishes an event of history from a physical event. But difficulties at once arise. For example, *whose* is the experience that is the differentia of historical events? Presumably the actors'. But it is notoriously the case that the actors in history have frequently no adequate experience of the events to which their actions contribute. Presumably the American Civil War, the battle of Gettysburg and the death of Lincoln are historical events. But can we say in any intelligible sense that anybody experienced them in their entirety, or that any individual experience is a true record of them? What we experience as individuals is always a situation or series of situations, real no doubt and *eventful*, but probably in no case constituting exactly what we mean by an historical event. Nor can we say that an event in this sense is the class (or any sort of compound or totality) of all the individual experiences involved. Furthermore it is not an *ens rationis*, an idealization or artificial construct existing only in

the historian's mind. It is something actual, objective, individual.

In order to make clear what we mean by an historical event it will be necessary to anticipate certain ideas which we shall have to establish at a later stage. The most important of these is that of *action*. Action is such a familiar notion, and we have so little difficulty in applying it in practice, that it may seem a strange thing to assert that it is really one of the obscurest and most difficult of conceptions. Yet such is the case. Indeed it is hardly possible to explain what the conception means except by an elaborate comparison and contrast with something which it certainly does *not* mean, but which in certain superficial respects resembles it.

Let us return for a moment to physical events. In the last analysis a physical event is neither more nor less than a change of place. If it be asked : What is it that changes ? the answer will have to be simply: that which is susceptible of such change ; and this means (again in the last resort) nothing but the content of space—or, to be more exact, the content of space and time. The full significance of these remarks will be apparent later. But it should be clear even now that what we are describing is motion. This constitutes the subject-matter of physics.[1]

Now there is one characteristic of motion, as interpreted scientifically, on which special emphasis must here be laid ; and that is its impersonal char-

[1] The last sentence, of course, applies primarily to the classical mechanics, and to those parts of physical science which, in common with the classical mechanics, imply the continuity of physical change. How far the phenomena of radiation, which point to the concept of a discontinuous energy, would require a modification of our assertion is a question which must be touched upon later.

acter. When the exact nature and extent of this is realized, it will be seen that most of the devices of language by which we seek to give expression to the fact of motion are more or less inappropriate. They express more than can be discovered in the mere facts when observed by themselves. This would apply, for instance, to the familiar use of active verbs, as when we describe a sphere as *running* down an inclined plane. Here we have an instance of motion and an attempt to express the latter in words. What is peculiar in the attempt is the assumption it embodies that there is more present than change of place. If such change were all that we meant, then all we should want to express in words (or in some symbolic substitute for words) would be the fact that the object we call a sphere is to be found in one place at one time and in another place at another time. This in turn would analyse out into a series of impersonal statements, in the form of equations, intended to express the varying spatio-temporal relations which are observed to hold between certain otherwise quite uninteresting objects. In expressing the observed phenomenon thus we do not find the subject-predicate form of proposition free from possible objections ; [1] for this form tends to suggest an agent employed in some sort of activity. When we say ' the sphere runs ', so far at least as the verbal expression is concerned, we might as well be saying ' John runs '. Of course we know that between the running of John and the running of the sphere there is a profound difference—almost as great a difference as there is between the *nature* of

[1] As we shall see in the following chapter, the subject-predicate formula is not so faulty as some of its modern critics have claimed.

the sphere and the *nature* of John. But ordinary linguistic usage tends to conceal from us the extent of the difference between the two cases. When we speak of the sphere as running we can hardly help thinking of it as *doing* something and as being among the things whose nature it is to do something or to act. As physics views the event, all this is a complete misrepresentation, and in order to bring our expressions into line with what we actually observe, we should have to contrive some form of words designed to convey the truth that there exists a series of spatio-temporal relations between certain factors, of which the only thing we really know is that these relations exist between them.[1]

Historical 'Episodes' are Significant Totalities, knowable apart from the Exhaustive Detail of the Contributory Actions

Now when we come to history we find the whole situation reversed. Events can no longer be conceived as a series of positions or relations in space and time. On the contrary, every event includes or involves those factors, activity and agents, of which physics knows nothing. More particularly the agents in question are human beings, and the actions are *their* actions—not that these actions in themselves constitute what we ordinarily mean by history (although the term history might be applied to them), but that the events of history imply such actions. An historical event, then, might be described as a

[1] It must not be taken for granted that the subject-predicate form of statement is unable to convey the kind of truth implied in a relation or system of relations. Whether such a form is well adapted to the purposes of logical manipulation is another question.

significant whole of *action*—that is to say, a combination of individual actions of such a nature as to constitute or produce a well-defined episode in a series of similarly determined episodes.

Clearly then we cannot reduce the historical to the physical. But if so, we must treat it as a new departure and as implying a change of standpoint. That change is symbolized by the difference between motion and action. Taking action, therefore, as the rudimentary concept in history, we must add to this the idea of certain conjunctions and sequences in which the actions of many individuals coalesce in such a way that the product acquires a certain individuality and distinctness of definition, when considered in relation to similar products. As in other instances of complex totalities, it is not necessary to know in detail all the individual actions which contribute to an historical event. Indeed in most cases this is quite impossible; and if it were possible in any individual instance, so far from helping us, it would in all probability render a genuinely historical grasp of the situation very difficult. The surprising thing is that we can know and appreciate historical events without any such detailed information, and that there are many details in the absence of which the events could not possibly happen, but which we should never think of including in their historical composition.

If this should prove too much of a paradox, we have only to reflect that something of the same sort is true even in physics. Here, as we have seen, events consist of motions in space and time, and these in turn consist of relations which occur in series. Now a relation which actually *occurs* is a very real thing.

It is neither a fiction nor an abstraction, but a genuine eventuality. The fact remains, however, that a relation cannot occur *by itself*. There must be terms between which it holds good. Now in physics we know a great deal about the relations which represent successive phases in the continuous processes called movements, but we know nothing or next to nothing about the internal nature of the terms without which there could be no such relations. Indeed what we know about the terms is comprised in our knowledge of what happens to them—*i.e.* of the relations into which they successively enter.[1] Thus we are confronted by the curious paradox that whereas relations cannot *exist* without terms, we can study them independently of the latter, and we can know them more exactly.

A full realization of this truth is the fundamental thing in modern physics; and something rather similar holds of history. A failure to grasp the apparent paradox is at the bottom of some very serious historical misrepresentations, as well as of some false theoretical ideas on the subject. For example, Tolstoy, at the end of that masterpiece of imaginative literature, *War and Peace*, gives an account of what he conceives to be the true nature of history. His theory is that history is nothing but the accretion of infinitesimal accidents, and that a true view of it would require us to abandon the romantic idea of a well-ordered march of events. Above all, the control supposed to be exercised over human affairs by great characters, the rôle played

[1] So far as I am aware, it was Locke who first saw the importance (although he only half-divined it) of the fact that we can know relations better than we know their terms.

in history by what we call foresight, power and influence, is nothing but a myth of the historical fancy. Thus the significance of *action* is reduced to a minimum. Men do not *achieve* anything in the field of history. Things simply happen.

It is easy to see the connection between this view and what we have been saying about the way in which individual actions combine to constitute historical events. Tolstoy is laying all the stress on the minutiae, and refusing to discriminate among them. An historical event is simply a group of these. According to the view we are advocating, there is a *difference* among human actions, and some are more efficacious than others in producing those larger configurations which we call historical events.

To sum up : the events with which history deals are, we may say, what terms are in physics, *i.e.* they are the units that bear upon one another, the units of which the mutual bearing is, so to speak, the content of the story. In the case of physics, however, terms, as we have seen, have no nature *of their own*; and in so far as they can be said to have any nature at all, it accrues to them in the form of these self-same bearings or relations. Historical events are indeed related to one another in ways that serve to determine their individuality but not in ways that completely determine their inner content. Furthermore an historical event is not a mechanical product of its own components, and it can be known without any special knowledge of circumstances that enter integrally into it. What we mean by an historical sense is the ability to see these things (not so much in the abstract fashion in which they have been here set forth, as in connection with events themselves) ;

and the importance of this ability, from our point of view, lies in the fact that religion, whatever its nature may turn out to be, manifests its presence in the form of historical events. We have already refused to identify it with individual cults or with any class of the latter; none the less, religion cannot be understood apart from the religions of mankind. Hence the importance to be attached to a true estimate of history.

The Historical Method as distinguished from the Method of Physical Science

This must not be taken to mean that we accord any uniquely significant value to the historical method of inquiry or to the study of what is known as ' comparative religion '. Valuable as such studies are, they assuredly cannot of themselves tell us what religion is. What we have in mind is something rather different. It is that the nature of truth itself (and consequently the nature of our human insight into it) takes on a peculiar quality in the realm of historical fact. Once more the easiest way to bring this out is by a comparison with physical science. In the case of the latter, truth, as we apprehend it, is the product of correct analysis. It depends largely upon simplification, upon our power to reduce the mottled play of circumstance to typical cases—and these as few as possible. This does not imply that science is simple : it implies that it is simple as compared with human experience—that same experience which it seeks to elucidate.

Now the peculiar respect in which historical truth differs from scientific has to do with simplification.

For while the tendency to analytic simplification is fundamental to scientific method, it is the bane of historical inquiry. Every event of nature is a transcript, under special conditions, of every other—or at least of *certain* others. The aspect under which we view these events is that of their being representatives. They represent one another, and each of them represents those universal laws which are seen to express themselves indifferently in each. Such being the case, we are able to describe them in a rigidly stereotyped symbolism. The case is just the opposite with historical truth, where the fundamental characteristic of the event is its uniqueness. Every happening, however significantly connected with others, must be taken by itself. In this field nothing is a perfect representative of anything else : there are no substitutes in history. It is true that the first great exponent of the historical method, Thucydides, in what may be regarded as the manifesto of a newly-awakened historical conscience,[1] has drawn attention to the fact that history in a sense repeats itself. But of course he does not mean this literally, in the sense, for example, in which certain philosophers have maintained the periodic recurrence of identical world-cycles. What Thucydides had in mind was merely that from a study of past events we can gain insight into the future. In history nothing really

[1] Book I, ch. xxii : " And it may well be that the absence of the fabulous from my narrative will seem less pleasing to the ear ; but whoever shall wish to have a clear view both of the events which have happened and of those which will some day, in all human probability, happen again in the same or in a similar way—for those to adjudge my history profitable will be enough for me. And indeed, it has been composed, not as a prize essay to be heard for the moment, but as a possession for all time " (trans. by C. Foster-Smith in Loeb Classical Library).

recurs. Every event must consequently be considered in all its particularity, and this, in spite of what has been said as to the irrelevance of many concomitant circumstances, implies a certain inexhaustible variety of detail. The expedients of history, unlike the expedients of nature, are not limited. In dealing with physical truth the first requisite is to see what we can eliminate as irrelevant: in dealing with historical fact the first requisite is to make sure that we have omitted no essential feature. The besetting sin of the non-historical mind, when brought to bear upon the facts of history, is the tendency to oversimplification.

Sensitiveness to Significant Contrasts

Side by side with the historical sense we must place another qualification so different in nature as to suggest at times a positive incapacity for historical truth—a special sensitiveness to what may be described as significant contrasts. For, as we find, those who have been most richly endowed with this sensitiveness have often shown themselves to be unhistorically minded. It exists in two profoundly different forms, but it is only one of the two forms which is helpful, and indeed indispensable, to a genuine grasp of religious truth. None the less, there is something about the other that enables it too to throw light upon the nature of religion. Let us then consider both forms briefly, in order to bring out by contrast the character of the one with which we are specially concerned.

The Failure of 'Enlightenment' to sustain its own Significant Contrasts

The first of the two contrasted phenomena is to be found as a characteristic feature in what are known as periods of Enlightenment. The term 'Enlightenment' has generally been appropriated to a certain well-defined development of French and German culture in the eighteenth century, associated with the names of Rousseau and Voltaire, Diderot and d'Alembert, Nicolai and Moses Mendelssohn. But in most of its fundamental features Enlightenment is a periodically recurrent phenomenon of civilization. It is a product of over-maturity, and appears in the form of a revolt, on grounds of reason (not unaccompanied by sentiment), against established authority, usages and institutions. Indeed the spirit of revolt extends beyond what has actually been established to the conditions which have called it into being. Not only are the *solutions* to all sorts of problems, theoretical and practical, called in question ; the reality of the problems is itself disputed.

It is not every revolt of reason against the *status quo*, however, that can be rightly brought under the rubric of Enlightenment. What is more specifically characteristic of the phenomenon with which we are dealing is a kind of studied superficiality whereby the mind of the Enlightenment seeks to disguise a certain deeply rooted and very strongly felt sense of intellectual impotence. Enlightenment does not pretend to go to the bottom of things, or if it does, it is only to show how near the bottom is to the surface. What is seen, and seen with considerable clearness, is the fact that somehow all is not right with the

world. What is wrong is also seen with some clearness but without depth of insight. The result is a shallow form of criticism based upon the sense of contrast between the sordid realities of the existing order and an ideal order set up by reason, or by a rationally controlled imagination, as the negative counterpart of the former. In periods of Enlightenment truth appears in the characteristic form of destructive criticism.

There is a reverse side to the picture. As we have just seen, criticism is accompanied by an ideal counterpart, the two between them constituting (in one of its forms) what I have called a sense of significant contrasts. These contrasts are the perpetually recurring note of the French Illumination. They clothe themselves in a variety of literary artifices; but through them all we discern the stark form of Reason balancing a *this* and a *that*. Now it is a picture of the conventional life of the church seen through the eyes of a Huron (*L'Ingénu*); now the institution of marriage as it appears to a South Sea islander (*Supplément au Voyage de M. de Bougainville*). Or else a native of Sirius makes fun of the philosophers (*Micromégas*); or a professional parasite exposes the insincerities of our average respectability (*Le Neveu de Rameau*).[1]

But there is a fundamental fallacy in the significant contrasts of eighteenth-century Enlightenment. The sceptical bias in the end plays havoc with the sense of contrast itself. In the absence of any bed-rock principle of truth, any ultimate and indefeasible distinction between good and evil, the anti-

[1] For a further development of this line of thought *vide* an article by the author on Tolstoy, *International Journal of Ethics*, Oct. 1912.

thesis between the established order and the ideals of reason fades away into a confused sense of the equal worthlessness of all things, and there appears the dreary indifferentism of the humourist, whom the contrasts of experience and imagination provoke to laughter because beneath the semblance of a meaning they have none at all. Throughout the universe there is nothing upon which to build the edifice of life, because there has been found no object fit for reverence; and the whole emotional stress of the movement, in so far as it is not expended in ribaldry and malice, goes by another contradiction into passionate appeal for some abstract principle or some negation—pacifism, toleration, atheism.

The Religious Apprehension of Significant Contrasts

This brings us to the second form of the phenomenon with which we are dealing. The failure of Enlightenment to sustain its own significant contrasts finds its counterpart in the depth and indefeasibility of these contrasts as they appear to the religious mind. We have only to replace the picture of a Voltaire with that of a St. Paul or an Augustine to realize what is meant. In Christianity, as in all religions in which the fundamental characteristics of religion are clearly defined and highly pronounced (as we shall see, there are religions in which this is not the case), we are confronted by a stupendous dualism, which includes in one comprehensive sweep all the objects and interests and issues of man's life. There is here no mere sensepiquant, provocative it may be, of laughter or of indignation—of the

contrast between *this* and *that*; but a profoundly seated, comprehensive value-judgment, reinforced by the whole emotional equipment of the subject—a value-judgment in the light of which all that is known and felt and thought, everything that experience reveals or reflection brings home to the conscience, ranges itself on one side of a dividing-line or on the other.[1]

This great antithesis, of which the Augustinian dualism is perhaps the supreme attempt at a theoretical expression, is neither clear nor simple; but the difficulty which besets it from the standpoint of the understanding does not affect the distinction in its appeal to the religious consciousness. Briefly stated, the difficulty is as follows. What we are here dealing with is the idea of a fundamental duality in the

[1] Cf. the striking words of a writer to whose views frequent reference (not always favourable) will have to be made—Émile Durkheim. (The English translation leaves much to be desired.) " But if a purely hierarchic distinction is a criterion at once too general and too imprecise, there is nothing left with which to characterize the sacred in its relation to the profane except their heterogeneity. However, this heterogeneity is sufficient to characterize this classification of things and to distinguish it from all others, because it is very particular: *it is absolute*. In all the history of human thought there exists no other example of two categories of things so profoundly differentiated or so radically opposed to one another " (*The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Book I, ch. i, Eng. tr., p. 38). Cf. *ibid.* p. 40: " . . . The real characteristic of religious phenomena is that they always suppose a bipartite division of the whole universe, known and knowable, into two classes which embrace all that exists, but which radically exclude each other." The radical character of the division is used as an argument against that part of Tylor's animistic theory which has to do with the promotion of the souls of the departed into objects of worship through the fact of death. " By itself ", says Durkheim, " death has no deifying virtue " (p. 62). But the same writer is insistent that the idea of *deity* is not essential to religion, and he later admits that the dead *are* sacred (p. 410). His argument, therefore, does not disprove that death can transform the soul into an object of religious veneration, but only that it can account for the idea of *gods*.

nature of things, and a line of cleavage which we must suppose to be drawn rigidly and without compromise. On the one side is the divine being (or, in the absence of such a being, some equivalent) and all that the existence of a divine being or its equivalent implies—for example, holiness.[1] So far we are on secure ground. It is only when we come to the other side of the antithesis that we feel a sense of uncertainty.[2] The holiness in question, for example, is the holiness of God ; but God is a spirit ; and the antithesis of spirit is nature. God, however, is at the same time good ; and the opposite of good is evil. Does it follow that nature and evil are one and the same ? This is a conclusion which was vehemently resisted by the Fathers of the Christian Church. As the creation of the divine being, nature must be conceived as altogether good. But if so, what becomes of the antithesis ? Must not nature go over to the side of God as something characteristic of

[1] According to Durkheim, the claim of Buddhism to be a religion is based exclusively on its recognition of the dualism with which we are dealing. " In default of gods, it admits the existence of sacred things."

[2] As we shall see later, even in the earliest times, while holiness was the special attribute of the divine being and of everything which special association with that being invested with something of the same dread character, in the case of the latter—what we might call the *holy by association*—the attribute of holiness was sometimes difficult to distinguish from what we should now consider its natural opposite, that of *being accursed*. This is an aspect of the case which is not sufficiently taken into account by Durkheim in what he says as to the absolute heterogeneity of the sacred and the profane. True, he deals with the subject at a later stage (Book III, ch. v, § 4), but in a somewhat unconvincing manner, and the question recurs : How is it that the sacred, which is represented as standing out in such uniquely distinct antithesis to the profane, can itself comprehend another dualism so radical as that of the holy and the accursed ? These remarks are not meant to throw doubt on the uniqueness and absoluteness of the fundamental antithesis : they are only intended to illustrate the difficulty which the exact formulation of that antithesis entails.

Him and therefore holy? In this case, what is there left to represent the profane? Furthermore, granted that nature is holy, can we conceive it as *good* in the pregnant sense which the term acquires in the terrific conflicts of the moral life? If not, what do we mean by describing it as good at all? [1] Is not the more appropriate conception that of the ethically indifferent? Thus the antithesis reasserts itself as that between the sacred and the *secular*—a contrast that contains its own peculiar difficulties.

The Sacred and the Secular

Now without pursuing the subject further, I wish to point out the paradox of the situation. To begin with, there is something anomalous in the mere fact of an antithesis in which one member stands out with so much greater definiteness than the other. But the really surprising thing is that the difficulties and uncertainties should appear on that side of the dividing line which comprises all our ordinary objects and interests—the region of our physical environment and of our most characteristic moods and attitudes. It is as if the idea of the Divine, itself as clear as the noonday sun, were to cast a haze of obscuring light about the world of familiar things.

From this embarrassment one obvious way of

[1] Augustine wrestles desperately with the difficulty. All his problems come to a head in the conception of that *caro peccati*, sinful flesh, which is nevertheless God's good creature, and in the allied conception of concupiscence, which, while not a bodily state, is inseparable from a bodily condition. *Vide* the anti-Pelagian treatise *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione*. In one phase of his thought, he appears to resort to the naïve conception of a graded hierarchy of goods, with God at the one extreme and body, *i.e.* flesh, at the other. Cf. *Sermo* CLVI, 6.

escape is to relinquish the idea of God, whether deliberately or by default. But it is one thing to get rid of the theoretical *idea* of God : to divest ourselves of all those deeply rooted instinctive and emotional attitudes which for generations of mankind have terminated in some such idea is a very different matter. To succeed in this would imply the complete secularization of life. Now, as we shall see, the partial, and indeed the extensive, secularization of life is one of the characteristic phenomena of the modern world. But between such partial secularization and complete secularization there is a difference that is not a difference of degree. To extirpate the last remaining vestiges of the sacred would imply a drastic dealing with moral distinctions for which very few minds are sufficiently robust. It would imply the successful reduction of obligation to factors from which the element of the obligatory is completely absent. Against such a proceeding there can be no possible *a priori* objection. The one stipulation which must be made and enforced is that the displacement of the dualistic background of religion by an unrelieved naturalism be carried out with relentless rigour. This presupposes in the end that we must find ourselves beyond good and evil ; and it is the difficulty of accepting this position in all its literalness, and maintaining it with perfect consistency, that has proved the stumbling-block of ethical naturalism since the day when Callicles and Thrasymachus came to grief at the hands of Socrates. Only a few ultramontanes have ever even attempted to reach the position which the whole logic of the problem indicates as at once a maximal and minimal demand. The average solution is a crowning example

of the *ignava ratio*, the timid compromise of confused minds whereby values and obligations are retained and cherished, while every endeavour is made to deprive them of the only kind of sanction which can make them either valuable or obligatory.

Such an attitude of mind, although it does not by any means imply the subversion of everything religious in the conscious subject, does certainly serve to mark the limits of *religion* in the substantival sense. Where the theory of life and all ideals are entirely secular, instincts and emotions of an essentially religious character may still survive, but religion has broken down, and the adjectival qualifications of the religious life remain only by inadvertence. Furthermore, there is a sense in which, if persevered in sufficiently long, the secular attitude of mind is apt, by a subtle transformation, to subvert even such survivals. To do without God, from being an intellectual ideal, in time becomes a passion. At the same time it becomes necessary to find a substitute for Him and for everything that once grew up around the divine conception. Hence the rise in modern times of humanitarianism and the cult of progress, with its deadening of the old antitheses. We are of course as yet in no position to pronounce upon such movements ; and the difficulty and complexity of the problem will become at once apparent if we reflect that they comprise such diverse products as the cynical theism of Voltaire and the atheism of Diderot, the serious and conscientious agnosticism of Huxley and Spencer, the gravely earnest utilitarianism of J. S. Mill, and the exuberant Nietzschian transvaluation of all values.

The Antithesis within the Religious Field: 'Once-born' and 'Twice-born' Religions

But above all, the confusion of the situation is borne out by the fact that the tendency, which is characteristic of secularism, to tone down the fundamental antithesis, appears as a well-defined phenomenon within the history of religion itself. There are religions in which the fear of God is by no means a pronounced feature. There are those cheery religions which William James designates 'once-born', and which begin the work of religion by denying the reality and the awfulness of that dual aspect of things upon which so many of the older religions of mankind are based.

At this stage we can hardly claim to have earned the right to say of such once-born religions either that they are no religions at all (they assuredly are religions if there is any sense in which the plurality of religions will hold good), or that they do not truly represent religion. But if we cannot go so far as that, there is one thing upon which we may and must insist. We can never be in a position to define religion philosophically unless the antithesis in question—that antithesis upon which one set of religions takes its stand, and from which another set of religions appears to be trying to escape—is at least in some degree intelligible. There are those who say that the idea of holiness is utterly meaningless to them. To the extent to which this is true, such persons are precluded by some disability, natural or acquired, some inhibition of temperament or impoverishment of experience, from understanding

the issue upon which, one way or another, religion turns.

When we spoke of a sense of significant contrasts —we might almost have said *productive* contrasts —as an essential part of any man's equipment for the task of elucidating religion, the word 'significant' was meant to suggest something in the contrasts referred to which not only renders them in some degree genuine but invests them with the power of illuminating, and even *creating*, experience. In the case of the once-born religions the sheer anxiety to repudiate the tragic antithesis presupposed by a second birth seems to indicate a certain sensitiveness to that antithesis ; and if so, it reveals a common root (and that an essentially religious one) to both forms of religion. A sensitiveness to something vitally significant here, something more than the arresting contrast of a this *and* a that, something which, if there is anything in it or if there is in it what there appears to be, can make our experience as a whole *either* this *or* that—such is the sense of significant or productive contrasts, without which, if we are right, it is futile to seek to explain what religion is *per se*.

Concluding Considerations

In concluding this chapter I would only add that it is useless to search for any special point of departure that will exonerate us absolutely from the charge of dogmatism and special pleading. Least of all can we hope to escape such an imputation by confining ourselves to the positive methods of history and anthropology. These studies have much to tell

us about the religions of the world ; but, unaided by another method, they can tell us nothing whatever about *religion*—not even whether such a thing exists, or whether we have any right to the idea of it. To acknowledge this is not to yield unresistingly to the charge of dogmatic procedure or to minimize the seriousness of the accusation. The fact is that there is still one way in which we may hope eventually to evade the indictment ; but that is a way which involves not so much the starting-point as the conclusion. Every beginning must be to some extent arbitrary. What matters is not so much how or where we begin, but whether, once we have brought our inquiry to an end, it will be found that the resulting concept of religion is such as, all things considered, we had a right to expect. This implies that we must not go beyond the evidence of the argument as a whole. Our picture will be a true one in so far as it enables us to see more clearly what we saw confusedly before, and that means seeing where we were wrong, as well as where, without fully understanding it, we happened to be right. The criterion will be neither correspondence—that point-to-point relationship which here more than elsewhere is devoid of meaning—nor mere workability nor any narrowly logical coherence. Yet in a sense it will be all of these. It will be *coherence*, if by that we mean, not any sort of principle binding things together into a systematic whole, but rather the power of all things, by throwing light upon one another, to reveal the true character of each. And it will be *workability*, if religion can be shown to tell us not only what things can be done but what things it is worth trying to do—more particularly if it can tell us by what

changes in the fundamental assumptions the impossible becomes possible. Lastly, it will be *correspondence* if its ideal postulates have their realizable counterparts—not their images and copies—in the actualities of experience.

CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM OF METHOD

I HAVE spoken of the difficulty of finding a starting-point that will not expose me to the charge of dogmatism, and in this connection I have noticed the attempt to evade such a charge by a strict adherence to the *facts*. The difficulty is to know which facts are relevant and to what extent they are so. Here again we appear to be in a hopeless quandary. There is indeed one tempting suggestion of a way out. That suggestion is that the key to the nature of religion is to be found in its beginnings. Certainly the anthropological study of primitive religions has been of enormous value even from the standpoint of the philosophical problem. In availing ourselves of anthropological material, however, we must be on our guard against various confusions and unwarranted assumptions. Above all we must be careful how we respond to the lure of the primitive. It is a legitimate assumption, a warrantable working hypothesis, that the remote beginnings of any fundamental movement in human history are of great significance, and are calculated to throw light upon the nature of the movement as a whole. It is quite another matter to assume that in the primitive as such we have a reliable criterion, and that, for example, the further back we can go in the pre-historical development of

religion, the nearer we approach to the secret of what religion is and means.

Assumptions to be avoided and the Principles to be followed

Some such illegitimate assumption appears to me to mingle in the otherwise valuable work of Durkheim, who has definitely adopted antiquity as his guiding principle. It is true that Durkheim has employed this principle with circumspection, and that he has some inkling of the limits within which it can be used at all. But he has allowed it to influence his mind decisively in certain matters of primary importance, where the principle seems hardly adequate to the import of the question. Generally speaking, Durkheim's method is to apply his criterion negatively. That is to say, when he finds that certain ideas, commonly supposed fundamental to religion, are totally absent from certain well-defined historical or pre-historical religions, or that there are periods of religious development at which these ideas have not yet made their appearance, it is his practice to omit the features in question from the theoretical concept.

We are apt to suppose that a belief in some sort of god is of the very essence of religion; but we know that there are primitive religions in which no such belief exists. Again, as regards what is really primitive, we have accustomed ourselves to the thought that the essential feature is animism; but Durkheim can show that animism is not truly aboriginal. There are, he contends, phases of culture which appear to be in the line of religious develop-

ment, and which, therefore, it would be no abuse of language to describe as *religious*, where the conception of nature as living is not to be found.[1] Durkheim's conclusion is that the spirit-idea can no more be accepted as fundamental than can the god-idea.

These conclusions appear to me to embody, not so much, perhaps, false reasoning, as a somewhat inadequate conception of the problem and the relevant point of view. It is true that before we can claim the right to include a belief in spirits and in a god among the essentials of religion, we must show cause why these beliefs should be included. But it is equally true that having regard to the great part played by the beliefs in question, and the great importance so widely attributed to them by the religious consciousness of mankind, their rejection from among the essentials can hardly be made to rest upon chronology alone. If chronological considerations are to be adduced at all, the exponent of this method will have to meet the not unreasonable question whether in any matter affecting the interpretation of man's life, and of its social organization, the points of greatest illumination are likely to be found either in the tentative beginnings or in the latest developments. May not the former be highly inadequate attempts, including many positively false steps, from which there is no way out but a developing insight? And may not the latter sometimes be sophistications, or those distorting freaks of fashion that sophistication brings in its

[1] On the difficulty of refusing the designation 'religious' to certain ceremonies and ideas which it is equally difficult to think of as 'religious', cf. the admirable remarks of Miss J. Harrison, *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 4-6.

train? It is certainly an interesting and suggestive fact that both in primitive cults and in such advanced products of spiritual development as Buddhism and the ethical science of to-day, we find religions without a god. But not even such evidence as this entitles us to conclude definitively that the belief in deity is not an essential feature in religion.[1]

The crucial question, therefore, seems to be not only what the facts are, but what we are to make of them once they are known. The answer to such a question in the abstract is no simple matter; and at the best it will be impossible to do more than to indicate a few of the dangers to be avoided and the general principles to be observed. The inquiry has to do particularly with method, and it will be necessary to dwell somewhat upon this subject before we can hope to proceed.

The Problem of the Validity of Religion

The reason why method has come to be so important may be stated briefly. Our problem (that is to say, the problem of religion as determined for us by our philosophical point of view) concerns the *validity* of religion. What can be said for the claims that have been made on behalf of religion as an attitude of the human soul and an interpretation of the meaning of existence? Merely to state the issue in this way of itself suggests the kind of facts which

[1] In her *Epilegomena* Miss J. Harrison bases the distinction between religion and magic on the fact that the first is social, while the second is or may be individual. She adds: "The methods of all very early religions are necessarily magical, *i.e.* godless, but they are consecrated, made religious, by their being practised for the common weal" (*op. cit.* pp. 5-6).

have a bearing on the problem, and furnishes us with a starting-point. Since the question is one of validity, it is not at all obvious that historical priority and antiquity are the decisive factors. Furthermore, we are going to agree with Socrates that in a question of *right* mere suffrage can never be taken as conclusive.[1] It would appear, therefore, that the statistical method, in whatever form, will have, at least for the present, to be put aside. But a statement of the problem in terms of validity not only enables us to see what facts are of subordinate importance and what facts cannot be used as a definitive criterion ; it also reveals at the outset the kind of facts with which we shall be compelled to reckon.

Let us look at the matter in this way. The problem, as has just been stated, is the problem of validity. Now surely the first and most obvious question to put is the question why the problem of religion should assume just this form. Why is the validity of religion in question ? What are the *facts* which make it possible and necessary that there should be a question of validity here ? To these questions there are a number of simple and conclusive answers, none of them profound, none of them going beyond the realm of historical circumstance, but for this very reason all of them furnishing us with just that obvious kind of consideration which is most suitable as a starting-point.

The question before us, then, is the question why the *validity* of religion should be under investigation. In order to bring the issue vividly home to our minds, let us put the matter as follows. Suppose a

[1] *Gorgias*, 472, 474.

young man who has been brought up, as is usual among western peoples, to take a somewhat off-hand and superficial interest in religion, suddenly comes to realize that the thing he has been taught to accept in this easy and tolerant fashion is a thing that really makes supreme claims upon his allegiance—claims to belief and to personal conformity, which, if there is anything at all in religion, cannot be denied without vital consequences. It is true that all religions do not make such claims, or do not make them in the same way, or with the same degree of emphasis. But some religions do; and this is sufficient for the purposes of illustration. The question before our young man is a question of choice, by which we mean not only the question what religion he will choose, but whether he will choose to acknowledge the claims of religion at all.

What are the facts about religion which produce the problem of a choice? Obviously there are two such facts or sets of facts. First, that religion in its historical aspect is not one thing but many things. There are many religions. Hence there comes to be a problem of choosing among competing claimants. The plurality of religions is one of the facts of which we shall have to make use at the very outset. Secondly, that religion is not the only thing in life, and not the only thing that claims for itself the most uncompromising fealty. There is science, for example; there is art, and philosophy, each of which has a way of appearing to its devotees as if it were, perhaps not the only thing worth considering, but at any rate the one supreme thing. In particular, the viewpoint of religion has been challenged in modern times by science. This fact in itself,

and the further fact that the scientific challenge first occurred at a time when religion was already a long-established institution, are considerations that must be taken seriously into account.

The position of Christianity, in the supposed conflict between it and science, is very instructive. Christianity, on its theoretical side, offers a view of life containing many highly individual features and a few principles of the most comprehensive, and at the same time of the most uncompromising, nature. Science also, directly or indirectly, has had much to say about the interpretation of existence, and much that seems either at variance with Christianity, or, if not obviously so, at least so different in its point of view as to seem to render the Christian standpoint irrelevant and even meaningless. Now the question at issue between science and Christianity is of course a question of *right*; but questions of right, as we have been assuming, are not independent of questions of fact; and in the present case there are certain matters of fact that have a very intimate bearing upon the real issue.

It is a matter of fact, for example, that Christianity developed, historically, through its polemic with competing theories of life; but among the circumstances of the times in which this religion first saw the light, it happened that these competing theories were mostly, if not altogether, of the same order as Christianity itself. That is to say, they were either religions, or philosophical interpretations of life in which the religious point of view still largely prevailed. It is true that in the early days of Christianity there existed a very advanced science among the Greeks; but the theoretical issue for Christianity

never came to define itself as an issue between its own standpoint and Greek science, in the same decisive way in which this holds good, for example, of the modern controversy on creation *versus* evolution. Thus it came about that in the great formative period, when Christianity was busy discovering and moulding its doctrinal content, its chief opponents, as we have said, were like itself religions or religious movements. Of these we note in particular three—Judaism, Paganism and, by far the most long-lived and formidable, the numberless heresies that sprang in almost uninterrupted succession from the bosom of the church itself.

It is a truism that nothing brings out what there is of solid worth in any human movement so well as opposition. But it is no less certain that opposition is apt to bring out truths in a partial and one-sided fashion. It brings out just those aspects of the whole truth that have the most direct bearing upon the special controversy in hand. And so it is that Christian doctrine, as developed and formulated in the first four centuries of our era, bears unmistakable marks of the fact that the productive controversies which enabled and indeed compelled it to elaborate its views of life and to forge the weapons appropriate to their defence, were on the whole controversies with the Gnostics rather than with, let us say, the atomists and the astronomers,[1] the mathematicians [2]

[1] The voluminous polemic against astrology belongs to another category. It is part of a campaign against magic and imposture, which in turn finds its place in the general controversy with paganism, and has little to do with astronomy as such.

[2] The diatribe in Hippolytus's chief work against the science of number is of course directed, not at the mathematicians, but at the mystics, and belongs to the movement referred to in the previous note.

and the biologists. It was left to the philosophical sceptic, Sextus Empiricus, to include mathematicians, astronomers and physicists, in one encyclopædic indictment.[1]

The full importance of this was seen only when the advent of the scientific Renaissance found Christianity quite unprepared, by reason of her training, to face and deal with the implications of a mechanistic view of nature. Of this unpreparedness we are still reaping the fruits. The situation is marked by the inability of each party to see what is significant in the standpoint of the other, and by well-meaning but not very convincing attempts to show that there is no real issue between science and religion. In spite of all that can be said to the contrary, the question is assuredly not closed. Mechanism is a fact of nature, whether or not it is the nature of all fact; and since this is so, Christianity must be made to say what she thinks of it. At the same time, in demanding this of her we must remember her historical position. We are asking her to pronounce judgment upon issues with which, for historical reasons, neither her Founder nor the apologists responsible for the elaboration of her doctrinal content were ever called upon in any serious sense to deal; and it is precisely these issues which, under the conditions of modern life, have become paramount.

The recognition of this will mean (so far as our inquiry is concerned) a vast simplification of doctrinal issues. Such simplification must not be taken to imply that I dispute the view of those who, like Newman, maintain that Christianity cannot be understood apart

[1] Not that Sextus condemns science in every sense of the term. On this point *vide* Paul Elmer More, *Hellenistic Philosophies*, p. 329 *sq.*

from dogma.[1] On the contrary, in so far as Christian dogma is the product not of arbitrary ecclesiastical fiat, but of prolonged and serious thought directed to certain well-defined and, in some cases, inevitable problems, it belongs in a sense to the general category of constructive philosophical thinking, and must be dealt with as such. At the same time it is impossible not to see that certain ideas, all of them very familiar, all of them vital to Christianity, are fundamentally involved. For instance, from the standpoint of the issue between Christianity and mechanism, it is a question of primary importance whether God is a person, whether, consequently, personality is not only something real, but something on the reality of which all else depends. There seems to be no such immediate urgency as regards the question whether God is three persons in one, or whether the Father and the Son are to be considered identical, or only similar, in substance.

The Method to be followed in dealing with the Problem of Validity

Such, then, being some of the ways in which questions of fact will be found to bear upon the problem of validity, let us turn now to the question whether there is any general method of dealing with facts from this point of view. Obviously the method (if there be any such) will vary somewhat with the particular fact or set of facts involved. We could hardly be expected to deal in exactly the same way with the fact that there are many religions which

[1] *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, Part IV, " History of my Religious Opinions ". Cf. the distinction between *dogma* and *theology*, pointed out by Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. i, pp. 9-11 (Eng. tr., 1894 ed.).

challenge one another, and the fact that all religions alike are in some sense challenged by science. A moment's thought will show that we have here two kinds of problem, which, while they are in the end inseparable, present such different sides of the question that they had best be treated separately. And this, in effect, is my intention. For the present, therefore, I shall defer the consideration of religion in its relation to science, and confine myself to the set of problems arising out of the plurality of religions.

The question that at once asserts itself is the question how, in view of the fact that there are many religions, we are to estimate the claims of any one? In order to give definiteness to the inquiry, I shall formulate the problem with special reference to the religion which is nearest to the western mind, Christianity. What can be said for Christianity, in view of the fact that other religions exist? There are many possible answers to the question; but the significant answers are those that involve some specific method of inquiry. Of such methods three in particular deserve notice. They are what I shall call (1) the eighteenth-century method; (2) the historical or comparative method; and (3) the method of anthropology.

The Eighteenth-Century Method

The eighteenth-century method has been so designated, not because it is peculiar to the eighteenth century,[1] but because it is so highly characteristic

[1] 'Eighteenth-century thinking' is very prevalent in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. An excellent illustration of the method in

of the thought of this period. In itself it really represents a type of mind, and a way of looking at all problems, which are to be found in every age, but of which the eighteenth century offers perhaps the choicest illustrations. This method is well exemplified in Voltaire's attitude to religion.

In the last analysis the procedure may be described as an attempt to ascertain the truth about religion by comparing already existing religions and eliminating their differences. The residue which they have in common is then abstracted and pronounced to be religion in its pure and primitive form, what it was before it was corrupted by priestcraft, and what in its essential nature it *is*. When the purgation is complete, all that remains is reducible to a supposed universal belief in the existence of God and a supposed universal morality. This, it is contended, is all that is demanded of religion by reason. Reason insists on this much but on nothing more. Morality and a belief in God, therefore, constitute the content of natural, *i.e.* primitive religion, and of true religion everywhere.[1]

The eighteenth-century method is vitiated by a number of fallacies. In the first place it is unhistorical. It confuses the kind of simplicity which is due to abstractness with the simplicity of primitive thinking. It is wrong in attributing the product of its own reflective processes to the processes of un-

question occurs in Durkheim's work already repeatedly referred to. "Leaving aside all conceptions of religion in general, let us attempt to disengage that which they have in common; for religion cannot be defined except by the characteristics which are found wherever religion itself is found" (Eng. tr., p. 24).

[1] An excellent summary of Voltaire's views will be found in Lévy-Bruhl, *History of Modern Philosophy in France* (Eng. tr., pp. 180-198).

sophisticated minds. The result is an inversion (and perversion) of history.

In the second place the eighteenth-century method is psychologically false in its assumption that primitive religion is based upon considerations of reason rather than upon instinct.

Further, the assumption of a universal belief in the existence of God is not borne out by the facts; and if it were, the argument would be a feeble one. As it is, the eighteenth-century method appeals in vain to the *consensus gentium*.[1]

In addition to these errors in the understanding of fact, there are several logical fallacies involved in this attempt to apply a merely inductive method. These fallacies are all based on a complete failure to understand the nature of truth in its relation to consistency, contradiction and difference. The underlying assumption is that when two or more beliefs or systems of belief differ they must all alike be false, or at least that in so far as they differ the truth is not likely to be found in any one of them.

Now from the standpoint of strict logic there is no reason in the world why divergent propositions, unless in their relations they constitute certain types of logical opposition, should not all alike be *true*. Difference does not imply incompatibility; and in this case the differences may be no more than different aspects or degrees of the truth. The possibility of there being *degrees* of truth and error is one which seems on the whole to have been overlooked

[1] On this point see the remarks of Hegel, *Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, § 71 (English translation by Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, pp. 134-135).

or tacitly rejected, with most disastrous results.[1] This way of looking at things implies that true and false constitute a rigid disjunction, so that everything must be either the one or the other—must be so altogether and without qualification.[2] The assumption is grievously erroneous, but there is enough truth bound up with it to make it worth while pausing to disentangle the strands.

Criticism of this Method: it fails to see that there is a Truth of Concepts and a Truth of Propositions

In considering the nature of truth and its relation to what we must regard as in some sense its opposite, falsehood, we encounter at the very outset one question to which it is of the utmost importance that we should find the correct answer. The question is: What is that to which we impute either truth or falsity? Most philosophers from Aristotle to Locke, and from Locke to the logicians of the present day, would answer: 'the proposition'. But there have been thinkers like Hegel who have taken another view. Indeed, Hegel goes so far as to maintain that the propositional form always has a falsifying effect, and that therefore in a sense all propositions are

[1] To take one's stand only on what is common to all religions is to argue that all differences must not only be false, but must be *equally* false; and this is to confuse impartiality with neutrality. *Vide* Baron von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 6-7.

[2] A striking instance occurs in a remark quoted by Carpenter (*Comparative Religion*, p. 24) from Broughton's *Dictionary of All Religions*, 1745: ". . . The first general division of Religion is into True and False"; and ". . . the chapter of False Religions is by much the longest in the History of the religious opinions and practices of mankind".

false.[1] For him truth resides not in the proposition, considered as such, but in the concept: [2] and the criterion is not anything that can be described as characteristic of an *assertion*, but rather the adequacy of the concept as a characterization of reality. The difference between the two views, then, is that between something which is characteristic of an assertion and something which is characteristic of a concept.

Now it is obvious that the way in which truth can be said to characterize a concept is very different from the way in which it can be said to characterize an assertion. There are many propositions which, in spite of Hegel, we do not hesitate to describe categorically as either true or false, but of which we could not possibly assert that they are both false and true. On the other hand there are few concepts, if any, of which this is so. Take, for example, my conception of justice. Is it true or false? Almost certainly, at the best, it is not true without being at the same time to some degree false; and, at the worst, it is not likely to be false without being at the same time to some degree true. The same could hardly be said of the proposition: 'Caesar crossed the Rubicon'.

It is true that what I have called "*my* concept of justice" is not exactly the kind of thing that Hegel meant by a concept (*Begriff*). It is more likely to be an instance of what he called a 'rough idea', an 'impression' (*Vorstellung*); but, as he is never tired of telling us, the 'rough idea' is only another 'form' of the same thing of which the 'concept' is the perfect example; they are both 'forms' of *thought* (*der Gedanke*). And so I think on the whole

[1] Cf. *Encyclopädie*, pp. 31, 115. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 33.

the illustration will stand. But if not, it can be modified in such a way as to render it more adequate. Thus, independently altogether of *my* conception of justice, there will be a conception of justice which is not in any private sense mine or anybody else's, but is an objective, ideal aspect of universal morality. In so far as this is so, the concept of justice is true. That is to say, it is true of morality that it includes justice, and neither justice nor morality is an arbitrary or variable thing. But on the other hand, in so far as justice is only a particular aspect and not the *whole* of morality, to that extent it is an inadequate, and therefore a not altogether *true*, characterization. Morality as a whole, although it is in a true sense *invariable*, is yet something so *varied* and flexible that it cannot be compressed within the limits of any one of its own aspects. At the same time it is impossible that it can have particular aspects at all unless these in turn have about them something fixed and stereotyped. They must at least be *definite*. Hence the very condition which renders them fit to characterize morality makes it inevitable that they should in a sense falsify the nature of the thing which they thus characterize.

From all this it will appear that while there is a sense in which truth and falsehood occur in a relation of simple disjunction, there is also a sense in which they do not so occur. Rather, in everything which admits of either, there is something of each. Now the question must be put whether both of the senses in which truth and falsity may be understood are legitimate. There is something highly unsatisfactory in the mere suggestion that there may be two kinds of truth or that truth may assume two

forms which are not in the end reducible to one. Let us take up the two senses in detail.

It will be noticed that a certain caution was observed in the statements that have just been made. Thus we spoke of there being *many* propositions which we look upon as being either true or false, but certainly not as being both. In order, however, that the statement should be of any real value to us, it ought to tell us something not about *many* but about *all* propositions ; or at least it ought to indicate how we can know which propositions are of the kind described and which are not. Is there any way of making our assertion more definite ?

The Treatment of Propositions in the Traditional Logic

A very interesting feature of propositions can be discovered by considering how they are treated in the traditional logic. This is a matter which has been so badly misunderstood that it will be necessary for us to dwell upon it at what may seem a somewhat disproportionate length. Since Bacon set the example, it has been the fashion among philosophers to vilify the traditional logic. Unfortunately there is only too much in the so-called ' formal logic ' to justify this attitude ; but the general neglect of the subject by responsible thinkers has led not only to ignorance but to much serious misrepresentation. Such misrepresentation is nowhere more pronounced than in what is frequently said about the traditional theory of predication.

Let us take a typical illustration. In his Lowell Lectures, entitled *Our Knowledge of the External*

World, Mr. Bertrand Russell draws up the following indictment:

> " Traditional logic, since it holds that all propositions have the subject-predicate form, is unable to admit the reality of relations; all relations, it maintains, must be reduced to properties of the apparently related terms ".

And the writer adds:

> " There are many ways of refuting this opinion; one of the easiest is derived from the consideration of what are called ' asymmetrical ' relations ".[1]

After explaining that asymmetrical relations are relations like those denoted by the expressions, *husband*, *father*, *before*, *after*, *greater*, *to the right of*, which, if they hold between A and B, never hold between B and A, Mr. Russell goes on to show how such relations cannot be expressed in the subject-predicate form of the proposition. He proves his point as follows:

> " A symmetrical relation which is transitive,[2] such as equality, can be regarded as expressing possession of some common property, while one which is not transitive, such as inequality, can be regarded as expressing possession of different properties. But when we come to asymmetrical relations, such as before and after, greater and less, etc., the attempt to reduce them to properties becomes obviously impossible. When, for

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 47.

[2] " A relation is said to be *transitive* " (to quote Mr. Russell's definition) " if, whenever it holds between A and B and also between B and C, it holds between A and C " (*Our Knowledge of the External World*, p. 48).

example, two things are merely known to be unequal, without our knowing which is greater, we may say that the inequality results from their having different magnitudes, because inequality is a symmetrical relation; but to say that when one thing is *greater* than another and not merely unequal to it, that means that they have different magnitudes, is formally incapable of explaining the facts. For if the other thing had been greater than the one, the magnitudes would also have been different, though the fact to be explained would not have been the same. Thus mere *difference* of magnitude is not *all* that is involved, since, if it were, there would be no difference between one thing being greater than another, and the other being greater than the one. We shall have to say that the one magnitude is *greater* than the other, and thus we shall have failed to get rid of the relation 'greater'. In short, both possession of the same property and possession of different properties are *symmetrical* relations, and therefore cannot account for the existence of *asymmetrical* relations." [1]

Let us take up Mr. Russell's indictment point by point. To begin with, he asserts that according to the traditional logic all propositions must have the subject-predicate form. This is true so far as it goes; but it is very far from being the whole truth about propositions as understood in the formal logic; and to represent it as the one essential point is seriously to misstate the case. Strictly speaking the subject-predicate relation is one aspect of the proposition,

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 48-49.

which appears in Aristotle's treatise entitled *Categories*, where the writer is dealing with language, and is trying to classify the chief kinds of predicates that may be asserted of any subject of discourse.[1] This form of expression is not the thing emphasized in *De Interpretatione*, the treatise that deals expressly with the proposition. What must be acknowledged is that the subject-predicate form is the only one recognized in actual practice by the formal logic; and this, of course, is a perfectly damning circumstance, if, as Mr. Russell asserts, there are propositions which cannot be expressed in this form. Let us look into the point.

Mr. Russell admits that there are certain kinds of relations, viz. transitive symmetrical relations, which may be regarded as expressing possession of a common property, and others, viz. intransitive symmetrical relations, which may be regarded as expressing possession of different properties. These admissions are supposed to represent the meaning, and the only meaning which can be assigned to propositions of the kind referred to, when expressed in the subject-predicate form. That is to say, Mr. Russell appears to think that the assertion "A is equal to B" may be taken to mean "A and B constitute a class possessing the common property of equality"; while the assertion "A is not equal to B" may be taken to mean "A and B constitute a class possessing the common property of inequality".

[1] The importance of the doctrine of 'categories' has been greatly over-emphasized. To invest the doctrine with the significance of a metaphysical, or even a logical theory, is to overstate it, and to bring it, unnecessarily, into conflict with the metaphysical doctrine of Form and Matter.

Now putting aside the minor question how far A's equality with B and B's equality with A may be considered to constitute a property that is common to A and B, and the corresponding question how far A's inequality to B and B's inequality to A may be regarded as constituting a common difference, we must remark that in neither case is the assertion such as Mr. Russell suggests; nor can it by any possibility be so construed. The interpretations which he proposes as possible are not interpretations at all, but totally different assertions, and assertions of doubtful authenticity. Thus the original propositions are (1) "A is equal to B" and (2) "A is not equal to B". But the first of these propositions does not assert that A is possessed of a property, equality, which it holds in common with B; nor does the second assert that A is possessed of a property, inequality or difference, which it holds in common with B. Strictly speaking, the 'property' in question (and according to Aristotle it is not a property at all, but a relation—indeed it is the very type of the category of relation)[1] is neither equality nor difference, but, in the one case, A's equality, in the other, its inequality, *with B*. All that is meant according to Aristotle's doctrine of the categories is that one of the things that can be asserted about A is its equality or inequality, as the case may be, *with something else*—that is to say, a relation. In a complete statement (it is true Aristotle's statements are not always complete) the specification of the something else in question is a perfectly essential part of the assertion,[2] since the statements "A is equal" and "A is equal to B"

[1] *Categories*, 6 b 20 *sq.*

[2] *Op. cit.* 6 a 36 *sq.*

are two different propositions. In the case of the latter, the predicate is not the ' property ' of equality, but the relation " equal to B ". This is a point which Mr. Russell does not appear to appreciate. If expanded, the proposition would read: " A (the symbol of some presumably existing thing capable of possessing qualities and of standing in relations) is characterized by the relationship of equality in which it stands to B ". Doubtless such an assertion is clumsy, and does not lend itself to the processes of logical manipulation which a more cunning symbolism renders possible ; but the statement expressed in the subject-predicate form *means* precisely the same thing that it would mean if expressed in a symbolism appropriate to the logic of relations.

And now we come to the concluding step in the argument. There is nothing we have said about symmetrical relations and the possibility of expressing them in the subject-predicate form which does not apply, *mutatis mutandis*, with equal force to asymmetrical relations. For instance, the proposition " A is greater than B " means simply that among the things that can be asserted of A is that it is greater than B. The predicate here, " greater than B ", is again the very type of a relation as understood by Aristotle ; and if, in his weakness for abbreviated expressions (" greater ", " equal ", etc.), he frequently omits all mention of the correlative involved, his definition of relationship shows that this is always implied.[1] All that Mr. Russell says about the impossibility of reducing asymmetrical

[1] *Categories*, 6 b 28 *sq.* It is true that Aristotle admits that there is sometimes no converse relation, but this is because the original relation is not accurately expressed.

relations to properties is entirely beside the mark; for surely it never occurred to Aristotle that the subject-predicate form of expression implied any such futile and distorting reduction. The point of Mr. Russell's contention is that asymmetrical relations like before and after, greater and less, cannot be expressed in the subject-predicate form, because these relations cannot possibly be represented as properties common to the terms involved. The answer is that this impossibility, which everyone would admit, is precisely the point brought out by the subject-predicate form of proposition. Or, if this is going too far, at least we may say that the subject-predicate form serves as well as any other to bring out this point.

Let us look at the matter as follows. From the standpoint of the logic of relations, the proposition in question consists of two (or it may be more) 'terms' and a relation or relations between them. Now Mr. Russell's argument assumes that if the proposition is to appear in the subject-predicate form, the relation must appear as the predicate, and must be ascribed as a common property to the different terms involved. The latter presumably will take their place as a substantival group of subjects. According to this rendering, the proposition "A is greater than B", in order to assume the subject-predicate form, would have to appear as the proposition "A and B constitute a class having the common property of being greater"—which obviously, besides being a travesty of the subject-predicate form, is not the meaning of the original proposition. Mr. Russell errs in supposing that because two substantival entities, A and B, appear in

the statement, the statement must necessarily be about *A and B*, and that on the subject-predicate view the only possible statement about them must have to do with some property which they possess in common. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the proposition "A is greater than B", understood in the subject-predicate sense, there is only one substantival term.[1] This is the subject-term A. B is not a term at all (far less a subject-term), any more than "greater" is the predicate of the proposition. The subject-predicate form may therefore be here regarded as a device, and a legitimate device, whereby it is possible to express an asymmetrical relation by referring it as a whole to one substantival factor—the other appearing as a defining element in the predicated relation.[2]

The purpose of this lengthy digression is to defend the proposition as formulated by the traditional logic from the charge of being unable to express certain very obvious and important kinds of statement. It was necessary to show that the charge is false, because the significance of what we are about to deduce from the nature of the proposition depends in large part upon our right to consider the proposition as a universal vehicle of thought.

[1] It is an unfortunate accident of language that the same word, 'term', should be employed in the logic of relations to indicate what Aristotle calls the ὑποκείμενον and in the traditional logic as a translation of the Aristotelian ὅρος.

[2] Mr. Russell's criticism illustrates a double tendency everywhere observable in recent criticisms of the formal logic, first to interpret that logic from the standpoint of the class-view, and then to condemn it as a bad exponent of the latter.

In Predication Truth and Falsity are Disjunctive Characteristics

The point then upon which all these lines of reasoning converge is the following. The proposition in the traditional logic always assumes the form of an assertion in which something (by no means always a property or a quality) is attributed to something else. This act of attribution is known as predication; and the special feature which concerns us here is the fact that the subject to which the predicate is attributed, affirmatively or negatively, is to be understood either in the whole, or else in part, of its extent. The words 'whole' and 'part', although they are words which would naturally refer to *spatial* distinctions, have no such sense as used by Aristotle, but refer rather to the instances in which the subject occurs. Thus they are equivalent to 'all' and 'some'.[1] Now this arrangement has the marked advantage that for every proposition so expressed there is another proposition which is the exact logical contradictory of the first. This means that of any two such propositions one or other must be true, but that both cannot be true at the same time. Affirmation and negation are the characteristic

[1] This feature of the Aristotelian logic has been specially criticized by exponents of the modern logic—particularly the inclusion of singular propositions with universals. The criticism again shows a misunderstanding of Aristotle based on the tendency just noticed to condemn his logic as a bad representative of the class-view. Errors of this sort might have been avoided if it had been observed that for Aristotle quantity as well as quality is a characteristic, not of terms, but of the copula, or, more exactly, of the assertion as such (*De Int.* 17 b 11-12). This statement is enough to show how far from the Aristotelian conception is the whole denotative tendency, whether embodied in Sir William Hamilton's quantification of the predicate, in Jevons's equational theory, or in the class-view.

signs of the disjunctive nature of truth and falsehood: to every affirmative proposition there corresponds a negative, to every negative an affirmative.[1] It will thus be seen that the Aristotelian proposition is a device of language whereby the true and the false are bound to appear in the relation of logical disjunctives. Amenability to this disjunctive character is the *differentia* of the proposition, which Aristotle actually defines in terms of the disjunction itself.[2] There is no question here of *degrees*: there are no qualifications of any sort. So far as logical implication is concerned, we are compelled to treat every proposition as either true or false, although we may not be called upon to decide whether it is the one or the other. This Aristotelian conception is precisely the conception of modern logic,[3] and it is the conception which, distorted and inaccurately applied, lies at the bottom of eighteenth-century thinking. The treatise *De Interpretatione* is a detailed study of implication from this point of view.

The Distinction between Truth of Predication and Truth of Terms

Apparently then the disjunctive character goes naturally with truth and falsehood, in so far as these are adjuncts of the proposition—that is, in so far as *true or false* is something which every significant assertion must *be*. The question which we have now to consider is whether there is any

[1] *De Int.* 17 a 31-34. [2] *De Int.* 17 a 1-3.

[3] With the Aristotelian definition compare Mr. Russell's "A form of words which must be either true or false I shall call a *proposition*" (*Our Knowledge of the External World*, p. 52. Cf. *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 75).

sense in which the ideas of true and false apply, other than that of antithetical attributes in affirmative and negative propositions. That such is the case can be easily shown. Let us take the propositional function " S is P " and see whether we can give it a concrete filling. Suppose, to begin with, S stands for Napoleon Bonaparte. Our problem has to do with the value we shall assign to P, and may be stated as follows: Are there some values of P which will render the proposition true, and others which will render it false?

It will be observed that this question implies a conception of truth and falsehood (whether justified or not) quite different from that implied in the theory of predication. There the true and the false had to do entirely with the relation in which propositions stood to one another—propositions, moreover, having identical terms and differing only in the relations of the latter. Here the question turns not upon the mutual relation of propositions having identical terms, but upon the value assigned to the terms of any proposition, and more particularly upon the value assigned to the predicate.

To pursue the illustration further, suppose we assign to the predicate in this particular proposition the value ' virtuous '. We have now the proposition " Napoleon is virtuous "; and the problem is to determine in what way the ideas of truth and falsity are to be brought in. It is obvious that the assignment of a value to the terms has made a difference. For example, in the previous case we saw that every proposition must be either true or false, and that none can be both. But this is no longer obvious with regard to the proposition as now interpreted. Thus

it may not be possible with truth to assert of Napoleon either that he is virtuous or that he is not. The case is much more complicated. Both propositions may be true at once or both may be false; and in a sense it may be the case that both propositions are true *and yet* that neither is true. How are these apparent anomalies to be explained?

When we assert of the proposition "S is P" (whatever these symbols may mean) that it must be either true or false and that it cannot be both, what we are thinking of is the statement, considered strictly as a statement, and with as little regard as possible for the precise value of the terms contained in it. The question of truth or falsity involves only two things, the quantity and quality of the proposition, and, as we have seen,[1] both of these go with the copula or with the assertion as a whole. Nothing else has any bearing on the question. Thus it may be that the predicate is something that admits of quantitative variation. There may be more or less of it, and the more or less may vary in infinite degrees. But this is an entirely irrelevant consideration. If the symbols stand for the proposition we are considering, its truth or falsehood (from the strictly logical point of view) does not depend upon the question *how* virtuous Napoleon may be. The statement holds (or fails to hold) with exactly the same force, whether he should prove to be a paragon of virtue, or to have only enough of that commodity to give him precedence over Elagabalus. The reason why it should be so is that the question of truth or falsehood in this case turns not upon the right to attribute *virtue* rather than the *opposite of virtue* to

[1] *Vide* note above, p. 68.

anyone, but upon the obligation to *attribute* virtue (or indeed anything whatever) rather than to *deny* it. The antithesis, as Aristotle so clearly realized, is between affirming and denying, irrespective of what it is that we deny or affirm; and the conditions of such affirmation and negation are entirely formal. That is to say, we are not compelled (or permitted) either to affirm or to deny anything in its own right, but only as the result of some other denial or affirmation. Truth regarded from this point of view we may call *the truth of the copula.*

Now in the case of Napoleon, considered from the other point of view, all this is reversed. The question is no longer whether we are compelled by certain previous statements either to affirm or to deny some particular statement, but whether the predicate is a true designation of the subject. Here quantitative considerations, or considerations of adequacy, may be of the greatest importance, not as regards the copula, but as regards the *predicate.* Thus we may be willing to concede that Napoleon possesses virtues, and to that extent is virtuous, without thereby agreeing that he is a virtuous man. In this case the propositions "Napoleon is virtuous" and "Napoleon is not virtuous" may both be true. Or it may be a question whether Napoleon's virtue or want of it is of a sufficiently distinctive character to warrant us in attributing either the one or the other to him. If so, neither of the assertions may be true. It will be seen that what we are considering is, as has just been stated, the truth of the predicate, and not the formal compulsions of affirmation and denial. To the truth of the copula we must therefore now add *the truth of the predicate.*

This must not be supposed to imply that there are two kinds of truth (for both reduce to one and the same, the right, namely—and the obligation—to make assertions, to think certain thoughts), but rather that certain considerations become, or cease to be, relevant, according as the question of truth is raised in connection with the act of predication itself or with the meaning of that which is predicated.

