

Adventures in Religion

ESSAYS FROM 'FAITH AND FREEDOM'
EDITED BY ERIC SHIRVELL PRICE

CH Bartlett
Frank A Bullock
Raymond V Holt
EG Lee
Eric Shirvell Price
Albert Schweitzer
Francis Terry
Paul Tillich
Von Ogden Vogt



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Foreword

WHAT does a questioning reader look for in a small collection of essays taken from the pages of a liberal religious journal privately circulated over the past twenty years?

What indeed! These post-war years have been 'back-to-the-wall' years for liberal theology and for the liberal's implicit faith in man. In 1947, when *Faith and Freedom* was launched, the second world war had but recently ended. Man's thinly-veiled depravity had been starkly uncovered. Barthian theology, with its insistence on the doctrine of man's essentially sinful nature, was more deeply entrenched in Catholic and Protestant circles than it had ever been. A new appearance was existentialism, an anguished attempt to meet the challenge of human despair in the midst of the mass neurosis of war and its aftermath. But existentialism was to show that it could not of itself provide any adequate faith for men living in a disintegrated society, surrounded by warring ideologies and growing disillusionment.

Out of this background—and in defiant reaction against it—have come these essays. They affirm, in no uncertain terms, a deep faith in freedom, in reason, in tolerance, and in responsibility—the principles which animate all truly religious liberalism, whether avowedly Unitarian or not.

Readers who meet for the first time the liberal religious outlook expressed in the essays which follow may be

excited by the discovery that, parallel with the scientific doctrine of emergent evolution, evidence is offered here for an emergent religious faith with a developing and maturing theology. Such a faith can reject the theological dogmatism that is based upon a closed revelation, because it is a faith which accepts as its norms the principles of sound critical judgment and creative living; it does not depend on credal statements which reflect a world-view that thinking men in the twentieth century no longer accept.

The liberal thought here displayed is no mere restatement of liberal judgments of previous centuries, although it expresses many of the same principles and shows the same attitude of mind. Decades before the 'Honest to God' and 'God is Dead' controversies burst upon the theological world, Unitarian thinkers in Britain and America had faced the impact which psychology and, above all, depth psychology, were making upon traditional theology. It is the result of this impact which gives coherence to the underlying theme which runs through the essays in this book.

Of the contributors, all but one—Paul Tillich—are avowed Unitarians. Three are living writers: six have died in recent years. The thought of all nine witnesses to the continuing vitality of a faith which is both broad and deep, rational and spiritual.

That religion is strong, wrote AN Whitehead, which in its ritual and its modes of thought evokes an apprehension of the commanding vision. The worship of God is not a rule of safety—it is an adventure of the spirit, a flight after the unattainable. The death of religion comes with the repression of the high hope of adventure.

Our title, *Adventures in Religion*, is inspired by those words.

*Bolton, Lancashire
September 1968*

ESP

The Religion of Evolving Truth

Eric Shirvell Price, MA

THE GOLDEN AGE of liberal religion is ahead, and not behind. Some backward-looking Unitarians seem to place it in the days of Martineau or Parker, or in some period of their own church's local history. Certainly there were times when men seized upon new insights and faced courageously the challenge presented to them. Thank God for these many buddings and flowerings of beauty and truth. But the full blossoming is yet to be!

The Unitarian faith is essentially an evolutionary faith. It refused to be bound by past formulations of truth. It accepted neither the creeds nor the doctrines which stemmed from a closed revelation—a once-for-all complete and absolute incarnation of God at one time and place. Nor could it accept the doctrine of the Trinity — that monolithic attempt to freeze theology in a pagan cast. Nor could it find reason or Christianity in Original Sin or Vicarious Atonement, nor yet in the literal word of an uncriticized and uninterpreted Bible. God was too great to be so cabined and confined, and man himself was of better stuff than the theologians could find it in their own natures to affirm.

But, beyond all theological questions, men of free faith denounced the right claimed by church and state to coerce the free conscience and reason of man. That was a betrayal of Jesus Christ, the greatest rebel of all against the authority of church and state. It has been

an utter travesty of his gospel to claim his authority for the use of either fear or force against honest conviction.

In all these rejections there is a profoundly inspiring and self-authenticating demand for truth, and for the freedom which progressively issues from the pursuit of truth. This demand for truth at all costs lies behind and is deeper than any theological truth.

There are truths of religion, and they may be stated in theological language, but the religion of truth transcends all separate truths. And if Unitarians are true to this essential spirit of their faith there can be no end or limit to it: it is truth which is itself evolving.

The Unitarian attitude to life as a whole is that of a philosopher-scientist, rather than that of a theologian who believes that all answers have already been given and are there in the official creeds. Criticism leading to affirmation, rather than dogmatic assertion, is the true Unitarian way, whether one is concerned with the phenomenal space-time world without, or with the spiritual value-time world within. Even when engrossed with theological issues the Unitarian thinker uses his own God-given reason and applies the only test by which the inner nature of anything may be known from outside — 'by their fruits ye shall know them'. Like any scientist, he is suspicious of ideological systems which rely on dogmatic assertion and which rest on an authoritarian basis. There is, and can be, no Unitarian theology corresponding to the once-for-all revealed system of orthodoxy. The Unitarian philosopher may give great weight to theology, but theology does not occupy that unqualified central and dominant position that it does for the orthodox. Theology, for Unitarians, is natural, or qualified theology, qualified, that is, by anthropology and cosmology for the world without, and by ethical and psychological criticism of myths, symbols and religious experience for the world within.

If a Unitarian changes from philosophical to convictional language, in order to express some aspect of his

own religious faith, it will be found that he naturally, and perhaps inevitably, express his faith as an affirmation of principles rather than as a theological creed. Philosophy for him is the truth-seeking of his mind, while his religion is the living out of the truth in his life.

Absolutism in theology and fanaticism in faith go hand in hand, and the world has suffered cruelly from the self-appointed apostles of such a faith. The Unitarian needs no absolute sanction for his actions or his faith; but although sanctions are conditional and relative, they can have the force of a moral imperative upon him. He can accept or reject them, and therein lies his freedom.

Intellectually the Unitarian may be agnostic about the ultimate reliability of his own definitive conclusions but he is in no worse case than the scientist who also accepts the latest theory cautiously and subjects it to the most vigorous testing before adding it to his armour of truths. As the area of scientifically attested truth expands, dogmatic theology will be seen to belong, with astrology, to the limbo of the pseudo-sciences.

Will such a fate for theology mean the end of faith in God? No, not by any means! The very faith which rejects the lesser for the greater truth is a faith in the increasing incarnation of God who is truth in the mind of a man and in the life of mankind.

Faith in Free Religions Today

Albert Schweitzer

FREE religious thinking is needed more than ever before, because for the spiritual life of our time it is a necessity.

Only out of the renewal of ethical and religious thought can arise the spirit which gives to mankind the understanding and power to go from darkness and struggle into light and peace. Free Christianity has the great task of bringing to mankind once and for all the conviction that thought and religion are not irreconcilable but actually belong to each other. Every deep religion begets thinking and every truly deep thought becomes religious.

The greatest human spirits have striven for the combination of thinking and religion because they saw this as a necessity for man's spiritual well-being. We continue this effort in a time when mankind must first of all learn again to respect spiritual truth. The heart of the Christian is, for us, the Kingdom of God. Only a Christianity which is inspired by this idea and is actively willing the Kingdom of God is near the original Christianity; only this can give mankind what it needs.

By standing for Free Christianity and not asking men to become religious by giving up the thinking which is part of their very nature, we have in Jesus one who denounces the laying on man, in the name of religion, heavy burdens which do not belong to it. We keep to the words of St Paul: 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is unity.'

May our Free Christianity show itself able in spirit and in deed to fulfil its task in our time; may we all keep alive in ourselves the need to work on ourselves, that our religion may become even deeper and more real, so that the spirit of Jesus shall not only make us free, but deepen the reality of our Christian living. May this be our ideal!

The Old and the New Rationalism

Raymond V Holt, MA, BLitt

WE LIVE in a time of increasing dogmatism, authoritarianism, and irrationalism, ideological cruelty and persecution. There is more deliberately invented and organised untruth in the world to-day than ever in human history. That is one of the paradoxes of the present time. Immense additions to knowledge and understanding have been made through devotion to truth by a number of great men working together in a civilized society. This knowledge has given men immense new power; this power is used to poison man's mind, to crush his freedom, and so to destroy human civilization.

Freedom and truth are and have always been the special concern of Unitarians. Devotion to freedom and truth is part of the Unitarian special contribution to religion and the world. Our faith is a free religious faith. And by freedom we do not mean freedom of everyone to believe what he wants but freedom to follow wherever the search for truth may lead. On no other basis can men live as men. If the present flight from reason continues, if the wave of irrationalism continues to submerge the gains of centuries, if the return to authoritarianism becomes world wide, whether it be the authoritarianism of a state or a church, new dark ages will come upon mankind and the new dark ages will be worse than the old because the modern barbarians have more power. If the machine gun and

aeroplane had been invented in the seventh century, Europe would probably have never found its way out of the dark ages. The lights are going out and once they are extinguished it will not be easy to restore them. But to cure an evil it is not enough to condemn it. Historians and psychologists agree in this, and the new rationalist must learn from both.

This revolt against reason is due in great measure to the inadequacies of the old rationalism which has left men's lives empty.

The old rationalism freed men from many superstitions and cleared the ground for future advance, but it was critical rather than creative. In the end the old rationalism blinded men to the deepest things of life and left them uncertain of anything.

Everything was only a matter of opinion and there were always two opinions. That men should judge of themselves what is right was a maxim of Jesus as well as of Unitarians. But men were left without any standards of judgment, without insight into principles. Men lost any sense of meaning or purpose in their lives, and since men cannot go on living if they come to believe that there is no meaning in their lives, they were ready to abandon reason if that was all that reason had to give them. The present wave of irrationalism is in essence due to the failure of the old rationalism to satisfy the needs of life. It is not due to the failure of reason or mind itself. And the only way to meet and overcome it is to turn it into fruitful channels. The floods which come down the River Nile may destroy or make fruitful the land.

But irrationalism will not make good the defects of the old rationalism.

Irrationalism can only end in blindness and death. Mankind ought to have learned that to-day. Hitler exhorted men to think with their blood, not with their minds. The first act of every dictator is to suppress freedom of thought. Professor R G Collingwood wrote in 1939: 'Fascism means the end of clear

thinking and the triumph of irrationalism.' The statement can also be reversed. Irrationalism leads to dogmatism, authoritarianism of a bad kind and, if resisted, to fascism. Albert Schweitzer warned men twenty years ago that the abdication of thought would be the decisive factor in the collapse of our civilization.

The cure for bad thinking is better thinking, not to stop thinking.

Even Unitarian ministers (who ought to know better) often say — What we want is more feeling and less thinking. As though feeling itself were of any value. Of course men only act when their feelings are stirred. But the value of the action depends on the quality of the feeling and thinking which lies behind it. Intensity of feeling is no guide at all to the value or truth of the feeling. In fact, the narrower a man's mind and the less his knowledge, the more intense his feeling often seems to be. The men responsible for Belsen and other horrors felt intensely. They had no doubts and no problems. Their feeling gave them power but it was the power to do evil. Ultimately, of course, the whole opposition of feeling and thinking is a false one, for man thinks with his whole being, as Professor Graham Wallas used to insist. And so far from being unaware of the importance of feeling, he was one of the first thinkers to apply the study of psychology to politics in his *Human Nature and Politics*. The new rationalism will take into full account all the springs of human conduct. But it will not forget that while man's thinking may be very inadequate, man is still 'a thinking reed,' as Pascal called him. 'Everything that we call specifically human is due to man's power of thinking' (Professor R G Collingwood). The more we realize this, the greater is the obligation upon us to discover why then men and women are in full flight from reason and to try to understand where the old rationalism has proved disastrously inadequate. A new rationalism must make good the defects of the old rationalism.

The contrast between the old and the new rationalism

may be best illustrated by the contrast between old and new town planning.

The old town plan is a series of quite straight parallel streets varied by a few crescents of an equally regular pattern. The plan might have been drawn in an office by someone who had never seen the ground on which the town has to be built. It was a universal plan which would fit everywhere or not fit anywhere, which is the same thing. In one town so planned the streets do not bear names but letters and numbers. Streets running east to west are given letters; streets north and south are given numbers. This plan was not without many good points, certainly. The streets were broad, they were planted with trees, there were green squares and so on. There was some use of mind in it — even though slight. By contrast with the congested narrow streets and higgledy-piggledy houses of the quite unplanned town this marked a real improvement. The whole was in a way dignified, though perhaps some of its dignity was the dignity of lifelessness.

Compare with this a newer town plan — the plan of the new capital of the Australian commonwealth, Canberra. The plan also was the work of mind—all planning is—but of mind used to the full. And this plan of the new capital suffers from none of the defects of the old. This town could not have been built anywhere—it could only have been built on the particular site. The natural features of the site have been used, not ignored or flattened out. The streets follow the natural lines of the ground, they are not forced into an unnatural and monotonous straightness. The water resources of the site are skilfully made use of to provide additional charm. This plan does not depress us as the old one did. To look at it is a double pleasure; it fills us with the thought: How varied and how beautiful is this life of ours, and how wonderful is man's power through mind of drawing out this variety and this beauty.

Even in this country we are beginning to see that the best way to lay out a housing estate is not to begin by

cutting down all the trees. We are beginning to adapt the plan to the site, not the site to the plan.

The old rationalism was abstract, formal, analytic, departmental, static and *negative*. The new rationalism will be the opposite of all these, concrete, living, synthetic holistic, dynamic and *positive*.

The old rationalism was abstract. It took a few facts which it assumed to be absolute and drew certain conclusions from them by a process of logical deduction and then tried to impose these conclusions on the rest of life. And so the variety and wonder of life was lost and life became very tame and very uninteresting. It is the reaction from this tameness that has caused many young people to fly from reason.

The new rationalism will be concrete. Its method will not be the method of argument from certain facts or premises assumed to be fixed, but the attempt to grasp the relationship of as wide a body of experience as possible.

The old rationalism was formal. The new rationalism deals with life. 'Experience must precede the attempt to explain it' (W H Reade). History and psychology will both play a larger part in the new rationalism.

The old rationalism was analytic. And even to-day men often think that it is possible to understand the nature of something by mere analysis. They forget that analysis by its very nature can only give knowledge about certain aspects of life. You can analyse a violin into some bits of wood and a bit of catgut, but the nature of the violin is not revealed in that analysis, though the analysis is not only correct as far as it goes, but useful and necessary if you want to make a violin. You can analyse a piece of music played on the violin into a series of wave lengths and write down a sonata as a series of numbers. This is very valuable if you want to invent a wireless or understand something of the nature of sound and the fact has far-reaching implications fatal to materialism. But even that does nothing to explain the thrill of listening to Beethoven and still

less does it explain Beethoven. Beethoven himself and every human being can be analysed. You only begin to understand anything when you see it as a whole. Analysis throws light on the parts but not on their relations. The new rationalism, therefore, will follow up analysis with synthesis. This means that the new rationalism will try to see things as wholes; it will be holistic. It will deal with patterns. There are indeed no completely isolated facts. And if there were, they would be without meaning. Facts are seen in their significance only when they are seen in relation to one another. From this it follows also that the meaning of facts can only be understood when they are seen as parts of a process. The new rationalism therefore is dynamic where the old was static. You cannot discover the meaning of life by dissecting a corpse.

And for that reason the new rationalism will be profoundly interested in history. For it is impossible to understand the meaning of anything if all you know about it is what it is at this particular moment. You must know how it came into being. Where the old rationalism was static, the new rationalism will be dynamic. But the past can only be understood in the light also of the future. For you do not understand the nature of anything unless you understand what it may become. You must look into the future as well as the past. For the present is indeed only the point at which past and future meet, and driven still further by the recognition of the fact that you do not understand anything till you see it in its wholeness, you are forced also to consider the meaning of our changing lives in the light of that which transcends them.

The new rationalism therefore will be positive not negative as was the old, life affirming not life denying. The negativeness of the Rationalist Press Association was essentially nineteenth century in its outlook. Perhaps this explains why it published so many out of date works of anthropology in its Thinker's Library. It is curious that people who would never dream of reading nine-

teenth century books on chemistry and physics treat nineteenth century books on religion and anthropology as authoritative. It is true that as individuals many old-type rationalists are working for a finer world but their ideals are inconsistent with their fundamental way of regarding the world. All this may be summed up in the statement that the new rationalism will be rooted in experience—the whole of experience, or so much of it as it is possible for men at present to grasp. The attempt to understand life as a whole will drive men deeper and deeper till they find a religion of some kind. The new rationalism will be religious.

