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TOMORROW

THE JOURNAL OF METAPHYSICS, COSMOLOGY AND TRADITIONAL STUDIES

THE SECRET OF SHAKESPEARE
Martin Lings

A CRAFT AS A MEANS OF REALIZATION
A. Messinesi

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THE JOURNAL OF METAPHYSICS, COSMOLOGY AND TRADITIONAL STUDIES

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ANCIENT BELIEFS
and
MODERN SUPERSTITIONS

By MARTIN LINGS

In an unusual way this book strikes at the root of almost everything that makes it difficult for the present-day European—and his overflow into other continents—to believe whole-heartedly in religion.

Scepticism generally results from an ill-matched combination of intelligence and prejudice. In many respects not unlike C. S. Lewis, but extremely unlike the Bishop of Woolwich, the author holds that man's already impaired faith is still further diminished by seeking to accommodate religion to the modern outlook, and can only be restored by dispelling those current illusions which prevent the intelligence from seeing religion as it truly is.

Martin Ling's analysis of these illusions comes as a sharp antidote to such books as *Honest to God* and the writings of Teilhard de Chardin, and is by no means flattering to modern man: it shows him to be just as superstitious, in his own peculiar twentieth-century way, as the most "backward" natives of "darkest Africa" are in theirs. It shows also that his superstitions are far more dangerous than theirs, and far more virulent.

But the stress is on the first part of the title, and although the book is centred on Christianity, the author has drawn much from his wide knowledge of other religions also. His direct, simple and readable exposition is perhaps one of the most powerful defences of religion to be written this century—if indeed the word "defence" can be used of something which carries the war so persistently into the enemy camp.

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EDITORIAL

Nothing incompatible with honesty can be simply and truly useful, *since it follows that it is contrary to man's last end.*

St. Thomas Aquinas.

The changes in policy recently instituted in *Tomorrow* have now been completed, and the contents of our last issue and this one represent clearly the type of article which readers may expect in the future. In the past we sometimes included contributions of only minor importance or passing interest, or even fiction, but this will now cease. *Tomorrow* does not exist to pass an idle hour, but to present matters of pressing significance; a task that is of more importance in these troubled times than ever before in history. In the light of worsening conditions, it is felt that the provision of "just another magazine" is of little moment. *Tomorrow* must make available knowledge which is not readily accessible elsewhere in the English language, and this is the task we have set ourselves.

The policy of *Tomorrow* was extended to include "all subjects actually relative to the mystery of man and the meaning and purpose of his earthly life." It is our object to present evidences and not to hammer points; such evidences to be based not on mere speculation, but only on "principles of more than human origin," properly applied at every level and in every direction.

This, then, is the course which we have set ourselves, and which we shall continue to follow in the foreseeable future.

No doubt some readers will have noticed that we have been publishing a large, well-printed magazine, at a very low price. We have only been able to do this through the kindness and generosity of certain friends in the United States, for which we shall always be grateful. This aid has now ceased, and as we have also been faced with a regular rise in printing costs each year, we are under the necessity of cutting our expenses to a more economic level. It is with regret, therefore, that we find it necessary to make the first increase in the selling price of *Tomorrow* for many years. As from this issue the annual subscription is being raised to 22s. or $3.25, and the price of single copies to 5s. or 75c.

One way in which readers may assist us in meeting our increased costs is by introducing *Tomorrow* to anyone they may think likely to be interested in the more serious things of life. Some readers already take out extra subscriptions for friends, and this we much appreciate. If, however, all our readers were to endeavour to obtain at least one other subscriber this would not only be of real assistance to us, but would also benefit the new readers by bringing them into contact with ideas and facts which they possibly have not previously encountered. We hope that present subscribers to *Tomorrow* will try to help us in this way.

A number of readers have written to us to say that they think *Tomorrow* is now better than it has ever been. To us it is encouraging to learn that, without any intention of proselytizing, we have been instrumental in making available to many

readers some of that rare contemporary writing which is of first importance in modern times. We hope that we shall continue to cater for those who are unimpressed with the "values" of today: the so-called "marvels" of science; the craving for higher living standards and ever more material goods; and all that goes to make man other than what he should be.

Perennial Books

It is now possible to announce that the second book to appear under our new imprint will be on the intelligence of the ancient world, by Frithjof Schuon. Those who have read this writer's contributions to *Tomorrow* will have realized that there are very few, if any, other authors approaching either the quality or significance of his work. Further details of this new book will be announced in one of our later issues, together with the exact title, which has not been finally settled.

Already published under the imprint Perennial Books is *Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions* by Martin Lings. This book, which goes a great way towards dispelling erroneous notions about religion, provides the complete answer to such books as *Honest to God*, and those intent on "bringing the church into the twentieth century," instead of the twentieth century into the church. Written in a readable manner it shows what religion truly is; something very far removed from the picture drawn by its opponents.

F. CLIVE-ROSS

Grace is necessary to salvation, free will equally so—but grace in order to give salvation, free will in order to receive it. Therefore we should not attribute part of the good work to grace and part to free will; it is performed in its entirety by the common and inseparable action of both; entirely by grace, entirely by free will, but springing from the first in the second.

St. Bernard.

Once the noble Ibrahim, as he sat on his throne,
Heard a clamour and noise of cries on the roof,
Also heavy footsteps on the roof of his palace.
He said to himself, 'Whose heavy feet are these?'
He shouted from the window, 'Who goes there?'
The guards, filled with confusion, bowed their heads, saying,
'It is we, going the rounds in search.'
He said, 'What seek ye?' They said 'Our camels.'
He said, 'Who ever searched for camels on a housetop?'
They said, 'We follow thy example,
Who seekest union with God, while sitting on a throne.'

Jalal-uddin Rumi.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN HELLENISTS AND CHRISTIANS

Frithjof Schuon

Like most inter-traditional polemics, the dialogue in which Hellenism and Christianity were in opposition was to a great extent unreal. The fact that each was right on a certain plane—or in a particular "spiritual dimension"—resulted in each emerging as victor in its own way; Christianity by imposing itself on the whole Western world, and Hellenism by surviving in the very heart of Christianity and conferring on Christian intellectuality an indelible imprint.

The misunderstandings were none the less profound, and this is easily understandable if divergences of perspective are taken into account. From the point of view of the Hellenists the Divine Principle is at the same time one and multiple; the gods personify the Divine qualities and functions and at the same time the angelic prolongations of these qualities and functions; the idea of immanence prevails over that of transcendence, at least in exoterism. The universe is an order that is so to speak architectural, deployed from the Supreme Principle by way of intermediaries—or of hierarchies of intermediaries—down to earthly creatures; all the cosmic principles and their rays are divine, or half-divine, which amounts to saying that they are envisaged in relation to their essential and functional divinity. If God gives us life, warmth and light, He does so by way of Helios or inasmuch as He is Helios; the sun is like the hand of God, it is thus divine; and since it is so in principle, why should it not be so in its sensible manifestation? This way of looking at things is based on the essential continuity between the Cause and the effect, and not on an existential discontinuity or accidentality; the world being the necessary—and strictly ordered—manifestation of divinity, it is, like divinity, eternal; it is, in God's eyes, a way of deploying himself "outside himself." This eternity does not imply that the world cannot undergo eclipses, but if it inevitably does so—as all mythologies teach—it is in order to rise again in accordance with an eternal rhythm; it cannot therefore not be. The very absoluteness of the Absolute necessitates relativity; Mâyâ is without origin, say the Vedantists. There is no "gratuitous creation," nor any creation *ex nihilo*; there is a necessary manifestation *ex divino* and this manifestation is free within the framework of its necessity, and necessary within the framework of its liberty. The world is divine through its character as a divine manifestation, or by way of the metaphysical marvel of its existence.

There is no occasion to describe here, on account of a concern for symmetry, the Christian outlook, which is that of Semitic monotheism, and is for that reason familiar to everyone. On the other hand it seems indispensable before proceeding further to clarify the fact that the Hellenistic conception of the "divinity of the world" has nothing to do with the error of pantheism, for the cosmic manifestation

of God in no way detracts from the absolute transcendence appertaining to the Principle in itself, and in no way contradicts what is metaphysically acceptable in the Semitic and Christian conception of a *creatio ex nihilo*. To believe that the world is a "part" of God and that God, by His Selfhood or by His very essence, spreads himself into the forms of the world, would be a truly "pagan" conception, such as has no doubt existed here and there, even among the men of old, and in order to keep clear of it, one must possess a knowledge that is intrinsically what would be represented on the plane of ideas by a combination between the Hellenistic "cosmosophy" and the Judeo-Christian theology, the reciprocal relationship of these two outlooks playing the part of touchstone with respect to total truth. Metaphysically speaking, the Semitic and monotheistic "creationism," as soon as it presents itself as an absolute and exclusive truth, is nearly as false as pantheism; it is so "metaphysically" because total knowledge is in question and not the opportunity of salvation alone, and "nearly" because a half-truth which tends to safeguard the transcendence of God at the expense of the metaphysical intelligibility of the world is less erroneous than a half-truth which tends to safeguard the divine nature of the world at the expense of the intelligibility of God.

If the Christian polemists did not understand that the position of the Greek sages simply completed esoterically the biblical notion of creation, the Greek polemists understood even less the compatibility between the two outlooks. It is true that one incomprehension sometimes begets another, for it is difficult to penetrate the profound intention of an alien concept when that intention remains implicit, and when in addition it is presented as destined to replace truths that are perhaps partial, but are in any case evident to those who accept them traditionally. A partial truth may be insufficient from one point of view or another, it is none the less a truth.

* * * *

In order properly to understand the significance of this dialogue, which in some respects was but a confrontation between two monologues, one must take account of the following: as far as the Christians were concerned there was no knowledge possible without love; that is to say that in their eyes gnosis was valid only on condition that it was included within a unifying experience; by itself, and apart from the lived spiritual reality, an intellectual knowledge of the universe had no meaning to them; but eventually the Christians had to recognize the rights of a knowledge that was theoretical, and thus conceptual and proleptic, which they did by borrowing from the Greeks certain elements of this Science, not without sometimes abusing Hellenism as such, with as much ingratitude as inconsistency. If a simple and rather summary formulation be permissible, one can say that for the Greeks truth is that which is in conformity with the nature of things; for the Christians truth is that which leads to God. This Christian attitude, to the extent that it tended to be exclusive, was bound to appear to the Greeks as a "foolishness"; in the eyes of the Christians the attitude of the Greeks consisted in taking thought as an end in itself, unconnected with any personal relation to God; consequently it was a "wisdom according to the flesh," since it cannot by itself regenerate the fallen and impotent will, but on the contrary by its self-sufficiency draws men away from the thirst for God and for salvation. From the Greek point of view, things are what they are whatever we may make of them; from the Christian—to speak schematically and *a priori*—our relationship to God alone makes sense. The Christians could be reproached for an outlook that was too much concerned with the will and too self-interested, and the Greeks on the one hand for too much liveliness of thought and on the other for too rational and too human a perfectionism; it was in some respects a dispute between a love-song and a mathematical theorem. It could also be said that the Hellenists were predominantly right in principle and the Christians in fact, at least in a particular sense that can be discerned without difficulty.

As for the Christian gnostics, they necessarily admitted the doctrinal anticipations of the Divine mysteries, but on condition—it cannot be too strongly emphasized—that they remained in a quasi-organic connection with the spiritual experience of gnosis-love; to know God is to love him, or rather, since the scriptural point of departure is love: to love God perfectly is to know him. To know was indeed *a priori* to conceive of supernatural truths, but only while making our whole being participate in this understanding; it was thus to love the divine quintessence of all gnosis, that quintessence which is "love" because it is at once union and beatitude. The school of Alexandria was fully as Christian as that of Antioch, in the sense that it saw in the acceptance of Christ the *sine qua non* of salvation; its foundations were perfectly Pauline. In St Paul's view a conceptual and expressible gnosis is a knowing "in part" (*ex parte*), and it shall be "done away" when "that which is perfect is come"[1] namely, the totality of gnosis which, through the very fact of its totality, is "love (*charitas*, ἀγάπη), the divine prototype of human gnosis. In the case of man there is a distinction—or a complementarism—between love and knowledge, but before God their polarity is surpassed and unified. In the Christian perspective, this supreme degree is called "love," but in another perspective—notably in the Vedantic—one can equally well call it "knowledge," while maintaining, not that knowledge finds its totalization or its exaltation in love, but on the contrary that love *(bhakti)*, being individual, finds its sublimation in pure knowledge *(jnana)*, which is universal; this second mode of expression is directly in conformity with the sapiential perspective.

* * * *

The Christian protest is unquestionably justified in so far as it is directed to the "humanist" side of "classical" Hellenism and to the mystical ineffectuality of philosophy as such. On the other hand, it is in no way logical to reproach the Greeks with a divinization of the cosmos—on the pretext that there can be no "entry" of God into the world—while admitting that Christ, and he alone, brings about just such an entry; indeed, if Christ can bring it about, it is precisely because it is possible and because it is realized *a priori* by the cosmos itself; the "avataric" marvel of Christ retraces, or humanizes the cosmic marvel of creation or of "emanation."

From the point of view of the Platonists—in the widest sense—the return to God is inherent in the fact of existence; our being itself offers the way of return, for that being is divine in its nature, otherwise it would be nothing; we must therefore return, passing through the strata of our ontological reality, all the way to pure Substance, which is one; it is thus that we become perfectly "ourselves." Man realizes what he knows: a full comprehension—in the light of the Absolute—of relativity dissolves the latter and leads back to the Absolute. Here again there is no irreducible antagonism between Greeks and Christians: if the intervention of Christ can become necessary, it is not because deliverance does not consist in a return through the strata of our own being to our true Self, but because the function of Christ is to render such a return possible. It is made possible on two planes, the one existential and exoteric and the other intellectual and esoteric; the second plane is hidden in the first, which alone appears in the full light of day, and that is the reason why the Christian perspective is for the common run of mortals only existential and separative, and not intellectual and unitive. This gives rise to another misunderstanding between Christians and Platonists: while the Platonists propound liberation by Knowledge because man is an intelligence[2] the Christians envisage in their

[1] I Cor. XIII. 8.

[2] Islam, in conformity with its "paracletic" character, reflects this point of view—which is also that of the *Vedanta* and of all forms of gnosis—in a Semitic and religious mode, and realizes it all the more readily in its esoterism; like the Hellenist, the Moslem asks first of all: "What must I know or admit, seeing that I have an intelligence capable of objectivity and of totality?" and not *a priori* "What must I want, since I have a will that is free, but fallen?"

over-all doctrine a salvation by Grace because man is an existence—as such separated from God—and a fallen and impotent will. Once again, the Greeks can be reproached for having at their command but a single way, inaccessible in fact to the majority and for giving the impression that it is philosophy that saves, just as one can reproach the Christians for ignoring liberation by Knowledge and for assigning an absolute character to nothing but our existential and volitive reality and to means appropriate to that aspect of our being, or for taking into consideration our existential relativity and not our "intellectual absoluity"; nevertheless the reproach to the Greeks cannot concern their sages, any more than the reproach to the Christians can attack their gnosis, nor in a general way their sanctity.

The possibility of our return to God—wherein are different degrees—is universal and timeless, it is inscribed in the very nature of our existence and of our intelligence; our powerlessness can only be accidental, not essential. That which is principially indispensable is an intervention of the Logos, but not in every case the intervention of a particular manifestation of the Logos, unless we belong to it by reason of our situation and by virtue of that fact it chooses us; as soon as it chooses us, it occupies the place of the Absolute as far as we are concerned, and then it "is" the Absolute. It could even be said that the imperative character that Christ assumes for Christians—or for men providentially destined for Christianity—retraces the imperative character inherent in the Logos in every spiritual way, whether of the West or of the East.

* * * *

One must react against the evolutionist prejudice which makes out that the thought of the Greeks "attained" to a certain level or a certain result, that is to say, that the triad Socrates—Plato—Aristotle represents the summit of an entirely "natural" thought, a summit reached after long periods of effort and groping. The reverse is the truth, in the sense that all the said triad did was to crystallize rather imperfectly a primordial and intrinsically timeless wisdom, actually of Aryan origin and typologically close to the Celtic, Germanic, Mazdean and Brahmanic esoterisms. There is in Aristotelian rationality and even in the Socratic dialectic a sort of "humanism" more or less connected with artistic naturalism and scientific curiosity, and thus with empiricism. But this already too contingent dialectic—and let us not forget that the Socratic dialogues are tinged with spiritual "pedagogy" and have something of the provisional in them—this dialectic must not lead us into attributing a "natural" character to intellections that are "supernatural" by definition, or "naturally supernatural." On the whole, Plato expressed sacred truths in a language that had already become profane—profane because rational and discursive rather than intuitive and symbolist, or because it followed too closely the contingencies and humours of the mirror that is the mind—whereas Aristotle placed truth itself, and not merely its expression, on a profane and "humanistic" plane. The originality of Aristotle and his school resides no doubt in giving to truth a maximum of rational basis, but this cannot be done without diminishing it, and it has no purpose save where there is a withdrawal of intellectual intuition; it is a "two-edged sword" precisely because truth seems thereafter to be at the mercy of syllogisms. The question of knowing whether this constitutes a betrayal or a providential readaptation is of small importance here, and could no doubt be answered either in the one sense or in the other.[3] What is certain

[3] Pythagoras is still the Aryan East; with Socrates-Plato one is no longer wholly in that East—in reality neither "Eastern" nor "Western", that distinction having no meaning for an archaic Europe—but neither is one wholly in the West; whereas with Aristotle Europe begins to become specifically "Western" in the current and cultural sense of the word. The East—or a particular East—forced an entry with Christianity, but the Aristotelian and Caesarean West finally prevailed, only to escape in the end from both Aristotle and Caesar, but by the downward path. It is opportune to observe here that all modern theological attempts to "surpass" the teaching of Aristotle can only follow the same path, in view of the falsity of their motives, whether implicit or explicit. What is really

is that Aristotle's teaching, so far as its essential content is concerned, is still much too true to be understood and appreciated by the protagonists of the "dynamic" and relativist or "existentialist" thought of our time. This last half plebeian, half demonic kind of thought is in contradiction with itself from its very point of departure, since to say that everything is relative or "dynamic" and therefore "in movement," is to say that there exists no point of view from which that fact can be established; Aristotle had in any case fully foreseen this absurdity.

The moderns have reproached the pre Socratic philosophers—and all the sages of the East as well—with trying to construct a picture of the universe without asking themselves whether our faculties of knowledge are at the height of such an enterprise; the reproach is perfectly vain, for the very fact that we can put such a question proves that our intelligence is in principle adequate to the needs of the case. It is not the dogmatists who are ingenuous, but the sceptics, who have not the smallest idea in the world of what is implicit in the "dogmatism" they oppose. In our days some people go so far as to make out that the goal of philosophy can only be the search for a "type of rationality" adapted to the comprehension of "human reality"; the error is the same, but it is also coarser and meaner, and more insolent as well. How is it that they cannot see that the very idea of inventing an intelligence capable of resolving such problems proves, in the first place, that this intelligence exists already—for it alone could conceive of any such idea—and shows in the second place that the goal aimed at is of an unfathomable absurdity? But the present purpose is not to prolong this subject; it is simply to call attention to the parallelism between the pre-Socratic—or more precisely the Ionian—wisdom and the oriental doctrines such as the *Vaisheshika* and the *Sankhya*, and to underline, on the one hand, that in all these ancient visions of the Universe the implicit postulate is the innateness of the nature of things in the intellect[4] and not a supposition or other logical operation, and on the other hand, that this notion of innateness furnishes the very definition of that which the sceptics and empiricists think they must disdainfully characterize as "dogmatism"; in this way they demonstrate that they are ignorant, not only of the nature of intellection, but also of the nature of dogma in the proper sense of the word. The admirable thing about the Platonists is not, to be sure, their "thought" it is the content of their thought, whether it be called "dogmatic" or otherwise.