Application of the above Distinction in the Study of the Different Religions

Now when we return to the question out of which this logical digression arose, the question, namely, of the truth of the different religions and religious beliefs, it is of the greatest importance that we should realize the nature of the distinctions involved in the problem. The question is further complicated by the fact that the special proposition which in this instance must be considered with a watchful eye upon the distinction between the truth of the predicate and the truth of the copula, is a proposition which, unlike that about Napoleon, has to do with truth itself; for it is the *truth* of religion that we are considering. What we have to make sure of is, therefore, *the truth about the truth.*

The eighteenth-century view of religion appears to be based on the idea that agreement (or identity) and difference are to be taken as the marks of truth and falsehood respectively. At first sight, and when stated in this baldly analytical fashion, such an idea seems too absurd to be taken seriously. On what ground (it will be asked) either of reason or of experience can it be assumed that because a number

of things agree they must to that extent be true, and that the various respects in which they differ must all alike be indications of falsity? Clearly this doctrine finds no justification in either of the conceptions of truth we have been examining; but it is possible that the explanation may be found in a perversion of the one and a complete failure to take the other into account.

That the eighteenth-century view overlooks that conception of the truth which we have called the truth of the predicate is plain from what has been already said. Religion is not seen to be capable of varying in degree of adequacy or completeness: it is not something which, like the Kingdom of God, can appear alike in the grain of mustard seed and in the tree under which all the fowls of heaven find shelter. Rather it is identified with a certain formula (or set of formulae) in reference to which we must put the unvarying question: Is this the formula of all religions or is it not? If the latter, then it is no part of true religion.

Their inability to look at the matter except from one point of view has blinded thinkers of the eighteenth-century type to an important aspect of the case—the fact, namely, that a religion may be a true religion, in the sense implied in the truth of the predicate, even although its doctrinal content is not altogether true. Indeed this may be so even in the absence of any very clearly formulated doctrine. The elaboration or simplification of a creed may be the task of centuries; but surely it is not necessary to wait until the labour is completed before it becomes possible even to ask of the religion in question whether it is a true religion. If it were so, it would

fare ill with most of the great historical religions; and the failure to see this is another instance of the lack of historical sense in eighteenth-century thinking.

Apparently, then, the eighteenth-century view turns upon something supposed to be characteristic of a true doctrine—for it is with doctrine that we have here to do.[1] The distinguishing mark of truth is taken to be universality of acceptance. This, again, implies that the standpoint of the predicate is not taken into account. That is to say, the adequacy of any doctrine as a characterization of religion *within the limits of that doctrine* is a possibility that is overlooked; and attention is concentrated exclusively on certain external relations in which the doctrine, considered as a professed assertion of truth, stands to certain other doctrines, similarly regarded.

The possibilities of such external relation are easily enumerated. Indeed, the only cases that concern us here are two. They are what are called by the formal logic the contradictory and the contrary; and they may be stated as follows. The propositions "S is P" and "S is not P" are contrary to one another when the first means "S is P in every instance in which S occurs", and the second "S is not P in any instance in which S occurs". In the second place, the propositions "S is P" and "S is not P" are contradictory of one another when the first means "S is P in every instance in which S occurs", and the second "S is not P in some instances in which S occurs", or when the first

[1] Voltaire is, of course, perpetually engaged in ridiculing dogma, but the religion he advocates is one which rests upon a doctrinal basis, viz. belief in God.

means "S is P in some instances in which S occurs", and the second "S is not P in any instance in which S occurs". Now whether we are familiar with the rules of formal logic or not, a brief inspection of these types of logical difference and their mutual implications will reveal the fact that while in the case of contraries and contradictories alike both assertions cannot be true, in the case of contraries one or other may be true, and in the case of contradictories one must be true. The eighteenth-century method of determining the truth of religion, therefore, comes to this. Difference is taken as the mark of falsity; but the only sense in which it can ever rightly be considered such is that of logical difference, *i.e.* difference between propositions having the same subject and predicate or dealing with the same subject from mutually exclusive points of view. Now of the two forms of logical difference, contrariety and contradiction, neither proves the falsity of *both* propositions involved, and the latter demands the truth of one.

But, it will be said, surely the acute thinkers whom we are criticizing cannot have overlooked anything so obvious. Is not our criticism based on a misrepresentation? What has logic to do with the matter? The question is not one of logic at all, and certainly not one of formal logic. It is a question of discovery, and may be stated in some such terms as these. Granted a variety of religions embodying a variety of divergent beliefs, have we any means of determining what of all this confused medley has a right to be considered the content of true religion? And if so, what could be more reasonable than that special consideration should be accorded to such

features as the various religions have in common? But to employ agreement or uniformity in this way as a test of truth is the same thing as to employ difference as a touchstone of error.

The logic of the method is a strictly practical logic. We begin by assuming an attitude of neutrality. No religion, no doctrine shall claim more than another. Each, so to speak, shall stand for one. Now when doctrines differ, there will be some that are mutually inconsistent and some that are not obviously so. Confining ourselves to the former, we see that if one is selected as true, the others must be considered false. But having regard to our principle of neutrality, we are not permitted any such selection. The only practical way to avoid impossible choices is therefore by rejecting, not the individual propositions in question, but the cases in which such incompatible propositions occur.

Coming now to doctrines which differ but are not obviously incompatible, a somewhat similar argument will apply. There are three possibilities. Either (1) all may be true, or (2) all may be false, or (3) some may be false and some true. But so long as we preserve our attitude of strict neutrality, there is no reason why we should decide either in favour of or against any one of the three contingencies. We are once more faced by an impossible choice; and the only way out of the difficulty is to avoid such choices altogether. This leaves us with the cases in which the need for them does not arise, *i.e.* the cases in which differences do not occur. Thus with some show of formal sanction we reinforce a conclusion which on entirely different grounds has so much in its favour.

It will be observed that in this apology for the eighteenth-century method, this argument for a practical solution, no weight is given to the possibility that the really decisive factor may be not the practical conveniences of procedure but the objective facts of the case. The whole onus is placed upon method and convenience. The eighteenth-century method might be described as a pragmatism of negations. In place of that generous willingness to admit different points of view that characterizes the pragmatism of William James, we have the determination not to allow embarrassing differences to make their appearance at all. Pragmatism by negations is an unnaturally cramped and grudging affair; but the pragmatic attitude is unmistakable, and comes out in what is conceded, as well as in what is denied. Of this an excellent example is Voltaire's notorious maxim that if God did not exist we should have to invent Him.

In problems like that of religion there can be no such theoretical or practical solution as logic offers to a purely logical problem, or experience to a purely practical one. Doubtless the pragmatic point of view in some ways fits the peculiarities of the case; for, to say nothing of the more narrowly practical aspects of religion, even in the sphere of doctrine the issue is never *merely* whether or not certain beliefs are true, but whether they shall be believed.[1] Even here,

[1] In his article in the *Année Sociologique*, vol. ii, p. 1 *sq.*, entitled "De la définition des phénomènes religieux", Durkheim defines religious beliefs as beliefs that are obligatory, and characterizes religion as defined by such beliefs. For the connection between this definition of religion and the somewhat different one which he gives in his *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, see the latter work, Book I, ch. i (Eng. tr., note on p. 47).

however, it may be questioned whether the pragmatic point of view is sufficient, since it cannot be taken for granted that belief exclusively on such grounds as pragmatism sanctions amounts, in all cases, to belief as *religion* understands it.

In any case, whatever may be said of an affirmative pragmatism like that of William James, there can be no doubt as to the utter inadequacy of a negative pragmatism like that implicit in the eighteenth-century method. The thin residue of abstractions that remains over when all differences have been eliminated from religion is the sort of thing that, from the standpoint of the practical considerations relevant to religion, can never be justified at all. Men are not *influenced* by abstractions of this sort in the way that religion demands—although it is true that abstractions are an almost unequalled source of error, and have played a sufficiently powerful rôle in human history. It is not of such influence, however, that Voltaire was thinking when he spoke of the necessity of a belief in God ; and it is assuredly not in any such belief, admitting that such a thing is possible, that we have cause to fear the malignant influence of abstractions. The trouble rather is that there is not here substance enough to constitute the content of any genuine belief. It is a fundamental error to suppose that we can know of God's existence and know nothing more about Him. There is no practical, and almost no theoretical, difference between believing in nothing but God's existence and not believing in His existence at all.[1]

[1] On this point see again the passage in Hegel's *Logic* already referred to above, p. 56. *Encyclopädie*, § 71 with footnote (Eng. tr., p. 134 *sq.*).

It would be unfair to leave this part of the subject without acknowledging the unmistakable merits of the eighteenth-century method. This method is really a perverted attempt to give expression to certain fundamental ideas, and particularly to the *rational character* and the *universality* of religion. On the first of these two points it may be said that while the deeper truth of religion can never be revealed by the abstract processes of rationalism, at the same time no religion can be true unless it is altogether *reasonable*. As regards the second point, we may remark that the true religion, if there is any such, must be a religion for all men. It must contain the element of universality. The question is to discover where this universal element is to be found ; and one thing may now be confidently asserted. The true method is not to abstract the differences and to carry off the remainder as the precious core of universal truth. The universal in religion must be what Hegel calls a *concrete*, and not an abstract, universal. That is to say, it must be a universal which in some sense is capable of *including*, instead of merely excluding, differences. Or rather, it must be a universal which the differences, even where they indicate an imperfection, have no power to destroy. It must be a universal capable of existing and expressing itself under many variations of time, place and historical circumstance. And when we look at the subject from the standpoint of the differences themselves, we see that they may even be required in order to give individuality and distinctiveness to religion. To this, however, we must add, that they in turn must be able to express and convey a universal meaning.

Two Important Conclusions

From these considerations we are now in a position to deduce two features, of a highly general character, which we have reason to expect in the ideal religion. (*a*) In the first place it must not be merely one religion among others, sharing with them, perhaps, certain features, but marked off from its competitors by just such peculiarities as mark them off from one another. It must be a religion which in a sense embraces all religions. From this point of view the discovery of common features acquires a new significance. What is common is no longer that which we uncover by eliminating differences. We do not proceed in this way at all. Our preoccupation is with the objective truth of our religion, and when we learn that something similar is to be found in other religions, the discovery brings with it a sense of confirmation. Thus we shall not consider the claims of Christianity in any way weakened, but on the contrary we shall regard them as indefinitely reinforced, by the fact that almost all Christ's ethical teaching is to be found in Judaism, and much of the doctrinal content of later Christianity in Greek philosophy—from which, indeed, it was largely derived.

(*b*) This attitude we shall maintain with a perfectly clear consciousness that such community of content carries with it what appears to be a threat to everything that gives distinctiveness and independence to Christianity. And therefore, in the second place, we shall add that the ideal religion must somehow be *different* from all others. It must have an individuality of its own, something unique. In

apparent contradiction to what has been maintained, it must now be asserted that the ideal religion, religion *per se*, must be *a religion among others*. Only, we must hasten to add, it cannot be *merely* such. In being one of them, it is still in a profound sense apart from them all. The very fact that it is to include them in a way in which they cannot include one another, is of itself a mark of individuality ; but it can hardly be the only, or indeed the primary, mark. There must be something else about it, something unique and unprecedented, in virtue of which it can claim such comprehensiveness. We must add, therefore, to what has been said about the universality of religion that the ideal religion must be not only different but also *unique*. Uniqueness and universality might at first sight appear contradictory qualifications ; but this is so only in a superficial sense. We shall see in due course how it is that these two differentiae, so far from being incompatible, actually imply one another ; that is, we shall not find it necessary to argue that because the ideal religion is unlike any other religion, it cannot be the religion of all men.

The Historical or Comparative Method

The historical method, which falls to be considered next, needs only a few words. This method seeks to understand the nature of religion in general by examining the origins and development of actually existing or extinct religions. Obviously from its very conception it is peculiarly fitted to avoid the abstractness and the historical fallacies of the eighteenth-century method. On the other hand it contains

several features which render it incapable of carrying the inquiry to the point required. In the first place, it treats the phenomenon of religion only from the point at which the latter appears as already crystallized in definite and definitely organized systems. Hence it starts at what should really be considered the culminating moments of a long and obscure religious development. In the second place, it is apt to overlook the universal character of religion and to devote itself exclusively to historical detail. This of course is the procedure proper to history; but it renders the historical method inadequate to the needs of our problem. Lastly, history at the best is a record of events and, while supplying data, contains no principles of judgment. In spite of these limitations—which are limitations only from the philosophical point of view—the historical method is of incalculable value in the inquiry before us.

The Anthropological Method

The last of the three methods which we have in view, the anthropological, in large measure avoids the errors of the eighteenth-century method and overcomes the limitations of the historical.

In considering the anthropological method, we must emphasize two things in particular. First, we must make sure that we know exactly what the method implies, and in the second place we must discover exactly how it is to be utilized in the service of the philosophical problem.

As regards the first question, it should be noted that while anthropology differs from history in going back to those earlier times of which we have no

direct literary records, the distinguishing feature is not a chronological one; and the preoccupation of anthropologists with pre-historic times is due to the circumstance that the problems peculiar to their science happen to derive much light from this previously neglected field. The study of pre-historic man is also necessary in the interest of perspective and orientation. The fundamental feature, however, to which all this is subordinate, is the fact that anthropology deals less with the lives of human individuals and societies than with the life of man in the generic sense. In this, however, it is profoundly different from the eighteenth-century method with its shallow generalizations; and the principle which enables it to avoid abstractness, while remaining true to the generic aspects of its subject, is the principle of evolution. Anthropology deals with man's life specifically from this point of view. Its theme may be said to be the evolution of human life in the widest possible sense.[1]

It is the combination of the two features mentioned, the generic and the evolutionary points of view, that enables anthropology to overcome the several deficiencies of the eighteenth-century method and the historical method. In so far as it deals

[1] In his little book on *Anthropology*, R. R. Marett brings out the two points very well (*vide* p. 7 *sq.*). Durkheim criticizes the idea of a *generic* treatment of man (*Elem. Forms*, Book I, ch. iv, par. ii (Eng. tr., pp. 93-94)). His idea is that religious phenomena, which are of social origin, cannot be studied apart from the particular society and the special social usages with which they are historically connected. This, however, even admitting the important element of truth in it, does not invalidate the anthropological standpoint. Anthropology can take such social distinctions into account without ceasing to be the study of man in general. Durkheim's method, as stated by himself (Eng. tr., p. 95), would invalidate his own studies of religion as a universal phenomenon, or would limit religion to totemism.

with man generically, this third method avoids the excessive particularity of the historical treatment, and is adequate to the expression of what is universal in human nature. In so far as it treats man's life as a developing phenomenon, and as the product of its own development, it avoids the fallacies of generalization, and attains to the concreteness required. Thus the anthropological point of view, in contradistinction to that of the eighteenth-century and historical methods, is the one best fitted to present religion as a *concrete universal.*

The Principle that Beginnings must be interpreted in the Light of their Later Development

The answer to the second question, that, namely, as to how the anthropological method can be made to serve the purposes of philosophical inquiry, depends also upon two principles. The first of these may be stated as follows. Wherever, as in the present case, we are dealing with a developing phenomenon, that phenomenon must first be treated in the light of its own beginnings, but in the second place, these beginnings must be interpreted in the light of their later development.[1] The philosophical problem has to do not only with matter of fact, but with authenticity and with values; and anthropology can contribute to these later problems at least such evidence as is to be derived from survivals and non-survivals, historical persistency and failure to persist. By tracing divergent sequences of facts from a common

[1] This principle is recognized (though not as a principle) by Durkheim in the admission he makes that light may occasionally be thrown by the more advanced totemism of America upon the more primitive totemism of Australia (*Elem. Forms*, Book II, ch. iv, par. ii, p. 97).

origin, and noting their proliferations, it can suggest to us what elements in those undifferentiated beginnings, where religion is not yet distinguished from other things, are genuinely religious in their significance. For it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that not everything in primitive religions, even among the factors that occur universally or all but universally, can be taken as clearly indicating the stuff of which true religion is made.

To take only one illustration. The practice of magic is one of the commonest features in the religion of primitive peoples. But this fact does not entitle us to conclude that the truth about religion is best displayed in the practice of magic, or that religion is only a refinement upon the latter. If we trace the developing phenomenon to the point of bifurcation and beyond, we see the plastic stuff dividing in a way that leaves religion on one side and magic on the other. And following the process further, we find religion grappling in a death-struggle with this aborted image of itself, until the latter, forced to seek an alliance outside the now well-defined pale of religion, contrives to align itself with the forces that are making, not for a religious, but for a scientific view of the world. And so the mystifications of the medicine-man become the half-serious researches of the astrologer and the alchemist. We conclude that it would be just as reasonable to seek in magic the secret of science as to seek in any such development the secret of religion. Religion and science together have exorcised magic ; and in this we have an instance of the way in which later developments may be used as a touchstone for the significance of earlier.

Of course it must not be supposed that mere lateness, or survival-value in the biological and anthropological sense, is a reliable criterion of validity. One of the characteristic accompaniments of lateness is sophistication and the perverseness that sophistication brings with it. Error and evil are among the most persistent forces in the world, and in many cases survival is anything but an index of the ideal. None the less it is true that the phenomenon of survival throws light upon the problem of validity, if we know how to utilize the evidence. The question is largely one of learning how to consider data and clusters of data not by themselves but in conjunction. If, for example, in the present case it can be shown, on evidence derived from the earliest and the latest sources alike, that religion is essentially a social fact, and that magic, at least in all its main phases, is an attempt to influence the lives of men, not by the socialized agencies of organized living, by rational intercourse or personal appeal, but by an individual resort to the mysteries of a dark and secret lore,[1] to that extent the magician places himself outside the pale of society and magic stands indicted as an anti-social, and therefore an anti-religious, institution.[2]

[1] It is not meant that magic necessarily addresses itself to agencies other than those to which religion makes known its requests. "The beings which the magician invokes and the forces which he throws in play are not merely of the same nature as the forces and beings to which religion addresses itself; very frequently, they are identically the same" (Durkheim, *op. cit.* p. 42). But even admitting this, it remains true that magic directs its appeal in an irregular fashion. The idea of cunning mastery is seldom absent from its practices.

[2] The compulsion of magic is sometimes represented as directed against the gods themselves. Cf. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, p. 111: "'It is not this living Pepi', runs the Pyramid text, 'who says this against you, it is the Charm which says this against you, ye gods'". Cf. *ibid.* 94, 113, 114.

Thus the evidence from survival or failure to survive, which in itself is far from conclusive, acquires a new significance in the light of evidence derived from another aspect of the subject.

The Principle of Transcendental Realism in its Application to Religion

The second principle which we must take as a guide in our attempt to make use of anthropological material is more fundamental. It is a special application, in the field of values, of a principle which is much more extensive in its range, and which I propose to call the principle of objective transcendentalism, or better, transcendental realism.

It will be remembered that the word 'transcendental' as used by Kant means "having to do with the conditions that render knowledge possible". Kant's notion is, in the first place, that human knowledge is dependent upon certain general conditions, which are its principles, and, in the second place, that these principles or universal conditions are not to be sought in the manifold detail of knowledge itself. They are not mere items among other items. Or, we might say, the *principles* of knowledge are no part of *the ordinary content* of knowledge. This does not mean that they are unknowable, but only that in order to know them we must go beyond empirical observation and any mere generalizations therefrom. The principles of knowledge are given to us in the same *act* by which we know anything whatever; only, they are not given in the same way. Before we can know them we must come to see that they are implied in the knowledge we have, in such

a fashion that without them that knowledge would be impossible. In the Introduction to the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant declares that our knowledge must all begin *with* experience, but that it is not all derived *from* experience. This is tantamount to saying that while there is an empirical element—the presented material of sense—in all knowledge, this empirical element could not be given of its own accord or all by itself. There must be other factors present to give meaning even to the notion of a given element.

Now the difference between the transcendentalism of Kant and the principle we have here in view is chiefly this, that whereas Kant's transcendentalism has to do exclusively with the conditions which render *knowledge* possible, the principle of transcendental realism applies not merely to knowledge and knowability but to the conditions of actual existence, and to everything that goes with existence. Generally speaking, the idea is that existence is not an unconditional thing, that it depends upon certain definitely ascertainable conditions, meaning thereby not so much such familiar facts as that, for example, plants require water in order to grow and animals air in order to live, but rather something much more general, as, for example, that any physical object in order to exist must occupy space and time. From the standpoint of transcendental realism space and time are principles of existence, not in the sense that they tell us how or why it is that anything physical ever comes to exist, but in the sense that, assuming (as, apparently, we are bound to do) the existence of a physical world, we see that this existence is conditioned by space and time.

In its application to our present problem, the principle takes on a special form. The question is not one of existence as such and of the conditions which render existence possible. It is a question of values, and of what makes values possible in a world of facts.

Briefly stated, the answer to the question is that just as the physical existence of anything is seen to imply, and therefore to depend upon, the existence and objective reality of space and time, so *the value of anything is found to depend upon a transcendental condition which alone renders all values possible.*

How are we to make plain what this transcendental condition of all value is ?

All through the history of ethics a main object has been to get behind the fact of moral differences, to *account for* the distinction of good and bad, of right and wrong. This procedure, which is a very natural one, is apt to conceal a devastating fallacy. It is right and fitting that we should seek to explain why we classify this or that action, or type of action, as either good or bad, as obligatory or the reverse : it is a proper thing that we should explore all the *facts* of morality ; but if in so doing we suppose that we are *accounting for* the distinction of good and evil, or that we are explaining how it comes about that anything at all should be obligatory, we are grievously in error. To argue in this way is like arguing that the reasoned truths of geometry explain how it is that the world comes to be extended in space. In its relation to the science of geometry space must be reckoned not a thing to be accounted for, but a thing to be assumed and explored. In the

same way, in its relation to ethics, morality (or the system of values which moral distinctions presuppose) must be taken as a fundamental presupposition. This does not mean that we have reached the limit of inquiry and that nothing remains to be said about the matter ; but it does mean that we have reached a limit, and that in view of it our inquiry must assume a new form. We must cease to ask : How is it possible to derive the idea of value or of obligation from the actual choices and the actual conduct of men? We must instead put this question: Granted the reality of value and the objective validity of obligations and sanctions, what do these admissions imply as a condition without which they could not be made ?

I think it may safely be assumed that if values exist, it can only be in a universe containing entities which possess a character other than that implied in the bare fact of their existence in space and time. The reality of value is fundamentally bound up with the principle of a higher self-identity. If then the reality of space and time is a transcendental condition of the existence of the physical, the objective reality of values is transcendentally conditioned by the existence of what we call *selves*—highly integrated, self-identical wholes, which we have not begun to explain when we have enumerated the conditions of their physical existence. If it is allowable to assume the existence of selves, so understood, then value may be defined (provisionally, and subject to much amplification and perhaps to serious modification) as " whatever in the nature of the universe as a whole, or of any of its contents, contributes to the realization of selfhood ". It will be

observed that in this statement we are not trying to *account* for the good or to explain what makes it what it is. We are merely assuming and *defining* it. Our definition, it is true, may look very like an explanation. It may seem as if we were saying that the good is good *because* it conduces to selfhood. But a moment's reflection will show that this is very far from being the case. All such statements (that is to say, all statements involving the notion *because*) will be found to apply not to the fundamental concept of the good, to the general principle of value as such, but only to individual attempts to give expression to this principle. Thus we may very well describe our acts as good *because of* something in them; and that something, if we are right, will be found in a supposed conformity to the transcendental principle of value as stated above.

Now as regards those peculiar values which we call moral, apparently there could be no such thing if there were no such thing as *personal* selves or *persons*. If so, the existence of persons in the universe will be a transcendental condition of the validity of moral distinctions; and on the analogy of our previous (and more general) definition, it should be possible to define the good as that which renders existence personal. It will be seen at once that this is a very different thing from saying that the good is what persons desire. Unfortunately persons constantly desire things that are far from conducing to a heightened personality. On the other hand it would be quite in harmony with our contention to assert that it is one of the defining characteristics of personality to be capable of desiring the good—to be possessed of a moral character. There

is just as much point, then, in asserting that persons are persons because they desire values as there is in asserting that values are what they are *because* of their connection with personal existence.

Now the problem before us is of course not the problem of morality and its implications, but the problem of religion—and more specifically how religion can be rendered more intelligible by the aid of anthropology. As has been pointed out, however, the *philosophical* issue is one of validity and of values; and this of itself would seem to indicate that the transcendental principle is not here out of place. What is more, the specific form or application of the principle is identical or all but identical with that which we have been considering. For obviously it is no less true of religion than it is of morality that the existence of persons is the condition which renders such a thing possible. In this case it will be necessary to think of personal existence as a transcendental condition of religion also. Among the principles determining the use of anthropological material must therefore be placed a constant consideration of the question how far any individual religion or any set of religious usages or beliefs is fitted, in a theoretical and practical way, to enhance the personalist interpretation of life.

Whether or not this argument will be accepted as a whole (and in stating it thus summarily we may well seem to have taken a very great deal for granted), it will hardly be questioned that we have here a highly significant principle of discrimination. It is only necessary to compare the profoundly divergent attitudes of Buddhism and Christianity on the significance of individual and personal exist-

ence, to realize that this is so; and if we are not yet in a position to say that this or that religion is either true or false to the fundamental character of all religion, we can already discern at least where one of the main lines of discrimination lies.

PART II

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PICTURE OF RELIGION

CHAPTER III

ANIMISM AND TOTEMISM

WHEN we ask what, in the light of all that anthropology has to tell us of the subject, was the original *form*, or what were the original *ingredients*, of religion, we are confronted by a bewildering array of claimants — shamanism, totemism, fetishism, ancestor-worship, magic and mimetic ritual, animism, with that great mass of beliefs and usages, of inhibitions and releases, which centre upon the ideas of taboo, pollution and purification. Of course, it is not to be assumed that these factors are necessarily mutually exclusive. It may be that religion has its roots in all of them or in some combination of them : it may be that religion issues, here from one set of factors, there from another. Upon one point there should be no manner of doubt—viz. that no one of these primitive forms, and no possible combination of them, adequately expresses the nature of that religion which we are trying to define.

Fortunately, it is not necessary for the purposes of philosophical inquiry to identify ourselves in any exclusive fashion with one or other of the theories mentioned. There are certain points on which we must be quite explicit ; but, as it happens, these points arise with almost equal force in connection with all the views we are considering, although that does not imply that all these views are equally

important. It is here that a certain distinction I have tried to make plain becomes peculiarly significant —the distinction between the substantival and the adjectival aspects of any subject. We have seen that there is a difference between claiming for philosophy that it is (or should be) scientific and claiming that it is (or should be) a science. In the same way there is a very real distinction between maintaining that religion in its earliest forms must have been animistic and maintaining that animism is the original form of religion.

Animism and Totemism

When we speak of animism, we think naturally and necessarily of a well-defined theory of life, first attributed by Sir E. B. Tylor to primitive man, as the essential feature in his religion. Now, to say that the primitive form of religion is animism in this sense is to deny, by implication, that it is totemism or fetishism; and as a matter of fact totemism is explained by Tylor as a mere phenomenon of that ancestor-worship, which, for him, is the inevitable outcome of animism.[1] This is a somewhat less drastic way of dealing with the competing claims than that adopted by Sir J. G. Frazer, who simply refuses to consider totemism, in its earliest form,[2] as a religion, on the ground that the totem is not worshipped as a

[1] *Primitive Culture*, vol. i, p. 402; vol. ii, p. 234 *sq.* (6th edition, 1920).

[2] The confidence with which the anthropologists assume an 'absolutely primitive' strikes the philosophical mind as a singular piece of dogmatism. A remarkable instance is the way in which Frazer, following Dr. W. H. R. Rivers, traces back the whole totemic development to primitive fancies regarding pregnancy. *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. iv, p. 58 *sq.*

deity.[1] What is not, it would seem, sufficiently clear to those authorities is the illogical, or rather, perhaps, the logically incomplete nature of the antitheses which they seek to establish. For example, while it is obvious that the original form of religion (if there is any such) cannot be both totemism and animism, it does not follow that totemism, should we decide in its favour, may not be animistic in some of its aspects;[2] nor, on the other hand, if we refuse to admit that totemism is the earliest form of *religion*, or indeed that it is a *religion* at all, does it necessarily follow that it is not *religious* in its significance, or that we can hope to understand it fully without reference to the religious point of view. This is also true of the other developments (with the corresponding theories) of which mention has been made; and what is more, this will hold good, with due modifications, even of such a thing as magic (also banished by Frazer from the sphere of religion), in which we are compelled to acknowledge a definitely anti-religious tendency. For may it not be that this

[1] *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. iv, p. 27 *sq*. On the other hand, Frazer does not refuse to accord to totemism a certain religious significance in its later developments; but such significance is not aboriginal. At least the religious aspect of totemism appears to be less pronounced the further back we go. "Totemism is . . . both a religious and a social system." But ". . . the evidence points strongly to the conclusion that . . . the further we go back, the more we should find that the clansman regards himself and his totem as beings of the same species, and the less he distinguishes between conduct towards his totem and towards his fellow-clansmen" (*ibid.* vol. i, p. 4).

[2] It is undoubtedly so in the sense at least that totemism acquires its significance entirely from a belief in the spirits of the totemic object. Cf. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. iv, pp. 59-60. In this connection a point of exceptional interest is the relation between totemism and dreams: *op. cit.* vol. i, p. 49. Cf. Mrs. Langloh Parker, *The Enahlayi Tribe*, pp. 28, 83-84, and Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 145-146, 154.

anti-religious tendency derives its meaning from that very religion to which it is opposed? In its later phases it is undoubtedly a malignant growth upon the latter, drawing its sustenance from the religious life: none the less, magic may well have been necessary to the first movements of the religious consciousness.

As regards the controversy between the advocates of totemism and those of animism, a further incongruity remains to be pointed out. It is not merely that the antithesis cannot be correctly stated until we have distinguished between the substantival and adjectival aspects of the case, but also that there is a certain incommensurability between the things contrasted. To compare totemism with animism is to compare something which at the best is still *a little less* than religion with something which includes *a little more* (in the way of precise theory) than seems necessary to enable religion to make its first beginnings.[1] If totemism is to be considered a primitive religion, the emphasis must be on the word *primitive*.

Animism, as conceived by Tylor, is a theory of life: it is the primitive man's philosophy, or, possibly, his religion in its theoretical aspect. When we say that it comprises more than seems necessary to primitive religion, the meaning is that we need hardly assume that religion, in order to make its

[1] In this I find myself in complete agreement with Mr. R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, ch. i, Pre-Animistic Religion. *Vide* especially the defence and explanation which Marett gives of his theory in the Preface: " My chief concern was simply to urge that primitive or rudimentary religion, as we actually find it amongst savage peoples, is at once a wider, and in certain respects a vaguer, thing than 'the belief in spiritual beings' of Tylor's famous 'minimum definition' ".

first steps, must have had behind it anything so precise and well-defined as this theory. On the other hand, primitive theories of life have in all cases something large and flexible about them ; and this remains true whatever the variations (in ritual usages or in modes of social organization), of which they are either the primitive theoretical basis or else the subsequent theoretical explanation.

In contradistinction to animism, which is a *theory*, totemism (whether its significance be primarily social or primarily religious) is the name given to a feature in the actual organization of certain primitive societies—particularly in North America, Africa and Australia. The differentiating feature of the totemic system is that it has to do not with the large tribal divisions based on locality but with the social sub-divisions of the local tribe.

It is safe to assert that the totem is a name and emblem which serves to give unity and identity to a small social sub-division. Around the totem there is found to cluster a system of more or less rigid usages and inhibitions, enforced not only by actual penalties, but by a profound sentiment of awe and of personal loyalty, and by a deeply rooted sense of sanctity. It is these latter emotional accompaniments, with whatever else they may imply, that invest the institutions with a distinctly religious significance. When to this we add that the system is closely connected with the practice of exogamy, we have almost reached the limits of safe generalization.

It is difficult to say on what principle the totem was chosen, or even to conjecture what it was in any particular object that made it specially appropriate to totemic uses. If we were to judge by the

most frequent and typical instances, we should have to suppose that the object usually chosen was some animal—not the individual but the *kind*—and that this rested on an obscure sense of affinity, more particularly, perhaps, in their origins, between man and the lower forms of animal life. But the totem is frequently not an animal at all. Sometimes it is a vegetable. In this case, however, we are still in the region of organic things, and, what is possibly more important, of natural kinds. The suggestion is a tempting one (although we shall have to reject it) that behind the totemic idea is a rude attempt to utilize the natural and impressive fact of *species* in order to create and stereotype certain classes and class distinctions necessary for the preservation of a healthy society.[1]

Unfortunately for this theory, the totem is not always derived from animal and plant life, but is occasionally to be found in the form of inanimate things, and even of unique objects, from which the class-idea is totally absent. Thus we hear of totems such as rain, hail, frost, wind, the clouds, lightning, the sun and moon, autumn, summer, winter, certain stars, thunder, fire, smoke, water or the sea, red

[1] Of course, the analogy would not hold beyond the one point indicated—the distinctiveness of the cleavage which divides one kind from another. In other respects, the points of difference are the more prominent feature. But, to take only one instance, the endogamy of the species and the exogamy of the totemic group do not seem to me to conflict in such a way as to render the analogy utterly inapplicable. Apart altogether from the purpose underlying the group-formation, there was the highly important practical question how the group was to be created and maintained. This problem of classification is one which, under whatever differences of condition, was as urgent and unavoidable for primitive man as it is for us to-day; and there seems nothing extravagant in the suggestion that he should have availed himself of something that nature had already struck out for him as the emblem of a social system.

ochre, resin, rivers, rainbow, shells, salt, ant-beds, stones, etc.[1] Such instances, of course, may be explained as anomalies, in which the pure totemic idea is badly represented or possibly perverted; but in the absence of any reliable clue as to how the perversion took place, it is not safe to resort to such explanations. In any case our view of what the pure totemic idea is, is so bound up with the answer to these minor questions, that we can hardly presume upon it in any solutions we may offer to these minor questions.

In view of these uncertainties, it is not surprising to find that among authorities on the subject there is no agreement as to what totemism really means. That it represents something in the way of a theoretical outlook upon life, or at least that it is in some way connected with such an outlook, can hardly be doubted; but that is almost the only thing about it, theoretically considered, which may be said. Totemism is certainly not a theory of life in the sense in which animism is. On the other hand, it just as certainly implies such a theory. On such fundamental questions as whether the totemic animal is to be regarded as an ancestor, or why eating or otherwise consuming the totemic object is interdicted, we find the greatest variety of opinions.[2] The reason, of course,

[1] *Vide* Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*, pp. 103-104; and J. G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. i, pp. 24 *sq.* and 253-254; also the lists in Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*; Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*; and in Parker, *The Enahlayi Tribe*.

[2] According to Spencer and Gillen, quoted on the point by Durkheim, "these restrictions are not the remnants of what was once a rigorous prohibition now losing hold, but the beginnings of an interdiction which is only commencing to establish itself". Durkheim takes the opposite view (*vide Elementary Forms*, p. 127); and Howitt seems to confirm (*Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 146-147).

is to be found in the nature of the institution itself. Totemism, in a word, belongs to the not inconsiderable class of institutions which have come down from antiquity as a code of social usages to which the key has been lost. Theorize as we will, it remains true that what we know is only something of the infinitely variegated detail, rather than the common substratum of meaning. Hence the incongruity of contrasting totemism with animism as rival claimants to the distinction of being the earliest religion. To compare the two from this standpoint is to compare a general meaning or set of meanings supposed to be discoverable beneath a mass of facts (partly conjectural) with a mass of definitely ascertainable facts, of which the meaning is almost entirely a matter of speculation. So far at least as the purely theoretical merits of the case are concerned, there seems to be no reason why totemism should not be the primitive religion and animism (in some of its phases) the primitive theology.

Animism as interpreted by Tylor

As our business is with religion in its philosophical aspect, it is clear that we must come to some very definite conclusions on the question of animism. To begin with, it is necessary to make up our minds as to what exactly shall be comprised under the term. The word 'animism', as everybody knows, was introduced by Sir E. B. Tylor as a name for the view of nature and of life which he believed to be characteristic of primitive thinking and to be at the bottom of primitive religion. This view, as constructed or reconstructed for us by Tylor, com-

bines a number of clearly distinguishable features into a single well-compacted total outlook. Part of our problem will be to consider whether all these features are of equal value or are equally well authenticated : another part will be to ask whether they must all be taken together in the way indicated by the author of this hypothesis. The theory has been retailed so frequently and is so familiar that we shall content ourselves with the briefest recapitulation.

To begin with, then, animism is a view of things attributed to the primitive man as his explanation of the phenomena of dreams and of death. To the primitive mind dream-events suggest that every man has a double which remains with him in his waking hours, but detaches itself in sleep. The same hypothesis is found to explain the allied phenomenon of death, which differs from its ' twin-brother ' sleep only in that the filmy and mobile counterpart of the body, which returns to the latter after sleep, now takes its departure for ever. This portion of the theory, which, as is obvious, deals with the soul of man, is made by Tylor the basis of the whole doctrine.

The next stage in the argument is the deification of the dead. The souls of the departed become the objects of that peculiar emotional regard which is characteristic of religion.

Finally the soul idea is extended to universal nature, which is thus conceived as animated. This is the explanation of that change and motion which are everywhere visible in the world around us. Just as the presence of the soul in the body is that which makes all the difference between waking and

sleeping, between the activity of the living and the inertness of the dead, so the presence of a soul in all things is what explains the universal activity of nature.

It will readily be seen that these different phases of the theory are not so vitally related that it is necessary either to accept or to reject all three at once. In particular it need not be assumed that the third part of the doctrine—the extension of souls to nature—stands or falls with the first, the explanation of dreams and death. There seems to be no reason why primitive man should not have discovered in nature something which he conceived vaguely as a soul, apart altogether from the explanation he gave of those two phenomena.

Criticisms of Tylor's Theory

Before attempting finally to pass judgment upon Tylor's theory, it would be well to consider what can be said against it. The theory has been widely criticized; but what strikes one most forcibly is that the objections on the whole are aimed, not so much at animism in itself, considered as the primitive man's view of nature and of life, as at some specific application of the doctrine—as for example in the attempt to show how it stands related to religion. A not uncommon view is that which would represent animism as implicit in religion at every stage, and which therefore refuses to agree that animism is the germ out of which religion develops. Thus Dr. D. G. Brinton in his book on *Religions of Primitive Peoples* insists that—

" there is no special form of religious thought which expresses itself as what has been called by Dr. Tylor ' animism ', the belief that inanimate objects are animated and possess souls or spirits. This opinion," he adds, " which in one guise or another is common to all religions and many philosophies, is merely a secondary phenomenon of the religious sentiment, and not a trait characteristic of primitive faith.[1] The idea of the World-Soul manifesting itself individually in every form of matter from the star to the clod, is as truly the belief of the Sioux Indian or the Fijian cannibal, as it was of Spinoza or Giordano Bruno."[2]

Now, if there is any single fact that stands out clearly and unambiguously in the history of religion, it is the fact that as religion develops there sets in almost universally a movement that leads away from the animistic ' sentiment ', with all of vitalism or quasi-vitalism, of personalism or quasi-personalism, which such a sentiment implies. This movement, which I shall designate the ' drift towards the impersonal ', is a distinguishing characteristic of the great religions of the East, Brahmanism, Buddhism and Confucianism, and within certain limits it is no less characteristic of Mohammedanism and of

[1] It should be noted that Tylor fully recognizes the universality of animistic beliefs in the developing civilization of mankind. " Animism characterizes tribes very low in the scale of humanity, and thence ascends, deeply modified in its transmission, but from first to last preserving an unbroken continuity, into the midst of high modern culture " (*Primitive Culture*, vol. i, p. 426, 6th edition, 1920; cf. p. 429).

[2] *Religions of Primitive Peoples*, 1899, pp. 135-136. In a footnote Brinton remarks that " like fetishism and shamanism, animism should be regarded, not as a form or stadium of religion, but to use Castren's excellent expression, '*nur ein Moment in der Götterlehre*' ".

Christianity.[1] As the development of this thesis will provide one of the main arguments of this book I shall postpone further discussion of the matter till the appropriate point is reached.

A further objection to animism, based not on the nature of the conception itself but on the way in which it is introduced into religious history, will be found in Otto Pfleiderer's work on *The Philosophy of Religion*. Pfleiderer speaks of " that religion which is usually spoken of as *Spiritism* or *Animism* ",[2] and explains it as a product of religious degeneration consequent upon the moral decay of certain peoples. In brief, the writer's theory is that—

> " as society is broken up into separate individual wills, the belief in God too is broken up into superstitious belief in individual spirits ".[3]

That there is truth in this view will hardly be denied. As we shall see at a later point, the proliferation of spirits or minor deities is a characteristic phenomenon of decadent civilization; and this phenomenon, as I shall have occasion to point out, undoubtedly reproduces certain of the features of animism. But it reproduces them with a difference—the difference which is always implied in the restoration, by an oversophisticated age, of the forms and beliefs of primitive man. The term ' animism ', therefore, can hardly be applied to this phenomenon

[1] We shall see that the difference between Christianity and the other leading religions of the world turns precisely on the way in which they differentiate themselves from one another in their *repudiation* of a primitive animism.

[2] *The Philosophy of Religion* (Eng. tr. by Stewart Menzies), vol. iii, p. 40.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 42.

of decadence in exactly the sense of Tylor's theory. Pfleiderer, however, will admit no other sense, on the ground that the animism which Tylor attributes to primitive man is nothing better than an historical fiction. His summary dismissal of Tylor's theory is based upon the erroneous assumption that on such a theory it is necessary to attribute to primitive man the idea of spirits originally existing independently of the bodies in which they are incorporated.

> ". . . To conceive of spirits as incorporated in dead things it must obviously have been necessary to possess beforehand the notion of spirits not attached to bodies, and before attributing magical powers to these spirits the notion of supersensuous, mysteriously operating powers must first have been formed. These two entirely abstract notions have thus to be presupposed as the necessary basis of the fetishistic belief." [1]

But surely this is an unwarranted statement of the doctrine. It is not that spirits are thought of in the first instance as existing independently of the bodies which they come to animate. Rather the thought of spirits is given in the very act of observation whereby the distinction between a living and a dead body is forced upon the attention of primitive man; [2] and it is only after the notion has been generated by the observation of bodies, that the possibilities of independent existence and action (an

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. iii, p. 9. Pfleiderer treats animism and fetishism together.

[2] This is quite in keeping with Tylor's method of introducing the subject. In accordance with his statement the very first question is: "What is it that makes the difference between a living body and a dead one?" (*Primitive Culture*, vol. i, p. 428).

independence which is always severely limited) are thought of.[1]

In some of its features Pfleiderer's view is akin to that of Andrew Lang, who maintains that animism (which he conceives to be the worship of spirits) is a degenerate form of religion, developed out of the earlier worship of a Supreme Being.[2] Lang, however, differs from Pfleiderer in confining his attention to that aspect of animism which has to do with the theory of ghosts, whereas Pfleiderer has chiefly in mind the other aspect, which has to do with the primitive interpretation of nature.

> " It is part of my theory ", writes Lang, " that the more popular ghost-worship of souls of people whom men have loved, invaded the possibly older religion of the Supreme Father. Mighty beings, whether originally conceived of as ' spirits ' or not, came, later, under the Animistic theory, to be reckoned as spirits." [3]

[1] Note especially Tylor's words: " Terms corresponding with those of life, mind, soul, spirit, ghost, and so forth, are not thought of as describing really separate entities, so much as the several forms and functions of one individual being " (*op. cit.* vol. i, p. 435). It is true that what Tylor is denying is not the distinctness of soul and body, but that of the various conceptions of soul; but what he says would seem to imply that a *separate existence* is not the first characteristic to be attributed to the soul, however conceived. Before the soul can be thought of as departing from the body, it must be thought of as having been there.

[2] " Thus, from every point of view, and on every side, Animism is full of the seeds of religious degeneration, which do not and cannot exist in what I take to be the earliest known form of the theistic conception: that of a Being about whose metaphysical nature—spirit or not spirit—no questions were asked " (*The Making of Religion*, p. 264): cf. p. 266: " Thus every known kind of degeneration in religion is inevitably introduced as a result of the theory of Animism ".

[3] Cf. *The Making of Religion*, p. 191: " Our conception of God descends not from ghosts, but from the Supreme Being of non-ancestor-worshipping peoples ".

And again :

> " We wish . . . to show that the idea of God, as he is conceived of by our inquiring plain man, is shadowed forth (among contradictory fables) in the lowest-known grades of savagery, and therefore cannot arise from the later speculation of men, comparatively civilized and advanced, on the original datum of ghosts ".[1]

The points which arise in connection with this criticism are obviously two. We have to ask whether there is any evidence that religion begins with a primitive theism or worship of a Supreme Being ; and we must further ask what truth there is in the view of animism as a degenerate cult of ghosts ' invading ' the earlier worship of a deity.

Is Animism a Degenerate Form of the earlier Worship of a Deity ?

To begin with the latter theory, it must of course be acknowledged that there is a form of ghost-worship which is not original, but this does not imply that the original form of worship may not have been ghost-worship—that is to say, worship of the dead. The history of religion in ancient Greece is especially instructive in this respect.[2] In post-Homeric times we find the worship of great gods supplemented by two kinds of cult, which are closely related to one another but stand out in equal contrast to the cult

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 162.

[2] *Vide* Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. i, p. 200 *sq.*, the chapter entitled " *Der Seelencult* ", especially §§ i and ii. Also W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, ch. i on " The Dead, the Heroes, and the Chthonian Deities ".

of the Olympians. These are the worship of Chthonic deities and the worship of deified heroes. The latter in turn is, in its origin, hardly distinguishable from the worship of the dead,[1] which, within historical times, was so marked a feature in the private life of the family and the public life of the commonwealth.[2] Now, although our knowledge of these developments connects them, as has been remarked, with post-Homeric times, it is quite impossible to regard them as a product of a degenerating religious genius. The truth is rather that they represent the perpetuation, under certain changes of form, of a religious development that far antedates the Homeric age.[3] At this remote period the only possible claimant to the honours of a 'Supreme Being' would have to be some god; but the only gods were Chthonic deities, and these were of the homeliest order—"local gods in the truest sense of the term, true home gods", serving the little community by bestowing a blessing upon the crops and receiving the dead beneath the surface of the earth.[4] But deities so limited in

[1] "Out of this early cult of ancestors appears to have grown the whole system of Hero-Worship in Greece" (Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, p. 7). Rouse is further of the opinion that the Chthonic deities "may themselves have been often deified heroes" (*op. cit.* p. 13). If this view is correct, the whole development will go back to the rites which accompany the cult of dead ancestors.

[2] Cf. Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. i, p. 245.

[3] Rohde, *op. cit.* vol. i, pp. 215 and 216. Rohde thinks that the variations upon Homeric practice in the matter of the funerary ceremonies, so far from being genuine innovations, may be revivals of a completely primitive usage: "Was uns als neues entgegentritt, mag zumeist auch nur neubelebter uralter Gebrauch sein" (*ibid.* p. 218). "The importance and the antiquity of hero-worship have been very much underrated.... It is inconceivable that these heroes should have grown up in such places after the greater gods had been introduced; they were therefore on the spot before them" (Rouse, *op. cit.* p. 11).

[4] Rohde, *op. cit.* pp. 204-205.

function, so local in jurisdiction, so close to the more obvious aspects of human life and death,[1] are hardly what we mean by a ' Supreme Being ', nor is it easy to see how the idea of a Supreme Being could have passed by any process of degeneration into the idea of Chthonic deities.

Does Religion begin with Theism ?

The question, however, cannot be decided on the evidence of Greek religion as such, nor indeed upon any evidence that has to do with the second of our two questions alone. For a complete solution we must take the two questions together ; we must ask what evidence there is that religion begins with theism, and that the worship of spirits is a later corruption of the religion that began with the worship of God. That the most primitive views of existence and of the world—those of the Australian aborigines, for example—sometimes include the notion of a Supreme Being, the being whom Howitt designates the All-Father,[2] is a well-attested fact.[3] Howitt gives a mass of detail and Mrs. Langloh Parker has devoted a chapter to Byamee, the All-Father of the Enahlayi.[4]

When we look into the reports, we are struck with

[1] Rohde's description hardly does justice to the elements of fear and aversion associated with the Chthonic deities. This is sufficiently brought out by Miss Jane Harrison in her books *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* and *Themis*, and by Gilbert Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, ch. i.

[2] *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 488 *sq.*

[3] *Vide* further Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (Eng. tr., pp. 285 *sq.*); Spencer and Gillen, *Northern Tribes*, ch. xvi, and especially p. 501 *sq.*

[4] *The Enahlayi Tribe*, ch. ii.

the close resemblance between the beliefs in question and certain familiar features in the totemic system. Thus to the tribes which entertain a belief in the All-Father, the legends that centre upon him seem to play an analogous rôle to that of the Alcheringa legends among the Arunta.[1] They are stories of the beginning of things. The All-Father is a creator.[2] At one time he dwelt upon the earth, whence he passed to the sky [3] (or even beyond it),[4] where now he lives eternally. As regards the appellation 'our father' found among the Wotjobaluk tribe and others Howitt enters a caveat against over-interpretation.

"Taking the Kurnai case as an example," he writes, "the term used is *Mungan*, that being

[1] Mrs. Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe*, p. 6. Certain tribes who possess the Alcheringa tradition have the All-Father idea as well; the two seem inseparably connected. According to Spencer and Gillen: "Inwana of the Kaitish and Murtumurtu of the Warramunga are merely Alcheringa ancestors who invented the Churinga, but are regarded as in no way different from, or more powerful than, scores of other such ancestors. Atnatu of the Kaitish stands by himself; before the Alcheringa was he was—in fact he made the Alcheringa; but he is, at all events according to the present ideas of the natives, in no way to be regarded as a great moral preceptor, and it may safely be said that, amongst the tribes inhabiting the whole of the central and northern central area of the continent, the natives have not the faintest idea of any such being. We searched carefully in the hope of finding traces of a belief in such a being, but the more we got to know of the details of the native beliefs, the more evident it became that they had not the faintest conception of any individual who might in any way be described as a 'High God of the Mysteries'" (*Northern Tribes*, p. 503). On the other hand, in the region studied by Howitt, the "anthropomorphic supernatural being, who lives in the sky, is supposed to have some kind of influence on the morals of the natives" (*The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 500). Cf. the case of *Tharamulun*, mentioned p. 495.

[2] Howitt, *op. cit.* pp. 488, 489, 492, 494.

[3] Howitt, *op. cit.* pp. 488, 489, 491-492, 495, 500.

[4] "The Wotjobaluk also spoke of *Bunjil* as *Mami-ngorak*, that is, 'our father', and said that he is in some place beyond the *wurra-wurra*, or sky" (Howitt, *op. cit.* p. 490).

> the relation of a man and of all his brothers to his child. It is a group relationship. . . . Now this is precisely the position in which the tribes-people stand to *Bungil*, *Daramulun*, *Baiamee* and *Mungan-ngana*, who are all spoken of as ' father', while the last has no other name than ' Father of all of us '. It is necessary to guard carefully against such a feeling toward *Mungan-ngana*, as is embodied in our expression ' Our Father in heaven '. Mungan-ngana is the Headman in the sky-country, the analogue of the Headman of the tribe on the earth." [1]

Howitt is no less emphatic in repudiating the attribution of divinity to the All-Father:

> " In this being, although supernatural, there is no trace of a divine nature ",[2]

from which it follows that we cannot think of the All-Father tradition, with the accompanying usages, as constituting a religion.[3]

Everything considered, Howitt's view seems to me a somewhat extreme one. Of course the question of definition comes in here; but whatever may be said on the subject, the idea of a supernatural *Ur-Vater*, the deathless creator of all things on earth, who is invariably mentioned with reverence or respect, whose nature is concealed from the women and is revealed only to the initiated, a being to whom

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 490-491. Cf. p. 506.

[2] P. 506.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 507. Howitt, however, admits that the beliefs in question "are such that, under favourable conditions, they might have developed into an actual religion, based on the worship of *Mungan-ngana* or *Baiamee*." Mrs. Parker refuses to commit herself on the question.

prayers are at least sometimes addressed [1]—includes a good many of the attributes that would ordinarily go with the conception of deity. It is a significant fact, too, that while one authority, Andrew Lang, accepts the belief in a great god among the Australian aborigines as a confirmation of his view that the earliest form of religion is theism, another authority, Tylor, finds the belief in an All-Father so unmistakably theistic that he refuses to accept it as aboriginal and attributes it to Christian influences. (The evidence seems all against this attribution.)[2] If, however, we agree that the belief in a Supreme Being is original, it must not be presumed that totemism and the animistic ideas implicit in totemism are to be regarded as a later development and the product of degeneration. On the contrary, there is no evidence that the cult of an All-Father was ever an active element in the lives of the Australian aborigines,[3] in the sense in which totemism was an active element.[4] It is true that the totem was not worshipped as a god; but have we any means of knowing (and in the face of what we do know, is it not unlikely) that the All-Father was conceived as an object of divine worship? Everything suggests a remoteness from the affairs of human life. Thus—

[1] Mrs. Parker, *The Enahlayi Tribe*, pp. 8, 89.

[2] On the primitiveness of the belief in an All-Father *vide* Howitt, *op. cit.* pp. 492, 504 *sq.*

[3] Howitt, *op. cit.* p. 491.

[4] "Byamee," according to Mrs. Parker, "at least in one myth (told also by the Wiradjuri), is the original source of all totems, and of the law that people of the same totem may not intermarry" (*The Enahlayi Tribe*, p. 7). The only inference that can be drawn from such a story is that totemism was felt to require an explanation, and that the belief in Byamee furnished a valuable suggestion.

> " no one dreams of claiming Byamee as a relation belonging to one clan ; he is one apart and yet the father of all, even as Birrahgnooloo is mother of all and not related to any one clan ; Cunnumbeillee, his other wife, had only one totem ".[1]

Something of the same remoteness characterizes the relations of the Alcheringa ancestors to the tribe.

> " Amongst the central Australian natives ", write Spencer and Gillen, " there is never any idea of appealing for assistance to any one of these Alcheringa ancestors in any way." [2]

It is, above all, this remoteness that makes it difficult to believe that primitive religion was based upon a genuine theism. In the All-Father we have a being sufficiently cosmic and sublime to support the character of deity; but a real god must not be only cosmic and sublime; he must be a possible and an actual object of human worship; and it is just here that the All-Father breaks down. The impression one gets is that he played a very minor rôle indeed in the lives of the aboriginal tribes; and the suggestion occurs to the mind that the belief in him is nothing but totemism over again, totemism feebly generalizing upon itself and unable to turn the generalization to practical account. If so, we should be justified in regarding

[1] The point is that Byamee and Birrahgnooloo, having a totem for each part of their bodies, are above the totemic system. They are only brought into it through the instrumentality of Cunnumbeillee, Byamee's second wife. Of Birrahgnooloo Mrs. Parker gives the following brief account : " Mother of all, though mother of none in particular, she was not to be vulgarised by ordinary domestic relations. For those purposes Cunnumbeillee was at hand, as a bearer of children and a caterer " (*op. cit.* p. 7).

[2] *Northern Tribes*, p. 491.

the All-Father conception as a collateral but abortive development of the same tendencies that led to the totemic system—a primitive but ineffectual idealization upon an identical theme.[1]

On such grounds as these I am compelled to reject Andrew Lang's theory that religion begins with the worship of a Supreme Being rather than with the worship of spirits, and that the latter is no better than a product of degeneration. It should be observed, however, that animism, although from the first it implies a belief in spirits, does not begin with the *worship* of them. Rather the worship presupposes the belief ;[2] and this is true even although the very first thing of which we have any knowledge *as religion* is a system of rites and ceremonies. Our argument so far, therefore, leads to the conclusion that the animistic beliefs inherent in totemism represent the root of everything to which the designation of religious or the title of religion may be applied.

[1] For an elaboration of this point of view *vide* Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms*, p. 285 *sq.* Durkheim makes the interesting suggestion that the transition from the ancestral genius to the tribal god may have been made through the idea of civilizing heroes (*op. cit.* p. 290). A similar suggestion would appear to arise naturally from the possibilities assigned by Rouse to hero-worship as intermediate between the cult of ancestors and the cult of chthonic deities. We must, however, beware of attributing ancestor-worship, as an aboriginal form of religion, to primitive man. *Vide* Howitt, *Native Tribes*, p. 506, for the evidence against this view. Spencer and Gillen point out that ancestor-worship is precluded by the belief in reincarnation : *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 494.

[2] This would seem to be a fair interpretation of Tylor's words in vol. i, pp. 426-427 of *Primitive Culture*: "Spiritual beings are held to affect or control the events of the material world, and man's life here and hereafter ; and it being considered that they hold intercourse with men, and receive pleasure or displeasure from human actions, the belief in their existence leads naturally, and it might almost be said inevitably, sooner or later to active reverence and propitiation ".

Durkheim's Criticism of Tylor's Theory

But we have not yet done with criticism. Durkheim has amassed a volume of objections to Tylor's theory, and before we can proceed we must pass these in review. To begin with, Durkheim objects that the conception of a double, the independently acting, autonomous counterpart of the body, is not the primitive man's conception of a soul.

> " For him, the soul, though being under certain conditions independent of the organism which it animates, confounds itself with this latter to such an extent that it cannot be radically separated from it : there are organs which are not only its appointed seat, but also its outward form and material manifestation." [1]

From this it must not be supposed that Durkheim is attempting to deny either that the conception of the soul as a double exists, or that independence and mobility are characteristic of the soul so conceived.

> " In some cases ", he says in a later passage, " they tell us that it has the external appearance of the body." [2]

He further admits that it leaves the body, and that

> " after it has once been completely freed from the organism, it is thought to lead a life absolutely analogous to the one it led in this world ".[3]

The writer even goes so far as to say :

[1] Book II, ch. viii, p. 56. In his footnotes the author cites Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*; Mrs. Parker, *The Enahlayi Tribe*; and Eylmann, *Die Eingeborenen der Kolonie Südaustraliens.*

[2] *Ibid.* p. 241. [3] *Ibid.* p. 242.

> " It is distinct and independent of the body, for during this life it can leave it at any moment. It does leave it during sleep, fainting spells, etc. . . . But it is especially at death that this distinction and independence manifest themselves with the greatest clarity. While the body no longer exists and no visible traces of it remain, the soul continues to live, it leads an autonomous existence in another world." [1]

In the face of these admissions it is clear that Durkheim can hardly have meant to deny Tylor's conception outright: at the most he is disputing something in the emphasis or universality which Tylor accords to the *double* idea. The modifications which he thinks necessary follow immediately on the passages we have quoted.

> " But howsoever real this duality may be, it is in no way absolute. It would show a grave misunderstanding to represent the body as a sort of habitat in which the soul resides, but with which it has only external relations. Quite on the contrary, it is united to it by the closest bonds; it is separable from it only imperfectly and with difficulty. . . . It is so intimately associated with the life of the organism that it grows with it and decays with it." [2]

And further:

> " There is not only a close union of soul and body, but there is also a partial confusion of the two. . . . Certain regions and certain products

[1] *The Elementary Forms, loc. cit.* [2] *Loc. cit.*

of the organism are believed to have a special affinity with it: such is the case with the heart, the breath, the placenta, the blood, the shadow, the liver, the fat of the liver, the kidneys, etc. These various material substrata are not mere habitations of the soul; they are the soul itself seen from without. When blood flows, the soul escapes with it. The soul is not in the breath; it is the breath." [1]

Now, without questioning any of the facts which Durkheim adduces in support of his view, it is permissible to question his way of stating the relation between the body and the soul. If it is admitted that during life the soul can leave the body at any moment, what is said as to the difficulty of separating the two must obviously be taken as applying only to the long separation of death.[2] Thus the sole point in Durkheim's criticism along these lines is the doubtfulness, not of separating soul and body, but of associating the phenomenon of dreams with the phenomenon of death in the intimate way characteristic of Tylor's theory.

Another point that might well be questioned is the conception of the soul as localized in a physiological sense, and the idea that *local position* expresses its relation to the body. It is difficult to think

[1] *Ibid.* p. 243.

[2] That this is what is meant would seem to be borne out by what appears a few lines further on, where we read: "After the last breath has been expired and the soul is believed to be gone, it seems as though it should profit by the liberty thus regained, to move about at will and to return as quickly as possible to its real home, which is elsewhere. Nevertheless, it remains near to the corpse; the bond uniting them has been loosened, but not broken. A whole series of special rites are necessary to induce it to depart definitely" (*ibid.* p. 244).

of localization except as localization *in* some part or other; and Durkheim does express the matter so. But we have just been forbidden to look upon the different organs or other 'parts' of the body as "mere habitations of the soul". We are told that they are the soul itself "seen from without". Not localization, therefore, but identification, is the conception which meets the facts of the case. This means that the soul must be identified with the heart, the blood, the breath, etc. But such identification in the case of the soul is of a very peculiar kind, and a kind that is least of all expressed by the idea of localization. If the soul is identified with the heart, the blood or the breath, it is not in the sense that it is to be found exclusively in them, or that it is where they are and nowhere else. Rather it is because these 'parts' are seen, no doubt more or less obscurely, to have a special functional relation to the body as a whole. They are the life within it; and while we cannot distinguish them from it and from each other without in some sense resorting to localization, it is not their local distinctness but their functional identity which the idea of the soul emphasizes.[1] The

[1] The following passage from Max Müller is worth quoting: "Among the names applied to the soul, some mean breath, others heart, others midriff, others blood, others the pupil of the eye, all showing that they were meant for something connected with the body, something supposed to have its abode in the eye, in the heart, in the blood or the breath, yet different from every one of these coarse material objects. Other names are purely metaphorical, as when the soul was called a bird, not because it was believed to be a bird, caged in the body, but because it seemed winged in its flights of thought and fancy; or when it was called a shadow, not because it was believed to be the actual shadow which the body throws on a wall (though this is held by some philosophers), but because it was *like* a shadow, something perceptible, yet immaterial and not to be grasped. Of course, after the soul had once been likened to and called a shadow, every kind of superstition followed, till people persuaded themselves that a

difficulty created by thus emphasizing the soul's integration with the body, while insisting upon localization, is seen in the statement Durkheim is compelled to make:

> "Moreover, even if the soul is localized especially in certain parts of the organism, it is not absent from the others. In varying degrees it is diffused through the whole body, as is well shown by the funeral rites." [1]

So far, then, Durkheim's criticism of the first part of Tylor's theory would seem to contain nothing more significant than a timely caution as to the application of evidence derived from dreams to the analogous, yet profoundly disparate, case of death. In coming to this conclusion we may seem to have given a somewhat undue importance to merely formal considerations, and above all to the question of consistency. Now in what follows, as will be seen, it will be part of our contention that Durkheim himself commits this error. A word or two would therefore seem to be required on our method of dealing with a question, in itself of profound philosophical import, but involving masses of evidence which we are bound to accept at second-hand from the experts.

dead body can no longer throw a shadow. Again, when the soul had once been conceived and named, its name, in Greek ψυχή, was transferred to a butterfly, probably because the butterfly emerged winged from the prison of the chrysalis. And here, too, superstition soon stepped in and represented pictorially the soul of the departed as issuing from his mouth in the shape of a butterfly. There is hardly a tribe, however uncivilized and barbarous, which has not a name for soul, that is for something different from the body, yet closely allied to it and hard at work within it" (*Three Lectures on the Vedanta Philosophy*, pp. 4-5).