The meaning of experience can be won only through vision, insight, intuition, imagination—there are many names and each of them throws some light on the way in which the meaning of experience is revealed to men. It is in the flash of understanding that the deeper meaning of experience is revealed to scientists as well as to artists and prophets. The history of science provides as many illustrations of this as does the history of art and religion. In imagination alone are thinking and feeling united and reason at its highest becomes imagination.

But insight, intuition, vision are not infallible.

Through them the deepest understanding of life is won, but even so, they are all limited and conditioned. We know only in part and see only in part. Insights, intuitions and visions have to be tested and related in religion as in science. Men have thought that in the mystic experience they had obtained a completely unconditioned experience—an absolute revelation. They have indeed obtained an experience of profound significance. But when they have treated this as complete, unconditioned and infallible, disaster has followed. Professor Rufus Jones has pointed this out in his great work on Quakerism*:

‘Mysticism, as a type of religion, has staked its

**Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, pp 28, 29 (quoted by kind permission of the publishers, Macmillan & Co)

precious realities too exclusively upon the functions of what to-day we call the sub-conscious. Impressed with the divine significance of “inward bubblings”, the mystic has made too slight an account of the testimony of reason and the contribution of history. The sub-conscious functions are very real and very important aspects of personal life, and can never again be ignored in any full account of personality. They influence every thought, feeling, attitude, volition, opinion, mood and insight, and are thus operative in all the higher as well as in all the lower phases of human life and character. Metaphorically, but only metaphorically, we speak of the sub-conscious as a vast zone, an indefinable margin surrounding the narrow focus of attention, and we may figuratively, but only figuratively, call it the subliminal “region” where all our life-gains and often the gains of the race are garnered. The contributions from this mental underworld are inestimable—we could not be men without them—but this sub-conscious zone is a source of things bad as well as good, things silly as well as things wise, of rubbish as well as of treasures, and it is diabolical as well as divine. It seems in rare moments to connect, as though it were a hidden inland stream, with the “immortal sea which brought us hither”, and we feel at times, through its incomings, as though we were aware of tides from beyond our own margin. And, in fact, I believe we are.

‘But obviously we cannot assume that whatever comes spontaneously out of the sub-conscious is divinely given. It mothers strange offspring—Esau as well as Jacobs; its openings, its inrushes, its bubblings, must be severely tested. Impulses of many sorts feel categorically imperative, but some call to deeds of light and some to deeds of darkness. They cannot be taken at their face value; they must be judged in some court which is less capricious and which is guided by a more universal principle—something *semper et ubique*. A spiritual religion of the full and complete type will, I believe, have inward, mystical depth, it will keep vitalized

and intensified with its experiences of divine supplies, and of union and unification with an environing spirit, but it must at the same time soundly supplement its more or less capricious and subjective, and always fragmentary, mystical insights with the steady and unwavering testimony of reason, and no less with the immense objective illumination of history.'

Man's partial insights must be tested and related to each other. And that is the work of reason. The scientist tests his insights by relating them to the facts. He observes the facts or what appear to be facts (as far as they can be isolated), and by some flash of insight he is able to see some relation between them (or some of them) which gives them meaning. He conceives a theory, a working hypothesis. But no theory does justice to all the facts. Each theory sooner or later brings with it new problems. So once again he returns to the particulars and from the particulars to the facts he thus discovers in turn demand and receive a more adequate explanation. From the generalization to the particulars, and from the particulars to the generalization there is a constant coming and going which gives meaning to the particulars and richness to the generalization. Instead of attempting to interpret all experience by one little isolated piece of it we must try rather to interpret each little piece of experience by the whole. The system is not built up from one part but hangs together like the solar system. There is only one assumption, and it is the assumption that the universe has reason—a 'ratio'—behind it, that somehow it is a coherent world. This is the primary working hypothesis. If it be invalid then all thought is invalid.

We also must test our insights by relating them to the rest of human experience.

Man starts with his partial experiences, tries to understand their significance, obtains some insight which illuminates his experience and enlarges it. In these moments of supreme experience when man receives the flood of revelation he seems for a time to stand out-

side the rest of experience. In a sense he does—as in the mystic vision—but he cannot remain there. He must return to try out his key experience on the rest of life.

*The mount for vision: but below
The paths of daily duty go.*

The value of the insight will depend on the breadth and depth and height of the experience it includes. First of all naturally comes a man's personal experience but the consistent and strenuous attempt to explain this will carry a man further, beyond his own narrow personal experience. In so far as the insight excludes any experience it is partial and incomplete. The experience which it excludes gives the problem—what may be called marginal problems. These must be faced. By facing them the great discoveries are often made. It is sometimes the little awkward fact which will not fit into the hypothesis which compels the creation of another hypothesis. But these marginal problems do not make scientists despair. They stimulate them to look further and lead to new discoveries. This wrestling with difficulties always brings its reward in a new revelation, whereas acquiescence in a final revelation kills the truth that revelation once had. By this method of faith we can never sleep, but we can be at peace. We struggle with difficulties but we struggle, with patience. This method satisfies our demands. It tests the objectivity of our vision and separates illusion from experience of the eternal. It enables us to interpret that experience in terms of the life of each day and so enables it to permeate that life.

We can recognize our errors and mistakes without losing heart and we can learn from them. We can admit fearlessly and frankly all we do not know and all our uncertainties without losing hold on what we have learned. And these marginal problems stimulate us to fit ourselves for a better understanding. We grow; we are able to include a richer content in our experience

and all the particulars we have been able to include glow in the light we have seen.

This way of approach is not popular. It demands much effort and calls for courage and faith. It has always seemed curious that men who demand a final complete revelation should be regarded as men of faith.

The dogmatist is a man whose faith in his own insights is so weak that he dare not look at these facts which he finds difficult to reconcile with his insights and so blinds himself. The dogmatist treats his insights as complete and infallible, whereas they are at best partial and always conditioned in some way by the climate of the age or by the character of the man himself. The sceptic recognizes that the insights are partial and conditioned and denies that they are valid insights at all. The dogmatist demands a hundred per cent solution of life's problems, and insists that he has such a solution. The sceptic demands a hundred per cent solution, and refuses to believe anything because he can't find one. The dogmatist and the sceptic are both blind. There is no hundred per cent solution to the problem of evil or of suffering, and if you demand one you will soon turn a blind eye to evil and make it unreal, or you will turn a blind eye to good. The man of faith is the man who stakes his life on his insights and yet is able to face up to all the problems they bring in the confidence that if he could see all life as God sees it, he would understand better. And because he does not turn a blind eye to facts which are problems he is able to master them and to win new insight.

There is no hundred per cent solution of life's problems. There is something better—the sense of taking part in a great adventure whose fuller meaning will only be revealed to you as you face its problems.

The fact is that men who demand a complete final infallible revelation want that revelation of God's ways to man on too cheap terms. God made man a thinking being, even though his thought is very imperfect. Men who want an infallible revelation may be said to

love God with all their heart and soul but not with all their mind. They do not want to use all the powers which God has given them. God has never given men an infallible revelation, and when they have demanded such a revelation or claimed to possess one they have been defying God's purposes—in the long run with disastrous results. That was what turned some of the great saints of the church into cruel persecutors, claiming the right and even the duty to put heretics to death in the name of Christ. What God has given men is the opportunity of discovering more and more and of rising in the scale of being as they do so. The task is harder but more worth while. God does not want men to be machines or cogs in a big machine. Neither does he want them to become gramophone records. God wants persons, for personality is the highest value we know. And so to each man is given the power of choice to follow his vision or to reject it. 'See, I set before thee this day good and evil, life and death.'

We know only in part, but we do know—we do have insights which we may trust. To those who act upon these partial insights, more is revealed. To those who demand full and complete insight or claim to have such insight, from them even those partial insights are taken away. In the last resort the challenge comes to us—'Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?'

The Maieutic Personality

Francis Terry, MA

THE DISTINCTION between priest and prophet is well known—so much so, that we are sometimes inclined to assume that every sort of religious mission must be classifiable as either priestly or prophetic, according as it is corporate or individual, based upon the experience of generations or upon the insight of the moment. Such an assumption may lead us to disregard or misinterpret the instances (if there be any) in which a religious mission conforms with neither type. In particular, we too easily assume that the features which are common both to the priestly and the prophetic office are essential characteristics of every sort of religious mission, so that, if any man exercises a religious mission from which those features are absent, our attempts to describe his work and character are likely to be defective. It is the thesis of this essay that there have been such men, and that their work would be better understood if we recognised them as together constituting a distinct type of religious personality.

In spite of differences, priest and prophet are united by a common assumption as to the relationship between the religious 'expert' and the 'non-expert', namely that the expert (whether so constituted by training or by individual vocation) possesses religious knowledge which can be passed on or rendered available for the benefit of the non-expert without actually turning the latter into an expert or abolishing the distinction between

them. The priest does not normally aim at making all men priests: he uses his priestly knowledge to give advice or admonitions to laymen or to perform ceremonies for their benefit. The prophet does not normally aim at making all men prophets: having God's word, he declares it to the people, so that they may learn it from him. Thus each is a mediator for men who lack direct religious knowledge of their own. It is true that the Old Testament points forward to the ideal of a nation of priests and a time when all the Lord's people shall be prophets; but the realisation of that ideal is not achieved by the exercise of priestly or prophetic functions; it depends upon a third type of mission (the subject of this essay) in which both priest and prophet are transcended.

There is a further feature common to priest and prophet and linking them with many other sorts of human activity. Priest and prophet alike are giving effect to something which already exists (at least in their own minds). This makes it comparatively easy to give an account of their work and assess its success. The priest serves a tradition, or system, of which the characteristic features can be studied and the history narrated. The prophet delivers a message, which can be quoted or summarised, and which men either accept or reject. This gives their work an objective character which enables it to be described by very much the same methods as the aims and achievements of statesmen and philosophers, reformers and scientists.

There is, however, a type of man whose work baffles our attempts to describe and assess it in this manner. The four outstanding representatives of this type are Socrates, the Buddha, Confucius, and Jesus. Each of these appears as the source of a great, enduring and many-sided influence. Each of them is known to us from literary sources which carry us back almost into the circle of immediate hearers, and, scientifically handled, should afford a sound basis of historical information. And yet each presents us with apparently insoluble problems when we try to ascertain the precise

relationship between the aims and work of the historic man and the forms assumed by his posthumous influence. There is a sort of 'family-likeness' in the four problems, which suggests that they are not due to accident but to some common characteristic of the four men. They were not concerned with acting as mediators or passing on expert knowledge but with enabling their fellow-men to see spiritual reality for themselves, and thus rendering mediation unnecessary and abolishing the distinction between expert and non-expert. Because their mission was of this type, there is no plain objective message or programme or system by reference to which their work can be described, and its results assessed.

This is clearest and least disputable in the case of Socrates. He does not expound a philosophy but tries to make men more philosophic. He therefore disclaims wisdom and does not purport to teach anything (the so-called 'Socratic irony'). His aim is to act as 'a mid-wife to men's souls', helping them to bring into the open ideas which are latent in their minds, and testing whether these are 'genuine births' (hence the use of 'maieutic'—the Greek word for 'obstetric'—as a term for the whole class). In this case we see that the difficulties of the 'Socratic problem' arise directly from the nature of the Socratic mission. Because Socrates is educating ideas latent in other people, he cannot identify himself with any particular message or system, while his hearers, when they try to describe him, find that their memories are inextricably entangled with the ideas which they have themselves produced under his influence, or even with the reactions by which they have sought to avoid its full implications.

The Buddha appears to us under two aspects. Traditional narratives show him insisting upon a rigid and homogeneous set of doctrines and arguments, which are apparently atheistic, pessimistic and mortificatory in character. On the other hand, he was the originator of a religious movement which has been vigorous, expansive, full of spiritual joy and effort, extremely elastic, diverging

into a multiplicity of forms, with a wealth of heavens and objects of worship. The basic question arises, 'How can a man who taught such doctrines have initiated such a movement?'

The reason why we find the problem difficult is because we habitually assume that the things about which a man talks most are the ones which lie at the heart of his mission, and hence conclude that, as most of the Buddha's talking was negative and mortificatory, negation and mortification must have been the central characteristics of his work. This is really the old assumption that a religious mission must consist in delivering a 'message'.

We should realise that the Buddha was not primarily concerned to deliver a message. He had attained 'enlightenment', and his aim was to enable other men to do the same. This is an altogether different thing from imparting to them the fruits of his own enlightenment. Time and again it is said that the Enlightened One knows the answer to a question, but that it would be unprofitable for him to declare it; in particular, he consistently refuses to give any information as to the nature of the ultimate goal (Nirvana). On such a subject, nothing can be said which would be helpful to a man who is still dominated by illusion and craving; he would simply take whatever was said, and twist it into new forms of error: the first essential is that he should get free from illusion and craving—and then it will be unnecessary to tell him about Nirvana, as his own enlightenment will enable him to understand it. Thus the Buddha pursues a positive aim by methods which have to be predominantly negative: he analyses error, not enlightenment, suffering not blessedness, the consequences of selfishness, not the reward of unselfishness; he proves that the self (considered as a separate object) is an illusion; he does not explain the nature of ultimate reality. It is on these negative matters that he is argumentative and presses home his views. But his aim is not fulfilled when his interlocutor is convinced by these

arguments: an interval usually occurs, in which the man goes off to think things over alone, and then returns and says that he has now attained his own enlightenment: only then is the goal attained. Buddhism is the religion of 'Enlightenment', and thus has produced very varied fruits.

Confucius' influence lies at the roots of the central Chinese tradition. The best sources (especially the older portions of the Analects) give us the impression of a man of distinctive personal quality but do not enable us to formulate the precise cause and nature of his influence. He was not a codifier or expounder of traditional lore—though he admitted his debt to the past. A number of specific doctrines are 'Confucian' in the sense of being held by one or other of the groups of his disciples, but it is doubtful how far any of them was actually distinctive of the master. We seem rather to be witnessing the fertilising influence of a particular type of personality. We know not how Confucius deals entirely with individuals, taking quite a different line with different disciples, according to their varying characters. He is concerned mainly to stimulate activity in the pupil: when he gives one corner of a matter, the pupil must provide the other three. He refrains from lengthy explanations of his own views, indeed seems to avoid expressing any general views at all: habitually modest, disclaiming wisdom, and a man of few words, he confines his answers to what is strictly relevant. There is something pregnant and forceful in him, which disturbs men and spurs them to moral effort. It is recorded that his favourite pupil said with a deep sigh: 'The more I strain my gaze up towards it, the higher it soars; the deeper I bore down into it, the harder it becomes; I catch a glimpse of it in front, but instantly it is behind; step by step the Master skilfully lures one on: even if I wished to stop, I could not; and when, at times, I have exhausted all my powers, something seems to rise up majestically before me; yet though I long to pursue it, I can find no way of arriving.' Confucius was a very Chinese Chinaman, as Socrates

was a very Greek Greek: and yet, in the effect that they produced, they are most curiously alike.

The analogy of Socrates, the Buddha and Confucius may help us to understand why the problems of Christian unity and of the historic Jesus remain so persistently baffling. These both arise from the same cause, namely that the New Testament is, in certain respects, a very ambiguous group of documents. This ambiguity is of the sort that results characteristically from the activity of a 'maieutic personality'. The questions, 'What was Jesus' message? What rules or doctrines did he formulate? What type of ecclesiastical polity did he authorise?' are unanswerable, because Jesus' mission did not consist in laying down the law on such matters. His influence though more positively dynamic than that of the other three, is, in its essential nature, as undefinable as theirs.

According to the accounts in Acts, the first great effect of Jesus' mission was the outpouring of the spirit in fulfilment of the prediction in Joel: in a very real sense, everyone who responded to Jesus' influence became a 'prophet'. The Pauline epistles centre round the distinctive problems arising in a community in which (though all do not actually utter prophecies) all are 'spiritual' and have been brought into direct communication with God. Another apostolic expression is that Christianity is the 'New Covenant'—the régime predicted by Jeremiah, in which 'they shall no more teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying know the Lord', for they shall all know God. So, too, in John's Gospel, Jesus does not offer his followers a well like Jacob's, to which they must constantly return, 'but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.'