The Sophists inaugurate the era of individualistic rationalism and of unlimited pretensions; thus they open the door to all arbitrary totalitarianisms. It is true that profane philosophy also begins with Aristotle, but in a rather different sense, since the rationality of the Stagyrite tends upwards and not downwards as does that of Protagoras and his like; in other words, if a dissolving individualism originates with the Sophists—not forgetting allied spirits such as Democritus and Epicurus—Aristotle on the other hand opens the era of a rationalism still anchored in metaphysical certitude, but none the less fragile and ambiguous in its very principle, as there has more than once been occasion to point out.

However that may be, if one wants to understand the Christian reaction, one must take account of all these aspects of the spirit of Greece, and at the same time of the biblical, mystical and "realizational" character of Christianity. Greek thought appeared in the main as a promethean attempt to appropriate to itself the light of

being sought is a graceful capitulation before evolutionary "scientism," before the machine, before an activist and demagogic socialism, a destructive psychologism, abstract art and surrealism, in short before modernism in all its forms—that modernism which is less and less a "humanism" since it de-humanizes, or that individualism which is ever more infra-individual. The moderns, who are neither Pythagoricians nor Vedantists, are surely the last to have any right to complain of Aristotle.

[4] In the terminology of the ancient cosmologists one must allow for its symbolism: when Thales saw in "water" the origin of all things, it is as certain as can be that Universal Substance—the Prakriti of the Hindus—is in question and not the sensible element. It is the same with the "air" of Anaximenes of Miletus, or with the "fire" of Heraclitus.

Heaven, rashly breaking through the stages on the way to Truth; but at the same time it was largely irresistible because of the self-evidence of its content: that being so, one must not lose sight of the fact that in the East sapiential doctrines were never presented in the form of a "literature" open to all, but that on the contrary their assimilation required a corresponding spiritual method, and that is the very thing that was no longer found and could no longer be found among the Greeks of the classical epoch.

* * * *

It has been said and said again that the Hellenists and the Orientals—the "Platonic" spirits in the widest sense—have become blameworthy in "arrogantly" rejecting Christ, or that they are trying to escape from their "responsibilities" —once again and always!—as creatures towards the Creator in withdrawing into their own centre where they claim to find, in their pure being, the essence of things and the Divine Reality; they thus dilute, it seems, the quality of creature and at the same time that of Creator with a sort of pantheistic impersonalism, which amounts to saying that they destroy the relationship of "obligation" between the Creator and the creature. In reality "responsibilities" are relative as we ourselves are relative in our existential specification; they cannot be less relative—or "more absolute"—than the subject to which they are related. One who, by the grace of Heaven, succeeds in escaping from the tyranny of the ego is by that very circumstance discharged from the responsibilities which the ego implies. God shows himself as creative Person in so far as—or in relation to the fact that—we are "creature" and individual, but that reciprocity in itself is precisely one that is far from exhausting all our ontological and intellectual nature; that is to say, our nature cannot be exhaustively defined by notions of "duty" or of "rights" or by other fixations of that kind. It has been said that the "rejection" of the Christic gift on the part of the "Platonic" spirit constitutes the subtlest and most Luciferan perversity of the intelligence; this argument, born of an instinct of preservation, wrong in its inspiration but comprehensible on its own plane, can easily and far more pertinently be turned against those who make use of it; for, if we are to be obliged at all costs to find some mental perversion somewhere, we shall find it with those who want to substitute for the Absolute a personal and therefore relative God, and temporal phenomena for metaphysical principles, and that not in connection with a childlike faith that asks nothing of anybody, but within the framework of the most exacting erudition and the most totalitarian intellectual pretension. If there is such a thing as abuse of the intelligence, it is to be found in the substitution of the relative for the Absolute, or the accident for the Substance, on the pretext of putting the "concrete" above the "abstract";[5] it is not to be found in the rejection —in the name of transcendent and immutable principles—of a relativity presented as absoluity.

The misunderstanding between Christians and Hellenists can for the greater part be condensed to a false alternative; in effect, the fact that God resides in our deepest "being"—or at the extreme transpersonal depth of our consciousness—and that we can in principle realize him with the help of the pure and theomorphic intellect, in no way excludes the equal and simultaneous affirmation of this immanent and impersonal Divinity as objective and personal, nor the fact that we can do nothing without his grace, despite the essentially "divine" character of the Intellect in which we participate naturally and supernaturally.

It is perfectly true that the human individual is a concrete and definite person, and responsible before a Creator, a personal and omniscient Legislator; but it is quite as true—to say the least of it—that man is but a modality, so to speak external and coagulated, of the Divinity at once impersonal and personal, and that human intelligence is such that it can in principle be conscious of this fact and thus realise its true

[5] It is really an abuse of language to qualify as "abstract" everything that is above the phenomenal order.

identity. In one sense it is evidently the fallen and sinful individuality that is "ourselves"; in another sense it is the transcendant and unalterable Self; the planes are different, there is no common measure between them.

When the religious dogmatist claims for some terrestrial fact an absolute import—and the "relatively absolute" character of the same fact is not here in question—the Platonist or the Oriental appeals to principial and timeless certitudes; in other words, when the dogmatist asserts that "this is," the gnostic immediately asks: "by virtue of what possibility?" According to the latter, "everything has already been"; he admits the "new" only in so far as it retraces or manifests the "ancient" or rather the timeless, the uncreated "idea." The function of the celestial messages is in practice and humanly absolute, but they are not for that reason the Absolute, and as far as their form is concerned they do not pass beyond relativity. It is the same with the intellect at once "created" and "uncreated": the "uncreated" element penetrates it as light penetrates air or ether; this element is not the light, but is its vehicle, and in practice one cannot dissociate them.

There are two sources of certitude, namely, on the one hand the innateness of the Absolute in pure intelligence, and on the other the supernatural phenomenon of grace. It is amply evident —and cannot be too often repeated—that these two sources can be, and consequently must be, combined to a certain extent, but in fact the exoterists have an interest in setting them one against the other, and they do so by denying to intelligence its supernatural essence and by denying the innateness of the Absolute, as well as by denying grace to those who think differently from themselves. An irreducible opposition between intellection and grace is as artificial as it could be, for intellection is also a grace, but it is a static and innate grace; there can be absolutely no reason why this kind of grace should not be a possibility and should never be manifested, seeing that by its very nature it cannot not be. If anyone objects that in such matters grace is not in question but something else, the answer must be that in that case grace is not necessary, since there are only two alternatives: either grace is indispensable, and if so intellection is a grace, or intellection is not a grace, and if so grace is not indispensable.

If theologians admit, with the Scriptures, that one cannot enunciate an essential truth about Christ "unless by the Holy Ghost," they must also admit that one cannot enunciate an essential truth about God without the intervention of the Holy Spirit; the truths of the wisdom of Greece, like the metaphysical truths of all peoples, cannot therefore be robbed of their character in so far as it is both "supernatural" and in principle a means of salvation.

From a certain point of view, the Christian argument is the historicity of the Christ-Saviour, whereas the Platonic or "Aryan" argument is the nature of things or the Immutable. If, to speak symbolically, all men are in danger of drowning as a consequence of the fall of Adam, the Christian saves himself by grasping the pole held out to him by Christ, whereas the Platonist saves himself by swimming; but neither course weakens or neutralizes the effectiveness of the other. On the one hand there are certainly men who do not know how to swim or who are prevented from doing so, but on the other hand swimming is undeniably among the possibilities open to man; the whole thing is to know what counts, according to what may be the situation individually or collectively.[6] We have seen that Hellenism, like all directly or indirectly sapiential doctrines, is founded on the axiom man-intelligence rather than man-will, and that is one of the reasons why it had to appear as inoperative in the eyes of a majority of Christians; but only of a majority, because the Christian gnostics could not apply such a reproach to the Pythagoreans and Platonists; the gnostics could not do otherwise than admit the primacy of the intellect, and for that

[6] In other words: if one party cannot logically deny that there are men who save themselves by swimming, no more can the other party deny that there are men who are saved only because a pole is held out to them.

reason the idea of divine redemption meant to them something quite other and more far-reaching than a mysticism derived from history and a sacramental dogmatism. It is necessary to repeat once more—as others have said before and better—that sacred facts are true because they retrace on their own plane the nature of things, and not the other way round; the nature of things is not real or normative because it evokes certain sacred facts. The principles, essentially accessible to pure intelligence—if they were not so man would not be man, and it is almost blasphemy to deny that human intelligence considered in relation to animal intelligence has a supernatural side—the universal principles confirm the sacred facts, which in their turn reflect those principles and derive their efficacy from them; it is not history, whatever it may contain, that confirms the principles. This relationship is expressed by the Buddhists when they say that spiritual truth is situated beyond the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity, and that it derives its evidence from the depths of Being itself, or from the innateness of Truth in all that is.

In the sapiental perspective the divine redemption is always present; it pre-exists all terrestrial alchemy and is its celestial model, so that it is always thanks to this eternal redemption—whatever may be its vehicle on earth—that man is freed from the weight of his vagaries and even, *Deo volente*, from that of his separative existence; if "my Words shall not pass away" it is because they have always been. The Christ of the gnostics is he who is "before Abraham was" and from whom arise all the ancient wisdoms; a consciousness of this, far from diminishing a participation in the treasures of the historical Redemption, confers on them a compass that touches the very roots of Existence.

Protest, criticism, opposition—these were never more necessary than to-day, and there was never a better moment than the present one for bringing home to as many people as possible the realization that the troubles to which our world is subject and the disasters with which it is threatened are only the symptons of a deeper disease; and because so many remedies proposed lead only further into the desert and only accentuate the tendencies which have brought us to this point, it was never more necessary to emphasize that there are other ways of living than our own and to make audible the distant voices of those who, in time past, took another road, unbeguiled by the promise of ease and enrichment in return for the surrender of their ancient heritage.

Gai Eaton.

Past and future veil God from our sight;
Burn up both of them with fire. How long
Wilt thou be partitioned by these segments, like a reed?
So long as a reed is partitioned, it is not privy to secrets,
Nor is it vocal in response to lip and breathing.

Jalal-uddin Rumi.

THE SECRET OF SHAKESPEARE

Martin Lings

The Earl of Gloster (blind)

The trick of that voice I do well remember.
Is't not the king? . . . O, let me kiss that hand.

King Lear (mad)

Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

(*IV*, 6.)

In the last few decades there has been a considerable increase of interest in the Middle Ages, which is no doubt partly due to a reaction, but which is also, much more, a case of ignorance giving way to knowledge. In another sense, it is simply a rising to the surface of something that has always been there and is always being rediscovered. Could it not be said that wherever the Middle Ages have not ceased to be accessible, wherever despite the barrier of the Renaissance they have always remained with us, as in the poetry of Dante, for instance, or—to take a more immediately accessible and inescapable example—as in their architecture, their superiority has always been felt at heart? This feeling implies also, if only subconsciously, the acknowledgement of a more general superiority, for it is quite impossible that the great Norman and Gothic cathedrals should have sprung from an age that had no inward excellence to correspond to these superlative outward manifestations.

One of the particular reasons for the present increase of interest in the Middle Ages is in itself highly significant: during the last fifty years or so Europeans have taken more interest in the art of other civilizations than ever before, and this has no doubt uprooted many prejudices and opened the door to a certain freshness and objectivity of judgment. Having come to know some of the best examples of Hindu, Chinese and Japanese art, and then turning back their attention from these to the art of their own civilization, many people find that their outlook has irrevocably changed. After looking at a great Chinese landscape, for example, where this world appears like a veil of illusion beyond which, almost visibly, lies the Infinite and Eternal Reality, or after having been given a glimpse of that same Reality through a statue of the Buddha, they find it difficult to take seriously a painting such as Raphael's famous Madonna, or Michelangelo's fresco of the Creation, not to speak of his sculpture, and Leonardo also fails to satisfy them.

Note—This article and its continuations are chapters from *The Secret of Shakespeare* which Perennial Books hope to publish this year and which is based on a course of lectures given by the author at the University of Cairo. As he explains in the preface, the word "secret" has no bearing on any of the authorship controversies which surround the plays.

But they find that they *can* take very seriously, more seriously than before, some of the early Sienese paintings such as Lippo Memmi's Annunciation, for example, or the statuary and stained glass of Chartres Cathedral, or the XIIth and XIIIth century mosaics in St. Mark's at Venice, or the Ikons of the Orthodox Church.

The reason why mediaeval art can bear comparison with Oriental art as no other Western art can is undoubtedly that the mediaeval outlook, like that of the Oriental civilizations, was intellectual. It considered this world above all as the shadow or symbol of the next, man as the shadow or symbol of God; and such an attitude, to be operative, presupposes the presence of intellectuals, for earthly things can only be referred back to their spiritual archetypes through the faculty of intellectual perception, the insight which pierces through the symbol to the universal reality that lies beyond. In the theocratic civilizations, if an artist himself was not an intellectual, he none the less obeyed the canons of art which had been established on an intellectual basis.

A mediaeval portrait is above all a portrait of the Spirit shining from behind a human veil. In other words, it is as a window opening from the particular on to the universal, and while being enshrined in its own age and civilization as eminently typical of a particular period and place, it has at the same time, in virtue of this opening, something that is neither of the East nor of the West, nor of any one age more than another.

If Renaissance art lacks an opening on to the universal and is altogether imprisoned in its own epoch, this is because its humanistic outlook considers man and other earthly objects entirely for their own sakes as if nothing lay behind them. In painting the Creation, for example, Michelangelo treats Adam not as a symbol but as an independent reality; and since he does not paint man in the image of God, the inevitable result is that he paints God in the image of man. There is more divinity underlying Simone Martini's painting of Saint Francis than there is in Michelangelo's representation of the Creator Himself.

Shakespeare was born less than three months after Michelangelo's death, and the two are often spoke of in the same breath as being among "the great geniuses of the Renaissance." Yet how does Shakespeare stand in the light of an intellectual approach which enhances, if possible, our respect for Dante, but which greatly diminishes our estimate of several others whose pre-eminence had long gone unquestioned? The following chapters are an attempt to answer this question in some detail; but a general answer can be given immediately. Let us quote, as touchstone, a masterly summing up of the difference between mediaeval and renaissance art:

"When standing in front of a Romanesque or Gothic cathedral, we feel that we are the centre of the world: when standing in front of a renaissance, baroque or rococo church we are merely conscious of being in Europe."[1] Now without trying to give Shakespeare so essential a place in the art of Christendom as the place which is held by the mediaeval cathedrals or by *The Divine Comedy*, could it not be said that to be present at an adequate performance of *King Lear* is not merely to watch a play but to witness, mysteriously, the whole history of mankind?

But this remark could not possibly be made about the majority of Shakespeare's writings; and if we wish to form any estimate of the mature dramatist whose secret bestowed on him a universality that is a prolongation of the universality of the Middle Ages, the first thing to be done is to set the histories and most of the comedies on one side for the moment so as not to confuse the issue. Few writers can have developed so much during their period of authorship as Shakespeare did. By the end of the sixteenth century he had written some twenty-two plays; but none of these can be said to represent his maturity, though some of them, in various ways, give an unmistakable foretaste of what was to come. Shortly after 1600 there was a

[1] Frithjof Schuon *The Transcendent Unity of Religions* (Faber) p. 84.

sharp and lasting change, not in orientation—that change seems to have come before—but in intensity. It was as if Shakespeare had suddenly come to grips with the universe after having contemplated it for some time with a half-detached serenity. From being in earnest, he had come to be in very deadly earnest. This change is forced on our attention above all by *Hamlet;* and the scope of this book lies mainly, except for one or two backward glances, between *Hamlet* and *The Tempest* which was almost certainly his last complete play.

* * * *

It is too often said that the marvellous variety of Shakespeare's characters makes it impossible to divine anything about the author himself. About his temperament this may be true to a certain extent, but as regards his outlook and ideals it is altogether false.

There are three characters in Shakespeare's maturer plays who have something of the looker-on about them and who manoeuvre the other characters, usurping as it were sometimes the role of dramatist. One of these is Prospero; another is the Duke of Vienna who, without magic, plays much the same part in *Measure for Measure* that Prospero plays in *The Tempest;* the third is Edgar in *King Lear.* They have much in common, being almost identical in their outlook; and as we shall see later, there are other strong reasons also for thinking that each of these characters is no more than a thin veil over the person of the author himself. But in any case they are not indispensable to us for our knowledge of Shakespeare the man. We can learn much about him, indirectly, even from his villains; and from his heroes we can learn much more, especially towards the end of a play, after he has fully developed them.

But when the hero, in a manifest state of undevelopment, at the beginning or in the middle of a play, gives vent to his ideas about this and that, he is perhaps revealing his own immaturity and may well even be saying the very opposite of what Shakespeare himself thinks. A striking example of this is in *King Lear* when Gloster, who has an important part in the subplot, says, before Shakespeare has fully developed him:

> *As flies to wanton boys, are we to the Gods:*
> *They kill us for their sport.*
>
> (*IV, 1*)

Edgar's comment on these words is:

> *Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,*
> *Angering itself and others;*

and it is at this moment that he decides to set upon his strange course of action for the purpose of saving his father from despair and suicide. Thanks to his efforts, Gloster is able to say eventually:

> *henceforth I'll bear*
> *Affliction till it do cry out itself*
> *'Enough, enough,' and die.*
>
> (*IV, 6*)

and later still:

> *You ever-gentle Gods, take my breath from me:*
> *Let not my worser spirit tempt me again*
> *To die before you please!*
>
> (*Ibid.*)

Now the great weakness of Gloster which he eventually overcomes, is akin to one of the weaknesses of Hamlet which he also overcomes, and which is lack of faith in Providence. The "To be or not to be" soliloquy, from which so much has been deduced about Shakespeare's own views, does not merely express the immaturity of Hamlet but it shows him at his most immature, for in a sense the Prince goes back in development after the beginning of the play before he begins to go forward. When this particular soliloquy comes his faith is at its lowest ebb. Having more or less said at the beginning of the play that he would commit suicide if only God had not forbidden it, he now implies that he would do so but for *the dread of something after death.*

It is always possible that Shakespeare may have drawn on his own past experience for this soliloquy. But we can be certain that it does not represent in any way his settled convictions because its whole tenor is completely contradicted in the last scene of the play by the fully developed, perfectly balanced Hamlet voicing the

maturity which Shakespeare has gradually shaped and built up for him. In this scene we find that he has altogether overcome his doubts. His now full-grown royalty of nature causes Horatio to exclaim, half in admiration, half in surprise: *Why, what a king is this!*; and his faith in Providence is unshakable. He says to Horatio:

> *There's a divinity that shapes our ends,*
> *Rough-hew them how we will.*

This conversation leads up to what is perhaps the greatest speech of the play, though it is seldom quoted, partly no doubt because it is in prose. Hamlet's fencing match with Laertes is about to take place. Hamlet tells Horatio that he is confident of victory; yet at the same time he has a premonition that he is going to die, and he intimates as much to Horatio, who begs to be allowed to postpone the match. But Hamlet will not allow this. He says:

> *There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow, If it be now, 'tis not to come, if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.*

The gist of this speech, *the readiness is all*, is repeated almost word for word in an equally significant passage in the last act of *King Lear*. The news of the defeat and capture of Lear and Cordelia plunges Gloster once more into despair. Edgar pulls him out of it by reminding him that just as a man has to submit to Providence as regards the time and manner of his birth, so also he must submit as regards the time and manner of his death and not seek to pluck the fruit before it is ripe. The only thing that matters is fulfilment of destiny.