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 244.

Characteristics of Primitive Experience: Animism as a Primitive Theory to account for Dreams

In attempting to analyse primitive conceptions and beliefs, it would be the greatest of errors to assume that the most likely interpretation is the one which renders any special instance most simple and coherent. This is a province in which neither logical inconsistency nor even sensuous incompatibility furnishes any *prima facie* evidence against a notion. The dividing line between the actual and the non-existent does not follow the boundary that separates the possible from the impossible. The limits of the actual are always the limits of actual experience—only, experience in this case must be understood in a more indefinite sense than that of the much refined and rectified product to which we ordinarily give the name.

To gauge the possibilities of primitive experience we must turn to that region of our conscious life—our dreams—which we no longer think of as genuine experience (in the substantival sense), although we do undoubtedly think of ourselves as *experiencing* whatever goes on there. In dreams we find no difficulty in accepting combinations which reveal themselves, in our waking experience, as synthetically incompatible. We are in one place, and also in another place, at the same time; we are ourselves and also someone else: the outlines of things melt and mingle, are lost and reappear: identities maintain themselves in the face of conditions that would ordinarily render identity unthinkable. And yet there is nothing wonderful, nothing exceptional, about it—so long as the dream-state lasts.

That we feel no surprise (or do not always or usually do so) at the things that happen to us in dreams, that we cheerfully accept the unthinkable, is simply to say that in dreams we do not think at all : it is to say that outlines and distinctions which in our waking moments it is as much as our lives are worth to ignore, and which, once they have become clear to us, we could not ignore if we wished, have for the time being somehow slipped the controls of consciousness. The fact of dream-possibilities, which are not possibilities of ' experience ', would seem to indicate that experience is a more piecemeal affair than is commonly supposed. In normal circumstances its contents appear above the threshold of consciousness already fully invested with that nexus of conditions which alone renders it possible. We may say that certain very definite conjunctival and prepositional elements emerge simultaneously and necessarily with the substantival contents of experience. But in the ' experiences ' of sleep every conceivable and inconceivable displacement, every possible and impossible conjunction and disjunction, occurs; so that in a sense we may be said actually to *experience* a reversal of the conditions which alone render experience possible.

Of course we do not wish to push the parallel too far. It is not meant that the normal state of consciousness in the primitive man is like our dream-consciousness, any more than it is like his own. And certainly, if there is anything at all in animism, it is that the ' savage ' knows how to distinguish his dreams from his waking experience. Indeed, it is upon his sense of this distinction that the whole theory rests. The exact point of the analogy is somewhat

different. It will be readily seen if we remember that it is not types of experience but *theories* that we are comparing. We are comparing animism, as a primitive theory *to account for dreams*, with the *ideal* of what any theory should be—*i.e.* with a theory which is a perfect and perfectly coherent transcript of experience at its best. Clearly animism is bound to suffer in the contrast. For, when viewed from this standpoint, it will be seen to involve many departures from strict logical coherence, and, like our dreams, to run counter at many points to the actualities (and implied possibilities) of ' genuine ' experience.

Moreover if it is the case that the impossibilities of our dream-experience are not felt to be such because dreaming is not thinking, it is no less true that the first attempts at thinking (and animism must be conceived as such) result in a similar obscuration. In the processes and products of primitive thought there is what appears to us a certain reckless disregard of method, and a perfect genius for the improbable—a going around to explain the obvious, and a tendency to treat as obvious what we should suppose called for the most elaborate explanation. In the whole matter of taking (and not taking) for granted, we are profoundly at variance with the obscure pioneers of human thought. The fact of the matter is that primitive thinking always appears something strange and remote to us ; and it does so because the *experience* of primitive man is so different from our own. To that experience we have lost the key, except in so far as the key is supplied by the theories in question. To be quite just to every aspect of the subject, we should begin with the primitive man's *explanation* of the world around

him and of his place in it; and then, with the aid of this explanation, we should seek to reconstruct in imagination the type of experience which lies behind it. We may well assume a certain commensurateness between the experience and the theory. In this case we soon come to realize that the theory is improbable only because the experience of which it is a transcript is not *our* experience. As an explanation of the world as we know it, the primitive theory is absurd; but it is not an absurd explanation of the world as the savage knows it. What he knows is something very strange to our ways of thinking; and it is only natural that the strangeness should be reflected in the theory.

There is, therefore, the greatest danger of misunderstanding if we insist on importing into the problem reflections and criteria which we now, in the light of a greatly enlarged and a much corrected experience, see to be natural and proper. In the present instance it would be a mistake to suppose that the primitive man would be deterred from localizing the soul in some part of the body because of the difficulty of reconciling the local aspect of the subject with some other aspect; and it is not in this sense that our criticism of Durkheim is to be taken. The point is rather that in seeking to convey the primitive idea in modern language, we should be careful to avoid suggesting difficulties and inconsistencies of a kind that could not have been apparent to the primitive consciousness we are trying to reproduce.

Durkheim's Criterion of strict Consistency

With these principles of interpretation in mind, we proceed to Durkheim's further strictures upon

animism. In the first place, accepting the idea of a double, he points out that this idea, which is supposed to explain how it is that we come to see distant objects in dreams, is not the only possible, or the most economical one; that there are simpler hypotheses, as, for example, that while asleep we are able to see things at a distance.

We must question the author's right to assume that *for the primitive mind* such an hypothesis is the simplest and most economical. When he speaks of it as "able to impose itself upon men with a sort of necessity", we feel bound to ask whether the necessity which he has in mind is the logical compulsion of a perfectly constructed hypothesis, or some psychological necessity discoverable only by an empirical survey of the way in which human minds do actually work under different circumstances and at different levels of development. If the former, then such necessity has no applicability to the case in hand; and if the latter, then it does not for a moment follow that necessity in this case implies either economy or simplicity. The truth is that primitive thought, like untrained thought in general, is anything but simple, as the phenomenon of totemism, which Durkheim expounds so admirably, sufficiently proves. If further evidence were wanting, it would be found in the difficulty which Mr. Bertrand Russell and others experience in getting the Law of Parsimony respected. The need which is everywhere felt of dwelling, with the insistency of a drill-sergeant, upon what has come to be called 'Occam's razor' is another proof that simplicity, in the intellectual sense, is neither primitive nor natural—any more than the simple, in the well-known phrase of the great Clausewitz, is *easy*.

A very similar answer must be given to Durkheim's next objection. His contention is that even if the hypothesis of a double will explain some of our dreams,[1] there are others which are positively incompatible with it. These are the dreams which have to do with past events.

> "We see again the things which we saw or did yesterday or the day before or even during our youth, etc.; dreams of this sort are frequent and hold a rather considerable place in our nocturnal life. But the idea of a double cannot account for them. Even if the double can go from one point to another in space, it is not clear how it could possibly go back and forth in time."[2]

But this is precisely the question at issue. Not clear *to whom*? To ourselves, or to the 'savage'? Obviously to ourselves. As for the savage, we can only remark that nothing whatever is clear to him in the sense of what we understand by clearness. Or, if this is saying too much, at least we are safe in assuming that many of the things which are clearest to us are for him anything but clear. The absence of clarity, or, to be more specific, the presence of what we can now see to be a sheer impossibility, may have no effect whatever on his mind. Here, as ever, the question is not whether the thing as we now see it is possible, but whether *he* sees it *as we do*. To apply a criterion of strict consistency is once more quite inappropriate, because we do not know

[1] Durkheim admits (p. 58) that "to-day the primitive attributes his dreams, or at least certain of them, to displacements of his double".

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 56-57.

whether the conditions which alone render such a criterion applicable are actually present.

As a matter of fact, we have only too good reason to suppose that they are not. For to suppose otherwise would imply the presence together in consciousness of certain ideas in themselves clearly defined and carrying with them the precise relations of inclusion or exclusion in which they stand to one another. In order that this condition should be realized, it would be necessary to suppose that when the savage lived over in dreams the events of yesterday, or when he dreamt that he was young again, he *interpreted* the dream-experience as an actual reversal of time, and the dream-content as identical with the actual content of events now past and gone. But surely this is asking a great deal. Furthermore, no matter how vividly the past event may be reproduced, there is always something *different* about the dream—a strangeness of timbre, a weirdness that was not there before. A dream of the past is very different from the waking repetition of a past event; and this something different might well of itself be considered sufficient to prevent the dream-problem appearing as a problem of time-relations. That an old man should become a young man might indeed seem, even to the savage mind, something incredible; but that an old man should become again his youthful self in dreams would in all likelihood be taken to mean no more than that he revisited the scenes and associates of his youth and re-enacted among them the events of long ago. True, the associates might in many instances be dead; but then it would be their ghosts that appeared in the dream, just as it would be the soul of the dreamer, rejuvenated for

the time-being, that encountered them. Thus it is that the contradiction supposed by Durkheim does not necessarily occur, because the conditions which it presupposes are not necessarily present.

We might go one step further and say that the contradiction would not necessarily arise even if the savage actually identified the dream-content with the content of the past event. For in order that there should be actual contradiction it would be necessary to suppose not merely that the content moved forward out of the past into the present, or backward out of the present into the past, but that the *time* of the event moved backward or forward with it. And why suppose anything so absurd? Events persist in time, while the time itself elapses. Why should not the same thing that is true of *duration* be true also of *repetition*? Indeed, may not repetition in some instances be interpreted as a special case of duration—duration interrupted by an interval? If so, it does not seem so unthinkable that events should repeat themselves or that a double should go back and forth in time as well as in space.

That such refinements of explanation should ever enter the savage mind is the last thing in the world I wish to suggest. My object is rather to show that the kind of contradiction which Durkheim exposes in animism implies a consciousness of distinctions which we have no reason to suspect at this early stage.

There is here really only one question which need make us pause. If animism is to be accepted, it looks as if we must suppose the primitive mind sensitive to problems of space in a way in which it was not sensitive to problems of time. Have we any right

to such an assumption? A complete answer to the question is beyond my competence; but it is a significant circumstance, as is now coming to be generally understood, that the whole history of human thought, both in its scientific and its philosophical aspect, is the outcome of man's preoccupation with the former problems and his neglect of the latter. Apparently it does not readily occur to men that time is a reality of the same order as space, and that its nature raises problems just as real. If it were the case, then, that primitive man, while more or less awake to certain problems connected with space, was quite oblivious to certain somewhat analogous problems connected with time, this would be entirely what we should be led to expect from the total movement of human thought on the large historical scale.[1]

Durkheim's next argument is based on the ease with which we may compare our dream-experiences with those of our fellows, and so discover the illusoriness of both. In dreams our double meets and converses with the doubles of others. But those

[1] I cannot refrain from pointing out that the assumptions underlying Durkheim's argument are directly at variance with his own theory of time as one of the categories. The latter are the product of social evolution and social compulsion, and Durkheim expressly admits that they may vary (p. 18). It is quite possible, therefore, that our ideas of time should once have been different from what they are now. When Durkheim asks, "How could a man on awakening believe that he had really been assisting at or taking part in events which he knows passed long ago? How could he imagine that during his sleep he lived a life which he knows has long since gone by?" the answer is that in the early times to which the question refers social development might not as yet have produced the rigid (but quite artificial) compulsion under which we of the modern world cannot help thinking distinctions of time in the way we do. Time might not yet have become categorized in precisely the form characteristic of our present-day thinking.

others have had their dreams as well, and their dreams do not tally with ours.

> " Since such contradictions should be the rule in these cases, why should they not lead men to believe that there had probably been an error, that they had merely imagined it, that they had been duped by illusions? This blind credulity which is attributed to the primitive is really too simple. It is not true that he must objectify all his sensations. He cannot live long without perceiving that even when awake his senses sometimes deceive him. Then why should he believe them more infallible at night than during the day? " [1]

To all of which we can only reply: But does he really believe this? And does the hypothesis of animism compel us to suppose that he does? Must we think of the primitive man as constantly verifying his dreams? That would seem to imply a more critical attitude to his dream-experiences than we feel disposed to ascribe to him as regards the events of his waking life. Is there not something perverse in assuming that animism implies that primitive man must believe in his dreams *more than* in his waking experiences? Surely, so far as the theory goes, there is no reason why it should not be just as easy for him to believe that he is sometimes deceived by night as it is to believe that the same thing happens by day.

Nevertheless the difficulty suggested by Durkheim remains a real one. It is of a kind, however, which would not of itself invalidate the theory. We do

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 57.

not know to what extent the primitive man was given to verifying his dreams, to what explanations he may have had recourse in order to account for discrepancies, or how far such difficulties would have seemed *to his mind* fatal to the belief in a world of doubles.

Is primitive Mentality characterized by Absence of Intellectual Curiosity?

It is interesting to note that we presently find Durkheim adducing the " intellectual laziness " of the primitive as evidence that he probably did not take the trouble to explain his dreams at all. This may be perfectly good reasoning; but if intellectual laziness is to be advanced as an argument against animism, it may with equal propriety be advanced in reply to some of Durkheim's criticisms. As a matter of fact it may be introduced in this latter connection with greater force than in the former. However, the question is more complicated than might at first sight appear.

The expression ' intellectual laziness ' admits of two meanings. There is the laziness which shows itself as an indifference to all inquiry, and there is the laziness which appears as a readiness to be content with any sort of explanation. The two do not always go together. Children are anything but lazy in the first sense: they are usually lazy in the second —even those of them who are the most indefatigable questioners. That the primitive is also intellectually lazy in this second sense is probable—although it is questionable how far the word ' laziness ' is a fair expression for the fact that he overlooks points

which are obvious to us. On the other hand it is far from certain that he is lazy in the sense of having no desire to institute inquiries. We know that he must have varied in this respect. The differences of cultural level between palæolithic and neolithic man are a warning against hasty generalization.

As to the question whether dreams would prove the sort of phenomenon likely to excite the intellectual curiosity of the primitive, here again we are on debatable ground.

> "What does the dream amount to in our lives?" asks Durkheim. "How little is the place it holds, especially because of the very vague impressions it leaves in the memory, and of the rapidity with which it is effaced from remembrance, and consequently, how surprising it is that a man of so rudimentary an intelligence should have expended such efforts to find its explanation!" [1]

But is it fair to assume that because the dream means so little to us, it must have meant just as little, or less, to primitive man? May it not be that his dreams occupied a far larger place and meant far more in his life than our dreams do in ours—and that not in spite of our greater intellectual development, but because of it? May not dreams be peculiarly apt to awaken intellectual curiosity in the savage? There is reason for believing that he dreamt constantly, and that his dreams were vivid and exciting. Ours are more or less occasional and on the whole subdued.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 58.

Durkheim's Failure to distinguish the Question of the Interpretation of Dreams from the Question why we dream at all

Finally Durkheim points to a probability which must be taken seriously into account, the probability, viz. that the primitive man, like the people who 'believe in' dreams at the present day, distinguished between his dreams, and did not seek to explain them all in the same manner. In support of this contention he remarks on the fact that the Melanesians, according to a leading authority on the subject,

> "do not attribute their dreams indiscriminately to the wanderings of their souls, but merely those which strike their imagination forcibly. . . ."

And he continues:

> "Similarly, the Dieri in Australia sharply distinguish ordinary dreams from those nocturnal visions in which some deceased friend or relative shows himself to them. In the first, they see a simple fantasy of their imagination; they attribute the second to the action of an evil spirit. All the facts which Howitt mentions as examples to show how the Australian attributes to the soul the power of leaving the body, have an equally mystic character. The sleeper believes himself transported into the land of the dead or else he converses with a dead companion. These dreams are frequent among the primitives. It is probably upon these facts that the theory is based." [1]

Now considerations of this sort are thoroughly relevant; but it is unfortunate that the writer, in seeking to apply them to the hypothesis of animism,

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 59-60.

does not go further than he does in the analysis of the distinction which he himself indicates. Had he done so, he would have seen that the distinction involved is not so much that between the different explanations which we give of our dreams, as that between *interpreting a dream*, and explaining *why we dream at all*. If we keep this distinction in mind, we see that the explanation which fits the one case does not necessarily fit the other. It may be that animism is an attempt to tell us why we dream, even although primitive man does not seek to explain all his dreams in detail.

We have here a very peculiar type of problem ; and the unusual character of the problem naturally leads to something unusual in the solution. What we have in mind may be expressed by saying that in the case of dreams, as in some other cases, we seem to be dealing with a phenomenon which does not always admit of being explained by reference to the natural conditions under which such phenomena are known to occur. In addition to these conditions or causes there is something quite different which must be taken into account. This something different is to be found in the specific content or character of the phenomenon, or in some special feature of that content or character, and might be explained by saying that phenomena possessing this sort of content do not merely happen according to natural law : they happen in accordance with the system of their own symbolic meanings.

Thus whereas in other cases we treat the phenomenon from the standpoint of its common character as a member of a class, and explain it through this common character, by reference to a uniform class

of antecedents, there are cases in which explanation by causality fails to hit the point at issue. To the question: How does it happen? we must add (before we can answer it) the question: What does it mean? And so it is that the least superstitious among us, at the moment of awakening out of a terrifying dream, and while still vibrating with the horror of the dream-experience, are apt to think of the dream as having a *meaning*, and to think of the meaning as having something to do with bringing about the dream. When in a vivid and terrifying vision I have just seen a dear friend of whom I have long lost all trace, the first thought that occurs to my mind is likely to be: "Does this *mean* that he is dead?" And if the mail brings me word that he died at an hour which corresponds closely to the time of my dream, I shall want all the armour of an exceptionally sceptical mind if I am not to be both intellectually intrigued and emotionally impressed by the coincidence. For the average man of the present day it requires an effort of sceptical common sense to think of such a conjunction of events as meaningless; and to the primitive the conjunction would be the most absolute proof of causal relation. The dream would be *caused* by the very event which constituted its content, or which that content in some way symbolized.

It is precisely here, in the distinction between what a dream means and what causes us to dream, that I find the crux of the whole question. Dreams differ vastly in impressiveness and in clearness of definition; and it is easy to believe that it was only the more vivid and impressive among them that led the primitive man to ask, in the language of his

peculiar mentality, what they meant and how they happened. These would be the thought-provoking dreams. As regards the others, those that failed to arrest his attention or to interest him, it is natural to suppose that he felt no curiosity either as to their meaning or their causal explanation.

Now anthropologists seem to be more or less agreed that in the dreams of primitive man a great rôle is played by the dead; and it is just these dreams of the dead that are likely to be most haunting and impressive. It seems a reasonable inference, therefore, that they were the dreams, if any, that gave rise to the theory; and if we view the theory in the light of them, it will be seen to gain immeasurably in persuasiveness and verisimilitude. For what could be the *meaning* of a vision of the dead except that the dead themselves were actually up and about, and that their visit at the solemn hour of night was fraught with fearful portent for the living?

To think such thoughts was, however, to think of ghosts. That form which appeared so vividly in the darkness, when the eyes of the living were closed in sleep, was surely not one with the dead body which had been disposed of by fire or burial. And yet it was the express image of that body—the ghostly double.

But (to return to our thesis) this is only one side of the question. The discovery that the dead exist does not explain how it is that we are able to see them in sleep. Surely this is a sufficiently astonishing fact to call for explanation; and of course it was just the contradiction implied in the fact that we are able to see and do certain things in sleep under impossible conditions that seemed to Tylor the first motive in the theory.

In this I cannot quite agree. That we should see things in sleep, that we should be conscious of moving about freely while all the time, as we know, our bodies are lying inert in the sleeping-place, is assuredly in startling contradiction to experience. But it does not follow that we notice it to be so, or that we do not need to have the contradiction specially brought to our notice. Indeed a capacity for the quiet and unquestioning acceptance of contradictions is characteristic of the untrained intelligence in all ages.[1] Experience is too full of contradictory elements to make it natural to notice individual instances from the first. The decisive factor, therefore, is apt to be not the contradictory character of any piece of experience, but the *newness* or *suddenness* of the contradiction. If we have been noticing from the earliest times that something always is so, then, should it suddenly cease to be so, or should it become the opposite, we feel the contradiction at once. In the present case we have no such aid to observation. It is true that we have been seeing things with our eyes from infancy, and we know that when we close our eyes we cease to see. But it is equally true that we have been dreaming from our childhood up, and that there is nothing new or unprecedented in having a dream.

The main Problem is why it occurred to Primitive Man to collate his Waking and his Dream Worlds

This being so, it is quite conceivable (and I think it is even probable) that, had it not been for

[1] Cf. remark of Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, p. 6.

special circumstances, the dream-experience and the waking-experience might have gone on indefinitely side by side without its occurring to the primitive mind to correlate the two in such a way that the contradiction was bound to come out. The problem which we have really to solve, therefore, is the problem why it occurred to primitive man to collate his waking and his dream worlds.

The answer is implied in what has already been said. It is not because dreaming, generally speaking, is contrary to all the conditions of our waking experience that it was first *observed to be so*, but because *some* of our dreams, and in the case of primitive man a great many of them, are in themselves so startling and overpowering that on waking we cannot get them out of our heads. They continue to suffuse our waking moments with an atmosphere peculiarly their own. We feel an overlapping, an intussusception of experiences. We are suspended between two worlds, and in the acuter moments of the experience it is a question which is the dream-world and which the real. At such times we are transported out of ourselves. There is something in us other than the ordinary, something that raises us up out of our average *Nüchternheit*, and finds us moving and conversing with the dead in a world whose features, however familiar, have taken on a strange unearthliness. And then the amazing powers that are ours in dreams! And the amazing impotence! The leaping and soaring into space, and the agonizing frustrations, when we struggle vainly to accomplish feats, some of which we perform without any effort in our waking life, others of which we should never think of attempting except in dreams! The overpowering

sense of our helplessness as we sink down the nocturnal abysses to some terrifying doom of annihilation—only to waken up at the catastrophic moment, in the security of the resting-place! The sudden, welcome dislocation of an agonizing consciousness, the sense of miraculous escape, of inexpressible relief, must surely have played a great part in forcing a sense of the duality of existence upon the primitive mind. In view of such overwhelming transitions, such incredible displacements of experience, it is ridiculous to ask why the primitive man *ever thinks* of collating his dream-life with his normal life. It is simply that in the experience of waking out of dreams the two lives clash. If the transition to the waking state were of the same imperceptible character as the transition to sleep, if it were the rule that the dream-consciousness faded away before the waking consciousness asserted itself, it is quite conceivable that, until an age of scientific curiosity brought the question into prominence, men should not have given the matter any serious thought. It is the fact that we are in our waking world before we are well out of our dreams that makes the dream a special object of curiosity to the undeveloped intelligence.

Dreaming comes to be, for Primitive Man, an Instance of that Duality which is at the Basis of all Religion

What we have here, then, is a profound and moving mystery at the very heart of our everyday experience—a rupture in the continuity of consciousness—an instance of that duality which is at

the basis of religion. In the light of this it is not hard to believe that the primitive man should have thought of himself as having a double. Such a double would be no more than a naïve expression of his feeling that an undivided self was unequal to what we have just called the displacements of experience. And once the theory had been suggested by the more startling and exciting dream-experiences, it seems natural that it should have been taken as an explanation of dreams in general. Whatever their content, they were all alike in form —a periodic intrusion of irrelevant matter into the otherwise even flow of consciousness, the displacing of one set of contents by another in such a way that the latter failed to synthesize with anything whatever, whereas the former invariably fused with one another across the intervening space of sleep. The daily wakening must have seemed to the savage, as it seems to us, like the resumption of a life that has been temporarily suspended in favour of another; and the idea of a *life* is so near to that of a *soul* that it must have been well-nigh impossible to think of the first without thinking of the second.

As a matter of fact the extension of the *double* theory from the dreams that first suggested it to dreams in general is something which we are compelled to assume if we admit a theory of dreams at all. For Durkheim is quite wrong in supposing that less exciting dreams might have been explained as mere illusions. It is true, as we have already argued, that primitive man may sometimes have thought of himself as deceived in his dreams, just as he must sometimes have felt himself deceived in his waking moments; but it is most unlikely that he did not

distinguish between the two kinds of deception. He may have thought of some of his dreams as illusions; but that would not explain them *as dreams*. The illusions of a dream are not the illusions of waking experience. To be deceived by a false appearance when awake is not to dream (even if we sometimes figuratively describe such deception as dreaming); and, conversely, one must first have a dream before it can deceive one. Even admitting, then, that dreams are illusory, it does not follow that they are nothing but illusions, or that primitive man explained them as such.

What can be accepted in Tylor's Account of Animism?

It will be observed that we have accepted Tylor's hypothesis of animism in its first phase as a theory to account for dreams. We have done so, however, with a significant difference. It would be a misleading thing to say that primitive man ever tried to explain his dreams in the sense in which we understand *explanation* at the present day.[1] When we seek to explain how anything comes about, our explanation tends to take the form of a statement about the cause. Now we have long known (what seemed impossible to the ancients) that causes are not at all like their effects, so that there seems to us nothing strange or

[1] An exception to what we are about to maintain will be found in the method of Freud. Freud's dream-theory represents a striking reversion to animistic thinking. It is an attempt to explain dreams causally; but by a causal explanation Freud means not merely a reference to antecedents, physical and physiological, but also a deciphering of the dream-symbolism. The causes of our dreams are to be found, at least to some extent, in what the dreams *mean*.

unnatural in explaining one thing by attributing it to a cause which has nothing or next to nothing in common with it. Thus we are not surprised when we are told that a terrifying and apparently significant dream is due, not to something like the dream itself, but to something quite unlike it in quality and significance—for example, to a condition of the heart or the digestive organs.

This view of causality is comparatively modern; and it applies more particularly, though not exclusively, to the kind of phenomenon in which modern science is interested, namely, events in space and time. In earlier ages the idea was prevalent that between cause and effect there must be some sort of resemblance, or at least that there must be something about the nature of these related factors that made it clear to us why the one should follow from the other. Plato, for example, is quite definite in his view that no cause can produce an effect that is opposite in nature to itself. A similar assumption underlies the criticism of the causal relation by Sextus Empiricus. It was David Hume who most persuasively showed the falsity of this view, and substituted for the notion that the effect must resemble its cause the profoundly different notion that when a number of causes resemble one another their effects will do the same.

Now the view of Plato is not primitive, any more than is that of Hume; but in the primitive way of looking at things there is a suggestion of both views. In a sense the primitive man does not think it necessary that the cause should be like the effect. This is obvious if we consider the obscure and oracular reasons sometimes given in explanation of

events, as well as the mysterious and inexplicable means adopted to obtain their ends by the wizard and the medicine-man. On the other hand even when there is no actual resemblance between cause and effect, there is something about the cause, other than its mere invariable antecedence, which fits it to produce precisely the effect it does. The two are so related that to him who knows, the one becomes the index of occult forces passing from it to the other. Thus all things, as we have seen, become invested with a certain meaning, a suggestiveness of potency, which is not independent of their content; and indeed in some cases the feature in the content to which the potency is due may be actually resemblance. An example of this is sympathetic magic.

But beneath all uniformities and all variations in the primitive view is one all-important fact, namely, that the interest of the primitive man in nature's processes and in the bonds that connect one thing with another is not primarily a theoretical interest. I should describe it as a practical interest, were it not for the fact that, once more, it differs in one significant respect from what we should frequently mean by the latter at the present day. The difference is this. Our practical interests tend to be highly impersonal in the sense that whatever be their ultimate connection with the conditions of human life in its personal aspect, that connection is sufficiently remote to make the immediate issue some purely technical problem. It may be to discover how a certain substance can be adjusted to another substance, and what will be the result of putting certain physical elements together; and even if it be the case that we do these things with an eye to further

practical applications, these applications terminate in ends that are not the ends of life in general, but are purely auxiliary and so semi-independent. They assume the form of limited utilities. The engineer and the builder do not in their professional capacity look beyond the advantages of rapid locomotion and sound construction. It is left to human life to make what it can of these advantages.

The case is different with primitive man. For him life is not yet the highly departmentalized thing it is to-day, and its activities have not been drained into numberless technical channels terminating more or less independently in distinct and narrowly restricted utilities. The result is that when he seeks to explore the enigmas of his existence, he has a way (of which we have partly lost the habit) of relating everything directly to himself and to the conditions of his personal life. It is this tendency, closely connected with the struggle for existence, that explains the identification of causes with meanings by the primitive mind. Hence the question : How does it come about ? is apt to be taken in the sense : What does it mean ? The latter question in turn implies a third : What bearing has that meaning upon the group of my vital interests ? It is natural for the savage to interpret everything in the light of the fateful meanings with which his experience seems to be saturated. Now the most obvious meaning of a vivid dream is that the events which appear in it are real events. They seem to be genuine in spite of the fact that from the standpoint of waking experience it is hard to see how they can be so. The *explanation* of the dream, therefore, the *causal* part of the interpretation, is determined by the inability to

give the appearance any other meaning than that of a real incident. The initial problem is not that of finding a theoretical explanation of dreams; but once this explanation has grown up within the husk of the experience itself and under the stimulus of practical *concern*, it becomes the theory of dreams in general.[1]

A further important modification follows from this first modification (which is chiefly a difference of emphasis) in the theory as originally stated by Tylor. It does not seem likely to me that the theory was originally devised as an explanation of dreams, and then *extended* to the phenomenon of death. The fact (of which, as we have seen, there seems to be abundant evidence) that the savage is constantly visited in dreams by the dead, would give to the dream-theory from the first an intimate relationship with this other application of the theory. That is to say, what would strike the savage mind would be not so much that the notion of a double, which so well accounted for the dream-experience, would also account for the mysterious difference between a dead body and a living, but rather that in his dreams the dead were constantly with him, and that he could then associate with them in a way not possible in his waking hours.

Now the natural interpretation to put upon this supposition, saturated as it must have been with the weird impressiveness of the dream-atmosphere, would be, not so much that death resembled sleep (although this too must have been obvious), but that

[1] Tylor certainly goes too far in suggesting the doctrinal character of animism. It has neither the self-conscious nor the systematic character which a doctrine implies. At best it is no more than a strand of theory inseparably interwoven with experience itself.

sleep resembled death, and that to be asleep was very like being dead. It was in sleep that one met the dead on an equal footing. In dreams it seemed as if a curtain were withdrawn and one were admitted to a communion not otherwise vouchsafed. And when a body was observed to lie inert and motionless, the more fearful of the two surmises that would naturally arise in the mind must have been suggested by the fact that sleep looks so like death, rather than that death looks so like sleep.

Thus from the standpoint of the primitive man, grappling desperately with the thought of the ever-imminent, dread presence, the question is not one of a mere observed resemblance which may be viewed indifferently from either side. To see the likeness from one standpoint is something fraught with far more meaning than to see it from the other. I should incline to the conclusion, then, that it is more natural for the primitive man to think of sleep in terms of death than to think of death in terms of sleep, to dwell upon what is formidable in the one rather than on what is soothing in the other—and this in spite of the fact that in subsequent times men have tended to reverse this procedure. Such reversal is no less natural to an age when the pressure of the struggle has relaxed sufficiently to enable men to take a more or less detached and sentimental interest in the last dread enemy, and to observe whatever of kindliness and calm can be discerned on his grim features. This is the side of the relationship which we should expect to become fixed in the language of poetry. And so it is that from Homer to Shelley poets have spoken of death as the twin brother of sleep, and from Hesiod to Shakespeare have found it

natural to speak of a "sleep of death" (*ὕπνος θανάτοιο*),[1] but never of a "death of sleep".

Concluding Query

Before passing from this aspect of animism we must summarily notice one serious difficulty. Owing to the complexity of the issues and to the fact that a solution involves other aspects of the subject, we cannot do more than indicate the difficulty. It will be discussed at length in subsequent chapters. The question is: Are the spirits of the dead, as the theory seems to suggest, identical with the souls of the living? Clearly in one respect at least the two must be thought of as differing. For the special function of a soul is to animate a body, whereas the dead have no longer any bodies to animate. Moreover,[2] if it is the special function of the soul to animate a body, it would appear to be its peculiar characteristic to be able to do without one. Is there not here some gross confusion of thought? Is it thinkable that that whose nature it is to exist as the dead exist, should be that to which the living owe everything that gives them the attributes of life?

[1] Hesiod, *Ap. Strab.* 642.

[2] Of course this is not to say that they are conceived as immaterial. What is meant is that they have lost touch with the bodies with which in life they were associated.

CHAPTER IV

FURTHER DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF THE ANIMISTIC THEORIES : ANIMATISM

Soul as a Changeless Principle of Motion

IN approaching the difficulties indicated at the close of the last chapter, we must keep in mind what has already been emphasized as a principle of interpretation, viz. that clearness and consistency are no criteria of primitive thought, with the corollary that there can be no special presumption against a conception or belief on the ground that it is confused and even self-contradictory. We need not therefore be deterred from pushing the inquiry further by the discovery of such paradoxes as have been pointed out. We are moreover encouraged to proceed by the fact that in much later times, when the conception of the soul is no longer primitive, very similar difficulties are to be found. The primitive point of view will be more readily understood if we pause for a little to consider some of these later developments.

In one whole phase of Plato's thinking the soul appears as the principle of motion in the universe. That is to say, whenever motion is self-initiated and not merely communicated from without, the factor to which this possibility is due is *soul*. To be actuated by a soul, therefore, is to be an independently moving agent. Such is the character of

living things; and, since the heavenly bodies appear to move in the same independent fashion, although with a far greater regularity of motion, it is necessary to suppose that they have souls and are alive.

But the nature of the soul is not exhausted in its function as a principle of motion. The soul is also a principle of knowledge. It is that within us which enables us to know the true nature of things. Now the true nature of things, that which really is—τὸ ὄντως ὄν—is always something changeless, and a genuine knowledge of this is correspondingly fixed and unvarying. That the soul is able to be in possession of such knowledge is due to its own nature, which has a deeply-seated affinity with the changeless realities. It is its nature to contemplate them, and with one of them, the Idea (*i.e.* Form) of Life, its relationship is closer still. Thus the soul participates in the Idea of Life not in the sense in which physical objects participate in the changing qualities which constitute their content, nor yet in the sense in which they participate in changeless Ideas such as great, small, equal, but in the sense that, if there were no such thing as life, neither would there be any such thing as the soul. Life is to such an extent the very nature of the soul that to suppose a soul without life, or to suppose a soul capable of losing its life, would involve a contradiction. It follows that the soul is eternal, and belongs to the order of things that do not come and go.

Yet, as we have seen, it *is* a principle of coming and going, so far as this is presupposed in motion. It is through the agency of the soul that this kind of change gets into the world.

Now, of course, there is no contradiction in

supposing that a principle of change is itself changeless. This is obviously the case with those laws of nature which we think of as regulating the everlasting flux of physical events; and there have been expositors, *e.g.* Natorp, who have asserted that the unchanging Ideas of Plato's philosophy are to be understood as *laws*. But however this may be of the Ideas (and there are strong reasons against such an interpretation), certainly the soul cannot be so understood. Whatever may be its fundamental nature, it is not a principle of motion in the sense of being a physical law of motion, but in the sense of being an actuating force. The difficulty in Plato's conception is to see just how these two aspects of the soul come together—the aspect in which it leans to changelessness and the world of the eternal Ideas, and the aspect in which it appears responsible for the changing world of moving things.

There are two points of view from which the whole subject may be viewed. Indeed we are compelled to view it from two opposite sides, if we accept Plato's conception of the world of motion as intelligible only on the assumption of self-movers. These two points of view may be expressed as follows. In the one case we begin with a world of moving things, and proceed to ask how such a world is possible. Clearly the movements of certain things can be explained on the ground that motion is communicated to them by other things already in motion. But if we are to explain the *origin* of motion, as Plato and Aristotle both assumed we are bound to do, this kind of explanation is quite beside the mark. It will compel us to proceed from one thing to another indefinitely, and at no point shall we be

any nearer an explanation than we were at first. This endless reference of one thing to another, which is the method most natural to physical science, appeared to Plato and very emphatically to Aristotle—whose works are full of a characteristic *horror infiniti*—to be the very negation of true explanation. What is wanted is a terminus to every such regress, and thus we get the notion of an *initiator* not itself affected by the process which it initiates.

So far the logic of the argument is clear. It is easy to see why all the motion in the world should be attributed to something which does not participate in that motion. But when we have reached this point we feel compelled to turn round and view the subject from the other end, beginning with a world of changeless realities and proceeding to ask how it is that such realities should give rise to a world of motion and change. It is here that everything becomes obscure. The difficulties concentrate around the notion of a soul, and in Plato's philosophy that notion becomes clouded with a great many features which, if they are undeniable in the light of experience, are none the less unintelligible in the light of Plato's own theory. The soul which is indissolubly one, immortal and divine, appears in the turbid medium of human experience as self-divided and corruptible. Leaning, as we said, in its intrinsic nature to the side of the changeless Ideas, its spiritual history is a drama of uncertainties. Sharing in all the attributes of the divine being, its misadventures furnish us with the very names and ideas of all that is most directly contrary to the divine.

Opposition-thinking : the Bipolar View

But, it will be asked, why should we feel compelled to place ourselves at the point of view from which all these difficulties are seen ? On our own admission no such confusion need arise so long as we confine ourselves to the standpoint of the changing world and ask only under what conditions such a world is possible. Why then not let the matter rest there ?

The answer is that we cannot, so long as our reply to the first question rests upon the idea of a *soul*. There is something in the very nature of soul which makes it a promoter of just such difficulties as those with which we are now dealing. In the present instance the reason is that the Platonic soul-conception (and, as we shall see, the same thing is true of the *primitive* conception of the soul) is the product of a special way of looking at things which is characteristic alike of primitive man and of some of the deepest thinkers the world has known. This way of thinking (which, on the whole, is also the plain man's way of thinking, although, unlike Plato, the plain man does not trouble to work it out) we shall name ' opposition-thinking ', and the general view of things which results from it we shall call ' the bipolar view '. As to the ultimate truth of this view we shall have nothing to say at the moment. It may, for all we know, represent the profoundest of truths. What is immediately obvious is that both the view itself and the method of thought of which it is the result are alien to the standpoint of modern science, and that if their truth is to be established, it must be on other than scientific grounds.

Let me try to make clear the nature of opposition-thinking. When we consider such a thing as the motion we have been discussing, and ask in what kind of relationships it can stand, we see that these relationships can be viewed in various ways. For example, motion may be contrasted with motion, as when we compare the movements of two vessels at sea and note their differences. On the other hand motion may be contrasted with something which we conceive to be the natural opposite of motion, *e.g.* rest. In this case the question arises in what terms the difference is to be reported. If, disregarding the question of direction, we denote amounts of motion numerically by the figures 25 and 15, then we may say that the difference between the two motions is ten units of motion. But we cannot represent the difference between motion and rest in this way without implicitly giving up the idea of rest as the opposite of motion. Suppose, as in the previous illustration, we have an instance of motion equivalent to 25. Obviously, in order to relate this motion to rest in the same way as it was previously related to motion, we should have to represent rest by the number 0. But in so doing we are not representing it as a case of rest at all, but as the zero instance of motion ; and from the standpoint of the theory of number it represents the null class of motions, not a zero case of *rest*.

As a matter of fact there are the strongest scientific reasons why what we ordinarily talk of and conceive as rest, the opposite of motion, should be regarded, not as the opposite, but as a limiting instance, of the latter. In this case we recognize nothing but motion, and motion as so conceived has

no opposite. The only contrasts are contrasts of motion itself in respect of velocity, acceleration, duration, etc. All this implies a considerable displacement in our ordinary unscientific way of looking at the subject ; and if there are reasons why our ordinary ways of looking at things should not be altogether displaced—if there is a point of view from which it is as necessary to maintain the fundamental oppositeness of motion and rest as, from the scientific point of view, it is necessary to insist on their identity—then the reasons referred to will belong to what I have called ' opposition-thinking ', and the point of view to what I have called ' the bipolar view ' of things.

Now almost the whole of Greek philosophy in its classical phase—two significant exceptions being Eleaticism and the naturalism that finds its greatest exponent in Democritus—is profoundly under the influence of opposition-thinking. The idea of a certain oppositeness in the contents of the natural world was introduced by Anaximander, and we find the idea in some way associated with almost everything that was unscientific in early Greek thought. In order to estimate the extent of the ravages due to the bipolar point of view, we have only to trace this through the succession of early cosmologies and more particularly through the detail of Aristotle's cosmology and physics. At the same time it must be acknowledged that this standpoint was among the things that gave Greek thinking its start along scientific lines ; and when we come to certain types of problem—the more strictly philosophical and the religious—it is a question whether any other point of view will serve the purpose.

As Plato and Aristotle are the most advanced representatives of opposition-thinking in antiquity, so the chief representative of this standpoint and method in the history of modern thought is Hegel. Hegel has developed the method into a highly elaborate and comprehensive technique. In so doing he shows no sense of the necessity of distinguishing between his point of view and that of the sciences in ways that the sciences would demand. For example, he is wrong in representing the bipolar character of certain physical phenomena, the polarity of magnetism and electricity and the polarization of light, as instances, at a certain level of reality, of that dialectical character which is the nature of the real everywhere. In so far as the bipolarity (and, we might add, the periodicity) which nature manifests in many of her phenomena are to be interpreted in the light of any logical theory, the appropriate theory is to be found in the logic of relations and of series and not in any dialectical movement of opposites. That is to say, the phenomena referred to fall into certain classes of relations which have to be studied from the standpoint of their symmetry and asymmetry and from other points of view, but not from the standpoint of the evolutionary progression which dialectic implies. The special mark of the Hegelian variety of opposition-thinking is the idea that the opposites pass into one another by a well-defined logical process, and this character is quite absent from the bipolarity of nature as understood by science.

There is, however, nothing about this idea which makes it essential to opposition-thinking. As a matter of fact we do find it in the doctrine of Hera-

clitus very near the beginning of Greek philosophy, but we find the contrary view represented by Anaximander at an even earlier date. The fundamental difference between these two thinkers is that for Anaximander the opposites cannot pass into one another, whereas for Heraclitus this is precisely what they do. Anaximander's conception is not that of *passing into* but of *giving place*. The opposites are 'separated off', which may be taken in the most general sense to signify that where the one is the other cannot be—only, it must be added that when opposition-thinking takes this form, the opposites must be thought of not only as falling back before one another (or, as we said, *giving place*), but also as pushing on and *taking one another's place*.

The Contrast of Life and Death as dealt with in Science

Now the special case that interests us is that of life and death ; and there is probably no opposition better fitted to bring out the difference between scientific and opposition-thinking. As, in the illustration from motion and rest, science explains the difference in terms of motion, thus reducing rest to a limiting instance of the latter, so here, in so far as science has anything to say on the subject, the whole tendency is to say it in terms of one member of the opposition. Admittedly the subject is one on which science speaks with a somewhat uncertain voice ; but underneath all variations we detect the same eventual motive, to find some means of viewing and expressing the opposition from one side only. The question is : from which side ?

To begin with, we find the opposition itself restated as that between the organic and the inorganic. The problem therefore narrows down to this: In what terms must the distinction between the inorganic and the organic be presented?

To this question there are, roughly speaking, three classes of answers. In the first place there is the answer of mechanism, according to which the difference between the organic and the inorganic must be stated in terms of the latter. That is to say, there is no phenomenon of organization or of life which is anything more than a complicated instance of what we already find in the inorganic world.

In the second place there is the view of those who call themselves ' naturalists ', and who maintain that it is the function of biology so to confine itself to the study of living things as if nothing else existed. These living forms are for them the fundamental data behind which it is vain to press. If the problem of the *place* of life in the universe arises, the answer is supplied by the facts themselves. So far as can be observed, the place of life is where life already is. Living things exist only where there are other living things. And if the question is how life originally got into the world, once more the universal evidence of fact is invoked in support of the thesis that life originates in life.

There remains one question which might prove somewhat embarrassing to the naturalist, were he sufficiently alive to it, the question: *What becomes of life?* But it is one of the consequences of looking at the opposition of life and death from the standpoint of the organic, that the phenomenon of death loses in significance. As for the allied question: What becomes

of *living things*? the point on which the naturalist concentrates is not that they die, but that they propagate; and the fact of propagation is one that he tends to look at from the standpoint of the new life involved rather than of the old. Thus his preoccupation with origins serves only to strengthen the barrier which he has built up around the world of the living. Whatever may be the nature of the distinction between the animate and the inanimate, the distinction is not one with which he is concerned.

In the third place there is vitalism, which is the refusal to accept the mechanistic interpretation of life. Two main forms of this doctrine may be distinguished. In so far as the theory confines itself strictly to the sphere of biology, it may be classed along with the naturalism we have been considering. In so far as it attempts to extend the vitalistic viewpoint to the broader questions of existence, it is the antithesis of mechanism. In this aspect its fundamental tenet may be stated as follows: Just as on the mechanistic hypothesis there is nothing in life that is not already present in pre-organic forms of matter, so from the standpoint of philosophical vitalism, the thing to be explained is the *inorganic*, and the explanation offered is that it represents the inevitable backwash of vital force. Or, in terms of Bergson's striking similitude, it is the downward movement of the sparks through the upward movement of the flame.[1]

[1] *L'Évolution créatrice*, iii. The figure of a rocket suggests the *upward* and the *downward way* of Heraclitus; and this reminds us that we have represented the Greek thinker as an exponent of opposition-thinking, whereas we are here representing Bergson, who in some respects so closely resembles him, as an exponent of the contrary view. As a matter of fact the two thinkers have much less in common

Life and Death as dealt with in Opposition-thinking

Thus in all three classes of answer the problem presents itself not so much as one of meeting, and, perhaps, in some way overcoming a fundamental opposition in the nature of things, but rather as one of so envisaging the facts that the problem itself will cease to be one of opposition. Precisely the reverse is the case with what I have called opposition-thinking. Here the relevant factors are life and death, or living things in contradistinction to *these same things dead*; and the introduction of a soul as the key to all the questions that spring from the opposition, means that the opposing factors are felt in a very pregnant sense to conflict. The point of view is that from which life and death are conceived to be no mere observed phenomena, but objects of the deepest concern to the living. The life in question is the content of an actual experience, and death is the prospect of an actual destiny.[1]

We say that death is the opposite of life; but the word 'death' covers a number of significantly different meanings. It may mean the change that comes over the living when they die: it may be the

than might be supposed. In the present instance, in order to bring Bergson into line with Heraclitus, it would be necessary to treat the downward movement of the sparks as a phenomenon of the same metaphysical status as the upward thrust of the fire.

[1] It is possible that, as Durkheim maintains, the fact of death strikes the primitive mind first in its social, rather than in its individual aspect (*op. cit.* Book III, ch. v; Eng. tr., p. 399). If this is so, if the significance of death is felt to be the weakening of the group, and if the elaborate piacular rites common among savages do not indicate personal grief, still this feeling that the group has been weakened reports itself in terms of individual experience. Death is a fact of fearful import for the individual.

name of that *event* or the substantival equivalent of that *verb*. If so, the things opposed to one another will be existence and that which brings existence to an end. On the other hand death may be the equivalent, not of the verb 'to die', but of the corresponding past participle. If so, death will mean not the act of dying but the fact of having died, and the antithesis will be between having died and being still alive. Thirdly, by a variation on this last meaning, death may signify neither the act of dying nor the fact of having died, but a supposed *state of being*, the resultant of that fact. This last interpretation will be, presumably, greatly reinforced by the linguistic circumstance that when we speak of 'the dead' (*mortui*, οἱ τεθνηκότες) the past participle, which, grammatically of course, has a substantival value, almost inevitably comes to suggest something metaphysically substantival as well. We can hardly think of the dead as *those who have died* without at the same time thinking of them as *those who are now dead*; and this of itself suggests that *although dead*, they still *are*. Once this point has been reached, certain further readjustments become necessary among the antithetical opposites. Life and death are no longer opposed to one another as existence and non-existence (or the end of existence), but as two forms or stages of existence itself; and the catastrophic act which puts an end to life is not an end in any absolute sense but merely a transition. It remains only for religion to invert the antithesis altogether, and to represent life in the true sense as attainable only after death. *Mors (est) janua vitae.*

These distinctions are to be taken in an analytic rather than in a chronological and historical sense.

We must therefore ask: In which of the various meanings indicated (if, indeed, in any) does primitive man think of death? The form of the question should be carefully noted. What we are asking is, what is *thought* of death? Consequently we take no account of a possible stage of development at which death is not thought of at all. If any such stage existed, if ever there was a time at which man accepted the fact of death in that completely unreflective way which is presumably characteristic of the lower animals, then we must suppose that he had not yet begun to evince those traits which give him the right to be considered a religious being. On the other hand there are modes and degrees of reflective thinking, and when we speak of the primitive man's *thinking* on any subject it is necessary to be on our guard against confusing one thing with another. For example primitive life abounds in ceremonial, and we must suppose that that ceremonial has ideas of some sort behind it. In trying to fathom these, however, it would be a mistake to accept as correct the explanation given by the savage himself. It may be so; but it may not, and it is not likely to be. Much more probably the explanation given is one which the savage has devised in order to account for rites and usages which have come down to him from an unknown antiquity, and to which the key has been lost. It does not follow, however, that because the savage is not a good anthropologist, his ideas are to be disregarded altogether. If not aboriginal, these ideas at least may be primitive, and in so far as they represent his thinking on certain very important subjects, they are of the greatest possible interest. As has been already remarked, the attempt to reach

the aboriginal in any absolute sense is illusory. One thing alone is certain. The history of early thought is a confused and tortuous thing. It can hardly have had the progressive continuity which belongs to the history of science and of philosophy. In its course there must have been many blind alleys and many lost clues. The thoughts that crystallized out into institutions were assuredly in many cases buried in the institutions which incorporated them, so that in course of time the institution became, not a solution, but a problem; and, as we have just seen, the explanation evolved represented in all likelihood a new departure of thought.

Primitive Piacular Rites : their Significance

In view of these considerations it would seem that the proper course for us would be to examine not so much what the savage has to tell us about death and the dead as the piacular rites out of which his views on the subject have grown up. Unfortunately the piacular rites in themselves tell us very little ; and if we refuse to consider the explanation which the savage himself gives of them, we are thrown back upon the hazards of conjecture.

There are, however, three features in the primitive ceremonial attendant upon death which are so widely prevalent and so well defined that it is difficult to overlook them. In the first place they are not the spontaneous and unpremeditated expression of individual grief, but are in the nature of a conventionalized performance by the social group to which the deceased belonged. In this performance the nearest of kin have special rôles assigned to them, but their

part in the proceedings is still that of participants in a social function. The second feature which calls for special notice is the nature of the rites themselves. They are unmistakably intended as an exhibition of grief and despair, in some cases of anger and fear; and the means of expression adopted, torture and lacerations, are in many instances of the most extravagant character.[1] Lastly the proceedings terminate in the same precise fashion in which they have been conducted.

From these considerations and others like them Durkheim has drawn the inference, in line with his general position, that the underlying idea embodied in the piacular customs is the preservation of group-solidarity in the face of social loss. The rites of mourning are a demonstration of this solidarity evoked by the death of a member.

> "When someone dies, the family group to which he belongs feels itself lessened and, to react against this loss, it assembles. . . . Not only do the relatives, who are affected the most directly, bring their own personal sorrow to the assembly, but the society exercises a moral pressure over its members, to put their sentiments in harmony with the situation. . . . Sorrow, like joy, becomes exalted and amplified when leaping from mind to mind, and therefore expresses itself outwardly in the form of exuberant and violent movements. . . . Each is carried along by the others; a veri-

[1] *Vide* the interesting remarks of Knabenhaus in his article "Zur Psychologie des primitiven Menschen", in *Schweizerisches Archiv f. Volkskunde*, pp. 154-155. It should be added that even here everything is subject to regulation. A good illustration of the ordered sequence of stages in the funerary ceremonies, each stage at a fixed interval from the preceding, will be found in Dr. Rivers' work, *The Todas*.

table panic of sorrow results. When pain reaches this degree of intensity, it is mixed with a sort of anger and exasperation. One feels the need of breaking something, of destroying something. He takes this out either upon himself or others. He beats himself, burns himself, wounds himself or else he falls upon others to beat, burn and wound them. Thus it becomes the custom to give one's self up to the veritable orgies of tortures during mourning." [1]

There is much that is attractive in Durkheim's theory, and in this case it is stated with great persuasiveness ; but as is usually the case with theories of this kind, there is a flaw in the logic of the argument, a flaw which, it is true, does not altogether invalidate the writer's contention, but which makes a certain amount of restatement necessary. The precise point is this. Even if the piacular ceremonies are to be understood primarily as a set of observances imposed by custom upon the individual in the interest of social solidarity, it does not follow that this is the root of the matter, or that we cannot get back to something more primitive still. On the contrary, admitting the truth of Durkheim's statement, not only can we get further back, but we are compelled to suppose something much more nearly approaching the aboriginal. What this something is can be easily shown.

If the instinct of social solidarity is the sole and original motive in the rites of mourning, it follows that the death of an individual will find its significance in a sense of social loss. In this case we shall

[1] *Op. cit.* Book III, ch. v, § ii (Eng. tr., pp. 399-400).

have to think of the organized group as the direct sustainer of bereavement, while the individual's sense of bereavement accrues to him only indirectly as a member of the group. The grief, the anger and the fear will consequently be due to a consciousness that the group-life has been weakened and impoverished by the loss of a member.

But surely no one would agree that this is a complete representation of the case. However profoundly integrated the social instincts may be with the whole institutional development of primitive life, we cannot think of these instincts as self-sustaining. For when they rally, as they do in the piacular rites, to some great demonstration of their power, they do not rally, so to speak, *round themselves*, but round another set of instincts and emotions—the grief and fear of the emotional human individual. The solidarity of the group demonstrates itself in a gesture of sympathy, in a wholehearted and public participation in the feelings of its afflicted members. All that Durkheim says as to the social motive and the social compulsion behind the mourning rites may be conceded; but this does not alter the fact that these rites, while they impose upon the individual the forms which private grief is permitted to assume in public, nevertheless borrow their public expression largely from the forms of private grief. All that the facts appear to warrant is a conclusion to the effect that the death of any member is a matter of profound concern to the group as a whole, and that the group shows its solidarity by participating as a unit in the piacular ceremonies. And when we see this much, we see also that underlying the integration of any society is the common nature of mankind, to which

grief is intelligible and sympathy natural. In the last resort we are bound to acknowledge, among the factors needed to explain the mourning customs of primitive peoples, the intimate circle smitten with a bereavement peculiarly its own, and finally the individual himself brought by circumstance into the awful presence of death. It is of him that we must ask : What does death mean to the one who stands closest to it as a matter of actual experience ?

Of one thing at least there seems to be no doubt. Death for the primitive mind never means an end of life *and nothing more*. What follows the act of dying is not extinction. The famous argument of Epicurus against the fear of death, to the effect that while *we are*, death is not present, and that when death is present we *are not*, is typical of a mature age, and rests upon assumptions that are quite alien to the primitive point of view. For the savage the dead exist ; and death is either the mode of their existence or the transition thereto. This appears from the whole body of their piacular observances, and evidences could be multiplied indefinitely.

Again our Original Question, whether the Spirits of the Dead and the Souls of the Living are Identical?

At this point a host of difficulties make their appearance. They all have their root in the idea that the dead exist. It will be remembered that this whole discussion originated in the question whether the spirits of the dead are identical with the souls of the living. There seemed to be something contradictory in the assumption ; but if so, the contradiction belongs in a peculiar degree to the stage the

inquiry has now reached, and if there is no solution here, the contradiction must be accepted along with all that it involves.

The situation amounts to this. If the dead exist, they must be thought of as in some sense alive. For to the primitive mind the meaning of existence is primarily definable in terms of living. This does not necessarily mean that the savage is unable to think of anything not alive as existing (although the point is one which we have not yet discussed). The statement of course refers particularly to beings like himself and his fellow men. He cannot think of them or of himself as existing in any other sense than that in which experience has revealed the nature of existence to him. To exist, as he knows existence, is to live : life is the content of the experience he has of existing. Not that he has any well-defined *conception* of life. We are not here dealing with conceptions, but with those primitive meanings without which we could not have the *experience* of being. The position is stated most exactly, as I have stated it, in negative terms. It is not that primitive man *thinks* of himself as existing, and then interprets his existence in the sense of life. Rather it is that he can neither think of himself and of his dead as non-existing, nor yet of their existence as anything but living. And yet (here is where the contradiction comes in) it is a living that is the very negation of life. It is everything that living is not ; or rather, it is living with everything that living means left out.

Why, then, it will be asked, does not the primitive man leave out the living too ? Why does he think of the existence of the dead as in any sense of the term

life ? The answer is surely not far to seek. It is simply because the existence of the dead, as he conceives it, is something fundamentally different from that inert and passive mode of existence which he sees before him in the dead body. Here is something which in a still more radical sense fails to express the nature of existence for him. It is the antithesis of being in the sense in which experience has taught him the meaning of being. Compared with the dead body the ghost, however attenuated its existence, is still a living thing. Thus in a sense life has two opposites and death two meanings. There is the dead body and the state in which the dead exist ; and these two must be added to the list of antithetical pairs.

The Answer to our Question

If it is still thought that our original question as to the identity of the soul and the spirit calls for an answer, that answer may now be supplied in the light of our whole discussion. To begin with, the body is alive, active, mobile, throbbing with sensitiveness and with initiative. After a longer or shorter period there comes a moment when, without ceasing to exist, it ceases to possess any of these characters. What has become of them ? Since the primitive does not think of death as annihilation, it is necessary to think of them as carried on somehow. But how, and by what ? Certainly not by the dead body as such, nor in that efficient manner characteristic of the body while alive. Nevertheless we are compelled to think of the old functions as somehow feebly maintained, and that by the self-same being that was once a living body. The line of self-identity is thus carried, so to

speak, across the body of the dead to the dead himself. He has not ceased to exist or to function. He has only shed his body. It is the corpse that is sloughed off and becomes a sheer *Unding*, a *res aequivoca*, to which we are at once compelled to attribute and to deny existence. One thing alone is clear. In so far as the body is thought of as really dead, it is not of it that we think when we think seriously of 'the dead'. The dead are *what the living become when they leave their bodies behind*, and death is what life becomes under the same condition. No doubt there is a change and a very profound change. Furthermore the change is specifically due to the severance of body and soul. But it is not a change of identity: it is a change of circumstance and of degree. The ghosts are the souls of the living without their bodies.[1]

[1] I am strongly of the opinion that the utter anomaly of the dead body had much to do with generating the conception of matter as the existent that is altogether lifeless. Certainly at a much later period than that with which we are dealing, the conception of matter in general was closely bound up with that of the human body. To the Christian apologists of the first centuries the denial of matter by the Docetae appeared a dangerous heresy, because it implied the unreality of bodily existence. It is true that the body thus threatened was the living body; but for the early Christians, with their new and highly spiritualized conception of life, the body in itself was hardly a living thing. Or, more precisely, it was a living thing only as the vehicle and organ of the spirit. It was something which we were bound to accept for a season as a condition of our eventual deliverance from it. But the deliverance was something to be sighed for. Hence St. Paul's passionate ejaculation, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the resurrection the spirit took to itself a body worthy to be the vehicle of a redeemed soul—a *spiritual* body. In the Upanishads there is an interesting attempt at an etymology, which seems to indicate how close was the connection in earlier times between the idea of the body and the idea of decay. "It (the body from which breath has departed) was decayed, and because people said, it decayed, therefore it was (called) body (*śarīra*) That is the reason of its name" (Aitareya-Âraṇyaka, III, 1, 4. 11; *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i, p. 207).

It must not be supposed, however, that for the primitive mind this problem in identities is so easily disposed of as it is in our analysis. As a matter of fact the phenomenon of death is provocative of endless confusion, especially as it makes its appeal to us not only in the cold light of intellectual curiosity, or as an observable fact, but through the medium of our instincts and emotions. The body is so much the organ and agent of all the meanings of life that we cannot help actually investing it with these meanings. It appropriates the identity which is by right the soul's ; and in the first moments of bereavement we think of the sacred clay not as ' it ' but as ' him ' and ' her '. The act of death appears not as a giving up of the body, but as a *giving up the ghost*, and the ghost becomes a thing of fear and aversion or an object of commiseration. In course of time, and sometimes by a sudden transition, it becomes the object of a peculiar veneration, while the body from which it has departed comes to be an object the very thought and mention of which is not to be endured.

The problem which here arises is that of adjusting the mind not to different objects or contexts of experience, but to the conditions of experience itself. Experience, we may say, which in every other instance has served as a comprehensive context or universe of discourse, now suffers a displacement which reduces it as a whole and with all its structural uniformity to an enigmatic content in a still wider context—a context of surmise and mystery. It is of the very nature of death to raise even in the savage consciousness the equivalent of what at a later stage of development we should call transcendental issues.