A mission that produces such results cannot consist in laying down the law, but must encourage and challenge men to exercise their own spiritual faculties, and will often seem to involve refusal to give plain answers to

plain questions. We have noticed these characteristics in the other maieutic men; and so it is with Jesus also. His initial message ('The kingdom of heaven has drawn near') is challenging, but capable of a wide variety of interpretations: he refuses to specify how near the kingdom has come or what is his conception of its nature; instead, he illustrates it by means of parables, which still admit of varying interpretations, and can only be understood by those who have 'an ear to hear' (the 'Papias tradition' attests that, at the earliest stage, there was no single agreed interpretation of Jesus' sayings). His teaching does not solve problems but rather drags them to light by calling attention to men's inconsistencies, to the difference between the standards which they apply to themselves and to others, and to their failure to conform with what they themselves declare to be authoritative scriptures. He refuses to say what is his own authority or to specify the status which he claims, and discourages the spread of rumours on such topics: even at his trial the dominant impression is that he remained deliberately enigmatical; 'It is for *you* to decide what I am and how I should be treated; and I cannot relieve you of that responsibility.' Throughout his mission, his opponents are puzzled and keep asking him questions, and even his closest disciples are frequently at a loss what to make of him. In life and death he gives himself to mankind as a challenging problem by which their spiritual education is advanced. This is not to deny that we can obtain good evidence about some of his words and deeds, and even perhaps about his inner character and beliefs: but, if the evidence is to be construed as part of an intelligible picture, the 'maieutic' features must be kept at the centre. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'

Does God Care?

EG Lee

Author of 'The Minute Particular'

THE QUESTION which I have to answer bristles with so many presuppositions that I have decided to select three of them, base my article upon these, and try to find an answer through them. I am well aware that I have to try and find an answer to the problem of suffering. This I shall attempt, but I could not begin unless I made or attempted to make clear what I mean by God. I shall therefore select three propositions hidden in the question through which an answer may be obtained. I shall present them in the form of three questions: (1) What do I mean by God? (2) How does God care? (3) Why does he care?

I will begin by laying all my cards on the table. At the heart of any religious attitude to the universe there must be wonder, amazement and awe. By religious attitude I mean being able to participate in the universe around me, and by universe I mean the visible world I see, to which must be added, poetically, all the choirs of heaven and the furniture of the earth. To which can be added again any extension that can be given, by whatever notion I can conjure up, of all presumed visible being. Without wonder, amazement and awe one is not able to participate in the surrounding sheath of the world. There are those who cannot do so. I suspect there were as many in the past as there are today. The opposite of wonder, amazement and awe is emptiness, and there have been many men of deep sensibility who have been able to

discover nothing but emptiness, and have endured temporarily, some over a long period of time, this state or conviction in this, after all, soul-troubling universe. I hold in deepest respect, for instance, the atheist existentialist. He is the representative of many who try to follow their thinking, and for that matter their emotions, to an ultimate conclusion, and accept where these lead them. And it would be a poor estimate of thinking, and the integrity that usually goes with it, if the possibility of emptiness as opposed to wonder were ruled out. There cannot be any closed gates if the religious attitude is to be able to use words with meaning. I understand the condition, I think, of the man who says there is nothing where the universe ought to be, and who concludes that the only solid fact is death with the beginning, end and final sublimation of all things found in death; nothing else existing with meaning except this fact. I wonder—I am bound to use the word—at his noble courage in going on living at all. He at least cares. He does not wish to put up with the tinsel clichés that time and habit place between him and the interpretation of the universe. But the opposite to emptiness and its general consequences are wonder, amazement and awe. And I find myself wondering, I say again, at the greatness of the man who goes on living while declaring the world to be nothing. If I dare, I wish to call him brother. I do not wish to help him for that would be insulting his conviction. Rather I want to share with him. He too is in the sheath of the universe with me, and—I cannot help it—he makes the world more wonderful to me. He, in his integrity, helps to establish me in a universe which is my home.

The cards then which I wish to lay upon the table are that the only response which I can make to the universe around me, in which I participate, and which responds to my participation, is wonder, amazement and awe. And I trust you will allow me to make this affirmation by granting to me that I have some knowledge of its opposite — such a knowledge, indeed, that it forces upon

me wonder.

On the whole I would prefer to describe the religious experience through the three stages given by Whitehead: God the Void, God the Enemy, God the Friend. But I do not think that does justice to the existentialist position. The very existence of God, God being what he is, leaves the way open for denial. If this were not so a compulsion would have to be assumed that leaves no way open for the living individual needs of freedom and choice.

What then is the nature of God? I wish to try and answer this question by way of concept and symbol. I shall first use intellectual concept, introducing it by analogy; then I shall go on to symbol.

The Augustine who came to England in the sixth century was walking on the sea-shore. He was harassed by the doctrine of the Trinity. He saw no way through the metaphysical difficulties. He came upon a couple of children playing in the sand. They had dug a large hole and were running down to the ocean with their buckets trying to fill up the hole with sea-water. He asked them what they were doing. They told him they were trying to empty the ocean into the hole. The harassed thinker saw the light. He had been trying to empty the mystery of the Trinity into the hole of his reason, and it couldn't be done. He saw the light. He gave up, and presumably after that was harassed no more.

Now I am not concerned with Augustine's providential relief from the doctrine of the Trinity. I wish to use the hole in the sand, and the children and the ocean as the analogy to introduce my concept.

I understand that the first assumption that science makes is that there is no end to possible discovery. If there were, then the assumption would have to be made that eventually the point would be reached where everything that could be known in the scientific sense was known, and that there was nothing left for the scientist to do than to keep the wheels well oiled in a mechanistic universe that had no more secrets to reveal

or to be discovered. Science does not believe this. The whole of its experience leads to the belief that the range in which it works is endless and always will be so. The scientist will always be going to the ocean, as it were, with his bucket and pouring into the hole he has made the water his bucket picks up, although unlike the children he does not believe that he can empty the ocean. And it must be supposed that in a million years, if this planet is still a planet, and if there is still such an activity as science, the scientist will still be going down to the ocean with his bucket and the ocean will still be there. And the relative size of the hole and the ocean will be just the same. Now the ocean the scientist goes to is just as real as the hole he has dug and just as real as himself. Indeed it is not pushing comparison too far to suggest that the ocean is more real than the scientist, for when he has faded away into whatever the scientists believe they fade into, presumably the ocean will still be there for his colleagues of the future, for them to go down to, bucket in hand. There is no end to the ocean, no depth or height; each secret within it contains an infinity of secrets, and not merely an infinity of numbers but of fathomless experience. To the scientist the ocean is not dead material substance, whatever that may be, but an impenetrable mystery which must be explored. Always the impenetrable. No matter how far or deep he may go, how much water he may pick up with his bucket; no matter how many buckets he may invent to pick up more water, the illimitable will still be there and he will not be able to pierce it. If he could there would come an end to his activity. My first concept therefore is as follows. I quote Einstein: 'To know that the impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, which our full faculties can comprehend fully in their most primitive form, this knowledge, this feeling, is at the centre of religiousness.' (By 'most primitive form' I suppose him to mean the deepest psychological form.) I am not in the least concerned for this argument with

'highest wisdom' or 'radiant beauty'; what I am concerned with is the concept that what is impenetrable by science really exists. There is as it were a Beyond which can never be penetrated by the scientific method. No matter how far or deep it may pierce there will always be a point, near at hand or receding, which declares 'so far and no further'. This Beyond is as relevant to science as the hole which it has dug, and the water it has poured into it. No matter how far the scientist ranges, or what startling alternatives he offers to the human condition, the impenetrable will always be there, and to Einstein at least it was of such a reality that it could manifest itself as 'the highest wisdom' and 'the most radiant beauty'. That is my first concept; now the second.

Philosophy I assume to be an activity of thought which in a phrase taken from Whitehead, 'seeks to establish general ideas in terms of which every element of experience can be interpreted.' Well, let us suppose that this activity no longer becomes anyone who lays claim to be a philosopher. Yet the most scientifically minded user of words must think about something; and one must conclude that all he talks about and thinks about now cannot include all that will be talked and thought about in the future in the range of his own particular interest. I assume that in a million years the gentlemen usually called philosophers will still be as intelligently exploratory as the gentlemen of today. And if that assumes too much, namely that there will be a million years, and that there will be men recognisably similar to the men of today, well then let us retire to our studies, play our little games of chess, and do not pretend that we are speaking intelligently of anything at all. But if we are speaking intelligently then we must assume that the men of the future will be as exploratory as the men of today. Exploratory into what? Is there no what? Has the last word, for instance, been said about words and their relation to one another, and to what this leads to? Is there nothing for the philosopher to think

about save to go over in mechanical repetition what has been thought about before? And if he does that and is likely to do it in the future, why? There will surely be something new for the philosophers in the future. Therefore I dare suggest that the philosopher too has his own ocean to go to, with his own little bucket, and no matter how much or little he may take from the ocean and pour into his hole, the illimitable will still be there, awaiting him and his bucket. I am not in the least doubting the validity of the philosopher's activity, or indeed its usefulness, far from it. All that I am trying to say is that, like the scientist, he is forced to acknowledge the illimitable, and all that his thought can do is to bring us to the edge of the ocean and leave us standing there. Dipping the bucket in, I may add, is no paltry occupation. In one form or another I am willing to agree that it may be the highest occupation of man. But most certainly the philosopher as philosopher, as the scientist as scientist, stands before impenetrable reality, impenetrable that is by philosophy and science as such. I can now define my second concept. I do so using some sentences from Whitehead. 'Philosophers can never hope to formulate . . . metaphysical first principles. Weakness of insight and deficiencies of language stand in the way inexorably. Word and phrase must be stretched toward a generality foreign to their ordinary usage; and however such elements of language be stabilised as technicalities, they remain metaphors mutely appealing for an imaginative leap.'

In other words, in all forms of philosophy, so far and no further. The best philosophy can do is to bring us to the edge of the ocean and leave us standing there. It emphasises the existence of the ocean but it does not dispose of it. This is my second concept, and I now come to the third.

This is taken from art.

For certain reasons art comes nearer to what I am trying to establish than anything else I have mentioned. I assume that applied science can create the illusion of

change in the sense that the relative size of the hole and the ocean, and the position of one to the other, can seem to change. One can expect, for instance, that in the near future aeroplanes will travel twice as fast as they do now, and that will seem to create a difference in the state of man. I assume that philosophers can improve in some understandable way upon the thought of all previous philosophers, although that is not so obvious and factual as the improvements the scientist can make in their own sphere. But art in what it intends to do can never improve upon art. A masterpiece is always a masterpiece in its own right no matter in what time or situation it was created.

The prehistoric paintings, for instance, on the walls of the caves of Lascaux, executed some forty thousand years ago, can stand side by side in their own authenticity, that is by their own penetration into reality, beside the paintings of Monet, Picasso and Braque. Whatever may be the developments in the subtleties and execution of technique, no matter what new experiments, no matter how wide the range of intellect behind the work, the penetration will always be there. And the rock drawings of the bushmen of Africa, or the designs of the aborigines of Australia, will still have something to declare to the greatest of the moderns. In a sense there is no progress or advancement in art; there may be developments of various kinds, each giving significance to what is created, but that means little in what a masterpiece (I am thinking particularly of pictorial art) is about. More clearly than in science or philosophy there is the hole and the ocean. And to change the analogy a little, the masterpiece takes you by the hand, conducts you to the edge of the ocean, and leaves you there with awakened and startled imagination to gaze into the unvisaged reality. The work of the painters of Lascaux, displayed in reproduction in a London shop window, can suddenly hold the modern passer-by up taut, and force him to glimpse into the illimitable ocean of the unseen. Art declares at its highest that there is more

than this, that is why it is art, that is why it speaks, and if it could not speak in that manner it would not be art.

I now define my third concept in the words of Braque the French artist: 'The only valid thing in art is that which cannot be explained... To explain away the mystery of a great painting—if such a feat were possible—would do irreparable harm, for whenever you explain or define something you substitute the explanation or the definition for the real thing.'

In other words always the Beyond in great painting, always the illimitable, always the ocean to go to to put the bucket in, always the possibility that one can stand on the edge of the ocean.

This is my third and last concept. I now come to symbol.

The concepts suggest that the human being is surrounded by a mystery impenetrable in the sense that it can ever be brought within the limits of any human activity. Bring it there, as is so often tried, and never with more assumption of certainty than today, and, in a sense, it is killed stone dead. Or rather the human being who attempts it is sooner or later killed stone dead. This mystery is at least as real as the human being who tries to comprehend it. Being real it can be entered into, or perceived or seen; and being real, in this sense it contains life—if that is the word that is wanted—or, in William James' description, it is a Thou rather than an It.

If this reality exists it is possible for religious experience, in the sense that I have defined it, of wonder, amazement and awe—or for that matter in many other forms of definition—to take a leap of a certain kind into its nature. Religious experience can symbolise the life that can be known, in descriptions, images, tone poems, that well up out of the deepest consciousness of man. For illustration I will go to the Bible.

The Bible says nothing about science, philosophy or art in the sense that I have been using those words, or

says so only in an indirect and casual way. The coherence of the books rests mainly upon the personal experiences they record or interpret. There was a man called Hosea; he believed he had a certain experience; it is recorded. There was a man called Amos; he believed he had a similar, if differently realised experience; it is recorded. The New Testament, in all it wishes to say, is basically what happened to certain persons in certain experiences and situations.

Now these experiences, which I shall call religious, seem to me to be perfectly justifiable. Those who encountered them were aware of the illimitable reality which I have attempted to demonstrate by analogy and concept. By a compulsion upon their spirits which is no hidden secret to us they found a life there, and they had to describe that life, in the stuff and substance of everything that was real in their own personal lives. That Hosea found through the tragedy of his own personal experience that God is love interpreted through the conventions and personal relationships of his own day, is entirely convincing. To acknowledge through the basic emotions that can throb through the reality of a man's own life the other reality that makes everything real, does not seem to me to be in need of explanation or proof, least of all is it understood in all its intention by the simple destroying word, anthropomorphism. To ask of such a man as Hosea, in that setting, some other kind of communication, some other statement of experience, and because it is not forthcoming to dismiss it as illusion, is simply to turn one's back upon imaginative communication with the past. To suppose for instance that only that is true which can be expressed within the familiar terms of the 1960s is to make anything that is said to be sheer nonsense. Who wishes to talk about what is merely relevant, in terms of isolation and restriction, to this decade? To suppose that we are the people, that nothing else that has happened or can happen is of importance to our condition, is as sure a way of destroying all conception of the 'we', and of

leading to emptiness, as any other form of dogmatism. The atheist existentialists have been courageous enough, more or less, to accept the spiritual conditions of being utterly alone at one moment in history with no behind or before, and short of vanishing altogether, maintaining that they are nothing.

That Hosea could interpret God as love, and God as a being who could love, is entirely relevant. That Amos could see that religious convention, simply as convention, missed the poignancy and terror of his own communication with the Unseen is entirely convincing. That again he spoke when he did speak, and acted when he did act, in historical situations, conceptions and relevancies that conditioned what he said and acted does not make what he said and did an obscurantist communication from the past. That Paul of the New Testament tried to express the inexpressible through the personal experience he called the Christ; that Jesus of Nazareth could speak of his Father—all these are words used with meaning. They are symbols making the leap into the illimitable and returning with convincing experiences of what is to be found there.

I have no difficulty therefore in understanding such words as, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want', or, 'My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you', or—particularly against the background of what I have been trying to say—'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, heaven and earth are full of thy glory.' They represent leaps into the impenetrable, they find a life there, and return with their own description of it. They set up a relationship with the *Thou* to be known. And to ask something else of religion, at least religion as it is known in the fulness of the tradition of the past (and no one knows any other religion than that, as a beginning, in whatever he accepts or rejects), is to ask for we know not what. The language of symbol is the language of the leap, and provided other tasks of thought and exploration are undertaken, belonging to our his-

toric situation, the language of the leap is authentic.

So much then for answer by concept and symbol to my question, What is the nature of God? I now come to the second question, How does God care? I shall attempt to answer this through the problem of suffering.