> *Men must endure*
> *Their going hence, even as their coming hither.*
> *Ripeness is all.*
>
> (*V*, 2)

It will be noticed that in these two speeches of Hamlet and Edgar, as also elsewhere, Shakespeare is concentrating on the most universal aspect of religion. He is concerned with man's having the right attitude of soul towards Providence rather than with any particular mode of worship; nor could he have written otherwise, with any safety, for in the extreme religious soreness and sensitivity of sixteenth and seventeenth century England, Christianity was a very dangerous topic. Before the end of his period of authorship it was even forbidden by law to mention the name of God on the stage. But one could always refer to "the gods"; and if he deliberately chose to set nearly all his maturer plays in a pre-Christian setting—*Hamlet* is almost the last to be set in Christendom—it is to be noticed that his attitude to Greece and Rome is far more typical of the Middle Ages than of the Renaissance. He does not merely borrow the surface of classical antiquity. He places himself at the centre of that world. For him, and for Dante, just as for the ancient priests and priestesses at Delphi, Apollo is not the god of light but the Light of God.

* * * *

In the form of his drama Shakespeare is typical of his age. Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* is externally in some respects more mediaeval than anything Shakespeare wrote. But in outlook Marlowe was altogether a man of the Renaissance, as were Ben Jonson and Webster, whereas Shakespeare seems in a sense to go back as time goes forward and by the turn of the century he had become, unlike any of his fellow dramatists, the continuer and the summer-up of the past, the last outpost of a quickly vanishing age. To say this is not really to say anything new; it is rather a case of putting two and two together. Bradley says, cautiously, of *King Lear:* "It does not appear to disclose a mode of imagination so very far removed from the mode with which we must remember that Shakespeare was perfectly familiar in the Morality plays and in *the Faerie Queene*." Of *Othello* Wilson Knight says: "Othello, Desdemona and Iago are Man, the Divine and the Devil," and he remarks in general that Shakespeare's heroes are "purgatorial pilgrims." Of *Macbeth* Dover Wilson says: "*Macbeth* is almost a morality play," and he says much the same of the two parts of *Henry IV*. Moreover, in this last connection, and with

regard to Shakespeare as a continuer of past tradition, he reminds us: "Before its final secularization in the first half of the sixteenth century, our drama was concerned with one topic and one topic only: human salvation. It was a topic that could be represented in either of two ways: (i) historically, by means of miracle plays which in the Corpus Christi cycles unrolled before the spectators' eyes the whole scheme of salvation from the Creation to the Last Judgment, or (ii) allegorically, by means of morality plays, which exhibited the process of salvation in the individual soul on its road between birth and death, beset with the snares of the World or the wiles of the Evil One."[2] Dover Wilson does not define the word "salvation" and for the purpose of his book it is not necessary to do so. But as regards mediaeval art in general, it is important to distinguish between what may be called esoteric works, which look beyond salvation to sanctification, and exoteric works, in which sanctification is not really conceived of at all. If Shakespeare is a continuer of the past, which of these two categories does his art belong to, the exoteric or the esoteric?

An example of what may be called an exoteric work which stops short at salvation in the lowest sense is *The Castle of Perseverance*. In this morality play mankind (*humanum genus*) is represented as having led a very questionable life, and he is saved from Hell in the face of justice by operation of the Divine Mercy. A supreme example of an esoteric work is *the Divine Comedy* which presupposes salvation and deals with man's purification and his ultimate sanctification or in other words his regaining what was lost at the Fall. It may be said that in the Middle Ages the mass of the laity was considered as following the path of salvation, whereas the monastic orders, and the lay orders attached to them, and one or two other brotherhoods such as those of the Freemasons and the Companions, aspired to follow the path of sanctification. In other words they aimed at passing through Purgatory in this life. It is now known that Dante belonged to a brotherhood which was affiliated to the Order of the Temple, and which was more or less driven underground when the Order of the Temple was abolished. Some have supposed that Shakespeare was a member of the brotherhood of the Rosie Crosse; others believe him to have been a Freemason. This is a part of his secret which will probably never be known, and in any case it is not within the scope of these pages to dwell on anything that is not obvious from what he wrote. What *is* obvious, however, is that his plays far transcend the idea of salvation in its more limited sense; and it may be remarked in passing that this does suggest that their author was following a spiritual path, which itself implies attachment to an order.

At the beginning of Act V of *the Winter's Tale*, with reference to the long penance done by King Leontes during the sixteen years which elapse between the two parts of the play, the priestlike Cleomenes says:

> *Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd*
> *A saint-like sorrow: no fault could you make*
> *Which you have not redeem'd; indeed, paid down*
> *More penitence than done trespass. At the last,*
> *Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil;*
> *With them forgive yourself.*

In *King Lear* the blind Gloster, recognizing the King's voice, asks to kiss his hand. Lear, still mad, replies:

> *Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.*

This remark contains not only the very essence of the play but also of most of Shakespeare's other maturer plays; for in the course of them what does Shakespeare do but wipe away mortality, that is, the sin of Adam, from the hand of the hero? The hand must be altogether clean: there is no question of more or less. In *Hamlet* the prince says of himself in the middle of the play that he is not so bad as people go—or in his own words, *I am myself indifferent honest;* but Shakespeare's purpose goes far beyond such mediocrity. The porter to the Gate of Purgatory, that is, the gate to salvation, is by definition of almost unfathomable mercy. Hamlet could have

[2] *The Fortunes of Falstaff*, p. 17 (C.U.P., 1964).

passed by him at the beginning of the play; so could Leontes at the moment of repentance, sixteen years before the speech just quoted; and so could Lear long before the end of the play. But the porter to the Gate of Paradise, that is, the gate to sanctification, is relentlessly exacting; and for his heroes and heroines, Shakespeare stands as that porter. He will let nothing pass except perfection. Character after character is developed by him to a state of virtue which is pushed, one feels, to the very limits of human nature until each could say, with Cleopatra:

> *Give me my robe; put on my crown; I have Immortal longings in me.*
>
> (V, 2)

Even those who refuse to admit that Shakespeare himself speaks through any of his characters cannot escape from the fact that it is Shakespeare himself, and no one else, who is the architect of his plays. And when, after a certain maturity has been reached, play after play follows the same quest for human perfection, each play in its totality (over and above the wide variety of detail) conveying the same message, we have no alternative but to conclude that Shakespeare was altogether preoccupied, at any rate for the last fifteen years of his life or more, by the same questions which preoccupied Dante.

(To be Continued)

The . . . . pseudo-religious movements, sects and cults are by far the most insidious enemies of Religion, because they can fill the vacuum caused by its absence without fulfilling its essential purpose. Being inventions and not traditions, whatever claim to orthodoxy or to inspiration they may make, they can never be a means of grace: on the contrary, at best they are totally ineffectual, and at worst there is no limit to the harm they can do, not so much to body or mind, though that can be great, as to the immortal soul.

Lord Northbourne.

Superstition . . . . a symbol which has continued in use after its original meaning has been forgotten . . . . The best cure for that, is not misapplied invective against idolatry, but an exposition of the meaning of the symbol, so that men may again use it intelligently.

Marco Pallis.

People should think less about what they ought to do and more about what they ought to be. If only their being were good, their works would shine forth brightly. Do not imagine that you can ground your salvation upon actions; it must rest on what you are. *The ground upon which good character rests is the very same ground from which man's work derives its value, namely a mind wholly turned to God. Verily, if you were so minded, you might tread on a stone and it would be a more pious work than if you, simply for your own profit, were to receive the Body of the Lord and were wanting in spiritual detachment.*

Meister Eckhart.

COSMOLOGY AND MODERN SCIENCE

Titus Burckhardt

"The object of psychology is the psychic; unfortunately it is also its subject": thus wrote a famous psychologist of our time.[36] According to this opinion, every psychological judgment inevitably participates in the essentially subjective, not to say passionate and tendencious, nature of its object; for, according to this logic, no one understands the soul except by means of his own soul and the latter, for the psychologist, precisely belongs only to the psychic and to nothing else. No psychologist, whatever may be his claim to objectivity, then can escape from this dilemma, and the more categorical and general are his affirmations, in this realm, the more they will be suspect; such is the verdict that modern psychology pronounces in its own cause, when it is sincere towards itself. Whether it is so or not, the relativism expressed by the aforementioned sentence is inherent in it. This relativism is also a kind of promethelsm that would make of the psychic the ultimate reality of man. It is the root of the manifold divergencies that have arisen in the interior of this discipline, and it dominates it to the point of contaminating whatever that discipline touches: at its contact history, philosophy, art and religion, all become psychological in turn and therefore also subjective, that is to say devoid of objective and immutable certainties.[37]

But all relativism laid down *a priori* is inconsistent with itself. Despite the admitted precariousness of its viewpoint, modern psychology behaves like every other science, it utters judgments and believes in their validity, and in this respect it leans unknowingly or without admitting the fact on an innate certitude: in effect, if we are able to observe that the psychic is "subjective," that is to say dominated by a certain egocentric bias imposing on it certain limits or a particular "colour," this is because there is to be found in us something that is not subject to the same limits or tendencies, but exceeds and dominates them in principle. That something is the intellect, and this it is which normally provides us with the criteria whereby the fluctuating and uncertain world of the *psyche* can alone be illuminated; though

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[36] C. G. Jung in *Psychologie und Religion* (Zurich 1962) page 61.

[37] "I do not find that there is occasion for surprise at seeing psychology exchanging visits with philosopy, for is not the act of thinking, basis of all philosophy, a psychic activity which, as such, directly concerns psychology? Must not psychology embrace the soul in its total extension, which includes philosophy, theology and countless other things besides? In the face of all the richly diversified religions there rise up, as the supreme instance perhaps of truth or error, the immutable data of the human soul" (C. G. Jung *L'Homme à la Découverte de son Ame* (Paris, 1962, page 238).

This amounts to replacing truth by psychology; it is being quite forgotten that there are no "immutable data" outside that which is immutable by its own nature, namely the intellect. Besides, if the "act of thinking" is but a "psychic activity," by what right does psychology set itself up as the supreme instance—psychology, which is but one "psychic activity" among others?

the evidence for this speaks for itself, it remains totally outside modern scientific and philosophical thinking.

It is important above all not to confuse intellect and reason; the latter is indeed the mental reflection of the transcendent intellect, but in practice it is only what one makes of it; by which is meant that its functioning is limited, in the case of the modern sciences, by the empirical method itself; at the level of the latter, reason is not so much a source of truth as a principle of coherence. For modern psychology it is even less than that; for if scientific rationalism lends a relatively stable framework to one's observation of the physical world, it reveals itself as entirely insufficient when it comes to describing the world of the soul; hardly can psychic movements at the surface, namely those whose causes and aims are situated on the plane of current experience, be translated into rational terms. All the chaos of inferior, and mostly unconscious, psychic possibilities escapes rationality, and this is even more true of whatever stands above the rational; which means that the greater part of the psychic world, on the one hand, and the metaphysical realm, on the other, will appear "irrational" according to this measure of thought: hence a certain tendency, inherent in modern psychology, to relativise reason itself, which is a self-contradictory tendency, since psychology could not dispense with rational methods. Psychology finds itself facing a domain that overflows in all directions the horizon of a science built on empiricism and the cartesian standpoint.

For this reason, the majority of modern psychologists ensconce themselves in a sort of pragmatism; it is in a "committed" experience, coupled with a coldly clinical attitude, that they see some guarantee of "objectivity." In point of fact, the movements of the the soul cannot be studied from the outside, as in the case of bodily phenomena; in order to know what they signify, they have in a sense to be lived, and this raises the question of the observer himself, as was justly pointed out by the psychologist we quoted at the outset. As for the mental faculty that "controls" the experiment, what is this but a "common sense" of a more or less arbitrary kind, one that is inevitably coloured by preconceived ideas? The would-be "objectivist" psychic attitude therefore changes nothing in regard to the uncertain nature of the experiment, and thus one returns, failing a principle at once interior and immutable, to the dilemma of the psychic striving to grasp the psychic.

The soul, like any other compartment of reality, can only be truly known by that which exceeds it. This is admitted spontaneously and implicitly when people recognize the moral principle of justice, which demands that men should overcome their individual subjectivity; now, it would be impossible for a man to overcome it if the intelligence, which guides his will, were itself nothing but a psychic reality and intelligence would not exceed the *psyche* if in its essence it did not transcend the plane of phenomena, both internal and external; this observation suffices to prove the necessity and the existence of a psychology deriving in some sense from above and not claiming an *a priori* empirical character. But although this order of things is inscribed in our very nature, it will never be admitted by modern psychology; despite its own reactions against the rationalism of yesterday, it stands no nearer to metaphysic than any other empirical science, indeed quite the contrary, for its perspective, which assimilates the supra-rational to the irrational, predisposes it to the worst of errors.

What modern psychology lacks entirely is criteria allowing it to situate the aspects or tendencies of the soul in their cosmic context. In the traditional psychology, these criteria are provided according to two principal "dimensions" namely, on the one hand, according to a cosmology which "situates" the soul and its modalities in the hierarchy of states of existence, and on the other hand, according to a morality directed towards a spiritual aim. The latter can provisionally espouse the individual horizon; it none the less keeps in view the universal principles attaching

the soul to an order more vast than itself. Cosmology in some senses circumscribes the soul; spiritual morality plumbs its depths. Just as a current of water only reveals its force and direction when it breaks against an object that resists it, so the soul can only show its tendencies and fluctuations in relation to an immutable principle; whoever wishes to know the nature of the *psyche* must resist it, and one only resists it truly when one places oneself, if not effectively then at least virtually or symbolically, at a point corresponding to the divine Self, or to the intellect which is like its ray.

Traditional psychology has therefore one impersonal and "static" dimension, namely cosmology, and another personal and "operative" dimension, namely morality or the science of the virtues, and this is necessarily the case because the genuine knowledge of the soul results from the knowledge of oneself: he who, by the eye of his essence, is able to "objectivize" his own psychic form, by that very fact knows all the possibilities of the psychic or subtle world; it is this intellectual "vision" which is both the outcome, and if need be the guarantor, or every sacred science of the soul.

* * * *

For the majority of modern psychologists the traditional morality, which they readily confuse with a purely social or conventional morality, is nothing but a kind of psychic dam, useful on occasion but more often a hindrance or even harmful for the "normal" development of the individual. This opinion is especially propagated by the Freudian psychoanalysis, now become of very general application in certain countries, where it has practically usurped the function which elsewhere belongs to the sacrament of Confession:[38] the psychiatrist replaces the priest, and the bursting of the complexes that had previously been repressed takes the place of absolution. In ritual confession, the priest is but the impersonal representative (necessarily discreet) of the Truth which judges and pardons; the penitent, by admitting his sins, "objectivises" in some sense the psychic tendencies these sins manifest; by repenting, he detaches himself from them and by receiving the sacramental absolution his soul is virually reintegrated in its primitive equilibrium and centred on its divine essence. In the case of the Freudian psychoanalysis,[39] on the other hand, man lays bare his psychic entrails, not before God but to his fellow; he does not draw away from the chaotic and obscure depths of his soul, which the analyst unveils or stirs, but on the contrary he assumes them, for he must say to himself: "So I am in reality"; and if he does not overcome, with the help of some salutary instinct, this kind of disillusion from below, he will keep from it something like an intimate sullying; in most cases it will be his self-abandonment to the collective mediocrity which for him will play the part of an absolution, for it is easier to endure one's own degradation when this is shared with others. Whatever may be the occasional and partial usefulness of such an analysis in certain cases, the state described above is its more usual result, given that its premises are what they are.[40]

If the medicine of the traditional civilizations knows nothing analogous to modern psychotherapy, this is because the psychic cannot be treated by means of the psychic; the *psyche* is the realm of indefinite actions and reactions; by its own specific nature, it is essentially unstable and deceptive, so that it can only be cured by resorting to something situated "outside" and "above" it. In some cases, one will act favourably upon it by re-establishing the humoral balance of the body, commonly upset by psychic affections;[41]

[38] It also prospers chiefly in Protestant countries.

[39] One must specify that here it is the method of Freud that is in question, for psychoanalysis in our day knows forms that are more neutral and less pernicious, a fact which from the present standpoint, however, in no wise amounts to a justification.

[40] René Guénon has observed that the principle whereby every psychoanalyst needs to have been psychoanalysed himself before being empowered to analyse others raises the troublesome question of knowing who occupied the first place in the queue.

[41] Usually a vicious circle ensues, with the psychic unbalance engendering a physical intoxication which, in its turn, causes the psychic unbalance to worsen.

in other cases it is only by the use of spiritual means, such as exorcism,[42] prayer, or a sojourn in holy places that the soul can be restored to health.

We all are aware of the fact that modern psychology tries to explain in a psychological sense the spiritual means mentioned above; in its eyes the effect of a rite is one thing and its theological or mystical interpretation is another; the effect of the rite, arbitrarily limited to the psychic and subjective domain only, is attributed to psychic dispositions of ancestral origin, which its form is supposed to actualize; there is no question of a timeless and superhuman sense inherent in the rite or symbol—as if the soul could cure itself through believing in the illusory projection of its own preoccupations, whether individual or collective. There is nothing in the above supposition to shock modern psychology, since the latter goes much further than this in admitting, for example, that the fundamental forms of thought, the laws of logic, merely represent a residue of ancestral habits;[43] this path is one that leads to the outright denial of intelligence and to its replacement by biological fatalities, if indeed psychology can go that far without encompassing its own ruin.

* * * *

In order to be able to "situate" the soul in relation to other cosmic realities or realms, one must refer to the cosmological scheme where the degrees of existence are represented under the form of circles or concentric spheres. This scheme, which amplifies the geocentric conception of the visible universe, identifies the corporeal world symbolically with our terrestrial surroundings; round this region there extend the sphere or spheres of the subtle or psychic world, enclosed in their turn by the sphere of the world of pure Spirit. This representation is naturally limited by its own spacial character, yet at the same time it well expresses the relation existing between these various states: each of these spheres, considered in itself, is presented as a complete and perfectly homogeneous whole, whereas from the "viewpoint" of the sphere immediately superior to it, it is but a content thereof. Thus the corporeal world, envisaged at its own level, knows not the subtle world, just as the latter knows not the supraformal world, precisely because it only includes that which has a form. Furthermore, each of these worlds is known and dominated by that which exceeds and enfolds it: it is from the immutable and formless background of the Spirit that the subtle realities become detached as forms, and it is the soul which through its sensory faculties, knows the corporeal.

This double relationship of things, which hides itself *a priori* from our individual vision, can be grasped "alive" when one considers the very nature of sensible perception: on the one hand this really reaches the corporeal world, and no philosophic artifice will be able to convince us of the contrary; on the other hand there is no doubt that all we perceive of the world are but those "images" of it that our mental faculty is able to keep hold of, and in this respect the whole fabric made of impressions, memories and expectations, in short all that for us constitutes the sensible continuity and logical coherence of the world, is of a psychic or subtle nature; it is in vain that one will try to know what the world is "outside" this subtle continuity, since the corporeal world is but a content thereof, even while appearing, when viewed in the mirror of that state, as a materially autonomous order.[44]

It is evidently not the individual soul but the entire subtle order that contains the physical world. The logical coherence of the latter

[42] Cases of diabolical possession, such as visibly call for an application of the rites of exorcism, seem to have become rarer nowadays, doubtless because the demoniac influences are no longer "restrained" by the barriers of tradition, but are able to range pretty well anywhere, under forms that are to some extent "dilluted."

[43] They will say, for example, that logic is but an expression of the physiological structure of our brain, even while forgetting that the above statement would then be, no less, an expression of the same physiological fatality.

[44] Nothing is more absurd than the attempts to explain the perception of the material world in material terms.

implies the unity of the former, as manifested indirectly by the fact that the multiple individual visions of the sensible world, fragmentary as they are, coincide in substance and are integrated in one continuous whole. The individual soul participates in this unity both by the structure of its cognitive faculties, in conformity with the cosmic order, and also by its nature as a subject containing the physical world in its own way; otherwise regarded, the physical world is "a world" only in relation to the individual subject, in virtue of the cleaving of consciousness into object and subject, a cleaving which results precisely from the "egoic" polarization of the soul. By this same polarization the soul is distinguished from the totality of the subtle state—the "universal or total soul" of Plotinus—without, however, being substantially separated from it. For if it were so separated, our vision of the world would not be adequate to reality; now, it is adequate, in spite of the limitations and relativity of all perception.