The result is a profound bewilderment as to what

is real, and what less real, and as to whether something is not real at all. There is hardly a statement that can be made which we are not compelled to modify in some way. For example in discussions on the nature of the self it is sometimes said that in early times man identified the real self with the body rather than with the soul. A supposed illustration is to be found in the opening words of the *Iliad*, where we read that the dire wrath of Achilles flung forth many doughty souls of heroes to Hades, but delivered *themselves* a prey to dogs and to all birds.

On such slight evidence as these words afford, it is argued that the *selves* of the heroes, the real personal identities to which alone the pronoun can refer, must be the bodies which are left upon the plain to be devoured by any prowling beast or bird of prey. The souls, on the other hand, are the mere leavings of the embodied selves, cast forth to a doom of semi-extinction—not the real persons but shadowy replicas.

Such an interpretation is surely a trifle strained. It overlooks the fact, on which we have dwelt, that even if the opposite were the true view, it would still be customary to speak of the bodies, at least in the first hours after death, as if they were the *persons* of the dead.

There is another passage from the *Iliad*[1] which is sometimes made the subject of a similar over-interpretation—the passage in which the ghost of Patroclus is described as appearing "in all respects like to himself, in stature and in fair countenance". What is the *self* which the ghost resembles in size and face? Obviously the bodily self—not, however,

[1] xxiii, 65 f.

the dead body, but the body of the living Patroclus.[1] It is the extreme likeness of the corpse to the living body, as well as a certain continuity of existence between the two, which makes it so natural for us to think of the former in the first hours of death as we think of the latter, namely, *personally*.

It is thus the element of life, or soul, in the body, from which the personal connotation radiates out in every direction. The dead body retains a little of it for a time, but only because for a time it seems to be the same body that was so recently the body of a living soul.[2]

[1] The Homeric expression would perhaps appear less striking if it were not for our inveterate habit of prodding an ancient classic for every vestige of meaning that can be extracted from it. When similar expressions occur in a modern poem, we do not comment upon the traces of a primitive view which they disclose; and there seems nothing that is not in accord with the habit of our modern minds when Wolfe writes, "We buried *him* darkly at dead of night", or "We left *him* alone with his glory".

[2] Of extreme interest in this connection is the passage from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, where the hero describes his encounter with the shade of Heracles: "And after him I descried the mighty Heracles, his phantom, I say; but as for himself he hath joy at the banquet among the deathless gods, and hath to wife Hebe of the fair ankles, child of great Zeus, and of Here of the golden sandals" (*Od.* xi, 601-604; Butcher and Lang's translation). The last three lines are by common consent a later interpolation. Now when interpolations occur in a passage like this, they invariably suggest an interesting psychological problem. Why did the later writer seek to improve upon the original? What exactly is the force of the modification intended? In the present instance the word εἴδωλον is clearly meant to restrict the connotation of the βίην Ἡρακληείην. It is as if the editorial comment were, "No, not exactly the *might of* Heracles, but something less than that; a mere *semblance*". The implication therefore is that the original Homeric expression went too far, and came too near to suggesting that the ghostly *might of Heracles* was the real person of the hero. Hence it is necessary to add that *he himself* is with the immortal gods. From all this the inference would seem to be that in the view of some early redactor Homer's language tended to identify the ghost too closely with the self. The attempt to put the matter right is particularly instructive. In the first place the ghost is distinguished as a mere phantasm. Distinguished from what? From the self, the

One final Difficulty in 'Animism'

These considerations may help to mitigate, although certainly they do not resolve, one final difficulty in animism. That difficulty has to do with the difference between a sleeping and a dead body. Up to now we have felt compelled to emphasize their resemblance; but the resemblance does not amount to identity. A sleeping body is still alive. It continues to breathe. But if during sleep the soul is absent on the business of the dream, what is it that meanwhile animates the body?

In general one can only say that we are here in a region where distinctions are profoundly obscure, and that if it is hard for a time to *dissociate* the living personality even from the dead body, from which it is known that the soul has taken its final departure, it must have been well-nigh impossible for the primitive mind, with its irresistible proclivity to association, not to feel some kind of sympathetic relation between the sleeping body and the soul, which was known to be absent from it, as the parent bird from the nest, only for a season. Its temporary absence would not impair its power over the body any more than distance impaired the efficacy of a magic spell; and it is not hard to suppose that the difference between a temporary and a permanent absence may have seemed to the savage to lie

αὐτός; but the self in question is not the dead body, but the living presence of the deified Heracles, who has taken his place at the banquet of the gods. Thus the ghost must be thought of as a phantasm of the living rather than of the dead. Or perhaps we might say that by a confusion of thought the ghost of Heracles is conceived as a phantom of the living and the dead—the ghost of the departed hero and the double of the living demi-god. On the point *vide* Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. i, pp. 60-61 (2nd edition).

precisely in this matter of *rapport*. If so, then in sleep the soul would still be in touch with the body, in the sense at least that there was nothing to prevent its return ; whereas in death this would be for some mysterious reason, perhaps an injury to the body itself, due to violence or magic, no longer possible.[1] Like the parent bird, which some compulsion leads to forsake the ravaged nest, the outraged soul would leave the violated nest for ever.[2]

[1] The fact that certain primitive peoples do not think of death as a natural event is highly significant. *Vide* Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 48, 536; Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. i, p. 1; Lévy-Bruhl, *op. cit.* pp. 37-38. The last writer doubts whether the Australian natives were originally able to conceive of death as due mainly to disease : *op. cit.* p. 40. The natives of Indonesia attribute disease itself either to magic or, more commonly, to the agency of divine or spiritual beings. The Polynesians ascribe it exclusively to the action of spiritual beings and gods. Cf. W. H. R. Rivers, *Medicine, Magic and Religion*, pp. 65-66, 94. *Vide* also Lévy-Bruhl, *op. cit.* p. 39.

[2] When reflection did finally stumble upon this problem, the solution appears to have been along some such lines as these. Here is another passage from the ancient literature of India dealing with the phenomena of sleep and dreams :

" On this there are these verses :

" ' After having subdued by sleep all that belongs to the body, he (*i.e.* the person, self), not asleep himself, looks down upon the sleeping (senses). Having assumed light, he goes again to his place, the golden person, the lonely bird.

" ' Guarding with the breath (*prâṇa*, life) the lower nest, the immortal moves away from the nest ; that immortal one goes wherever he likes, the golden person, the lonely bird ' " (Bṛihadâraṇyaka-Upanishad, IV, iii, 11-12 ; tr. M. Müller, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xv, p. 165).

The suggestion (cf. v. 12) appears to be that when the soul quits the rest of the body in sleep, it leaves behind it breath enough to carry on the vital functions. A little later (v. 19) the simile is reversed, the sleep-state (in this instance a *dreamless* sleep) being compared to the nest. I subjoin Deussen's German translation of v. 12 :

" *Das niedre Nest lässt er vom Leben hüten*
Und schwingt unsterblich aus dem Nest empor sich,
Unsterblich schweift er, wo es ihm beliebet,
Der gold'ge Geist, der ein'ge Wandervogel."

One further possibility of explanation suggests itself. The circumstance that distinguishes a living and waking body from one that is asleep or dead is the presence or absence of movement. But by movement must be understood the motion of the body as a whole or at least the movements of its gross and readily perceptible parts. From these we have to distinguish the minuter organic processes that go on even when the body is most inert—what the Hindu philosophers generalized in the conception of *prâna*, breath. Now we may almost take it for granted that a capacity for the grosser physical movements must always have seemed the most unmistakable evidence of life. When Plato, for example, defines life as the principle of motion, it was chiefly of motion in this sense that he was thinking.[1]

Now, as we see the situation to-day, in so far as *motion* is taken as a differentia, there are two obvious facts about the relation in question : (1) that a sleeping body differs from a waking one through the absence of gross movements, and (2) that it differs from a dead one through the presence of minute organic movements. What distinguishes our point of view from that of the savage is that whereas for both of us the first difference is unmistakable, the second is not so obvious to primitive observation, and where it is observed, its significance is not understood. It is not through minute organic movements that life defines itself.[2] That is to say, while the *fact* that a sleeping and a dead body differ could never have been in any doubt, the *respect* in which they

[1] Aristotle connects the soul-idea more specifically with the minuter processes of physiology.

[2] Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality*, pp. 68-69.

differ (except for the presence or absence of breathing) must have been far from clear. Such being the case, it would seem a reasonable inference that primitive man, although, of course, he cannot be thought of as *denying* the difference, would not feel specially called upon to account for it. We must remember that intellectual indolence which is characteristic of the savage, where his practical interests are not at stake.[1] And looking at the subject from the *practical* point of view, we see at once that the real issue, the thing that had to be thought about and provided for was the relation between the waking (rather than the sleeping) and the dead self. It is the life of the waking, the interests of waking life, that are most obviously threatened by death ; and so it is that the antithesis involved comes to formulate itself unconsciously as that between waking life and the dead state. Thus the special interest which came to attach to sleep through the phenomena of dreams had nothing to do with the *difference*, and much to do with the *resemblance*, between the twin brothers. The circumstances of early human development and the evolution of human thought in an unreflective age must have conspired to minimize the problem of the distinction between the sleeping and the dead, with the result that the difficulties involved probably had

[1] It is only in this sense that he can be described as intellectually lazy (Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality*, p. 30). His apathy melts away as soon as the problem in hand touches his sense of the mystical (*ibid.* p. 97). The so-called laziness would be better described as a certain inertia which makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the savage to observe and to think as an individual or outside the limits of the socially generated categories. Something of the same sort characterizes the thinking of the present day, even in its scientific phases.

very little influence upon the doctrine we are examining.

Animism and Animatism

So far we have been dealing with animism in its two aspects as a primitive theory of dreams and a primitive theory of death. We now come to what in the order of Tylor's exposition constitutes the third aspect, that in which the soul-idea is extended to nature as a whole. This phase of the theory has appeared so much in the light of a new departure that later anthropologists have been inclined to separate it from the other phases, reserving to them the name of animism and distinguishing the other development as 'animatism'. On the whole, perhaps, it would be true to say that animatism is felt to be the more convincing theory of the two, provided it is accepted on its own merits and is not made to depend too closely upon animism.[1]

That there is some connection between the two can hardly be doubted by anyone who admits both. It is most unlikely that the soul-idea would have developed with complete independence along two distinct lines, as the solution to certain problems of nature and the key to certain enigmas of human life. But it does not follow that animism came first and that the relation is correctly expressed by speaking of animatism as an *extension* to nature of the soul-idea evolved in animism. Durkheim, who once more plays the part of critic, is wrong in maintaining, as he does, that this third theory breaks down with the breakdown of the others. More precisely stated, his

[1] It is accepted by many writers who do not accept the doctrines on which it is professedly based.

criticism amounts to this, that the concluding theory, " which concerns the transformation of the cult of the dead into the cult of nature ", loses all cogency as soon as it is seen that the cult of the dead is not primitive.

Now in all our previous discussion of the subject we have nowhere considered animism as a cult, nor have we raised the question whether it can be regarded as a religion. We have refrained from these inquiries because the purpose of our investigation as a whole is to determine the nature of religion, and consequently we are compelled to place the inquiry on a much broader basis than can be supplied by animism. At the same time, in accordance with the distinction, which appears to us so important, between religion as such and the *merely religious*, it has seemed necessary to scrutinize the content of animism independently altogether of the question whether the ideas involved could be considered as constituting the first religion. In what follows we shall proceed on the same principle. That is to say, we shall consider animatism as a system of ideas or an interpretation of nature, irrespective of the question how far primitive man sought to apply these ideas in the form of a definite cult, and of the further question as to the adequacy of any such cult. Questions like these will be bound to come up in the end, when we have reached the heart of our subject. For the present it is sufficient to make sure that we are here in the presence of vital issues, questions of life and death and of the principles which underlie man's relations, as an individual and as a species, to that great other-than-himself with which he is bound up in one bundle of destiny. The

significance of these questions is assuredly *religious*. The problem whether animism or animatism constitutes a religion can await the solution of the more general problem.

How Primitive Man combines a keen Sense of the Distinction between the Living and the Lifeless with a Sense that Everything is Alive: the Corpse an Unding

Durkheim's objections, then, fall to the ground with our refusal to consider animism as a single coherent system in which every proposition implies the validity of every other. There are, however, further difficulties which cannot be ignored, and one in particular which calls for some sort of reply before we can hope to proceed. Animatism is the doctrine, ascribed to primitive man, which would assign a soul or animating spirit to natural objects and even to things which are the creation of man's hands. This means, in effect, that nature is conceived as everywhere alive. That such is the primitive view is borne out by a great mass of anthropological evidence derived from the most diverse sources. Now the special difficulty just referred to is that of universalizing life in this way. If everything is alive, obviously there is nothing with which it is possible to contrast the living. But if so, what is the point—indeed, what is the possibility—of distinguishing anything at all as *animate*? Is not animatism, therefore, a self-defeating doctrine?

A tempting answer to these questions would be that as a matter of fact the distinction in question does *not* exist for primitive man, and that, conse-

quently, when he thinks of all things as alive, he does so in some sense which does not require, and does not permit, any clear conception of the inanimate. Let us see what such a one-sided view of the nature of life would imply.

It would seem to imply merely the absence of such elements in the connotation of life as are directly or indirectly dependent upon the relation in which life stands to its opposite. But surely these elements do not constitute the whole of life, and it is not solely through them that we get the notion. Do we not as a matter of experience come to know something of what life means, something of what it means *to be alive*, long before we have more than the most shadowy conception of death ? Do we ever, indeed, advance beyond such a shadowy conception ? Is not the fact of death as much a mystery to science as it is a mystery of experience ? And does our increasing knowledge of life imply an equivalent increase in our knowledge of its opposite ? To this last question we must answer : By no means. But if not, if there is not at any point of our growing experience anything like an exact or even approximate equivalence between the two sides of the antithesis, what is there to hinder our supposing a limiting case, to which all the analogies of experience unmistakably point, where the one conception stands out unshadowed by the other ? If this suggestion is accepted, all that is needful is to qualify our statement about the primitive belief by adding that though life would be thought of with certain *differences*, there would be no need to assume that the primitive man was unable to think of life at all, but only that he had not yet learned to think of those aspects of life

which depend upon a knowledge of its opposite.

To this solution there is one fundamental objection. It is not in accord with the facts. As we have seen, the conception of life which is at the bottom of animism is clearly the product of a consciousness that between the waking and the sleeping state, between the living and the dead, there is a great gulf fixed. Animism is an attempt to explain this apparent discrepancy in experience. The conception of life from the earliest times stands rooted in its opposite. It is true, as we have maintained, that death itself is interpreted in terms of life. The dead exist, and to exist is to live; but in the evolution of this view the dead body plays an important part, and the dead body is unambiguously *dead*.[1] The very sense of its inertness, of its inability to sustain the meaning implied in the thought of a dead *person*, is bound to draw attention to it by sheer force of contrast, as the mind passes from existence here and now to existence then and there. If one might say so, the dead body lies across the threshold of the transition.

And yet this difficult instance of the dead body, which seems to be the chief obstacle to the acceptance of animatism, contains a clue to the solution of our problem. For where there is a dead body, there must be a living ghost *living*, that is to say, in the sense in which ghosts have been explained to live. It is true that the life they lead, when compared with the life before death, may appear no life at all, but only

[1] Among the Solomon Islanders, we are told, "the word for death is *mate*, which means also sickness. Actual death is often expressed by *mate ndapu*, that is, 'quite dead'" (A. M. Hocart, "The Cult of the Dead in Eddystone of the Solomons," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1922, p. 80).

an existence. Yet as contrasted with the existence of the corpse, it is life. The spirit is a living thing that escapes from the corpse, and life for it is the difference between the mode of its existence and an existence even more meagre and squalid than its own.

Here, then, is the conception which enables primitive man to combine a keen sense of the distinction between what is living and what is not with a sense that everything is alive. When life goes out of a body, the ghost appears, and what remains is a veritable *Unding*, doomed to swift decay and ultimate dissolution. In the absence of life, it is impossible long to sustain even existence.

The truth, however, seems to be that the primitive mind is on the whole unable to sustain in its full force the antithesis of life and death. This is necessarily so where there is as yet no category of the *inorganic*. The savage does not *think* of the dead body as an *Unding*. Either he puts the thought of it out of his mind with the ceremonies that consign it to oblivion ; or else, if his traditions compel him or permit him to harbour the mortal remains or any part of them, he envelops them in an atmosphere of mystery, which serves to obscure the stark fact of inanition. What he keeps by him is not a mass of dead matter, but something not *altogether* dead [1]—something whose existence he cannot accept in the matter-of-fact way in which he accepts the existence of natural objects.

[1] In the passage just quoted from Hocart we have seen that the expression *mate ndapu* means ' quite dead ' ; but in the same passage we further read : " A dead man, or any part of him, is called *tomate, to* being an obsolete article ". The significant point here is that the descriptive phrase refers to the *soul* as well as to the body, which indicates the inability to push the antithesis to its extreme limits.

Hence the prescriptive ceremonies that invest his attitude towards the ghostly reliquary with some of the awe due to a ghostly presence. The adoption of such prescriptive measures marks the primitive adjustment to a predicament of experience with which the savage is unable to deal intellectually.

Of all things in the world there is no one that strikes the mind with such a leaden weight of incomprehensibility as a dead body. It is the utterly uncompanionable. Not only does it *do nothing*, not only is there nothing we can *give it to do*—there is nothing we can do *with it*, except to put it out of sight. It refuses to enter anywhere into the context of our life's purposes. In comparison, the most inert members of what we should now call the inorganic world are responsive and flexible. They may be turned to account. We can find a function for them. The dead body has no function but that of decomposition.[1] Such is the mode of its existence. Inflexible to the purposes of the living, in itself it is the very type of instability, crumbling and putrefying before our eyes, unable to maintain its self-identity—an

[1] It is natural to assume that when the funerary customs do not include the permanent expulsion of the corpse from the presence of the living, the mystery and awe which surround the dead body of what was once a living person should gradually fade away. When this happens the remains lose much of the character which distinguishes them from things in general, and may even be turned to account as objects of adornment or utility. An extraordinary instance of this is reported by Arthur Grimble. In the Gilbert Islands the dead are usually buried in the floor of the house, the skull being kept as a reliquary. In course of time, when the teeth drop out, they are frequently used as dancing necklaces, while the bones are sometimes turned into hooks (" From Birth to Death in the Gilbert Islands ", *J.R.A.I.*, 1921). In this case it is interesting to note that the funerary customs of these islanders make a special feature of certain ceremonies the purpose of which is to encourage the soul to leave the neighbourhood of the body and to prevent its returning to trouble the family.

anomaly in nature, profoundly *sui generis*. And all this is due to the withdrawal of something that was there before. Just as the spirits are what the living become in the absence of their bodies, so the corpse is what the body becomes in the absence of its soul.

The presence or absence of the spirit, then, is the differentiating feature ; but such presence or absence is a thing that admits of varying degrees. Life (in the ordinary sense) and death are only the extreme poles ; for in the case of the living while asleep, the soul is only temporarily absent, whereas death is the permanent departure of the animating principle. Between these extremes is the whole realm of nature, where the ghost or the genius comes and goes, but in any case attaches itself in a peculiar way to some specific object or locality. In the realm of nature, then, that great moving, restless other-than-ourselves, the characteristic phenomenon is *haunting*. The world of the primitive man is *a ghost-haunted world* ; and this, as we shall see, is a fact of fundamental importance for religion.

CHAPTER V

THE INSTINCTIVE, EMOTIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL INGREDIENTS IN RELIGION

So far we have devoted our attention to what is virtually an analysis of primitive thinking. Now at the best, thinking, whether primitive or not, can never amount to a religion, although it may have in it something to which the epithet religious can be applied. That this is so as regards both totemism and animism we have already in a measure assumed. Both have to do with what we might call the fundamental interests of mankind, that is, the interests of man in the generic sense and the interests that go deepest into the conditions of life itself. Both deal with the things that matter most. Naturally, therefore, such thinking as these systems imply is accompanied by a commensurate emotion. We are here in the region of man's fundamental fears and hopes, meaning thereby not the fears and hopes that are most rudimentary, that reveal man most nearly in his kinship with the lower animals, but those that correspond to what we have just noticed as his generic interests. As soon as man's development reaches the point at which it is a matter of deep concern to him what he is and what is to become of him, the emotional ingredient in religion is already present to his consciousness.

It must be confessed that among the problems of

transition with which the evolutionary theory is confronted, none is more obscure than that of the point at which we are first entitled to attribute a religious significance to the instincts and emotions. Where exactly shall the line be drawn? Shall we make any use of the differences that distinguish man from the lower animals? This is one of those superficial methods of approaching a problem which sometimes throw light not so much on the problem in question as on some other. In the present case the attitude of different thinkers on the subject of man's relations to the lower animals is frequently an excellent index of their whole philosophical outlook.

Take Hegel as an example. In his case the constant assumption of a great gulf for ever fixed between the human kind and other animal kinds is the reflection of an overbearing intellectualism. That man alone *thinks* in the strict sense is what distinguishes him as man. His religion, for Hegel, is an application of that fact. God is an object—the supreme object—of thought. He is the object of a completed thought, the Whole, the Truth. Outside all this lies the instinctive life of the lower animals —a fugitive and fragmentary thing.

A similar attitude, though with differences, marks the very different intellectualism of Descartes, with its reduction of animal life to automatism; and the still more radical intellectualism of Spinoza, with its frankly reasoned plea that no consideration should be given to the feelings of the lower animals.[1]

No less symptomatic is the tenderness of Schopenhauer for the lower forms of life. The mutual dis-

[1] *Ethics*, Book IV, prop. xxxvii, note 1.

placement, in his system, of the intellectual and the conative aspects of our nature brings man and the animals together on one side of the dividing line. The same thing is true, in a sense, of oriental mysticism, and in a very different sense and for a very different set of reasons, of the biologically oriented psychology of the present day. This psychology, whatever may be thought of its conclusions in general, has contributed one fundamental feature to the solution of the problem which confronts us. It has shown the importance of instinct as the raw material of human nature. Whatever else we are, we are at least creatures of instinct, and to say this is to say that in our original nature we are in some sense at one with many of the lower forms of life.

We have now, apparently, committed ourselves to three propositions between which, it is to be presumed, there must exist certain relations, though what these relations are has yet to be made clear. The propositions in question may be stated somewhat more elaborately as follows. (1) Thinking as such is not a *specifically* religious function. Consequently ideas and systems of ideas do not of themselves constitute religion. On the other hand there may be (and as a matter of fact there are) ideas and systems of ideas which have a specifically religious significance, and to think such ideas is implied in what religion means. (2) Emotions as such are not necessarily of a religious character, but a certain emotional ingredient is necessary to religion. This ingredient should be in some way commensurate with the ideas in which the emotion centres. And (3) in its elementary aspect human nature is like animal nature in general, a thing of instincts. To this

last proposition I shall add (4) that if it were not so, man would never become a religious animal.

An Illustration: Fear in Man and Fear in the Animals

Our next task is to discover the bearing of these various propositions on one another and on the subject of our inquiry as a whole. We shall begin with an illustration. Among the instincts common to man and the lower animals there is one which is very well defined and almost universal in its range, the instinct which reveals itself in fear and flight. It may be that this instinct, which for the time being we shall call the fear-flight instinct, is a more or less composite product of simple elements—'units of behaviour' or other factors. The question of its exact constitution does not concern us. For our purposes it is sufficient that the instinct (or group of instincts) has an identity of its own which is readily recognizable. It is instinctive in the antelope to flee from the tiger; and flight is accompanied by every evidence of fear. Exactly the same thing is true of man. The attitude of man and of the antelope to the tiger may therefore be brought under the common designation of the fear-flight instinct. This is the rudimentary fact which I wish to emphasize, and it is in such connections as this that the remark contained in the last of our four propositions holds good. The possibility of religion depends on the fact that man, like the antelope, is susceptible of instincts like that of flight and fear.

But how, it will be asked, is it with the antelope? Does susceptibility to the fear-flight instinct imply

the possibility of a religious life for the lower animals as well? If not, on what grounds do we assert that man's religious development depends on such susceptibility?

In answer to the first of these questions, we shall have to say that so far as observation goes there is no evidence that the lower animals are capable of the religious attitude. I say, *so far as observation goes*; for of course we are here dealing with a set of phenomena which can only be observed from without, and to which we have not the key of personal experience. None of us knows all that it means or exactly how much it means to the antelope to be confronted by the tiger. On the other hand we have some means of knowing at first hand what such an experience implies in the case of a man; and in this latter case there are certain elements which enter into the experience, but which we do not feel entitled to read into the experience of the antelope. What are these added elements?

Let us try to analyse the total complex of circumstances presented to our observation (and reinforced by a certain amount of inference) as the antelope's fear of the tiger. In the first place it is fair to presuppose the presence of consciousness in the antelope. This consciousness may differ from ours in many respects, and in respects which it would be difficult for us to understand. But to doubt that the antelope is conscious would in the end play such havoc with a great many things which we cannot doubt without reducing ourselves to uttermost confusion, that we are bound to concede at least this much.

The antelope then *sees* (or, it may be, *smells*) the tiger. This element of awareness is a differentiating

character in the reactions which we described as instinctive—provided, that is to say, we use the term exactly. Instinct, then, as Professor McDougall rightly insists,[1] is to be distinguished, through this element of consciousness, from reflex action, which has to do exclusively with neural processes. If the stimulation of the optic and olfactory nerves produced all the movements involved in the instinctive action, without the intervention of consciousness, we should have a phenomenon of a profoundly different order from that with which we are dealing. As a matter of fact the particular kind of stimulation which occurs in this case does not occur under normal circumstances without producing an equivalent of sensation; and the total process includes the sense-object as an integral component. The remaining factors in the process are fear (an emotional state) and a physiological reaction which under favourable conditions will result in the gross movements that we call flight.

Summarizing the total event, then, we may say that the sight of the dreaded object produces a state of fear and an act of which the biological motive is to withdraw to a safe distance.

The Conceptual Factors that differentiate Human from Animal Experience

Now there is no single phrase in this descriptive formula which would not apply exactly to man in similar circumstances. He too sees the tiger, fears it, runs away; and furthermore, so far as

[1] *Social Psychology*, ch. ii, "The Nature of Instincts and their Place in the Constitution of the Human Mind".

external observation goes, this description is as complete in the case of man as in the case of the antelope. This is exactly what happens, and we do not *observe* anything more to happen. Nevertheless we know that if we stop here in our account of what has happened to the man, we are greatly understating the case. We are passing over much of what the event means to him *as an actual experience*. The difference between his experience of the event and what we know of the antelope's experience may be brought out somewhat as follows.

What the antelope sees is literally the tiger ; and in so far as it is necessary to assign *objects* to the affective and conative accompaniments of the act of seeing, these objects are either to be identified with the object of sense-perception itself or else to be defined by reference to it.[1] The antelope not only sees the tiger : she fears the tiger as well, and thus the object that she fears is the same as the object that she sees. Furthermore, it is from this identical object that she runs away. Such is the utmost that we have any grounds for supposing to happen in the case of the antelope. But with man it is different. Not only does he see and fear *the tiger*, but he sees the tiger and fears *that it will kill him*. This latter fear, which on first thoughts might appear hardly distinguishable from the former, is as a matter of fact so completely different that we require a different structure of speech in order to express it. In the case of the animals the object of fear is naturally expressed by a noun, in the case of man by a noun clause.

[1] This last phrase means that if there is any difficulty in saying that the object *seen* is the object *feared*, the difficulty can be met by saying that the object feared is symbolized and represented by the object seen.

In the former, the object of the emotional state is identical with the object of the perceptual act. That which is feared is the same as that which is seen with the eye. In the second case, in addition to the visible object of dread there is another, which cannot be seen at all, but only thought.

We have not yet, however, exhausted the difference between the two types of experience. For not only does man dread the tiger and fear that it will kill him, but he almost certainly fears *death* as well.[1] Here again it might seem at first sight as if in adding the fear of death to the fear of being killed, we had not really added anything. But a moment's thought will show that there is here a very real difference. The fear of being killed defines itself primarily by

[1] It has been frequently remarked that primitive man does not fear death. Professor C. P. Tiele, *e.g.*, remarks: "Primitive man feels the terror of death no more than a child. Dying is simply passing into another and even higher state. Between the world of spirits and that of man there is constant intercourse, and the boundaries are undefined" (*Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. i, pp. 80-81). Cf. also Albert Schweitzer (*On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, ch. x, p. 154): "It is well known that hopes and fears about a world beyond play no part in the religion of primitive man; the child of nature does not fear death, but regards it merely as something natural". I have heard the late Dr. Rivers describe a scene in the South Sea Islands, where an old woman on the way to be buried alive marched exultantly at the head of her own funeral procession. Dr. Rivers' explanation, as I remember it, was that death is not feared because to primitive peoples the hereafter is so much of a reality. Without for a moment disputing the truth of such statements as I have quoted I would suggest that they do not express the whole truth. If primitive man is frequently found to evince no fear of death, it is not that death for him is naturally devoid of terrors, but that he has learned to arm himself against them, and that in his panoply of animistic beliefs he advances calmly to meet the King of Terrors. Dr. Schweitzer's remark that the savage "regards [death] merely as something natural" cannot, of course, be taken in the sense that death for him is a natural phenomenon, but only in the sense that the occult agencies which produce death may be expected to operate in every case. Dr. Schweitzer himself admits (*op. cit.* p. 35) that his patients never think of *disease* as due to natural causes.

reference to the life we have, the life we know : it is the fear of losing that life. But the fear of death is (or may be) not only the fear of losing the life we have, but the fear of what will happen to us when we have lost it. It is a fear of *what it means to be dead*, and it defines itself primarily by reference to a set of conditions more or less problematical, but still capable of exercising a powerful influence over the imagination. We have seen that the idea of death as annihilation is not primitive. The dead exist for the savage in ways that are not wanting in definiteness —although the definiteness is not too great to preclude the sense of mystery and the emotion of awe. There is something for the imagination to work upon. But even if it were not so, even if death were thought of as sheer non-existence, there would be something to fear over and above the act of ceasing to be. There would be the fear of *having ceased to be*, the fear of *being dead*. It matters nothing that such a fear is irrational, that in the absence of being there is nothing of which to be afraid. As a matter of fact it is not so at all, and it argues a profound ignorance of human nature, as well as a certain want of logical discernment, to conclude, as is frequently done, that if death is annihilation, we have no cause to dread it. What is meant is of course that once we are dead we shall have nothing to fear ; but this does not imply that while we are still alive the thought of annihilation is not a very terrible thought, or that the dread of death is not a legitimate dread.

Now the special feature that distinguishes man from the lower animals is that from the earliest times of which we have any knowledge, man's consciousness goes behind the visible object of his fear to a

fear of invisible possibilities, whereas we have no evidence that the lower animals are capable of such transitions. For them the fear of the object terminates in the object of fear. For man the dreaded object is the sign and earnest of a greater dread, the dread of being killed, and the idea of being killed signifies the further idea of being dead. Thus the primary experience is fraught with a progressive symbolism which, so far as we know, has no analogue in the experience of the lower animals. To all appearances they live in one world at a time, the world of sense-perception and of instinct. Man's life of sense is dogged at every point by a shadow-world which he fears may in the end turn out to be the real world for him.[1] In any case the very *thought* of it makes all things different, and the thought of it is a thing that he cannot escape. It is part of the *meaning* which sense-objects convey. These objects are more than objects of perception. They are symbols of destiny, loosed among men to harass them " with thoughts beyond the reaches of their souls ".

The Transition from Instinct to the Religious Life

We have now passed definitely into the region of religious ideas and emotions—that is to say, ideas and emotions of a religious significance. Furthermore we are in a position to establish the connection between the various propositions laid down at the opening of this chapter. If, to begin with, man were

[1] As we have seen, the contents of the two worlds are thoroughly fused, and the unseen (if we may use such language of primitive man) has more metaphysical reality than the seen.

not, like the lower animals, the possessor of an instinctive nature, it would be impossible for him eventually to pass beyond the instinctive life. It is from the natural life of the instincts that he catches the clues to a new attitude towards existence. The change occurs in ways which we can hardly pretend to understand in detail; but the substance of the matter, so far as our problem is concerned, consists in the fact that objects of perception somehow come to sustain a meaning in consciousness, other than their ostensible meaning as objects of perception, and that a free outlet is thus opened up for the deepest emotional stirrings of the soul. These are no longer bound to the visible object that provokes them. Their reach is wider than the limits of sense-experience itself. Indeed they tend to detach themselves from the latter, and they must do so if religion is to develop. It is thus characteristic of the transition from instinct to the religious point of view that the thoughts and emotions which centre on existence here and in the hereafter cease to demand the stimulus of any actual object of instinctive aversion or desire. A great reversal occurs. Instead of the instincts propagating thoughts and feelings beyond their natural scope, the thoughts and feelings that rise up spontaneously upon the contemplation of life's ultimate issues seek relief through the instrumentality of the instincts.

To pursue the subject further along these lines would, however, carry us beyond the immediate purpose of this inquiry. A more pressing task is to reformulate the present statement in a perfectly general way, and without specific reference to any special case. We must also try to state in positive

terms the conclusions which our illustration has compelled us to state negatively. Before religion, even in its most primitive form, is possible at all, there are certain conditions which must be realized. The realization of these does not of itself constitute religion, but in their absence religion is for ever impossible.

The Natural Pre-conditions of Religion

First among the natural pre-conditions of religion, is one which must be viewed on two sides, the objective and the subjective. On the objective side is the precariousness of human life; on the subjective side what is frequently called the instinct of self-preservation. The designation, if taken too literally, is misleading. Strictly speaking, there is no such instinct. What we find is rather a group of instincts or inborn psycho-physical dispositions, all of them tending to subserve the life-process. Understood in this sense, as a collective name for all such dispositions, the phrase is a convenient one, and we shall avail ourselves of it. Our point of departure, then, is to be found in these two facts: (1) the uncertain tenure of human life, and (2) the so-called instinct of self-preservation. If man were self-secure and self-sufficient, or if, being insecure and insufficient, he were either unconscious of the fact or indifferent to it, whatever else he might be, he would never become a religious animal.

The precariousness of human life and man's instinctive reaction against whatever threatens it being, then, the two-sided *natural* pre-condition of religion, the question follows: What must be added

to these facts of nature to give them a religious significance? Once more the answer involves two factors.

The Human Prerequisites of Religion

(1) In the first place it is necessary that *the instinct of self-preservation* should become *the desire to live*. The difference between these two may not be immediately apparent; but the distinction is not hard to grasp. The instinct of self-preservation is a natural endowment common to man and the lower animals. Every living thing reacts with all the resources of the psycho-physical apparatus against whatever threatens it with destruction. It is the nature of the organism to do so. The desire to live, on the other hand, however natural, however inevitable at a certain level of development, is more than a natural disposition: it is, or it implies, an *idealization*. That is to say, it is no mere instinctive tendency to react in a predetermined way to certain types of stimulus: it includes a comprehensive value-judgment pronounced at long range upon the meaning of existence in the light of all that is known of life and known or imagined of death. The moment at which primitive man becomes capable of such judgment (whether or not he is capable of expressing it in words or other conventional symbols, even to himself) is the moment at which he graduates in one of the two main qualifications required of a religious being.

At the very root of religion is the yearning for life, and this is a feature which, though primitive, is, as we shall see, fundamental to the most advanced

religion. It is true that there have been, and are, religions which have sought salvation by a renunciation of life; but such renunciation is a phase in the idealization of life itself.[1] What is renounced is something which is seen to fall short of an ideal existence and has come in consequence to be looked upon chiefly as a negation. It should be noted that the value-judgment upon which religion is based need not be a true or adequate value-judgment; but to the extent to which it fails in adequacy and truth, it is unfitted to sustain the highest possibilities of religious development.

In dealing with this phase of the subject it is necessary to observe great caution. At first sight it is by no means obvious that the desire for life is always or necessarily a fact of religious significance. In a scientific age the tendency has been to treat it as if it were nothing of the sort; and there is a sense in which the desire may, both from the practical and the theoretical point of view, become completely secularized. Indeed the actual trend seems to be from the religious to the secular. This is a phenomenon of man's development with which we shall have to deal later. Meanwhile we shall proceed to ask what it is that makes the desire for prolonged existence a religious phenomenon at one period of human history, and what makes it take on a secular aspect at another.

(2) The answer to this question brings us to the second of the two factors to which I have referred as a necessary ingredient in religion. This second factor is *animism*, in the comprehensive sense of the

[1] A striking example is Miss Harrison's idea, already alluded to, of asceticism as a biological function.

term.[1] The desire for prolonged existence acquires a religious character only in virtue of the fact that it inevitably relates itself in the mind of primitive man to the animistic view of life and death, and more particularly to the animistic theory of nature. Conversely the same desire appears to lose its religious character and to acquire a purely secular character when animism, or some later equivalent of animism, loses its hold upon the human mind. In the conjunction of animism with the desire to live we have in the most definitive sense the beginnings of religion.

How the Conceptual Factors involved in Animism make possible the Beginnings of Religion

Let me try to explain why this is so. In the first place we must further consider the nature of that life for which man has always yearned and which I have described as an idealization. By this I do not mean that it is something imaginary. On the contrary it is realized as an actual experience—the experience of living. But this experience has about it something paradoxical and unique. To be alive in the sense in which life is an actual experience, is at the same time to *experience* something that is not yet actual—something that comes to us in the sense of a certain incompleteness, and in the thought of a life beyond, a life still to be realized. In other words, the experience of living is not exhaustively definable in terms of the life that is for the moment

[1] From this point on, for the sake of convenience, I shall employ the term animism in the comprehensive sense, and shall distinguish animatism as a special aspect of the doctrine only if the context seems to demand such precision.

felt to be pulsating in our veins; along with this we experience a life which so far exists only in thought; but which (and this from our point of view is far more important) as *thought* is yet an integral part of the experience itself.

Now it is this second ingredient contributed by thought to the total experience of living that welds the desire for life to the animistic interpretation of nature. Man feels the flow of life within him. To his naïve intelligence existence defines itself as this felt flow of life. But existence as he knows it (also a matter of experience) is permanently confronted with a set of facts (death and the unconsciousness which comes with deep sleep) that appear to imply the negation of that very experience which is what existence means for him. To accept these facts as a negation is, however, as we have seen, beyond the power of primitive man. He cannot think of death as the end of existence. There remains but one alternative. Death must be conceived not as putting a term to his experience of life, but as itself an *experience*, and consequently as a transition from one mode of existence to another. Behind the transition itself, and behind the variable modes that give rise to it, we discern an invariable idea—the idea of an existence that defines itself as the experience of living. Thus the life of the body, the life of *here* and *now*, is seen to be a transitory and conditioned phase of a larger life, discernible whenever experience compels us to attach existence to anything in heaven or on earth—to animal and plant, to sun and moon and stars, to rock and stone, to sea and lake and river. Behind the transitory life of the body is the abiding life of the spirit that animates the latter, expressing

itself normally in the visible forms of natural objects, but no less normally cropping out through the surface of the natural in the nocturnal visitings of ghosts and in the fear-provoking phenomena of omens and incantations. In the sense of his own oneness with this ghostly world man rises above himself. He sees his bodily existence, the *here* and *now* of him, depending, with all such circumscribed existence, upon a universal, a mysterious Presence ; and the supreme issue of life, in so far as life is not only a fact of experience but a practical problem, is the business of relating his tiny portions of life to the living soul of nature.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AS A BODY OF PRACTICAL PRESCRIPTIONS

THAT life *is* a practical problem we are bound to assume, as we are bound to assume that it is what man encounters in the very fact of living. And herein we find ourselves confronted with that same duality which meets us in the practices of totemism. Just as the great transitions from one phase of life to the next, although they occur by natural process and are consequently already guaranteed, have nevertheless to be effected and confirmed by special *rites de passage*, so the great adjustments of life as a whole, and more especially the supreme adjustment to the hereafter, although guaranteed by the very nature of life, must be sealed and ratified by the conscious action of the living subject. Hence the chief business of the living is the due performance of the ceremonial which secures the adjustments of life to Life—that ceremonial which is the first concrete embodiment of what we have come to recognize as religion.

Ritual and Creed in Primitive Religion

It will be necessary to dwell somewhat on the enormous importance of ritual in primitive religion. I must also take this opportunity to clear my argument of certain imputations which have doubtless

long before this been fastened upon it. Until now I have tended to treat primitive religion as if it were primarily a matter of the mind and soul of the individual, of his desires and his thoughts about existence; whereas anthropologists tell us that it was not at all a matter of the individual's inner life, but only of certain rites and ceremonies performed in public by the organized group. To be religious would naturally be to conform to these observances, to participate, in the prescribed fashion, in these rites; and in those early times non-conformity and refusal to participate were unknown. The ritual was not accompanied by a theology. At the most there was an explanation (if indeed there was even that) of what the ritual meant, or how it came to be established; and even in this case a theoretical belief in the explanation did not go with the ritual itself as a part of the prescribed content of religion. Consequently there were no sceptics and no dissenters. Every man was religious within the meaning of the term.

Now all this might appear to be very inadequately indicated in my presentation of the case. If the view just stated be the correct one, it will be necessary to modify my statement considerably; for in any question of historical origins the philosopher must bow to the authority of the anthropologist. A little thought, however, will show that the discrepancy is more apparent than real. I do not for a moment question that primitive religion consists in ritual rather than in creed; but that ritual is surely neither meaningless nor devoid of purpose; and the meaning and purpose which lie behind it, and which I have tried to describe, are entirely different from

anything to which the name of a creed or a theology could be applied. The differentiating feature is this. A theology is the conceptual content of a religion. That is to say, it is the system of ideas and beliefs which the religious consciousness of an age or a people has wrought into or out of the fabric of religion, and so stereotyped as a specifically religious body of truth. But the animism which furnishes the vague and variable intellectual content of primitive religion is not of this order. There is nothing *specifically* religious about it. Indeed it might rather be described as a primitive *Naturphilosophie*, which came of necessity to play a rôle in religion because it happened to cover the same set of interests of which religion is the outcome. In other words, it was not the intellectual counterpart of a specifically religious experience: it was not the product of religious thinking as such. Religious thinking was not possible until religion had become not only an established fact but a more or less organized and developed institution. Animism is one of the factors which in conjunction with others enabled religion to establish itself in this sense. It is the system of those thoughts which inevitably go with man's yearnings after life, since they are needed to define the object of those yearnings.

As for the presence of subjective features in primitive religion, there is nothing here that is in any way incompatible with the stress which anthropology lays upon mere ritual. For the ritual in which primitive religion consists was not unaccompanied by emotion. In itself it frequently assumed the most wildly stirring and the most deeply moving forms; and in any case it had as its motive the hopes and

fears which for the primitive, as for men in every age, centre upon life and death and human destiny. Apart from these religion could not exist even as a primitive ritual. They are therefore in a sense prior to religion itself, since they are its psychological preconditions. Consequently they are bound to be present in religion at whatever stage of its development; and once religion has come into existence through their dynamic power, they acquire fresh elements of religious significance through the self-same religion which they have called into being, and which they continue to actuate.

What is right, then, in the anthropologist's contention is that until the ritual form has been established, although factors may be discerned to which the epithet 'religious' may be applied, there is nothing which we are entitled to designate a religion. The organized cult or set of rites is the first definite *precipitate* in a turbulent mass of groping thoughts and unregulated emotions, in which we can descry nothing but the rude natural reaction to the elemental facts of human experience. Animism, we may say, terminates where religion begins, not in the sense that it disappears with the appearance of religion, but in the sense that the organized cult or ritual is the practical answer to the questions implicit in the animistic view of nature.

Primitive man desires to live. Such desire is the motive behind his whole life-policy. The practical question for him is how to attain the desired object, and the answer implicit in animism is: "by acknowledging the fundamental identity of the individual life with the universal life of nature".[1] The question

[1] The use of such a term as 'nature' in this connection, of course,

however, arises: In what way did primitive man hope, by the due performance of certain ceremonies, to secure the destiny of life for which he yearned? What is there about a ceremony that fits it to be the effectual agency in promoting a prolonged existence? A complete answer to these questions would entail a study of primitive ritual in all its multifarious forms, and such a study is beyond the scope of the present inquiry. It is possible, however, to obtain sufficient light upon the subject by considering one or two typical instances. In this we are greatly assisted by the fact that in spite of endless diversification the ritual practices follow a few well-defined lines, and are therefore amenable to treatment in a generic way. In order to make use of the material, however, in a generalized form, it is necessary to place ourselves at the standpoint of primitive man, a standpoint which we have learned in some degree to understand through a study of the selfsame practices which we now seek to elucidate by reference to it.

One point has been admirably elucidated by Lévy-Bruhl.[1] Primitive man has no conception of causality in the sense in which we ordinarily understand this term. That is to say, although he sometimes observes causal sequences they fail to interest him and he does not think of events as invariably preconditioned by other events, the whole constituting the universally determined system of nature. Of nature as such he knows nothing. On the other hand he does not think of any event as undetermined. The conception of *chance* involves an anachronism; but there need be no stumbling-block here.

[1] *Primitive Mentality*, ch. i, on "The Primitive's Indifference to Secondary Causes".

has no place in his magazine of categories.[1] His views on the subject may therefore be summed up by saying that for him no event occurs by natural determination, yet no event happens by chance. How is it possible to combine two such apparently discrepant ideas? Only by taking the whole question out of the realm of the natural, and so destroying the antithesis of natural determination and indeterminism. In a word, for primitive man all genuine causes are effectual[2] and all effectual causes are manifestations of occult powers moving mysteriously behind the visible surface of events. Now the significance of ceremonial is that *somehow or other* it sets those occult forces in operation and so achieves the purposes that give definite form and content to the desire for life.

The Law of 'Participation' and the Rites de Passage

We might well leave the question at this point as sufficiently answered in the light of primitive mentality. But as it happens our previous inquiries enable us to push the investigation one stage further back. The object to be achieved is always life itself, in one or other of its phases. Now we have seen that the problem of life is inseparably associated in the mind of primitive man with the problem of existence and the problem of identity. The process whereby the savage secures his life is the process whereby he effects the transition from one of its successive phases to another, and this in turn is one with the process

[1] *Primitive Mentality*, p. 43.

[2] As distinguished from mere phenomenal sequences.

whereby he successively establishes his identity with the unseen reality that passes by ordered gradations from phase to phase. The *rites de passage* are therefore to be understood not merely as a ceremonial of transition but even more essentially as a ceremonial of self-identification, which is the same thing as self-realization. The savage progressively realizes his existence by meeting each of the recurrent changes in the life-process with an act of symbolic ritual whereby he equates his personal identity afresh with the comprehensive identity of that unseen reality which remains one throughout all its fluxations.

Behind the whole fabric of primitive ritual we discern the features of a law which extends far beyond the operations of the primitive mind, but finds in the latter a uniquely naïve and faulty application. The law in question is one in accordance with which it is possible (and necessary) for man to think that one thing *is* another thing and to explain how events happen by an extension of the same principle to the world of events. As exhibited in primitive thought this law is that to which M. Lévy-Bruhl has given the name of *participation*: but he is wrong in supposing that the law of participation is limited to primitive thought. As a matter of fact participation in some sense is assumed in every significant assertion of the subject-predicate form and in every statement of the causal relation. Thus when oxygen and hydrogen combine in a certain proportion we say that the *resultant* phenomenon is water; but underlying the assertion is the unexpressed assumption that water consists of, or is identical with, the oxygen and hydrogen which are the cause of its emergence

as a distinct phenomenon. So far as the purely formal or logical aspect of the case is concerned there is no difference between the principle underlying causal law and the principle upon which the doctrine of transubstantiation rests. The difference has to do only with the application, and consists specifically in this, that whereas the man of science applies the principle exclusively to the sequence of objectively presented appearances, the theologian applies it to a reality which he supposes to underlie appearances.

Now this is precisely the principle that explains the belief in effectual ceremonies on the part of primitive man. The resort to such ceremonies is nothing more or less than a practical demonstration of the law of participation in its causal aspect. This is clearly the explanation of two of the most characteristic practices of primitive religion, sympathetic magic and mimetic ritual, as well as of the beliefs and usages which centre round the highly significant institution of taboo.

Sympathetic Magic and Mimetic Ritual

Sympathetic magic is a means of producing certain effects, usually, but not necessarily,[1] of a harmful nature, upon an absent person, through the agency of objects in some way closely associated with him—his clothes, clippings of his hair or fingernails, his image moulded in wax or in clay. Obviously the assumption is that of a certain fundamental identity, a hidden continuity of being, between the

[1] For an example of the beneficent use of the method, combined with the idea of sacrifice, *vide* Heine's ballad, *Die Wallfahrt nach Kevlaar*.

victim and the associated objects. It is because they are what he is that effects wrought upon them accrue to him.

Mimetic ritual may be described as a method of rendering the personified forces of nature propitious by an imitative reproduction, in dramatic form, of the supposed operation of these forces themselves. A striking instance is to be found at a later stage of development in the rites of Adonis—the Syrian Tammuz—which are a dramatic representation of the decay and revival of plant life.[1]

These rites, though not in themselves primitive, go back in idea to a primitive origin. To the modern mind there is something peculiarly paradoxical in the notion of the magical control of nature by the dramatic imitations of her processes. We think of the drama, and of art in general, as uniquely detached from man's practical interests. We speak of an æsthetic point of view as something independent and self-sufficient, something either altogether unrelated or else related only in an antithetical sense to the utilitarian world of actual life. As a matter of fact, along with much that is true, there is much that is false in such a view. In its extreme form it implies an illegitimate abstraction from the historical circumstances that gave birth to art, and the substitution of a standpoint which is really that of the science of æsthetics for the standpoint of the creative artist himself. The independent treatment of art, inaugurated by Aristotle, and the discovery

[1] *Vide* Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Part IV, the two volumes on *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, and in particular Bk. I, chs. i, "The Myth of Adonis", ix, "The Ritual of Adonis", and x, "The Gardens of Adonis". Miss Harrison gives a fascinating account of the same institution in her *Ancient Art and Ritual.*

of independent æsthetic standards, do not imply that the *artist's* interest in his art is independent of his interest in the enigma of life itself. Assuredly in the case of the greatest artists no such separation is possible. Aeschylean tragedy may be a fitting subject for Aristotelian æsthetics, but the motive which inspired Aeschylus to write was not a technical interest in those laws of dramatic construction which can be generalized from his works. It is impossible to read the *Prometheus* or the *Oresteia* without the impression of a great spirit wrestling desperately with the problem of man's existence in a universe that is largely adverse to man, and if the idea of utility is entirely absent it is not that the problem is other than practical, but rather that when we face the supreme issues of life we have reached the point where all utilities, which strictly speaking are limited values, relative to some end beyond themselves, terminate in the ultimate value. Religion has this much in common with great tragedy that they are both preoccupied with the same issues of life and death, and that consequently they both lie beyond the sphere of everything to which the name utility can be applied. They differ in so far as tragedy stops short at the *presentation* of a truth, whereas religion aims at *realization*, and prescribes the means thereto. In this instance, however, the relation of means to end, even when considered in the most practical sense, does not involve the conception of utility. The ordinances of religion are not to be thought of as *useful* but rather as *efficacious*. The distinction between efficacy and utility in this connection depends upon the further distinction between ends that are limited and ends that are not.

When the end in question is life itself in a completely comprehensive sense the means acquire a correspondingly comprehensive character. They cease to define themselves definitely *against* the end, and become the veritable content of the life to which they contribute a practical condition. To be accessory in this sense is to be accessory after, as well as before, the deed—which means that the idea of accession is lost in the idea of participation. Religion does not *use* the ritual of realization; it *includes* the latter. If, for example, prayer in one of its aspects is a means to an end, the end being either life itself or one of the purposes or conditions of life, in another aspect it appears as the privilege of communion with the Divine; life itself is seen to be an opportunity for prayer. Anything short of this complete reciprocity of relation, anything that gives undue priority or prominence to the idea of a means, implies a certain relative separateness of means and end, and consequently a loss of comprehensiveness in the end as well, with a corresponding loss of religious significance. Thus a prayer for life, when life defines itself as the salvation of a soul, may be profoundly religious in its import; but a prayer for life when life defines itself as bodily health or an abundant harvest, is less directly so, and requires the addition of certain implications to bring it fully within the scope of the concept. When these implications are not realized, the function of religion takes on something of the character of a mechanical expedient, and the notion of utility mingles confusedly with the notion of efficacy.[1]

[1] Herein, once more, we discern the distinction between true religion and magic.

It is to be feared that the application of mimetic ritual to the practical ends of life exemplifies this situation. If so, the reason is that primitive man, although his whole life is permeated with religion, fails to realize the comprehensiveness because he fails to realize the inwardness of that life, the desire for which is the primary religious motive. Although, as I have pointed out, the life, for him, is something more than the meat, the insistent pressure of bodily necessity forces the comprehensive concept into moulds already fashioned by the physical contingencies of human existence. The ritual by which man's life is encompassed has a distinctly utilitarian motive. But this is only half the truth ; for it is no less true that the value of life is very largely established in terms of the ability to perform the prescribed ritual. But the fundamental characteristic which gives to mimetic ritual its religious significance is, as has been pointed out, the assumption of a mystical identity between the worshippers and the personified forces of nature, whose vicissitudes furnish the content of the drama.[1] Here is the secret of the efficacy of such rites. The dead god can be made to rise again because his rising is enacted by a body of men and women who are more than his representatives, who in representing him have become a party to his nature

[1] The idea of *symbolic* representation, of *symbolism in general*, falls short of that *participation* which is the secret of efficacy. Such a statement as the following, therefore, is not quite adequate, or at least its adequacy depends upon remoteness from primitive times and the categories characteristic of primitive thinking: ". . . for thousands of years men and women died believing that, inasmuch as all that was done for Osiris would be done for them symbolically, they like him would rise again and inherit life everlasting" (Budge, *Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life*, p. 60).

and participants in his successive dooms.

The Origin of Taboo, and the Significance of the Inhibitions to which it gives rise

One of the features in primitive religion which call for special notice is the institution of taboo. The origin of taboo, like all such origins, is matter of conjecture. But without committing myself further I should like to say that I cannot accept Miss Harrison's account [1] as adequate. The sexual jealousy of ' the old man ' and the resulting system of prohibitions might indeed explain certain taboos and certain aspects of taboo, but there are others which it does not obviously explain ; and in so far as Miss Harrison's theory would make totemism a system of social distinctions—of marks or badges indicative of social distinction and based upon taboo—my analysis of totemism definitely precludes any such explanation. The significance of totemism we have found to lie not so much in social classification (far less in the merely negative aspect of classification, in the discrimination of class from class) as in a fundamental need of human nature that compels man to ask what he is, wherein he must seek the hidden identity that abides while life comes and goes. The ultimate motive is the yearning after life, expressing itself in the form of a claim to identity with one of the emblematic objects round which the forces of life rally and through which they are transmitted. We have found further that this cult of life (if it may be so described) has its negative counterpart in a certain inevitable

[1] *Epilegomena*, p. 7 *sq.*

aversion to everything in human experience that seems to threaten man's grip upon life itself. Death is a fact to which primitive man is partly unable and partly unwilling to adjust his mind. He cannot think of it as annihilation; yet there are phenomena connected with it which he cannot assimilate to his conception of existence. Above all there is the dead body to be disposed of, in thought as well as in deed; and he disposes of it, sooner or later, mentally and physically, either by putting it from him, or by removing himself and his fellows from the place which has become unfit for human habitation by association with the dead.[1] In a word, the fact of death, in so far as it cannot be digested into a mental system dominated by the passionate asseveration of life, is covered over by a system of *avoidances*. And woe to him who disregards them. Death and the dead must not be spoken of. They must not be treated except in ways that imply repudiation, and the repudiation must be made to extend even to our accidental and unavoidable contacts with them. Thus death becomes the negative pole of human experience—the region of man's natural aversions, from which the tide of appetition sets strongly in a contrary direction.

At the base of the primitive man's attitude there is a curious confusion which we shall encounter again in the attitude of the early Christians to magic.

[1] It will be seen that the same effect is achieved—viz. *separation*—by both methods. In the one case the living separate the dead from themselves by removing the corpse from their midst, in the other they separate themselves from the dead by removing themselves from the proximity of the corpse. As extreme instances, contrast the practice of the peoples who send their dead out to sea or to an island of burial with the practice of those who bury their dead where they are and move to another locality.

He *disbelieves* in death: he would fain deny its metaphysical reality. But there is something in it that he cannot deny. Its reality is only too dreadfully apparent. It cuts directly across the stream of life, across the even trend of his aspirations; and in view of the brute fact disbelief becomes theoretically impossible and practically futile. In his embarrassment he falls back upon what can only be described as a kind of *moral* repudiation. He *rejects* the fact which he cannot deny; and thereby he commits himself to an attitude which can only be sustained by deliberate artifice. He must *ban* whatever in human life and conduct does not give expression to his repudiation of death. Taboo becomes an artificial system of inhibitions, devised and administered by man himself in the interest of a fundamental attitude to life. So much must assuredly be acknowledged; but in admitting the artificial nature of taboo, we must guard against the fallacy of supposing that it represents *artifice* as opposed to *instinct*. The fact that in Miss Harrison's phrase, "it cuts clean across individual desire", does not imply, as she thinks, that "*tabu* is never an artificial strengthening of an instinctive repulsion".[1] This is precisely what it is—a system of inhibitions based upon the organization and consequently the *idealization* of certain instincts, and directed to the suppression of others.

But before we can fully understand the significance of these inhibitions, we must view them not only in the light of man's natural aversion to death and his more or less developed desire for life, but also from the standpoint of the contrast which life and

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 9.

death present when idealized (in the sense that has been explained) and confronted with one another. The situation exemplifies what I have called 'significant contrasts'.[1] On the one hand there is life itself, sustaining the meaning of existence; on the other, there are certain phenomena which go with death, although they may not constitute its essence—phenomena which can hardly be denied to *exist* and yet which are the very negation of life. Now the dreadful fact must be faced that it is the nature of these phenomena to invade the province of life, where life to the primitive mind is most comprehensible, viz. in the living body: and it is the nature of the living body to sustain the onset of the dreaded power of death. But the desire for life, which is an active thing, is not compatible with any view which would surrender the meaning of life itself, along with its bodily tenement, to the grisly forces of dissolution. At all costs these two things must be kept apart. Nothing that savours of dissolution must pass over into the content of that idealization upon which all man's hopes depend. Thus life becomes, as I have said, a thing apart, sacred, something invested with the awfulness of man's fundamental hopes and fears; and every infringement of this sanctity, where it is really felt, must be visited with a curse. Under the influence of the moral repudiation of death, the significant contrast of death and life gives rise to further contrasts, which play confusedly around the institution of taboo—the ideas of pollution and purification, of the accursed and the sacred.

If this account of the fundamental ideas of which taboo is the practical expression be accepted, it is easy

[1] Cf. above, p. 31.

to see how the system would develop and diversify itself. Thus if an awful sense of the separateness of the living and the dead calls for a system of avoidances enforced by cursing, cursing will itself become an institution, capable of fastening upon its object the same aversions in which it has its origin. Taboos will be *created* by the curse that gives expression to them. Wherever an aversion is felt similar to the aversion of the living for the dead, wherever the desire to mark off and to isolate occurs, a curse will have the desired effect. In this way taboos multiply and lose much of the character that relates them directly to the initial contrast of life and death. In the end the sense of some vital antithesis is all that is needed to invest certain objects and acts with all the horror of the thing set apart and forbidden.

Taboo and 'Participation'

The process whereby taboo is contracted exemplifies the principle of participation as uniquely applied to the relations of the living and the dead. When the living claims identity with his totem, the identity he claims is one of substance. What his totem is, that he is. But obviously no such relationship is possible between the dead body and the living subject who has had the misfortune to touch it. The relationship whereby the one participates in that which we ascribe to the other must be differently expressed. The participation is adjectival rather than substantival. Thus if a man has the misfortune to shed blood or even to come in contact with a corpse, we cannot say of him, " he is *what* these things are ", but we can say, " let him be *as* they are, a thing

unclean, an outcast, the object of a similar aversion ". The identity is in that which renders the dead body accursed—the contamination that spreads from it like a physical contagion to everything with which it is in contact. And so it is that what is no more than an accident may bring the unfortunate victim under the influence of a ban, a ban which surrounds him with an aura of horror, and separates him from his fellows and from the amenities of social intercourse, until such time as the due performance of the appropriate rites shall have restored him to a state of ceremonial cleanness.

Taboo and Vicarious Purification

Of very peculiar interest, as illustrating all the principles involved, are the cases in which the removal of taboo or of uncleanness calls for the death of a victim. As uncleanness comes of death and of anything towards which we feel as we feel towards the dead body, so death may put an end to uncleanness. A most striking instance of this, involving as it does a further application of the principle of participation, is the institution of *vicarious purification*, as exemplified in Hebrew religion by the scapegoat and in Greek religion by the *pharmakos*—the criminal who was made to die for the cleansing of the city from a contracted pollution.[1] Here we find

[1] On the scapegoat see Leviticus xvi, 5-8 and 20-22. On the φαρμακός Miss Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 97-98 and 103-105. Cf. also Fr. Schwenn, " Die Menschenopfer bei den Griechen u. Römern ", in *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche u. Vorarbeiten*, Bd. XV, 3. Hft. pp. 36-41. The name φαρμακός is explained as a masculine variant upon the neuter, φαρμακόν, meaning '*lebendiges Zauber—(d.h. Reinigungsmittel)*', p. 39. The writer instances the case of καθαρμοί, a term applied in Halos, a town in

traces of a pre-ethical stage of thought, a stage at which morality was not made to bear the full weight of the situation, and the guilty person was not fully saddled with the burden of his guilt.