Two years ago I made a note of a certain incident in Brixton, London. Two small children held up an express train by playing on the main line. They were both nearly killed. The train just stopped in time. One child slipped away and the other was pulled out unhurt from underneath the engine. The fireman who pulled the child out was so overcome by shock that he had to be relieved at the next station. Now I assume this to be a potential situation of suffering. The two children might have been killed with all the spreading ripples of that, and with all the implications of a seeming senseless waste of life. Did God care? Was he responsible for those children playing on the line and for what might have happened and did not?

Let me give you another illustration. Before the age of twenty-one, on two discernible occasions I escaped a violent death. Only by the most trivial of trivial chances did I escape. Did God care? I cannot think so. Each incident as I look back seems to me to be unimportant, and if important, as I suppose I ought to count them, I cannot connect God with them.

Similarly I cannot connect God with the stopping of that train and with what might have happened to those infants and did not happen. The fireman suffered from shock. I cannot think of God suffering from shock or anything else, and it is not absurd to point out that the fireman had a hospital to go to; there could be no hospital for God.

Now those seemingly trivial incidents can be extended to include the whole range of suffering. I will not extend them, because an answer to the problem in the manner I have presented the illustrations just does not exist. Indeed in that manner there is no problem. I cannot possibly think of myself or those children as things being

pushed around by another thing called God, or as little forces being pushed around by a big one. I cannot possibly think of God as being worried or upset or elated by anything that happens to me. If I did I think I should be like one of Dostoevsky's characters. I should hand God back his ticket and try, like the atheist existentialist, to get on very well in this world without him.

There is no problem of suffering to be found in a thing being pushed around by another thing. In such a universe, if such can be conceived, you simply resign; you leave God to get along with his affairs; you get along with yours, and all is for the best in the best of all possible empty universes. You kick around, aware perhaps of something called suffering, but admitting no sense or reality to it. There is no problem, just because there is no reality with what you are supposed to be concerned. In short there is only a problem of suffering when you throw overboard the notion of an arbitrary deity pushing you around, and you yourself, as it were, a billiard ball being pushed. Suffering only is a problem when there is a God of life in whom you live and move and have your being. Suffering is a religious problem; without religion there is no problem; and if there is no problem of suffering then indeed you are living in an empty universe.

If a way is sought out of this dilemma by supposing that in some strange way suffering is just there to give you a life purpose in ending it, or that by some instinctive means men are called upon to end suffering, particularly in others, then all I can say is that I can imagine no supposition more trivial and evasive, and nothing more directly opposite to the facts of life.

I will therefore try to state the problem in religious terms.

The two children on the line belonged to a family of six children, two parents and one other adult who lived in a three room flat. That social situation may be responsible for the children being on the line, and the consequent situation of suffering. Let us ignore the social

situation as a cause. Let us suppose, as well may be the case, that they were all happy together, nevertheless the dynamic urges of that particular human situation still contain all the potentialities of suffering. And those potentialities can be extended until they contain the whole human race. Now let no one tell me that that situation can be ended by social reform. Put, if you will, that family into a ten room house, with admirable parents, plenty of this world's goods, and every possible psychological care for the children. Let all that be done, and let every possible form of social idealism be created to accomplish it, and every adequate reason be found for so doing, but still in that implicit situation you would have suffering—indeed of a deeper kind than may be known now. No one will mistake me in supposing that I am using this as an argument against social reform or social good or for that matter social revolution. All that I am trying to say is that where you have nine people bound together by human emotion there you have the permanent condition of human conflict and the possibility of suffering.

For what is suffering? And here I try to come to grips with its nearer religious meaning. I will try to explain by some verses of William Blake. We are familiar with the following:

*To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love
All pray in their distress,
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.*

*For Mercy has a human heart;
Pity, a human face;
And Love, the human form divine;
And Peace, the human dress.*

That tentatively provides an answer to what is suffering. For Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love suggest that there is something innate in human nature that seeks release through those virtues of delight. And because release is

found, the difficult experience of suffering finds a solution, the solution offered in these verses being found in the idealised human form.

But that, I want to suggest, is only a surface solution, and consequently does not show suffering as it really is.

I will quote two other verses of Blake not so well known as those I have just used.

*Cruelty has a human heart,
And jealousy a human face;
Terror the human form divine,
And secrecy the human dress.*

*The human dress is forged iron,
The human form a fiery forge,
The human face a furnace sealed,
The human heart its hungry gorge.*

As far as human experience goes both sets of verses are true. But the last set must most certainly be included. I know of no human life in which in measure and degree the human dress is not forged iron, the human form not a fiery forge, and the human face not a furnace sealed. And is there a human being, can there be such, who has not felt at some time or other the heart gorging upon itself? And here for me is the nearer answer to what suffering is. Life is an intertwined tapestry of all the threads of Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love, but equally also of the threads derived from the fiery forge and a furnace sealed. There is no choice between joy on one hand and suffering on the other. There is no real release through Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love from the other symbols of what man is. All the threads are woven together and there is no untangling them.

Let me illustrate this again by another poem, again by Blake. He is writing of love:

*'Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.'*

*So sung a little clod of clay,
Trodden with the cattle's feet,
But a pebble of the brook
Warbled out these metres meet:*

*'Love seeketh only self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in Heaven's despite.'*

I doubt if contemplation of the nature of love—which I conclude to be one of the most certain realities of human existence—can exclude those two forms of its realism. True, Blake makes the clod of clay trodden underneath the cattle's feet to see the sacrifice of love; and the little pebble rubbed smooth and cynical by soft flowing water, its selfishness; but granting all that is hidden in that symbolism (and much could I use for my purpose) the selfishness is never far from the sacrifice.

Suffering therefore is woven into the very tapestry of love itself. There is no love without suffering, and that I suppose is the answer of all the great religions—even the secular religion of communism.

How then does God care? My answer must be that the tapestry which is called life is the veil, the outer garment of God's existence. I can draw back as it were from the veil; I can live in it; I do live in it; but beyond I see the presence of God's existence. The intertwining veil of what is usually called joy and suffering, full of startling, brilliant, dark and frightening colours, is part of the impenetrable in Einstein's sense of God's existence. God always exists in the beyond. If there were no tapestry between me and him I should not be able to see him. All that I should see would be a thing, an Idol, and that is not God. Or all that I could do would be to empty the ocean out with my miserable little bucket and leave behind me an incalculable void, signifying nothing. God's care exists in bringing me into the fact of life, and thus enabling me to see him. He is not a thing pushing me around. He is a mystery who has created in

me an awareness of mystery and thus has given me the capacity to see him.

For there is mystery in me. It is the deepest reality of my being. I am not a thing. I am an ultimate which cannot be limited at any point. It is through that mystery of the self that the communion can take place through the veil of life with the illimitable mystery that lives beyond. That communion, because it takes place, must provide for me the answer to the question, 'How does God care?' I know of no other, and in the terms I have already laid down I can find no other.

I am left with the third question. 'Why does God care?'

In a sense I have already provided an answer, but I suspect that that answer is not complete or satisfactory for many. I will therefore attempt to provide an answer to the third question through another type of experience.

I think I can introduce it by a quotation from Pascal: 'Nothing stands still for us. This is the state which is ours by nature, yet to which we least incline: we burn to find solid ground, a final steady base on which to build a tower that rises to infinity; but the whole foundation breaks beneath us and the earth splits open down to the abyss.'

That, I take it, is the permanent condition of man. He has to resolve that condition if he wishes to resolve the condition of suffering implied in it. Pascal has said what Buddha and Jesus Christ said, 'Life is suffering', and man has to find his way out of that condition.

Why does God care? It is anthropomorphic language. I must escape from it. God cares because the greatest and most secure joy is the answer to suffering. It is the answer which lies at the heart of existence. We are insecure, always terribly insecure until we reach it. The abyss is always at our feet until we reach it. The answer is the answer of religion. To the question therefore, Why does God care? I can only reply with the words, 'The Peace of God which passeth all understanding,' and in these words lies the deepest joy attainable, if we can find it.

The Psychological Background of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Charles H Bartlett, BA

THE TERM 'the Holy Spirit' is most generally used in Unitarian Churches as an alternative term for 'the Indwelling God', and it will be used in this paper in that sense, and without therefore implying any doctrine of the Trinity. The typical Unitarian position, as the writer understands it, is most clearly expressed in the familiar words of Eliza Scudder's hymn:

*Yet high above the limits of my seeing,
And folded far within the inmost heart,
And deep below the deeps of conscious being,
Thy splendour shineth: there, O God, Thou art!*

A psychological study of this doctrine might be an attempt to show how and why such a doctrine had arisen in the light of the theories and tests of some modern school of psychology. But since modern psychology is a confusing welter of conflicting opinions, such a study would have no particular value. It is too often forgotten by those who make statements on behalf of modern psychology in critical, and often antagonistic, assessment of old ideas, that the subject is still in the pre-scientific state of intense and serious research, a world in which there are no firm foundations of agreed terms and theories, and in which very often there is no agreement as

to what are the facts to be examined, and in which 'one man's meat is another man's poison'. No pronouncement on the doctrine would therefore have any validity except as a statement as to what one person belonging to one particular school in psychology thought of it.

It has therefore seemed better that we should consider whether the independent researches of the modern psychologists, starting from points of view so entirely different from the older religious thinkers, have thrown up any theories which are parallel to the doctrine of 'the indwelling God', or which can be related to it. Our conclusion is that Christian theologians in their study of human nature and modern psychologists in their study of mental disorder are far closer together than would appear from the superficial words used. Any adequate demonstration of this would require a lengthy thesis. I shall be content to suggest that this argument is worth much more detailed study and serious consideration.

The theme of this paper therefore is the statement: 'There are parallels which can be drawn, without violation to either side, between the religious theory known as the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and certain theories developed by those schools in modern psychology which now are generally classed together as "depth psychology", namely the schools of Freud and Jung.' To this I add the further statement: 'It is the religious doctrine which gives the most adequate foundation to the theories of the depth-psychologists and the clearest explanation of their experience.'

And what is the religious doctrine? It is that the human organism is ultimately a duality, not the so-called Cartesian duality of body and mind, but the duality of God and Man as essential but independent factors in the total human organism. There is, on the one hand, what modern jargon would term the Ego-system, with its intelligent power to understand and its conative power to exert effort, with its whole range of unconscious

factors, both in the form of motives not consciously appreciated, and in the form of external influences of which the person may not be aware but which nevertheless are acting continually in an autonomous manner to control his overt behaviour; and there is on the other hand what is affirmed in the familiar lines already quoted.

And the 'Thou' of the last line is separate in purpose and in its power to exert willed action. There is the will of man and there is the will of God. Any other interpretation of the doctrine, which evades the objectivity of that THOU and converts it into some subjective element of the individual human mind, is a complete evasion of all the familiar language of the Christian religion, and indeed of other religions also, especially those of the Eastern cultures. This other-than-human entity, which is fundamental to the duality of the human organism, is already a familiar notion in Augustine and runs through the whole of orthodox Christian theology, turning up in *Theology for Beginners* by FJ Sheed, published only recently, as when that author says: 'Everything whatsoever receives the energy of God, bringing it into existence and keeping it there; that is the sense in which God is omnipresent, is everywhere, in everything,' . . . an echo in the present of the great Pauline phrases about the 'God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.' It is the doctrine which is at the root of the controversy as to the nature of Christ which was partially settled by the *Tome* of Leo and the Chalcedonic Definition, and which nevertheless had to await the full solution of the Monothelite and Monophysite controversies before the essential duality of the one organism was acceptable to western reason even in the case of Christ. That settlement looks back to Jesus himself and such mysterious phrases as 'I and the Father are one', in which the clear distinction between the two elements is there for all to see, and good theologians have not been blind, as the same distinction in the Athanasian creed testifies, though it is a distinction

which unhappily in popular teaching has been blurred from the very first debates right up to the latest preacher who heretically states 'Jesus is God'.

The doctrine has never in sound theology separated Christ from the normal human personality in this respect, for the two elements which are in united harmony in the Christ are also in the normal man, though split off the one from the other as an inevitable consequence of the Fall. Christian pastoral teaching, in its most authoritative form, has always been concerned with the re-union, or as it has come to be called, the sacred marriage between these two separated elements of the human organism. Christianity in its orthodox doctrine is, to use modern terminology, concerned with the problem of a basic schizophrenia which lies at the root of all human ills, and each of its techniques, either through the services of the church or through personal training in sanctity, is aimed at the dissolution of that split condition. The language and manner of life of such great mystics as St John of the Cross, or his friend, Santa Teresa, cannot really be understood apart from that concept. Indeed, it would not perhaps be too much to say that the whole of the great monastic system of the Christian west would have no intelligible *raison d'être*, were it not for that fundamental idea and that purpose.

It is astonishing to find that a modern neurologist turned psychotherapist, and not a Christian but a Jew, soaked in Judaism and unfamiliar with Christianity, has been driven by his clinical experience of mentally abnormal patients to a similar doctrine. Sigmund Freud, seeking to find some rational system of ideas by which to interpret the phenomena of neurosis and psychosis, began first by assuming that these abnormalities of mental functioning arose from conflict between those things of memory, impulse or idea which were acceptable to the person and those things in the person's mind which were not acceptable and which were therefore repressed into some level of the mind in which they could be conveniently forgotten. At that stage, the only

things which Freud recognised as basic elements of the human mind were (1) the organised rational mind of waking consciousness with its standards of judgement, and (2) a kind of general rag-bag or limbo of the rejected material of life-experience which consciousness refused to assimilate. This proved quite inadequate as a theory, particularly in respect of the genuinely insane states of psychotic. Freud then was driven to his doctrine of the Ego and the Id, first published in German in 1923 in the book, *Das Ich und das Es*. This book marked a turning point in Freud's theoretical views. It presents a hypothetical picture of the anatomy of the mind, and lays stress on mental structure as compared with mental function. By the 'ego' Freud meant all that can be considered as the functioning of the human will and human intelligence, together with all the individual's life experience, whether available to consciousness or completely repressed. He visualised this, however, as only part of the fundamental story of the human mind. There was also, he conceived, another part which was completely independent of the ego-system in all its ramifications. This other part was a reservoir of life-potentiality, struggling (and it is important to realise that Freud thought of it as intensely active) for expression through the life of the person and continually frustrated in its effort by the limitations of the individual. This he named the *Id*... or perhaps it is better to keep the ordinary German of the original, *das Es*... the IT. Freud deliberately chose such an almost meaningless word because for him *das Es* was unknowable in its nature, that is, completely unconscious... and destined by its very nature as potentiality to remain unknown. Freud's attitude to the *Id* might, I think, at the risk of appearing to pervert a phrase, be best expressed, so far as he intellectually and emotionally thought of it, as 'The Fountain of Life for ever striving to flow free'. The writer of the hymn understood the fountain of life to contain, not only power and the whole range of normal life potentiality, but also the full force

of the most perfect striving after truth, beauty and goodness. Freud stopped short of the latter, thinking of it as more a fountain of wild, chaotic life, whose denial was a danger for human stability but which must be controlled by the human ego for the safety of the human personality. But he is at one with the Christian theologian in visualising that the human organism is a duality in which there is the human element and also another and separate entity of immense power. Like the theologian too, he was thinking in terms of spiritual entities (though he would have used the modern term 'psychological', meaning the same thing). He refused at all times to have anything to do with the attempt to reduce such terms to mere physical things or functions of the physical. It is an utter misinterpretation of Freud to conceive of him as a materialist, though he did sometimes speculate as to whether the force of the *Id* was derived from physical roots, but only as one of his less serious bright ideas. To those who are familiar with DH Lawrence, it may be interesting to notice that his vision of human nature is almost exactly the same as the later conception of Freud, especially in such writings as *The Plumed Serpent*, *The Fantasia of the Unconscious*, and that amazingly useful little essay (useful to the theoretical psychologist), *The Crown* . . . though Freud would probably have said of Lawrence that he would have been wiser to have been more afraid of the life-power.

For Freud, as for the Christian theologian, the distresses of human life, in so far as they are attributable to human fault, are in the end due to a fundamental split, a fundamental schizophrenia. Where the Christian speaks of the Fall by which the human became separated off from the indwelling Divine, Freud speaks of the prime, prehistoric trauma by which the socialised *Ego* became split off from the *Id*. It is curious that in both cases the cause is found at the beginning of history, in the one case in the garden of Eden, in the other case in the primeval horde of almost animal man. Moreover,

the two theories are parallel in another way, namely, that they both accept the paradox that the human self, though completely separated from that other source of life and power within, nevertheless in each individual arises out of it. The *Ego* for Freud arises out of the *Id* and in some sense remains a function of it, though taking on its own independent life, and even dangerously opposing the very source of its own existence . . . and for the Christian, the very soul which can so completely oppose its God is nevertheless the son of that God and born of him and in his own image.