It is true that ordinarily we only perceive an isolated fragment of the subtle world—the fragment that we "are" and that constitutes our "myself"—whereas the sensible world reveals itself to us in its macrocosmic continuity, as a whole which seems to include us. The reason is that the subtle world is the very field of individuation; in reality we are steeped in the ocean of the subtle world as fishes are in the water and, like them, we do not see that which constitutes our own element.

As for the opposition between the psychic world as "internal" and the corporeal world as "external," this only becomes actualized in relation to, and in function of, the latter; in itself the subtle world is neither "internal" nor "external"; at most it is "non-external," whereas the corporeal world is external as such, which furthermore proves that it does not enjoy an autonomous existence.

The corporeal state and the psychic state both form part of formal existence; in its total extension, the subtle state is none other than formal existence, but we call it "subtle" insofar as it escapes the laws of corporeity. According to one of the most ancient and natural symbolisms, the subtle state may be compared to the atmosphere surrounding the earth and pervading all porous bodies and acting as a vehicle of life.

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A phenomenon of whatever kind can only be truly understood through its relations, both "horizontal" and "vertical," with total Reality. This truth applies in a particular, and in a certain sense practical, manner to psychic phenomena; a selfsame psychic "event" can simultaneously occur in answer to a sensory impulsion, to the manifestation of a wish, as a consequence of an interior action, or it can appear as the trace of the typical and ancestral form of the individual, as the expression of his genius, or, again, as the reflection of a supra-individual reality. It is legitimate to consider the psychic phenomenon in question under one or other of these aspects; but on the other hand it would be abusive to try and explain the notions and motives of the soul by a single one, or by several, of these aspects exclusively. In this respect let us quote the words of a psychiatrist who has shown himself to be well aware of the limits of contemporary psychology: "There is an ancient saying of the Hindus the psychological truth of which can hardly be contested: 'What a man thinks, that he becomes.' If one steadfastly thinks of good deeds, one will end by becoming a good man; if one always thinks of weakness one will be weak; if one thinks of how to develop one's strength (bodily or mental) one will become strong. Similarly, if for years one is almost daily engaged in stirring up Hades,[45] explaining systematically everything higher in terms of the lower, ignoring at the same time all that in mankind's cultural history (in spite of its lamentable errors and misdeeds) has been regarded as valuable, the danger can scarcely be averted that discrimination will be lost, imagination (a fountain of life)

[45] Allusion to the quotation from Virgil *Flectere si nequeo superos Acheronta movebo* (If I cannot bend the Gods, I shall stir up Hell") that Freud placed at the head of his *Traumdeutung* (Interpretation of Dreams).

will be levelled down, and the mental horizon will shrink."[46]

Ordinary consciousness only serves to illuminate a restricted portion of the individual soul, and the latter represents but a minimal part of the psychic world. Howbeit the soul is not isolated from the remainder of that world, its situation is not that of a body rigorously limited by its own special extension and separated from other bodies; that which distinguishes the soul from the aggregate of the vast subtle world is solely its own particular tendencies, whereby it is defined (to employ a very simplified image) as a given spacial direction defines the ray of light that follows it. By those same tendencies the soul is in communion with all the cosmic possibilities pertaining to analogous tendencies or qualities; it assimilates them and is assimilated to them. For this reason, the science of cosmic tendencies (the *gunas* of Hindu cosmology) is fundamental for the knowledge of the soul; in this order of ideas it is not the external context of a psychic phenomenon, the accidental occasion for its manifestation, which matters essentially, but its connection with *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas*—the "upward," "expansive" and "downward" tendencies—which confers its rank on that phenomenon in the hierarchy of internal values.

The motives of the soul being only perceptible across the forms that manifest them, it is on these forms or manifestations that a psychological assessment must needs be founded; now, the part played by the *gunas* in any form whatsoever can only be measured in a purely qualitative manner, therefore in reference to precise and decisive, and in no wise quantitative, criteria such as are entirely lacking in the quite profane psychology of our time.

There are some psychic "events" whose repercussions traverse all the degrees of the subtle world "vertically," since they touch the essences; others—these are the ordinary psychic movements—only obey the "horizontal" coming and going of the *psyche;* lastly, there are those which derive from the subhuman depths. The first of these do not lend themselves entirely to expression, they include an element of "mystery," and yet, the forms they evoke occasionally in the imagination are clear and precise, such as those characterising the true sacred arts; the third kind, the demoniac "inspirations," are unintelligible by their very forms, they "ape" true mystery by the nebulous, obscure and equivocal character of their formal manifestations, of which examples can easily be found in contemporary art.

When studying the formal manifestations of the soul one must, however, not forget that the psycho-physical organism of man can display strange *cesurae* or discontinuities; thus for instance, in the case of certain states of the soul as found among that somewhat "anarchical" category of contemplatives known as "fools in God," the spiritual states in question are hardly being manifested normally and harmoniously and do not make use of the reason; inversely, an intrinsically pathological state, dominated as such by infrahuman and chaotic tendencies, may incidentally and by accident comprise openings towards supraterrestrial realities; this is but saying that the human soul is of an unplumbed complexity.

Viewed as a whole, the subtle world is incomparably vaster and more varied than the corporeal world: Dante expresses this by making the entire hierarchy of planetary spheres correspond to the subtle world and only the earthly surroundings to the corporeal. The subterranean position of the hells, in his system, merely indicates that the states in question are situated below the normal human state; in reality, these likewise form part of the subtle state, and it is for this reason that certain mediaeval cosmologists place the hells symbolically between heaven and earth.[47]

[46] Hans Jacob in *Western Psychology and Hindu Sadhana*, Allen and Unwin, London. The author of this work is a former disciple of Jung, who later discovered the doctrine and method, immeasurably greater, of the Hindu *sadhana*, which thus enabled him to submit Western psychotherapy to a just criticism.

[47] In Islam, it is said that the throne of the Devil is to be found between earth and heaven, a statement which also indicates the temptations to which those who follow the "vertical path" expose themselves.

* * * *

Experience of the subtle world is subjective—except in the case of certain sciences quite unknown to the moderns—because consciousness, in identifying itself with subtle forms, is affected by their tendencies, just as a light is turned from its course by the form of a wave which it happens to traverse. The subtle world is made up of forms, that is to say it comprises diversity and contrast; but these forms do not possess, in themselves and outside their projections in sensible imagination,[48] spacial and defined contours as in the case of corporeal forms; they are entirely active or, to be more exact, dynamic, since pure activity belongs only to the "essential forms" or archetypes, which are to be found in the world of pure Spirit. Now the *ego* or individual soul is itself one of the forms of the subtle world so that the consciousness which espouses this form is necessarily dynamic and exclusive; it only realizes other subtle forms insofar as these become modalities of its own egoic form.

Thus it is that in the dream state individual consciousness, even while being re-absorbed in the subtle world, none the less remains turned back on itself; all the forms it lives while in that state present themselves as simple prolongations of the individual subject; or at least they appear so in retrospect and inasmuch as they verge on the state of wakefulness. For in itself and despite this subjectivism the consciousness of the dreamer is evidently not impermeable by influences originating from the most diverse "regions" of the subtle world, as is proved, among other things, by premonitory or telepathic dreams such as have been experienced by many people.[49] In truth, if the imagery of dream is woven from the very "substance" of the subject—a "substance" which is none other than the progressive actualization of his own psychic form—it none the less manifests, incidentally and at varying degrees, realities of a cosmic order.

The contents of a dream can be considered under several relationships: if one analyses the *materia* of which it is made, one will find that it is constituted by all sorts of memories, and in this respect the current psychological explanation, making of the dream an expression of subconscious residues, is largely right; it is not, however, excluded that a dream might also comprise "materials" that in no wise proceed from the personal experience of the dreamer and which are like traces of a psychic transfusion from one individual to another. There is also question of the economy of the dream, and in this respect one may quote the following description of C. G. Jung, which is exact despite the radically false theses of that author; "the dream, deriving from the activity of the unconscious, gives a representation of the contents that slumber there; not of all the contents that figure in it, but only of certain ones among them which, by way of association, are actualized, crystallized and selected, in correlation with the momentary state of the consciousness."[50] As for the hermeneutic science of dreams, this eludes modern psychology in spite of its efforts in this direction, for it would not be possible to interpret validly the images reflected by the soul without knowing to what level of reality these refer.

The images one retains on waking from a dream generally represent only a shadow of that which the psychic form one lived in the state of dream amounted to in itself; at the time of passage to the state of wakefulness a sort of decantation takes place, of which one can, however, take note, insofar as something of the reality inherent in the dream will evaporate more or less rapidly. There exists, nevertheless, a certain category of dreams, well known to the traditional oneirocritic science, the remembrance of which persists with incisive clearness, and this can happen even if the profound contents of these dreams appears to conceal itself; such dreams, which most often

[48] If certain masters have compared the subtle world to imagination, it is the imaginitive activity and not the images produced through the imagination that they had in mind.

[49] Also empirical psychology no longer ventures to deny this phenomenon.

[50] Cf. *L'Homme à la Découverte de son Ame* (Geneva 1962, page 205).

occur at dawn and which finally lead to awakening, are accompanied by an irrefutable feeling of objectivity; otherwise put, they comprise a more than merely mental certainty; but that which characterizes them above all and independently of their moral influence on the dreamer is the high quality of their forms, disengaged from every kind of turbid or chaotic residue. These are the dreams that come from the Angel, that is to say from the Essence connecting the soul with the supra-formal states of the being.

Since there are dreams of divine or angelic inspiration, there must also exist their contrary, namely dreams of satanic impulsion, containing palpable caricatures of sacred forms; the sensation accompanying them will not be made of cool and serene lucidity, but of obsession and vertigo; such is the attraction exerted by the abysses. The infernal influences sometimes ride on the wave of a natural passion, which opens a way for them, so to speak; they are, however, distinguishable from the elementary character of passion by their arrogantly negative tendency, accompanied either by bitterness or else by sadness. "He who wishes to play the angel will make the beast," said Pascal, and in effect nothing is so apt to provoke caricatures, both in dreaming and elsewhere, as the unconsciously pretentious attitude of the man who mixes God with his own highly particularized *ego*—the classical motive of many of the psychoses studied and exploited by the post-Freudian psychologism.[51]

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It is starting from the analysis of dreams that C. G. Jung developed his famous theory about the "collective unconscious." Observation of the fact that a certain category of dream-images cannot be explained simply in terms of residues from individual experiences led Jung to distinguish, within the "unconscious" domain whence dreams are fed, between a "personal" zone whose contents after all represents the other face of individual psychic life, and a "collective" zone made up of latent psychic dispositions of an impersonal character, such as never offer themselves to the direct grasp of the consciousness, but manifest themselves indirectly through "symbolic" dreams and "irrational" impulsions. At first sight, this theory has nothing extravagant about it, except its use of the term "irrational" in connection with symbolism; it is easy to understand that the individual consciousness centred on the empirical *ego* leaves on its margin or even outside itself all that which, in the psychic order, is not effectively attached to that centre, just as a light projected in a given direction decreases towards the surrounding darkness. But this is not how Jung understands the matter: for him, the non-personal zone of the soul is unconscious as such, that is to say its contents can never become a direct object of the intelligence, whatever its modality or however great its extension may be: ". . . . just as the human body displays a common anatomy, independently of racial differences, so also the *psyche* possesses, beyond all cultural and mental difference, a common *substratum*, that I have named the collective unconscious. This unconscious *psyche*, which is common to all men, is not made up of contents able to become conscious, but solely of latent dispositions giving rise to certain reactions that are always identical."[52] The author goes on from there to insinuate that here one has finally to do with ancestral structures having their root in the physical order: "The fact that this collective unconscious exists is simply the psychic expression of the identity of cerebral structures beyond all racial differences . . . . The different lines of psychic evolution start out from one and the same trunk, of which the roots plunge through all the ages. It is here that the psychic parallelism with the animal is situated."[53] One notices the plainly Darwinian turn of this thesis of which the disastrous consequences, in the intellectual and

[51] In a general way, contemporary psychology delves in the observation of pathological cases and views the soul largely through this clinical perspective.

[52] Cf. Jung's Introduction to the book *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (Munich, 1929).

[53] Ibid.

spiritual order, announce themselves in the following passage: "It is this which explains the analogy, and indeed the identity, of mythological motives and of symbols as means of human communication in general."[54] Myths and symbols would therefore be the expression of an ancestral psychic fund that brings man near to the animal! These have no intellectual or spiritual foundation, since "from a purely psychological viewpoint, it is a matter of common instincts of imagining and acting. All conscious imagination and action has evolved on the basis of these unconscious prototypes and remains constantly attached to them, and this is especially the case when consciousness has not yet attained a very high degree of lucidity, that is to say, as long as it is still, in all its functions, more dependent on instinct than on conscious will, as long as it is more affective than rational . . ."[55]

The above passage clearly shows that, for Jung, the "collective unconscious" is situated "below," at the level of physiological instincts: it is important to bear this in mind since the term "collective unconscious," in itself, could carry a wider and in some sort more spiritual meaning, as certain assimilations made by Jung seem to suggest, especially his utilizing—or rather in point of fact his usurping—of the term "archetype" in order to indicate the latent, and, as such, inaccessible contents of the "collective unconscious." For though the archetypes do not belong to the psychic realm but to the world of pure Spirit, they nevertheless are reflected at the psychic level—as virtualities of images in the first place—before becoming crystalized, according to circumstances, in images properly so-called, so that a certain psychological application of the term "archetypes" could at a pinch be justified. But here it is that Jung defines an archetype as "an innate complex"[56] and describes its action on the soul: "Possession by an archetype makes of man a purely collective personage, a kind of mask, under which human nature can no longer develop but degenerates progressively."[57] As if an archetype, which is an immediate and supra-formal determination of Being—and non-limitative by that very fact—could in any sense "cast a spell" on and vampyrise the soul! What is really in question in the more or less pathological case envisaged by Jung? It is simply a question of a dissociation of the possibilities inherent in the subtle form of a man, a form which includes multiple aspects each of which has something unique and irreplaceable about it; in every non-degenerate human individual there is to be found in potency a man and woman, a father and mother, a child and elderly person, as also various qualities or "dignities" inseparable from the original and ontological position of man, such as the priestly and royal qualities and those of a creative artisan, a servant and so forth. Normally, all these possibilities complete one another; here there is no question of an irrational fund of the soul, for the coexistence of these diverse possibilities or aspects of the human "form" is perfectly intelligible in itself and can only be hidden from the eyes of a mentality or civilization that has become one-sided and false. Every "genial" development of one of these multiple possibilities or dispositions inherent in the human soul moreover requires the integration of the complementary possibilities; the true man of genius is a balanced being, for where there is no balance there is no greatness either. The contrary of such a development is the barren and pathological exageration of one of the soul's possibilities in disregard and at the cost of the others, leading to that kind of moral caricature compared by Jung to a mask; and let it be added that it is the carnavalesque mask one must think of here, and not the sacred mask which, for its part, precisely does express a true archetype, therefore a possibility that does not bewitch the soul but on the contrary liberates it.[58]

Psychic dissociation always produces a fixation

[54] Cf. Jungs Introduction to the book *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (Munich, 1929). [55] Ibid.

[56] Cf. *L'Homme à la Découverte de son Ame* (page 311).

[57] Cf. *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten* (Zurich 1963) page 130.

[58] See my article "Du masque sacré" in *Etudes Traditionnelles* Nov-Dec. 1963.

as well as a tearing apart between opposing poles, and this is only rendered possible by the clouding over of that which, in the soul, corresponds to the archetype; at the antipodes of this unbalance and this producer of hypertrophies, the perfect virility, for example, in no wise excludes femininity, but on the contrary includes and adapts it and the same is true of the opposite case; similarly the genuine archetypes, which are not situated at the psychic level, do not mutually exclude, but comprise and imply one another. According to the Platonic and hallowed meaning of the term, the archetypes are sources of being and knowledge and not, as Jung conceives them, unconscious dispositions towards acting and imagining; the fact that the archetypes cannot be grasped by discursive thought has no connection with the irrational and obscure character of the supposed "collective unconscious," whose contents could only be known indirectly through their "eruptions" on the surface. There is not only discursive thought but also intellectual intuition and it is the latter which attains to the archetypes starting out from their symbols.

Doubtless the theory according to which ancestral structures constitute the "collective unconscious" imposes itself all the more easily on the most modern thinking inasmuch as it seems to be in agreement with the evolutionist explanation of the instinct of animals; according to this view instinct would be the expression of the heredity of a species, of an accumulation of analogous experiences down the ages. Thus it is that they explain, for instance, the fact that a flock of sheep hastily gathers together round the lambs the moment it perceives the shadow of a bird of prey, or that a kitten while playing already employs all the tricks of a hunter or that birds know how to build their nests. In reality, it is enough to watch animals in order to see that their instinct has nothing of an automatism in it; the formation for such a mechanism by a purely cumulative and consequently vague and accidental process is, moreover, something highly improbable, to say the least. Instinct is a non-reflective modality of intelligence; it is determined not by a series of automatic reflexes, but by the "form"—the qualitative determination—of the species; this form is like a filter through which the universal intelligence is manifested; nor must it be forgotten that the subtle form of a being is incomparably more complex than its bodily form. The same thing holds for man too: by which is meant that his intelligence also is determined by the subtle form of his species; only this form includes the reflective faculty, which allows of a singularization of the individual such as does not exist among the animals. Man alone is able to objectivize himself; he can say "I am this or that;" he alone possesses this two-edged faculty. Man, by virtue of his own central position in the Cosmos, is able to exceed his specific norm; he is also able to betray it and sink lower; *corruptio optimi pessima*. A normal animal remains true to the form and genius of its species; if its intelligence is not reflective and objectifying, but in some sort existential, it is none the less spontaneous; it is assuredly a form of the universal intelligence even if it be not recognized as such by some men who, from prejudice or ignorance, identify intelligence with discursive thought exclusively.

As for Jung's thesis that certain dreams, which cannot be explained as personal reminiscences and which seem to arise from an unconscious fund common to all men, contain motives and forms that are also to be found in myths and in traditional symbolism, the thing is possible in principle; not that there is in the soul a repertory of types inherited from distant ancestors and witnessing to a primitive vision of the world, but because the true symbols are always "actual" inasmuch as they express non-temporal realities; in fact, under certain conditions the soul is able to take on the function of a mirror that reflects, in a purely passive and imaginative manner, universal truths contained in the intellect. Nevertheless "inspirations" of this nature remain fairly rare; they depend on circumstances that are so to speak providential, as in the case of dreams communicating truths or announcing future events, to which allusion has previously been

made. Moreover symbolic dreams are not clothed in just any traditional "style"; their formal language is normally determined by the tradition or religion to which the individual is effectively or virtually attached, for nothing arbitrary is to be found in this domain.

Now, if one examines examples of supposedly symbolical dreams as quoted by Jung or by other psychologists of his school, one notices that in most cases it is a matter of false symbolism, of the kind commonly met with in pseudo-spiritual circles. The soul is not only a sacred mirror; more often it is a magic mirror that deceives him who views himself in it; Jung should have known this, since he himself speaks of the tricks of the *anima*, indicating by this term the feminine aspect of the soul; and some of his own experiences, as described in his memoirs,[59] should have told him that an investigator of the unconscious depths of the *psyche* exposes himself, not merely to the wiles of the egocentric soul, but also to psychic influences coming from elsewhere, from unknown beings and entities, especially when the methods of analysis used derive from hypnosis or mediumship. It is in this context that must be placed certain designs executed by sick patients of Jung and which the latter tries to palm off as genuine *mandalas*.[60]

On another side, there exists a symbolism of very general character and underlying language itself, as for instance when one compares truth to light and error to darkness, or a progress to an ascent and a moral danger to an abyss, or when one represents fidelity by a dog or craftiness by a fox; now, to explain the occurrence of a similar symbolism in dreams, of which the language is naturally figurative and not discursive, there is no need to refer to a "collective unconscious"; it is enough to note that rational thought is not the whole of thought and that the consciousness in the waking state does not cover the whole region of mental activity. If the figurative language of dreams is not discursive, this does not necessarily make it irrational, and it is possible, as indeed Jung has properly observed, that a dreamer shows himself more intelligent during his dreams than in his waking state; it even would seem as if this difference of levels as between these two states is fairly frequent among men of our own time, doubtless because the frameworks imposed by modern life are particularly unintelligent and incapable of conveying in a normal way the essential contents of human life.