Taboo as Forerunner of Morality

Taboo throws much light on the workings of the primitive mind, and illustrates in a striking way the order in which human ideas originate and grow. What is important is the convention itself: what the convention means is more or less lost sight of. The subjective state of the agent does not come into question, and no specifically ethical issue is involved. The acts and situations which resulted in pollution, were acts and situations which might be inadvertent or unavoidable. In some cases, like that of Orestes, the act was morally incumbent. In the same way the removal of taboo did not imply any inward change, but merely a certain ritual duly performed.[1]

The importance of this from our point of view is that it helps us to see how morality developed in connection with religion. Obviously, to begin with, religion did not include morality in the sense in which we now understand that term. But it included something analogous to morality, namely, a system

S. Thessaly, to men who were *καθάρματα*—('*Reinigungsmittel*'). As to the actual slaying of the substitute, cf. Robertson Smith's remark on the fate of the scapegoat: "According to the Mishna the Hebrew scapegoat was not allowed to go free in the wilderness, but was killed by being pushed over a precipice" (*The Religion of the Semites*, p. 397: 1st edition).

[1] On taboo in general see Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, Lecture IV and Additional Notes C and D (1st edition); Additional Notes B and C (revised edition).

of prohibitions and a sharp distinction between what is permitted and what is forbidden. In the order of history this distinction appears before the specifically moral distinction—a circumstance which goes far towards determining the form the moral distinction is destined to assume when finally it emerges into the light of consciousness. For generations of mankind, and still for most of us in our first approaches to moral experience, things are not permitted or forbidden because they are right or wrong : they are right or wrong because they are permitted or forbidden. One of the greatest advances in human insight was achieved when it was first realized that these conceptions must be reversed, and that morality derives its sanction not from the prescriptions of custom or convention, but from its own intrinsic character. Nevertheless the advance in insight was attended with a great danger. For the discovery that morality must rest upon foundations of its own meant the establishment of a new (and in some ways a doubtful) autonomy, and the institution of a highly perilous and disconcerting division in human life. It became a question whether morality and religion could subsist together in the world.

The question is one to which we shall have to return. Meanwhile it is to be noted that taboo is the irrational thing it appears to us only when we view it from the standpoint of an autonomous morality. Not only were many of its prescriptions socially and hygienically sound, but they all alike had behind them a very sufficient motive in that dread with which they were enveloped.[1] This is what gives them

[1] It is interesting to compare the primitive dread, expressed in taboo, which centres upon the phenomena of birth and death, with

their specifically religious character, and relates them to that great dualism which we have seen to be of the very essence of religion. On the other hand taboo falls short of the substantival character of religion in several respects. It has largely to do with the occasional situations or the periodic predicaments of life: it is too frequently a matter of mere accident. Furthermore it belongs to the regulative usages which look to the here and now rather than to a great beyond and a hereafter. It originated in a pre-theistic stage of culture, and even in theistic times there is little about it that suggests the theocentric point of view. The divine being may be involved, but not necessarily so.

The Holy and the Accursed as alike Fear-invested Things

From an early date taboo combines two closely associated, yet profoundly different, meanings—the idea of that which is set apart because it is unclean and therefore *accursed*, and the idea of that which is set apart because it is holy.[1] To our minds, saturated with ethical notions, these two ideas appear diametrically opposed: to the primitive mind they are difficult to distinguish. The twofold significance survives in the Latin *sacer*, which means either 'sacred' or 'accursed'. The common substratum

the extraordinary impressionability to such phenomena which marks the writings of Tolstoy. *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch*, as well as his later religious writings, abound in illustrations.

[1] See Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-144, and Additional Note C, pp. 430-431 (1st edition); p. 150 *sq.* (revised edition); Durkheim, *Elementary Forms*, Book III, ch. v, para. iv; Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena*, pp. 138-145, the section on "The Curse and the Law".

of meaning is that of being offered up to the god as a victim or sacrifice. Thus somewhere in the history of thought and of language the ideas of "*laying a curse*" (to borrow Miss Harrison's phrase) and *offering a victim* came very close together. As Miss Harrison says:

> "The person cursed or bound down was in some sense a gift or sacrifice to the gods of cursing, the underworld gods: the man stained by blood is 'consecrate' (καθιερωμένος) to the Erinyes".[1]

In illustration of the verbal confusion Miss Harrison further draws attention to St. Paul's saying, "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema",[2] *i.e. accursed*, and points out that the word 'anathema' means literally 'laid upon the altar', and hence, 'dedicated', 'consecrate'.

In this failure to distinguish the holy and the accursed we have still further evidence of a period in the religious development of mankind when religion had not yet attained to any clearness of spiritual discernment. Its roots were still in the inevitable fears and aversions of the primitive mind, and its form was the observance of prescribed ritual. The idea of the 'holy' is simply that of anything which the original religious instincts[3] have invested

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 141.

[2] 1 Corinthians xvi, 22; cf. Galatians i, 8: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema". Also Romans ix, 3.

[3] I use the term advisedly, but with a sense of its inadequacy, to express that combination of impulse and emotion which is at the bottom of man's whole religious development. Assuredly there is no place in the highly variable lists given by psychologists for a specific-

with a kind of dread peculiar to themselves. In this sense the dwelling of the god is holy; and so is everything pertaining to or associated with it, the approaches, for example, and the implements of service; naturally, therefore, the victim offered in sacrifice. But the confusion goes back to the pre-theistic stage in the evolution of religion, and does not require the concept of a god and of his worship to give it vogue. Rather it is implicit from the first in primitive man's confused ideas of life and death. Thus there is something of the same kind of dread, springing from the same set of instincts, in many of the normal or accidental predicaments of life, and above all in the fact and the accompaniments of death. A woman's periods which are fluxations in the life-process are mysterious, and touch the fountains of aversion. A dead body is unmistakably an object of aversion and terror, and that because it was so lately the body of a living man. Such fear-invested things differ from other things, and that irrespective of any differences they may have among themselves. Even without discriminating among them we feel that they form a class apart. Here, then, is the fundamental bifurcation, which splits the world in two along the line of religious significance.

ally religious instinct. On the other hand there is something in the religious impulse or emotion that marks it off from everything else as definitively as nature has differentiated the instincts from one another and from everything else. My point of view combines two ideas: (1) uniqueness and originality of religious feeling, and (2) the fact that this feeling avails itself of the agency of man's instinctive nature, uniting and modifying the individual instincts in ways peculiar to itself and determined by a perfectly unique and irreducible attitude to existence.

CHAPTER VII

THE NUMINOUS AND THE HOLY

THIS brings me to a question of vital importance for the understanding of religion—the meaning of holiness and the part played by this unique factor in creating and informing the complex of attitudes which together constitute the religious life of man. Holiness has been made the subject of a profound and searching analysis by Dr. Rudolph Otto in his work entitled *Das Heilige*,[1] and any attempt to deal with the subject must almost inevitably begin with a consideration of Dr. Otto's views. At the outset I wish to say that in the main I am in agreement with the conclusions reached. At the same time a specific problem has been created for us by the necessity (arising from my chosen method) of relating the idea of holiness to the anthropological data.[2] Thus assuming with Dr. Otto that a sense of holiness is the unique and therefore universal differentia of the specifically religious attitude, we are compelled by the conditions of the inquiry to ask whether the varying phases through which

[1] Translation into English by John W. Harvey under the title *The Idea of the Holy*, 1923.

[2] I cannot agree with Dr. Otto's repeated assertion that nothing can be learned about the nature and value of a thing from the study of its historical origin. The two problems are certainly distinct, but it does not follow that they are unrelated or that the one can be satisfactorily solved without reference to the other. See *The Idea of the Holy*, p. 95.

religion has passed in the course of its historical development do not imply a commensurate variation in the importance of the omnipresent idea. Granted that holiness and man's sensitiveness to it are one and the same at every stage of the evolutionary process, are there no differences to be noted in the form of the idea and in man's attitude, as his religious experience deepens and his grasp upon religious truth gains in comprehensiveness and insight? It would be strange indeed if no such differences could be detected. But if so, must we not conclude that there is an evolution in the idea of holiness, as there is an evolution of religion, and that the addition (and possibly the rejection) of certain elements of meaning must be taken into account as contributing to our final understanding of the thing itself? In view of these questions I cannot help feeling that something may be gained by reversing Dr. Otto's procedure and (instead of abstracting the kernel of specifically religious meaning from all ethical and other complications) allowing the religious idea to unfold its unique and inalienable significance by observing the devious course of the process whereby it finds its way progressively into organic relationship with other elements and acts in human life. As a man is known by his associates, it is a fair assumption that something may be learned of the nature of holiness from a study of its affinities with the categories of experience, and of the way in which the *sense* of holiness develops along with the latter.

The most obvious case in point is of course that of morality. As Dr. Otto rightly points out, our modern conception of holiness has become so per-

meated with ethical connotation that we have almost lost sight of the original and authentic core of meaning, an ' overplus ' of significance that remains and may be isolated when all ethical implications have been withdrawn. To this irreducible nucleus he assigns the term ' numinous ',[1] which he proceeds to analyse.

Otto's Analysis and Definition of the Holy in Terms of the Numinous

Dr. Otto begins by criticizing Schleiermacher's analysis of numinous experience into a ' feeling of dependence '. This, he acknowledges, represents an important element in such experience, but fails to indicate the qualitative distinctiveness implied in the sense of holiness. Schleiermacher's mistake lies

> " in making the distinction merely that between ' absolute ' and ' relative ' dependence, and therefore a difference of degree and not of intrinsic quality ".[2]

The real nature of the distinction as something qualitatively and not merely quantitatively unique is brought out by the aid of an illustration.

> " When Abraham ventures to plead with God for the men of Sodom, he says (Genesis xviii, 27) : ' Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes '. There ", our author adds, " you have a self-confessed ' feeling of dependence ', which is yet at the same time far more than, and something other than, *merely* a feeling of dependence.

[1] *Op. cit.* ch. ii. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 9.

Desiring to give it a name of its own, I propose to call it ' creature-consciousness ' or creature-feeling. It is the emotion of a creature, abased and overwhelmed by its own nothingness in contrast to that which is supreme above all creatures." [1]

In the chapters which follow, Dr. Otto devotes himself to a profoundly subtle analysis of this creature-feeling. He redefines it as ' mysterium tremendum ', showing that it is something specifically different in nature from any mere natural fear. It is a fear into which ' the element of awfulness ' enters along with the element of ' overpoweringness ' (*maiestas*) and ' the element of energy or urgency '—an urgency which appears as the divine ' Wrath ' [2]; this being not the *purely* human passion of anger, but something far more comprehensive and awe-inspiring, clothing itself everywhere in symbolical expressions, vitality, passion, emotional temper, will, force, movement (the *mobilitas Dei* of Lactantius), excitement, activity, impetus.[3] Behind the unique fear of the creature for the Creator, as its object and inspiring cause, is the complete *otherness* of the Numen. The object of this fear is ' the Wholly Other ', and the peculiar reaction of the creature is something more than fear, something different from *tremor*, a sense of " blank wonder, an astonishment

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 9-10.

[2] In a very interesting passage, pp. 18-19, the writer points out that from many passages in the Old Testament it is evident that the ' Wrath ' of God has nothing to do with moral qualities. It is rather something terrifying which stands between the majesty of the Divine Being and the human creature—something " like stored-up electricity, discharging itself upon anyone who comes too near ".

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 23.

that strikes us dumb, amazement absolute ", a state of mind for which there is no appropriate expression but the word *stupor*.[1] At the same time this unparalleled feeling of smitten amazement is accompanied and complicated [2] by a certain fascination, defined as

> " that element in [the numen] whereby it is of *subjective* value (=beatitude) to man ", in contradistinction to the element of *augustness*, whereby " it is recognized as possessing in itself *objective* value that claims our homage ".[3]

Criticism of certain Features in Otto's Exposition: the correlating of the Ideas of the Numinous and the Holy with the Anthropological Data

Now before we can carry out our purpose of correlating these important conceptions with our anthropological data, it will be necessary to clear up a certain ambiguity in Dr. Otto's statement. Obviously, as I have pointed out, since the anthropological treatment of the subject implies the evolutionary point of view, we must seek to discover the connection between man's sense of holiness and the development of human experience in general. Unfortunately Dr. Otto's presentation of the truth has placed certain difficulties in the way. Not that he denies the validity of the evolutionary standpoint. On the contrary, his doctrine of evolution is an integral part of his theory. But in his anxiety to keep the idea of holiness pure, he commits himself to

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 26. [2] *Op. cit.* ch. vi.
[3] *Op. cit.* p. 54.

statements which it is difficult to bring into line with the notion of development, however defined.

It is in his seventh chapter, " Analogies and Associated Feelings ", that he gives most explicit expression to his doctrine. In brief, Dr. Otto interprets the conception of evolution in terms of the psychological law of association, applying the latter not to ideas and their power to evoke other ideas, but to feelings and their power to evoke other feelings.[1] The process is one whereby, under the law of reproduction by similarity, certain " exchanges and replacements of feelings " occur, in such a way that

> " I may react with a feeling x to an impression to which the feeling y would normally correspond. Finally, *I* can pass from one feeling to another by an imperceptibly gradual transition, the one feeling x dying away little by little, while the other, y, excited together with it, increases and strengthens in a corresponding degree. But it is important here to recognize the true account of the phenomenon. What passes over—undergoes transition—is not the feeling itself. It is not that the actual feeling gradually changes in quality or ' evolves ', *i.e.* transmutes itself into a quite different one, but rather that *I* pass over or make the transition from one feeling to another as my circumstances change, by the gradual decrease of the one and increase of the other. A transition of the actual feeling into another would be a real ' transmutation ', and would be a psychological counterpart to the alchemist's production of gold by the transmutation of metals." [2]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 43.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 43-44.

It can hardly be claimed that this is an adequate account either of evolution or of the way in which feeling succeeds feeling in accordance with psychological law. In the first place mutationism—of which the classical example is to be found in Hugo de Vries' experiments with the *oenothera* (evening primrose)—is only one interpretation, strictly limited in its application, of the evolutionary concept. Certainly evolution does not stand or fall with this doctrine. And in any case, even if we accept De Vries' conclusions, the theory of sudden mutations does not imply the mysterious and occult change supposed to characterize the alchemist's transmutation of one metal into another.[1] Quite the contrary. Mutationism means neither more nor less than this, that certain species have been found which, *given the requisite experimental conditions*, can be made, in conjunction with the latter, to undergo a degree of change equivalent to that which the biologist conceives to constitute the difference between one variety and another. The conclusion to be drawn from the phenomenon of mutation is not the possibility of one species or sub-species becoming another species or sub-species, but rather the close integration of any natural kind with the conditions under which it subsists—with the corollary that the latter cannot change in certain ways and beyond a certain point without a commensurate change in the former.

Applying this principle to the case under consideration, we see that while it would be ridiculous to think of one feeling *as such* mysteriously meta-

[1] As a matter of fact the modern chemical theory has brought the transmutation of elements within the range of scientifically intelligible possibilities.

morphosing itself into another, we do not need to think of the evolutionary process as implying any such metamorphosis. The truth is that no individual feeling exists of and for itself. Our feelings exist as well-defined (although, it may be *indefinable*) members of psychical complexes, and these complexes in turn occur only in conjunction with still wider complexes of conditions, among which must be reckoned the comprehensive unity of the environment [1] and the objects to which the feelings direct themselves whether by way of attraction or aversion. Dr. Otto is entirely right in maintaining that what "passes over or makes the transition from one feeling to another" is the ego as a whole, but it is surely impossible to interpret this well-attested fact of experience as a genuine mutation while at the same time analysing the change itself into a mechanical displacement of one feeling by another in accordance with the law of association. To uphold the identity of the subject while asserting the complete diversity of its feeling-states is to deny, by implication, the complete solidarity of the feeling-states with the subject whose states they are. It is to reduce the subject to the empty Kantian unity of apperception—a conclusion which, I am sure, would be emphatically resisted by Dr. Otto. But if so, we have no alternative but to restore the feelings to the subject as its actual content under the momentary conditions which evoke them; and we cannot so relate the subject to its feeling-states without relating them to one another in a way that implies a higher degree of integration than anything suggested by such terms as 'exchange' and 'displacement'. As a

[1] For a definition of 'environment', *see* vol. ii, p. 230 n.

matter of fact Dr. Otto's whole position implies such an interior view of the emotional life. For what he is all along emphasizing is the impossibility of deriving numinous from purely *natural* feeling. In this again he is justified up to the hilt. Only, the implication is not, as his expressions seem at times to convey, that the natural and the numinous, like two rivers which originate on opposite sides of a watershed, derive from independent and unconnected sources in human nature, but rather that, with whatever degree of integration, the numinous must be put down as an *original* endowment of human nature, something therefore that goes with the conditions of our nature as a whole and must be thought of as inseparable from that which makes us what we are. The relationship might perhaps be exemplified, though very inadequately, from our experience of the relationship between space and time. Everyone would now agree that neither of these, as we experience them, is derived from the other, yet there can be no experience of space that is not also an experience of time, and *vice versa*; and to assert the mutual dependence of these two orders of experience is not to deny the complete originality of either. It is no less true that our experience of space and time develops, but the condition of its development is that from the beginning our experience should have been one of space and of time. The conception of evolution applied to human experience means precisely the process whereby we come to discern new elements of meaning where we failed to detect them before. Or it means a process of realizing what it is we have been experiencing from the first.

These statements are not inapplicable to the

evolution of feeling. It must be remembered that feeling is no special faculty of the soul, but an inseparable emotional ingredient in the totality of our psychophysical reactions to environment. Every reaction is to some degree a readjustment, and with readjustment there is some influx of new knowledge. We learn to know ourselves and the world in which we live by perpetually readjusting ourselves to both. Now one reaction is undoubtedly different from another, and the emotional accompaniment is in each instance likewise something distinct and individual. But it is no more possible to describe the process by which one emotional state gives way to another as mere displacement than it would be to describe the process whereby one reaction follows another as *mere* succession. Every reaction is the composite product of past experience and new conditions. It is something that tells us what our previous adjustments mean. And the same is true of the accompanying feelings. They are what the emotional nature of the subject becomes from point to point as experience increases; and therefore later feelings are what earlier feelings *become* under the variable circumstances of life. Behind all changes we detect the identity of personal existence developing under the impetus of the self-organizing instincts.

I conclude, then, that while the purely natural never develops into the purely numinous, man's sense of the numinous grows up in a context which includes the natural as well. This is not to diminish by one jot or tittle the distinction that for ever divides the two, but it is to throw doubt upon the extent to which in the concreteness of actual experi-

ence the two are ever found in absolute isolation. This much is certain. They are not so found at the beginning. In the life of primitive man they are inextricably interwoven; and the task of isolating the natural in the scientific concept of *nature*, like the task of isolating the ethical in the concept of an autonomous moral order, is one of the latest and most advanced achievements of the analytic intelligence. From this point of view it would be absurd to claim that the numinous evolves out of the natural, since the natural is the later of the two notions to attain conceptual clearness. In so far, however, as a clear sense of nature is as yet undeveloped, there is still wanting something that is needed to bring out, by way of significant contrast, the full force of numinous experience.

Before leaving this aspect of the subject I must acknowledge that evolution does not cover all the facts of the case. There is an important truth on which Dr. Otto lays much stress, and to which I have already fully subscribed—the fact, namely, that certain types of feeling (that for instance upon which our sense of moral obligation depends, as well as every vestige of numinous feeling) become active not as a result of evolution out of other types, but as a result of specific stimulation. These feelings cannot be transmitted, inculcated or educed: they can only be awakened by an appropriate stimulus, and this of itself implies an original capacity for the kind of experience in question. But the exciting stimulus in this case is or may be something more than an accidentally associated feeling. Whatever the occasion of the first association, the result is a 'permanent connection', a 'lasting combination', which

" does not fall to pieces, and cannot be cut out as the development of the consciousness of religious truth proceeds onwards and upwards, but is only recognized with greater definiteness and certainty ".[1]

Such an indissoluble association, whereby one set of sentiments comes to represent another, Dr. Otto designates, in Kantian parlance, schematization. Thus in the field of æsthetic values the sense of the sublime, in the field of morality the sense of obligation, may convey the meaning of holiness under the limiting conditions which divide æsthetic and ethical from numinous experience. They are schemata—experientially conditioned adaptations—of the transcendent meaning of the holy.

But in so stating the connection Dr. Otto is in the end committed to precisely the evolutionary view which his analytic statement seems to preclude. This is obviously the case because, on his own showing, if our human experience did not include the specific element of æsthetic feeling and the rational element of an autonomous morality, we should be unable to grasp the full force of the numinous itself. Dr. Otto goes so far as to speak of the intimate interpenetration of the non-rational with the rational elements of the religious consciousness, an interpenetration which he likens to " the interweaving of warp and woof in a fabric ". His final position is reached by gradually displacing his earlier statement, and in the displacement the part played by development in the evocation of an independent and *a priori* category of the numinous comes into ever greater prominence.

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 46-47.

The Holy more comprehensive than the Numinous

Another truth that emerges is the inadequacy of the numinous, if taken by itself, as a revelation of the nature of religion. Dr. Otto frankly acknowledges that the rational is as fundamental in God's character as the non-rational.[1] It is the coalescence of the numinous and the ethical that gives its peculiar depth and fulness to the religious sense of the Hebrews.[2] From all this it follows that the idea of the holy is more comprehensive than the idea of the numinous. Holiness combines morality with religious awe. But if so, it is difficult to think of morality as an absolutely independent ingredient, mechanically compounded with the other ingredient, and itself devoid of numinous significance. To treat it as such is to render its associations with the numinous for ever unintelligible and to reduce religion to a meaningless and indefensible collocation of unrelated constituents.[3] The question forces itself irresistibly to the forefront: Is not this absolute distinction between morality represented as altogether rational and the numinous conceived as altogether non-rational, the product of abstract analysis, and of a certain confusion between the

[1] Vide *op. cit.* pp. 102, 106-107, 112, and more particularly p. 113. The following sentence illustrates the finished statement (p. 116): "It follows from what has been said that the 'holy' in the fullest sense of the word is a combined, complex category, the combining elements being its rational and non-rational components".

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 115.

[3] A striking example of this is the passage (*op. cit.* pp. 57-58) in which the distinction between an ethical sense of *remorse* and a religious sense of *loathing* is drawn out: "The two kinds of self-depreciation proceed on parallel lines and may relate to the same action; but none the less it is obvious that they are, inwardly and in their essence, determinately different".

theoretical standpoint of ethics and the practical standpoint of morality? May it not be (and does not the whole logic of the argument compel us to assume) that the moral life itself, as distinct from any reasoned system of morality, is something into which the numinous enters directly with all the awfulness that characterizes man's sense of deity in the world of his experience?

CHAPTER VIII

THE FORMS ASSUMED BY THE IDEA OF HOLINESS IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF PRIMITIVE MAN

The Part played by Fear, in its Numinous Forms, in Primitive Experience

HAVING thus prepared the way for the reception of the idea of holiness into our genetic and evolutionary account of religion, we must ask: Where does the idea first make its appearance and what forms does it assume in the religious life of primitive man? The answer to these and all similar questions depends upon the answer to another question, viz. *what* and *how* is it that primitive man fears, when his fear assumes a numinous form? It is obvious that we must reply in accordance with our analysis of primitive religion. Primitive man fears the totem and everything connected with the totemic system: he fears *mana* and *orenda* and *manitou*: he fears ghosts and spirits: he fears the All-Father. He fears the very fact of life itself, encompassed and permeated as it is by such dread powers. But these statements in themselves convey very little, and before they can be of any value as imparting some hint of the distinctive significance of holiness, we must try to realize by the aid of analogies drawn from our own experience, a little of what the feeling of holiness must have meant to the naïve intelligence of the savage. A certain effort of the imagination will be

necessary; but in this we are greatly assisted by the fact that among the things in human nature which have been least of all impaired by the disintegrating agency of reason and a secularized experience of the world, is the capacity for numinous dread. It is true that such dread, represented, *e.g.* by night-fears and the unearthliness of a recent dream, does not usually count for much in our lives. Modern man even refuses to accord to such feeling the usual attributes of experience. He has learned to discredit what he cannot help *feeling*, and to that extent the feeling itself has lost in impressiveness and certainly in durability. Its usual fate is to be absorbed forthwith into the matter-of-fact atmosphere of a wide-awake, empirical existence. It is consequently not here that we of the present age find the forms of experience that best express our sense of the holy. These feelings fail to do so because they no longer impress us with the feeling of reality; at the most they merely trouble us a little with a vague surmising sense of limitless possibilities of experience beyond the range of that which we have learned to rationalize [1] and to regard as canonical. In spite of this it would not be an extravagant assumption to suppose that at the moment of waking from a terror-saturated dream the experience of a modern man closely approximates to the experience of a savage under the same conditions; and in order to bring the savage experience home to ourselves we have only to add the idea that it is not only felt but believed in. To dream

[1] That we have learned in some sense to rationalize our experience must not be taken to imply that any experience whatever can be rightly regarded as a purely rational thing. This is a point to which I shall return later in the analysis of experience. Cf. vol. ii, pp. 208 *sq.*, 348 *sq.*

a terrifying dream which we cannot help believing to be fraught with all the import of an omen, is a numinous experience.

Now assuming (as I think we are bound to do) that there is numinous quality, stupefaction, in the dream-experience, we must ask wherein exactly this numinous quality consists. In the first place, I do not think it is to be identified with those terrifying but utterly indescribable nuances of feeling-tone that constitute the horror of the dream as actually experienced. So far as these are concerned, we are in the realm of psychopathological phenomena; and such phenomena in themselves contribute nothing to an understanding of our problem. It is only when the dream is over that the experience acquires a numinous character. This circumstance may be explained as follows.

As I have so insistently maintained, man's preoccupation has always been (and still is) with the problem of existence, in its practical and theoretical aspects. Furthermore, existence defines itself in the mind of primitive man in terms of what life means to the living; and life in this sense defines itself in terms of experience. To exist is to experience life as the conscious subject experiences it in himself. Now from this point of view the most disconcerting thing about experience is the fact that while in general we think of it as nothing but the sequence of experiences, ordered in ways that repetition has rendered familiar, there is a recurrent experience which is not definable as the addition of a new content to others in the familiar order, but must be thought of as the displacement of one total order by another. This is the experience of passing into and out of

an order of experience. I have described these periodic displacements as disconcerting. They are so because, in addition to the horror that mingles in the content of the dream itself, they produce a profound disturbance in the point of view from which by a certain natural necessity and without conscious reflection primitive man seeks to bring home to himself the meaning of his existence. If to exist is to undergo the series of experiences which constitute a life, what is it to *experience* an order of events that cuts across that series like a veritable annulment? The very thought of it is stupefying, and the stupor, unlike the natural terror awakened by particular objects or possibilities of normal experience, turns upon the very conditions of existence. It is the terror evoked by life itself when life, which is the abyss of existence, is revealed suspended over another abyss. In the light of this revelation man shudders at the thing he is. The terror of human existence breaks in upon him in the sense of an inexorable destiny which comprehends him (as in a universal remorselessness) but which he cannot comprehend. Herein lies the numinous element in the natural terror evoked by the dream-experience.

The fear of ghosts, to which, even in the absence of intellectual belief most men are still to some degree susceptible, is impregnated with the same numinous quality. It is specifically different from all our ordinary natural fears—the fear of fire and water, of enemies and wild animals, of hunger and thirst, of dizzy heights, of wounds and pain, even of death itself in its purely natural aspect. Ghosts are sometimes thought of as malicious but they seldom hurt in natural ways. They are not ordinary destroyers

of life. What we dread in them is not what they *do* to us: it is the bare fact of our *seeing* them. But why should we fear to see them? Simply because the sight of a ghost is an announcement of destiny, an irruption from the unseen world into the seen, and brings with it an intimation that the familiar world of our mundane experience is trembling upon the brink of the supreme displacement. The horror we feel is a horror of the dark mysterious powers that move the foundations of existence: it is the dread, not of anything that can happen to us in this life, but of the awful truth that this life, with everything in it that experience has rendered familiar and natural, should give place to another, an existence that is all mystery.

The Object of Numinous Fear an Unseen Presence

In the light of such examples the object of numinous feeling begins to define itself in vague and general outline as the hidden power that presides over life—the mystery of existence, the invisible, to which the visible must yield. This Unseen Presence, fraught with the issues of life and death, and feeling its way stealthily into his consciousness through the grosser experience of material objects, awakens in man the awful presentiment of the Holy Thing. What is the secret of that feeling, partly dread and partly fascination, that assails us in the depths of a gloomy wood? It is assuredly not the sense of personal danger. Nor is it the presented spectacle as such, the low lights and shadows, the soughing of winds in the tree-tops, the subdued

murmur of insect life—nothing could be less fitted to arouse the instinctive apprehension of a foe, nothing better fitted to lull the soul to a sense of perfect security and peace. And yet it is precisely under these conditions that we become most sensitive to the suggestions of irrational fear. The sudden snapping of a twig, the unaccountable movement in a bush, set the pulses beating with surmise. This heightened suggestibility may have in it something that derives from a remote ancestral age when the woods were still dangerous. But nothing of the sort can account for the peculiar quality of our fear, which is quite different in character from the dread inspired by visible things. It is not the fear of that against which we can (however unsuccessfully) defend ourselves, but the fear of that against which we cannot defend ourselves. Should an actual danger suddenly arise, our state of charmed awe would be at once replaced by a defensive reaction accompanied by natural fear. The diffused and contemplative horror of the woods would vanish in the natural alarm that accompanies flight or resistance. In order that the forest-spell shall remain unbroken it is necessary that nothing should emerge into consciousness that would direct it towards any well-defined object of dread. For the fear of the forest lives upon the undefined. In its essence it is one with the fear of a *haunting*, the awful feeling of an invisible and impalpable presence with us in the wood, something of which we cannot divest the solitude and yet to which we cannot relate ourselves as we relate ourselves to other things. Into our mood there enters the sense of uttermost defencelessness, of being beyond the limit of our resources—here where

life, transcending all the assignable purposes of life, assumes an aspect as incomprehensible as that of death itself. And yet it is not death but life; and being life it irresistibly attracts as death repels. It is the very form and substance of existence, the condition of all blessedness, the source and epitome of every value, the comprehensive category and the comprehensive experience. Holiness is the characteristic that invests the object when our desire for life addresses itself to the metaphysical sources of life and finds therein ineffable charm mingled with ineffable fear.

Numinous Feeling deepens into Creature-consciousness

What is true of the fear that visits us in the forest is true of the numinous fear that comes upon us in solitude [1] and in the dark.[2] In solitude as such there is nothing to make us afraid: what we fear is the something in it that is not solitude—the something that finds us not where other things find us, on the periphery of our nature, but at the centre. When we place an interval of silent space and time between us and the myriad superficial contacts with men and things whereby we sustain the life of the body and the tissue of our secular interests, when the feeling of our essential selfhood prevails at length over its multifarious engrossments, and the outer world falls

[1] Not to be confused with the fear (meaning thereby the *dislike*) of solitude as such. Such fear is merely our instinctive sociability expressing itself negatively.

[2] Here again a distinction must be noted. It is not the instinctive fear of darkness that is meant, but a certain laying bare of what is dreadful in existence, to which darkness is conducive.

away into the semblance of a dream, there comes over us, or rather there wells up from within, the sense of what we really *are*—a nucleated centre of existence never reached by those superficial contacts and therefore independent of the temporary support they seemed to offer to our numberless superficial selfhoods. But with this accession of acute self-feeling, liberating us from all the things upon which we have learned to think that we depend, there comes also the feeling of a new and awful dependence—specifically different from our dependence upon things and upon our fellows. For these relate themselves to us more or less externally, providing the environmental conditions, physical and spiritual, under which the soul realizes the existence that reveals its nature only in the *experience* of being. But the dependence which we now discover is not to be identified with any conjunction of circumstances. It is a bond that relates us from within—relates the nucleated core of being that we experience as the existent self—with that which is still inalienably other than we are. Here is the primal mystery of existence as we experience it, the metaphysical dependence of our *inner* being upon another. In this unique coincidence of inwardness with otherness we have the idea of creation. To experience the life within us is to grasp existence on its inner side. To experience the sense of dependence when existence so reveals itself is to pass beyond mere dependence to that creature-consciousness which, as Dr. Otto has shown, is one with the feeling of holiness. Existence as the subject knows it does not relate itself *as such* to the conditions under which it appears, but only to the metaphysical source of Being.

How the Consciousness evolves: the Bipolarity of its Attitude to the ultimate Source of Being and Life

Such a formula as this, however, is in itself so vague as to be almost meaningless; and before we can assign it a content derived from the actual experience of men, we must revert to the anthropological point of view. It is here that the indispensable character of the evolutionary concept appears. Admitting that the numinous dread, which is the differentia in the feeling of holiness, centres upon the hidden fountain of life, we must also grant that this feeling will vary according as man's thoughts about life (whether explicit or merely implied in the organized conventions of social existence) vary. It goes without saying that there is a profound difference between the totemic emblem and the Hebrew God. Yet both are conceived as what I have called the " metaphysical source of being ". The difference therefore has to do not with the uniform idea conveyed by the varying concepts of Jehovah and the totem, but with the adequacy of the two concepts to convey the uniform idea. Indeed the *primitiveness* of the totemic system consists precisely in this, that the totemic object (even if considered as a mere emblem) is grotesquely disproportionate to the weight of meaning which it is made to sustain. The disproportion is, of course, to some extent redressed by the animistic implications of totemism. While a wichetty-grub is a poor representative of the principle of life, it is less so when we think of the grub as incarnating a deathless spirit. And the system as a whole gains immeasurably in metaphysical significance when

construed in the light of that belief in reincarnation which it implies. Even from this point of view, however, it fails to represent in its completeness the primitive sense of metaphysical reality. The living spirit that becomes a ghost and the ghost that becomes a living soul have too much of the metaphysically ambiguous quality which attaches to what we call mortality; and this ambiguity comes out in the strange vicissitudes that mark the prestige of the ghost in history.[1] It is not surprising therefore that even among primitive peoples we find the totemic and the animistic ways of dealing with the problem of being supplemented by the belief in an All-Father, who, strictly speaking, is not so much a *parent* as a *creator*.[2] He is the creator of the universe, and therefore transcends the social limitations of the totem and the local limitations of the spirits. Byamee represents the attempt to render the problematic Being cosmic. Taken along with totemism, the belief in a 'great spirit' marks a certain bipolarity which characterizes religion from the earliest times and is one of its most distinguishing features to-day. On the one hand religion is what is most intimate to the individual.

[1] The *Iliad* furnishes a striking example. Throughout the Homeric poems the ghosts appear with a bare minimum of metaphysical prestige. They are mere simulacra, impotent, trembling on the verge of nonentity. But the dreadful vengeance evoked by the shade of Patroclus shows the ghost in quite another aspect. Rohde's explanation is that what we have here is the survival of an earlier conception, where the ghost is still prepotent as a fate. It may be that the feeling we still entertain about ghosts, the feeling referred to in the text, viz. that the phantasm itself is powerless to injure, but that it is unlucky to see one, is the conjoint product of the earlier and the later view.

[2] In an article contributed to the *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* (vol. xvii, 1914), and entitled "Über den Zusammenhang höherer Gottesideen mit primitiven Vorstellungen", Nathan Söderblom points out that the designation *Urheber* is more in accordance with the actual accounts given of Byamee (Baiame) than is the designation *Urvater*.

The life which it defines for him or offers to him is a life which he discovers (or which he must realize) in the privacy of his own innermost experience. On the other hand the life thus presented as the differentia of existence unites the individual with existence in general. Religion goes behind all intimacies of experience to the universal groundwork of reality. The identity of the individual which it is life to him to establish is lost in the social identity of the clan, and the social identity of the clan in the identity that unites the clan to nature. But behind all is the created universe with the vague figure of the Creator looming up as the comprehensive and original source of being.

The Conceptual and Emotional Factors must come together in any adequate Sentiment of Holiness

We have seen that primitive man never fully succeeds in assimilating the belief in a universal Creator to the substance of his religious life, which is much more genially expressed by totemism. This is reflected in the idea of holiness in primitive religion. Theoretically speaking, the supreme object of numinous regard should have been the *All-Creator*; but the All-Creator is too remote from the actual throb of life to make it easy for the savage to feel the awfulness of his holy presence. The result is a certain separateness of the factors that must come together before there can be any adequate sentiment of holiness. The emotional element of numinous dread attaches to objects that are very imperfect expressions of the numen, while the object that is uniquely adequate to the latter concept is unable to

inspire the appropriate emotion. It is clear that if the idea of holiness is to develop it must be by a process which will bring together the conceptual and the emotional ingredients. This process is one with that which marks the transition from the totem which is *regarded* but is not worshipped, to genuine objects of worship, that is to say, gods. Without the idea of a god the idea of holiness cannot come to full fruition. The next step in the argument therefore brings us face to face with the origin of a belief in deity.

This effected through Animism

And here again the fundamental significance of animism in primitive religion becomes apparent. Not only must the desire to live combine with an animistic interpretation of nature before religion can be brought to the birth ; but once this result has been achieved it is upon the animistic element that religion depends for the transition from the primitive to the theistic phase of its development. Animism is the bridge over which man has passed from the totem that is not an object of worship to the gods that are.

The underlying assumption which gradually brought this into the light of consciousness is that since the objects or forces which have power to aid or to injure human life are, like man himself, living things, the natural methods of dealing with them must resemble the methods by which men deal with one another—namely, by gifts and entreaty, by conventional signs, and the ceremonial regulation of intercourse. All of these imply what we can only call personal relations—although, it is true, the

conception of personality involved in them is as yet highly inadequate. It is the unformulated presupposition of animism, when applied to the practical interests of man's life, that the relations between living things are in some sense personal relations. On its practical as on its theoretical side, animism involves a personalist interpretation of nature; and this is the unfolding secret of primitive religion.[1]

The Root-idea of Animism is Life, but Personalistically conceived

We are here still on somewhat debatable ground, and before we can proceed further, the restatement just promised becomes necessary in the interest of accuracy. When we say that the primitive man *personifies* the forces of nature, we do not mean that he reads personality into the impersonal. In other words, he does not begin with a conception of the impersonal and a conception of the personal, and *then* proceed to interpret the former in terms of the latter. On the contrary, he has no idea of the distinc-

[1] A certain carefully qualified exception to these statements would have to be made in the case of *mana* and all cognate ideas. *Mana*, of course, is not a personal agent, nor does primitive man address himself to it as such. The same, of course, would hold, in a sense, of the unseen totemic reality, and of the supposed powers that underlie the practice of magic. But, as we have seen, the point of view implied in all of these conceptions is animistic. *Mana*, if not a personal entity, is the abstractum of personal power. It is something that manifests itself as a personal acquisition and a personal attainment, just as disease and death manifest themselves as a certain personal failure and impotence. The totemic reality, too, which must be conceived as super-personal, maintains itself by successive acts of reincarnation. Totemism implies a universe of spirits and consequently rests upon an animistic presupposition. The mechanism of magic, too, resolves itself very largely, upon analysis, into the compulsion of ghost by ghost, and therefore represents a hybrid conception—the notion of an irresistible impersonal power directed personally against spiritual essences.

tion involved. The statement that he personifies nature must therefore be taken to mean, not that he imports personality into nature, but that he has not learned to abstract personality from her. It is not so much, therefore, that he has a clear notion of the personal, as that he has none whatever of the impersonal. He does not begin with 'spirit' and proceed to 'embody' the latter in natural objects.[1] Rather it is of bodies that he is thinking all along; and what he does is to attribute to nature in general the same capacity for free movement and responsible action which he discovers in his own body and in the bodies of his fellows.

To be quite exact, the root-idea of animism is not personality but life. Nevertheless the idea of life implies the personalist point of view, at least in a rudimentary form. It is impossible for the primitive man to think the idea of life *as he thinks it*, without at the same time thinking certain things which we can now see to be attributes of personal existence. Life for him is of course no abstract conception, scientifically definable in terms of its physical conditions, and opposed to its opposite as the organic is opposed to the inorganic. Nor is it a mere fact of observation, a phenomenon displayed in a series of well-defined stages in the medium of space and time. It is indeed something which he sees in others; but what he sees in others he interprets in terms of what he experiences in himself. The life that can be *observed* is merely a transcript of the life that can be *felt*. And so when the question of the relations between living things comes up in a practical form, the determining factor is that self-knowledge or self-

[1] Cf. Miss Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*, p. 71.

feeling which is the meaning of life to the living subject. In every such relationship into which he enters, primitive man carries the feeling of his selfhood directly over to others. Only, as we now see, he carries the feeling too far. He has not yet learned to restrict the inner life of his own feelings to himself.[1] In imputing self-feeling to others, therefore, he shows that he does not know where to stop, although it would be an exaggeration to say that he does not stop anywhere. As a matter of fact he stops precisely where we should expect him, under the circumstances, to stop—with the objects that affect him emotionally. As it is to these that his feelings are addressed, it is these that he thinks of as possessing something closely akin to his own feelings. They are the objects to which the animistic explanation primarily applies. In order to express the whole truth, therefore, we should have to add to the proposition that primitive man does not know how to confine his emotional life to his own conscious processes the no less significant proposition that he extends the idea of an inner life to the unconscious processes of nature under a limiting condition—the condition, namely, that these processes should first of all relate themselves, through his emotions, to his vital interests.

[1] " Der Primitive hat es noch nicht gelernt, das Spiel seiner Affekte auf sich selbst zu beziehen " (A. Knaberhaus), " Zur Psychologie des primitiven Menschen " in *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, vol. xxiii, 1920–21, p. 150.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

WE are now in possession of all the main features that enter into primitive religion. To recapitulate, religion at this stage of its development is the joint product of man's desire to live and his animistic point of view ; and, what is of equal importance, the union of these two factors implies a personalist interpretation of nature in the sense explained. The importance of this last factor can hardly be overestimated. In the subsequent development of our thesis, the notion of personality will appear as the pivot on which everything turns. The presence or absence of this notion will be seen to be the differentia that distinguishes the religious from the scientific and secular point of view, as well as the issue that confronts religion itself in one of the most serious crises of its development. Apart from these fundamental traits, however, there are still a number of highly important points which call for settlement.

Is Primitive Life entirely and exclusively Religious?

In the first place it might seem that if our analysis is correct, the life of the primitive man must have been one sustained act of religion. For what was there in it but the desire to live, expressed practically

in ways determined by the exigencies of primitive thinking? Is it conceivable that religion was so little differentiated from anything else? And is there any meaning in speaking of religion at all except in contrast to a distinctively secular attitude to things of secular significance?

To answer the last question first, it is certainly the case that religion implies something other than religion, though what this something else must be is not so clear. Furthermore, so far at least as the logic of the argument is concerned, it does not follow that the factor or factors which furnish the contrast religion requires must exist simultaneously with their own antithetical counterpart. If it is merely *contrast* that is needed, this has been abundantly supplied by the subsequent history of mankind, which, as we have seen, is marked by the development of a secularist point of view. There is no immediate logical reason, therefore, against the assumption that primitive life was saturated through and through with religion; and indeed there is more truth in the assumption than might at first sight seem probable. Only, we should have to add that the religion in question would be primitive religion—an admission fraught with many implications.

The chief of these is that where nothing but religion exists, the latter is not *felt as*, and therefore not *fully known* to be, religion. And this, within limits, is probably true of the primitive man. It is true in the same sense (and in something like the same degree) in which it holds good that where all existence is thought of as life, life itself is not very clearly defined, and where all relations are personal relations, the nature of personality is but imperfectly

realized. Undoubtedly from this point of view the primitive mind is rather poorly equipped in what we have called significant contrasts,[1] and primitive religion suffers accordingly in depth and insight.

To know of no possible attitude to life and life's problems but the religious attitude is, therefore, to know less than may be known of what religion is or may become. And what is more serious still, to think too exclusively in religious terms is to miss the grand comprehensiveness of religion itself. This will doubtless appear a dark saying ; but it will become intelligible in the light of the fact that religion, as we shall see, in the course of its later development, found it necessary to define and to sublimate its content by expelling certain elements as alien matter, thereby establishing the secular point of view.

Even in the earliest times, however, and in the most primitive civilizations of which we have any record, it is not true to say that religion is absolutely universal and undiscriminating, or that there is no aspect of life to which the epithet of secular may be applied. From the beginning there must have been significant differences. In the tension of life there are periods of relaxation and periods of strain ; and religion is inalienably associated with the latter.[2] Moreover, if it is true, as remarked above, that the primitive mind is poor in significant contrasts there is one great exception to this, the contrast of life and death, on which we have dwelt so long. It is when the precariousness of life and the dread of

[1] Cf. above, p. 31.

[2] Cf. the case of the dreams that are not felt to be omens and are therefore (so far as is possible in an age when the conception of nature has not yet been evolved) explained as *natural events*. Cf. below. p. 261.

the hereafter are borne in upon the mind of the primitive, as they frequently are, with exceptional force—when the great antitheses of existence stand revealed, in the hour of peril or of bereavement, in the moment of awaking from a terrifying dream of the dead—that the desire to live becomes active within and impregnates a slumbering animism with that energy of which the act of worship is born. It is in such moments that animism shows itself for what it really is—the vaguely thought-out, theoretical element in man's solution of a profoundly practical problem. But such moments do not constitute the whole of experience even to the ghost-haunted, terror-ridden savage. Between times, when the tension is relaxed, and the significant opposites are not, so to speak, *engaged*, there must be periods of emotional rest, of quiet absorption in some business of the moment, some business that does not seem to call for ghostly assistance or for magical rites, but is found interesting on its own account, or on account of some end that falls short of a vital issue. These are the periods of religious hush, when the secular spirit appears in all its demure matter-of-factness, between the spasms of an intenser life.

Thus from the first, when religion was far from being the *exceptional* thing it has become in the modern world, there was still about it something occasional and episodic. It was a thing of climaxes. The great moments of life were even then its special province. But the great moments refuse to stay. They even provoke reaction. In these inevitable fluctuations there is contrast enough to give religion something of an independent identity among the interests even of the primitive man.

This is probably the explanation of certain facts advanced by Durkheim in one of the arguments which we have examined—that in which he shows that primitive peoples distinguish among their dreams.[1] That this is so is not surprising, considering the extent to which we distinguish among our waking experiences. There are experiences that do not reach the degree of intensity required to give them religious significance; and there are dreams that lack the impressiveness required to force the animistic explanation upon the mind. Our dream-life is characterized by the same fluctuations in emotional intensity to which our waking life is subject; and it is precisely the dreams in which we see and converse with the dead that are best fitted to provoke in us a poignant sense of the dread opposites between which our destiny as living souls is cast.

The Orgiastic and the Conventional: the Development of Religion out of the occasional Crises of Life into a settled Attitude and Policy

In emphasizing the episodic character of religion, as a thing of culminating moments, we have stated an important, but a one-sided truth, and a truth that tends to be particularly misleading when applied, without due qualification, to the experience of the primitive. There is another aspect of the case, which must now be brought to the forefront. Life as it presents itself, whether to us at the present day or to primitive man, is not merely a thing of crises; it

[1] *Elementary Forms*, p. 59. Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality* pp. 101-102, 109; Codrington, *The Wal*, pp. 249-250.

is a steadily cultivable entity, a thing of routine, demanding incessant watchfulness and the strict observance of times and seasons. Even here, it will be seen, there are episodes and crises ; but the crises in question occur at more or less regular intervals. They can be foreseen and prepared for. There are, for example, the rhythmic phases of life itself, the monthly periods, or the fundamental changes which occur once and for all, adolescence and the climacteric. Such things, like the beginning and the end of life, are fraught with solemn and mysterious import ; and around them cluster groups of religious observances.

Again there is the periodicity of nature, the alternation of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, the rise and fall of the fertilizing river.[1] All these suggest a side of religion somewhat different from that upon which we have been dwelling. Religion now appears as a thing of stated rites and established cults, highly regularized—almost a technique.

Thus it is that we find in primitive religions two elements and attitudes, which at first sight might appear almost the direct opposites of one another, but which none the less occur in the closest association—the orgiastic and the conventional. The wildest excesses of worship are prescribed as a duty and conducted according to rule. The religious attitude in general, considered as the product of high tension, hardly differs from the secular more radically than these two phases of religion differ

[1] For the connection between the yearly inundation of the Nile (giving rise to the art of irrigation), the institution of kingship, and the rise of a definitely theistic religion (the worship of Gods), *vide* the fascinating chapter (ii) on " Gods and Kings " in W. J. Perry's *The Origin of Magic and Religion.*

from one another. Indeed the epithet 'secular' in its etymological sense could be not inappropriately applied to the element of fixity and regularity in religion itself. Or we might describe the two factors, in their mutual relations, figuratively, as the male and the female principles.

Let us glance rapidly at the element of regularity and permanence—what we might call the settled policy—in religion. The ordinances which embody this element differ greatly in significance and in the extent to which they express the religious idea. What has just been said of religion as first appearing in the form of ritual must, therefore, be qualified by a recognition of these differences.

The underlying principle of discrimination may be stated as follows. To begin with, whatever in the established practices still conforms chiefly to the occasional and incidental character of the first religious impulses, whatever reflects the unsteadiness of instinct in the process whereby the latter develops into the desire for life, is thereby ill adapted to embody the essential nature of religion. In this we see the fundamental difference between what we have called the masculine and feminine principles. The emotional stresses are the fecundating element; they are the actuating motive, and without their agency religion would never come to the birth. But, although *religious* in their significance, they are not the embodied actuality of religion. Their energies are quickly spent, and if there were no other factor in the case, they would leave no trace behind them.[1]

[1] Of course, in accordance with an elementary principle of psychology, they themselves are responsible for the 'traces' or 'dispositions' which are the basis of permanent attitudes.

It is in the *something left behind*, the permanent attitude that spans the intervals between the emotional crises and profoundly modifies these crises as they recur, that we must seek the differentiating feature in the religious life, the feature that enables us to distinguish the substantival from the adjectival aspects of the case. Thus the orgies of the Maenad and the dances of the whirling Dervish [1] may be quite accurately described as religious, but there is less *religion* in them than in the steadily prevailing pieties of a St. Francis.[2]

In the second place, the established ceremonies and usages will differ in the extent to which they give expression to the substantival nature of religion, according as they terminate in the normal regulation of human life and custom, or in something specially designed to carry us beyond the mundane conditions of human existence. In the former phase religion leans to this-worldliness, in the latter to other-worldliness. Now I cannot but acknowledge that to assign the preference to either of these phases in the final characterization of religion is a hazardous and controversial procedure. Yet without hesitation I pronounce in favour of the latter, and that for the following reason. The regulation of human conduct and custom is doubtless a religious function of the

[1] So far as the cultivated Dervish of the present day is concerned, there is very little in his worship that suggests the orgiastic or fanatical. The Dervishes are merely the exponents of the mystical attitude in Islam, organized in fraternities and monasteries. For an account of a religious service in one of these fraternities (and of Dervish religion in general) *vide* Professor D. B. Macdonald, *Aspects of Islam*, Lect. V, p. 160 *sq.*

[2] It is interesting to observe, however, that in the book referred to in the last note the writer remarks that during his wanderings in the East " by far the most accessible people . . . were the Franciscans and the *darwishes* " (p. 150).

first importance; but it is not *peculiar* to religion. It is not the thing that distinguishes religion as such from other things—morality, for example, and law. Moreover in the course of human development this function, which, to begin with, is inseparable from religion, tends to establish itself more and more on a purely secular basis, and to go on under its own momentum without any special religious sanction or supervision. In the history of mankind law, morality, hygiene, the scientific control of human life, have become growingly autonomous interests. On the other hand, the offices of other-worldliness, which find their type in the act of worship itself, are either the specific expression of what religion in a unique sense is and means, or they are nothing at all.

Thirdly, religious institutions differ profoundly in significance according as they do or do not directly imply some reference to a divine person or persons. The regulative usages of which we have just spoken as in no way specifically religious, will again serve the purpose of illustration. These usages address themselves to the human agent in his individual and social capacity. But there are rites and practices that address themselves to a god, and these are more specifically characteristic of religion than the others. Religion is fundamentally *theocentric*.

Lastly, there is a difference which marks the final stages in the development of religion out of the occasional crises of life into a settled attitude and policy, the difference between rites of any sort and a cult.

The Lingering of Magic in the Evolution of Religion

In relation to rites, considered as such, a cult may be defined as an organized system of the former, sustained by the periodic performance of the prescribed ceremonies, and addressed as an act of worship to some deity.[1] Strictly speaking, therefore, the establishment of a cult presupposes the belief in a personal god. But in the order of actual development the definite belief in gods, with the personalist point of view which accompanies such a belief, emerges confusedly along with the cult itself.

From this standpoint the special significance of sympathetic magic and of mimetic ritual, as of the institution of magic in general, is that these developments reflect the curiously mixed and halting character of the personal idea as it enters into the complex of primitive religion. The divine personages appealed to in mimetic ritual—beautiful youths, fruitful mothers and what-not—are persons, and yet they are not persons. We address ourselves to them in a perfectly unique way, which is not the way in which we address ourselves to mere things, nor yet the way

[1] In the natural course of development the periodic performance of certain rites will become the regular episodes in an unceasing round of worship, and the service of the gods will become a full-time function. When this point is reached an organized priesthood, specializing in divine worship, is called for. Thus in ancient Egypt, that episodic character of the mimetic ritual connected with the worship of Osiris gave way to something in the nature of permanent service. "The various episodes in the life of the god were made the subject of solemn representations in the temple, and little by little the performance of the obligatory and non-obligatory services in connection with them occupied, in certain temples, the greater part of the time of the priests" (Budge, *Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life*, p. 61).

in which we address ourselves to one another, that is, through the medium of rational discourse. The procedure has about it something suited to appeal to beings capable of observing and appreciating our efforts; and yet in itself it has the fixed and stereotyped features characteristic of our attempts to control and regulate the inanimate forces of nature, something that savours of the chemist's formula or the pharmacologist's prescription.

To the spiritualized religion of later times there came to be something peculiarly repulsive in these hybrid figures and the practices that pertained to their worship. It is an instructive thing to observe the stages by which that worship and the associated magic declined and passed away. We may say that the heathen gods and their rites were seen to be false long before it was realized that there was nothing at all in them. Thus the flood of new light which Christianity brought with it only served in the first instance to show up paganism and magic in bolder relief. The gods were still credited with some sort of existence, and that by those same Fathers who taught the Church to believe in one God. The result of this confusion was a return to something startlingly resembling the thinking implicit in primitive religion. The discredited gods of pagan mythology became malignant demons, whose function it was to *haunt* the world of men.

The part played by demonology in the writings of Christian apologists of the first centuries is one of the most significant features in the history of the early Church. From Justin and Athenagoras to Augustine there is hardly a writer of importance who does not dwell more or less upon the subject;

and the amount of learning wasted by the great scholars, Clement, Origen and Augustine himself, in spirited refutations of paganism is chiefly interesting as revealing how real a thing that paganism was for them. In the end, however, this furious polemic brought home to its authors how void and vapid was the thing that had seemed to them such an enormity. When this point was reached, paganism was ready to die a natural death. The labour of morally discrediting it preceded and led up to the stage at which it was intellectually discredited as well.

Something similar is true of magic, although the dark ages allowed this institution to retain its hold long after paganism had succumbed to the growing prestige of the church. There can be no doubt that magic was firmly believed in by the Jews,[1] even when it was seen to be an imposture, and we find it admitted by Christian writers, both explicitly and by implication, in works written with the express purpose of exposing its false pretensions. Doubtless it would be a mistake to take a romance like the *Clementine Recognitions* too seriously as evidence; but it is a significant thing that such a romance should have been written at all. Apparently Simon Magus was a figure which made a real impression upon the Early Christian imagination. For evidence of this we are not confined to the *Recognitions*. Confirmatory testimony is to be found in Irenaeus,

[1] The place it occupies in Scripture is quite remarkable. One or two typical references will suffice. Exodus vii, 8-13; Leviticus xx, 27; Deuteronomy xviii, 9-12; Daniel, ch. ii, where the magicians, enchanters and sorcerers fail to tell King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The case of Elymas occurs in Acts xiii, 6-12. In Revelation xxi, 8, and xxii, 15, a doom of fire and exclusion is pronounced upon sorcerers and others.

Against Heresies, and in the *Refutation of all Heresies* of Hippolytus.[1] The Simon of the *Recognitions* is assuredly a figure of heroic proportions ; but to the writer and his readers he could not have been all fiction.[2] If his powers had not been believed in up to a certain point, it would have been impossible to produce the effect evidently intended in those passages that strike us as so grotesquely overdone, where he is pictured as restoring the dead to life and filching the attributes of deity.

Here again the strange incongruities of thought which permitted such excesses of the imagination to exist side by side with the profoundest spiritual insight are intelligible only in the light of earlier developments. Magic was hard to disbelieve in because it had been believed in so heartily. What we have is a phenomenon of transition. The new is sprung upon the old before the latter is ready to give place to it. Not that the new wine is poured into old bottles (although of this we have a striking example

[1] *Vide* Book X, ch. viii, and more particularly Book VI, chs. ii-xv, of this latter work for Simon Magus. On magic in general *vide* Book IV.

[2] Of course there are other explanations of the extraordinary prominence attained by this enigmatic figure. There is the view (which one would hope need not be taken too seriously) that in the hideous perverter of light and truth we have neither more nor less than a malicious representation by some Jewish Christian of the second century of the Apostle to the Gentiles. Another explanation is that Simon was erected by some Gnostic sect into a revelation of the Divine Being. But behind all this remains the question why it was that the obviously obscure and insignificant person of the New Testament Simon came to impress himself on the imagination of a subsequent generation as fitted for such heroic rôles ; and the only answer I can see is that Simon was a sorcerer and as such was brought into frequent relations with Christianity at a time when Christianity had not yet entirely divested itself of a belief in magic. Modern writers have attempted to trace the Faust legend back to the villain of the *Clementine Recognitions*, but with rather doubtful success. *Vide* Kuno Fischer, *Goethe's Faust*, vol. i, p. 32 *sq.*

in the real Simon of the *Acts*), but that the new bottles themselves acquire a faint and gradually disappearing aroma from hands that were still in contact with the old. The result once more is a curious and highly characteristic attitude of mind, which might be described as that of discrediting what in a sense is still credited. Magic has not ceased to exist: but it is seen to have no right to existence. Its falsity is a moral falsity. Intellectual categories are transfused with an ethical connotation. Such are the hazards incidental to the process whereby religion advances beyond its own imperfect beginnings.

The Chronological Differentiation of the Phases of Primitive Religion

In touching upon these evidences of development in primitive religion, I have made no attempt to differentiate the various features from the standpoint of chronological development. The subject is profoundly obscure, and any conclusions as to the earlier phases must be taken as tentative and conjectural. Yet certain evidences of a difference in *primitiveness*, within the primitive period itself, may be gathered inferentially from many hints and survivals to be found in literature and in custom. A remarkable account of such differences in the religion of the Greeks is given by Miss Harrison in her *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, and I shall content myself with a brief recapitulation of these, premising only that they seem to me to represent a fair balance of truth, and that I cannot accept all the detail of Miss Harrison's argument.

In the work just mentioned the writer distin-

guishes an earlier phase, in which the fear of spirits —what the Greeks called δεισιδαιμονία—is the predominant emotion. At this stage religion appears to have consisted largely of rites which were apotropaic (ἀποτροπή, aversion) in their significance. Their purpose was to turn the spirit away. The formula of the period is *do, ut abeas,* " I give that thou mayest depart ". In sacrificing to the demon, the worshipper (if he may be so called) was really placing a meal before a malignant spirit in order that the spirit, having eaten, might depart satisfied. This is the fundamental idea embodied in the sacrifices of the epoch. It is further worthy of note that such sacrifices were what are called *holocausts,* that is to say, meals intended to be consumed entirely by the spirit to which they were offered, rather than friendly feasts in which the god and his worshippers partook in common. The idea of a festival embodies the later view of sacrifice, and is characteristic of the more advanced conception of religion. It was to this later type of sacrifice that the Greek word θυσία was specially applied. In this case, part of the victim having been set aside for the demon, the remainder was distributed among the worshippers. Among the Greeks the advance in viewpoint is connected with the confused transition from the worship of ghosts (κῆρες) and of chthonic spirits—the inmates of clefts and caverns and the bodies of serpents—to the worship of the Olympians, those deities in human form, inhabitants of the mountain-top and the bright upper air.

This later phase of religion is that in which the deities who preside over nature are no longer regarded as altogether or chiefly hostile. They have

become humanized and socialized, and are consequently conceived as potential friends and allies. The function of religion is to get them on the side of the worshipper. Between the two phases there is all the difference that divides a ghost, conceived as the object of apotropaic ceremonies, from a blessed immortal, conceived as the object of service or worship—what Miss Harrison calls " tendance "—*θεραπεία*. The motive can be observed to have changed from that of driving away an evil influence to that of invoking friendly assistance; and the appropriate formula is no longer *do, ut abeas* but *do, ut des*.[1] Physical terror, which forms no small ingredient in the complex mental state of the primitive worshipper, begins to take on more and more the spiritualized form of religious awe, the character of a truly numinous experience.[2] A sense of co-partnership with the divine grows up. The *other*-binding of the curse prepares the way for the *self*-binding of the vow; and a new sense of holiness develops out of the original significance of the ' devotion ' or ' consecration ' of a victim.

Such being, in briefest outline, the general direction in the early development of religion, it remains only to recapitulate our conclusions and to add a few observations based upon them.

[1] In Brahmanical religion *Dehi me, daddmi te*, " Give to me, I give to thee ". *Vide* Carpenter, *Comparative Religion*, pp. 142-143.

[2] In the case of the Greeks, assuredly, the sense of awe was tempered by the over-humanization of the gods. This aspect of the subject is too familiar to need illustration. For the sake of the general reader, however, let me give one example, a description of Heracles by the Sicilian poet, Epicharmus. " If you saw him at his meals, you'd die. The noise his gullet makes inside him. Mash, mash, goes his jaw. His molar grinds; his canine grates; while he snuffles with his nostrils and makes his ears go up and down."