It is when we turn to Freud's disciple, for many years his trusted fellow-worker, though in the end his reluctant opponent, the Swiss psychiatrist, Jung, that we find this Freudian doctrine of the *Ego* and the *Id* developing a stage nearer to the characteristic Christian doctrine. Jung begins from the same point of view, though using a different term. What Freud calls the *Id*, Jung renames the collective unconscious, not because he is referring to any different element in theory but because of a different interpretation of the content of that element. Where Freud insists that that other in the human organism is only a source of elementary life, of what Bernard Shaw might have been content to call the life force, Jung replies that it can be shown to contain other and more fundamental elements, and he wrote his book *The Integration of the Personality* to argue this point. For Jung, what the (putting all the terms together) 'Fountain of Life-Id-Collective Unconscious' contained at bottom was not just blind life forces, but organising, integrating functions and purposes, which were concerned, not just to gain the satisfaction of the free flow of libido, that is, of life potentiality, but which were more importantly concerned with the up-building of a satisfactory, balanced and integrated personality. This, Jung, in the book I have mentioned, attempted to demonstrate by drawing attention to certain characteristic symbols which the process of dreaming tended to throw up in the course of establishing an integrated

stability in a neurotic patient. These symbols were mainly circles, squares and associated figures and movements. In his patient's dream material Jung thinks that he discerns the signs of an integrating factor, quite other than the conscious effort of his patient, which is concerned for the spiritual and moral welfare of the person in all aspects of his life . . . an integrating factor moreover which can be completely trusted to take control of the process of cure and, more importantly, of the whole process of life-development as it is appropriate to the person's own nature and his environmental circumstances. Where Freud finds the fundamental source of neurosis in our failure to find adequate outlet for the *Id*, the reservoir of life-potentiality, Jung finds the fundamental source of neurosis in our failure to cooperate adequately with the central integrating factor. In both cases the failure is the result of the conditioning factors of society imposing upon us ideas which are inadequate to the satisfactory adjustment of a personality to the mysterious depths of its own nature, depths which, in dreams, tend to reveal themselves as oceans from which too often the dreamer shrinks in fear.

The basic problem of psychotherapy then becomes a matter of breaking the hold of external influences, both of the past as they still function effectively in the person, even if unconsciously, and of the present as they impinge upon the person in his day-to-day living, and then to accustom him to learn to depend upon something in himself which is not his own will. Here, modern depth-psychology, as it has been developed by these medical men, concerned at first only with the problems of treating mental disorder, comes amazingly close to the whole traditional scheme of the cure of souls as it grew up in the contemplative tradition of Christian orthodoxy.

I turn therefore to consider what that scheme was. It is entirely wrong to assume that there was no systematic psychology before the end of the last century. It is perhaps true that there has been no secular systematic psychology. It is perhaps true that post-reformation

Protestantism has had, and still has, no systematic psychology. But classical Christian theology has a very clear and very simple psychological system, which is still capable of wide application and still immensely useful. One of the *loci classici* for its expression is in that profound and subtle Middle English book, *The Cloud of Unknowing* . . . where the author, in chapter 62, says: 'Within thyself in nature be the powers of thy soul, the which be these three principal: Mind, Reason and Will; and secondary, Imagination and Sensuality. Above thyself in nature is no manner of thing, but only God.' Some 200 years later Augustine Baker, the English Benedictine contemplative director, notes that other authors use the term 'memory' where *The Cloud* says 'Mind', and 'understanding' where it says 'Reason'. And this can be paralleled again and again with different authors using different terms but speaking as if they were completely familiar with what each writer meant. Indeed, beginning with Augustine the church was accustomed to think of human psychology in terms, first, of the soul or, as we should say, the *ego*, and then in terms of three superior functions and two inferior functions. This scheme first, I think, appears in Augustine's *De Trinitate*, though it is present already in embryo in his *Confessions*, particularly in the tenth book. It is echoed with approval nine centuries later by Aquinas in the *De Veritate*, and is fundamental to medieval thinking about human nature, and is still the psychological scheme which is taught in the Roman Catholic church. The three superior functions of the soul are what we should now call consciousness, intelligence and conation . . . or perhaps better, consciousness, reason and will. The two inferior functions of (to use the medieval Latin) *imaginatio* and *sensualitas* we cannot translate by their English cognates since *imaginatio* means much more than the modern imagination, and the modern sensuality has almost next to nothing to do with *sensualitas*. *Sensualitas* is what we might best term 'the world of sense-impression', and is a very

broad term that covers all that range of experience, attraction and distraction, which is externally orientated and which comes to us through our senses, and which has such a complete hold over our minds that we consider it is the world of reality *par excellence*. Medieval Christian orthodoxy and modern philosophy are agreed that this is the only source of our knowledge in so far as our knowledge is natural knowledge. The modern philosopher knows no other knowledge that is trustworthy. The medieval theologian, in agreement with Plato, thought there was another source of knowledge, though disagreed with Plato as to the nature of the source. Where Plato said 'Memory that is lost', the Christian said 'God'. If therefore the Christian wished to get into touch and ultimately to be in union with his God, he must first break the hold upon himself of the whole world of sense-impression, as well as all the impulses which directed him to value that world at (according to the doctrine) too high a value. In this the Christian is entirely at one with the Hindu teaching of the Upanishads and Bhagavadgita, as well as with the teaching of Buddhism. And in this ascetic process a critical stage should appear in which all concern for the external world had been lost, all interest in normal action had disappeared, and living, at any rate so far as the normal pattern of external reality was concerned, had lost its savour. To this state, distressing for the person in it and worrying for those ordinary folk who observed the man in it, St John of the Cross gave the term which has now become almost a standard term, 'The Dark Night of the Senses'. His interpretation of this state has been accepted by Orthodoxy as correct; it is due to the action of the Indwelling God withdrawing the soul from its absorption in external reality. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* begins with a very vivid description of such a state, and very beautifully and sympathetically makes it clear that, to ordinary people round about Christian, he seemed merely to have lost his wits . . . 'His relations were sore amazed because they thought that

some frenzy distemper had got into his head . . . therefore it drawing towards night, and they thinking that sleep might settle his brains, with all haste they got him to bed.' But what seemed to Christian's relations merely 'a distemper to be driven away by harsh and surly carriages to him' was, as we know, the beginning of his profound spiritual adventure. All this may seem remote from Freudian psychoanalysis or from Jungian analytical psychology, but in fact that is not so. A collapse of interest in normal routines, a nervous breakdown as such states are popularly called, a loss of appetite for living, is not a mere disorder to be cured but, on the contrary, the beginning of an internal process concerned for the further spiritual development of the individual. It is at this point that the most violent disagreement arises between the typical medical psychiatrist and the Freudian or Jungian. The former regards the so-called normal state of the person as perfectly right and proper and completely healthy, and the abnormal state of severe loss of interest as a disorder to be cured so that the person can get back to normal. The psychotherapist of the other two schools regards the collapse as the sign that the supposedly normal condition of the person previously was in fact completely unsatisfactory, and the collapse is the opportunity produced by internal factors for the person to go on to a new level of spiritual experience. Therefore, 'to get back to what I was before' is a false cure in which the spiritual opportunity has been lost. So it is quite possible for a psychoanalyst to be able to say quite sincerely, 'Oh yes! he's cured . . . unfortunately . . . and we shall now have to wait perhaps for another ten years before we get another opportunity to tackle the job properly.' If one knows a case in detail from the inside, it sometimes seems quite unbelievable that people can be saying, 'How nice that so-and-so has been cured,' when in fact nothing of any importance has been done at all.

This conviction that mental disturbance of any kind (other than the genuinely insane psychotic cases which

are usually easily distinguished by the fact that the person has no sense that there is anything wrong with him) is a demand by internal factors for further spiritual growth, is at the core of the Freudian technique of treatment by free association, the so-called sofa-technique, which is all aimed at giving those internal factors their opportunity for influence over the mind. The patient is asked to remove his attention from the external world as far as possible, and also to get rid of all willed control over the flow of his mind and his tongue. He must learn to let himself just drift on an uncontrolled tide of wandering thought . . . for the length of the analytical session. And the extraordinary thing is that it works. I am not going to suggest that it works every time, far from it, but on the other hand, it works sufficiently effectively and sufficiently often that more and more medical psychiatrists over the years have turned to it as their salvation, and the Freudian International Association is growing in numbers and in influence every year.

What I have said may sound all very simple and easy to do, both for the patient and for the analyst. In fact, it doesn't work out like that at all. Each and every patient puts up complicated resistances to the whole process. He fights to stop his mind from running easily and without control. He becomes terrified the moment it seems to be out of control. He tries to convert the whole business into one of simply getting back to what he was before he collapsed. So many and diverse are the resistances to this apparently easy process that it is nowadays said in psychoanalytic teaching that the whole of psychoanalysis consists of 'working through the resistances'. And one is again and again reminded vividly of that phrase in our *Orders of Worship*, 'Lay to rest, by the persuasion of thy Spirit, the resistance of our passion, indolence or fear.' And that is not inappropriate, because here again is a parallel between Christian teaching and the psychotherapist. Both have trust in internal factors at work for the welfare of the individual. Both teach that the exercise of the human

will, at least in certain fundamental spiritual issues, is of no avail, so far as the welfare of the individual is concerned. 'Of myself I can do nothing' . . . that is the rule for the mental case as it is for the saint. Both Christian theologian and Freudian psychotherapist seek to train those under them to relax and to let themselves be carried by an unconscious process. Both know the unending resistance that the human *ego* puts up against this. Both know how evil a thing the human, wilful pride can be which is determined at all cost to keep its control over its own life and mind. Jung has a lengthy passage in the *Integration* in which he makes the note that this poses a most difficult problem for our minds. 'It would appear that there is nothing so distressing or repugnant for the western mind as becoming the passive object of the action of interior forces. Yet this is the only way whereby lasting spiritual gains may be made. Except ye become as little children, surrendered to the inner processes of growth, ye shall in no wise inherit the kingdom of your spirit.'

To return to the orthodox Christian psychological scheme of the three superior capacities of the soul, consciousness, reason and will, and the two inferior capacities, imagination and *sensualitas*. I have argued that the depth-psychologist takes the same attitude as the director of religious souls in the medieval contemplative tradition over the matters of the will and the world of sense-impression, *sensualitas*. There are also parallels with the other orthodox functions. To both the Freudian and the orthodox theologian the supreme human capacity is reason, intelligent understanding—all that is assumed in the Latin term, *Ratio*. And here the Unitarian should have welcomed eagerly Freudian psychoanalysis, for it is one of those systems of thought which, like the stoicism of Marcus Aurelius, almost deify human reason. It is odd that this has often not been noticed by people who read Freud's books. They often get the impression that Freud is teaching sexual licence or the free release of primitive passion or the complete

breakdown of all manners and all morals. They forget that whatever Freud *said*, he was concerned from beginning to end with nothing except the salvation of the reason of his patients. Moreover the whole process of psychoanalysis has another side to it which is equally fundamental, namely, that there must be a continual effort on the part of the patient in co-operation with the analyst to understand what has happened to make the patient what he is and to understand what is happening in the process of the treatment. Moreover, the so-called 'dummy' attitude of the psychoanalyst is an attempt to leave the patient's reason free to come to its own conclusions and decisions about the person's life and to find its own direction. Jung secures the same aim by basing all argument, so far as it is humanly possible, upon the patient's own material, whether of his life history or his dreams. And that leads to the further comment that Freud and Jung have returned unwittingly to that fundamental principle shared by Socrates and classical Christianity, that 'self-knowledge' is a fundamental factor in spiritual development. The medieval tag of the contemplative, *nosce teipsum*, might also be the basic text of the psychotherapist.

But if Freud and Jung have been driven by their practical experience of dealing deeply with human nature to points of view similar to those of the Christian doctrine, why did they not become out and out supporters of religion? For Jung has been hesitant in his support of the Christian religion and Freud quite violently antagonistic to Christianity and to Judaism as well. The answer is that neither had any training in religious thinking. Both were first and foremost doctors, concerned with medical patients. They were experimenters in a field of medicine little understood and not at all popular with the run of medical men. They fashioned their theories as they went along and had no contacts in their formative years with very much outside their medical schools to help them in their theories. Freud also, as the result of a personal kink of his own

character, and perhaps partly as the result of an inner rebellion against a strict religious background in his own family, never had any positive interest in religion. His attention was directed towards religion by an understandable but unfortunate influence, namely, that he found again and again in his patients that the neurotic conditions he was called upon to treat had a great deal to do with an overstrict, puritanical upbringing, supported by a religion of fear. He set himself to free his patients, and the world, of such a religion, failing to realise that what he was attacking was a perversion of Christianity, which perhaps Jesus himself would have been the first to attack. But oddly enough, although he attacked religion and endeavoured to explain away God as merely an inflated and cosmically projected Father image, he produced, and psychoanalysis has accepted generally, something remarkably like this doctrine of the Indwelling Holy Spirit. You might read Freudian literature quite a lot before you began to tumble to the fact that the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit, rejected at the front door along with all other Christian doctrine, turns up again at the backdoor and gets settled quite solidly in the house as *Eros*.

Freud has an odd doctrine of what he calls 'instincts' . . . and those of you who know McDougall (and any other psychologists who have speculated about instinct in man or animal) must forget all you've read, because Freud's instincts are quite unlike anything else of the same name. To Freud there are two basic instincts, *Eros*, the instinct for creation, and *Thanatos*, the death-instinct. With the latter we are not concerned here. It has gained popular notoriety but has never been accepted by the Freudian psychoanalysts as anything but an oddity of Freud's quite frequently wild speculations. Even Freud grew to be unsure as to whether it really was a valuable idea. Ernest Jones, in his biography of Freud, wrote that he knew no modern psychoanalyst who accepted the idea. So there is but one instinct. But the word instinct is used by Freud in the

sense of formative factor. For Freud it is not I who possess instinct or instincts, but rather the instinct which possesses me, in the sense that it controls my growth and development. *Eros* therefore is the creative factor which controls the growth and development of a man in so far as the ego-system and the pressure of external society will permit, and it is a fundamental element in the *Id*. Freud here has a contradiction in his theory, for part of the time he is arguing (and some analysts after him) that the *Id* is simply a reservoir of elementary life-force, and part of the time (in later years and probably under the unacknowledged influence of Jung) he is saying that the *Id* life-forces are not the most fundamental thing but have a substratum of this controlling creative power, the instinct *Eros*. It is when one meets the term in actual use that the closeness of this to the Holy Spirit begins to appear. *Eros*, of course, is simply the Greek word for love, and it is unfortunate that its cognate adjective, erotic, has a markedly sexual meaning in English . . . but this is completely absent from Freud's use of *Eros*. I would remind you of the use of Love in connection with God in normal religious usage, and of such a book as Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love*. I refer to that great classic of the English religious life especially in view of my next quotation. At the end of her book on *Dream Analysis*, Ella Sharpe, one of England's very best training analysts in the London Institute of Psychoanalysis, has an epilogue. She writes: 'I wish to record as the final dream in this book one which was in reality a last dream, since it was related by a woman three days before her death. She did not regain full consciousness after reciting it. Physical distress had mainly been caused by persistent sickness, and her dream ran: "I saw all my sicknesses gathered together and as I looked they were no longer sicknesses but roses and I knew the roses would be planted and that they would grow."' After one or two comments, Miss Sharpe says: 'It is *Eros* alone who *knows* that the roses will be planted and will grow.'

Is this not the sort of deep spiritual vision which would be immediately recognised and understood by such a person as Thomas à Kempis as being completely at one with his own teaching of the Royal Way of the Cross in *The Imitation*, that way of patient and humble acceptance of suffering which can lead to a fulfilment of spiritual experience, a flowering of the personality? What he has said in *The Imitation* is only one expression of the general attitude of Christian orthodoxy on the subject of bearing one's cross. And would not the Christian teacher say that man, so far as his *own* understanding goes, can have only faith? Only the Holy Spirit can *know* that pain may bring spiritual fruition. And is there not here some close affinity between the professional orthodox psychoanalyst and the orthodox Christian theologian?

I would like to dwell on this dream a few minutes longer, for there are other points to be examined.