This has evidently nothing to do with the function of purely symbolic or sacred dreams, whether these be spontaneous or evoked through rites; here one is thinking of the example of the Indians of North America, whose whole tradition, as well as their vital ambience, favours a kind of dream-nourished prophetism.

In order to neglect no aspect of this question, the following may be added: in every collectivity that has become unfaithful to its own traditional form, to the sacred framework of its life, there ensues a collapse or a sort of mummification of the symbols it had received, and this process will be reflected in the psychic life of every individual belonging to that collectivity and participating in that infidelity. To every truth there corresponds a formal trace, and every spiritual form projects a psychic shadow; when these shadows are all that remain they do in fact take on the character of ancestral phantoms which haunt the subconscious. The most pernicious of psychological errors is to reduce the meaning of symbolism to such phantoms.

As for the definition "unconscious," it must never be forgotten that this is eminently relative and provisional. Consciousness is capable of gradation like light and is similarly refracted in conformity with the media it meets; the ego is the form of individual consciousness, it could not be its luminous source; the latter coincides with

[59] The kind of introspection practised by Jung by way of psychological investigation as mentioned in his memoirs, as well as certain "parapsychological" phenomena he provoked by this method, takes one into a plainly spiritualistic ambience. The fact that the author in question proposed to study these phenomena "scientifically" changes nothing in regard to the influence they in fact had on his theory of "archetypes."

[60] Cf. the Introduction to *The Secret of the Golden Flower* cited above.

the very source of intelligence. In its universal nature, consciousness is in a sense an existential aspect of the intellect, and this comes down to saying that nothing is basically situated outside it.[61] Whence it follows that the "unconscious" of the psychologist is merely all that, in the soul, lies outside ordinary consciousness—that of the empirical "I" orientated towards the corporeal world—that is to say, this "unconscious" is made to include at the same time the inferior chaos and the superior states; the latter (which Hindus compare to the bliss of deep sleep, the state of *prajna*) irradiate from the luminous source of universal Spirit; the definition of "unconscious" therefore in no wise delimits a given concrete modality of the soul. Many of the errors of "depth psychology," whereof Jung is one of the chief protagonists, spring from the fact that it operates with the "unconscious" as if with a definite entity.

One often hears it said that Jung's psychology has "re-established the autonomous reality of the soul"; in truth, according to the inherent perspective of this psychology the soul is neither independent nor immortal; it is merely a kind of irrational fatality situated outside any intelligible cosmic order. If the moral and mental behaviour of man were secretly determined by a collection of ancestral "types" issuing from a fund that is entirely unconscious and entirely inaccessible to the intelligence, man would be as if suspended between two irreconcilable and divergent realities, namely that of things and that of the soul.

For all modern psychology, the luminous pinnacle of the soul or its existential summit is its consciousness of the "I," which evolves in such measure as it is able to disengage itself from the darkness of the "unconscious." Now according to Jung, this darkness contains the vital roots of the individuality; the "collective unconscious" would then be endowed with a regulatory instinct, a kind of somnambulant wisdom of a biological nature doubtless; from this fact, the conscious emancipation of the ego would comprise the danger of a vital uprooting. According to Jung, the ideal is a balance between the two poles of the conscious and the unconscious, one which can only be realized by the help of a third term, a sort of centre of crystallization which he calls "the self," this term being borrowed from the doctrines of India. Here is what he has written on the subject: "With the sensation of the self as an irrational and indefinable entity, to which the 'I' is neither opposed nor subordinated, but to which it adheres and round which it evolves in some sort, like the earth going round the sun, the aim of individuation is attained. I use this term 'sensation' to express thereby the empirical character of the relation between I and self. In this relation there is nothing intelligible, for one can say nothing about the contents of the self. The 'I' is the only content of the self we know. The individualized I feels itself to be the object of another subject, unknown and superior to itself. It seems to me that psychological observation here touches its extreme limit, which one can certainly justify psychologically, but could not prove satisfactorily. The step beyond science is an absolute requirement of the psychological evolution described here, for without the postulate in question I could not formulate sufficiently the psychic processes established by experience. From this fact, the idea of a self possesses at least the value of a hypothesis after the likeness of the theories about the structure of the atom. And if it be true that here also we are prisoners of an image, this is in any case an eminently living image, the interpretation of which exceeds my capacities. I scarcely doubt that it is a case of an image, but of an image which contains us."[62] Despite a terminology too much bound up with the current scientism, one might be tempted to grant full credit to the presentiments expressed in the above passage and to find in it an approach to the traditional metaphysical doctrines if Jung, in a second passage, did not relativise the notion of the self by treating it this time, not as a trancen-

[61] Let us recall here the vedantine trinity of *sat-chit-ânanda* (Being, Consciousness, Bliss).

[62] Cf. *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten*. Page 137.

dent principle, but as the outcome of a psychological process: "One could define the self as a sort of compensation in reference to the contrast between interior and exterior. Such a definition could well be applied to the self insofar as the latter possesses the character of a result, of an aim to reach, of a thing that only was produced little by little and of which the experience has cost much travail. Thus, the self is also the aim of life, for it is the most complete expression of that combination of destiny we call 'an individual,' and not only of man in the singular but also of a whole group, where the one is the complement of the others in view of a prefect image."[63] There are some realms where dilettantism is unforgivable.

It is the balance to be realized between the conscious and the unconscious, or the integration, in the empirical "personality"; of certain forces or impulsions emanating from the unconscious, that Jung paradoxically labels as "individuation" using a term by which was traditionally designated, not some psychological process or other, but the differentiation of individuals starting from the species; that which Jung understands thereby is a kind of definitive pronunciation of the individuality which is taken as an end in itself. In such a perspective the notion of "self" plainly loses all metaphysical meaning; but this is not the only traditional notion that Jung appropriates in order to debase it to a purely psychological and even clinical level; thus he compares psychoanalysis, which he uses precisely to promote this "individuation," to an initiation in the proper and sacred meaning of the term and he even declares that psychoanalysis represents "the only form of initiation still valid in the modern age!"[64] Whence proceed a whole series of false assimilations and intrusions into a realm where psychology is without any competence.[65]

Here it is not a case of the involuntary ignorance of some isolated seeker, for Jung carefully avoided all contact with the representatives of living tradition: during his travels in India, for example, he did not wish to see Sri Râmana Mahârishi—alleging a motive of insolent frivolity[66]—doubtless because he feared instinctively and "unconsciously" (it is a case for saying it) a contact with a reality that would disprove his own theories. For him, metaphysics was but a speculation in the void or, to be more exact, an illusory attempt of the psychic to reach beyond itself, comparable to the senseless gesture of a man who tries to pull himself out of a mud-hole by his own hair. This conception is typical of modern psychology, and this is why it is mentioned here. To the absurd argument that metaphysic is only a production of the *psyche*, one could easily object that the above-mentioned judgment itself is but a similar

Continued on page 55

[63] Cf. *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten*. Page 137.

[64] Cf. Psychological commentary on the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

[65] Jung's psychological interpretation of Alchemy has been expressly refuted in the author's book, *Alchemie, Sinn und Weltbild* (Olten 1960)—Mr. Frithjof Schuon after reading the present article sent me the following reflections in writing: "People generally see in Jungism, as compared with Freudism, a step towards reconciliation with the traditional spiritualities, but this is in no wise the case: from this point of view the only difference is that, where Freud boasted of being an irreconcilable enemy of religion, Jung sympathizes with it while emptying it of its contents which he replaces by the collective psychism, that is to say by something infra-intellectual and therefore also anti-spiritual. In this there is an immense danger for the ancient spiritualities, whose representatives, especially in the East, too often are without critical sense in regard to the modern spirit, and this, by reason of a complex of "rehabilitation"; also it is not with much surprise, though with grave disquiet, that one has come across echoes of this kind from Japan, where the psychoanalytical balancing has been compared to the *satori* of *Zen*; and there is little doubt that it would be easy to meet with similar confusions in India and elsewhere. Howbeit, the confusions in question are largely favoured by the almost universal refusal of people to see the devil and to call him by his name, or in other words by that kind of tacit convention formed of optimism to order, of a tolerance that in reality hates truth, and of compulsory alignment with scientism and the official tastes, without forgetting a "culture" which swallows everything and engages one in nothing if it be not in a "neutralism" of complicity; to which must be added a no less universal and quasi-official contempt for all that is, we will not say "intellectualist," but truly intellectual and for that reason tainted, in people's minds, with "dogmatism," "scholasticism," "fanaticism," and "prejudice." All this agrees perfectly with the psychologism of our time and is in large measure its result."

[66] Cf. The preface of the book by Heinrich Zimmer on Sri Râmana Mahârshi.

A craft as a fountain of grace and a means of realization

A. MESSINESI

Gangā flows
In bubbling foam
And leaping spray.
Behold
The Shakti on Her way!

Gangā flows.
We ride Her waves
And come to this:
The Sea of Beauty,
The Ocean of Her Bliss.

By re-expounding the Theory of Art with so much depth of understanding and such clarity of definition, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy rendered in his time a greater service than any other contemporary writer to practising artists of every description. The testimony of one, therefore, who himself benefited by that exposition will perhaps not come amiss even after a lapse of years and it will serve to show whether and to what extent an individual can make use of a manual trade as an effective means of Realization in an age of increasing disorder, when both the hands and the mind through which he would normally receive and transmit the Light appear to have become insensitive and unresponsive to every spiritual influence.

Let it be said from the outset that if the Light's reflection in the individual, that is to say, his inward light, be brilliant enough it will shine through any curtain; and likewise let it be said that there is nothing to prevent this from happening even today. Similarly, if the echo of Vocation, that is to say the inward voice, be sufficiently loud and insistent, it will pierce through any wall. The inward light and the inward voice represent the essential part of the individual demanding its rights. In a traditional[1] society it does not have to insist clamorously because a society of this kind is organized in such a way as to favour these rights. Modern society, however, recognizes no such rights; it has in fact tried, and by dint of trying, it has largely succeeded in squeezing the essence out of the individual and leaving a devitalized substance which it can mould as it pleases. Present leaders of society, those countless chemists, engineers, industrialists, publicists and psychologists are, no doubt, likewise listening to a voice of sorts, but of the exact nature of the call the less said the better.

[1] By "Tradition" is meant not a merely historical continuity and still less a blind observance of customs bereft of their former meaning, but a transmission of principles of more-than-human origin, effectively applied in every field of thought and action.

A craft as a fountain of grace and a means of realization

The first decade of the twentieth century was in many respects a critical one, for it immediately preceded the visible collapse of so much that had already been undermined during the Victorian era. The attitude of society towards artisanship had become one of indifference and contempt; but so far it was not consciously hostile. Open warfare had not yet been declared against the manual trades and people were not being driven by such an inexorable pressure of circumstances into the mechanized industries. Compromises were still possible; a training in handicrafts, though superficial and rudimentary, was still obtainable if one went out of one's way to search for it. An existence could just be eked out by work of the hands.

In England the influence of William Morris and his followers, which had never penetrated very deep, was by this time hardly to be reckoned with. In those sections of society which might be described as "cultured," and which incidentally were already predominantly urbanized in character, painting held the place of honour among the visual arts. It was an art which these people had made their own and which they were able to practise in a comparatively free manner. Handicrafts, on the other hand, which were less highly esteemed, became the appanage of servile craftsmen whose work could not be expected to escape the effects of the limited taste and viewpoint of the people from whom they, as craftsmen, received their commissions—though it must not be forgotten in this connection that the work of the rural artisan, wherever it still survived, had felt the baneful influence of the age far less than any of the "arts" of the more sophisticated sections of the community.

As has just been pointed out, a successful painter often held a position of considerable importance in "society," whereas a craftsman or an artisan was reckoned of no account; is it surprising, therefore, that a young man, desirous of using his hands in a vocational way, should have thought almost invariably in terms of painting? Neither were opportunities for training in that branch of art lacking: Art Schools abounded and many famous painters accepted pupils in their own studios. My own case did not differ in any way from that of other young men of my class aspiring to "Art" as a career: I chose to become a painter but, like many another, I was forced to go into business and train for "Art" in my spare time. The effects of the Art School were deadening. After a time I was no longer certain which I disliked more: the Venus of Milo or Miss X, the living model; under my languishing pencil the Venus assumed a fleshy appearance while poor Miss X might well have been made of wood or stone!

How thankful I am now for my love of plants and flowers, of arabesques and geometrical forms: this strong leaning towards formalized pattern saved me in the end. The first year after leaving business was spent in an orgy of untutored designing and in digesting the refusals and snubs of manufacturing firms to whom I offered my designs for sale. It dawned on me before long that I was wasting my time; I and my designs cut straight across the interests of these industrialists; we would only be like sand in the wheels of their machines, threatening to put everything out of gear. Industry gnashed her teeth or waved a tentacle engagingly, according to her mood—so I withdrew for fear of being torn to shreds or manoeuvred into harmlessness.

My next move brought me into the world of "Arts and Crafts" as a devotee of the hand-loom. The "Arts and Crafts" movement was not in spirit a continuation of the William Morris movement though it followed closely on its heels. William Morris and his followers worked inside the main body of society and their motto was good craftsmanship; they were in the first place practical and business-like. The brotherhood of "Arts and Crafts," on the other hand, retired from society; their motto was "Simplicity" and they called themselves "Idealists." These, of course, are generalizations; there were exceptions in both groups. Each contained something that was sound, but neither touched fundamental principles: society and the "human soul" represented, respectively, their deepest

perceptions and their highest aspirations. In the 1930s revivalism in the "Arts" donned yet another garb: it returned to the towns in strength with "uplift" and "education" as its watchwords; it penetrated everywhere: into schools, institutions of all kinds and even into lunatic asylums! Present events have laid it prostrate; it may or may not lift its head again under some other form, but if it does, its headquarters will doubtless be the "State Dispensary of Art and Culture."

But I must return to the early 1920s, the time of my accession to hand-weaving. At that period hand-weaving workshops or studios were nothing like as numerous as they became later. They were mostly situated in the country—often in remote parts—and they usually belonged to women of independent or partly independent means. The fabrics made in these establishments were of the simplest and roughest; they were not always devoid of charm of a certain kind, but they were often of a poor standard of workmanship and not sufficiently serviceable. As it happened, however, I was, at the time, unaware even of the existence of these workshops. It was in quite another way that I was introduced to hand-weaving and received my training. My teacher was a veteran of the William Morris period and I met him accidentally in a museum. He came from East London artisan stock and was employed for many years as designer in a Jacquard hand-loom industry. The Jacquard hand-loom was the precursor of the present power-loom. It was mechanized in spirit if not in fact for, though operated by hand and foot, it was so suited for harnessing to "power" that its "conversion" proved child's play. It was soon turned into the power-loom of our day, or else replaced by it—surviving, in England, only in one or two strongholds of the textile arts, such at Spitalfields.

When I met the man who was to teach me, he was working on the reconstruction of the "draw-loom," the loom which the Jacquard hand-loom supplanted at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The draw-loom had been the traditional loom for fine patterned tissues in all countries throughout the ages, India not excepted. A great deal of my time was taken up in following my teacher's experiments, both in respect of the draw-loom and of other types of extinct or moribund looms. Possessing theoretical knowledge and inventive talent, he was successful in so far as function was concerned; but "texture," that very essence of tissue, proved too subtle and elusive; it eluded him, as it must elude every other weaver whenever there has been a complete break in the tradition, since texture is a *Shruti*[2] element in weaving.

My Own Workshop

After four years with my teacher I founded my own workshop. Between then and the time when the present essay was first drafted[3] some twenty years had passed: it was a period fruitful in experience if in nothing else. Social and economic conditions in England made the employment of men an impossibility; the help of two girls was all that circumstances would permit, but in their veins flowed the blood of artisan and farmer forebears: they were true artists and became an integral part of my workshop; I could not have wished for better service.

My output was small, it barely covered costs and it had to be disposed of without delay; every scrap of material had to be utilized and there was never a running stock either of materials or of finished articles: needless to say such conditions are highly disadvantageous both to production and sales.

For sales, my workshop and others like it relied mainly on private or joint exhibitions organized by ourselves or by societies in some way connected with our work. These exhibitions were wasteful in time, in money and in

[2] A Hindu term denoting those portions of the Scriptures that vehicle a direct or essential inspiration, as distinct from more or less inspired commentaries of various kinds.

[3] The occasion was a symposium to mark A. K. Coomaraswamy's 70th birthday (in 1947): the present text has been brought slightly more up to date.

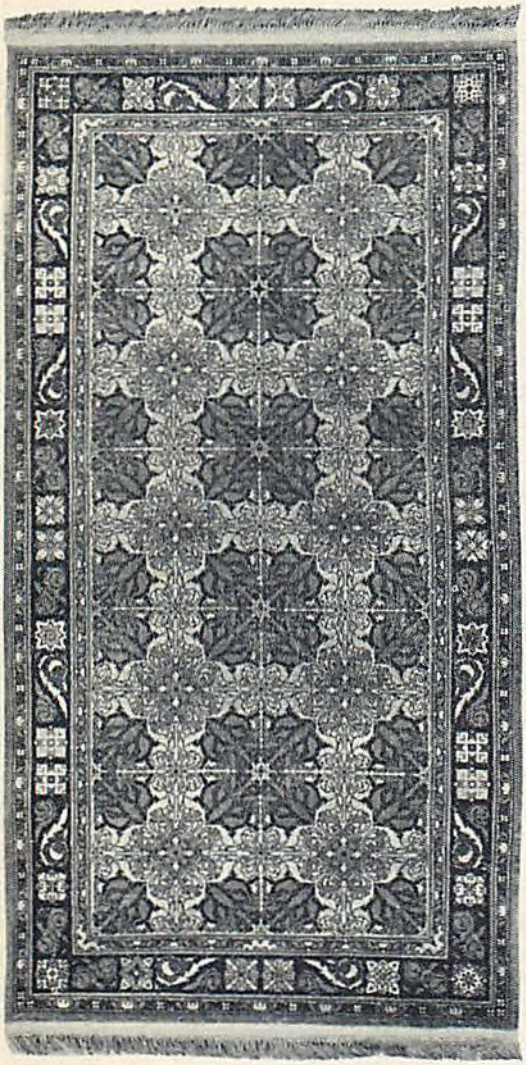
energy; they disorganized our workshops for weeks before and after and, more often than not, to little purpose. Private clients were few and far between and had to be angled for and, when they came, they usually proved unprofitable customers either because of their total, though perhaps understandable, lack of familiarity with the articles they came to buy or else because they were people of small means for whom the prices worked out too high under the conditions then imposed on the producer. On the other hand, shops, architects and decorators were of even smaller value, either as ordinary clients or as patrons, so restricted and constrained were they by their businesses and their prejudices; and as for the Church—its patronage was conspicuous by its absence. All this goes to prove that when the traditional foundations of a society have been upset, activities which are quite normal in themselves are made to appear exceptional; they cease to have any intellectual or even rational meaning for the large majority of people and no longer answer to any of their needs, whether real or imaginary.