The Advance from Ritual to Cult

Behind the religious life is the natural life of instinct; but religion, strictly speaking, does not make its appearance until instinct has given rise to something more stable than itself. Thus, as we have seen, the 'instinct of self-preservation' reappears as the desire to live, and religion becomes a possibility. But once this stage is reached, and religion in some sense is a *fait accompli*, something of the same sort may be observed as the rule of its development. There are religions, and there are phases of religion, which are more advanced than others; and when we examine the difference between the two, we find that it resolves itself into a relative nearness to or remoteness from the instinctive level. In the earlier phases man's desire to live is as yet hardly distinguishable from the instinct of self-preservation. The fear of injury and destruction, rather than the positive idealization of existence, is the prevailing motive. The religious life, such as it is, requires the constant stimulus of need and terror; and in its mode of expression it approximates to the negative type of reaction. Man performs the offices of religion because he is dogged by hunger and by danger and haunted by ghosts. As progress is made, religion emancipates itself from these limitations. It ceases to be dependent upon specific incitements. It assumes the form of a steady attitude to life, and an established, not an occasional ritual. When this process is complete, we find that the idea of ritual as such is no longer sufficient to give the last touch of definiteness and meaning to what religion has become. Ritual, it

is true, is still the content, but it is now the *content* of something which implies more than ritual, something which invests the latter with a new meaning, and in the absence of which ritual itself falls back into an archæological survival. That something else is the established cult.

In all the respects which have been enumerated the cult represents a clear advance over rites. This will appear if we consider the most developed and elaborate examples, for instance the ceremonies of initiation which among savage peoples accompany the transition from youth to manhood. These ceremonies are of the most terrifying and painful nature, and are intended to produce an ineffaceable impression. They represent the inauguration of a new era in the life of the subject: they are the labour-pains of a second birth, and that is how they are regarded. Moreover, once they are duly accomplished, there is about them a sense of definitiveness, of something done once and for all. The youth has passed the Rubicon of life and has settled into manhood. Mere ritual can go no further. And yet we feel that such ceremonies fall short of certain possibilities to which ritual itself seems to point. Such further possibilities have to do not with anything in the elaborateness or the impressiveness of the rites in question, but with the meaning implied in them. Ritual may be made to *mean* more than what is implied (whether from the standpoint of the individual or from that of the tribe) in even the most crucial changes in human life. So far the ceremonies involved have found their significance and their correlates in the facts of biological development and social organization. The mysteries which they shadow forth are the mysteries

of man's own nature. The motives behind them and the purposes which they subserve are contained within the circle of conditions that determine his existence as a member of the human race. But these are not the only motives and purposes, these are not the only mysteries and facts, in which ritual may find an actuating principle. Behind the mysterious change that comes once in a lifetime, behind the mysterious cravings, the wants and the fears, that waylay the individual and the group at every point, there is the abiding mystery of life itself, and of its counterpart death. Behind the variable phases and the periodicity of nature are the powers, dimly discerned, yet, it may be, vividly imagined, which are responsible for these fluctuations. Here is a fact to be reckoned with, not occasionally and under the stress of a special excitement, but steadily and all the time. It is necessary not only that there should be rites, but that these rites should become a standing institution, a fixed ordinance of worship, addressed to the power behind the permanent mystery of life.

In the cult, then, we find the old ritual reoriented. The god counts for more, and the worshipper for less. The practical motive is obscured and chastened, as the significance of human life shrinks before the sense of a divine order. Worship generates its own specific emotions, which more and more absorb and transfigure the natural emotions in which religion begins. Religion asserts that quality peculiar to it as an instigator and sustainer of vital dualities ; and in the course of development there comes a point where the original value-judgment implicit in the desire to live may be so transformed by the influence of a new perspective, that the life of the body ceases

to sustain the ideal meaning of existence. Such a revulsion has its dangers, as appears from the suicidal mania that attends religion in some of its phases; but it is by no means only in its fanatical and its orgiastic moments that this reversal of the value-judgment occurs. At the highest level of development the renunciation of life becomes a profoundly spiritual phenomenon. And so it is that religion, which is the idealization of life, passes in thought and aspiration beyond terrestrial existence, and turns its back upon the very thing which gave it birth. The reason for this is that the discovery of God, through the worship of Him, has rendered such existence a thing of no account. Or rather, I should say, God is revealed as the meaning of life itself. That *I* live is nothing at all: what really matters is the fact that God liveth. "I am come", says Christ, "that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly"; to which St. Paul, rightly divining the nature of the life to which Christ refers, appears to answer, "For me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain".

PART III

QUESTIONS WHICH CONCERN THE *CONCEPT* OF RELIGION

CHAPTER X

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE DEALT WITH

THE various factors which we have brought together as the defining characteristics of religion are now before us. Yet we are very far from a well-defined concept of religion. Our procedure hitherto has been largely determined by the desire to use the anthropological method, turning it to philosophical account. But so far we have been engaged chiefly with origins. Now we have seen that from the philosophical point of view origins, however important, are by no means the whole tale, and that from the standpoint of anthropology the same thing is true. Indeed, as has been pointed out, it is more or less of an accident that anthropology has found itself compelled to devote so much attention to prehistoric evidences and to primitive life. Having, then, drawn certain more or less general conclusions from a study of the subject in its primitive aspects, we must recall a principle laid down in the second chapter. That principle is to the effect that the significance of beginnings can be clearly seen only in the light of later developments. Before we can hope to understand the nature of religion, we must therefore observe not only how it begins, but also what happens to it in the course of its subsequent history. This inquiry brings us within the province of historical fact; but

this does not affect our viewpoint. In so far as historical detail is relevant to our purposes, it is so in the same restricted sense in which such detail is relevant to anthropology.

Anything in the nature of a survey of the world's religions is out of the question. We shall take our departure from certain well-defined points, and shall content ourselves with following out the lines of inquiry which begin in these. The points in question are those which emerged in the last chapter as the defining concepts in religion, and may now be restated as follows.

Recapitulation: the Defining Concepts of Religion

(1) First, religion is the result of a germinal union of two factors—an emotional factor, the desire to live, and an intellectual factor, the conception of nature known as animism.

(2) In the second place, the *object* of the desire to live must be viewed as an ideal, or at least as containing an ideal element. This is so, whether we look at the desire on its negative side, as implying the fear of danger and death, or on its positive side, as a desire for increased vitality. Thus what is feared is not merely the dangerous object as presented to the senses, but the unseen death of which the dangerous object is the symbol. In the same way, if life is desired, it is not the life actually pulsing in the veins (*that* is already a realized fact), but a life to come, a life as yet present to experience only ideally.

(3) Thirdly, we saw that animism, which on the theoretical side is the interpretation of existence in

terms of life, becomes on its practical side the interpretation of existence in terms of the possibility of personal relationships. A being whose destiny it is to live in a world where life is universal, sustains its existence by relating itself to other living things. The relation of living things to living things, *considered as such,* implies the recognition of what we can only call personality.

It is true that in our relations with the lower animals we do not ordinarily think of them or treat them as persons, but that is because, except in a very limited way, we do not pay regard to the life within them. We do not consider their lives as we consider our own, viewing them from within as an actual experience of living rather than as a fact of observation. Thus their lives, as we relate them to ours, are frequently no more than mechanical conveniences, auxiliary to certain of our life-purposes. Sometimes they are no better than obstacles, to be swept aside without consideration for any point of view but the human. This attitude, however, is not that of lovers of animals. For them the life of the creatures is a sacred thing, which means that it is considered as something more than an object, whether of observation or exploitation. But if as something more than an object, as what then? Obviously as nothing less than an experience, the experience of a subject. But a subject capable of experience comes very close to what we mean by a person—a being capable of meeting the approaches of living, conscious beings not merely with a mechanical reaction, but with a conscious counter-approach.

(4) We saw further that religion consists in

ordinances of some sort, and more specifically in ritual; and that until rites have been established and to some degree regularized, religion can hardly be said to have acquired a substantival character. Whatever, then, we may have felt ourselves compelled to assert about its origin in the ideal yearnings of men, there is nothing to which we should feel entitled to give the name of religion before the appearance of ordinances. The distinction we are here trying to bring out might be expressed by saying that while man acquires a *religious character* when he learns to relate his desire for life to his animistic view of nature, he does not acquire a religion until he learns to express this union of thought and desire in the form of ritual. There is here of course no question of chronological sequence. The ritual and the inner impulse must have come together as two sides of one and the same thing.

(5) Among the ordinances of religion we attached great importance to the system of inhibitions known as taboo; and in this connection we raised the question of the relation between religion and morality.

(6) Finally, it appeared that while in a certain sense and in a somewhat superficial way the life of primitive man was filled with religion and with religious sentiments and practices, there must have been from the earliest times some intermixture of that secular attitude and point of view which in the subsequent course of human development have come to compete so powerfully with the religious.

The Questions, closely Interrelated, remaining for Discussion

These, then, are the considerations round which our argument from this point on will revolve—the union of animism (or some successor to animism) with the desire for life, personalism, rites, morality and the secular outlook. The questions that will engage our attention are questions like these. What does it purport for religion that it had its origin in the union referred to, that it makes its first appearance in the form of ritual, that its ordinances and prescriptions antedate the development of an autonomous morality, that from the first religion contains within it suggestions of its natural antithesis, secularism ?

In the history of religion these various considerations bear continually upon one another, so that there is no one of the points which we have selected for discussion that does not involve the others. To take only one illustration : the question of the fundamental relation between morality and religion cannot be fully considered without taking into account the relation between religion and ritual. For as soon as it becomes apparent that true religion involves morality, and that therefore our moral obligations are at the same time religious duties, it becomes difficult to distinguish our religious duties from our moral obligations. Thus we find the discharge of ceremonial functions and the observance of religious ordinances appearing side by side with the more general obligations of moral living—what the Founder of Christianity called, in contradistinc-

tion to these same ceremonial observances, " the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith ". This fusion of the religious and ethical points of view is a matter of incalculable importance in the history of religion, and has given rise to some of the most critical passages in that history.

The Desire for Life, and the Value-Judgment which this involves: that Life is Good

We shall begin with the proposition which stands first in the order of our exposition—the proposition that has to do with the union of animism and the desire for life. In the preceding chapter we distinguished that desire from the merely instinctive clutching at existence, by pointing out that the desire to live implies something not implied in the instincts as such—namely, judgment. This is necessarily so, since, as has been shown, the elements involved in the desire, as contrasted with the instinct, are at least in part ideal elements. The life desired exists for consciousness as an ideal. The intellectual content of the desire is, therefore, a judgment to the effect that life in this sense is desirable.

This, however, is not a perfectly complete, and therefore it is not a perfectly exact, statement of the case. What has just been said would naturally be taken to mean that the life pronounced desirable is to be identified with the life that constitutes the ideal content of the desire—in other words, that the life desired is the same as the life which is judged to be desirable. As a matter of fact there is a fine but

significant distinction here. For, strictly speaking, the object of the judgment is the more comprehensive of the two. Thus, while what is desired is *more life*, what is judged to be desirable is *life in general*. Or we might bring out the difference by saying that the object of the desire is expressible in the substantive 'life'; whereas the object of the judgment is the content of a noun clause to the effect that life is desirable. The reason for the discrepancy is that in the emotional and conative state (which is always something private to the individual) the ideal contents of our judgments acquire a certain narrowness of application. They are restricted by a special reference to the actual circumstances and more specifically to the possible future, of the individual. In their relation to one another the judgment and the desire are like the major premise and the conclusion of a syllogism. The judgment expresses—or exposes—the ground or general principle, while the desire gives the individualized application.

We may say, then, that behind the desire to live, as this enters into the union of which religion is the issue, there lies a comprehensive value-judgment to the effect that existence is good, that it is good *to be*. This must not, of course, be taken to mean that everything that is or can be is good, but only that existence—existence as the content of our experience—is a thing to be desired. In the beginnings of religion this is merely an assumption; and it is easy to see that sooner or later the question is bound to arise whether the assumption will bear investigation, whether the experience of existing will in the end confirm the judgment, and that in the face of whatever may betide. It may be that there are possi-

bilities of existence in view of which the initial judgment can no longer be sustained.

Optimism and Pessimism in Religion

These questions are fraught with profound consequences for the future of religion, and the struggle with them constitutes one of the characteristic crises in religious history. This is obvious; but it is by no means obvious how the standing of religion will be affected by the variety of possible answers to the question. It might be assumed, for example, that an optimistic answer, being a confirmation of the initial value-judgment, would define the attitude of religion in a reflective age. Evidence that it sometimes does so is to be found in St. Augustine's *City of God*,[1] where the writer goes so far as to take it for granted that men would everywhere prefer an eternity of misery to a doom of annihilation. On the other hand there is such a thing as religious pessimism; and there is an attitude characteristic of one great group of religions, the Oriental, which combines optimism and pessimism in a profoundly significant way.[2] So

[1] "And truly the very fact of existing is by some natural spell (*vi quadam naturali*) so pleasant, that even the wretched are, for no other reason, unwilling to perish; and, when they feel that they are wretched, wish not that they themselves be annihilated, but that their misery be so. Take even those who, both in their own esteem, and in point of fact, are utterly wretched, and who are reckoned so . . . if anyone should give these men an immortality, in which their misery should be deathless, and should offer the alternative, that if they shrank from existing eternally in the same misery they might be annihilated, and exist nowhere at all, nor in any condition, on the instant they would joyfully, nay exultantly, make election to exist always, even in such a condition, rather than not exist at all" (*De Civitate Dei*, Book X, 27).

[2] For an interesting criticism of the current view that the philosophy of India is pessimism see S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. i,

far as the content of ordinary human experience is concerned, and the existence which is known through this experience, Buddhism and Brahmanism are pessimistic in the extreme : metaphysically speaking, that is to say, with reference to the reality supposed to underlie experience, Brahmanism is entirely optimistic. How are such estimates to be conceived from the religious point of view ? Is it possible for religion to begin in naïve optimism and end in reflective pessimism ? Can it, without proving false to its original nature, be optimistic and pessimistic at once, or optimistic in one sense and pessimistic in another ?

Perhaps the best way in which to begin the inquiry would be to examine the actual process whereby the religious consciousness adjusts itself to the criticism of the initial value-judgment.

The Criticism of the Value-Judgment

To this task we shall address ourselves. But first of all there is one remark which seems to fall due here. The original value-judgment rests, as we have seen, on the assumption that existence is one with the content of experience. The thing that is desired and pronounced desirable is an ideal extension of what experience reveals existence to be. It is the content of an experience idealized by thought and imagination. Now when in the development of religion the point is reached at which the validity of the judgment is made the subject of dispute, of one thing we may be certain. It can be nothing

pp. 49-50. Also Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. i, pp. 76-77.

other than experience itself, the experience of what existence is here and now, that leads to the critical inquiry. It is the nature of existence as revealed in the actuality of present experience, that appears either dubious or positively baleful; and this discovery leads men to question the desirability of the ideal extension. But it is quite conceivable that the ideal extension may stand on its own merits. In this way there arises a deep cleavage between the here and now on the one hand and the then and there on the other. Whatever the nature of this life, whatever the tragic disclosures of experience, it may well be that in this instance also the new world will redress the balance of the old. The life-to-be thus becomes an idealization in a new sense—less an ideal extension of what we have experienced existence to be, and more an ideal antithesis of the conditions of mundane existence. It is a case of idealization by contrast rather than by continuity.

Such is the position of oriental mysticism to which attention has just been drawn. The final step in this process of transvaluation takes place when the contrast thus established bears fruit in a complete discrediting of the here and now. Experience, in the ordinary sense, and the ordinary world of experience, are seen to be illusion—Mâyâ—and individual existence, the existence of a this and a that in a here and now, appears as the source and substance of all evil. Whether or no this is to be considered a direct reversal of the value-judgment which is the original basis of religion is a question which will have to be considered in due course. For the time being it is sufficient to notice the logic of the position. Ordinary human experience is condemned; but since it is con-

demned as an illusion and as no longer capable of sustaining the meaning of existence, it does not follow that existence as such is condemned along with it. On the contrary, existence is reinstated as the content of another experience. The idealization turns out to be the real, and the real as ordinarily understood to be an impostor.

Religion ceasing to be merely a Solution of other Problems, itself becomes a Problem

That the original value-judgment of religion comes to be questioned presupposes the appearance of a new factor in the situation. This new factor is the growth of a theoretical interest in religion. From the earliest times religion, as we have seen, has not been without a theoretical basis. But this basis, represented by animism, is the presupposition, rather than the product, of the religious attitude. Animism, therefore, is not religious thinking: it is not a theology. That is to say, it is not a system of thought evolved out of religious experience. But such a system was bound sooner or later to appear, if religion was to be capable of sustaining a reasoned inquiry into its own presuppositions. Such a result became inevitable the moment religion ceased to be merely a solution of other problems and itself became a problem of thought. This point, in turn, was reached when men were no longer content to accept its ordinances without question. Here we find one of the great landmarks in the history of religion. The characteristic feature is a distinct transfer of interest from the outward act of observance to the ideas seen vaguely to be implicit in the act. One of the best

illustrations to be found is the deeply reflective religion of the Hebrews.

In order to understand this development, we must keep in mind a circumstance to which attention has already been drawn—the tendency, namely, to combine the ritual institutes of religion with moral rules into one great code of ordinances. From the earliest moment in their recorded history, we find religion and morality already wedded in the mind of the Jewish people. Thus it is that when the period of reflection sets in, religion becomes subjected to a double scrutiny. There is the criticism directed towards her institutes as representing the religious idea ; and there is a criticism of the ethical code to which she has committed herself. Our inquiry has to do very largely with this latter side of the case.

CHAPTER XI

THE SELF-CRITICISM OF RELIGION IN HEBREW LITERATURE

In its earliest phases Hebrew religion was, in one of its most characteristic aspects, a national institution. Its representative conception was that of Yahweh, the tribal god, and its standpoint was that intermediate position between polytheism and a pure monotheism, to which the name of monolatry has been applied. Thus the religious life of the individual Hebrew was something which came to him from the fact of his membership in the nation. His relations with the divine being were on the whole mediated for him by the larger relationship between the nation as such and the nation's God. Between him and the latter there stood the sacerdotal caste, and a vast volume of prescriptive regulations. The same thing in a sense was true of his moral life. He was not suffered to bear the full weight of its responsibilities. The sharpness of its immediate touch was tempered by the complex of his social and official connections. In particular his moral delinquencies did not always come home to him in person.

Suddenly it was realized that all this is utterly inadequate and even false to the true inwardness of the spiritual life. Or rather, let me say, it was realized that the moral and religious life is a genuinely spiritual affair, and that consequently it must be

understood in a way that will make it the business of the individual soul. Neither national tradition nor heredity can alter the solemn fact of individual responsibility in the sight of God.

In this we detect one of the shelving-places of Hebrew thinking, where religion attains a depth unknown before. The literature of the period is quick with the sense of discovery, the consciousness of special illumination and dedication to new truth. Of this new truth Ezekiel is the prophetic exponent, and its literary monument is the eighteenth chapter of his Prophecies.[1] Never has the direct imputation of moral good and evil to the individual doer been more emphatically insisted upon than in this chapter.

The Restatement in Hebrew Literature of the Issues bearing on the Primitive Distinction between Life and Death

But the new truth makes its appearance in closest integration with the very oldest of religious ideas—the ideas which, as we have seen, cause religion to turn, from the first, around the issues of life and death. Around these same issues the new ethical teaching is now made to turn, with the most fateful consequences. Morality, which is seen to be an integral part of the content of religion, comes to acquire the significance of the latter. It too is made a matter of life and death, rather than an autonomous interest refusing either to condition or be conditioned by anything but itself.

[1] For an interesting general account of this whole phase of Hebrew development see R. H. Charles, *Religious Development between the Old and the New Testaments*, pp. 106-107.

"What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

"As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." [1]

And again:

"Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

"All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live." [2]

Underlying these impressive iterations it is easy

[1] Ezekiel xviii, 2-4.

[2] Ezekiel xviii, 19-22.

to discern the original value-judgment of religion. Life is a reward, and death a punishment. Therefore the propositions that the good shall live and the evil die must be read in the light of the assumption that to die is evil and to live is good. As a matter of fact the passionate clinging to life was a marked characteristic of the Hebrew mentality, and this characteristic is fundamentally related to the causes which made the Hebrew people a religious people *par excellence.*

At this early stage, however, it can hardly be said that the life thus assumed to be good was thought of as good entirely by itself and irrespective of its content. It was not mere existence, in the sense of St. Augustine's maxim, that was made the object of the religious value-judgment. On the contrary, *mere existence* was the very thing that was most dreaded, as the antithesis of life. For such existence was the fate of the dead in *Sheol.* Strictly speaking, we may say that the significant contrast of religion, as this appeared to the Hebrew mind, was not that of existence and non-existence, but that of the existence which is life and the existence which is death. This too is entirely primitive.

The conception of Sheol here plays an important rôle. Sheol was the place of shades, the abode of departed spirits, not to be thought of as a place of retribution—that is to say, as a place of penal severities—but as a region where good and evil fared alike. As Dr. Charles has pointed out, it was a place of social, but not of moral, distinctions ; and if this seems inconsistent with what has just been said as to death being a *punishment* for wickedness, it should be noted that the latter statement does not

mean that the wicked are punished after they are dead, or that the punishment is added to the fact of death itself. On the contrary, it is the fact of death that *is* the punishment: and since death is a thing that comes sooner or later to all men, we must understand what was said about life and death as respectively reward and punishment in the sense that the wicked are destined to die before their time (they are *cut off*), whereas the righteous are favoured with length of days.

One further point requires mention before our statement of the antithetical possibilities is complete. Death is the punishment of the wicked irrespective of anything that death entails in the way of special retribution.[1] But the same thing does not apply in the case of life, considered as the reward of the righteous. The life that is their portion is not *any sort of life*. In their conception of it the Hebrews assumed a special content, and the content became an integral part of the conception itself. By life was meant existence here on earth, attended by everything required to make such existence desirable—length of days, riches, honour and children. These accompaniments entered into the very connotation of life in so far as this was the earthly portion of the good man. Thus there is a distinctly mundane—not to say, material—strain in the spirituality of the period; but the underlying motive is not to be judged from this point of view. Rather we must look upon the whole conception as determined by the

[1] As we shall see, this statement must be taken with one reservation. Death entailed separation from God, and this was a severe penalty. It was so, however, primarily from the standpoint, not of the wicked, but of the righteous; and it was a hardship to which the righteous, as well as the wicked, had eventually to submit.

inability to think of life in any other terms than those of a terrestrial existence.

What is more important still, the antithesis of life and death went back in the last resort to one fundamental fact, in the light of which it acquired its real meaning, and apart from which the excessively eager clinging to life cannot be understood. This is the fact that the jurisdiction of Jehovah stopped short at Sheol. To be 'cut off' was therefore primarily to be cut off from all communion with the God of Israel. God was a god of the living and not of the dead, and this, to the Hebrew mind, constituted the peculiar sting of death. Read in the light of such a theory, the poignant story of Hezekiah's sickness gains a new import. Hezekiah is the very type of the righteous man, who does the will of God with all his heart and therein prospers.[1] The death that had seemed imminent is therefore an anomaly in providence—the deprivation of a due.

> "I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.
>
> "I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world."[2]

And further on:

> "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.
>
> "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from

[1] 2 Chronicles xxxi, 20-21; xxxii, 27-30.
[2] Isaiah xxxviii, 10-11.

the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

"For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

"The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth." [1]

The doctrine of a more or less uniform equilibration between the destiny of the individual and his moral deserts appears to have become something of an established dogma. In Jeremiah and in the Books of Psalms and Proverbs we find passage after passage to the same effect—the whole suggesting a well-consolidated piece of theology, based upon the supposed facts of religious experience and on observation of the facts of life. To this phase of Hebrew thought the thirty-seventh Psalm gives sustained expression.

"Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

"For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.

"Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." ". . . I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." [2]

[1] Isaiah xxxviii, 16-19.

[2] Other passages to the same effect will be found in Psalm xxxiv, 9-13 (like the thirty-seventh, a late Psalm, belonging to the period of the Exile or later, according to Driver); Psalm xci, 15-16 (presumably pre-Exilic: Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 364, 4th edition); Jeremiah vii, 5-7; xvii, 5-8 and 19-27; Proverbs iii, 1-2 (probably shortly before the Exile: Driver, p. 382); xi, 30-31; xii, 28.

Such being the position of Hebrew orthodoxy about the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., it is entirely in accordance with what we should expect that the orthodox theology should have been in time subjected to criticism. The light of reflection was turned upon the problem of human destiny, and as a result it was seen that the orthodox view was much too simple, and was by no means in accord with the facts of experience. This discovery had a profoundly disturbing effect upon the religious consciousness of the age. The ways of Providence being no longer clear, indeed the very *fact* of Providence being doubtful, thinking men began to wonder whether they had been right in assuming the value of human existence. To exist in a world where all things happened in accordance with a divine law of right was one thing: to exist in a world which was, in Dr. Charles's phrase, a ' moral chaos ' was quite another. Moreover it began to be questioned whether at the best a life which is doomed to end in the swift and irremediable tragedy of death was capable of sustaining the comprehensive value-judgment of religion. The query is a periodically-recurring one in religious history.[1] Does not the mere fact of death in itself, and apart from every other consideration, deprive life of all meaning and value ?

Two Opposite and Typical Solutions in Hebrew Literature

To all such questions two opposite and typical solutions emerge in the religious literature of the

[1] It played a great part among the considerations that led to Tolstoy's conversion. Cf. *My Confessions.*

Hebrews. One of these is contained in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the other in the Book of Job. A brief survey and comparison of these writings will illustrate the plight to which religion is driven in its endeavour to sustain the fundamental judgment of value.

(1) *The gospel of Ecclesiastes—the negation of religion*

Ecclesiastes was written, in all likelihood, two hundred years later than Job,[1] but in the attempt to state the contrast between the two there is a certain advantage to be gained by beginning with Ecclesiastes.

This Book represents a reaction against the orthodox belief in individual rewards and punishments in this life. The facts of experience show that there is no evidence for any such dispensations of Providence. All things come alike to all. The world is a 'moral chaos', and existence is vanity. Another feature of the writer's view of things is the absence of all hope in a future life. This is important from our standpoint because of an implication it

[1] The following chronological note will help to keep matters straight in our minds:

(i) Ezekiel.—"Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was one of the captives who were carried with Jehoiachin in 597 into Babylonia, and was settled with others at Tel-abib . . . by the river Chebar" (Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 260, 4th edition).

(ii) Job.—". . . About or before 400 B.C." (Charles, *op. cit.* p. 109). "It is not possible to fix the date of the Book *precisely*; but it will scarcely be earlier than the age of Jeremiah, and belongs most probably to the period of the Babylonian captivity" (Driver, p. 405).

(iii) Ecclesiastes.—". . . Decidedly probable that it is not earlier than the later years of the Persian rule, which ended 332 B.C. (Ewald, Oehler, Ginsburg, Delitzsch, Cheyne, Volck); and it is quite possible that it is later" (Driver, p. 446).

contains. If, in the writer's judgment, life on earth is rendered void and meaningless by the absence of any clear indication of an after-life, then obviously he is using the idea of an after-life as a criterion by which to estimate the value of existence here and now. A hereafter is apparently assumed as indispensable to the religious value-judgment.

The final issue of the writer's disillusion is profoundly significant. The discovery that the world is a moral chaos, conjoined with the reflection that there is no hereafter, does not, as might have been expected, result in any direct renunciation of existence. What is renounced is rather the comprehensive value-judgment *upon* existence, and more specifically the *comprehensiveness* of the judgment. The result of this is highly illuminating. As we have seen, the comprehensive value-judgment is an idealization of existence, superimposed upon, or in some way extracted from, the primitive instinct of self-preservation. Now from any such idealization the author of Ecclesiastes reverts to the instinctive or quasi-instinctive attitude. It is important to notice the exact nature of this operation. Strictly speaking, the reversion is not from judgment to instinct. Once the level of judgment has been attained, there can be no return upon the path that has led up to it. The point is rather that for the disillusioned but not distraught Koheleth, while life *as a whole* has lost its meaning, and can no longer be judged desirable in any comprehensive sense, there is still some gratification or at least amelioration to be gathered at random from its disintegrating moments. The life of the instincts continues, and there is no reason to deny them such satisfaction as they permit.

> "Go thy way," this 'gentle cynic' advises, "eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God hath already accepted thy works.
>
> "Let thy garments be always white; and let not thy head lack ointment.
>
> "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in life, and in thy labour wherein thou labourest under the sun." [1]

The logic of the position calls for a few words of comment. As we have said, the writer does not merely revert to the life of instinct: he *advises* such a reversion. Between these two attitudes there is a fundamental difference. If it were psychologically possible to revert to the life of instinct, this would mean a return to the level of merely natural existence. Religion would be impossible, as it is, presumably, for the lower animals. For instinct, while, as we have seen, it must be reckoned among the pre-conditions and instruments of religion, does not amount to more than a *pre*-condition and instrument. On the other hand, to *advise* a return to instinct is, by implication, to pass judgment upon religion. It is to idealize the natural, and to idealize it in that moment-to-moment aspect which, from the very nature of the case, does not permit of idealization. Looked at on its positive side, or as implying a judgment of approval, the position of the cynic breaks down in contradiction. There remains the

[1] Ecclesiastes ix, 7-9.

negative side. That is to say, the only thing of significance that survives in the cynical attitude to life is its negation of the comprehensive value-judgment on the ground of its *comprehensiveness*. But it is precisely in its comprehensiveness that the value-judgment finds its religious meaning. Religion, whether or no in the end it prove a justifiable institution, is formally and specifically a movement *beyond instinct*. This is precisely what it means, and to advise a relapse upon the instinctive life is to counsel a reversal of the movement in which religion had its birth, and of the direction in which, from its very nature, it is bound to advance. The gospel of Ecclesiastes is the negation of religion.

(2) *The teaching in the Book of Job, leading in the direction of a deepened religion*

A very different attitude towards the problem of man's existence and its meaning is presented by the Book of Job, written probably about the year 400 B.C. This ancient essay in the philosophy of religion is a literary enigma of the first order, and any attempt to make use of it for purposes of illustration must be extremely guarded. Nevertheless, apart from the minuter questions of exegesis, if we consider the composition as a whole, there is discernible in it a general trend of thought which is unmistakable, and which leads as certainly in the direction of religion as the Book of Ecclesiastes leads in the opposite direction. If we are to believe the more advanced critics, the familiar versions are highly misleading, and some of the crucial passages have been given a depth and fulness of religious

meaning that were quite alien to the thought of the original document. Apparently, too, there are strong reasons for supposing that this book has suffered from manipulation of the text in the interest of certain ideas which it would be an anachronism to attribute to so early a writer or group of writers. If this is so, however, it is doubtless in some measure due to the fact that the original document laid itself open to such manipulation. The thinking of Job is so pregnant with the suggestions of a genuinely religious solution of the problem, that the temptation to tamper with words, to distort meanings and to insert substitutes must have been almost irresistible in an age in which the rules of literary propriety were not understood.

The Book of Job may be described as a 'dramatic poem',[1] or 'symposium',[2] with prologue and epilogue, dealing with a problem in the philosophy of religion.[3] The poem is woven round what was perhaps a well-known story of suffering and patient endurance,[4] and this is the feature of the tale which has stamped itself on the imagination of after-times. Job is still the proverbial type of patience.[5] When we read the book as a whole, however, the patience of Job is by no means the characteristic that impresses us most. In the opening passages there is certainly

[1] Driver, *op. cit.* p. 387, 4th edition. ". . . Hardly . . . a drama, though it may justly be called dramatic" (A. B. Davidson, *The Book of Job* in the Cambridge Bible, Introd. p. xxii).

[2] Morris Jastrow, *The Book of Job*, p. 30. This designation applies only to the central portion.

[3] Driver, *op. cit.* p. 385.

[4] Job is already mentioned by Ezekiel, along with Noah and Daniel. xiv, 14 and 20.

[5] For the conception of Job as the patient man in New Testament times, *vide* the Epistle of James v, 11.

a remarkable demonstration of submission to the divine will, and this feature in the religious attitude has never been more strikingly expressed than in the words which describe Job's reception of the news of his children's death :

> " Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither : the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord." [1]

But this phase is soon over. With startling suddenness Job again opens his mouth and curses his day. Thereupon the whole tone and temper of the poem are changed, and through much the greater part of the work Job's attitude is that of a fierce moral and intellectual resentment against the inscrutable decrees of Providence.

This sudden reversal, along with much evidence both of an internal and an external nature, suggests forcibly that in the Book of Job we have a not unfamiliar literary phenomenon, the attempt, namely, to utilize an already existing narrative as a vehicle for the development of a reflective and artistic *motif* ; and, as in the case of more than one of Shakespeare's plays, the completed content strains the fabric of the legend to the breaking-point. It does not, indeed, seem necessary to go the whole way with Jastrow in maintaining the patch-work character of the composition.[2] Abrupt as are the transitions from one

[1] Job i, 21.

[2] Jastrow maintains the non-Hebraic origin of the " folk-tale " (*op. cit.* p. 46 *sq.*), and instances a similar Babylonian story, of which the hero is a king of Nippur. A similar view is held by Cheyne (*Job and Solomon or the Wisdom of the Old Testament*, p. 13), who describes Job as " an Arabian sheich ". Contrast Davidson, *The Book of Job*, p. lvii.

mood to another, glaring as are the superficial incongruities, it is not at all certain that the difficulty of welding the substance of the writer's thinking to the conventional structure of the narrative will not explain them all. In any case, there is no fundamental incompatibility between Job the rebel and Job the patient sufferer. Where suffering accumulates beyond a certain point, it is no uncommon thing to find a spirit of heroic endurance, which excites admiration, passing suddenly into its opposite. Morale, whether in religion or elsewhere, is liable to give way with the suddenness of a landslide ; and if it was the purpose of this ancient writer to depict the breakdown of a character under excessive strain, the facts of psychology would not be against the abruptness of the transitions.

Furthermore, if the evidence of *content* is to enter into this question (as Prof. Jastrow undoubtedly intends), there is one special touch which should not be overlooked. As we shall see, the narrative introduction to the book is conceived from the standpoint of the orthodox theology, whereas the long series of disquisitions which follow represents the revolt of thought. But the statement of the situation in the introduction is not quite true to the orthodox position, at least in its extremer form. For the Hebrew orthodoxy of the age was not so much a demand that the decrees of Providence should be submissively accepted, however inscrutable, as a claim that these decrees were not inscrutable at all. The content of the dogma has been sufficiently dwelt upon. Prosperity and long life were the portion of the just man, confusion and an early death the portion of the wicked. There was no special call to bear with

Providence, for the ways of Providence carried their justification on their front. At the most a little *waiting* was all that was required—not the tremendous self-renunciation contained in Job's words last quoted. And when we consider the hero's reply to the solicitations of his wife, the variation upon orthodoxy is unmistakable:

> "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."[1]

Now from the strictly orthodox point of view it was quite inconceivable, and quite wrong, that Job should have received evil at the hand of God—evil, that is, to this extent and in this irremediable form. Job's attitude of submission is, therefore, something beyond the ken of Hebrew orthodoxy. In this introductory passage we are already faced with a situation that lies outside the limits of the moral order as then conceived. Either the universe is a 'moral chaos', or else there are depths and heights in it—depths of anguish and contradictoriness, heights of spiritual achievement, with commensurate miracles of reconciliation and ultimate restoration—which had not yet been suspected. It is in such suggestions of a new scale of things that the poem as a whole finds its significance; and in this the prologue is by no means out of keeping with the rest.

Let us now turn to the plan of the poem.[2] The

[1] Job ii, 10.

[2] Commentators are agreed in dividing the Book of Job into five episodes. First there is the Prologue in prose, chapters i and ii. Then comes a series of colloquies, in poetry, between Job and his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar—chapters iii to xxxi. This is followed by the discourses of Elihu, chapters xxxii to xxxvii, chiefly

Prologue (no doubt, in this, reproducing the character of Job as he appears in the original folk-tale) pictures the good man who under continuous adversity refuses to abandon his attitude of resignation to the divine will. The episode is profoundly in the spirit of religion, and particularly so in the resolutely theocentric attitude maintained by the sufferer. But if the spirit is that of religion, the religion is one which has yet to face the questionings of man's moral intelligence. Up to now the facts of human experience have been viewed through the distorting medium of a dogma which will not stand the test of these facts themselves. The problem is now whether, when experience has done its worst, when the facts of history have been clearly seen and acknowledged, the religious attitude is any longer justifiable. Is religion adequate, not to the fictitious exigencies of an experience that has been idealized to meet the demands of religion, but to the brutal actualities of life at its worst? The colloquies and discourses that follow are an attempt to thresh the problem out. It is with these that we have now especially to do.

In the Symposium, which opens with chapter iii, Job is shown in a changed frame of mind. The bitterness has entered into his soul, and having just refused to curse God, he proceeds to curse the day on which he was born. For this he is taken to task by his three friends, representing the orthodox position. They argue that the calamities which have

poetry. Jehovah's reply to Job, which is also poetry, occupies chapters xxxviii to xlii, 6. The book concludes with an Epilogue in prose, chapter xlii, 7-17, which takes up the narrative of the Prologue, and in a purely conventional fashion depicts Job as restored to his original state of prosperity and bliss.

befallen him must point to past sinfulness, and they urge him to make humble acknowledgement and supplication to God, in the hope that thereby he may attain forgiveness and restoration. To all their entreaties Job replies with renewed outbursts of bitterness. He declines to admit sinfulness, or at least to acknowledge any commensurateness between the venial sins of his youth and the enormity of his punishment.[1] To Job, in fine, it appears that God has determined to pursue him with relentless cruelty, for which no justification can be found in any of the ordinary ideas about right and wrong. The old orthodoxy has broken down hopelessly as an explanation of God's dealings with men.

Job's Arraignment of Providence

It is one of the most striking characteristics of the Book of Job, however, that the writer does not desist from the pursuit of his problem, even when the problem appears insoluble. There is in the manner of the poem, whether regarded from the standpoint

[1] See, *e.g.*, ch. x, verses 5-7 :

" Are thy days as the days of a man,
Or thy years as man's days,
That thou inquirest after mine iniquity,
And searchest after my sin,
Although thou knowest that I am not wicked ;
And there is none that can deliver out of thine hands ? "

i.e. " You act as if it were necessary to accelerate my punishment, lest I should escape out of your clutches—and that knowing my innocence."

Jastrow renders the last two lines :

" Since Thou knowest that I am not to be saved,
That there is no escape from Thy hands."

Cf. ch. xiii, 18-28, and ch. xxxi, beginning :

" I made a covenant with mine eyes ;
How then should I look upon a maid ? "

of psychology, of literary method, or of its objective content, a certain relentless tenacity of purpose, which reveals itself in an endlessly iterated return to the attack, each time from a slightly different angle. No doubt this is to be explained in part as merely conventional, as due, perhaps, to the Hebrew, or, more generally speaking, the oriental tendency to repetitiousness. But the significance of a convention may vary; and a mode of expression natural to any age or people may be turned to account for different purposes. Thus if we compare the repetitiousness of Job with the repetitiousness of Ecclesiastes, the contrast is instantly obvious. In the one case the oft-repeated 'vanity of vanities' is the natural expression of a mind habituating itself to the thought of its own defeat, and determined only to resist the temptation to go on. The case of Job is just the opposite. With unabated spirit the writer addresses himself time after time to his problem, turning it round in his hands like a thing of many facets seen in delicately varied lights. It is as if he were determined to miss nothing that can be said or thought on the subject. The result is not so much a completely worked out solution as a clear perception of the factors required to render such a solution possible—this, and a sudden irresistible conviction that since a solution there must be, these factors will not be found wanting in the dispensations of Providence.

Thus it is that in the seething overflow of the writer's thoughts there is thrown out a *possibility*, which is seen at once to be the possibility of a *solution*: whereupon the sheer *necessity of a solution* turns that possibility into a *necessity of faith*. Unlike

the author of Ecclesiastes, Job refuses to commit himself finally to the handy, and at times all but irresistible, conclusion that the universe is a moral chaos, and at length reaches the point at which it is possible for him to see that such a conclusion is not at all necessary and is by no means satisfactory. It is not necessary, because another hypothesis has been found, which will fit the facts of the case equally well. It is not satisfactory, for it excludes certain possibilities of explanation on grounds as arbitrary and as little warranted by experience as the possibilities thus excluded.

The meaning of this is that Job's arraignment of Providence stops short before a consciousness of the limitations of human experience. Within the narrow limits of that experience, there is no possibility of reconciling the hypothesis of a divinely appointed order of events and the actual events of human life. The inference to be drawn, however, is not that *all* is vanity, but that the vanity of human life is *not all.* Beyond the enigma of man's destiny, the contradictoriness of his experience, there is the immensity of an experience that is cosmic and divine. It is here and nowhere else that we have a right to look for a solution.

The Initial Value-judgment of Religion reinstated in altered Terms

Thus in the Book of Job the initial value-judgment of religion, which, from the days of Ezekiel on, had been expressed in terms of earthly existence, and for which, as so expressed, the facts of experience had proved too much, is reinstated by a new

vision of the comprehensiveness of existence itself. Indeed man's life on earth by its very limitations is made to supply the evidence that it is not the whole. In face of the grandeurs and splendours of the natural world, man is bound to feel his insufficiency; and to recognize this insufficiency is a cardinal point in the understanding of his moral destiny. The solution of the enigma is perceived by Job, indistinctly it may be, yet unmistakably, to involve the question of *perspective*; and in this he is suddenly confirmed by a startling new episode in the drama—the appearance of the Lord himself, who answers him out of the whirlwind.

It matters little whether or no the concluding passages of the book are by a later hand, or whether they represent successive attempts to amplify and complete the argument. From our point of view the possible compositeness of the work merely means that it required more than one mind to work out an answer to Job's question. Taking the book as it stands, what we have is not an ill-defined solution of a well-defined problem; it is a solution which may have disclosed itself not all at once in its completeness, but phase by phase, as man's moral horizon widened. What we cannot fail to notice is that the initial postulate of the argument—the broad basis upon which the whole edifice of troubled thinking rests—is furnished by Job's attitude throughout the Symposium, his stubborn refusal to relinquish the specifically moral point of view, and his insistent appeal to the moral sense of the Divine Being. In this the contrast to Ecclesiastes assumes the form of a point-to-point antithesis. Granted the facts of human experience, Koheleth seems to argue, it is

impossible to believe in a divinely ordained principle of righteousness as the fixed and universal law of the world. Granted a rectitude such as mine, argues Job, a rectitude that no power human or divine can challenge, it is possible to challenge experience itself until it shall have yielded up meanings in conformity with the initial postulate. It is true that these meanings are hard to decipher on the face of the immediate facts ; but if so, there must be other facts, remote perhaps, but inevitable as fate, which shall confirm the judgments of the righteous, that no fundamental value be lost, no vital meaning rendered meaningless. " Are thy days as the days of man ? " he asks, in the hour of his extremity ; and the negation implicit in the rhetoric of the question is really the solution of which he is in search. It is because God's days are not as the days of a man, because in the amplitude of His nature He compels us to look to an experience more comprehensive than our own, that a new confidence in the meaning and value of existence awakens in the soul. When things are at their worst, the forces that are working for a ' grand refusal ' cannot overthrow the idea of an eventual vindication.

Let us now try to sum up the contrast between the anti-religious solution of the problem of existence contained in the Book of Ecclesiastes and the religious solution contained in the Book of Job. Since the facts of experience have been found, upon reflection, unable to bear the weight of the primitive value-judgment, the writer of Ecclesiastes, accepting experience as conclusive, denies our right to that judgment altogether, and advises us to fall back upon experience in its more elemental aspect, as

offering all the good of which we can be sure. The writers of Job, equally acknowledging that the facts of experience so far are against us, refuse to accept these facts as conclusive, or the limited experience of man as a criterion. They refuse to do so because they perceive that experience, taken at any point in our terrestrial existence, is incomplete. That it is unable to sustain the comprehensive value-judgment may be due to its not being itself comprehensive. The value-judgment, therefore, if it is to be authenticated, demands for its confirmation an act of insight whereby the fragmentariness of our actual experience shall be viewed from the standpoint of an experience ideally complete.

Job's Answer is the Answer of the Religious rather than the Philosophical Consciousness

The answer of Job can hardly be taken as theoretically conclusive. It is the answer of the religious rather than the philosophical consciousness. In the last resort it rests upon an act of faith—faith in the *necessary solubility* of the problem. This being taken for granted, Job is able to show the conditions upon which his postulate is realizable. From the standpoint of our inquiry the value of his argument lies in its serving to redefine the attitude of religion, when confronted with the special difficulties that arise in an age of reflection. At the primitive stage it is enough that religion should be defined by reference to the original value-judgment: now it is necessary to decide what is to be done should the value-judgment either break down altogether or lose in comprehensiveness. The answer

of religion itself to these questions seems to be that it cannot survive the destruction of the comprehensive judgment. It becomes the special business of religion, therefore, to discover upon what conditions it is possible to maintain that judgment, in face of the difficulties inherent in human experience. To this second question the religious consciousness, as represented by Job, replies that in spite of all that experience can tell us to the contrary, life is still worth living, but only on the condition that there is more of it or rather more *in* it than is comprised in the limited experience of the individual.[1]

How Religion is constrained to redefine and reaffirm its Initial Postulate, that Life is good

Religion then redefines its position by assuming a critical attitude to human experience: it is the demand for a new meaning in life. From now on 'more life!' is its watchword, meaning thereby not merely more of what we already have, or more of the same kind, but something that will so transform what we have, that even here and now it will be in a profound sense *something more.*

Such being the position at which religion arrives through the exigencies of its initial postulate and the impact of experience thereon, we must ask in what way it accommodates itself to the change. Obviously, in the first place, we have now to do

[1] As we have not yet discussed the meaning of experience, the term must for the present be understood, uncritically, as meaning what it would naturally mean in the illustration. Job's experience of life is just what has happened to him in life, viewed from the standpoint of the way in which it affects his happiness and well-being. It is possible that when we have completed our reasoned consideration of experience, our statement will require some modification.

with a two-edged thing, a thing of strained affirmations and strained negations. In some sense, yet to be determined, religion has turned its back on what appeared to be the actualities of ordinary experience: these are not the ultimate actualities for religion. At the same time it reaffirms its belief in existence, and that only the more confidently because it has found out wherein true life does *not* consist. The crux of the situation is its ability to maintain both positions at once, or, more exactly, to give an intelligible meaning to the idea of life as redefined—a life which, in relation to most of the ordinarily accepted conditions of human existence, must seem to be largely a thing of negations.

The Question of the Concept of Religion not completely separable from that of the Validity of Religion

It should be noted that up to now we have not begun to deal seriously with the question of the *validity* of religion—the question which is at the bottom of our whole inquiry, and which we have assumed to constitute the differentia in a genuinely philosophical attitude to the subject. Our business so far has been with the *concept*; and for some time it will still be so. But at this stage I must pause to point out that the question of the concept is becoming more and more bound up with the question of validity. Thus in the present instance, had it proved impossible for religion to redefine its position in view of the difficulties that have arisen, the impossibility of renewing the concept would have been tantamount to a refutation of its claims. As it is, the concept has

been secured for the moment; but we have still to discover whether it will bear a critical investigation.

The Distinctive Attitude of Religion to Experience

The peculiar difficulty of our problem from this point on will be realized at once when it is remembered that the unusual attitude of religion to experience, as implied in the newly formulated concept, precludes our appealing to experience in the ordinary way. If religion is to stand the test of a rigorous scrutiny, it cannot be because, like the findings of science and the maxims of worldly wisdom, it is sustained by an observation of the facts, and lends itself to generalization of the latter. Rather it must authenticate its claims on grounds that render it in some sense independent of the more obvious facts; it must maintain itself in spite of experience. How this can be done, and indeed whether it is possible at all, is as yet far from obvious. But our examination of the Book of Job has shown the direction which our inquiry must take. If it is permissible to assume that there is more in life than appears from our limited experience of it here and now, it can only be on the ground that there is more in *experience* than we have been assuming. The suggestion is that experience is a thing that may be *read* in different ways, and that what we are accustomed to look upon as our experience of life, may, through our failure to understand it, appear as something quite different from what it really is, something, therefore, which would be more accurately described as *inexperience*. The critique of experience will be attempted in due course. For the present our business is to ask on

what conditions it is possible for religion to maintain that there is more in life than the events of life itself would seem at first sight to imply.

Reverting to the position of Job, let us restate the solution in its most superficial form, and from this let us see by what steps it is possible to advance to a more adequate solution.

A rectitude which cannot be challenged in point of *fact*, establishes, for the good man, a claim upon the cosmos which cannot be denied in point of *right*. The problem is to discover, in the light of experience, the evidence that such a claim will be honoured; and the only hope is seen to lie in the immensity of the cosmos itself, and in the thought that a universe so vast, presided over by a God whose powers are commensurate with the resources of His creation, is bound to prove adequate to all that a moral interpretation of experience can demand.

This assumption, however, is extremely hypothetical, and it is attended by one fundamental difficulty which must be rigorously dealt with before the next advance is possible. Among the conditions required for the realization of an eventual adjustment of all claims is one that has to do with time. There must be time enough to bring the various factors involved into harmonious relation. The vindication, whether human or divine, is thus perceived to lie in a hypothetical future. It is just here that the difficulty referred to occurs. For obviously the future as such can guarantee nothing. That is to say, it can guarantee nothing if there is nothing in it but *futurity*. And yet it has always been the way of distressed souls, who refuse to be crushed by the weight of calamity, to look ahead for the moment of their

deliverance. This is a trick of nature, and there is nothing in it specifically religious. Probably most men have been at one time or another sustained by the thought of ' a good time coming '.

But to those who reflect upon their experiences it becomes sooner or later apparent that even in the best of times there is always something wanting. At the very least there is a curious disability from which experience itself seems to suffer, so to speak, *constitutionally*, something in its very nature which renders it incapable of cashing the credits that are vouchsafed us. We are conscious of this limitation even in the act of appropriating the objects on which we have most set our hearts. Nor is it, necessarily, that these objects have proved to have less in them than we had expected, or that we are unable to get out of them what we had hoped. On the contrary, they may exceed our utmost expectations, and yet fail to satisfy us. The trouble is that *the getting out of life* the utmost that life has to offer is less of a satisfaction than it should be. It is the *experience of living*, and not the objects of the experience, that we feel to mock us with a perpetually vanishing hope. In most cases of course the objects fall short too, and it is usually to such failure that we attribute the other; but of this I shall not speak at present. The special circumstance on which it is incumbent upon us to dwell is the fact that experience, if I may say so, is *a bad container*.

Experience a bad Container: the need not of more but of another Experience, a Second Birth

There are two ways in which this makes itself felt. In the first place there is the familiar experience of

not being happy when we actually have all that we want, or all we *know* that we want. In the second place there is the far more interesting experience of not knowing how happy we are until it is all over. Many of the deepest joys are fully realized only in the form of aching memories. It is usually so with our supreme days, which are upon us and are gone before we know that they are our supreme days. The fact is that in happiness, which in one of its aspects appears to be a thing of *the time being*, there is something that cannot be experienced *at any one time*. To be happy is an experience that strains all the mechanical conditions of *any* experience to the breaking-point. This is one of the respects in which happiness differs from mere pleasure, to which the experience of the moment is fully adequate. Such being the case, it is easy to understand why we are prone to think that if we are to be happy, plenty of time is necessary. Long life and happiness have always gone together; and while we admit the possibilities suggested by 'one crowded hour of glorious life', the aspiration strikes us as among the ideals that owe their power to the element of paradox in them. There is tragic import in the 'crowded hour'.

Now it may well be that happiness is not the thing that makes life desirable, and that the value-judgment of religion does not turn upon any such consideration. But in whatever the value of life may consist, the statement that has just been made about happiness holds good of life as well, when considered as the subject of a judgment of value. Like happiness, life in one of its aspects is a thing of the time being: we realize it by living; and living is at once

the experience of life and the life that we experience. Again, as in the case of happiness, it must be said of life that although it is a thing of the time being, it is more than can be experienced at any one time, and, we must add, *in any length of time*. By this I mean that taking any piece of actual experience, or taking the whole of our experience down to the ever-moving present, we are never able to say of it: "This is the life which we pronounce absolutely and unconditionally desirable".

The life that we desire, then, is a thing that craves *room*. By the necessities of the case we are always pushing ahead of the actual. We do so in the sense of thinking and hoping that future experience will complete our imperfectly realized ideals and will substantiate the value-judgment we maintain by faith. But this procedure, when reflected on, is seen to be irrational. For our experience, whatever its content, will assuredly continue to suffer from the same constitutional defect as in the past—the incurable tendency to engender a sense of something wanting. What is needed, therefore, is not more experience of the same kind, but a new kind of experience. Religion has not been blind to the amazing audacity of this conception; indeed it has signalized the radical character of the change demanded by such ideas as being that of a *second birth*.

What is the new Experience? The Answer given in one great Group of the World's Religions, the Mystical Religions of the East

The problem for us now is to discover what form the new experience will take. This is in a general,

theoretical way already determined by the exigencies of the problem itself. The new experience, whatever its form, must be such as will emancipate us from the tragic ineffectuality of the old. Its precise character, as religion sees it, will, therefore, depend upon the diagnosis of the disease, upon the answer to the question: What is wrong with life as we experience it here and now? The language of the question suggests a possible answer. Perhaps it is this very 'here and now' that is the root of all the trouble, that is to say, the fact that our experience differentiates itself in modes of which space and time, with the distinctions which they imply, are the most general types.

This point of view should be easily grasped as regards the latter mode at least. We have just seen that apart altogether from the individual and occasional tragedies of life, the fundamental judgment of value is imperilled by a certain defect in the nature of our experience as determined by time. The obvious course then is to think of an experience not thus determined; in other words, of a life that is not, as we have expressed it, 'a thing of the time being'. With such a conception of life what we described as the constitutional disability of experience disappears of its own accord. We need no longer say that there is more in life than can be experienced at any one time, for from now on we abandon this whole way of looking at things, by substituting for the idea of 'any one time' the idea of '*only* one time'. And with the idea of any one time disappears the idea of any *length* of time. Briefly, time is no longer conceived as a thing of lengths or of instances. It does not consist of times.

The same line of reasoning is applicable to all the other ways in which we discriminate our experience and its contents, to every distinction we draw between things as 'here' and 'there', as 'this' and 'that'. As soon as these distinctions are clearly perceived to be unreal, as soon as they lose their hold over us, we begin to realize the possibilities of an experience which will not at every point falsify that sense of value in existence which it itself provokes.

Such in brief is the answer to our question given by one great group of the world's religions, the mystical religions of the East, Brahmanism and Buddhism.

We have described the answer as *possible*, and it would be natural at this point to ask whether it is the *only* possible answer. Perhaps the best way in which to approach this further question would be by an examination of the view that has just been stated in such a summary fashion. Should that view prove tenable, we may be saved the trouble of further inquiry: should it break down under investigation, the failure may furnish hints as to the direction in which we must look for a more adequate view.

CHAPTER XII

THE SELF-CRITICISM OF RELIGION IN THE MYSTICISM OF THE EAST: INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

If we take our stand at the view-point of ordinary experience, before science and reflection have begun to modify the forms and relations of things as we commonly see them, it is an obvious truth that the world appears to us as a manifold. We have many perceptions, and we perceive many objects. But there is a second characteristic of our experience which is only less—if indeed it *is* less—obvious; namely, that experience does not come to us in this aspect alone. The world is not all manifold.

These two opposite aspects of experience and of the objective world of experience, which in themselves, and until they have assumed certain precise propositional forms, have nothing in them that amounts to a direct contradiction, do, nevertheless, constitute a serious predicament for thought. Of this predicament mysticism is one outcome. It is the outcome that *leans away* from the manifold, just as certain other modes of thought—those, for example, contained in radical empiricism and atomism—lean in the opposite direction.

Let us try to trace the movement from its origin in the crudeness of unanalysed experience. By such experience we shall understand experience as it appears to us at the moment of actual incidence, or

as we think of it before we have learned to think reflectively.

Ways of regarding Experience: the Distinction between Phenomenalism and Activism

To begin with, then, it will be agreed that typical instances of experience in this sense are those which we express by such verbs as 'seeing', 'hearing', 'touching', 'tasting'—in a word, that they are what we call 'sense-experiences'.

Now certain things about sense-experiences are so obvious that the moment they are mentioned we agree to them. On the other hand there are things which are so far from obvious that some of them have only been found out in recent times, and that some are still a matter of perplexity and a subject of controversy. Among the things which are obvious is the fact that our sense-experiences (or shall we say, our sensations?) differ from one another. This is the kind of fact that no amount of analysis or reflection can alter—provided, that is to say, we do not change our standpoint but remain true to the literalness of experience in the ordinary sense. Seeing, hearing and tasting are three perfectly distinct sensations. The same thing is true of different instances of each: seeing red is different from seeing green, just as they are both different from hearing the note G sounded on a bugle.

But while all this is almost too apparent to justify the trouble of stating it, there are certain things closely connected with these differences that are really very obscure. For example, sensations which differ from one another do not differ to the

same degree or in the same way. Some differ in one way, others in another. Thus we are enabled not only to distinguish our sensations, but to classify them. It is here that the first difficulty occurs.

For centuries it was customary to distinguish five senses. In modern times certain others have been added to the traditional five. It would be interesting to inquire why exactly it is that for such a long period of time our kinaesthetic and organic sensations, as well as sensations of temperature, which in actual experience are so pronounced and unmistakable, should have been overlooked in the general classification. Presumably the answer is that these sensations, while, as we have said, pronounced and unmistakable, are obscurely defined, and more particularly that they are not so easily located as are the others. It required a certain knowledge of physiology, which was not available in earlier times, to enable men to realize that the feelings which accompany the innervation of a muscle and certain visceral adjustments belong to the same general category as sight and hearing. What is of chief importance, however, is that in this extension of the list of sensations, the determining factor seems to have been the tacit acceptance by physiologists and psychologists of the definitory concept upon which the pre-scientific classification was based. Temperature and the kinaesthetic sensations have been added to the list because it was discovered that these modifications of consciousness could be correlated with distinct sets of organs, stimulated, as in the case of sight and hearing, in a well-defined manner.

This explanation enables us to resolve a still further problem, and one which is much more

fundamental from our present point of view. That problem has to do with the reasons underlying, not so much the detailed *classification* of the sensations, as the distinction of the sensations, *when considered as a class*, from (1) other types of consciousness, and (2) purely physiological processes. There would seem to us, for instance, to be something perverse and unscientific in classifying together such sensations as sight and hearing with physiological functions such as breathing and digesting, and with mental functions such as reflection and volition. And yet, when we think of it, these various types of function, physiological, psychical and psycho-physical, are not so utterly disparate as to render cross-classification in various directions quite unintelligible. Breathing and digestion are accompanied by states of consciousness; and these conscious states have that distinctive quality in them which is characteristic of the different senses, and which enables us to distinguish them from one another. It is true that we do not ordinarily notice the 'sensations' connected with breathing; but the same thing is to a certain extent true of other sensations, sensations of hearing, for example, or of touch, which we habitually disregard. If then we do not usually assign a distinct sense to the lungs and to the digestive apparatus, it cannot be on the ground that any of the differentiating marks of sensation, whether physiological or psychical, are wanting to these organs in their use by the conscious subject, but only on the ground that upon analysis we find that the sensations peculiar to breathing and digestion are resolvable into sensations already distinguished. Thus the 'feelings' attendant upon digestion, in so far as these are not to be char-

acterized as pain, would naturally be included among the organic sensations which have their seat in the viscera; while the sensations produced by inhaling a deep breath of cool air would presumably be analysed into a combination of muscular sensations with tactual and temperature sensations, the latter similar to those produced at the periphery by contact with a chill wind.

As regards the purely mental functions, or those which we commonly consider such, it is our usual assumption that these, like the sensations, have their physiological concomitants and even their local areas. There is indeed one important difference in the fact that whereas the sensations have each of them both a peripheral organ and a local area in the central part of the nervous system, our strictly mental states are limited to the latter; but it is doubtful how far this difference should be made to overshadow all points of resemblance. Certainly if it is the case that our distinguishable sensations are so closely integrated with purely mental acts of interpretation—classification, acquirement of meaning, association and inference—that some psychologists have not hesitated to describe a pure sensation as an abstraction, it would seem at least to be a question whether the distinction which we draw has any right to be regarded as more than methodological and provisional. Indeed when we consider the question of sensation, not from the standpoint of the peripheral organ and its mechanism, but from the standpoint of the central nervous apparatus and its distribution into local areas, the striking fact emerges that so far as the sensory areas are concerned many of the conclusions previously arrived

at regarding localization have been found upon closer inquiry to be without sufficient foundation; and physiologists themselves have pointed out that sensation, whatever its physiological concomitant, is primarily mental.

On these somewhat diverse grounds, then, it would seem less extravagantly absurd than might at first be supposed, to classify together, at least for certain purposes, what we should ordinarily distinguish sharply as the physiological, the mental and the psycho-physical; and the question returns upon us why it is that we draw the line of demarcation just where we do and as we do.

The answer to the question has been anticipated by a remark already made. The distinction is largely a matter of methodological convenience—only, it goes somewhat further then mere methodology. For it is the unexpressed maxim of all scientific procedure that underlying the differences of method are certain objective and independently existing differences in the nature of things. In the present instance the implicit assumption is that just so far as we find upon trial that we can conveniently handle our material as distinctively physiological, mental or psycho-physical—that is to say, in so far as the data lend themselves to classification in two pure groups and one mixed group—so far we are entitled to assume a real distinction in the nature of the data themselves. There are facts of the physiological order; there are facts of the mental order; and there are facts which, so far as our present insight goes, appear to imply a union or co-operation of both orders. But beneath all this there is something much more fundamental—namely, the general attitude which any such scheme

of classification and any such distinctions imply towards the subject as a whole. That attitude might be described as phenomenalistic and objective, in contradistinction to a subjective and activist attitude. Let us look more closely into these divergent points of view.