First, notice that the dreamer is asleep, that is, in ordinary language, in an unconscious state. Nevertheless, she sees and can intelligently understand in complete consciousness, as is, of course, true of every dream. In other words, consciousness with all its range of perception and of reason is functioning in a perfectly normal manner even though the person is unconscious in some other and more superficial sense. It follows that consciousness, as the medieval church taught, is fundamental to the human personality and continues to function normally at all times. What we have to distinguish is whether that consciousness is externally orientated *per sensualitatem ad exteriora*, as Aquinas says, as in normal waking life, or whether it is internally oriented, withdrawn from the world of sense-impression, as it is in dreams, or as the mystic seeks to train himself to be, in the state of 'interior prayer'. I do not think it has been sufficiently noticed that Freud and Jung have almost inadvertently returned to a notion of mental functioning which is quite alien to our typical modern thought, but which is perfectly familiar to the teachers

of the contemplative tradition in Christianity, as it is also to their mystical colleagues, if I may call them such, in the Eastern religions. In fact, as we approach the deeper levels of dream-material, to which this dream belongs, and which it would appear every person can approach as and when he is prepared to spend time and energy on the effort to understand his dreams, we are in a world thoroughly familiar to the Christian teacher, both as to the spiritual content of what can only at this stage be called religious visions and as to the psychological notions of the anatomy of mind. We are in the world in which the language of Julian of Norwich, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Thomas à Kempis and the ideas of the strict psychoanalyst cohere together into a unity. The visionary material of Christ at the Baptism or in the Temptations, the dreams of Peter in the book of Acts, the sense of a commanding voice as it came to Old Testament prophet or to Muhammed or to Joan of Arc no longer appear strange and abnormal but fit into a systematic psychological scheme which can be and is in practice applied to the study of the dream material of the neurotic patient in the consulting room.

I have omitted one term so far of the orthodox Christian scheme, namely, *imaginatio*. This term is used to denote the whole range of the imagery which belongs to our human experience, whether it is the imagery which is cast up by our interaction with sense-impression or the imagery which, unrelated, at any rate directly, to the immediate impact of sense stimuli, functions apparently without any control on our own part in the world of hallucination or dream or vision. What we call now 'Imagination' is only a minute part of this whole inner world of *imaginatio*. This the analyst treats as full of meaning and purpose. I have noted this attitude in the Freudian, Ella Sharpe, whom I have quoted. The attitude is even more impressively there in Jung, as anybody can see quickly if he reads *The Integration of the Personality*. And this again is the return in modern times of an older religious point of

view. The typical modern mind tends to regard the inner imagery as without value, unless it can be excused on the ground of poetry. It cannot conceive of it as having objective reality on any ground whatsoever, so that, for example, the vision of the transfigured Christ in the Gospels can be treated by the Catholic theologian as an experience of reality though not the reality of external physical fact, whereas the modern mind can only treat such things as mere hallucinations or as poetry, lacking any objective reality. Jung by contrast has insisted on the objective *psyche* and the objective reality of psychic imagery. He is repeating what has been stated in other words in the form: 'Two worlds are ours, 'tis only sin [the psychotherapist would prefer to say repression] forbids us to descry the mystic heaven and earth within.'

And over this other world of objective imagery within, both the director of spiritual souls concerned with the union with God and the psychotherapist take the attitude that it is limiting and unwise to be over-impressed with the inner imagery, even if it throws up the most moving and numinous material. The psychoanalyst and the analytical psychologist are concerned to translate the imagery into intelligible rational thought. The medieval contemplative was taught never to remain content with sensible imagery however majestic and profound but to press on in his search for God, remembering, as Augustine taught, that God is most nearly to be approached, *non per sensibilia sed per intelligibilia*. It would be perhaps wise if some moderns who are stressing the importance of feeling and sensuous imagery in religion were to remember the older and deeper teaching which is so much more in line with the practice of the modern psychotherapist.

I cannot for a moment imagine that I have *proved* a closeness of thought between the members of modern psychological therapeutic schools and the older religious schools of spiritual training in the Christian church. The only possible way of doing that would be to take

some writer such as Louis de Blois in *A Book of Spiritual Instruction*, or St John of the Cross in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, or even the familiar language of our own prayer book and hymn book and show point by point that the teaching of the psychotherapist is so exactly parallel that it is quite possible to take a patient through a whole course of treatment without any quotation whatsoever except from common religious language. I have only sought to suggest that some modern medical men seem to have come, by a different route, remarkably close to the whole nexus of thought to which the doctrine of the Indwelling God belongs.

It is when one swings over completely to the religious point of view that one discovers that nothing so simply draws together into one system of ideas such a vast range of facts. The dreams of a patient in all their subtle range of symbolism, the language and experience of the prophet and the mystic, the visionary material of the Bible or of such a person as Julian of Norwich are all seen to fall together into one simple pattern, the variations being explicable also in simple terms of a limited number of variant factors. The matter becomes even more exciting when it is observed that one has now a theory by which the physical concomitants of spiritual experience, as for example the ocular dissociation of St Paul on the road to Damascus (quite improperly dismissed by Schweitzer as mere epileptic formation) or the migraine symptoms of the disciples at the first Pentecost are seen to cohere with those physical experiences of patients undergoing treatment which are known to be the physical characteristics of deep spiritual change . . . so again the familiar stories of the religious life become embodied in a theory which is amenable to experimental test in the analytic consulting room.

But this poses a very critical problem, upon which already psychiatrists and psychotherapists have passed influential comment, and upon which it is of vital importance that religious thinkers should do some careful and

detailed research: there is, quite obviously, (and this is I think agreed by all workers in the field, to whatever school they belong) a very close relationship between the mental and physical experiences that belong to the religious life and the experiences that belong to neurotic collapse. Are we, as did Max Nordau in the case of Santa Teresa as he studied her in his *Degeneration* or as a French psychiatrist has made out more widely in the book *La Religion d'après les Maladies Mentales*, to interpret the characteristics of religious genius as merely the symptoms of morbid psychology due to general mental degeneration, *or* are we to interpret neurotic disturbance in the light of religious experience as the mark of the surface waters being troubled by the Holy Spirit? This is the great debate in modern psychology, as it was the great debate between Bunyan's Christian and his family at the beginning of *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Psychoanalysis, Existentialism and Theology

Paul Tillich, DD

THE OLDER I become, the more I feel obliged to make a semantic introduction—a very short one, but a very necessary one. I shall be using the two words, psychoanalysis and theology. By their very nature they pose semantic problems for us. We have to state what we mean by these two words before we talk about their relations. Psychoanalysis can be a special term, and it is often usurped by the Freudian school, which declares that no other school has a right to use the term psychoanalysis. I remember a talk I had with a representative of this school a few weeks ago at a dinner party. We talked very cordially with each other up to the moment when I called people like Horney, Fromm, Jung, Rank and other psychoanalysts. At this moment she broke in and said, 'They are dishonest in calling themselves psychoanalysts. They shouldn't do it. They do it only for purposes of profit.' There I got angry.

This situation shows that we have to do something about this term. If I use the term here, I will use it not as this lady psychoanalyst did but in the meaning into which this term has been transformed and enlarged during the last half-century. These developments surely are dependent on the basic Freudian discovery, namely, the role of the unconscious. However, I believe two other words which indicate something about the matter itself can be used here. 'Therapeutic psychology' is one of the terms often used. Another term is 'depth psychology'.

About the term 'theology' I want to make only one short remark. What theology is cannot be the subject of this lecture; it must be presupposed. Perhaps many of you know that in our theological seminaries and divinity schools, the word 'theology' often is used exclusively for systematic theology, and that historical and practical theology are not considered theology at all. With respect to our topic, I wish to enlarge the concept of theology for our discussion of its relationship to depth psychology; I wish to include in it past religious movements and great religious figures, and also the New Testament writings. On the other hand I want to include practical theology where the relationship to psychoanalysis has become most conspicuous, namely, in the function of the counsellor who gives counsel in religious and in psychoanalytic terms at the same time.

I was asked to fill a gap that has developed, namely, a treatment of existentialism in relation to psychoanalysis. This is a real gap, because I take existentialism in a much broader sense than it was taken a few years after the second world war here in America. At that time existentialism was identified with the philosophy of Sartre. But existentialism is a much larger movement, and it has many predecessors. It appears in decisive forms early in the 17th and in the 19th centuries, and it is incorporated in almost all great creations in all areas of life in the 20th century. If you understand existentialism in this broader sense, it suggests very definitely a relationship between existentialism and psychoanalysis. I would not have accepted this additional assignment, if I had thought that it was an additional assignment. But it is not, because a basic assertion I intend to make about the relationship of theology and psychoanalysis is that psychoanalysis belongs fundamentally to the whole existentialist movement of the 20th century, and that as a part of this movement it must be understood in its relationship to theology in the same way in which the relationship of existentialism generally must be understood. Thus the enlargement of my subject is not really

an addition, but is something that in any event involves the problem of the relations between psychoanalysis and theology.

This factor to which I refer is very revealing for the whole situation. It reveals something about the philosophical implications of depth psychology, and also about the interdependence between this movement and the existentialist movement of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is a fact that psychoanalysis and existentialism have been connected with each other from the very beginning; they have mutually influenced each other in the most radical and profound ways. Everybody who has looked into the works of existentialist writers from Dostoevsky on to the present, will immediately agree that there is much depth-psychological material in the novels, the dramas, and the poems, as well as in the visual arts—modern art is the existentialist form of visual art. All this is understandable only if we see that there is a common root and intention in existentialism and psychoanalysis.

If these common roots are found, and I will try to give at least some hint about them, the question of the relationship of psychoanalysis and theology is brought into a larger and more fundamental framework. Then it is possible to reject the attempts of some theologians and some psychologists to divide these two realms carefully and give to each of them a special sphere; it is then possible to disregard those people who tell us to stay in this or that field, here a system of theological doctrines and there a congeries of psychological insights. This is not so. The relationship is not one of existing alongside each other; it is a relationship of mutual interpenetration, and the analysis of this mutual interpenetration is the great problem to which I have to address myself.

Let me first give you something that may tax your patience, namely, a historical view of the common roots of existentialism in general and of psychoanalysis in particular. One can say that the common root is the

protest against the increasing power of the philosophy of consciousness in modern industrial society. This conflict between the philosophy of consciousness and the protest against it is of course much older than modern industrial society. It appeared already in the 13th century in the famous conflict between the primacy of the intellect in Thomas Aquinas and the primacy of the irrational will in Duns Scotus. Both of these men were theologians, and I mention them mainly in order to show how untenable theological positions are which want to exclude philosophical and psychological problems from theology. The struggle between these two basic attitudes towards not only the nature of man but also the nature of God and the world has continued ever since. In the Renaissance, we have philosophers of consciousness, for instance, humanists of the type of Erasmus of Rotterdam or scientists of the type of Galileo, but against them stood others, as for instance Paracelsus in the realm of medical philosophy who fought against the anatomical mechanisation of medicine and against the separation of body and mind, or Jacob Boehme, who influenced the subsequent period very much, particularly by his description in mythological terms of the unconscious elements in the ground of the divine life itself and therefore of all life. We find the same conflict in the Reformation: on the one hand the victory of consciousness in reformers like Melancthon, Zwingli, and Calvin, all of them dependent on humanists of the Erasmus type, while the irrational will was emphasised by Luther, on whom Jacob Boehme was largely dependent. The history of industrial society, the end of which we are experiencing, represents the history of the victory of the philosophy of consciousness over the philosophy of the unconscious, irrational will. The symbolic name for the complete victory of the philosophy of consciousness is René Descartes, and the victory became complete, even in religion, at the moment when Protestant theology became the ally of the Cartesian emphasis on man as pure consciousness

on the one hand, and a mechanical process called body on the other hand. In Lutheranism it was especially the cognitive side of man's consciousness which overwhelmed the early Luther's understanding of the irrational will. In Calvin it was the moral consciousness that predominated. We have in America, which is mostly dependent on Calvinism and related outlooks, the moralistic and oppressive types of Protestantism which are the result of the complete victory of the philosophy of consciousness in modern Protestantism. But in spite of this victory, the protest was not silenced.

Pascal in the 17th century stood in conscious opposition to Descartes. His was the first existentialist analysis of the human situation, and he described it in ways very similar to those of later existentialist and non-existentialist philosophers, that is, in terms of anxiety, of finitude, of doubt, of guilt, of meaninglessness, of a world in which Newtonian atoms and cosmic bodies move according to mechanical laws; and, as we know from many utterances, man decentralised, deprived of the earth as centre, felt completely lost in this mechanised universe, in anxiety and meaninglessness. There were others in the 18th century, for example, Hamann, who is very little known outside of Germany, a kind of prophetic spirit anticipating many of the existentialist ideas. But most radical became the protest at the moment when the philosophy of consciousness reached its peak in the philosophy of Hegel. Against this victorious philosophy of consciousness Schelling arose, giving to Kierkegaard and many others the basic concepts of existentialism; then Schopenhauer's irrational will, Hartmann's philosophy of the unconscious, Nietzsche's analysis which anticipated most of the results of later depth-psychological inquiries. The protest appeared also in Kierkegaard's and Marx's description of the human predicament, in finitude, estrangement, and loss of subjectivity. And in Dostoevsky we find the description of the demonic subconscious in man; we find it also in French poetry of the type of Rimbaud and Baudelaire. This was

the preparation of the ground for what was to follow in the 20th century.

All the things which in these men were ontological intuition or theological analysis now through Freud became methodological scientific words. Freud, in his discovery of the unconscious, rediscovered something that was known long since, and had been used for many decades and even centuries to fight the victorious philosophy of consciousness. What Freud did was to give to all of this protest a scientific methodological foundation. In him we must see the old protest against the philosophy of consciousness. Especially in men like Heidegger and Sartre, and in the whole literature and art of the 20th century, the existentialist point of view became aware of itself. It now was expressed intentionally and directly, and not only as a suppressed element of protest.

This short survey shows the inseparability of depth psychology from philosophy, and of both of them from theology. It is also clear that they cannot be separated if we now compare depth psychology and existentialist philosophy in their differences and their identity. The basic point is that both existentialism and depth psychology are interested in the description of man's existential predicament—in time and space, in finitude and estrangement—in contrast to man's essential nature; for if you speak of man's existential predicament as opposite to his essential nature, you must in some way presuppose an idea of his essential nature. But this is not the purpose to which all existentialist literature is directed. Instead, the focus in both existentialism and depth psychology is man's estranged existence, the characteristics and symptoms of this estrangement, and the conditions of existence in time and space. The term 'therapeutic psychology' shows clearly that here something that contradicts the norm, that must be healed, is expressed. It shows the relation between disease—mental, bodily, or psychosomatic disease—and man's existential predicament.

It is also clear that all existential utterances deal with

the boundary line between healthy and sick, and ask one question—you can reduce it to this: how is it possible that a being has a structure that produces psychosomatic diseases? Existentialism in order to answer these questions points to the possible experience of meaninglessness, to the continuous experience of loneliness, to the widespread feeling of emptiness. It derives them from finitude, from the awareness of finitude which is anxiety; it derives them from estrangement from oneself and one's world. It points to the possibility and the danger of freedom, and to the threat of non-being in all respects—from death to guilt. All these are characteristic of man's existential predicament, and in this, depth psychology and existentialism agree.

However, there is a basic difference between them. Existentialism as philosophy speaks of the universal human situation, which refers to everybody, healthy or sick. Depth psychology points to the ways in which people try to escape the situation by fleeing into neurosis and falling into psychosis. In existentialist literature, not only in novels and poems and dramas but even in philosophy, it is difficult to distinguish clearly the boundary line between man's universal existential situation based on finitude and estrangement on the one hand, and man's psychosomatic disease which is considered an attempt to escape this situation and its anxieties by fleeing into a mental fortress. Now we can approach better and with much more foundation the question of the relation of theology to depth psychology and to existentialism.