My work during these years brought me into contact with all the other hand-loom weavers and with many other of the crafts-people. Various loosely-knitted and often short-lived bodies, describing themselves indiscriminately as guilds, leagues, societies, institutes and so forth, existed for the promotion of our so-called interests. Some were local in their constitution and scope, others ranged further afield and included members from all over the British Isles and even from overseas; some related to a particular craft, others to a more or less comprehensive combination of crafts. Most of them had been founded originally by the craftsmen themselves but gradually came to accept an ever larger number of non-practising members. Their activities as a rule were confined to the organizing of exhibitions; some took the line of Education and organized schools, lectures and demonstrations; in one case a very useful quarterly journal was published, but in no instance, so far as I am aware, was the question of disposal of work given the consideration it deserved: to open a co-operative shop for example in the Capital or in an important market town would, so it was argued, be to reduce "Art" to the level of mere business. Yet, if they only knew it, it was they, arguing thus, who were the "materialists." Education as it happened, was the safe line to take as well as the line of least resistance. You took in pupils, in the majority of cases candidates for posts in the teaching professions and the social services; they paid you good fees and did your donkey-work; in due course they would themselves become teachers and would teach others to teach—but to what end may it be asked?

Visit to India

About ten years after the founding of my workshop I visited India for the purpose of adding to my experience and to the scope of my work. The visit lasted a year during which time I was enabled to produce a number of very fine carpets by making use of the facilities offered to me in Kashmir and elsewhere. Observations which I made while thus engaged led me to the conclusion that carpets manufactured according to the methods commonly in force in certain types of hand-made carpet factories both in India and other Oriental countries can be described as "hand-made" only in name: the epithet which fits them best is "man-power carpets." In spirit such work does not differ greatly from that of the machine. When quantity is the means and gain the only end, the tieing by hand of a bit of wool round a string contains no deeper meaning and will in the long run carry with it the same effects as, let us say, the slipping of a nut onto a bolt: in both cases man is reduced to the level of a machine. When one considers the Indian workman who, in spite of all, has neither lost his skill nor the whole of his spirituality, this debasement is particularly tragic.

The fact that the artisan class in India has advanced a long way on the road to extinction is much to be regretted, but no blame can be



Author's design. Colours open to discussion; one or two ranges are possible.

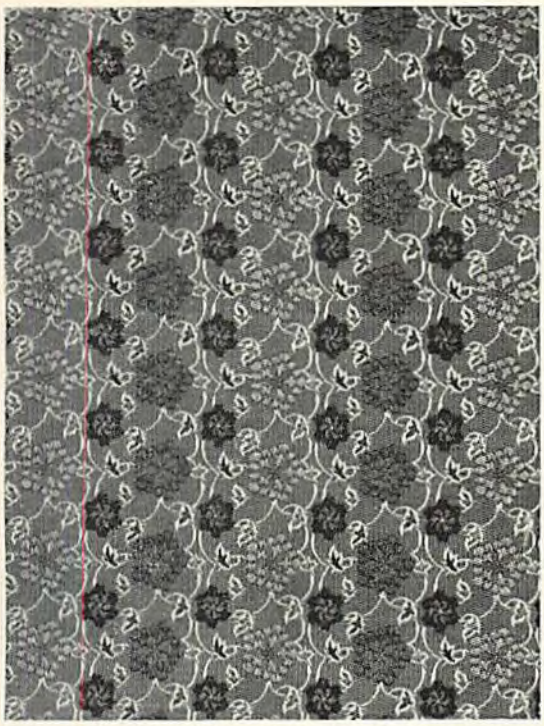
attached to these unfortunate people. In the majority of cases they clung to their crafts until they were starved out of existence or were reduced to the status of mere labourers. What however is *not* excusable is the apathy of the



Silk brocade, Persian antique design. Woven on a contemporary draw-loom, by the author.

better-to-do classes, the potential patrons, who although aware of the state of affairs and while rendering lip-service to Indian culture and talking much about *Svadeshi*[4] this and *Svadeshi* that, in practice do nothing that will in any way further the cause which they profess to have at heart. What is first of all wanted of the patron is that he should himself experience the need to furnish his home with objects that have been made in the traditional manner and feel uncomfortable when using anything different. To support the traditional craftsman, merely out of sentiment and apart from any compelling need felt by himself, will neither get the patron nor the Arts anywhere, because that kind of senti-

[4] Literally "own country" or, as we might say, "national product."



Silk brocade, Persian antique design. Woven on a contemporary draw-loom, by the author.



Author's design. Multicoloured flowers. Background of field: red; ground of border: dark blue.

mental motive is both unstable and inadequate and misses the essential point. As soon as a patron realizes that the craftsman's interests *are also his own* then, year in year out, he will go to this source for his household requirements and the craftsman will automatically benefit by this intercourse. If, as is probable under present circumstances, a patron should find that there are certain things he cannot nowadays procure for himself from sources he is able to approve of, then he will hasten to take steps to remedy this want by a constructive and long-sighted use of his patronage. There is still much that can be saved of the Indian village arts and whoever contributes to that end will be helping to pass on a knowledge that is beyond valuation in purely economic terms. Organizing ability is not a prerogative of the West, neither is it a virtue sufficient unto itself: it is no more than the mechanism of an engine; if the motive power is misdirected of what use are the wheels? How much grander, wiser and in a true sense more practical has been the organizing ability of the Orient, the rhythm of which fell in line with the

Universal Rhythm and produced a Harmony hardly to be paralleled elsewhere. The "village" was a fundamental feature in Mahatma Gandhi's conception of the Indian social edifice for nearly twenty-five years and his efforts have not been entirely without results; only let it be more widely recognized that the question of the village is not merely a social one but in the deepest sense a spiritual one and the results can be made still more far-reaching.

The Wardha Ashram

While in India I took the opportunity of visiting the *Ashram* at Wardha. I felt drawn to many of his teachings; besides to me, as a weaver, the message of *Khadi*[5] was particularly eloquent and significant. Who could wish for a more appropriate symbol of non-injuriousness? What use has he for violence who has coaxed and guided thousands of the finest threads, each of thousands of yards, through a series of operations requiring the utmost care, accuracy and delicacy of touch, in order that he may lay them finally, taut and parallel, between the rollers of his loom? A breath of ill-temper, a gesture of impatience and the work of weeks, even of months, might have to be begun all over again!

The connection with Wardha was kept up after my return to England by means of letters and through the reading of the journal "Harijan." I made a special point of following questions relating to village industries in its columns and, on one occasion, I came across a paragraph the gist of which was that, if the poorer people could not afford the latest chemical dyes with which to dye their homespun yarns, they might, perhaps, "make do" with their local vegetable dyes, the implication being, of course, that the chemical dyes were something superior; yet after all, it was the natural dyes which once supplied the colour to all fabrics, including those masterpieces of the textile Arts which are considered today so rare and precious that one is hardly allowed to touch them! The advice to the spinners of yarn to make the best of vegetable dyes in the absence of the chemical dyes is in reality a frank admission on the part of those who gave it that they are prepared to swallow the modern notion of "progress" with all its consequences. It is also an attitude which they cannot take up without falling into self contradiction, for how can they stand for the revival of the traditional village Arts while at the same time advocating the use of materials which are the very embodiment of modern profanity and how can they hope to convince others by arguments which they patently do not believe in themselves?

Having been duly prepared by the lesson of *Khadi* I was now encouraged to read some books bearing on doctrinal and metaphysical questions. Among the works that could be cited as having been particularly helpful at the stage that had been reached were:— Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy's "Why exhibit works of Art?" and his "Hinduism and Buddhism," also R. Guénon's *Crisis of the Modern World* and his *Introduction to the study of the Hindu Doctrines*. It was now becoming more and more possible to relate what one was trying to do to the principles on which these acts depended and to be consciously guided by those principles. Although one's every act could not at once become a form of worship, as by rights it should be, at least in what one made one had begun to look for something more than what the unaided senses could provide; though the selfless goal might still have seemed a long way off, individual self interest no longer dogged one's every step.

At this point a little technical and general information about looms and weaving might be of help to a reader uninstructed in such matters. It will also provide an illustration of the nature of the relationship that exists between universal principles and those governing the Arts, as well as giving some idea of the lessons that a practising craftsman will be able to draw from this relationship once he has become conscious of its existence.

First, when discussing the question of tools—

[5] Homespun cotton cloth, the daily weaving of which was an important discipline for the Mahatma and his followers.

the term being used here in its broadest sense—what is of primary importance is to remember that the hand, as the principal organ of action, is the master-tool, and that through the agency of the mind, which is at once an organ of action and of perception, it is linked to the Transcendent Intellect, hand and mind together, as it were, bridging the gap between the thing being made and the Intellect, without which nothing whatsoever can be made that contains the slightest spiritual meaning. This "bridge" must therefore be the first and last consideration of every artist when choosing his tools.

The Simplest Loom

The simplest and most elementary type of loom consists, roughly, of four beams joined to form a rectangular frame while a fifth beam either slides in a groove up and down the vertical sides of the frame or else takes the form of a roller which revolves but is otherwise fixed. Across this frame threads (the warp) are stretched running in a direction parallel to the axis of the person standing before the frame; these threads are either taken over the sliding beam or else they are wound round the roller and can thus be tightened or slackened at will. It should be explained that the direction of the warp is always looked upon as vertical in principle even when the frame slopes to the ground or lies parallel to it. At right angles to the warp another thread or series of threads (the weft) is inserted (interwoven) by picking up and missing alternate warp threads or else in some different order, according to a predetermined pattern.

There is nothing else absolutely indispensable to the loom itself except two rods threaded through the warp, the one picking up the odd threads and the other the even threads. The warp threads cross each other between the rods and cannot get out of order. This device is known as the "cross"; it is the Alpha and Omega of weaving and no loom can function without it, for it maintains warp threads of any length spaced and parallel and also provides the weaver with his only means for counting the warp threads singly and in serial order. The Weaver's Cross is in principle a "sequence" and, in the case of the more elaborate looms, it is the "parent" of a number of other different but also highly important sequences operating in various parts of the loom. On the correct ordering of these sequences depends the proper action of the functioning parts of the loom and the production of a technically faultless material. One single warp thread wrongly placed in the cross is enough to upset not only the order of the cross itself but also that of one or more of the other sequences; if the mistake is not discovered and corrected at an early stage, the weaver is almost bound to find himself involved in a labour of many weeks of correcting, for the sum total of the units making up the sequences may run into a figure of tens of thousands of units, each of which will require separate handling. A weaver could not have the principles of Relativity and Interdependence illustrated for him in a more vivid manner than by these sequences which are of the very "bones" of his art.

The type of loom I have described a little further up is known as the "upright" loom as it usually stands upright or at a slight angle. Being the least complicated, it is also the least limiting and allows for the greatest freedom and intricacy of pattern without the degree of complexity in the pattern making any appreciable difference to speed in weaving; the speed that can be attained is, however, never great and the texture is normally thick and firm. This loom is also called the Tapestry or Carpet Loom as it is on such a loom that these fabrics are woven as a rule; they are fabrics especially suited to the needs of a pastoral or nomadic life. This loom can be improvised, if necessary; it is easily transported and the fabrics, which are made out of the wool of their flocks, supply all the tent and saddle furnishings of the herdsmen.

The other type of loom is known as the "horizontal" loom because, in this case, the warp always lies flat; this type contains many subdivisions and must have developed out of the

more primitive upright loom because of the need for greater speed in weaving the rich, fine fabrics of wool, silk, cotton and linen which the settled, agricultural peoples wanted for their clothes, their beds, and for the reception rooms of their palaces. The brocades, damasks and cut-velvets of China, India, Persia, Turkey and Byzantium were made on looms such as these though, when stripped of their accessory devices for elaborating the pattern, these were the same looms which made the plainer materials. The degree of complexity which this loom reached in certain cases is almost inconceivable yet, so long as the Intellect continued to preside, the "bridge" already spoken of, was maintained intact even in the case of the most complicated loom. In proportion, however, as the Light of the Intellect became more and more veiled to man, so did the loom get more and more *out-of-hand* which is the same as saying that the *Other Party*, having sized up the loom's possibilities, gradually took charge and handed it over to its own executives: first Steam and then Electricity. As for the upright loom, the austerity of its structure and the uncompromising nature of the technique this structure imposed did not allow of its being exploited by the powers of subversion, as happened in the case of the more luxurious and accommodating horizontal loom. The upright loom therefore fell into neglect, except in one case: that of the "pile" or "tufted" carpet, which the powers referred to contrived to exploit in the subtle way that led to the man-power carpet already described. But this is an exceptional case, only rendered possible by exceptional labour conditions prevailing in certain localities. The machine-made carpet is manufactured on a horizontal "power-loom" and has very little resemblance even to the "man-power" carpet and much less to the genuine article. In the case of Tapestry the machine has failed completely. Tapestry, representing as it does the principle of pattern-weaving, has remained inviolate and that is why every weaver should receive his first training in this form.

A description of the various types of horizontal looms, however much abbreviated, would still be too long for the available space and will have to be omitted; but we can, and must, give a few lines to the shuttle, that elegant and charming creature, which can hardly be called an implement, so nearly does it come to possessing a life of its own. Carrying the weft, it darts in and out of the warp threads like a streak of lightning or an arrow speeding to its mark; like a ship it plies from shore to shore, out and home again; like *Lakshmi* casting flowers into *Vishnu*'s lap, it adorns and nourishes its Lord. To handle it is a delight and the "throw" is one of the most graceful movements which the human body can perform. No two weavers have the same throw of the shuttle or the same "beat" of the batten. (The batten swings from above or pivots from below and beats down each throw of weft on to its predecessor). The "weaver's "throw" and "beat" are as individual as the embroiderer's stitch and the touch of the hand can be detected in the material itself.

Symbolism

Neither can a short reference to the symbolical uses of the forms and figures of the Art of Weaving be omitted; the Sacred Books of all Traditions have drawn lavishly from this source when choosing their symbols, for it is an Art which is almost unrivalled in its possibilities in this respect. It should be noted that the Universal Principles of which the Cross is the recognized symbol can also be represented symbolically in the most perfect manner by terms borrowed from the Art of Weaving, for it is evident that a tissue is intrinsically nothing more nor less than a multitude of crosses, the warp threads forming the vertical arms and the weft the horizontal arms. I cannot dwell on this absorbing topic of the symbolism of weaving as long as I would like, but neither can I summarize it better than by quoting from the *Upanishads* in which the Supreme *Brahma* is frequently described as "That on which the Worlds are woven as warp and weft." For anyone wishing

to acquaint himself with these symbolical forms and with their manifold applications, I must recommend him to consult the traditional sources of reference as well as the enlightened interpretations of one or two contemporary writers, including Réné Guénon's *Symbolism of the Cross*, and numerous allusions throughout the writings of the recipient of the present tribute.

Good Workmanship

From the loom and what it makes, one is led on to the question of good workmanship. For a work to be well made, it must be "all that it should be and nothing else besides"; it will then be speaking the Truth and—to quote a *Mahāyāna* formula—if Wisdom and Method have together gone into the making of it, it will achieve true Unity, thus becoming a means of Grace. A work has to be conceived; conception is revelation; the maker goes up to Heaven to find his model and Heaven likewise descends to reveal it. The maker may visit Heaven in his dreams, or he may be transported there by the Grace of his teacher, or while in contemplation of a work already revealed for the good of all those who are able to read its message. If a gift of skill has been traditionally accepted by the individual and not profanely appropriated; if it is disinterestedly administered and not selfishly exploited, then the work will be faithfully executed and the material of which it is made will also necessarily be whole and sound. If it is of wool, then the wool and the sheep, the pasture and the landowner must alike answer to the searching test of whether they are all that they should be and nothing else besides, for such is the interdependence of the essential constituents of any cycle that it cannot suffer interruption at any point and such is the oneness of Unity that it can consist of nothing but Unity.

The moment has now come to answer our opening question in a decisive manner, but before doing so, I will put the question again, this time using somewhat different words:— What possibilities are offered to a craftsman born into the Modern World, a world almost wholly profane in its outlook, for integrating his life through the practice of a craft?

My enquiry has taken the form of a narrative in the unfolding of which many of the points implied in the initial question will be found to have been answered; there still remains, however, the work of co-ordinating these dispersed and partial conclusions into the one which will constitute their epitome and synthesis.

The conclusion stands out bright as a beacon lighting up the Way; unerring as the marksman's arrow, it indicates the Target:—A man's Art—be this a handicraft or some different work—if it is to serve him as a vocation in the fullest sense and not merely as a means of earning, if it is to fulfill spiritual aspirations instead of only satisfying aesthetic greed, must have its roots in a living Tradition. A man born *into* the Modern World is not necessarily entirely *of* it, for he need not have been affected by it in every respect; but, though not of it, neither can it be said of him as yet that be belongs to the Traditional World. His Art will be but a sickly plant growing out of an impoverished soil; if he is not to let it wither before fruiting, he must find for it a soil which the Doctrine's Bounty has enriched. Where then should this cultivator of the Arts seek for the plot he requires? Maybe in some oasis of Tradition situated within the ever-encroaching desert of secularism he will discover what, for him, is right; or he may find himself drawn towards some more fortunate land which profanity's desiccating breath has hitherto left comparatively untouched. His quest is, in any case, likely to be an arduous one; he will be guided to the correct choice by his own inherent tendencies; but, though he must himself search, it is really the Tradition which will do the final choosing.

A man's task is described as his "calling"; but does a man living in the Modern World always recognize the nature of the voice that calls him? He is aware, of course, that he has got to live, but has he never listened to a call that

comes from beyond the rational or sensual orders: the Voice of the Shepherd, for instance, inviting him into the Fold? He may often have heard this voice, not knowing it for what it was. When he recognizes it, he will have "seen" but not till he has answered it, will he have "become." A great gulf separates the two; how is it to be crossed? None can tell, for it is always crossed in the Darkness of the Night.

And so we see that every being
Has first to be essentially itself,
Before it can become all other things
Within the cycle of its changing forms.
Therefore the Mind, wherever it exists,
Has a twofold function to fulfill;
That of maker and destroyer.
It must gather strength to spend it
In a work of self-undoing.
For, both as vehicle and obstacle,
At once uniting and dividing,
It lies athwart the road from self to Self.

SPIRIT versus LETTER (Islamic Style)

In the days when Spain was still under the Moors a certain doctor of the Law crossed over from that country to the African coast on business and as he was walking in the streets of one of the coastal towns he happened to meet an old man who was going about playing tunes on his flute or else singing religious songs. Many people were following the fluteplayer about and listening to his singing in evident delight, but to the learned doctor the words seemed rather childish and hardly worth listening to. Being however rather puzzled by the evident enthusiasm these songs aroused he entered into conversation with the old man and asked him where he had learned them: "I make them up myself" he said, "it is all I know": and this indeed was only too apparent to the doctor, for the man was quite illiterate and even admitted that he did not know the words of the five canonical prayers which it is the daily duty of every Muslim to offer up at stated hours. Greatly shocked the doctor said to the man: "You really ought to know the prayers, for it is a great sin for any Muslim either to miss or to distort them. So please let me show you the correct way." The old man gratefully accepted and repeated the sacred words after the scholar, not without many slips and hesitations; after which they parted. Next day, having concluded his business, the doctor set out on his return to Spain; but he had not proceeded a couple of miles from the coast when, looking back, he saw a man running over the surface of the sea and making signs to the boatmen to wait. It was the flute player! Breathlessly he came up to the boat and grasping the side cried out "Stop! Stop! Doctor, I can't remember that third prayer! Please recite it once again for me." "Go back" said the man of learning "and do as God will show you. There is nothing I can teach you."

From "France-Asie"

René Guénon

The Triple Druid Precinct[1]

In *Atlantis* (July–August 1928), M. Paul Le Cour drew attention to a strange symbol drawn on a druidical stone, discovered about 1800 at Suèvres (Loir-et-Cher). This had previously been studied by M. E.-C. Florance, president of the Society of Natural History and Anthropology, of Loir-et-Cher, who thought that the place where the stone was found could have been the site of the annual reunion of the Druids, situated, according to Caesar, in the confines of the country of the Carnutes.[2] His attention was attracted by the fact that the same sign was found on a Romano-Gallic oculist's seal, discovered about 1870 at Villefranche-sur-Cher (loir-et-Cher); and he propounded the theory that what it represented could be a sacred triple enclosure. This symbol is, in fact, formed by three concentric squares connected by four lines at right angles. *(Fig. 1.)*

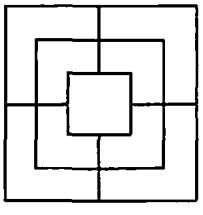


Fig. 1

Just when the article appeared in *Atlantis*, M. Florance was told of the same symbol engraved on the huge foundation stone of a buttress at the church of Sainte-Gemme (Loir-et-Cher); this stone seemed to have an origin older than the church and which might even also go back to the Druids. Apart from this, it seems certain that, like many other Celtic symbols, and notably that of the wheel, this figure remained in use up to the Middle Ages, since M. Charbonneau-Lassay has placed it amongst the "graffiti" of the keep of Chinon,[3] jointly with another no

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[1] Translated from *Le Voile d'Isis*, June 1929.