The Phenomenalist, Objective Attitude

The phenomenalist and objective standpoint implies that the data are conceived to occur in the form of observable facts or events. These facts and events, which are easily distinguished from one another, and which are connected in ways that are also easily distinguished, exist and happen like other facts and events—it may be in the world of space and time, but certainly in the world of time. We think of them therefore as *objects* of observation, to be studied under the conditions which an objective observation imposes, rather than as the *acts* of subjects.

Now this is a point that demands careful statement, if the whole question is not to be left in confusion. There have been psychologists who have emphasized the unity and the active character of the mental life. They have insisted on the fact that mental states are states of activity, and are therefore not accurately described as 'states' at all. To be quite exact, they are processes ; only, if we use the plural form of expression, we must not think of the processes as self-contained and clearly marked off from one another. Rather they represent the successive phases of one continuous process. This continuity is as much a primary character of the mental life as is activity itself. Continuous activity, active

continuity—these are the combinations that express what is meant by describing the subject-matter of psychology as mental *life*.

Now it should be noted that even among writers who maintain most emphatically that the data of psychology—the actually existing or occurring facts—are the continuous dynamic processes of consciousness and the unconscious (the activity of subjects), when it comes to detailed observation, the standpoint becomes necessarily and almost automatically phenomenalist and objective. This means in effect that while strongly insisting that the subject-matter with which they are dealing is intrinsically dynamic in character, and cannot be understood in any other sense, these writers have failed to present it as such. They have failed because their standpoint as psychologists is necessarily that of observers, and the object of observation, whatever be its own intrinsic nature, is always something that appears in the form of observed facts or events, or, comprehensively speaking, of phenomena.

There would thus seem to be a very peculiar difficulty inherent from the outset in the task of the psychologist. If he maintains, as he has a perfect right to do, the dynamic character of mental facts, then, since his method is perforce observation, and since observation is the method appropriate not to the dynamic but to the phenomenal aspect of the real, it is impossible for him to maintain the scientific maxim of a correspondence between the method and the facts. In this case it is necessary to resort to an expedient unique in science. In order to do justice to the real nature of his data as he conceives them, the psychologist has to interpret the latter in the light of

his private experience, or rather, let me say, in the light of his experience considered, not from the standpoint of its objective content, but from the standpoint of what it means to the conscious subject to have an experience at all.[1]

We have described this procedure as something unique in science. It is so in the following sense.

In the first place all the sciences have to do with experience. They are an attempt to interpret the latter, and it is to the latter that they look for verification. But the experience in question is what we have described as the *objective content* of experience. It is *what* the individual experiences, not the fact or the act of experiencing it, that science considers ; and the underlying assumption is that what the individual experiences, when rightly understood, is not in any way peculiar to the individual. It is what all individuals would experience under the same conditions. Hence, we may say, it is the universal element in individual experience. Furthermore, the physical sciences are at one in the presupposition already mentioned, namely, that the content of experience, in the sense in which they deal with this, is at the same time the independently existing. It is specifically with the *real* that they have to do. From the standpoint of the physical sciences, therefore, it is an accident that the independently existing content of the objective world should be at the same time the content of experience—that the real should assume the form of the phenomenal.

[1] This phrase need not be taken as implying that the psychologist presupposes anything in the nature of a self or soul ; but in case my words should suggest such a view, the concluding phrase may be read : " what it means for the objects of consciousness to constitute an experience ".

This fact, we may say, although it is at the bottom of scientific procedure, is no part of the content of the sciences as such, but is merely a circumstance which may be turned to account in the process of verification. In the case of psychology, however, the fact of being experienced is of the very essence of the data themselves.

Psychology, it has frequently been maintained, is a science from which nothing that can possibly constitute a content of human (or animal) consciousness can be excluded. In its subject-matter, therefore, it coincides with the other sciences; but the particular aspect of the common data with which it deals is that which we have just described as accidental to the latter. Psychology deals with being conscious, and consequently with that of which we are conscious, considered as supplying content to the conscious states in question; and this is an aspect of things which cannot be made clear without reference to *what being conscious means*, not to the observer of consciousness, but to the conscious individual himself. The predicament of psychology might be expressed by saying that this science has to go beyond its own content not only, as in the case of the other sciences, for verification, but also for a principle of interpretation. In the one case the opaque facts that call for illumination are the facts presented in experience; the illumination is the scientific interpretation of these facts; and this interpretation constitutes the content of the sciences in question. In the case of psychology it is the content of the *science* that calls for illumination, and the illumination is provided by the actualities of personal experience.

The Activist, Subjectivist Attitude

This predicament of the psychologist may serve to introduce our study of the attitude which we have contrasted with the scientific position—namely, the attitude already described as subjectivist and activist. By the expression 'subjectivist and activist' we are not to understand what is suggested by the term 'subjective idealism'. It is true that this philosophical doctrine represents subjects as active and even as creatively active. They are so in relation to the ideas which exist only as they are perceived. But when we come to ask what is the nature of this activity which is characteristic of subjects in relation to their objects, we find that it is nothing more than the act of perception or observation—an act, therefore, which serves to suggest the conception not so much of an active subject as of a passive object. And so it is that subjective idealism, when worked out in detail, is found to be a striking illustration of the position we have just disposed of under the designation of *objective and phenomenalist.* Berkeley's 'ideas' are objects of consciousness, and not states of the active subject; and the proof of this is that while Berkeley constantly insists that it is their nature to be perceived, he never pauses to explain what it means to the subject to be in the *act* of perceiving them. His whole philosophy is conceived in the passive rather than the active voice, and its fundamental purpose is not to demonstrate the activity of the subject, but to disprove the existence of matter. This he does by showing that our perceptions cannot be caused in us by independently existing material objects. It follows that they must

be produced by ourselves in the self-same act by which they are perceived. Their *esse* is *percipi*. Obviously subjective idealism is a theory of the object and not of the subject.

Now the attitude which I am trying to define, and which I have called the activist and subjectivist, is that which would result from an inversion of the emphasis in subjective idealism. If the latter doctrine, instead of dwelling upon the nature of the object as produced by the act whereby it is perceived, had dwelt upon the nature of the subject as determined by its power of active perception, and indeed by its activity in general, we should have had a theory closely approximating to the position I have in mind.

One result of this suggested inversion will be immediately apparent. If the emphasis is no longer upon the object as perceived, but upon the subject as perceiving, then the interest will no longer be concentrated on the *identity of the object* but on the *identity of the subject*. The question will be what it takes to make a subject rather than what it takes to make an object; what it is in any subject that gives it its distinctiveness and separates it as *one* from every other. In the respect in which all the objects of my consciousness are seen to be *mine*, these are less fundamentally distinct from one another than *I* am distinct from *you* and from *him*. Thus the hard atomic individuality which characterizes the Berkeleyan ideas falls short of the absolutely irreducible individuality of personal identity. This is one essential feature in what we mean by the subjectivist and activist attitude. But much remains to be explained.

One method of making the distinction clear would be by indicating the way in which it has come to imprint itself on the ordinary forms of language, as contrasted with the *artificial* language—*i.e.* the symbolism—of science. A particularly striking instance is the use of finite verbs in the active voice. We talk and think of water as flowing, of fire as burning, thereby representing these events as acts performed by the appropriate agents. But obviously there is something (to say the least of it) rather undiscriminating in this form of expression. For example, the activist description is easily seen to be less appropriate in the case of fire than in the case of water.[1] Flowing water may be thought of as water in action, because water does not always flow : sometimes it appears to do other things, for example, to break up in foam or to evaporate ; sometimes it stagnates or appears to do nothing at all. But the same is not true of burning fire. Here it is less easy to perform the peculiar act of analysis which the view we are investigating implies—the analysis into act and agent. Of fire we cannot say that it does not always burn. In a word, we see at once that there is no difference between the ' act ' of combustion and the supposed agent which we call fire. Fire and burning are one and the same. All this is perfectly clear to us ; for it has been long alien to our mental habit to think of fire, as the ancient Greeks and the Hindus did, as a material element having a nature of its own like the other supposed elements : earth, air and water. Hence we no longer think of com-

[1] It may appear that in the last analysis both are equally inappropriate. At present we are dealing with what is immediately obvious rather than with what an exact analysis eventually demands.

bustion as the activity appropriate to fire; but we represent the whole phenomenon as an event or series of events in which it would be impossible to separate certain factors as the agents and certain variable phenomena as their acts. What we discern is simply a redistribution, in space and time, of certain contents of which, in the last resort, we know no more than that they are among the contents of space and time. Obviously the form of expression suitable to such a piece of knowledge is a formula from which activist implications are altogether absent. Such a formula implies a purely impersonal method of expression. The thing to be explained is not what *something does*, but what happens under certain conditions in a phenomenal field of observation; and this in turn implies the substitution of the idea of relations for the idea of actions.

To return for a moment to our illustration. If the need of abandoning the activist standpoint, implicit in finite verbs, for the impersonal standpoint of science is more immediately obvious in the case of fire than in the case of water, it is no less true that the difficulties inherent in the activist position are in another way better illustrated in the case of water than in the case of fire. For if we cannot accurately speak of fire as burning, because there is no difference between the burning and the fire, we cannot confidently describe the water as flowing, because it is not clear that the flowing of the water is something which the water *does*, rather than something that is *done to it*. Here the difficulty is not that of distinguishing act and agent, but of distinguishing the state of activity from that of passivity.

As a matter of fact the difficulty is not so formid-

able as it might seem; or rather, it is a difficulty which disappears of its own accord with the solution of a more fundamental difficulty. The latter is simply that of admitting activity at all. Once activity has been conceded, the distinction of active and passive is seen to be a quite minor distinction falling within the concept of activity itself. Indeed the distinction in question is not really between activity as such and something which must be thought of as the exact opposite of activity, but only between the activity which is, relatively speaking, prior, independent and even possibly self-initiating, and the activity which is, relatively speaking, later, dependent and derivative. In a word, it is the distinction between action and reaction.[1] That both of these, as we have

[1] The distinction may be roughly stated as follows—*roughly*, because it is at bottom an artificial distinction. Granted an event X in which two physical factors, A and B, are involved, if the change of form wrought in B by contact with A is more apparent, more serious or more lasting than the change wrought in A by contact with B, we tend to think of A as active and B as passive or *re*-active. The conception implies that we take some event and look at it from the standpoint of its differing effects upon the two factors. The question which factor, if any, is stationary and which in motion is of quite minor importance. In relation to the wave which dashes a boat on a rock, we think of the boat as passive, although it is in motion. In relation to the breaking-up of the boat we think of the rock, although motionless, as an agent. Incidentally the distinction of action and reaction furnishes the key to an apparent contradiction in Locke's account of mind. As regards the simple ideas of experience—those of sensation and reflection—the mind is represented as passive; but it is passive in the sense in which the wax is passive to the impression of the seal. That is to say, although not active, it is reactive. It does not *inaugurate* anything; but given the relation between itself and its object, in which experience consists, the attitude of the mind is not one of utter inertness. It *responds* in accordance with its nature. As regards its complex ideas, it actually assumes the initiative in the work of organizing them. In this sense it can be described as active—*i.e.* in a sense in which it is not active in relation to its simple ideas. The same variability of character is found in physical things, which appear now as active, now as passive, according to the nature of the events in which they

stated, are included in the conception of activity is a fact which, again, is reflected in linguistic usage.

It is a remarkable testimony to the hold which the activist view of things has had on the human mind from the earliest times that the active verb is employed to express not only initiative, but the results of what we commonly conceive as compulsion. When the tree-trunk subsides under the blows of the woodman's axe, it is as natural for us to describe the incident in the active as in the passive voice. We say the tree *is felled*, and we say that it *falls*. Not only so, but we employ the same active form to express events in which, as in the case of fire, the phenomenon is really analysable into a vastly complex relational system. For example, we still speak of the weather as changing or threatening. The husk of a personalist verbal form continues to serve the purposes of expression even in the case of events from which the last vestiges of the personalist idea (and with it the activist idea) have long been absent.

The Activist Attitude essential to the Concept of Religion

Whether in the face of admissions like these it is possible to retain the activist way of looking at things at all is a question with which we shall have to deal when we come to discuss the *validity* of religion. Our

are involved. An admirable analysis of the active-passive relationship is given by Mr. Broad, who uses as an illustration the action of a style on a piece of wax (*Perception, Physics and Reality*, p. 83). Mr. Broad's argument is intended to discredit the conception of activity. Whether or no it succeeds in this, it is valuable as showing the difficulty of maintaining the difference in the world of phenomenal events.

business is still primarily with the concept, and there can be no doubt that so far as this is concerned, the activist standpoint is essential.

We have seen that the various distinctions and classifications characteristic of the scientific way of thinking about persons are determined by the objective and phenomenalist attitude of science towards its data. And in the second place we have seen that when the whole situation is looked upon, not from the standpoint of an observer surveying a set of objects, and marking their differences, but from the standpoint of a subject expressing the activity of his nature through the appropriate channels, the differences that distinguish object from object are bound to be subordinated to the fundamental distinction that separates subject from subject and invests each with an underived and indefeasible self-identity.

The modern Emphasis on the Subject-Object Relation and on the Cleavage between the Mental and the Physical

It remains to point out that this is still more emphatically so when, as was actually the case in earlier times, the subject is not thought of exclusively, or even primarily, in terms of the relationship between a percipient consciousness as such and an unconscious object of perception, but is rather conceived as the sustainer of a character expressing itself actively through modes peculiar to its constitution. As a matter of fact, the peculiar emphasis laid upon the subject-object relation is a relatively modern development, dating only from Locke.

Before his time the significant relation was that of substance to its attributes or modes, and Locke himself retains the latter conception alongside the other, with very confusing consequences. For the rationalistic thinkers of his own generation, ideas are not objects of the mind, but are its modifications or states—very much as triangles or circles are modifications of space. Of course these thinkers did not fail to see that the mind is *conscious* of its states, but this did not lead them to consider these states as related to the mind primarily as its objects. The reason for this is that they conceived the real object to exist independently of mind, and to be merely *represented* in consciousness by ideas. To have thought of the ideas in their relationship to consciousness as primarily its *objects*, would have seemed like investing them with an independent reality which they could not claim. We may say then that for the rationalists of the seventeenth century the importance of ideas is two-fold. Ontologically considered, ideas are modifications of thinking substance or consciousness in general. Epistemologically considered, they are the *medium* through which we obtain our knowledge of real objects. Between these two points of view their significance as *themselves the real objects of consciousness* was missed. Thus they are thought of as purely secondary and dependent, and are referred for their explanation and reality to the thinking substance of which they are the modifications. For Locke, on the other hand, they are above all the objects of consciousness, and without them the mind is a blank sheet. In any analysis of mind, therefore, its contents, the ideas, are the things to be specially considered. Thus the fact of their being

presented to mind, and so becoming its contents, takes priority both over their *representing* an independently existing world beyond themselves,[1] and over their being the ways in which the mind expresses its substantive *mentality*. Locke would not have subscribed to Berkeley's view that their *esse* is *percipi*; but the emphasis he laid upon their being *presentations offered to*, rather than *modifications* of, mind, prepared the way for Berkeley's more radical doctrine.

Now if we take still one step further back and compare the point of view most characteristic of modern philosophy as a whole with that most characteristic of Greek philosophy (and indeed of the ancient world), we shall see that there is one more or less constant feature which distinguishes these earlier ages from the era which began with Descartes. That feature is the relative inability to appreciate the tremendous depth and apparent finality of the cleavage which divides the mental from the physical. An intense feeling for the significance of this cleavage is the chief characteristic that distinguishes modern thinking as a whole from all the thinking, whether philosophic or not, which preceded it.

Thus reviewing the subject in its entirety, we may say that from Locke onwards, the tendency has been to look at every fundamental problem from the standpoint of a consciousness confronted with an object; that from Descartes until the effects of English empiricism made themselves fully felt, the

[1] For Locke they don't represent this world very clearly or satisfactorily; for he insisted that representation does not imply likeness. What it is they represent, therefore, we really do not know. In Locke the doctrine of Representative Perception is seen at the vanishing point.

tendency was to think not in terms of subject and object but of substance and its modes; while prior to Descartes and the modern era there was a general failure to realize how very powerful are the considerations that now compel us to put mind, with all that pertains to it, on one side, and space, with all that pertains to it, on the other.

The Thinking of the Ancient World, in both East and West, essentially Activist

It must by this time be quite apparent that the thinking of the ancient world (and this holds good of East and West alike) was rooted in a way of looking at things in which the determining factor was neither the distinction between consciousness and its object, nor the distinction between mind and matter, but the distinction between one substantive individual and another. And if it be asked in what way the mind of antiquity distinguished what we should now call the spiritual from what we should call the physical, the answer would have to be that on the whole the differentiating character was not consciousness but activity or life. The period of human thought with which we are here dealing is that in which primitive animism has given place to a sense of the profound difference between the animate and inanimate, a difference which still obscures the significance of the distinction between the conscious (with whatever consciousness implies) and the unconscious. Even the greatest thinkers of antiquity are under the influence of this point of view. For Plato and Aristotle the soul in its entirety is primarily a living and active thing, a

principle of motion ; it is only in part (although in the highest part) rational. When we speak, therefore, of the subjective and activist view, in contradistinction to the phenomenalist and objective, what we must understand by the active subject is primarily something having a substantival nature of its own, an abiding nature or selfhood, and expressing this selfhood in an active fashion and in ways appropriate to its nature. It is a *self* and a principle of *activity*.[1]

How the Activist Interpretation of Experience Operated

And now let us see how these presuppositions will affect the distinction from which we started. To begin with, and looking at the subject from the

[1] In the attempted analysis of oriental mysticism which follows, a certain point of view has been maintained throughout. The teaching of the Upanishads comprises two main lines of thought, the one centring upon the conception of Brahman or world-unity, the other upon the conception of Âtman or self. These two lines of thought may be considered, to begin with, as independent developments in a single direction and towards a single conclusion, or they may be considered as converging upon a single conclusion from two opposite starting-points. In either case before the end is reached they become completely fused. The original difference between them lies in the points from which they start, the one beginning with the objective world as represented for primitive thought in Hindu cosmogony, the other beginning with the personal subject, regarded from the standpoint of a naïve physiology and psychology. It is the writer's opinion that, so far as the interpretation of mysticism is concerned (and the Upanishads attain to a pure mysticism only in their culminating moments), there is a great difference between the Brahma-doctrine and the Âtman-doctrine. The Âtman idea is the key to Brahma-knowledge in its mystical aspects ; and the whole subject has been treated accordingly. For an account of the varying relations of the two doctrines *vide* R. E. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (translated from the Sanskrit), introductory outline.

standpoint of the active self, as just defined, it is no longer clear that there is any very decided or significant difference between the physiological, the mental and the psycho-physical. These are not primarily phenomena to be noted and classified in the light of their observable differences. They are functions of the active self, most accurately expressed in active verbs. They are indeed, all of them alike, *the self in action*. Thus sight and hearing are not objects of observation, occurring in closest association with the eye and the ear, and distinguishable with all the precision that distinguishes one of these organs from the other. Rather they are the self in the act of seeing and the self in the act of hearing. In this activist interpretation of the facts we pass by the organ with scant and depreciatory notice. It is not the eye which sees ; it is the person—the *purusha* —in the eye,[1] the seer. But the seer, the person in the eye, is no other than the hearer, the self behind the ear ; and these two, which are thus identical with one another, are likewise identical with the self

[1] " Now, when the eye is directed thus toward space, that is the seeing person (*cākṣuṣa purusa*) ; the eye is [the instrument] for seeing. Now, he who knows ' Let me smell this '—that is the Self (Ātman) ; the nose is [the instrument] for smelling. Now, he who knows ' Let me utter this '—that is the Self ; the voice is [the instrument] for utterance. Now, he who knows ' Let me hear this '—that is the Self ; the ear is [the instrument] for hearing " (Chāndogya Upanishad, 8, 12, 4 : Hume's tr.). It is with much hesitation, due to my ignorance of the originals, that I venture to quote from the Upanishads. The principle on which I have gone is to employ Max Müller's version (*Sacred Books of the East*, vols. i and xv) when this appears to be in complete accord with the renderings approved by later scholarship. Whenever possible I have verified Müller's renderings by comparison with those of Deussen (*Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda*) and of Hume (*The Thirteen Principal Upanishads translated from the Sanskrit*). Except when quoting from these last-mentioned writers, I have adopted Müller's transliterations for the sake of uniformity.

in every one of its functions—the self which speaks, the self which digests, the self which breathes. In all these there is but one real agent. Thus the distinction of the various senses themselves, and between sensation in general (conceived as a psycho-physical function) and what we should now consider the purely physiological functions of the body, is swallowed up in the idea of the self at work. The same thing holds good of the mental functions. Hence it is that in the Upanishads we are constantly confronted with the strangest collocations, in which the senses appear side by side with bodily and mental attributes as the characteristic marks of the self. This obscuration of the difference between bodily and mental functions becomes intelligible as soon as we see that, as a result of the activist point of view, the identity of bodily function ceases to stereotype itself against the identity of mental function. Just as the self that sees is identical with the self that hears and the self that breathes, so the self that does all these things is identical with the self that thinks, considers, reflects, wills.

What renders the subject particularly obscure to our modern objectivist way of thinking is a certain difficulty which we have already encountered in the case of fire—a difficulty due to the fact that the phenomenon in question appears to combine the characteristics of act and agent.[1] This is very

[1] Note the expressions in Talavakâra (Kena) Upanishad, 1, 2, as translated literally by Max Müller: "the ear of the ear", "the eye of the eye", etc. (cf. Bṛihadâraṇyaka Upanishad, 4, 4, 18). Obviously what is meant is the function of the various organs. This is brought out both by Deussen ("*Des Hörens Hören . . . Des Auges Seh'n . . .*") and by Hume. (The difference between Deussen's interpretation of this verse and that of Max Müller and Hume is not relevant here.)

markedly so in the case of breath, a factor which occupies a very important place in oriental mysticism. Breath is at once the air we breathe and the breathing of it; and this view, taken in conjunction with the close and universal connection between respiration and the vital function in general, accounts for many of the features in mysticism which at first we are apt to find most perplexing. Vitality itself is a fact that unifies all its modes and manifestations. Seeing, hearing, speaking, digesting, etc., are just ways of breathing; they are manifestations of that universal vital function, of which breathing is the most characteristic expression. The same thing is true of thinking and feeling. The identity of the physiological self coalesces with the identity of the psychical self in the comprehensive identity of breath.

A single passage will serve the purposes of illustration. Here is a descriptive account of man, conceived from the standpoint of his selfhood, and of the gradual development of a sense of selfhood within him:

> "That man is fivefold. The heart in him is fire; the apertures [of the senses] are ether; blood, mucus, and seed are water; the body is earth; breath is air.
>
> "That air is fivefold, viz. up-breathing, down-breathing, back-breathing, out-breathing, on-breathing. The other powers (devatâs), viz. sight, hearing, mind, and speech, are comprised

Hume's note on the passage is instructive: "Very frequently in the Upanishads these words for the five 'vital breaths' are used either for the abstract function or for the concrete instrument of the function" (*op. cit.* p. 335). For the interpretation both of this passage and that from the Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up., Deussen refers to Chândogya Up. as quoted in note above, p. 344.

under up-breathing and down-breathing. For when breath departs, they also depart with it." [1]

[1] Aitareya-Âraṇyaka, II Âr. 3, 3, 3-4: Max Müller, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i, p. 223. In explanation of what is meant by the last sentence take the case of speech. "If we breathe up" (*i.e.* breathe out, *aushauchen*, Deussen), "that is prâṇa, the up-breathing. If we breathe down" (*i.e.* breathe in, *einhauchen*) "that is apâna, the down-breathing. The combination of prâṇa and apâna is vyâna, back-breathing or holding in of the breath" (*Zwischenhauch*, Deussen; diffused breath, Hume). "This vyâna is speech. Therefore when we utter speech, we neither breathe up nor down" (Khândogya Up. 1, 3, 3). Hume translates prâṇa and apâna in the opposite sense—it is hard to see why, in view of such passages as Maitrâyaṇa Up. 2, 6. Cf. Kaushîtaki Up. 2, 5. "So long as a man speaks, he cannot breathe" (*einatmen*, Deussen); "he offers" (*i.e.* sacrifices) "all the while his prâṇa (breath) in his speech. And so long as a man breathes, he cannot speak, he offers all the while his speech in his breath." For an account of all five vital breathings *vide* Brihadâraṇyaka Up. 3, 9, 26; Praśña Up. 3, 1-12; Maitrâyaṇa-Brâhmana Up. 2, 6. In the last-mentioned passage the functions of the Samâna and Udâna (Müller's "on-breathing" and "out-breathing") are explained as follows: "That which carries the grosser material of food to the Apâna, and brings the subtler material to each limb, has the name Samâna"; and "That which brings up or carries down what has been drunk and eaten, is the Udâna". *Vide* M. Müller's note *in loco*.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SELF-CRITICISM OF RELIGION IN THE MYSTICISM OF THE EAST: THE BEARING OF THE PRECEDING CONSIDERATIONS

So far, however, we have made no more than the first approaches to the standpoint of mysticism. The true mystical doctrine can only be attained by placing ourselves in a certain position to begin with, and moving out from this in a particular direction by a series of fairly well-defined mental operations. Everything depends on whether these operations are carried out successfully and in due order; for the fact that we are capable of the first step does not of itself assure us a safe passage to the final position. Indeed the issue of our journey may be as far removed from mysticism as anything could be. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that we should understand the precise significance of these preliminary considerations, and that we should see exactly how mysticism grows out of them.

A main Task of Mysticism is the Subordination of the Phenomenalist to the Activist Standpoint

Let me repeat, then, that the position which I have described as subjectivist and activist, although it is the position from which the mystical ascent takes its beginning, is not in itself mysticism. On

the contrary, it is not far from the attitude of the average man for whom the fact of his own selfhood is the central fact of experience. In our ordinary moments we are all more or less given to subjectivist and activist thinking. The attitude is one which is implied in the use of personal pronouns, possessive adjectives and active verbs. The distinguishing fact, however, is that while we are all so far activists, and that men have been so as far back as the record of language extends, we plain people have never been activists or personalists pure and simple. Our activism and egocentricity have been counterbalanced by an objective and phenomenalist tendency from the earliest times. One of the main tasks of human thought, as it advances in the direction of mysticism, is the subjugation of this tendency. This phase in the process is marked by the gradual triumph of the sense of selfhood over the presentational manifold of experience.

That triumph is not achieved without conflict, as is witnessed by the presence of a quite discernible polemic in the Upanishads. An interesting example is the attempt to explain the nature of the self in the case of that "person in the eye" already referred to. This familiar phrase is used in two profoundly different but dialectically connected senses. In the first sense the person in the eye is introduced in order to discredit the naïve realism which would assign a substantival character to the material world of sense-experience. So far, therefore, it is directed against the conception of selfhood. In the second sense, the "person" restores the conception in such a way as to refute not only naïve realism but the temporary doctrine which had displaced it.

If we remember that the Sâma-veda is, in the words of Max Müller, " almost entirely taken from the Rig-veda ", and may therefore " be called the essence of the Rig-veda ",[1] the following passage will be not unintelligible :

> " *Rik* is the eye, Sâman the self. This Sâman . . . rests on that *Rik*. . . . Therefore the Sâman is sung as resting on the *Rik*. Sâ is the eye, ama the self, and that makes Sâm a." [2]

In his note on this passage Max Müller explains that the self referred to is " the shadow-self, the likeness or image thrown upon the eye " ; and Deussen, following Sankara's commentary, interprets in the same sense.[3] Now this is a noteworthy departure from that naïve realism to which I have referred as the natural attitude of the non-philosophical mind. From this naïve point of view the visible world appears to be a manifold of independently existing objects, actually possessed of the qualities which they reveal to our observation. But in the passage just quoted from the Khândogya Upanishad we have reached a stage of thought at which a certain doubt of these appearances has caused the question to be raised : What is the *Self* of that which we see ? The answer given is the surprising one : the self is the image in the eye.

[1] Preface to *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i, p. xxiv.

[2] Khândogya Up. 1, 7, 2. *Ibid.* vol. i, p. 14.

[3] " Auf dem Auge [beruht] die leibliche Gestalt (âtman, nach Çañk. *chayâtman* das Spiegelbild) " (*Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda*, p. 75). For the person who is seen in the eye cf. also Khândogya Up. 4, 15, 1 and 8, 7, 3.

The Task: first, a Physiological Subjectivism in contradistinction to Subjective Idealism: then a Transcendence of the former

These words, if taken quite literally (as apparently we must take them in this passage), would seem to be nothing less than an expression of that subjective idealism which we have been at pains to distinguish from the activist subjectivism of mystical doctrine. It is a subjective idealism, however, which differs in two fundamental respects from that of Berkeley. In the first place, it is in a much more pronounced way physiologically conceived. For the sake of exactness, therefore, we shall call it not subjective idealism but physiological subjectivism. In the second place, it is put forth not as a final and complete ontology, but (if I may borrow the terminology of Hegel's logic) as a *moment* in the dialectic of mysticism. The 'ideas' of Berkeley, although subjectively conditioned, are as real as anything could be. They are as real as the material world, which they displace, is commonly conceived to be. In their orderly connection they constitute the system of nature. They express the will of the divine being; and to say that they exist only as they are perceived is merely to state their *real* causality: it is not to say that in the end only the perceiving self exists. When, however, the Upanishad asserts that the bodily self is the image in the eye, the implication is that there is no more in the body than in the image. The latter may be looked upon as a sublimation of the former. Only, it is a sublimation in which nothing is lost. Feature by feature it reproduces all

that we can possibly discover in the body; and the inference to be drawn is not, as in Berkeley's idealism, that images are in their own way as real as sense-objects in theirs, but that there is no more reality in a sense-object than in its image. The difference is one of emphasis, but in this case emphasis makes all the difference in the world. The final conclusion is of course that the bodily self is no true self at all. The reality behind it is not the person *seen in* the eye, but the person who *sees with* the eye. Before this conclusion can be reached, however, it is necessary to feel the unreality of the physical world. The phase of physiological subjectivism is therefore a distinct step in the direction that brings us eventually to activist subjectivism.[1]

Physiological Subjectivism, in its Cosmological Setting, passes into Acosmism

We must therefore turn back and dwell for a little upon that physiological subjectivism which represents the present level of the argument. To begin with, physiological subjectivism marks the distrust, and indeed the actual disbelief, which had come to centre upon the independent reality of sense-objects. Such objects were seen to have no reality, no self, of their own. In the absence of certain conditions they vanish away. Their selfhood (such as

[1] I cannot help thinking that both Deussen and Hume tend to miss this point. In his *Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda*, p. 125, Deussen, *e.g.* identifies the person seen in the eye with the seer: ". . . Den Mann (Person, Geist, *purusha*), der im Auge erscheint, d.h. (hier) als den Seher des Sehens, das Subjekt des Erkennens, die Seele in uns". It is difficult to see how the image reflected in the eye can be interpreted as identical with the seer.

it is) must therefore be sought in those conditions which are just the conditions of sense-perception in general. Hence we find the external object of perception dislodged from its apparent position of independent reality and transferred to the appropriate place in the percipient organism.

In this connection two points call for special notice. The first is the creative power assigned to the organs of sense. This is entirely in keeping with a subjectivist position; but the physiological form of the subjectivism in question leads to the paradox of attributing this creative agency to the organ of sense. It is the eye that creates the sun.[1]

If it be asked whether it could really have been maintained in all seriousness that a minute organ of the human body can create an object of such cosmic proportions as the sun, the answer is that from the moment at which the implications of physiological subjectivism (and indeed of subjective idealism in general)[2] are seen, we have no longer to do with physiology as such or with cosmology as ordinarily conceived. The two things have run together. Each set of facts must be read in the light of the other, and the two acquire a certain mutual

[1] In a footnote to Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 3, 9, 12, Max Müller remarks: "The commentator explains satya, the true, by the eye, because the sun owes its origin to the eye" (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 143). One might compare the same Upanishad, 5, 5, 2, where the relationship between the sun and the eye is shown to be one of mutual dependence. "Yonder sun is the same as that Real. The Person who is there in that orb and the Person who is here in the right eye—these two depend the one upon the other. Through his rays that one depends upon this one; through his vital breaths this one upon that. When one is about to decease, he sees that orb [*i.e.* free from rays]; those rays come to him no more" (Hume's tr., p. 151).

[2] Cf. Berkeley's "all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth".

commensurateness. Thus by the same act of thought by which the physical universe is divested of its independent objectivity and brought home in all its immensity to the touchstone of sense, the senses themselves and the organs by which they exist [1] become, so to speak, the generalized correlatives of cosmic equivalents.[2]

This brings us to the second point to which I referred as requiring special notice, viz. the constant parallelism between the physiology and the cosmology (or, to be more exact, the cosmogony) of the Brahmanical writings. Thus it is apt to be in a generalized cosmological or mythological setting that the creative agency of the sense-organs is set forth. In the Aitareya-Âraṇyaka Upanishad, for example, it is the universal Person, Pragâpati,[3] the lord of creatures [4] and of times and seasons,[5] whose physiological functions (including the senses) call into being the whole created universe.

> " By his speech earth and fire were created. Herbs are produced on the earth, and Agni (fire) makes them ripe and sweet. ' Take this, take this', thus saying do earth and fire serve their parent, speech.
>
> " As far as the earth reaches, as far as fire

[1] In the Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. the various organs are represented as *seized* by their respective functions : *vide* 2, 2.

[2] The mental process underlying this act of generalization is not so hard to grasp if we remember how prone we are, even in sober and scientific speech, to employ terms in a generic sense. Thus we speak of ' the eye ' and ' the ear ', ' the heart ' and ' the hand '. We want only enough imagination to conceive of these expressions being taken seriously, in order to see a whole world of men dissolving into the universal Person, Pragâpati.

[3] Vide *Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 210, n. 1.

[4] Prasña Up. 1, 4 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 272).

[5] *Ibid.* 1, 9-13 (pp. 272-3).

reaches, so far does his world extend, and as long as the world of the earth and fire does not decay, so long does his world not decay who thus knows this power of speech.

" By breath (in the nose) the sky and the air were created. People follow the sky, and hear along the sky,[1] while the air carries along pure scent. Thus do sky and air serve their parent, the breath.

" As far as the sky reaches, as far as the air reaches, so far does his world extend, and as long as the world of the sky and the air does not decay, so long does his world not decay who thus knows this power of breath.

" By his eye heaven and the sun were created. Heaven gives him rain and food, while the sun causes his light to shine. Thus do the heaven and the sun serve their parent, the eye.

" As far as heaven reaches and as far as the sun reaches, so far does his world extend, and as long as the world of heaven and the sun does not decay, so long does his world not decay who thus knows the power of the eye." [2]

Confused Correlation of the Cosmic Elements and the Vital Powers, in Physiological Subjectivism

With physiological subjectivism we enter a region of relativity and of perpetually shifting points of view. Having selected our position and surveyed the whole subject from one angle, we must needs change our ground and view the same prospect from

[1] *I.e.* presumably through the air.

[2] Aitareya-Âraṇyaka Up. II Âr. 1, 7, 2-5 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, pp. 210-211).

another point. Thus if it is true that the sense-world rests upon a physiological basis, it is no less true that the whole variety of physiological organs and functions—indeed, the body as a whole, appearance though it be—craves an explanation. Upon what do these organs, perceptive and active, with the corresponding functions, rest? Obviously upon their correlatives in the cosmic order. There is a later passage in the Aitareya Upanishad which closely parallels the one from which I have just quoted, but which is immediately followed by what seems to be a direct reversal of the position established. In the first passage the cosmic elements are derived from the organs of sense; in the second the organs of sense are supplied with the appropriate nutriment by a modification of the cosmic elements. For the sake of the contrast let us place the two passages side by side.

In the first the Purusha (person), clearly symbolizing the created universe, having been formed and brooded upon by the Highest Self[1] (a point which we have not yet reached in our analysis of mystical doctrine), proceeds by successive differentiations to produce the variegated features of the physical world.

> " He brooded on him, and when that person had thus been brooded on, a mouth burst forth like an egg. From the mouth proceeded speech, from speech Agni (fire).
>
> " Nostrils burst forth. From the nostrils proceeded scent (prâṇa), from scent Vâyu (air).

[1] Four elements have previously been created: Ambhas, the water above the heaven (and heaven itself); Marîkis, the lights (identified with the sky); Mara (mortal), the earth; and Ap, the waters under the earth. The Purusha is taken from the waters.

" Eyes burst forth. From the eyes proceeded sight, from sight Âditya (Sun).

" Ears burst forth. From the ears proceeded hearing, from hearing the Diṣ (quarters of the world).

" Skin burst forth. From the skin proceeded hairs (sense of touch), from the hairs shrubs and trees.

" The heart burst forth. From the heart proceeded mind, from mind Ḳandramas (moon)," etc.

In the passage which immediately follows, the deities (devatâ) mentioned in the preceding verses are represented as tormented by hunger and thirst and as imploring the Self to allow them a place in which to rest and eat. The Upanishad proceeds:

" He led a cow towards them (the deities). They said: ' This is not enough '. He led a horse towards them. They said: ' This is not enough '.

" He led man [1] towards them. Then they said: ' Well done, indeed '. Therefore man is well done.

" He said to them: ' Enter, each according to his place '.

" Then Agni (fire), having become speech, entered the mouth. Vâyu (air), having become scent, entered the nostrils. Âditya (sun), having become sight, entered the eyes. The Diṣ (regions), having become hearing, entered the ears. The shrubs and trees, having become hairs, entered

[1] Max Müller explains: " Here purusha is different from the first purusha, the universal person. It can only be intended for intelligent man " (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 239, n. 3).

the skin. Kandramas (the moon), having become mind, entered the heart," etc.[1]

The only possible explanation of such a point by point reversal would seem to be a logical one. When we look at the world in a comprehensive way as a gross structure, filled with those contents which are revealed to us in vast distinguishable masses, the most general truth that emerges is that all these contents alike are relative, as was said, to the conditions under which they become objects of perception. But when we come to man, it is more natural to look at the same facts from the opposite point of view. The universal forms of nature demand for their explanation a universal subject; but the finite individual subject, with his panoply of physiological apparatus, demands an explanation in terms of universal nature. The universe must have travailed that man should be born. All this is merely to say that man is a part of nature, and nature an aspect of the divine being. But the place of man in the universal scheme of things is more privileged than this would seem to imply. He is not like the lower animals, which are parts of nature and nothing more. As sustainers of cosmic meanings, his senses and active powers are superior to theirs. The cow and the horse do not reflect their nature, as he does his, to the satisfaction of the cosmic elements themselves. Man *epitomizes* nature as no other creature can. In the universal relativity of subject and object, the true character of the object-universe is brought out only when it is correlated with an adequate sentience. Of this, human sentience is the type. Thus the relativity

[1] Aitareya-Âraṇyaka Up. II Âr. 4, 1, 6; II, 4, 2, 2-4 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, pp. 238 *sq.*).

in question is not a relativity from which consciousness, of the specifically human order, can be left out.

Such a statement might appear to conflict with what was previously said as to the subordination of consciousness to life in the antithesis of the spiritual and the purely physical. As a matter of fact there is no real inconsistency. Consciousness is merely thrown up into temporary prominence as one phase in a process of which the permanent character is vital function. This comes out emphatically when we consider (what has already been pointed out) the unique part played by breath, the primitive life-principle, both in the physiology and in the cosmology of the Upanishads, and more particularly in the work of linking up the two. There is a dramatic episode, recorded more than once, in which the vital powers are depicted as contending ' who should be greatest '. A uniform test is applied, one which has done yeoman service in the history of this subject, and which really comprehends the whole logic of animism.[1] That test

[1] In proof of his view that air is the universal principle, Anaximenes is reported to have argued as follows (whether the argument was actually used by him does not greatly matter) : " Just as our soul, which is air, holds us together, so breath and air encompass the world ". The point of the analogy is evidently that the body consists of air (breath), because so long as breath is present, it persists, and as soon as breath departs, it decomposes. Cf. the remark of Yâgñavalkya in the Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 3, 7, 2 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 133) : " By air, as by a thread, O Gautama, this world and the other world, and all creatures are strung together. Therefore, O Gautama, people say of a dead person that his limbs have become unstrung ; for by air, as by a thread, O Gautama, they were strung together." On the other hand, in the same Upanishad it is asserted that at death the breaths do not go out of the dead man. Rather " they are gathered up in him, he swells, he is inflated, and thus inflated the dead lies at rest " (*Ibid.* 3, 2, 11 ; p. 126). This latter passage marks an advance in mystical thought over the other. The unity of breath is no longer equal to the expression of real selfhood (*vide* Deussen's remark *in loco* : " Nicht

is in effect the one formulated by J. S. Mill as his second canon of inductive reasoning, the Method of Difference. This is how the test is applied in the Upanishads:

> " These (five delights or senses) strove together, saying: ' I am the uktha (hymn), I am the uktha '.[1]
>
> " ' Well,' they said, ' let us all go out from this body; then on whose departure this body shall fall, he shall be the uktha among us.'
>
> " Speech went out, yet the body without speaking remained, eating and drinking.
>
> " Sight went out, yet the body without seeing remained, eating and drinking.
>
> " Hearing went out, yet the body without hearing remained, eating and drinking.
>
> " Mind went out, yet the body, as if blinking, remained, eating and drinking.[2]
>
> " Breath went out, then when breath was gone out the body fell.

die Prâṇa's sind das Unsterbliche am Menschen, sondern nur der Âtman, das Subjekt des Erkennens " : *Sechz. Up.* p. 431). Even in this passage, however, a change in the *condition* of the breaths is recognized; and it is this change of condition that marks the difference of life and death. Cf. also Aitareya-Âraṇyaka Up. II Âr. 1, 8, 9: " He (the breath) is death (when he departs), and immortality (while he abides) " (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 213).

[1] The meaning is that each of the senses claimed to be the vital principle. In a footnote to Kaushîtaki Up. 3, 3, Max Müller explains that " Uktha, hymn, is artificially derived from ut-thâpayati, to raise up, and hence uktha, (hymn), is to be meditated on as prâna, breath, which likewise raises up the body " (*Op. cit.* vol. i, p. 295). Cf. Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 5, 13, 1: " Verily, the Uktha is life (prāna), for it is life that causes everything here to rise up (ut-thā) " (Hume's tr.).

[2] The subordination of the conscious function to the vital may here be noted. We can exist without mind; but without the principle of life we cannot exist.

"It was decayed, and because people said, it decayed, therefore it was (called) body (śarîra). That is the reason of its name.

. . . . . .

"They strove again, saying: 'I am the uktha, I am the uktha.' 'Well', they said, 'let us enter that body again; then on whose entrance this body shall rise again, he shall be the uktha among us.'

"Speech entered, but the body lay still. Sight entered, but the body lay still. Hearing entered, but the body lay still. Mind entered, but the body lay still. Breath entered, and when breath had entered, the body rose, and it became the uktha.

"Therefore breath alone is the uktha.

. . . . . .

"The Devas (the other senses) said to breath: 'Thou art the uktha, thou art all this, we are thine, thou art ours.'" [1]

As regards the cosmic application of the conception, it will be enough to mention the oft-repeated identification of the sun with breath.[2]

Recapitulation: the Mystical Ascent starts from the Activist Standpoint: the Search for the Unconditioned

Before we take the next step forward in the direction of a completed mysticism, it would be well

[1] Aitareya-Âraṇyaka Up. II Âr. 1, 4, 9-17 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, pp. 206-207); cf. Khândogya Up. 5, 1, 6 *sq.*; Kaushîtaki Up. 2, 14; 3, 3-4; Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 1, 5, 21.

[2] *E.g.* Aitareya-Âraṇyaka Up. II Âr. 2, 1, 1, and II, 2, 3, 4.

to survey the course of our argument hitherto. We have seen that mysticism begins in a subjective-activist attitude to reality. Everything is viewed in the way in which it is natural for a person to view the fact of his own existence, that is to say, from the standpoint of selfhood. To say that anything is real is to say that it has a *self* of its own ; to indicate the nature of its existence is to say wherein that self consists. This view rests on the assumption that the meaning of existence is to be found only where existence is known from within. In the words of Professor Deussen :

> " . . . If the mystery of Nature is to be solved, the key of it can be found only there where alone Nature allows us an interior view of the world, that is in ourselves." [1]

The first Step: the Encounter with the Facts of Experience and Failure to find Self in them. Their Conditionedness

But the crux of the situation is that nature as a whole is not presented to us from within. We are permitted an interior view only of our own small selves ; of *that great self* (or system of selves) we see only the outside, and the outside is nothing but appearance. For surely the real nature of a thing, what a thing is *in itself*, cannot be the same as *what it looks like to another.*

Here is the first great predicament which we encounter in the path that leads to mysticism. The practical problem may be stated thus. Granted that

[1] *Outlines of Indian Philosophy, with an Appendix on the Philosophy of the Vedanta*, p. 23.

we can know the truth of anything only when an interior view of it is permitted, *i.e.* when we can know our object as a self, how is this possible in a world of experience which permits this interior view only in one instance? The second stage in the journey we are attempting to describe, the stage with which we have been dealing, is that which results from this predicament. It is the product of the situation which arises when the subjectivist presuppositions of mysticism first meet the raw facts of experience in conscious antagonism.

At this point, therefore, we are compelled to start afresh. Just as in the first instance, armed with the category of the âtman, the self, we entered the world of experience, so now, beginning with considerable experience of the world, we set out to discover the self, the âtman. The point is that we have found it necessary to *reckon with* experience even in its superficial aspect. Such experience has a content, and this must be disposed of. The situation calls for a *phenomenology*. And obviously if in the pursuit of this there should emerge certain uniform principles, it may be taken for granted that these principles, since they explain to us the general nature of appearances, will help us to understand the nature of what is not appearance.

Now the fundamental truth about an appearance is simply *that it appears*. There are two points of view from which this truth can be explored. We can set ourselves the task of discovering what appearances occur, and we can investigate the conditions under which they do so. Both of these tasks call for a descriptive account of nature; but the second suggests the possibility of passing beyond descrip-

tion to something more fundamental. In the Upanishads the two inquiries are inextricably confused. Thus we have a cosmology, or phenomenology of nature, and a physiology, or phenomenology of the finite self; but these are so correlated that at every point the one is seen to be conditioned by the other. The principle which characterizes this phase of the subject is relativity or *conditionedness*, a principle which may be stated in the proposition: Everything is in some way conditioned by or relative to something else.[1] The universality of the principle is guaranteed by the uniform character (in this respect) of every experienced content. We conclude, then, that whatever is conditioned is an appearance rather than a self, and that appearances condition one another. And so this stage in our pilgrimage draws to an end.

The next Step: the Transcending of the Phenomenalist Stage, in the Transition to Mysticism

The next step leads to the portal of the Âtman. We have just spoken of the discovery that everything is conditioned by something else, and consequently falls short of true selfhood or being. But how is that fact to be interpreted? Evidently if we say that so and so is no true self because it is con-

[1] This statement has been left intentionally vague and ambiguous, for it would be in vain to look for exact analytic distinctions in the literature of mysticism. It is not obvious that relativity and what I have called 'conditionedness' are one and the same; but the ideas are interchangeable in the Upanishads. More important still, there are two distinct senses, not here distinguished, in which things are *conditioned*. There are formal conditions like space and time, and there are causal conditions, such as physiological generation. The idea of conditionedness embraces both types.

ditioned by another, we are by implication defining the nature of that selfhood in which reality or truth consists, either as the *unconditioned* or as the *self-conditioned*—that which contains all its conditions within. Such a character is not to be found in any object of experience, or in a world of experience where the principle of conditionedness is universal.

Suppose for example that *d* is conditioned by *c*; consequently that *c* must be thought of as that without which *d* would not be what it is. In this case it would be natural to describe *c* as the reality or self of *d*, and even to identify *d* with *c*.[1] But such a position calls for further elucidation. The statement that *c* is the self of *d* derives its meaning from the assumption that *c* is a self. The meaning of the statement, and with it the principle, will be seriously endangered if it can be shown that *c* is no more a self than *d*. In this case the only resort is to further analysis. We must begin from the fact that *c*, like *d*, is conditioned, and we must ask: conditioned by what? If the answer is, by a real self, then the situation is saved. But if the answer is that *c* is conditioned, either in reciprocal fashion by *d*, or else by some factor that is no more real than *d*, then we have no right to claim for it that selfhood which is identical with reality; and when we say that *d* is *c*, or that *c* is the self of *d*, we are asserting that there is just as *little* reality in the one as in the other. This is, in effect, the state of affairs that obtains in the world of space, time and sense-experience.

But our analysis is not yet quite complete. It is

[1] Cf. the remark of Prof. Cowell, quoted by Max Müller (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 297, note), as to "the principle, that when one thing cannot exist without another, that thing is said to be identical with the other".

not a simple question of being conditioned or unconditioned; for there may be kinds and degrees of conditionedness. It may be that in the case of reciprocal relations, *d* is conditioned by *c* in a way in which *c* is not conditioned by *d*, and that therefore in asserting the identity of the two we have reason for preferring the one to the other. As a matter of fact this is a point that comes out quite noticeably in the Upanishads. We have dwelt upon the primacy of breath among the vital powers. These powers are all merged in breath, and are therefore declared to be identical with it. But the identity is not one that can be expressed without a difference. The primacy of breath over the other powers takes precedence over their identity with breath and with one another.

> " (Pratardana said): ' Some maintain here, that the prâṉas become one, for (otherwise) no one could at the same time make known a name by speech, see a form with the eye, hear a sound with the ear, think a thought with the mind. After having become one, the prâṉas perceive all these together, one by one. While speech speaks, all prâṉas speak after it.[1] While the eye sees, all prâṉas see after it. While the ear hears, all prâṉas hear after it. While the mind thinks, all prâṉas think after it. While the prâṉa breathes, all prâṉas breathe after it.'
>
> " ' Thus it is indeed,' said Indra, ' but nevertheless there is a pre-eminence[2] among the prâṉas.' "[3]

It is this " pre-eminence among the prâṉas ",

[1] *I.e.* " with it " (Deussen). [2] " Rangordnung " (Deussen).
[3] Kaushîtaki Up. 3, 2 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 294).

this inequality of conditionedness in the sphere of the universally conditioned, that at once establishes and strikes at the principle of the latter, and leads eventually beyond the phenomenalistic stage in the pilgrimage of mysticism. Among the conditions that are themselves conditioned there are some that are more in the nature of conditions than others. What we must now do is to follow up the implications of this fact. These implications are made clear in the sequel to the passage quoted.

The principle is again that embodied in the logical Method of Difference. It is the *invariable* accompaniment to which alone we must ascribe causative significance. On the subject of the vital powers and the pre-eminence which has been declared among them, the Upanishad continues:

> "Man lives deprived of speech, for we see dumb people. Man lives deprived of sight, for we see blind people. Man lives deprived of hearing, for we see deaf people. Man lives deprived of mind, for we see infants.[1] Man lives deprived of his arms, deprived of his legs, for we see it thus. But prâṇa alone is the conscious self (pragñâtman), and having laid hold of this body, it makes it rise up. Therefore it is said, Let man worship it alone as uktha."[2]

It will be observed that the argument has taken a novel turn. Beginning with the assertion that the senses are one, the writer proceeds to postulate a difference between them. This difference is indeed

[1] "Narren" (Deussen): "the childish" (Hume).

[2] *Sacred Bks.* vol. i, pp. 294-295. Deussen and Hume take pragñâtman in apposition to prâṇa rather than as predicate. There is no difference of meaning.

no other than the principle that makes them one, the fact, namely, that they are all identical with breath, in a sense in which they are not identical with any other power. That is to say, we assert that the eye is one with the ear because they are each one with breath, but not that the eye is one with breath because they are each one with the ear. Now obviously this identification of all the vital powers with one of them has a modifying effect upon the conception of breath itself. This is no longer to be taken in the exclusive sense of respiration, or in any sense in which breathing is assuredly *not* the same thing as seeing and hearing.[1] Its connotation has spread over the physiology of the body as a whole. Prâṇa has become the generalized concept of vital function.

But not only so. The logic of the argument calls for one further extension of connotation. The breath which is not only breath but life, cannot be life without being more than life itself. It must be the selfhood that is conscious.

The logic of this latest move seems to be as follows. In speaking a moment ago of prâṇa as a generalized concept of life, we were using language which is not strictly accurate. For of what could prâṇa be legitimately described as a *generalization*? The only factors in the case are the senses, or rather the vital powers, including the senses. To say that prâṇa is a generalization of these is like saying that vital power is a generalization of vital powers. But this is not the case. Life is not a generalized concept of seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, etc. Rather it

[1] "No mortal lives by the breath that goes up and by the breath that goes down [*i.e.* respiration in its two forms of breathing out and breathing in]. We live by another, in whom these two repose" (Kaṭha Up. 2, 5, 5: *Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 18).

is a concept of something that goes on behind all these and is implied in them as their presupposition. This precedence is strikingly expressed in the Vâgasaneyi-Samhitâ Upanishad.

> "That one (the self), though never stirring, is swifter than thought. The Devas (senses) never reached it, it walked before them. Though standing still, it overtakes the others who are running.[1] Mâtarisvan (the wind, the moving spirit) bestows powers [2] on it." [3]

The *living being*, then, is the self of the vital powers. But when we speak of the vital powers, we must take into account the duality which their nature presupposes. Each of the senses has its organ and its object, the object being characteristically conceived as created by the organ. This duality, with the relationship which it implies, has now to be translated into terms appropriate to the unification of the vital powers in the conception of the living being. The question therefore comes to be: In what form will the relationship of sight, hearing, speech, etc., to their objects reappear when all these functions are merged in the unity of a living self?

The answer is: in the relationship of consciousness to its object. "What is prâna, that is pragñâ (self-consciousness)[4]; what is pragñâ (self-conscious-

[1] Hume strikingly translates: "Past others running, this goes standing".

[2] Perhaps (as Deussen) "primeval waters": "action" (Hume).

[3] Vâg.-Sam. Up. 4 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 311).

[4] Perhaps rather 'consciousness' ("Das Bewusstsein", Deussen); or, if 'self-consciousness', then not consciousness *of* self, but 'consciousness *as* self', consciousness in the concrete, *the Conscious*.

ness), that is prâṇa, for together they (pragñâ and prâṇa) live in this body, and together they go out of it." [1]

Thus the relativity of the vital powers (of which the senses are a type) to *their* objects, when generalized in the peculiar sense just explained, becomes the relativity of a conscious self to *its* objects.

> " These ten objects (what is spoken, smelled, seen, etc.) have reference to pragñâ (self-consciousness), the ten subjects (speech, the senses, mind) have reference to objects. If there were no objects, there would be no subjects; and if there were no subjects, there would be no objects. For on either side alone nothing could be achieved. But that (the self of pragñâ, consciousness, and prâṇa, life) is not many, (but one)." [2]

At this point special caution becomes necessary. Our argument has led from the vital powers to the living self, and from the living self to consciousness. It might appear, therefore, as if consciousness were meant to be understood as the key to life, just as life is the key to sensation and action. In that case the position would be some sort of idealism. As a matter of fact we are quite unwarranted in any such assumption.

When we use the terms consciousness, self-con-

[1] Kaushîtaki Up. 3, 3 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 295).

[2] Kaushîtaki Up. 3, 8. (*Ibid.* p. 299) Max Müller's rendering, " objects " and " subjects ", is doubtful. I subjoin Deussen's version: " Denn alle diese zehn Wesenselemente sind abhängig vom Bewusstsein, und die zehn Bewusstseinselemente sind abhängig von den Wesen; denn wenn die Wesenselemente nicht wären, so würden auch die Bewusstseinselemente nicht sein, und wenn die Bewusstseinselemente nicht wären, so würden auch die Wesenselemente nicht sein, denn nicht kommt durch die einen ohne die andern irgend eine Erscheinung (*rûpam*) zu stande " (*Sechz. Up.* p. 50).

sciousness, we employ an abstract form of speech, where very often (as in the present instance) the fact to which we refer is not abstract but concrete. To be quite exact, therefore, we should speak not of consciousness or self-consciousness, but of a conscious or a self-conscious being. Our propensity to use the abstract form in reference to the experience of being conscious is unmistakably connected with the phenomenalistic phase of our thinking. Consciousness is our name for an aspect of experience which comes to the front when we think of the object as an object of *observation* and the subject as an *observer*, and this aspect is undoubtedly emphasized in the passage cited from the Kaushîtaki Upanishad. At the same time it is clearly impossible that consciousness in this sense should be represented as the self which is identical with life. It would be a mistake, therefore, to treat the passage as genuinely phenomenalistic. The conscious subject is not thought of merely as the percipient of a manifold of data, presented to it as its objects. Its defining function is more than awareness. Awareness is rather the characteristic of the various vital powers, in virtue of which we are entitled to attribute them all to a single self. It is the thing that makes it possible for these powers to differ as they do from one another, and yet to be in a sense identical. They differ in the sense in which seeing differs from hearing; they are one in the sense that to see and to hear are both to be conscious. This in itself, however, will not secure their identity, unless the consciousness that is hearing is identical with the consciousness that is seeing, and this it obviously is not. The identity of which we are in search evades us consistently until we locate it in the

fact that the *conscious being* who sees is the same *conscious being* who hears.

Subjective Activism in its Final Formulation: the True Self cannot be anything Phenomenal

The implication of this view obviously is that *consciousness* as such is not the self of anything. Rather, like the different vital powers, it must *have* a self. And what can this self be but the prâṇa? Hence it is that the Kaushîtaki Upanishad, having insisted on the identity of the pragñâ and the prâṇa, goes on to announce that the prâṇa is the self of the pragñâ. The various relationships in the case are thus completed. The objects (or elements of existence) of the vital powers depend upon these powers; the powers meet and coalesce in the living being; and the living being is enabled to diversify itself in the powers through a certain characteristic which we discern in the identity of consciousness.

> " For as in a car the circumference of a wheel is placed on the spokes, and the spokes on the nave, thus are these objects (circumference) placed on the subjects (spokes), and the subjects on the prâṇa. And that prâṇa (breath, the living and breathing power) indeed is the self of pragñâ (the self-conscious self),[1] blessed, imperishable,[2] immortal." [3]

[1] *I.e.* the self *as* consciousness — " das Bewusstseinselbst " (Deussen).

[2] " Ageless " (Hume) : " nicht alternd " (Deussen).

[3] Kaushîtaki Up. 3, 8 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 299). The wheel simile is a common-place of Brahmanical literature. Cf. Muṇḍaka Up. 2, 2, 6; Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 2, 5, 15; Svetâsvatara Up. 1, 4; *ibid.* 6, 1; Praśna Up. 2, 6.

At this point in our logical progression we reach the high-water mark of subjective activism. The prâṇa which is the self of the pragñâ is the active agent that remains indivisibly one in all its manifestations. To know the latter we must know the former. We must realize that the ten subjects, to which reference has been made, are one.

> " Let no man try to find out what speech is, let him know the speaker. Let no man try to find out what odour is, let him know him who smells " ;

and so of sight, sound, taste, action, pleasure and pain, happiness (the joy that attends generation), movement and mind.[1]

The True Self is not the Body but its Actuating Principle

In the light of this fully developed subjectivism we must go back upon our tracks with a new and more drastic reinterpretation. To take only one illustration—the 'person in the eye' must now be understood to mean not, as at first, the image thrown upon the organ, but the person using the latter.

In the Khândogya Upanishad[2] there is an interesting story of the Devas and the Asuras, the gods and the demons, which turns precisely upon this point. Pragâpati having made a pronouncement upon the nature of the self, Indra, as representing the Devas, and Virokana, as representing the

[1] Kaushîtaki Up. 3, 8 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, pp. 298-299). Cf. the passage in Brihadâranyaka Up. 2, 4, 7 *sq.* beginning: " Now as the sounds of a drum, when beaten, cannot be seized externally (by themselves), but the sound is seized, when the drum is seized or the beater of the drum " (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, pp. 110-111. Cf. also p. 183).

[2] Khândogya Up. 8, 7-12 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, pp. 134-142).

Asuras, approach the Lord of creation with fuel in their hands—the symbolic act of pupils approaching a master. In reply to their request for enlightenment Pragâpati answers: "The person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self". This cryptic utterance is explained by the commentator as referring to the "real agent of seeing, who is seen by sages only, even with their eyes shut". His pupils, however, understand the words to indicate "the small figure imaged in the eye" [1]; and so fall into grave error.[2] But even in their error there is a difference of degree. Virokana fails to mark the difference between an object and its image, and ends by identifying the self with the body. Indra, with deeper insight, although still deceived, for a time remains content to think of the shadow as the real self.[3] Then a new light dawns upon him. The shadow is a mere duplicate of the body, and is, therefore, subject to all the disabilities from which the body suffers, including eventual destruction. Clearly the true self cannot be identified with anything so perishable. He returns dissatisfied to Pragâpati, who, after imposing a novitiate of thirty-two years, undertakes to instruct him further in the truth. At the end of this period Indra is informed that the self is "he who moves

[1] Max Müller's note *in loco*.

[2] In view, however, of the really important rôle played in the Upanishads by this idea of the person seen in the eye, it would be a mistake to treat Indra's interpretation as *nothing but* error. Rather, it represents a real phase in the process of mystical enlightenment—the phase, viz. in which it is seen that an image possesses all the reality that can be discerned in the material world. From this point of view the *self* of the material world is only the self of an image. It requires further reflection to make it clear to Indra that such a self is no true self. This is the point, already referred to, which Deussen and Hume seem to miss.

[3] Max Müller's note *in loco*.

about happy in dreams". The point of the answer is that the dream-self, unlike the image, is no mere replica of the body, reproducing all the deficiencies of the latter, but a free, active, independent agent.[1] Indra is satisfied; but before he reaches the Devas, fresh doubts multiply upon him.

> "Although it is true that that self is not blind, even if the body is blind, nor lame, if the body is lame, though it is true that that self is not rendered faulty by the faults of it (the body)",

yet the dream-experience can be filled with fear and pain. The dream-self is chased[2] and sheds tears. So the suppliant returns once more to Pragâpati, and the process of instruction is resumed.