Let me say a few words about some theological judgments concerning these two forms, depth psychology and existentialism, which are in reality one thing. The relation between man's essential nature and his existential predicament is the first and basic question that theology has asked, wherever it encounters existentialist analyses and psychoanalytic material. In the Christian tradition, there are three fundamental concepts. First: *Esse qua esse bonum est*. This Latin phrase is a basic dogma of

Christianity. It means 'Being as being is good', or in the Biblical mythological form, 'God saw everything that he had created, and behold, it was good'. The second statement is the universal fall—fall meaning the transition from this essential goodness into existential estrangement from oneself, which happens in every living being and in every time. Then the third, the possibility of salvation. At this point I want to remind you that salvation is derived from *salvus* or *salus* in Latin, which means 'healed' or 'whole,' as opposed to disruptiveness. These three considerations of human nature are present in all genuine theological thinking: essential goodness, existential estrangement, and the possibility of something, a 'third', beyond essence and existence, through which the cleavage is overcome and healed. Now, in philosophical terms, this means that man's essential and existential nature points to his teleological nature (derived from *telos*, aim, that for which and towards which his life drives).

If you do not distinguish these three elements, which are always present in man, you will fall into innumerable confusions. Every criticism of existentialism and psychoanalysis on the basis of this tripartite view of human nature is directed against the confusion of these three fundamental elements, which always must be distinguished although they always are together in all of us. Freud, in this respect, had an unclearly ambiguous attitude, namely, he was not able and willing to distinguish man's essential and his existential nature. And this is my basic criticism, not of any special result of his thinking, but of his doctrine of man and the central intuition he has of man. His libido makes this deficiency very obvious. Man, according to him, has infinite libido, which never can be satisfied and which therefore produces the desire to get rid of oneself, the desire he has called the death instinct.

And this is not only true of the individual, it is also true of man's relation to culture as a whole. His dismay about culture shows that he is very consistent in his

negative judgments about man as existentially distorted. If you see man only from the point of view of existence and not from the point of view of essence, only from the point of view of estrangement and not from the point of view of essential goodness, then this consequence is unavoidable. And it is true for Freud in this respect.

Let me make this clear by means of a theological concept which is very old, the classical concept of concupiscence. This concept is used in Christian theology exactly as libido is used by Freud, but it is used for man under the conditions of existence; it is the indefinite striving beyond any given satisfaction, to induce satisfaction beyond the given one. But according to theological doctrine, man in his essential goodness is not in the state of concupiscence or indefinite libido, rather he is directed to a definite special subject, to content, to somebody, to something with which he is connected in love, or *eros*, or *agape*, whatever it may be. If this is the case, then the situation is quite different. Then you can have libido, but the fulfilled libido is real fulfilment; and you are not driven beyond this indefinitely. That means Freud's description of libido is to be viewed theologically as the description of man in his existential self-estrangement. But Freud does not know any other man, and this is the basic criticism that I would weight against him on this point.

Now, fortunately, Freud, like most great men, was not consistent. With respect to the healing process, he knew something about the healed man, man in the third form, teleological man. And insofar as he was thus convinced of the possibility of healing, this contradicted profoundly his fundamental restriction to existential man. In popular terms, his pessimism about the nature of man and his optimism about possibilities of healing never have been reconciled in him or in anybody of his school of whom I know or with whom I have talked. But some of his followers have done something else. They have rejected the profound insight of Freud about existential libido and the death instinct. And in so doing

they have, in my opinion, reduced and cut off from Freud what made him and still makes him the most profound of all the depth psychologists. I say this even in relation to Jung, who is much more religiously interested than was Freud, but in spite of this fact I stick to Freud in this point. I think he saw, theologically speaking, more about human nature than all his followers who, when they more and more lost the existentialist element in Freud, went more to an essentialist and optimistic view of man.

We can make the same criticism of Sartre's pure existentialism and fine psychological analysis (to which I want to direct your attention whenever there is a chance to do it). This is the greatness of this man. He is the psychological interpreter of Heidegger. He is perhaps misinterpreted on many points, but nevertheless his psychological insights are profound. And here we have the same thing that we have found before: Sartre says man's essence is his existence. In saying this he makes it impossible for man to be saved or to be healed. Sartre knows this, and every one of his plays shows this too. But here also we have a happy inconsistency. He calls his existentialism humanism. But if he calls it humanism, that means he has an idea of what man essentially is, and he must consider the possibility that the essential being of man, his freedom, might be lost. And if this is a possibility, then he makes, against his own will, the difference between man as he essentially is and man as he can be lost, the very essence of man, namely, to be free and to create himself. We have the same problem in Heidegger. Heidegger talks also as if there were no norms whatsoever, no essential man, as if man makes himself. On the other hand, he speaks of the difference between authentic existence and unauthentic existence. 'Authentic' here means what man truly should be, having the courage to be himself; and on the other hand, we have unauthentic existence, falling into the average existence of conventional thought and nonsense—into an existence where he has lost

himself. This is very interesting, because it shows that even the most radical existentialist, if he wants to say something, necessarily falls back to some essentialist statements because without them he cannot even speak up.

Other psychoanalysts have described the human situation as correctible and amendable, as a weakness only. The tragic element we have in genuine existentialism and in Freudianism. And my great and wonderful friend, Karen Horney, was very much against the existentialist implication of Freud and of myself as a theological existentialist, and we often fought about the question: Is man essentially healthy? If he is, only his basic anxiety has to be taken away; for example, if you save him from the evil influences of society, of competition and things like that, everything will be all right. Men like Fromm speak of the possibility of becoming an autonomous non-authoritarian personality who develops himself according to reason. And even Jung, who knows so much about the depths of the human soul and about the religious symbols, thinks that there are essential structures in the human soul and that it is possible (and one may be successful) to search for personality.

In all these representatives of contemporary depth psychology I miss the depths of Freud. I miss the feeling for the irrational element that we have in Freud and in much of the existentialist literature. I have already mentioned Dostoevsky; I can mention Kafka and many others.

Now I come to the third element, namely, the teleological, the element of fulfilment, the question of healing. Here we have the difference between the healing of an acute illness and the healing of the existential presuppositions of every disease and of every healthy existence. This is the basis for the healing of special acute illnesses; on this all groups agree. There are acute illnesses that produce psychosomatic irregularities and destruction. There are compulsive restrictions of

man's potentialities which lead to neurosis and eventually to psychosis. But beyond this there are the existential presuppositions. I would say that neither Freudianism nor any purely existentialist consideration can heal these fundamental presuppositions. Many psychoanalysts try to do it; they try with their methods to overcome the existential negativity, anxiety, estrangement, meaninglessness, guilt. They deny that they are universal, that they are existential in this sense. They call all anxiety, all guilt, all emptiness, illness which can be overcome as any illness can be, and then try to remove them. But this is impossible. The existential structures cannot be healed by the most refined techniques. They are objects of salvation. The analyst can be an instrument of salvation as every friend, every parent, every child can be an instrument of salvation. But as analyst he cannot bring salvation by means of his medical methods, for this requires the healing of the centre of the personality. So much for the criticism.

Now at the end I would like to talk about the way in which theology must deal with depth psychology. Let me first say that I believe that the growth of these two movements, existentialism and depth psychology, is of infinite value for theology. Both of them brought to theology something which it always should have known but which it had forgotten and covered up. They helped to rediscover the immense depth-psychological material which we find in the religious literature of the last two thousand years and even beyond that. Almost every insight concerning the movement of the soul can be found in this literature, and the most classical example of all is perhaps Dante's *Divine Comedy*, especially in the description of hell and purgatory, and of the inner self-destructiveness of man in his estrangement from his essential being.

Second, it was a re-discovery of the meaning of the word 'sin' which had become entirely unintelligible by the identification of sin with sins and by the identification of sins with certain acts that are not conventional

or not approvable, and by calling these things 'sin'. Sin is something quite different. It is universal, tragic estrangement, based on freedom and destiny in all human beings, and should never be used in the plural. Sin is separation, estrangement from one's essential being. That is what it means; and if this is the result of depth-psychological work, then this of course is a great gift that depth psychology and existentialism have offered to theology.

And third, depth psychology has helped theology to re-discover the demonic structures that determine our consciousness and our decisions. Again, this is very important. It means that if we believe we are free in terms of conscious decision, we can find that something has happened to us which directed these decisions before we made them. The illusion of freedom in the absolute sense in which it was used is included in this re-discovery. This is not determinism. Existentialism is certainly not determinism. But existentialism and especially psychoanalysis and the whole philosophy of the unconscious have rediscovered the totality of the personality in which not only the conscious elements are decisive.

The fourth point, connected with the previous one, is that moralism can be conquered to a great extent in Christian theology. The call for moralism was one of the great forms of self-estrangement of theology from its whole being. And it is indeed important to know that theology had to learn from the psychoanalytic method the meaning of grace, the meaning of forgiveness as acceptance of those who are unacceptable and not of those who are the good people. On the contrary, the non-good people are those who are accepted, or in religious language forgiven, justified, whatever you wish to call it. The word grace, which had lost any meaning, has gained a new meaning by the way in which the analyst deals with his patient. He accepts him. He does not say, 'You are acceptable,' but he accepts him. And that is the way in which, according to religious symbolism, God deals with us; and it is the way every

minister and every Christian should deal with the other person.

Another direct help given by psychoanalysis not only to religion but to theology, is its help in understanding the history of religion. Let me say here only a few words which are the same time an acceptance and a criticism of the way in which many psychoanalysts deal with the history of religion. They interpret religion as projection of the father image or of the mother image or of I don't know what. In doing so they show some truth, namely, the truth good old Xenophanes knew before Socrates, namely, that every being chooses the symbols for the divine according to what he himself is. That is true; there is no doubt about that. But the question remains: projection upon what? What is the screen? And there neither Feuerbach nor the analysts of today know the answer. The screen is our ultimate concern. Religion is being ultimately concerned. The symbols are dependent on our special character—in this the analysts are quite right. But there is something that precedes the act of projection, as every technical analogy shows clearly. But the analogy is deeper than technical. It means that if we use the father image in order to symbolise our ultimate concern, then the ultimate concern is not the father image. Rather, the ultimate concern is the screen into which the father image is put. This very simple consideration is usually forgotten in psychoanalytic literature. On the other hand, it shows that we have to be very critical about the symbols of religion. We always have to ask with respect to our practical piety to what extent distorted psychological elements enter into the image of our gods. This holds for every religion, and this must be maintained. So much for the history of religion.

Before the re-discovery of confession and counselling (which were completely lost in Protestantism), everybody was asked to do something, and if he didn't do it he was reproached. And now he can go to somebody, can talk to him, and in talking he can objectify what is in him

and get rid of it. If the counsellor or confessor is somebody who knows the human situation, he can be a medium of grace for him who comes to him, a medium for the feeling of overcoming the cleavage between essence and existence.

Finally and lastly, what is the influence of psychoanalysis on systematic theology? Let me say this: the interpretation of man's predicament raises the question that is implied in man's very existence. Systematic theology has to show that the religious symbols are answers to this question. Now, if you understand the relation of theology and depth psychology in this way, you have grasped the fundamental importance, the final and decisive importance, of all this for theology. There is no theistic and non-theistic existentialism or psychoanalysis. They analyse the human situation. Whenever the analysts or the philosophers give an answer, they do it not as existentialists. They do it from other traditions, whether it be Catholic, Protestant, Lutheran, humanist or socialist. Traditions come from everywhere, but they do not come from the *question*. By the way, let me tell you this story. Once I had a long talk in London with TS Eliot, who is really considered to be an existentialist. We talked about just this problem. I told him: 'I believe that you cannot answer the question you develop in your plays and your poems on the basis of your plays and poems, because they only develop the question—they describe human existence. But if there is an answer, it comes from somewhere else.' He replied: 'That is exactly what I am fighting for all the time. I am, as you know, an Episcopalian.' And he is really a faithful Episcopalian; he answers as an Episcopalian but not as an existentialist. This means that the existentialist raises the question and analyses the human situation to which the theologian can then give the answer, an answer given not from the question but from somewhere else, and not from the human situation itself.

I cannot go very much into the special problems which

arise here. I want to show you that I believe that this great movement characterises the 20th century. We are less conscious of this movement than perhaps the next generations will be. One is never conscious completely of what is going on in the time in which one lives. But what I have tried to do in this paper has been to make you conscious of the tremendous importance of these movements for the interpretation of our human situation. The existentialist and psychoanalytic movements do this analytically, showing the human predicament in all its implications and distortions.

Theology has received tremendous gifts from these movements, gifts not dreamed of fifty years ago or even thirty years ago. We have these gifts. Existentialists and analysts themselves do not need to know that they have given to theology these great things. But the theologians should know it.

Modern Interpretative Criticism

Frank A Bullock

WHEN in 1903 WB Yeats wrote in his essay on 'Magic' in *Ideas of Good and Evil*, 'I believe in three doctrines, (1) That the borders of our minds are always shifting, and that many minds can flow into one another and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy. (2) That the borders of our memories are just as shifting, and that our memories are a part of the great memory, the memory of nature herself. (3) That this great mind and great memory can be evoked by symbols,' or when in 1904 he suggested in his play *The King's Threshold* that God gave the great images of poetry to men before he gave them wheat, he was expressing in a personal and poetic way ideas which were later, by slight modification, to be accepted as a basis for modern interpretative criticism. Yeats's poetical doctrines were mainly derived from William Blake who, he said, spoke things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him. Blake's central doctrine, stated in our language, was that imagination is the supreme instrument of cognition. Or as Wordsworth finely expressed it: 'Imagination is reason in her most exalted mood.' This conception Coleridge stated with even more profound implication in his *Biographia Literaria* (Everyman Edition, p 159) as follows: 'The imagination then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the

eternal act of creation in the infinite "I am". These scattered references make it clear that there existed a tradition of a high poetical doctrine which affirmed the primal importance and significance of the image-creating and image-perceiving faculties in the human mind. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries came the revolutionary discovery of the unconscious mind, and between 1915 and 1919 Dr Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* was translated into English. These discoveries had a great and overwhelming influence on all literary transformations, on techniques, on context, and on language. In the case of Jung's book, apart from its purely technical interest for psychology, there were many wide explorations in the fields of ancient mythology and literature, as well as in mediaeval and Wagnerian symbolism. Here was an attempt to discover the secrets of creative power in the human mind below the level of conscious invention. These explorations made it appear possible, and indeed almost certain, that all great literature is dominated by powerful primal images arising out of the unconscious mind. Jung called the realm of the deep unconscious the 'collective unconscious', and we may use it tentatively as an adequate image of something real but undefinable. In any case, it replaces, for the moment, Yeats's image of the great memory of nature. A matter of great significance for the future study and interpretation of literature was the suggestion that the creative impulse in great literature arose out of the deep unconscious, and expressed itself in primal images and certain rhythmic movements and patterns towards an always constant, transcendent goal of unity and integration. Jung has himself applied these principles in further studies related to literature in *Modern Man in search of a Soul* and in *The Integration of Personality*. The particular essays are *Psychology and Literature* and *Archetypes of the Unconscious*. In these essays he deals briefly with *The Shepherd of Hermas*, Dante, *Faust*, Kierkegaard, and Boehme, as well as certain eastern writings. These facts are worth

mentioning because they suggest the range of the enquiry and present the fruitful conception of a common archetypal pattern of images behind the great literature of every age and race. All the same, it is not certain that modern methods of interpretative criticism arose directly from these sources, though they certainly created the kind of awareness from which the method arose and deeply influenced its development.

However, in 1921, Colin Still published a book called *Shakespeare's Mystery Play, The Tempest*, but it was almost immediately withdrawn from circulation and re-appeared in a much extended form and under a new title in 1936, when it was called *The Timeless Theme*. In this book he contends that all great creative literature tells one story which constitutes the timeless theme, and that this story is an odyssey from the earthly to the spiritual state of consciousness.

The stages of this pilgrimage are represented by the symbols of the ancient elements, earth, water, air and fire, with intermediate stages of mire, mist and rainbow. The author affirms that, just as merely temporal values are reflected in a lesser imaginative art 'which deals with the particular and transient experience of individual men and women on the diversifying plane of the senses, so eternal values are reflected in a greater imaginative art which deals with the common and unchanging experience of all humanity on the unifying plane of the spirit'. This greater art includes the myths and mystery dramas connected with them, which are the product of collective genius. It includes also great imaginative works by individual genius. The argument develops 'by a process of purging and amplifications through time, the best examples of the greater art, but especially the myths and the mysteries, have grown into a universal tradition, which is not only true but permanently true and true for all men'. This universal tradition is a perfected reflection of the sum of mankind's spiritual experience, and a product of collective genius working through all time. Individual genius can never hope to do more in its most exalted

utterance than reproduce the universal tradition, or some aspect of it. The voice of genuine individual genius is thus the same in effect as that of collective genius. It has the same things to say and it says them in the same symbolic language. Every utterance of imaginative genius is the reflection of some phase or phases of spiritual experience in terms of natural imagery. There is but one spiritual theme and the sum of all that has been said by collective genius through the ages constitutes the universal tradition which is the living art of all mankind. This universal tradition is the source of 'all the mighty songs that miss decay'.