[2] Caesar writes: *in finibus Carnutum*; the interpretation seems to be open to some doubt, since *fines* does not always mean "confines" but often refers to the country itself. Again it does not seem that anything has been found at Suèvres relating to the *Omphalos*, which in the *Mediolanon* or *Medionemeton* of Gaul, according to the custom of the Celts, should be indicated by a standing stone.

[3] "Le Coeur rayonnant du donjon de Chinon."

less ancient, formed of eight radials surrounded by a square (Fig. 2) which is to be found on the sacred stone of Kermaria, studied by M. J. Loth,[4] and to which allusion has already been made elsewhere.[5] M. Le Cour states that the

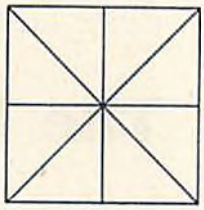


Fig. 2

symbol of the triple square is found also in Rome, in the cloister of San-Paolo, dating from the thirteenth century, and that it was known also in antiquity by others than the Celts, since he himself had found it several times at the Acropolis at Athens, on the paving of the Parthenon and of the Erechtheum.

The interpretation of the symbol under discussion, as making up a triple enclosure, seems to us correct. In this context M. Le Cour established a connection with what Plato said, when he spoke of the metropolis of Atlantis, describing the palace of Poseidon as built at the centre of three concentric rings linked by canals, thus making a figure analogous to the one in question, but circular instead of square.

Now, what can be the significance of these three circles? It appears at once to be concerned with the three degrees of initiation, so that its entirety would, as it were, be the image of the druidical hierarchy; and the fact that the same figure is found elsewhere than among the Celts indicates that there were, in other traditional forms, hierarchies built on the same model, which is perfectly normal. Moreover, division of initiation into three grades is the most frequent and, we might say, fundamental arrangement; in fact, by comparison, all others merely represent subdivisions or more or less complicated developments. What gave us this idea was that we formerly knew of documents which, in certain masonic systems of the high grades, clearly described these grades as successive circles drawn

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[4] "L"Omphalos' chez les Celtes," in the *Revue des Études anciennes*, July–September 1915.

[5] *Le Roi du Monde*, ch. XI "L"Omphalos,' symbole du Centre," in *Regnabit*, June 1926. (The article quoted here was again taken up by the author in *Le Roi du Monde* in the chapter referred to, but without certain details concerning the stone in question and this is the reason for recalling it again here. Here is the passage which should be remembered:

"A remarkable example of the representation of the *Omphalos* is the sacred stone of Kermaria, near Pont-l'Abbé (Finistère), the general shape of which is a regular cone, rounded at the top. On the lower part is a sinuous line, which could not but be a stylised form of the serpent (. . .); the summit is surrounded by a Greek key-pattern. On one of the faces is a swastika; and the presence of this sign, of which, incidentally, the Greek key-pattern is a derivation, should suffice to confirm, in as clear a manner as possible, the significance of this strange monument. On another face is yet another symbol, no less interesting; it is a figure of eight radials surrounded by a square instead of a circle like the wheel; this figure is thus comparable with the British flag, which must similarly be of Celtic origin. What is most strange is that this sign of the sacred stone of Kermaria is to be found exactly reproduced in several examples in the graffiti of the keep of Chinon (. . .) and, in the same graffiti, the eight radial figure is to be seen again on the oval shield held by a kneeling person. (Note: This shield clearly recalls the wheel with eight radii, just as that of the allegorical figure of Albion, which has the same form, recalls the wheel of six spokes, as we have already pointed out.) This sign must have played quite an important part in the symbolism of the Templars. (Note: Moreover, the same figure has been preserved even up to modern Masonry, but there it is only regarded as the 'key to numbers,' and it is shown that it is possible, in fact, to break it down in such a way as to obtain all the Arabic numerals in a more or less schematised form.) For, 'it is also found in the ancient Commanderies of the Temple; it is equally to be seen on the heraldic insignia on a large escutcheon at the head of a funerary statue of a thirteenth century Templar from the Commandery of Roche-en-Cloué (Vienne) and on a carved stone in the Commandery of Mauleon, near Châtillon-sur-Sèvre (Deux-Sèvres),' (Charbonneau-Lassay, 'Le Coeur rayonnant du donjon de Chinon,' p. 16.) This last diagram is, properly speaking, of a wheel; and here is but another example amongst many others, of the continuity of the Celtic traditions throughout the entire Middle Ages. We have omitted to say earlier in relation to this symbol that one of the chief meanings of the number 8 is 'justice' or 'balance,' which ideas, as we have shown, relate directly to that of the Centre (it is also known what importance the Pythagoreans attached to the *Ogdoad*).")

round a central point;[6] certainly these documents are far less ancient than the monuments referred to, but one can nevertheless find in them an echo of much more ancient traditions, and, at all events, they furnish us, in the circumstances, with a point of departure for interesting comparisons.

It should be noted that the interpretation which we put forward is thus in no way incompatible with certain others, such as that envisaged by M. Le Cour, referring the three enclosures to the three circles of existence established in Celtic tradition; these three circles, which are found in another form in Christianity, are, moreover, the same thing as the "three worlds" of Hindu tradition. In this tradition, moreover, the celestial circles are sometimes depicted as so many concentric enclosures surrounding the *Meru*, that is to say, the sacred Mountain symbolizing the "Pole" or the "Axis of the World," and here again is a most remarkable concordance. Far from being mutually exclusive, the two interpretations harmonise perfectly, and it can even be said that, in a certain sense, they coincide, for, if it is a matter of genuine initiation, its degrees correspond to so many states of being, and these are the states which, in all traditions, are depicted as so many different worlds, for it must be clearly understood that the "locality" has only a purely symbolical character. We have already explained, in connection with Dante, that the heavens are actually "spiritual hierarchies," that is to say, degrees of initiation;[7] and it goes without saying that, at the same time, they are related to the degrees of universal existence, for, as we have said,[8] by virtue of the constitutive analogy of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm, the initiatic process exactly reproduces the cosmological process. We add that, in a general way, the characteristic of every truly initiatic interpretation is never to be exclusive, but, on the contrary, to include synthetically in itself all other possible interpretations; moreover, this is why symbolism, with its manifold and superimposed meanings, is the normal means of expression of all true initiatic teaching.

From this explanation, the meaning of the four lines arranged in the form of a cross and connecting the three enclosures, becomes perfectly clear: they are channels by which the teaching of the traditional doctrine is communicated from on high downwards, starting from the supreme level which is its depository, and is distributed hierarchically to other levels. The central part of the figure thus corresponds to the "fountain of learning" spoken of by Dante and the "Fidele d'Amore,"[9] and the cruciform arrangement of the four channels rising from it shows these to be identical with the four rivers of *Pardes*.

In this connection it should be noted that there is an important shade of difference between the circular and square forms of the figure of the three enclosures: they are connected, respectively, with the symbolisms of the earthly Paradise and of the heavenly Jerusalem, in accordance with what we have explained in *Le Roi du Monde* (ch. XI) and in *L'Esoterisme de Dante* (ch. VIII). Indeed, there is always an analogy and correspondence between the beginning and end of any cycle, but at the end the circle is replaced by the square, and this indicates the realization of that which the Hermeticists symbolically designated as "squaring the circle":[10] the sphere, which represents the development of possibilities through the expansion of the primordial and central point, changes into a cube when this development is accomplished and final equilibrium is achieved for the cycle under consideration.[11]

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[6] M. Le Cour observes that the central point is conspicuous on most of the figures he has seen at the Acropolis at Athens.

[7] *L'Esoterisme de Dante*, ch. II.

[8] *L'Esoterisme de Dante*, ch. VI.

[9] *Le Voile d'Isis*, February 1929.

[10] This squaring cannot be brought about in the "growth" or even in the movement of the cycle, since it expresses the fixation resulting from "transition to the limit"; and, all cyclic movement being properly indefinite, the limit cannot be reached by traversing successively and analytically all the points corresponding to each moment of the development of the manifestation.

[11] Here it would be easy to make a comparison with the masonic symbol of the "cubic stone," which equally corresponds to the idea of achievement and perfection,

In order more especially to apply these considerations to the question occupying us at the moment, we must point out that the circular form represents the point of departure of a tradition, which is certainly the case where Atlantis is concerned,[12] and the square form its terminal point, corresponding to the constitution of a secondary traditional form. In the first case, the centre of the figure will thus be the source of the doctrine, while in the second it will be more correctly the reservoir, spiritual authority having here, above all, a function of conservation; but, naturally, the symbolism of the "fountain of learning" applies to both cases.[13]

From the viewpoint of numerical symbolism, it should also be pointed out that the combination of the three squares forms the duodenary. Arranged differently (Fig. 3), these three squares, to which four lines in the form of a cross are again added, constitute the figure in accordance with which the ancient astrologers inscribed the Zodiac;[14] moreover, this figure was regarded as that of the heavenly Jerusalem, with its twelve gates, three on each side, and here there is an obvious connection with the meaning just indicated of the square. Undoubtedly there are many other comparisons possible, but we think that these few notes, even if incomplete, help to throw some light on the mysterious subject of the triple Druidic enclosure.[15]

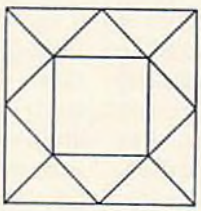


Fig. 3

that is to say, to the realization of the plenitude of the possibilities implied by a certain state.

[12] Moreover, it should be stressed that the Atlantean tradition is not, however, the primordial tradition for the present *Manvantara*, and that it is itself only secondary in respect of the Hyperborean tradition; it can only be taken relatively as a point of departure, in that which concerns a particular period which is merely one of the subdivisions of the *Manvantara*.

[13] The other figure reproduced above (Fig. 2) often appears in circular form: it is, thus, one of the most usual variations of the wheel, and this eight-spoked wheel is in some respects equivalent to the eight-petalled lotus, especially in oriental traditions, just as the six-spoked wheel is equivalent to the six-petalled lily (see our articles on "Le Chrisme et le Coeur dans les anciennes marques corporatives" and on "L'idée du Centre dans les traditions antiques" in *Regnabit*, November 1929, and May 1926).

[14] The four cruciform lines are then placed diagonally in relation to the two outermost squares, and the space between them is divided into twelve equal right angled triangles.

[15] (Complementary to this article we add here the following review by René Guénon in *Le Voile d'Isis*, July 1929:

"In *Atlantis* (April 21) M. Paul Le Cour pursued his researches on the symbol of the three kreunets; he reproduced a strange document, unfortunately without indication of origin, from the work of Canon Edme Thomas, on the Cathedral of Autun, and which is claimed as representing the Gallic city of the Aedui. In the same article some of M. Charbonneau-Lassay's reflections are quoted, which say that he would not be surprised if the Christians had made of this symbol a picture of the heavenly Jerusalem. In the article which we here devoted to this question last month, we ourselves precisely pointed out some connections of the same import, and recalled that another arrangement of the three squares constituted one of the most usual representations of the heavenly Jerusalem. We are glad to draw attention to this concordance, which causes no surprise, since it has often happened previously that we and M. Charbonneau-Lassay have come to the same conclusions, independently and by different routes, on many points concerning symbolism.")

TELEPATHY

WILLIAM STEWART

Is telepathy a fact? The answer is so obviously "Yes" that one might well wonder why psychical researchers are still so busy turning up cards and counting pips on them and are, apparently, still unable to declare quite positively that the successes achieved are greater than would be expected from "pure chance."

This is a good example of the generally unsatisfactory state of affairs in the whole field of parapsychology.

Two questions may be asked:

(i) In the first place, what is wrong with the *methods* being used in the investigations, and what changes could profitably be made in this direction?

(ii) Secondly, what are the actual aims of parapsychological research and are they really desirable?

With regard to the methods being used, it is evident that the investigations have developed largely along lines similar to those used in *experimental* psychology; they are summed up in the ideas: repeatable experiments and statistical evaluations.

Now, although the mind is the instrument of human experience and awareness (and without it there would be *no* counting of the pips!), yet these statistical methods are implacably opposed to any of the *direct* evidence which our minds may bring us; any such evidence is not merely ignored but it is actively avoided as it cannot be assimilated by these "scientific " methods.

All these attempts to investigate mental phenomena by the outward observation of certain concomitant physical events have one central defect: the human understanding cannot participate directly in the knowledge obtained. Hence, these methods may eventually show that thought transference has taken place and, therefore, that telepathy is a fact, but this will tell the investigators nothing about telepathy as a humanly experienced fact.

This is analogous to the physicist's knowledge of the atom; concerning this Sir Arthur Eddington has said: ". . . now we realize that science has nothing to say as to the intrinsic nature of the atom. The physical atom is, like everything else in physics, a schedule of pointer readings . . . attached to some unknown background." (From *Nature of the Physical World*, by Eddington).

Parapsychology needs to remove the fetters clamped upon its understanding by these constrictive methods.

Even Freud, materialist though he was, had satisfied himself as to the fact of telepathy; he devotes a chapter to it in *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis.*

We live in a mental world of sensations, thoughts, feelings and desires, and, if we were but aware of it, we should observe telepathy taking place around us all the time. Any individual with only average powers of observation can soon become convinced of the existence of these telepathic links.

With many people their first experience of this type, and sometimes their only experience, occurs whem some close relative is passing through a crisis; this is particularly likely to happen if the crisis is during the night, in which case the other person may have some vivid dream, conveying the information and probably waking him up! These things occur quite naturally and are far more frequent than most of us are able to observe. It was common knowledge to those who had extensive contacts with the native peoples of Africa during the nineteenth century (or before the major impact upon that continent of the modern civilized life) that these peoples had extraordinary telepathic powers. Many and strange, to civilized minds, are the stories and experiences which these travellers could relate; to give just one example, Edgar Wallace acknowledges this widespread faculty among the natives in his African stories (*Sanders of the River*, etc.).

The transference of specific thoughts is generally less easy to observe than the transference of feeling. The latter is so common and is so much an integral part of our lives, it is so close to us, that it usually passes unnoticed. The transference of fear is perhaps the most readily seen; animals are very sensitive to fear and they "pick it up" even when it does not show on a person's face or in their actions. Materialists may point out that recent discoveries have shown that fear is accompanied by the emanation of very fine material particles (like a scent) so that the transference may be a material phenomenon; but this is merely another example of the intricate interconnections between mind and matter, of which our brains are the leading examples.

No amount of argument and discussion can convince anyone of the reality of telepathy but, for those who honestly wish to know, the practice of a little simple observation can very soon provide the answer. In this connection, one is reminded of the professional burglar who was once interviewed by a leading journal; he stressed the fact that when going out "on a job" he had to keep his head full of *pleasant* thoughts, otherwise, he found that all the dogs of the neighbourhood would bark at him!

Here is a simple experiment which anyone can carry out who is working in an office or laboratory with a number of other people. Pick on a well-known tune which *used* to be popular but which is not very often heard now-a-days; hum this mentally, without in any way making a sound or using the lips; it can be guaranteed that within a very few moments some other person in the room will start to whistle or hum the same tune. If asked why they picked on that *old* tune, they will probably answer: "Oh, I don't know . . . it just came into my head!"

We cannot live in isolation. In the most subtle ways we are in relationship with the whole universe around us; this is neither a theory nor a doctrine, it is a plain fact. Wherever we go we spread an influence around us and react with our surroundings; we all know what a difference it makes when we feel cheerful within ourselves, other people respond to that cheerfulness or we ourselves may be similarly influenced by the feelings of another person. This interplay is by no means dependent entirely on hearing and seeing each other, the "telepathic" links are at work all the time.

The presence of the telepathic links is particularly evident when a medium goes into trance; those who have sat with one will have noticed how the medium can probe the mind, one can almost *feel* the thoughts being "lifted out" of one's mind. It is small wonder in these circumstances that our innermost desires are often given as messages "from the other side," telling us that these are just the things which "they" would like us to do!

Telepathy has merely been chosen as an example to illustrate the point that the know-

ledge obtained *directly* with our own minds is no less important than the knowledge obtained by means of experiments of the statistical type. There is no reason why both methods should not continue to be used but, at the present time, those working in the field of parapsychology would do well to consider ways and means by which the human mind can be brought back to enter more directly into their experimenting. If this is not done, then the results of the research will become ever more widely divorced from intelligence and there is a danger of more and more massive accumulations of data being accompanied by less and less comprehension of what they really mean; a situation which will undoubtedly give rise to a proliferation of futile hypotheses.

This brings us to the second question, concerning the aims of parapsychological research and their desirability or otherwise.

Parapsychology

Parapsychology is a relatively new invention of the human mind. It is partly an outgrowth of nineteenth century scientific materialism and partly a reaction to that materialism, coupled with a fascination for the unusual and mysterious.

Some people look upon psychical research as a means of proving "scientifically" that there is truth in religion; they hope that through the discoveries and conclusions of this type of research they may recover their own faith or else, perhaps, bring about a revival of faith and lessening of the materialistic outlook in the world around them.

Others are interested in a more or less utilitarian way (the burglar is an extreme case of this!); they wish to make some practical use of the psychic and mental powers investigated. The aims here may at times be very far from desirable, but among the less undesirable are those which aim at discovering new methods of healing and, perhaps, of curing human mental ills.

Then there is the purely scientific outlook of those who wish merely to pursue knowledge in this direction as being a legitimate field of science; as modern western science is so closely allied to practical applications this particular outlook is not in fact so far removed from that of the pragmatists.

Is there any other point of view?

Unusual psychic powers are not something new, they have been known, used and understood for many thousands of years and in all races of humanity. It is well known that when certain forms of meditation or of yoga, or other spiritual or mental disciplines, are fruitfully performed then, at certain stages, these special psychic powers may develop.

In the traditional Hindu doctrine they are called *siddhis*. There are said to be eight forms of *siddhi* (which include powers of levitation, etc.); also in Buddhist teachings there are similar references to "magical powers."

Generally speaking the spiritual teachers in all traditions (Moslem, Christian, Hindu and others) have always discouraged the pursuit of these powers and have taught that they are a hindrance on the spiritual pathway. Sri Ramakrishna said to his disciples: "The realization of God is not the same as the acquirement of the *siddhis* or psychic powers. Krishna once said to Arjuna: 'When you see one who exercises any of the yoga powers, you may know that such a one has not realized God, because the exercise of these powers requires *Ahamkara* or egotism, which is an obstacle in the path of realization.' The genuine devotee must not, therefore, desire any of these powers. There is indeed great danger in possessing the *siddhis*." (From: *The Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*).

Is parapsychology, therefore, a good thing?

From the point of view of a spiritual aspirant, or anyone with serious spiritual intentions, it would be certainly a diversion from the pathway to become involved in this type of investigation; but, for other people, with less exalted aims, an active interest in these phenomena may be excusable in certain circumstances.

Even in traditional societies there were forms of science used to meet various practical needs; astrology, divination and healing the sick were

among such practices, but these sciences were practised under the guidance of the spiritual authority and could truly be called sacred sciences.

The fundamental trouble not only with parapsychology but with the whole field of modern psychology is that it is practised as a profane science; that is to say, it is divorced from the spiritual or metaphysical principles which could give it its *true* theoretical foundations.

Man is not a machine and the subtle truths concerning his constitution cannot be determined and understood by the crude methods of modern experimental research. Parapsychology needs first of all to learn something of the real nature of man from metaphysics and then, if possible, to shape its aims and methods to accord with spiritual principles.