The next answer is that the real self is the self of dreamless sleep. But, as Indra presently reflects, this self is a self devoid alike of self-knowledge and of all consciousness. "He is gone to utter annihilation." After an additional five years of preparation Pragâpati makes his final disclosure. The body is the abode of an immortal, immaterial self. To identify the self with the body is to be in bonds to pleasure and pain. The true self is a 'serene being', which rises from the body in the 'highest light' of knowledge—the knowledge of self—as the disembodied wind rises from the ether of space in the summer sunlight. In relation to the body this self is an actuating principle.

> "Like as a horse attached to a cart, so is the

[1] Of special interest is the fact that we have here a reflection, touched with the critical spirit, of an earlier animism. This second self is the soul set free from the body, whose double it is only to a certain degree.

[2] Or "unclothed" (*vide* Hume).

spirit (prâṇa, pragñâtman) attached to this body." [All else is more apparatus.] "Now where the sight has entered into the void . . .[1] there is the person of the eye, the eye itself is the instrument of seeing. He who knows, let me smell this,[2] he is the Self, the nose is the instrument of smelling. He who knows, let me say this, he is the Self, the tongue [3] is the instrument of saying. He who knows, let me hear this, he is the Self, the ear is the instrument of hearing. He who knows, let me think this, he is the Self, the mind is his divine eye." [4]

At this point our survey of the preliminary steps in the approach to mysticism is as complete as we can hope for the present to make it. The next step will carry us definitely over the threshold.

[1] Or " when the eye is directed thus toward space " (Hume, in agreement with Deussen).

[2] *I.e.* he who wishes to smell, or bethinks himself that he wishes, etc.

[3] Or " voice " (Deussen and Hume).

[4] Khândogya Up. 8, 12, 3-5 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 142).

CHAPTER XIV

THE SELF-CRITICISM OF RELIGION IN THE MYSTICISM OF THE EAST: COMPLETED STATEMENT AND CRITICISM

THE identity and nature of the âtman having been established in the manner indicated in the last chapter, we enter at length upon the phase of essential mysticism. This may be described in general terms as a following out of the âtman-idea, in the most exclusive way, to its extreme logical conclusions. The process is largely one of shedding off everything that is unable to sustain the character of absolute and unadulterated selfhood. Thus the âtman defines itself through its own negations.

Mysticism in its Culminating Phase neither Subjectivist nor Activist, yet still determined by its Source in the Quest for Selfhood

In pursuing this final stage of the total movement, we must take as our guiding principle the thought that while the logic of the situation may lead us to conclusions and concepts the very opposite of those with which we started, and which have marked our progress hitherto, that logic (and the intellectual motives behind it) is essentially the same. This applies particularly to the conception which we adopted as a definitory formula at the outset, the

conception, namely, of mysticism as the product of a subjectivist and activist point of view. In its culminating phase mysticism is neither subjectivist nor activist. Nevertheless all that is most characteristic of it depends upon the fact that it begins from a position that can be described in no other terms.

This is a circumstance that we should try to keep steadily in mind. The failure to do so has led to much one-sided interpretation. Indeed it has become the fashion to lay all the emphasis upon the impersonal and non-activist aspects of mysticism. It is not as an eager quest of selfhood, but as a gospel of self-renunciation, a cult of indifferentism and of quietude, that mysticism has come to be most widely known. Man the individual and man in the generic sense, along with the whole world of human interests, are lost to view in the august presence of a greater Self. Instead of absorbing the cosmos in the intense unity of his individual selfhood, the mystic is supposed to sink his individuality in the cosmos; and the difference of view-point indicated in these two opposing possibilities, has been taken as a measure of the difference between East and West.

> " Looking at the history of the world as a whole " [says Buckle in his *History of Civilization in England*], " the tendency has been, in Europe to subordinate nature to man; out of Europe to subordinate man to nature." [1]

And Hegel has specially singled out the absence of a subjectivist standpoint as the distinguishing characteristic of oriental philosophy. " In the orient ", he

[1] Quoted by R. R. Marett, *Psychology and Folklore*, p. 31.

says, "the moment of subjectivity has not emerged."[1]

Such differences of interpretation as distinguish this view from that which we have been advocating are doubtless the result of the twofold character of mysticism, combining, as it does, Brahman-doctrine with âtman-doctrine. Any inequality of emphasis upon these two aspects of the total system is bound to produce a divergence of views, and if this divergence calls for an explanation, the explanation will naturally assume the form of justifying the initial emphasis.

Now in so far as I have laid the stress upon the doctrine of the âtman rather than upon the doctrine of Brahman, I have done so on the ground that the latter becomes a genuinely mystical theory of life only when it effects a thorough contact with the former. The self-renouncing, anti-activist conclusions of Brahman-lore are rendered theoretically and practically significant as an expression of mysticism by the activist and subjectivist presuppositions of âtman-lore. Thus when the mystic loses his individual selfhood to the Brahman, the whole experience must be interpreted in the light of the idea that it is only in this way that he can attain to that fulness of selfhood which from the beginning has been the object of all his endeavours. If the loss of finite individuality were not equivalent to the attainment of a perfect selfhood, the pilgrimage along the mystical pathway would be meaningless and vain. In whatever way, therefore, and to whatever extent it may be found necessary to reverse positions which have been arrived at as the result of much analysis, it remains true that the new con-

[1] *Geschichte der Philosophie* (*Werke*, Berlin, 1833, Bd. xiii), p. 136.

clusions which result from the fusion of the Brahman and âtman conceptions will have to be read in the light of assumptions peculiar to the latter. In one respect at least Buckle's statement does not truly represent the mysticism of the East. It is not *nature* that swallows up man: it is the Universal Self behind the fabric of appearances which we call nature; and this Self is as fatal to the survival of the natural world as it is to the human individual.

A supposed Parallel between Eleaticism and Mysticism

This interpretation will gain in clearness and force if we view it in the light of a supposed parallel which is sometimes adduced with the intention of rendering mysticism intelligible. The parallel in question is that between the Upanishads and the teaching of Parmenides. It is probably true that the Greek presentation is easier to a western mind, and for that reason the part of Parmenides in the comparison will be that of a rational commentary upon the obscure text of mysticism. My point of view is different. I shall make use of Parmenides not to establish a parallel but to point a contrast.

Parmenides' position, which is quite sufficiently indicated for our purposes in the surviving fragments of his didactic poem, embodies a remarkably straightforward piece of thinking. He begins with a background of already-existing speculation, the fundamental character of which is determined by the fact that early Greek philosophy is dominated neither by the physiological nor by the psychological point of view, but by the point of view which Professor

Burnet has rightly designated 'meteorological'.[1] This is in effect a special instance of what we have described as the objective and phenomenalist standpoint. It follows that from beginning to end Parmenides' attitude is objective and even 'realistic'. That is to say, he is interested in discovering what is *real* in the objective world; and if his conclusions lead him in the end to reject the world of appearances, the particular form which these conclusions assume is determined by the fact that it is with the world of appearances that he begins.

Parmenides assumes a distinction between Truth and the "opinions (δόξαι) of mortals". In these "there is no true belief". Nevertheless there is something to be learned from them. In particular we must learn how to estimate the *objects of opinion* (τὰ δοκοῦντα). As Parmenides puts it:

> "You shall learn how in passing right through all things you ought to have thought that the things which seem to be" (these same δοκοῦντα) "are."[2]

The meaning extracted from these words will depend upon what we understand by "the things which seem to be". Connotatively considered, the expression τὰ δοκοῦντα, which might be rendered, as in our paraphrase, 'objects of opinion', is not the exact equivalent of τὰ φαινόμενα, appearances. But as employed by Parmenides it *denotes* the same

[1] *Early Greek Philosophy*, p. 48, 3rd edition. By the meteorological point of view we must understand the standpoint which combines what we should still call 'meteorological' with what we should now *distinguish* as 'astronomical' phenomena.

[2] Frag. 1, lines 30-31, in H. Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (and in J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 3rd edition, p. 172).

things; and the difference in meaning amounts only to this, that whereas φαινόμενα are only appearances (appearances *as they occur*), δοκοῦντα are appearances *thought about*. They are what we suppose appearances to be—in this case, appearances mistaken for real existents.

The world of ordinary experience, then, is a manifold of appearances, in which, as we pass through it extensively from particular to particular, each appearance is thought about—that is to say, becomes the object of a judgment. Parmenides' philosophy is an attempt to unfold the implications of this fact; and his problem may be stated in the question: What difference does it make to appearances that they become the objects of judgment?

As soon as the issue is stated in this way it is seen that the solution depends entirely upon the judgment-factor and not at all upon the phenomenal factor. Appearances are data of which you can make nothing in themselves. To make anything of them is to think about them; and the whole question turns upon what can be thought—*thought*, and *expressed in words*, the two marks of the proposition.

What, then, can be thought of anything in the pregnant Parmenidean sense? To this question Parmenides gives the truly astonishing answer, ὡς ἔστιν, ὅπως ἔστιν, *that it is*. In other words: the only thing that we can really think about anything is that it exists. The reason for this is that to add anything to the bare fact of existence would be in some sense to *qualify*, and therefore to *negate* this fact; and this the law of consistent thinking forbids us to do. Of that which really exists we cannot

without self-contradiction say that there is any sense in which it does not exist.[1] The *content* of the real—τὸ ὄν, 'that which *is*—is exhaustively expressed in the fact of existence itself. Thus, starting from the phenomenalist assumption of a world of objectively presented appearances, we reach the conclusion that the reality of everything is comprehended in the meaning of the proposition 'it is'.

This phase of the problem has its analogue in the Upanishads, the difference being that between a phenomenalist and a subjectivist or personalist starting-point. The following passage is from the Katha Upanishad:

> "'He (the Self) cannot be reached by speech, by mind, or by the eye. How can it be apprehended except by him who says: "He is"?'
>
> "'By the words "He is", is he to be apprehended, and by (admitting) the reality of both (the invisible Brahman and the visible world, as coming from Brahman). When he has been apprehended by the words "He is", then his reality reveals itself.'"[2]

It will be said that between the assertions 'he is' and 'it is' there is no essential difference. If the content of the real is in each case to be reduced to the bare fact of existence, it cannot possibly matter whether we use the personal or the impersonal form of speech. Or, to be more exact, the latter is alone quite appropriate, and it is equally appropriate in

[1] "It can neither be said nor thought that it is not" (frag. 8, lines 8-9; Burnet, p. 175).

[2] Katha Up. 6, 12-13 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 23). Max Müller here follows Saṅkara in his interpretation of 'both' as meaning the 'conditioned' and the 'unconditioned' Brahman. *Vide* Hume's note *in loco*. Hume and Deussen differ both from Max Müller and from one another.

the two cases.[1] For surely every vestige of personal significance has died out of the self of which we can assert nothing but its existence. This is of course undeniable, and there is a phase (and a very important phase) of mysticism that coincides with the doctrine of Parmenides. But the Parmenidean point of view enables us to see only one phase of mysticism, and there are at least two other phases, each more fundamental than the one in question. In order to make this clear we must proceed to another point in the argument.

Having formulated his basic principle that the real is that which can be thought and spoken of, and that the latter is neither more nor less than that of which we can only say 'it is', Parmenides goes on to what is assuredly one of the most radical reinterpretations of experience to be found in the whole range of human thought. If, as we journey exhaustively through all things, we discover nothing of which we can truthfully assert more than its bare existence, then obviously the definitory formula of all appearances becomes the same. As each particular presents itself, we are permitted by the conditions of thought to put only two questions, 'Is it?' 'Is it not?' and by the same conditions we are forbidden to reply in the negative. The definition of all things being one and the same, it follows that the manifold collapses into a single undifferentiated whole of being. The one formula which exactly

[1] Note the sexlessness of the self considered as the vital principle. Here distinctions of male, female and even neuter are inapplicable. Aitareya-Âraṇyaka, II Âr. 3, 8, 6. In Kaushîtaki Up. 1, 7 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 279), Brahman has male, female and neuter names, but these apply only to the "conditioned and mythological form of Brahman". *Vide* Max Müller's note.

covers everything implies that everything exactly covers everything else. Object obliterates object. All phenomenal differences disappear on the plane of reality. This conclusion is the direct and inevitable consequence of Parmenides' thinking. Its grounds are strictly logical, and as such it shares to the full the objective character of logical necessity.

Mysticism the more Comprehensive Doctrine

Now mysticism, in so far as it has to do with the purely objective aspect of things, ends in a similar declaration, and it is easy to parallel from the Upanishads everything that Parmenides has said about the unreality of difference. But, as remarked above, this is only one aspect of the case. Mysticism is therefore the more complex and comprehensive doctrine of the two; and this fact is due entirely to its subjective starting-point. The characteristic tenet of Eleaticism, in its extreme Parmenidean form, is *the indiscernibility of the object*; the characteristic tenet of mysticism is *the indiscernibility of the subject*. Thus if we adopt as the Eleatic formula the statement 'object obliterates object', we must *add* to this, in the case of mysticism, the two additional formulae: 'Subject obliterates object' and 'subject obliterates subject'.[1]

This means in effect that the self which is defined in the formula 'he is' is by no means the same thing as the existent which is defined by the fact that it exists. To *be* in the sense in which the self can

[1] "Der Âtman ist Subjekt und Objekt zugleich; daher kann er nicht, wie ein Objekt, erkannt, sondern muss durch das unmittelbare Bewusstsein 'er ist' im Yoga erfasst werden" (Deussen, p. 286, footnote on the passage in Katha Up. just quoted).

be said to be (even if, as is the case, it precludes being anything other than the self, and even if, as is also the case, its selfhood is nothing but *its being a self*) is to be more than the barely existent. In a word, bare existence is not the full connotation of being, when the existent happens to be a Self.[1]

The advantage which mysticism enjoys in this respect may be shown as follows. Eleaticism and mysticism are alike based on a sense of the unreality of all that common experience reveals to us in the variegated world of space and time. Both doctrines therefore are attempts to discover a reality which shall be independent of the divisions characteristic of the world of space and the vicissitudes characteristic of the world of time. But for this task Parmenides has no equipment of thought except that supplied by his concept of consistency and by his naïvely realistic presuppositions. This means that although he perceives the unreality of everything in space and time, he is yet forced back, in his attempt to render his logically defined world of reality exact and apprehensible, upon space as the only available conception. The reality of which he is in search, and which he has actually succeeded in defining, must therefore be thought of in terms which preclude it. It seems impossible for him to get rid of space by those methods which enable him to get rid of everything else. The illusory

[1] On the relative concreteness of the mystical concept cf. the remark of Oldenberg: "Es ist bezeichnend . . . dass es eben nicht das 'Seiende' war, sondern konkretere schon inmitten jenes welterfüllenden Gewirrs der Opfersymbolik vorhandene Potenzen, die nunmehr zur definitiven Besitznahme der höchsten Stelle aufrückten" (*Die Lehre der Upanishaden und die Anfänge des Buddhismus*, pp. 44-45). The two 'powers' are the Brahman and the Âtman.

contents of experience are composite particulars, uniting in themselves the various conditions under which experience is obtained—space, time and sense. In their compositeness they are unreal, because unthinkable. But may it not be that among these contents there is something which, if taken by itself and apart from logically impossible combinations, will meet all the demands which reason makes upon a reality which is not to contradict itself? Parmenides proceeds to remove everything which cannot be said to *be* without at the same time being seen, in some sense, *not* to be. In this way he gets rid of time, motion, the difference between one place and another, and the sense-qualities. His explanation of these, like that sometimes given to psychical differences in the Upanishads,[1] is nominalistic.

> "Hence all the things that mortals have postulated, believing them to be true, are but a name: I mean coming to be and passing away, being [2] and not-being, change of place and interplay of bright colour." [3]

There remains but one factor from the world of experience—space. But the space in question is a space from which all differences have been removed, as well as everything that renders space a possible object of perception. It is therefore not the space of experience, although it is undoubtedly conceived as the physically existent. To be quite exact, we should have to say that it is physical reality defined in terms of logical necessities. Parmenides adds an

[1] Cf. Aitareya-Âraṇyaka, II Âr. 6, 1, 3-4.

[2] *I.e.* being in the illusory sense in which this is limited by not-being.

[3] Frag. 8, lines 38-41 (Burnet, p. 176).

important implication. The reality which he has discovered cannot, upon purely *a priori* grounds, be conceived as infinite. He tells us it is 'like' a sphere. The guarded expression may perhaps be taken as reflecting a certain difficulty felt in conceiving a physical sphere which is characterized exclusively by abstract theoretical properties. As a matter of fact the conception is an impossible one. The finitude of the sphere is fatal to its existence. For outside the sphere there is nothing whatever—not even empty space. There is nothing therefore to define its limit from without, and to give it exactitude and identity. This in itself would not necessarily prove destructive of its being, provided it were possible to define it from within, and indeed Parmenides speaks of a centre from which it is equally poised. But it is impossible to take this seriously, as his presuppositions do not permit the distinction of centre and circumference. There is only one way in which the notion of a finite spherical universe with nothing beyond it might possibly be reinstated. Physical space might still be conceived in this way as the system of all points for which temporal coordinates could be found. But in this case it would be necessary to admit distinctions of time. In the absence of time the sphere becomes as unthinkable as the existence of anything outside it. The pure being of Parmenides—the existent that is an existent and nothing more—turns out to be pure nothing. The attempt to uncover a core of absolute reality in the purely physical has only proved that the physical is incapable of yielding any such result.

The Advantage enjoyed by Mysticism

From this error mysticism is free. It is so because from the outset it realizes the relativity of the physical. It enters the field equipped with a larger armament of devices than is at the disposal of naïve realism. Beyond the ever-vanishing particulars of nature are the physiological conditions upon which nature subjectively rests ; and beyond the physiological conditions is the self, of which the senses are the instruments and agents. As each set of factors vanishes into its own constitutive conditions, it does so, as we have seen, in the sense of being unable, outside of these conditions, to claim a self-hood of its own. But *there*, where it finds its *cause*, it finds its self. The world around us is Mâyâ, illusion, but only in so far as Mâyâ—the *art*, the *making*—is nothing apart from Mâyin—the artist, the maker. In mysticism there are no such drastic amputations of the content of experience as characterize the surgical work which Parmenides executes with such lightning rapidity upon the *corpus vile* of appearance. Such transvaluation as occurs rests upon an application of causal law rather than upon the law of contradiction. It is ontological (and in its detail mythological, cosmological, physiological, psychological) rather than logical in its significance. Hence appearances, at the worst, are not snuffed out by one fell act of thought. Rather the twilight falls upon them as the pilgrim enters further and further upon the darkness that is less deceptive than the light of knowledge.[1] In plain language, the particulars of experience, which to begin with stand out with

[1] Vâgasaneyi-Saṃhitâ Up. 9 ; Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 4, 4, 10.

arresting individuality, the manifold of sense, earth, water, fire, air, ether (which is space), and then the senses that are needed to give them all the qualities they possess, and finally the persons of which the senses are the diversified function—all these pass as by successive distillations one into the other, until every trace of individuality is lost. Everything is the honey (madhu, the effect) of everything. In contrast to Parmenides, the mystic sees in the appearance of differences not so much a demand for categorical negation as an opening for identification.[1]

> " This sun is the honey of all beings, and all beings are the honey of this sun. Likewise this bright, immortal person in this sun [presumably the sun in the heavens] and that bright, immortal person existing as the eye in the body [2] (both are

[1] This is a point which calls for more precise statement. At first sight it might appear as if the assertion of the text were a direct inversion of the truth. Thus Parmenides maintains that for everything that presents itself to our judgment we must put the question " Is it or is it not ? " and further, that we cannot without contradiction assert " It is not ". The Upanishads on the contrary maintain that this is precisely what we must say. " Not this, not this " is our answer to every individual claimant to metaphysical reality. In a word, Parmenides denies the possibility of negative propositions: the Upanishads maintain that no other form of proposition satisfies the conditions of finite experience. But the point is that in all this Parmenides and the mystics are not dealing with the same *subject*. It is of the *really existing* considered as a *subject of predication* that Parmenides denies the possibility of negative judgments; whereas in maintaining the necessity of such judgments, the mystics are really denying the possibility of *attributing* real existence as a predicate to the *phenomenal manifold*. The two attitudes might therefore be quite correctly characterized by saying that the mystics cannot think of the differences without seeing that there is nothing in them; whereas Parmenides cannot think of *what is* without thinking of what it is not.

[2] ". . . Was in Bezug auf das Selbst jener aus Auge bestehende, kraftvolle, unsterbliche Geist ist " (Deussen).

". . . With reference to oneself, this shining, immortal person who is in the eye " (Hume).

madhu). He indeed is the same as that Self, that Immortal, that Brahman, that All." [1]

The Final Stage in the Passage to a Completed Mysticism : the Path of the Supreme and Only Self, the Highest Brahman

The spiritual pilgrimage which we have been attempting to trace, and which terminates in a completed mysticism, begins, as we have seen, with an ideal concept, the concept of the self. The whole process might be comprehended in one phrase, the yearning for selfhood. Armed with his ideal, and with a sense of something already in him akin to it, something that makes for self-completeness, the pilgrim enters the field of experience, to the infinitely variegated content of which he seeks to adjust his tiny spark of being—asking at every move " Is it this, is it this ? " At first he becomes aware of nature as a vast system of causal relations, in the warp and woof of which he feels himself caught up. As cause and as effect he is of a piece with the whole fabric. He is one with all that he perceives around him, with the sun and the moon, with earth and water and air ; and these in turn are one with what is most intimate to him, as word and thought, will and power. And yet they are not altogether one—these forms and forces out there in the world of space and time ; nor is he as yet completely one with them. As the objects of his consciousness, conditioned by his sensibility, they *rest* upon his being, as his being rests upon theirs. This relation of mutual dependence is not,

[1] Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 2, 5, 5 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 114).

however, that ideal of selfhood which he set out to realize, and the measure of his failure is brought home to him by a sense of the illusoriness of knowledge, and by the constant intimations of desire and fear. Apart from his object, his other, there is as yet no selfhood for him; but to find his self for ever in another is to find it for ever eluding him. Thus his quest produces only the reiterated denial, "nêti, nêti" ("it is not this, it is not this"). Nevertheless the labour is not all in vain. In realizing the unity of the created universe, and his union with it, he has attained to the lower or created Brahman. It may be that he will yet attain to the fulness of all that his ideal concept seems to guarantee; and if death overtakes him in the heyday of pursuit, there are other lives in store for him, in which the 'research magnificent' may be renewed.

As in the poem of Parmenides, so in the Upanishads, the metaphor of a journey plays a fundamental rôle. So far the seeker has found something—he has found a path, although the path is dark. But there is a second path which he must find if he is to realize the fulness of his hopes. This is the path of the highest Brahman. As we approach this last phase of the subject, it must be said that there is something paradoxical in the very idea of trying to expound what is professedly a mystery of the initiated. The difficulty, however, is one which cannot by any means be obviated, and a certain warrant to proceed is found in the fact that mysticism is not *all* mystery. Like every other doctrine, it must make itself known by the universal agency of language, and although language may be unable to follow it into its innermost secrets, the same thing is true of all human experi-

ence. The truth about language is that its function is neither to reduplicate nor to create, but merely to symbolize experience, actual or possible. This it does indirectly by evoking certain ideas which in turn, to borrow Locke's appropriate expression, 'represent' experienced actualities. Locke pointed out that our ideas do not necessarily resemble the objects which they thus represent: and we may add that language, in order to be intelligible, does not need to describe the actual content of any experience. All that is necessary is that there should be *ideas* for it to symbolize. Granted such a symbolism, therefore, we may still be in doubt as to the existence, outside the ideas in question, of anything corresponding to the latter. These ideas, for example, may be negations of experience, or they may represent an experience which is the negation of normal experience. This does not mean that they are unintelligible: it means that they may be intelligible *and nothing more*. So far as mere intelligibility is concerned, mysticism even in its extreme form may quite well be easily formulated and easily grasped. If so, the real difficulty will be with the actuality of mystical experience, which the concept *represents*, but is powerless to induce.

To take a simple illustration, there is a time of experience and there is a concept of time. Granted the former, it is easy to employ the latter as its universal symbol. The two differ from each other in so far as the concept is merely that of a particular type of series, a series characterized by transitiveness and asymmetry, by succession and irreversibility. But such a series is not time, nor in the absence of temporal experience would it necessarily suggest

time. Where it is a question of representing *experience*, experience is needed before ideas are capable of conveying the meaning intended. The problem of mysticism is therefore not so much a problem of rendering the conception intelligible (the conception is intelligible enough), but of the possibility of the mystical experience which the conception represents. It is obvious that such experience, since it cannot be derived from the representative ideas, must either come of its own accord, or else must issue, as an extension, modification or correction, from normal experience, in ways of which experience itself contains the secret. Whether this is so is a question we may or may not eventually be able to answer. Our immediate task is to study mysticism in its intellectual setting as a system of ideas, or, if it should turn out to be so, *as an idea.*

Let us then resume the argument where we laid it down. The underlying motive in mysticism is, as we have said, the yearning for selfhood. We have seen, further, that so long as existence is dependent upon external conditions, the individual cannot be said, in the fullest sense of the expression, to have a self of his own. From this the mystical idea follows by a simple inversion. If to be conditioned by others is to be without a self, to be a self is to be without such limitations. It is to be alone without a difference, to be one without a second.

In this idea, theoretically considered, there is nothing more mysterious or unintelligible than in the proposition from which it is derived by negation. Now mysticism implies this selfsame idea, presented, not as a theoretical conception, but as an actual experience. Mystical experience is the *experience* of

being one without a second. It is easy to see that if any such experience is realizable, it is realizable once and for all and by only one being. Thus the dialectic of selfhood leads to the conclusion that there can be only one self. At this point Âtman-lore empties into Brahman-lore.[1] The self must be the All; and with this conclusion there suddenly vanishes every vestige of the trail we have been so long pursuing. The mystical position, we now see, is no more subjectivist and activist [2] than it is objective and phenomenalist. We are beyond all such distinctions. The insight which revealed a meeting-place, a centre of identity, of selfhood, for all the diversified functions of the psycho-physical organism, now extends to a diversified universe, and shows that the same argument which served to define the partial or finite self applies also to the infinite whole.[3] In view of this,

[1] As regards the historical and chronological relationships of the Brahman-idea and the Âtman-idea I find the following: ". . . This Âtman theory was not in all probability a development subsequent to that of Brahma . . . though its beginnings certainly were posterior to the beginnings of the Brahma theory. The two, it would seem, progressed simultaneously and influenced each other until their final union" (Hume, *The Thirteen Principle Upanishads*, Introd. p. 25). "Jene beiden allem Anschein nach etwa gleichzeitig" (H. Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden, etc.*, p. 45).

[2] The supreme self is represented as inactive (Svetâsvatara Up. 1, 9). The different renderings show little agreement; but there appears to be no uncertainty on this point.

[3] "'As all waters find their centre in the sea, all touches in the skin, all tastes in the tongue, all smells in the nose, all colours [or forms] in the eye, all sounds in the ear, all percepts ["intentions", Hume; "*Strebungen*", Deussen] in the mind, all knowledge ["*Erinnerungen*", Deussen] in the heart', etc. . . . As a lump of salt, when thrown into water, becomes dissolved into water, and could not be taken out again, but wherever we taste . . . it is salt,—thus verily, O Maitreyî, does this great Being, endless, unlimited, consisting of nothing but knowledge, rise from out these elements, and vanish again in them" (Brihadâranyaka Up. 2, 4, 11-12; *Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, pp. 111-112).

the finite self is seen to be no self at all. It is but a fragment of the universal diversification, behind which we now discern the absolute solitariness of the one true Being.

The Simultaneous Assertion of Opposites is of the very Essence of Mysticism

It goes without saying that the definition of the supreme and only self, the highest Brahman, is beset with many difficulties, linguistic and other. But these difficulties are in great part due to the fact that the only available terms are saturated with a connotation derived from the phenomenal manifold. Having regard to the ordinary uses of language, there are three courses open to us. Either (1) we may pronounce the Brahman ineffable, or (2) we may define it exclusively by negatives, or else (3) we may represent it as comprehending the totality of all that can be said or known. In this last case it is obvious that we must ascribe to the Brahman numberless qualities and functions which, as they appear in the phenomenal world, are incompatible. Such, as a matter of fact, is frequently the procedure of the Upanishads; and here again we perceive one of the features that clearly distinguish mysticism from Eleaticism. For Parmenides there are things which cannot be uttered together. Where this is so, one of these things cannot be uttered at all. Upon this sort of intellectual inhibition his whole system rests. His one being is the hypostatized product of a logic that has purged out all contradictoriness from the existent. On the other hand the simultaneous assertion of opposites is of the very

essence of mysticism; but such simultaneous assertion is made subject to very precise qualifications. For the purposes of illustration I select two passages, one from the Vâgasaneyi-Samhitâ and one from the Brihadâranyaka Upanishad.

In the first of these passages we read:

> "It stirs and it stirs not; it is far and likewise near. It is inside of all this, and it is outside of all this."[1]

And in the second we read:

> "That Self is indeed Brahman, consisting of knowledge, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, wind, ether, light and no light,[2] desire and no desire, anger and no anger, right or wrong, and all things."[3]

Such assertions must not be taken baldly as nothing but the direct and simultaneous attribution of incompatible predicates to a subject. Such would be a purely superficial view of the case. What we have here is something more than a logical predicament. It is a predicament of the sort that arises when, for example, we think of ourselves as moving in space, and yet identify these same selves with a mind or a character to which we refuse to accord a spatial nature. It is the predicament with which Plato is faced when he is forced to represent the timeless and placeless Ideas as *compresent*[4] with the fugitive particulars of sense-experience. Thus,

[1] Vâgasaneyi-Samhitâ Up. 5 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. i, p. 312).

[2] "Energy and non-energy" (Hume); "*aus Feuer und nicht aus Feuer*" (Deussen).

[3] Brihadâranyaka Up. 4, 4, 5 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 176).

[4] The word παρουσία (*Phaedo* 100 D 5) can only be taken to mean that *where* the particulars are, *there* are the Ideas, although *ex hypothesi* we are precluded from thinking of the Ideas as any*where*.

in the first of the two passages just quoted, the words "It stirs and it stirs not" mean that the Self of all that moves is itself motionless. In the second passage the Self referred to is the soul that remains unreleased from the cycle of change at death. It too is Brahman, although Brahman never truly passes from light to no light, from desire to no desire, from anger to no anger.

The Attributes of the Highest Brahman, though negatively expressed, are not Negations

The lower Brahman is one of the most puzzling conceptions in the whole doctrine. It is apparently to this Brahman that the attribution of opposites in this instance applies; but the truth is that when we come to the highest Brahman, the union of opposites, although an inadequate characterization, is not more so than the kind of characterization that results from a logical purgation. Thus we do not improve upon the conception by limiting ourselves to one side of the opposition. The motionlessness of the supreme being is not the motionlessness which we know as the opposite of movement: his passionlessness is not the 'no-anger', the 'no-desire' that alternate in the finite individual with wrath and concupiscence. These states or qualities, too, in the infinite are in each instance one without a second. They are not the specific negatives or counterparts of specific positive states or qualities. Such being the case, they are not negations at all. That is to say, they are not states which preclude other states, or into which other states pass away; they are not qualities which exist only in the absence of other qualities. Whatever be the mode of their existence, we must conceive

them as unaffected by those distinctions which in the finite divide one thing from another. They are *beyond* all distinctions, all duality—beyond the difference of great and small, of consciousness and unconsciousness, of the known and the unknown,[1] of darkness and light, of good and evil, of being and non-being.[2] They are equal and compresent in the Brahman as a whole. Thus each of them must equal the completeness of the Brahman, and each of them must equal each. The attributes of the Brahman are all of them transcendent, and hence they may and must all be ascribed to him in the same manner. Hence, while all qualities as known in ordinary finite experience must be predicated negatively,[3] all qualities in the transcendent sense must be predicated affirmatively. Of the Brahman we must *deny* that it is either great or small, but we must *affirm* that it is at once greater than the great and smaller than the small.[4] Obviously we are here in the presence of a being that transcends

[1] Talavakâra (Kena) Up. 1, 4 (1, 3 Hume, 1, 3 b Deussen).

[2] Śvetâśvatara Up. 4, 18. Cf. the same point in Parmenides, as already indicated.

[3] It (the Imperishable) is " neither short nor long, neither red (like fire) nor fluid ['adhesive' (Hume), 'anhaftend' (Deussen)] (like water); it is without shadow, without darkness, without air, without ether, without attachment ['stickiness' (Hume)], without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without light (vigour), without breath, without a mouth (or door), without measure, having no within and no without, it devours nothing and no one devours it" (Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 3, 8, 8; *Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, pp. 137-138).

[4] In Katha Upanishad we are told of a Great Self which is beyond the intellect, and beyond which is the Undeveloped or the Unmanifest (Avyaktam), and finally the Person. The Valli continues: " He who has perceived that which is without sound, without touch, without form, without decay, without taste, eternal [or 'constant' (Hume)], without smell, without beginning, without end, beyond the Great, and unchangeable, is freed from the jaws of death" (Katha Up. 1, 3, 15; *Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 14).

all distinctions whatsoever, as well as the principles of all division, space and time.[1] The ether without (all space) is equalled by the ether within the heart.[2] The person, of the size of a thumb, who stands in the middle of the self is lord of the past and the future.[3] Time is not regarded realistically as an independent and irreducible principle of existence and of experience. It is not something beyond which it is in vain to seek: rather it is the broken reflection of a reality which in itself is undivided. Unreal as its divisions are, like the divisions of space, they are the product or manifestations of something that is real.

> "By the command of that Akshara (the imperishable), O Gârgî, sun and moon stand apart. By the command of that Akshara, O Gârgî, heaven and earth stand apart. By the command of that Akshara, O Gârgî, what are called moments (nimesha), hours (mûhûrta), days and nights, half-months, months, seasons, years, all stand apart." [4]

Just as the motionless is the self of all that moves,

[1] "Zu dessen Füssen hinrollend
In Jahr und Tagen geht die Zeit,
Den als der Lichte Licht Götter
Anbeten, als Unsterblichkeit,

In dem der Wesen fünffach Heer
Mitsamt dem Raum gegründet stehn,
Den weiss als meine Seele, ich,
Unsterblich, den Unsterblichen."

Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 4, 4, 16-17 (Deussen, *op. cit.* pp. 478-479).

[2] "'As far, verily, as this world-space (*ayam ākāśa*) extends, so far extends the space within the heart. Within it, indeed, are contained both heaven and earth'", etc. (Khândogya Up. 8, 1, 3; Hume, *op. cit.* p. 263).

[3] Katha Up. 1, 4, 12-13.

[4] Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 3, 8, 9; *Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 138.

as the unseen is the self of all that appears, so the timeless is the reality of the temporal.

Criticism of the preceding Doctrines. Is there a Mystical EXPERIENCE?

So far we have attempted to confine ourselves to the intellectual formulation of mysticism, leaving aside the question whether experience contains anything answering to the ideal formula—whether there is in fact such a thing as mystical experience. It is now no longer possible to postpone this question. Unfortunately a complete solution presupposes a critique of experience, and such a critique we are not yet ready to undertake. In place of it we shall, for the present, content ourselves with offering a few simple but fundamental considerations, which it will be our business at a later stage to elaborate and defend. For the sake of concentration we shall further confine the issue to one representative problem — the possibility of an experience from which the element of time is entirely wanting. If this is not possible, then experience can never be *completely* mystical.

The Need for a Critique of Experience: some General Considerations: 'Being a Subject' and 'Having an Object'

By experience we may mean one of two things —what it is to have an object, and what it is to be a subject. It might at first sight appear as if in stating the matter thus we were merely presenting the same truth from two sides—as if, in fact, we were

reformulating the now stale and trivial proposition that subject and object are relative to one another. Nothing could be further from our purpose. The two possibilities of experience which we have in mind are to be taken disjunctively, but in a peculiar sense. To have an object is itself experience, and as such it implies a subject or self in some sense of the term. In so far, however, as we confine ourselves to the experience of having an object (that is to say, to the experience involved in observing the variable content of space and time), this fact must be understood to indicate a genuine difference in the possibilities of experience itself. Having an object is a type of experience: it is not the form of all experience. Thus while it is the case that a consciousness of objects is at the same time an experience of selfhood, it by no means follows that the self-experience which accompanies a consciousness of objects is the only kind of self-experience, or is self-experience *at its best.* It may be that in some cases at least there is a certain bipolar relation between the experience of having an object and the experience of being a subject, and that when the one is at its maximum, the other is at the vanishing-point. Looking at the question from the opposite end, we may say that there does not appear to be any *a priori* reason why the experience of being a subject or self should imply that of having an object. There are obscure states of consciousness, in which, although the fact of awareness cannot be denied, it is at least doubtful whether anything that could rightly be described as an object is discernible. We conclude, therefore, that while the experience of having an object is at the same time the experience of being

a subject, the converse is not necessarily true.

These general considerations are reinforced in a striking way by the diversities of interpretation to which the notion of experience has been subjected by different schools of thought. Particularly instructive is the contrast between the mysticism which we are at present considering and the philosophy which stands most directly opposed to mysticism in every form—the philosophy that speaks in the name of experience and calls itself—most inappropriately, as we shall see—empiricism. Broadly speaking, we may say that in its interpretation of experience, empiricism lays all the stress on what it is to have an object. In so far as it recognizes the existence of a subject, by the latter it understands at the very utmost no more than the observing consciousness (itself a possible object of observation) to which objects are presented as data. The presentation of the object is the significant fact, in the light of which the existence of the subject, if acknowledged at all, is to be interpreted. From the standpoint of empiricism, therefore, the experience of being a subject never means more than the experience of having an object, whereas from the standpoint of the present analysis, what it means to have an object is very far from being the equivalent of what it means to be a subject.

So long as the traditional attitude of empiricism is maintained, the type of all experience is found in the presentation of a datum to an observer. Especially is this true of the experience which is tantamount to knowledge, and which we might describe as ' illuminating '. To assume, however, that all experience, or all ' illuminating ' experience, is of this type, or that the nature of experience in general is best

formulated as the relation of a datum to a conscious subject, is a procedure which can only be termed dogmatic. It is based on a number of pure assumptions, chief among which is the assumption that the object known, the datum, must be something quite different from the act of knowing it or from the knowing subject. That such is the case will no doubt appear to certain types of mind an indefeasible necessity of thought; but this in itself is not decisive, for it is no less certain that to other types of mind it appears axiomatic that nothing can be really known so long as there remains any difference between the known and the knower. This of course is the standpoint of mysticism.

Now if it is necessary that the distinction of subject and object, as mysticism maintains, should in the end disappear, then the experience which we have described as that of having an object disappears along with the distinction. But does the remaining type of experience, that of being a subject, also pass away? Of course there is something inappropriate in speaking of a subject to which no object corresponds. None the less the experience in question may be declared to survive as a sense of undivided selfhood. This sense, which, to a mind chiefly trained along the lines of 'empirical' comprehension, will doubtless have about it something vague and incomprehensible, can nevertheless be seen to conform in one important respect to the universal character of experience. There is something in it that is *given*: only in this case the datum is not given *to* an observing consciousness: it is given *with* the consciousness from which it is indistinguishable.

That such a formula is a theoretically possible

one cannot be denied: that it is required in order to supplement the deficiencies of the other can easily be made clear. In the first place, awareness of an object can hardly be considered an accurate or adequate description of *all* states of the subject. There are instances in which the content of consciousness is so thoroughly integrated with the consciousness of the content that the analysis into subject and object, with a stereotyped relation between the two, is anything but an exact or exhaustive account of the facts themselves. In such instances (and this is the important point) the situation is much more accurately described as the experience of a subject than as the experience of an object.

This integration of consciousness and content is of course characteristic of the lower levels of the mental life; but it is no less characteristic of the higher levels. The artist's or thinker's preoccupation with his theme is a case in point; and even in instances which lend themselves most completely to the analysis into subject and object, the subject-factor is never adequately described in terms which relate it exclusively to the object. What is more, there appear to be cases in which, contrary to the rule, the greater the prominence attained by the object-factor, the less adequate does the 'empirical' formula become. The experience of being entirely engrossed in an object may be an experience in which the subject can by no means be considered a mere observing consciousness. The relation of consciousness to its object becomes dynamic—the attitude of an active, self-adjusting, possibly a creative, force. If the object happens at the same time to be an *event*, the observer not only follows its

successive phases with strained attention: he *anticipates* each incident, throwing himself into posture after posture of mental and muscular expectation, and accompanying the whole with a running commentary of psycho-physical reactions. The absorption of a spectator in some drama (whether on the stage or in real life), or in the movements of a game, frequently reaches a point of intensity at which his *experience* is far more that of a participant than of a spectator. This is a truism; but that does not prevent many thinkers from failing lamentably to draw the necessary conclusions. A few words of analysis will show what these are.

Importance of the Distinction between Object-Event and Experience-Event

The total situation in this instance is an event—not the event being transacted before the eyes of the observer, the event that constitutes *his* object—but the event that constitutes *his experience of having such* an object. For the sake of clearness, we shall speak of the first of these as the object-event, and of the second as the experience-event.

Now, to begin with, we can admit the reality, as well as the presence to consciousness, of the object-event. The latter is an independent fact in the world of space and time. That is to say, it is being transacted independently of the further fact that a spectator is all the while observing it with an intense and discriminating attention. In the second place, we shall admit that the object-event is in the truest sense the spectator's object. He is aware of it, and for the time being he is not acutely aware of any-

thing else. Between him and it there exists the familiar relation of subject to object, of knower to known. In addition to these we shall make the following admissions: (1) that the object-event, as the subject perceives it, is the object-event as it actually occurs, except for such modifications as are due to the general conditions of perception—and these he has long since learned to understand and in some degree to rectify; and (2) that the emotional and conative accompaniments of the act of perception are no part of the object observed, that they are probably not themselves observed, and that they may be disregarded so far as the subject-object relation is in this instance concerned.

Having stated the case, then, exclusively in terms of an observing consciousness, an object observed, and a certain relation between them, I maintain that what I have described is not the experience of the observer—in other words, that what we have here is not really an analysis of the *experience-event*. That the spectator is conscious of the object is matter of fact; but his consciousness of the object is not identical with his experience of what it means to be thus conscious. His emotional and conative states are integral parts of the experience; but we have agreed that they do not occur as the spectator's objects. He is not at all *in this sense* aware of himself. The circumstances exclude what we ordinarily understand by self-consciousness.

Granted then that his consciousness is entirely absorbed in the object-event which he is observing, it still remains true that his experience is something more than his consciousness of the object-event as

such. It is the experience of observing the object. From this it follows that when the object-factor is most pronounced and the element of observation is at its maximum, there is no such thing as an experience which is only the experience of an object, but that every experience must be to some extent the experience of being a subject.[1] In a word, the consciousness of an object implies an experience of *Self*.

The Possibility of Mystical Experience

In considering the possibility of mystical experience, we must begin with self-experience as an actual fact. To begin here secures for us everything that is requisite for the solution of the problem. In the first place, looking at the subject from the standpoint of the theoretical formulation of mysticism, we perceive at once that mystical experience, if such a thing exists, must be of the type which we have expressed in the words " What it is to be a subject ". In the second place, the fact that such experience as is implied in this phrase not only occurs at the ordinary or non-mystical level, but is present in all experience whatsoever, ensures its contact with the normal life of men. It is this contact alone which entitles us to presume that the mystical life, if there is anything at all in it, may be shown to issue from the experience of every day in ways of which experience itself contains the secret. What we now see is that all experience is *in a sense* mystical. Our problem therefore is to discover whether and by

[1] The question whether this implies that all experience must be *conscious* experience is one which will be treated at a later point.

what means the mystical side of it may be so developed as to exclude all else.

In this connection certain distinctions must be made clear, if we are to avoid stumbling into the numerous pitfalls with which our path is here beset. Chief of these is the danger of identifying mystical experience with certain other forms of experience, which on a superficial view might appear to approximate closely to it, but which should really be considered limiting or defective instances of the normal life of consciousness. The fact is that while mystical experience may claim to be conceived as an extreme case of *self*-experience, there are cases of self-experience which are not in any special sense mystical. These are simply the forms which experience assumes under certain conditions, and belong to the normal evolution or to the pathology of the conscious life. Such, it may be presumed, is the experience of the newly-born infant, and of the mature consciousness when subjected to any of the familiar agencies—narcotics, anæsthetics, etc.—which produce an extreme displacement of the threshold, without inducing actual unconsciousness. It is obviously not in instances like these that we must look for mystical experience in the special sense of the term—although it must be admitted that such well-authenticated possibilities of undeveloped, obscure or suspended objectivity in the field of our awareness are of value as throwing light upon the further possibilities which we are exploring.

Another point of importance concerns our use of language. It may have been observed that in this inquiry we have allowed ourselves to treat the words 'subject' and 'self' as synonymous. This is a liberty

which it might not in every instance be easy to defend; but in the present case it finds its justification in the quite exceptional nature of the conceptions with which we are compelled to deal. Thus our use of the word 'subject' will not be questioned in reference to the experience which consists in a correlation of consciousness and its object. Our difficulties begin with the experience in which such correlation is at an end owing to the disappearance of the object-factor. The assumption that the other factor may continue to exist under the circumstances is of course the topic of our inquiry, and pending a final solution we have to find a term which will meet the demands of the assumption. The most suitable word seems to be the word 'self', which we may define for the time being and for the limited purposes of this discussion, as what the subject is all along, and more particularly what it continues to be when every vestige of an object has disappeared from consciousness.

Our difficulties, however, are not yet at an end; for it remains to relate the conception expressed in this definition to the conception of selfhood underlying the doctrine of the Âtman. Strictly speaking the Âtman-idea must be taken as comprising the idea of self as just defined. The definition given above, however, is conceived from the psychological and epistemological points of view; whereas the Âtman-idea includes along with these the ontological notion of an *existing* self. From this standpoint, to be a self is to exist without a second, just as from the other, to be a self is to be a subject without an object. In each case what we have is the idea of self-sufficiency, a sufficiency based upon the postulate that all the

factors in the case shall have been completely interhalized. Furthermore the two conceptions in the end inevitably coalesce. For a self defined from the ontological standpoint as existing without another is a self which can exist only as a subject. That is to say, all otherness must turn out to be nothing more than its states. On the other hand, the subject-self, if it is to be more than a figment of the brain, an *ens rationis*, must be thought of as existing : it must be a self in the ontological sense.

The Problem restated. Is the Mystical Experience that which has no Object?

Our problem now takes the following form. Assuming, as we have done, that ordinary experience combines what we have called ' being a subject ' and ' having an object ', we must inquire whether it is possible from such a starting-point to proceed, along the lines of experience itself, to an experience which shall be entirely that of being a subject. Our warrant for stating the problem in this way lies in the fact that experience as a whole, in the ordinary sense, oscillates from one type to the other. There is an experience which is more the experience of having an object, and there is an experience which is more the experience of being a subject.

The precise points upon which we must concentrate are easily seen. We must ask whether the claims that mysticism makes for itself are realized as experience becomes progressively subjective. These would seem to imply that in the advance to a purely subjective experience there should be no loss of what we might call *experiential values* ; that is to say,

that nothing of power or freedom or 'blessedness', which we have at our command when our experience is at once that of being a subject and that of having an object, should be forfeited as the experience in question becomes more and more exclusively that of being a subject.

It goes without saying that a purely subjective experience is not entirely definable as an experience from which the objective factor is absent. This condition in itself will not guarantee that completeness of *self-experience* of which mysticism claims to have the secret. It will be remembered that in certain cases an enhanced self-experience is accompanied by an increased pre-occupation with the object; and apparently some such preoccupation, raised to the limit of absorption, is a chief means of attaining to the state of mystical elevation. Conversely, the absence of any well-defined objective content may carry with it an equivalent absence of self-experience. Such, it may be conjectured, is the case of the infant, and such is undoubtedly the state of the mind in sleep and under those pathological conditions already referred to, where the threshold of consciousness is abnormally raised. That such conditions have a certain fascination for the mind of the mystic can hardly be denied, and assuredly they play an important rôle in his attempts to explain the true inwardness of mystical experience. Perhaps they are to be considered useful analogues of what he really means; and if so, they have their place somewhere on the path that leads to the highest Brahman. But surely their significance ends here, and if we push the analogy too far the result is a dangerous counterfeit. For mystical experience does not merely imply

a certain state of the self; it implies that this state has been induced in a particular way. The pathological and other states referred to are the product of natural causes, and therefore of conditions beyond themselves. They are, therefore, the very antithesis of that which goes to the making of completed selfhood.

In the treatment of this whole phase of the subject there is much wavering and uncertainty in the Upanishads; but we may take the judgment of Indra as decisive. The self of dreamless sleep that has "gone to utter annihilation" is no true self. This does not prevent annihilation, either in the form of death or of sheer nothingness, being taken as the type of all reality[1]; but neither the death that comes by nature nor the nothingness that results from the minute division of matter can be looked upon as the embodiment of the mystical ideal. Each is but the correlative of an *other* in the world of illusions. The death of the body, except for those on whom the light of truth has dawned, is the transition to a new birth, and the nothing of spatial subdivision by endless vain repetitions builds up the fabric of visible unrealities. On the other hand, the nothingness into which space divides, and the death in which life terminates, may be taken as a measure of reality in the life of nature and the world of space. As the one is, so is the other. Seen in this light, the world around us and our existence as a part of nature are nothing. But beyond their nothingness, and beyond the nothingness of space and of death,

[1] A good illustration is to be found in a passage quoted by Royce from the Khândogya Upanishad (*The World and the Individual*, vol. i, p. 165).

is the supreme negation, which is no mere phase of nature but is the one real affirmation—the Brahman which is neither here nor there, neither now nor then, and from which there is no returning.

Truly Mystical Experience, being Non-temporal, not possible to us

We must conclude, therefore, that no experience which comes to us in the ordinary way of nature, no experience for which natural causes can be assigned, is a truly mystical experience. Nature is the realm of external conditions, and the condition of a completed selfhood is not to be found there. It is on this ground that the experience of the infant and all pathological experience must be excluded. Such experience, while deficient in objectivity, is not on that account any richer in the element of selfhood. It is not a true internalization, but a product of conditions over which the self has little or no control, and of which in most cases it has no knowledge or understanding.

So far then as ordinary experience is concerned, only two possibilities seem to be indicated, and in both cases the result is directly opposed to the theoretical postulates of mysticism. On the one hand there is the experience which is deficient in objectivity without any compensating increment in genuine self-experience; and on the other there is the enhancement of self-experience which is attended by a commensurate enhancement of the objective element. The question consequently comes to be: Are there any indications (apart from such negative ones) of an extension, modification or rectification

of ordinary experience which, if followed out to its extreme limits, would result in the type of experience theoretically formulated by mysticism—an experience in which what it is to have an object, to be one along with others in a pluralistic universe, gives place entirely to the experience of being a self without a second ?

In order to answer this question we must go back to a feature of ordinary experience which was specially emphasized in our account of the successive steps in the approach to mysticism, namely, activity. More than in any other way the nature of the self is revealed by its character as active. And let me say again, in somewhat different language, what is really implied in all that has been already said as to activity and selfhood. In the first place, if there are anywhere in the universe factors which are not entirely the product of other factors, then these factors are so far selves. Whether such factors exist it will be our business at a later stage to inquire. For the present it is enough to observe that if they do not exist, the idea of a self, and with it the idea of any such thing as experience, is quite meaningless. Secondly, if there are events into which such factors enter, in the same way in which the ' particles ' of physics, when they are said to ' move ', enter into varying relations of space and time, the events in question are so far the *actions* of the factors concerned. These assumptions are the very essence of what we mean when we use active verbs.

It will be seen then that activity occurs in the form of events, although of course the converse does not necessarily hold : there may be events which are not actions. If there is such a thing as movement

in space which is *nothing but* movement, then we have a case in point. For such movement involves no factors but space and time, along with the relations which derive from these two. So understood, motion is nothing but change of place, and the idea of activity is excluded.

The case is very different when motion not merely occurs but is observed to occur. To observe motion is to have an object, and that, as we have seen, is tantamount to being a subject or self. Furthermore, the observation of the object is the self's experience at once of what it is to be a self and of what it is to have an object; and such experience is activity. That is to say, it is an event into which a self enters in such a way that the event must be imputed to the self as *its* event.

Now it is the very nature of such experience to occur at successive moments of time, and but for this succession, experience, as ordinarily known to us, would be impossible. So far as our problem is concerned, this fact must be taken as decisive. If the experience of every finite self is an experience of what it is to be amenable to time-distinctions, then no experience of the finite self can ever be an experience of what it is to be a self in the absolute sense of mysticism. The purity of such an experience, as an experience of *being*, will always be infected by the differences which we express in the phrases, *coming to be*, and *passing away*. Selfhood in the absolute sense of mysticism, therefore, is not attainable in a world of which the universal and primary character is the distinction between one time and another. In such a world there can never be that completeness of internalization which mysticism demands of the

absolute self; and if the absolute self is impossible, then clearly it is impossible to experience absolute selfhood.

We are now for the first time in a position to answer the question in which this long discussion of mysticism had its origin. That question, it will be remembered, had to do with what I described as the 'constitutional disability' of a time-conditioned experience—in other words, with the fact that an experience which lays itself out in a succession of *times* is an experience which, from the very nature of the case, is for ever incapable of realizing the ideal postulates of religion. In view of this predicament we had recourse to the obvious device of supposing an experience not thus determined—a non-temporal experience. If such a thing exists at all, it can exist only as the self-experience of a being that is *all self*, a being that has drawn into the vortex of its own existence everything which from any other point of view would appear as an external condition. For such a self there can be nothing that is missed either because it has ceased to be or because it has not come into being. There can be no distinction of times. All is together at once; and with this *alltogetherness* presumably will go the 'bliss' which is the self-feeling of a being that is complete.

The conception of a timeless being is, as we have seen, theoretically possible; but we have sought in vain for any means of turning the theoretical possibility into a possibility of experience. In order to do so, it would have been necessary to find in the ordinary forms of finite experience some hint of the kind of experience of which we are in search—an experience in which the *next step* would be not

another event in time but a step out of the time world altogether. Of such an experience we have found no trace.

Restatement of Conclusions thus far reached

Our results may be summarized by saying that our experience is sometimes more an experience of ourselves than of anything else, and sometimes more of other things than of ourselves: that all experience is to some degree self-experience; but that, finally, neither this fact nor any other which we have discovered about experience in any way suggests the possibility of an experience that is not an experience of time. The nearest approach to a limiting instance is the case in which self-experience is most nearly the *exclusive* experience of self; and this is always an experience either of the succession, or, at the least, of the duration, of subjective states.

There is another aspect of the case that calls for notice. The activity of a finite self is always *restless* activity. That is to say, it is an activity which involves interaction between the self and another. Activity is a comprehensive conception which includes not only what we call active but also what we call passive states. The latter, if they are really states of a self, are, like the former, instances of the self's activity under certain conditions. As has been pointed out, they are instances of *re*-action, and the difference between them and active states is that in the case of the latter we look upon the self as in some sense initiating the conditions to which other selves react; whereas in the case of passive states the situation is reversed. The difference is thus one

of degree rather than of kind, but it is a difference which, from the standpoint of selfhood and self-experience, is of fundamental importance. It makes a real difference to the self whether at any moment its activity radiates out from it to others, or merely comes into play as the reaction of its nature to the forces by which it is surrounded.

The point that chiefly concerns us here, however, is that the activity of a completed selfhood, as conceived by mysticism, is different from activity in either of the two forms which we distinguish as active and passive states. It is an activity commensurate with the nature of a being that is *all* self —self without a second. As such it is incapable of variation, is unconditioned and conditions nothing. It is a quietness become absolute. It has no correlative. Such impassiveness is quite different from the state of being passive. Strictly speaking, we cannot describe it as a *state* at all; for one state presupposes another, actual or possible; and any such presupposition is in this instance out of the question. It is not something from which or to which there is any transition. We see then that there is no possibility of reaching it by following up the tendencies or the sequences of human experience. If the first steps are time-conditioned, all other steps must be time-conditioned too. From the activity which all human experience implies we cannot pass to an activity without a correlate (hence the mystic's repudiation of works); from the passivity, which is one form of human *activity*, we cannot by any process of intensification hope to reach an absolute impassiveness. The experience of the absolute self is as unique as its selfhood. As there is in the end only one

Âtman, the highest Brahman, so there is in the end only one Quiet, the highest Activity, which is complete Impassivity. The existence of the Brahman is not the realization of existence along lines that lead from human experience onward: it is the extinction of all finite existence. If that Self *is*, it can only be that *we* are not.

The Error common to Naturalism and Mysticism

It might well seem, then, as if the labour of so much inquiry had been all in vain. Such a conclusion, however, is not warranted until we have asked whether it is not possible to learn something from the failure of mysticism. It is reasonable at least to expect that if we can discover the sources of that failure, the discovery will suggest new approaches to our problem and to its solution. A complete understanding of the situation will be possible only when we are able to confront mysticism with the view of reality most directly opposed to it, namely, naturalism, and when we are able to estimate more exactly the truth and error embodied in each view. This final estimate belongs to the later part of our inquiry, which has to do with the *validity* of religion. For the present we are still concerned mainly with the *concept*. Under this limitation, however, it is easy to show that mysticism breaks down as a solution of the religious problem of existence. The view of reality which it offers is incompatible with the idea which is at the root of religion.

A few words of recapitulation will serve to review our concept, so far as we have succeeded in formulating it. Religion, we have seen, originates at the

moment when the universal instinct of self-preservation, transformed by development into the desire to live, relates itself in a practical way to the animistic view of nature. It is the appeal of the finite consciousness to a personal power, conceived at once as raised above the limiting conditions that threaten human existence, and as able to protect and to promote the life so ardently desired. At the basis of religion is an organic instinct raised to the level of reflection and there reaffirmed as a comprehensive value-judgment upon existence. Religion is a phenomenon of finitude, and to remove the finite factor is to cancel our concept of religion altogether. The existence desired is existence as already revealed in human experience—revealed there as an actuality, yet incomplete and instinct with suggestions of something better.

Thus the concept of religion is not more bound up, on the practical side, with the preservation of existence, than it is on the theoretical side with the preservation of *the finite*. A universe which is all God is as incompatible with religion as a universe in which a god is altogether wanting. From the mystical point of view, dominated by the idea of a complete identification of the finite with the infinite, religion is a part of the general illusion of finitude; and the emancipation from the conditions of finite existence is an emancipation from religion as well. To be completely lost in God is to lose God completely. To become *one* with the One that knows no other is to cease to be His worshipper. Indeed the very idea of worship becomes a superstition of the unenlightened. In a world which is one solitary self, it is the self alone which can be worshipped—the self of the worshipper, where worshipper and worshipped

have become one.[1] Thus the act of overt worship becomes an absurdity.[2] And with the act of worship goes the value-judgment. For what is worship but the act whereby the finite individual hopes to secure the realization of the values which he judges to be the key to the meaning of life itself?

Here again in the notion of *meaning* we detect another feature in the concept of religion. Meaning may be defined as the ideal element in the actual. As such it is an attribute of everything for which existence *of any sort* can be claimed—of all that occupies so much as a point in space or an instant of time. It is something in a transient event which is not exhausted by the spatio-temporal conditions that define the event as such. The cup of cold water offered in the name of the Lord is doubtless so much matter in motion, and does not cease to be so, however our emotions may glorify the event; but to deny all right to invest the physical event with the significance of an ideal value is to deny the fundamental principle upon which religion rests.[3] It is to

[1] Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 1, 4, 8-10 (*Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 88).

[2] "Now if a man worships another deity, thinking the deity is one and he another, he does not know. He is like a beast ["Haustier" (Deussen), "a sacrificial animal" (Hume)] for the Devas" (gods) (Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 1, 4, 10; *Sacred Bks.* vol. xv, p. 88).

[3] Contrast the Christian idea that a gift offered to a fellow-mortal is to be interpreted *ideally*, as a sacrifice offered to the divine being, with the view of the Upanishads, fundamentally *realistic*, that every act of giving, including the act of sacrifice itself, is to be interpreted as the supplying of conditions for existence—a *becoming*, as it were, *the world in which the recipient lives*. "Now this Self, verily, is a world of all created things. In so far as a man makes offerings and sacrifices, he becomes the world of the gods. In so far as he learns [the Vedas], he becomes the world of the seers (ṛṣi). In so far as he offers libations to the fathers and desires offspring, he becomes the world of the fathers. In so far as he gives lodging and food to men, he becomes the world of men. In so far as he finds grass and water for animals, he becomes the

insist that the only meanings that exist are those which serve to define the position of the finite, for example, in space and time. To insist upon such a view is to insist upon a purely literal reading of the finite world. It is to invest the finite with the finality of an absolute. This is the attitude of naturalism; and, strange as the assertion may appear, the unqualified repudiation of works by oriental mysticism has in it an identical implication. The only difference is that whereas naturalism assumes that the literal acceptance of finite fact implies that the finite is the real, mysticism attempts to support its belief in the unreality of the finite by insisting that the latter be taken literally.

The exclusion of all ideality is thus made to serve two opposite ends; but in both instances the exclusion is fatal to religion, in the one case by cutting the ideal out of nature, in the other by casting nature adrift from the ideal. In the history of human thought such violent exclusions frequently call down upon them a swift nemesis. Brahmanism is a religion run to metaphysics, and contemptuous of works. In the Buddhism to which it gave birth works are all in all, and metaphysics is a delusion. With the disappearance of metaphysics there disappears the idea of a god who is no more than a metaphysical construct, and the paradox of a religion based upon acosmism is followed by the paradox of a religion tainted with atheism. Brahmanism is the nemesis of oriental religion; Buddhism is the nemesis of Brahmanism.

world of animals. In so far as beasts and birds, even to the ants, find a living in his houses, he becomes their world. Verily, as one would desire security for his own world, so all creatures wish security for him who has this knowledge" (Bṛihadâraṇyaka Up. 1, 4, 16; Hume's tr. *op. cit.* p. 85).

END OF VOL. I

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