The above is a summary of a long passage in which the author expresses the main theme of the book, in the first part of which he works out this idea with many examples and illustrations and in the second part applies all this material to an exposition of *The Tempest*.

Here stress is laid on images and imagination, and Yeats's *Memory of Nature* and Jung's *Collective Unconscious* are replaced by the image of collective genius. This book represents pioneer work in a comparatively new field of exploration, and although fascinating and suggestive, it has grave defects and limitations in matter and treatment. Thus, for instance, the range of imagery or symbolism is too restricted and is related to a goal too narrowly stated. Also the dualism of matter and spirit is fundamentally unsatisfactory. Reality is not finally integrated in our consciousness by throwing away what you may feel to be its inferior aspect. Finally, the author appears to be too anxious to make an unanswerable case for this theory. This suggests a secret doubt in his mind as to its complete validity, at least in the form he has imposed upon his material. The value of the book lies in the accumulation of data pointing to the existence of what will later be called archetypal patterns, which dominate the form and rhythm of all great literature. Later workers in this field were able to free themselves from the fundamental frustration of this particular method which is a too rigid interpretation of these

primal images in the interest of an abstract and arbitrary intellectual theory. Beginning in the realm of image and imagination it is fatal to the full development of this method to make a violent transition to the realm of abstract reasoning. Having begun in the spirit, in the spirit let us also walk. Liberation from this frustration has been found along the lines of what is called 'free association' to which we will return later. In the meantime, in 1924, DH Lawrence produced a very startling and revolutionary book called *Studies in Classic American Literature*. Here, in his own very characteristic way, he insists that the conscious mind of the artist tells one story which suits his conscious purpose, while over his head the unconscious mind is telling the truth, generally in opposition to the conscious story by means of the images projected in the story. Put very briefly, his theory appears to be that the basic soul of America found expression in the Red Indian culture, which was profoundly influenced by what Lawrence calls 'The Spirit of Place'. This idea has some relation to Yeats's 'Memory of Nature'. European stocks in America have always been in revolt against the soul of Indian culture and its spirit of place. Nevertheless these influences will eventually possess them and then there will appear a unified American consciousness. All Lawrence's studies in American classic literature express and expose, with startling power of insight, this dual context and conflict in the American soul. Here is a characteristic passage from the first chapter: 'Men are less free than they imagine; oh, far less free . . . Men are free when they are in a living homeland, not when they are straying and breaking away. Men are free when they are obeying some deep, inward voice of religious belief. Obeying from within. Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, *believing* community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealised purpose. Not when they are escaping to some wild west. The most unfree souls go west, and shout of freedom. Men are freest when they are most unconscious of freedom. The shout is a rattling

of chains, always was. Men are not free when they are doing what they like. The moment you can do just what you like, there is nothing you care about doing. Men are only free when they are doing what the deepest self likes . . . the deepest *whole* self of man, the self in its wholeness . . .' Whatever we may feel about Lawrence's theories concerning the American soul, and however extravagant much of his language may be, he is expressing something very deeply felt in his own personal experience as an artist, namely, that freedom is only realised in obedience to deep primal urges. This book of Lawrence's is a landmark in the development of modern interpretative criticism, which was not born ready made but has evolved through many stages of imperfect form and expression, and is still evolving. One thing is superbly real for Lawrence, and that is the soul of man and its vast hinterlands of hidden depths out of which the great creative urges and archetypal images emerge. This insight of Lawrence is carried to even greater heights in his last strange book *Apocalypse*, published after his death. There, apart from all his usual vehement protests against all sorts of things and people, we can yet feel his deep understanding of the great archetypal images and of their life-giving and creating power in human life. This is another pioneer book, and one we cannot leave out of account in trying to understand the development of our subject.

In 1929 there appeared the first of Wilson Knight's studies in Shakespearean interpretation and these studies have continued to appear over a period of nearly twenty years, the latest, and according to the publisher the concluding volume, *The Crown of Life*, being first published in 1947. This last work contains an early essay, reprinted under the title of *Myth and Miracle*. It was very slight in form, and assuredly drew inspiration from Middleton Murry's interpretative writings on Dostoevsky and *Keats and Shakespeare* and was also related to the work of Colin Still. But the central idea and method was capable of wide and rich expansion,

as the subsequent work of the author has shown. Stated briefly it is that Shakespeare, in the last great tragedies, reached the limit of direct representation and that in *Anthony and Cleopatra* the language of conceptual thought breaks down and gives place to a new mystic symbolism in the music that preludes the death of Anthony. Music heard in the air and in the earth. This gives a clue to the understanding of the final group of plays from *Pericles* to *The Tempest*. The further limit of direct representation is here reached. Tragedy is merging into mysticism and what is left to say must be said in terms, not of tragedy, but of myth and miracle. For the mind of Shakespeare, tragedy is resolved in a reality which can only be expressed in symbolism. This first essay was followed in 1930 by *The Wheel of Fire*, in which the author summarised in a long introduction what he conceived to be the ground and sanction for the new principles of Shakespearean interpretation. He begins by making a tentative distinction between interpretation and criticism. In criticism we objectify the work under consideration; we stand outside of it and decide its merits by comparison with other works of a similar nature in the light of our own experience of reality. Interpretation, on the other hand, tends to merge our mind and emotion with the work we seek to understand. We give up our own standards for the time being and try to let the creative work stand in the light of its own nature, employing external references, if at all, only as a preliminary aid to understanding. In other words, interpretation treats the creative consciousness as an independent unity. 'Criticism is active . . . interpretation is passive Criticism is a judgment of vision; interpretation is a reconstruction of vision.' What, then, are the great constructional laws which operate within this vision and bind it into an organic unity? We must be prepared by a definite act of the mind to see, in the case of Shakespeare, the whole play in space as well as in time. We are looking into a whole relative universe. Every play of Shakespeare has its own atmosphere and

everything in the play is related to that atmosphere. For instance, in *Macbeth* it is very difficult to settle on the precise motives of Macbeth and Banquo lying behind the words and actions. But this very vagueness and indecision is just right in the atmosphere of the play where 'foul is fair and fair is foul', where everything is murky in the presence of supernatural evil. This purely spiritual atmosphere interpenetrates the action, and certain of the symbols of the play grow directly out of the atmosphere as does the ghost in *Hamlet* or the weird sisters in *Macbeth*. Thus we must not relate these creations to the earth or to any theory of probability but to the universe of special atmosphere they are intended to make real. In a Shakespeare play there are two sets of links to keep in mind; the links in time, event following event in time sequence, and the links with the spatial dimension of atmosphere which broods over each play like the encasing heavens round the earth.

At this point we may leave the description of the method and development of modern interpretative criticism and attempt some comments upon the general significance and possible implication of these principles within the widest range of creative thought and literature. There are now many examples of this kind of interpretation from many fields of literature. Space will only allow the mention of four out of a great number of excellent books: *The Labyrinth*, edited by SH Hooke in 1933, dealing with the relation between myth, ritual, and images in the ancient world; *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*, by Maude Bodkin in 1934; *Through the Cumaean Gates*, by WF Jackson Knight in 1936, which deals with Initiation Patterns in Vergil's *Aeneid*; and *Herman Melville, the Tragedy of Mind*, by William Ellery Sedgwick in 1945. These, and many other examples available, make it clear that this method of approach represents a movement of thought of considerable significance and extent. Emphasis is laid to-day on 'the pattern of reality'.

That pattern gives us a valuable clue to the nature and

quality of reality. When we apply this clue to great art, music and poetry, we come to realise that just because these great creations of the mind give us significant patterns, they also give us an awareness of reality in ever-increasing degrees of value, according to the quality of life revealed in these patterns. And here emerges the vital change towards creative art and literature revealed by the methods of interpretation we have been considering. In the past we tried to test these patterns by reference to an outside standard which we called reality. Now we discover that these patterns of art, music and literature, and especially of poetry, exist in their own right. Our activity towards them is not to reduce them to conformity to any outside standard but to raise our minds and emotions to the experience of the new richness of life expressed and disclosed in these evocative manifestations. Thus human genius attains a new universal significance in that the mind of genius appears to draw upon a wide range of inner consciousness more closely related to the secret springs of ultimate reality than that which is accessible to the consciousness of ordinary men and women. Thus, by the means of these creations of genius, we have authentic insight into the deepest secrets of life.

Sometimes the inflow from the hidden central sea of life is manifested and disclosed through many minds in a great creative epoch. Such was that which occurred in Hebrew Literature from the 4th to the 5th century BC, or in Greece in the 5th century BC, or in the first century of the Christian era. Sometimes it is manifested in the work of a single mind as in Dante or Shakespeare. But in either case the literature thus produced will reveal richer and deeper qualities of soul life and contain higher significance of symbol and image than the writers are aware of in their normal consciousness. They seem to be used by the unknown creative spirit to express one or many of the infinite patterns of reality. Is it possible then, that we have in this modern method of approach a new liberation of interpretation as applied to biblical

and other classical primary religious literature? It would be a great deliverance to be set free from bondage to pure historicism, to be able to feel that the great images, symbols and patterns of religious literature have a universal significance, a kind of absolute value apart from their historical setting. The literature of the Bible is profoundly rich in these particular elements, but we are in need of some principle of interpretation by which the primal poetry of the great myths and legends of Genesis, the glowing images of the prophetic books, the atmosphere of ecstasy and rapture interpenetrating the myth of the nativity, and the tender legend of the resurrection in the Gospels may be made to yield new depths of primal and universal significance. Such methods of interpretation will have nothing to say on the strictly historical side of the matter but will have much to say in relation to the timeless theme of the life-drama of the soul. It could result in giving us a new realisation of the sublime poetry of religion in the Bible, with an added awareness that poetry, understood in its deepest significance, is a revelation of the profoundest depths of creative spiritual life. But one principle must first be firmly established. All such material of image, symbol, pattern and atmosphere must be handled with great sensitivity of insight and imagination or it may easily degenerate into a new kind of dogmatism. The principle of free association mentioned earlier is of supreme importance in this connection. Freedom from historicism will end in a worse bondage of the mind if we go on to say that these images must be confined to one meaning. They have many meanings and reflect new light in many and various relationships. They contain a potency of evocation which illuminates the depths of our mind and the experience of the past.

Finally we may ask what is this amazing process whereby what is at one time experienced in simple consciousness passes into the unconscious, and after periods of latency varying from stages in the single lifespan of the individual, to centuries or millennia in the

collective life of humanity, re-emerges as poetry with deep emotional powers, in images, symbols and patterns? When we say these are primal images, archetypal patterns, in what sense do we mean they are primal? Primal in the sense of time, or primal in the sense that they draw eventually from some Universal Mind which is first in order of being and quality? This latter significance is the one we would emphasize. These primal images reveal some deep and subtle relation between the experiencing medium of human consciousness and some vaster primal mind, in which experience is finally shaped into images and powers of destiny.

And so all the elements of our present bewildering experience are also potential disclosures of the Primal Mind. As yet we only dimly apprehend them as facts, we cannot as yet feel them as poetry; but when we do begin to apprehend them in a deeper way, they are felt as tragic confusions and conflicts. This sense of tragedy is the beginning of transmutation, for tragedy is an awareness of poetry, though in the greatest poetry it is transmuted into a beauty beyond tragedy. So we may look forward in hope to that, as yet unimaginable glory, when the vastness of universes, and aeons of time and history and all the unutterable ranges of experience shall be felt and seen as one inclusive pattern and image of that Primal Mind which still does, and everlastingly will, transcend them all.

The New Religious Atom

Von Ogden Vogt, AM, LMD, DD

IF, in the near future, we suffer the dread misfortune of war, then the new atomic power is likely to destroy civilised life as we know it. If such a disaster is averted for even a few years, the new atomic powers will open undreamed economic changes and new paths of international, inter-racial and inter-cultural accord.

All over the earth, the throbbing energies of human activity are geared to new powers and processes, pressing forward to still greater masteries of the material world. Where in the religious world are comparable achievements and efforts? Is religion quickening its imagination more fully to conceive its own nature and role in the coming atomic age? Is it even aware that there may be a new religious atom that differs from the old religious atom as the new physical atom differs from the old?

Up to the present, many religions and sects of religions have been centred in a group of beliefs. The ultimate unit, the atom of the faith, is a creed. The old physical atom as the ultimate unit of matter was a collection of particles or a pattern of inert substances. So also the old religious atom, as the ultimate unit of faith, was a collection of specific ideas or a pattern of fixed beliefs.

Not so the new atom. It is now seen that the atom as the ultimate unit of matter is not a collection of inert particles but a group of movements, a pattern of energies. So the new religious atom as the ultimate unit of faith is not a collection of unchanging and fixed beliefs but a

group of spiritual energies and a pattern of religious actions.

The new physical atom is an organization of energized and energizing elements, protons, neutrons and electrons. So is the new religious atom. The elements of the true religious atom are the spirit of truth, the spirit of goodness and the spirit of beauty. These are spiritual energies. They are organized in and by a pattern of religious actions, which comprise worship, to form the new religious atom.

Each of these is a powerful religious force. The spirit of truth is the active love of truth wherever it may lead. It is never fixed unchangeably upon any specific idea or belief. It is the live zeal for knowledge and understanding. However strong its convictions at any one time, it is always the perpetual search for more truth. The spirit of goodness is not a final allegiance to any particular code of morals or any completed definition of specific ideals. It is the inner love of right, a ceaseless devotion to the doing of good. The spirit of beauty is more than the apprehension of the beautiful world around us. It is also the urge to make beauty, to create order and structures of order, the unending reaching forth towards the beauty of holiness.

None of these energies can stand alone. Each requires the others. What organizes them and binds them together is a pattern of related actions which are the activities of worship. By the praise of all that is glorious and good, by clear humility and quiet waiting, by all-embracing remembrances and concerns, by eager efforts for larger understanding and faith, by pure dedications of heart and hand, by fellowships that are open and unlimited, which are all the religious actions of worship, these energies are mingled and fashioned into that supreme experience of communion with the most high that is at once our noblest task and most sublime joy.

The ultimate unit of living religion is thus not the old atomic pattern of received and fixed beliefs forming a creed, it is the new atomic pattern of religious energies

and actions forming a discipline of worship.

This does not mean that religion does not require beliefs. On the contrary, one of the central efforts of worship is to achieve strong faiths and convictions. It does not mean that the new religious atom rejects all old beliefs. It may retain an old belief or a new belief for generations, but never as a finality, and always with a complete willingness to change that belief according to new illuminations. The same is true for ethics and for aesthetics.

Ideas change, beliefs have changed and are changing: the spirit of truth is changeless. Morals differ among differing religions: all true religion requires the love of righteousness and the spirit of goodness. Tastes and styles in the arts are ephemeral: the love of beauty, the demand to bring more and more of life under the sway of order, continues through all times. Cosmogonies and theologies fade and die: it is God who is the eternal.

It is for precisely this reason that the new religious atom may open new paths to ecumenical harmony. The old atom of static beliefs has divided and will divide. The true common denominator of all religions is not intellectual but religious, not the old atomic pattern of religious beliefs that is a creed but the new atomic pattern of religious actions that is worship. The new religious atom that is a discipline of worship can bring about a deep religious unity while affording many varieties of intellectual and moral diversity.

The old religious atom is untenable, for religion, as the old physical atom is untenable for science. It cannot sustain either church or state in the coming atomic age. There is a new religious atom as there is a new physical atom. Its appropriation and use could add as much power to the spiritual growth of man as the new physical atomic power may add to his material welfare.

Adventures in Religion

Faith and Freedom is a religious journal which has now flourished for over twenty years under the highly individual editorship of Rev E Shirvell Price, who has made this selection from the pages of his magazine. Many distinguished names are to be found here, ranging from Albert Schweitzer to Paul Tillich. There are, too, highly distinctive essays which present new aspects of the religious dilemmas of our time, even though some of the authors may not be so widely known. The book, taken as a whole, will be found thought-provoking and stimulating. Much of its contents will be new to the general public, and it will go to show that not all the controversy in the twentieth century stems from the school of the Bishop of Woolwich. Here, indeed, are some striking contributions to the religious dialogue of the present day.

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