SPIRIT versus LETTER (Buddhist Style)

Once upon a time in Lhasa there lived an old man, humble and deeply pious, whose one daily pleasure it was to betake himself to a certain spot below Potala Hill where stands the Dalai Lama's palace in order to invoke there with a formula received from his Master; it was the only instruction the latter had given the old man, who asked for nothing better. The Dalai Lama, looking from his window, had often noticed this man, sitting so quietly with only his lips moving; and another thing he had noticed was the frequent appearance, above the old man's head, of various sacred shapes such as Umbrellas, Banners of Victory, Wheels of the Doctrine with eight spokes and flowers of variegated hue. Much intrigued, he one day sent for the old man and asked him: "What are you doing sitting there every day below my window? I see you are repeating some words and would gladly know what they are." The old man answered: "It is a formula given me by my Master which he told me to repeat as often as possible. To any other person it would be unlawful to tell, but your Holiness has the right to know," whereupon he repeated the words. "That is very good," said the Prelate-King "for I have seen auspicious signs; but I must tell you one thing, since I happen to know the Sanskrit language, you are pronouncing the mantra *incorrectly and that is wrong, for it is a cardinal rule of* mantra *that the sound be not distorted. Let me then show you how it is to be pronounced." The old man answered: "I know nothing about signs; but please help me to get it right," after which he proceeded to repeat the words several times under the Lama's guidance until he had got them correctly and then he took his leave. Next day he was back at his post below the hill invoking as he had been shown. The Dalai Lama looked out and again on subsequent days; but where were the umbrellas and the flowers? None were to be seen; they never appeared any more.*

From "France-Asie"

The Rev. "Dick" Sheppard: Christianity in Action

Bernard Bromage

It was a winter afternoon in 1940. An air raid was in progress. With that instinctive misguided notion that a roof over one's head was the best protection against bombs, I had taken shelter under the portico of the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, as had a number of other people of all types and callings.

Partly to ease the tension of the nerves, partly because he looked "simpatico" I entered into conversation with an elderly gentleman. Very soon I was fascinated. We talked on many subjects; on the war; on personalities of the day, on art (he had been a painter in his youth); on modern "progress"; and, last, but not least, about the place where we were standing. I noticed that, on the lips of the elderly gentleman everything turned to charity. He was automatically inclined to see the best in things and people: touched by the grace of tolerance and loving-kindness.

I asked him if he knew the church. He told me he was a regular member of its congregation and that he sheltered in its crypt most nights. One could get some sleep there, he said: one felt singularly safe from bombs! I enquired the reason for this desirable sensation of security. He smiled as he replied: "It was Dick Sheppard's Church"; and I remembered the Peace Pledge Union and how one man had inaugurated a Movement which, although a seeming failure, has surely been one of the noblest failures of our contemporary social life, and will surely be one day, in the whirligig of one of time's happier revenues, an abounding and apocalyptic success.

One night a bomb demolished the wall of the crypt; but no one was hurt.

If ever any man deserved the title of "occultist," in the widest sense, it was the Church of England parson who gave his life to implementing the teachings of a great religious system into constructive, irrefutable action: and who fought like a good solider against the timidity and compromise and baseness of so much of the world around him, in order to reveal that the essential dynanism of the Christian "message" is contained not in any bellicosity but in the remark about the "meek" inheriting the earth.

For is not "occultism," *tout court*, the interpenetration of ordinary life with subtle currents, "influences," "streams of tendency" which, for good or ill, leaven the lump and charge and change phenomena with new intimations, inklings, impulses and orientations? And, this being the case, surely the most potent of all the forces wielded by the occulist is that which works with understanding and sympathy and love? Has this not been proved time and time again through the tortured records of histo: y? Was it not proved, and that abundantly, by the tireless indefatigable clergyman against whom his worst enemies have never been able to hurl any effective stone, and who awakened the guilty conscience of our age to an

eminently desirable awareness of manifold hypocrisy and imperfection?

Hugh Richard Lawrie Sheppard was born at Windsor in 1880, the son of a minor canon whose duty it was to sing, not to perform the duties of a priest. (The distinction is important. It implies that the boy was never fated to see conventional Anglicanism in practice in his youth!)

His parents, at considerable sacrifice to themselves, gave him the type of "good education" till recently deemed essential for any adequate "start" in life. From preparatory school at Margate to Marlborough was a normal enough progress for a boy of his class; but a public school education, as happens so often with boys of genius, was anything but an unmixed blessing. In fact it was the seed time of that sense of pain and frustration out of which was to come his determination to transcend suffering in a total absorption in the woes of others.

There was a master who knew how to make his life an inferno. There were tracts of the" hell-fire" variety which fell into his hands, and which set up a neurosis of fear and horror. He induced pneumonia by lying in bedclothes soaked with water and so succeeded in shaking the dust of the place off his feet.

Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he arrived in 1901, was a much more agreeable experience. He played cricket, boxed, earned a deserved reputation as a practical joker of brilliant inventiveness.

One of these jokes is worth recording. There had been rumours in the Press of the evil lengths to which "ragging" was taken in the Universities. Dick, writing as a particularly harassed victim of such vandalism, communicated with a well-known daily. A reporter came down and was directed to Dick's room. Here he found a frightened youth with a disarming manner and large ingenuous eyes, who informed him that life was made a nightmare by bullies. Hardly had he finished his tale of woe when a gang of "toughs" burst in; and, before the eyes of the terrified journalist, threw the furniture about, played football with the books and made outrageous and jeering remarks about the family photographs. Shortly afterwards, an article appeared in the national Press demanding public action in the matter of persecuted undergraduates!

The outbreak of the Boer War saw Dick enrolled in the militia—not once in all his pacifist campaigns did he belittle the soldier—and, but for an accident to his leg when driving to Waterloo Station in a hansom, he would have seen service in South Africa.

The problem of the future occupied the minds of his parents. He was resolute in his determination not to be a parson. What else was there? The bar, a solicitor's office, even politics? He shook his head at all of them. A vast apathy seized him. Perhaps he was of no earthly use to anyone or anything?

Then the Divinity which shapes our ends began to shape *his*. Under the influence of such Christian social-workers as Gore, Arnold Toynbee and Winnington-Ingram, students fresh from the Universities were encouraged to rid themselves of some of their surplus energy by giving up some of their time to work in the East End for the poor and the unguided. This Settlement work, if it did nothing else, at least "improved" the University men and taught them that there were other needs besides those of the dilettante and the plutocrat.

At the age of twenty-four Dick found himself a volunteer for work at Oxford House in Bethnal Green. To his own astonishment he found, almost immediately, that not only did he like the work; but, more important, the work liked *him*. He had a "way with him" which struck an unmistakable responsive chord in the members of boys clubs. He had something to *give*!

Applying a merely rational explanation to the phenomenon, Dick was using the treasures of experience to illuminate the mysteries of the human heart. He knew at least, what to *avoid*. "One thing had been burned into me—that the cruel punishment of sarcasm which was inflicted on me as a boy makes me avoid being sarcastic and try to go alongside the vast number of

people who suffer the torture of sensitiveness" . . . "To me, the day on which a schoolmaster knocked me out, even though he didn't intend to hurt, and that on which an East End boy pulled me back from the Slough of Despond by telling me that his Mum and Dad had need of me, made more difference to my life than anything that has happened to me."

With the apperception of his success with humans, it was inevitable that he should seek to attach himself more closely to the source of those humans—their Creator. Dick Sheppard was eventually ordained after working for a time as lay secretary to Cosmo Gordon Lang, then Bishop of Stepney and later Archbishop of Canterbury, for whom he cherished a lifelong affection. As he listened to the sermon of the ordaining Bishop, knelt and answered the requisite questions, he grippped in his hand a sheet of notepaper on which was written two lines from a hymn:

> "Oh Lord, I give myself to Thee,
> Thine ever, only thine to be" . . .

Never was a dedication more consistently adhered to: never was a burden assumed with greater joy!

He returned to Oxford House as Chaplain. But the lodging he chose for himself was a mean room near a public-house in a district marked on Booth's map as "perpetual crime and destitution." Much of his energy was expended in endeavouring to cure the excessive drinking-habits of many of the natives. Naturally there were those whom he alienated. Sometimes friends of the publicans set about him. "If there were only two or three of them I used to take them on" . . . On one occasion he was knocked unconscious, kicked as he lay on the ground and hit on the head.

He never spared himself. The realization that another was in trouble was sufficient for him to exert every ounce of energy on his behalf, even if he himself was half-dropping with fatigue and overwork.

In 1910 he began work in Mayfair, after dallying with the idea of a mining parish. He appointed himself Chaplain of the Cavendish Club in Bourdon Street, whose object was to enlist young men of wealth and leisure for work among the poor and dispossessed.

On the 15th November, 1914, he was inducted into the living of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. (He had spent a short period in France helping to relieve the war-wounded, but had been ordered home. "He identified himself with every dying man," said a hospital doctor, "and in consequence nearly killed himself.")

The church was new to Dick, and he had contemplated its respectable Victorianism with some apprehension. "I confess I did not find the atmosphere stimulating. It struck me as cold and rather depressing, and rightly or wrongly, it seemed to say to me 'Reverend young man, I am decidedly low, even a little flat.' I loathe and detest ecclesiastical labels of any kind, but must own that I would rather smell incense than varnish in the house of God."

But he was no innovator. He had no desire to make a cheap reputation by any tawdriness of "modernism" or any startlingly exhibitionistic personal gestures. He did, however, desire to make "all things new" in the sense implied by Christ when he said these words: he desired that he might be granted the grace to "live love" and so make the place a beacon for the weary and heavy-laden.

In his induction sermon he told the congregation of his vision and his ambition." . . . Hundreds and hundreds of all sorts of people going up to the Temple of the Lord with all their difficulties, trials and sorrows. . . . Will you give a hand, in trying, even if we fail, to build up this thing in the greatest city in the world? To have absolute reverence within this church, and absolute love; and to go out from this church to take the story of Our Lord into the streets outside?"

Dick was thirty-four. For twelve years he stayed here and (as far as any dream can be realized amid the marts of men) he saw his dream come true. St. Martin's became the church of every type, every class of society: of the fighting-

men and the down-and-outs; of the optimists and the disheartened; of the modern sceptic and the devout believer; of the young and of the old. It became indubitably a centre of light.

And that of the most practical kind! No mere repetition of pious beliefs and high-sounding counsel, but the consistent application of active Christian principles to what Dick regarded as the structure of a Christian society.

He married in 1915. No doubt a woman's support helped him to formulate his aims and to expand his horizon. And of course it freed him from much of the vampirish hero-worship which it is the lot of the celibate to invite! The inauguration of a lunch-club for girls and women may have been one of the results of formative feminine influence.

Above all, the charity of the church was extended to those who needed it most. It is an impertinence to talk to men of their "souls" before their bodies are adequately nourished; and the provision in the crypt for the rest and refreshment of the socially submerged was one of the most excellent of Dick's "innovations."

There were the inevitable "snags." Gratitude, so often the expectation of favours to be received, was not always forthcoming. There was, for instance, the vagrant who, after washing his linen down below insisted on hanging it to dry over the pews in the church above, and who had to be informed that "this is a church, not a wash-house!" There were the people who used the services for an occasion to slumber—particularly troops home on leave. Dick was very tender with these latter, and allowed them to sleep on, with the result that a daily paper came out with the headlines "Broadminded Vicar advocates sleeping during church-services!"

That Dick Sheppard *did* succeed in re-orientating a very large number of people from listlessness, despair and downright wickedness to a renewed belief in life is attested by abundant witness. The following tribute may be quoted as significant: "Rev. Sir, To me you have done more than your share of goodness by keeping the church open at night. Last night I followed the Devil (garbed as a woman) to a house in Victoria. I praise God that He claimed me at 3 a.m., and I left that woman and the house at His call. From Victoria I walked and finally found your church wherein I thanked God and gave myself wholly to His service in the future. I slept in your church with the knowledge of absolute peace. May God reward you for what you have done. . . ."

Incessant labour and the strain of bearing everyone's burden were taking their toll of a constitution more nervously dynamic than constitutionally robust. Dick Sheppard had to resign the living at St. Martin-in-the-Fields in 1926. But it was impossible to remain idle. He was offered the Deanship at Canterbury, and accepted. The condition of his health deteriorated: this post, too, he had to leave to another.

In 1934 they made him a canon of St. Paul's. Here, as always, he was the "live wire." He wanted to keep the place open till seven p.m.; to illuminate its cross after dark; to set apart a corner for seeing people and hearing confessions —wanted to make "the poor old mausoleum" no show-place, but the mecca of those in need.

One does not know how far he succeeded. Another, more stupendous cause was absorbing his interest.

The international scene was grim with possibilities. Mussolini was shouting to an exuberant Fascist Italy about the "beauty" of war. Hitler, his German disciple, was excelling his master in his shrieks and yells. Other principalities and powers, less honest but more cunnning—armament manufacturers, big business, sly ecclesiastical politicians, were engaging on a bewildered humanity to sacrifice their lives in millions for their rapacious and insatiable financial overlords.

Dick, his spiritual perceptions sharpened by his own ailments, nervous exhaustion, pleurisy, a persistent and excruciating asthma, saw the picture only too clearly. Saw too the parlous condition of the communion to which he belonged, which had haggled so contumaciously about the "revised" prayer-book and left undone so many regenerating duties they ought to have

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done. "What's the good of Anglicanism to the Bashi-Bazook? The parochialism of the Church Assembly is becoming almost unbearable! It bids fair to destroy the vitality that remains in established religion."

He had to make a decision: one which will rebound to his credit when all the voices have faded, and which sent him to his grave a happy man. "There may be dishonour in the worst peace: there must be dishonour in the best possible of wars!" Dick Sheppard had become Dick Sheppard. In subscribing to the unescapable logical implications of what he understood as the teaching of Christ, he had found himself at his best and fullest.

Hatred and all uncharity were being mobilized for war. Could not peace be mobilized for a happier issue in human affairs? One could but try! One *had* to try. The famous letter to the Press asking men who agreed with him to send him a postcard with the simple statement " I renounce war, and never again, directly or indirectly, will I support or sanction another," was the earnest of his good intent, the public announcement of his own complete spiritual liberation.

The bigness of the idea carried him forward on a tremendous new wave of energy. Innumerable letters were written: important converts made. He lectured up and down the country. There was a mammoth Peace Pledge meeting in Hyde Park. On a wet and foggy February day he carried a sandwich-board along the Strand, advertising the most potent therapeutic in the world—peace.

As his movement prospered, all kinds of chimerean fancies possessed him. He would approach European leaders and convince them of the error of their ways. Perhaps the whole Church of England might be made to see the light? (Had not the adamant Church of Rome inaugurated its own "Peace Party" under the sponsorship of the distinguished sculptor Eric Gill—and, allegedly, with the spiritual and logical protection and direction of that mighty theological intellect, St. Thomas Aquinas?) Their Graces of Canterbury and York were approached; but naturally "could not see their way at present. . . ." One wonders whether they will ever see it!

Not that it mattered greatly. It is the motive, the aspiration, the statement of fundamentals which count in these things, not the immediate victory: "Say not the struggle naught availeth!" —the reward of the struggle lies in the will of God and in the gratitude of generations yet unborn!

Dick Sheppard died in 1937, a comparatively young man crucified by an ideal. The subsequent incumbents of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, have carried on the torch, which, however much it may flicker in the changing wind of popular apprehension and bewilderment, is nevertheless a torch—one of the very few worth lighting.

On Easter Monday some years ago, I went into Dick's old church for a few moments' reflection. The assistant-verger Mr. Julian was kind enough to inform me of changes made since Dick's day. The "Welfare Scheme" had grown enormously. There were three "whole-time officers" to see to the needs of the derelict and the dispossessed. Every month members of an Anglican "Peace" Union hold a service in commemoration of Dick. Peace is in the atmosphere. One left in peace!

Continued from page 31

production. Man lives by truth; to admit any truth whatsoever, however relative this may be, is to admit that *intellectus adequatio rei*; to say "this is that," is to affirm at the same time the very principle of adequation, therefore the presence of the absolute in the relative.

Jung breached certain strictly materialistic frameworks of modern science; but this fact is of no use to anyone, to say the least—one would have liked to rejoice over it—because the influences that infiltrate through this breach come from the inferior psychism and not from the Spirit, which alone is true and alone is able to save us.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Sufis *by Idries Shah*

W. H. Allen, 45s.

The Arabic word Sufi has been consecrated by at least a thousand years of use in all Islamic countries as a name for the Moslem mystic, and from that use it has come to have this meaning the world over. If an author entitles a book *Sufism* for example, the reader has every right to expect a book on Islamic mysticism, in exactly the same way that he has a right to expect a book called *Qabbalah* to be about Jewish mysticism, and a book called *Zen* to be about Buddhism. Nor can anyone, flying in the face of tradition, reasonably claim that the meaning of the word Sufi has been changed by the recent formation of a group in the West which calls itself "the Sufi Movement" and which has nothing to do with Islam.

But it cannot be denied that the existence of such groups does confuse the issue; and now Idries Shah's book comes to confuse the issue still further. For him Sufism appears to mean an age-old esoteric or mystical wisdom which has been passed down from generation to generation and which has taken now this religion, now that, as its outward shell.

It is true that mysticism is universal and that the end aimed at by all mystics is the same. But this inward identity of the different mysticisms does not come from mutual influence or from something that has been handed down from the past; it comes from nothing less than the Oneness of the Absolute, Infinite and Eternal Truth. As regards "horizontal" transmission from the past, this necessarily takes place within each religion after the outset of that religion; but the outset itself is a "vertical" descent direct from the Divine Source.

For Christians the connecting link with the Supreme Truth is Christ himself: without him Christian mysticism could never have existed, and for its fundamentals its owes nothing to any other esoteric teaching. In the same way Islamic mysticism or Sufism is, *basically*, quite independent of any spirituality that existed before the time of Muhammad; nor could Zen and other Buddhist schools ever have come into existence without the Buddha.

It is only on the surface and in various subsidiary ways that different mysticisms have been known to influence each other; and since *The Sufis* is largely concerned with the influence of one mystical form upon others, the author is forced to concentrate on the outside. Consequently genuine lovers of mysticism (which is by definition the most "inward" thing in the world) will find this book extremely superficial. By the end one is still, in a sense, at the beginning; but the reader has a right to expect to be led from the outside to the inside, not to have exter-

nals drummed into him the whole time, even when these externals are often interesting in themselves. And even if we are prepared to accept nothing but externals, some of the author's conclusions are extremely exaggerated and misleading. Not untypical is the following understatement, made at the close of a chapter about the possible influence of Sufism on St. Francis of Assisi: "In addition to Sufi ideas, legends and practices, St. Francis retained many Christian aspects in the Order." !!! (The exclamation marks are not his; on the contrary, he goes on to suggest that the Friars Minor would have been better as a purely Sufic order, without the admixture of Christian elements!) In a later chapter we read of the Sufic origins of Zen Buddhism!

The author is described on the dust-jacket as "Grand Shaikh of the Sufis." Few people will realize how little this may mean. A less misleading description would have been "a Grand Shaikh of Sufis"; and there must be scores of men alive today who could reasonably claim this title. Moreover, many such functions have become purely hereditary. To hold one of them is by no means necessarily a guarantee of high qualification to speak about Sufism.

From the dust-jacket we learn also that *The Sufis* is "the first authoritative, responsible book on Sufism." The outrageousness of this claim speaks for itself. But scarcely less unjustified is the author's own more modest claim "My thesis is that the bases of a system which has proved so dynamic and yet so anonymous deserves to be studied," for it is precisely the "bases" that he is *not* studying. At the same time, for all its outwardness, the book could never serve as an introduction to the subject. Ghazali, Ibn Arabi, Rumi and other great Sufis are quoted from time to time. But as regards the beginning of the spiritual path, there can be no doubt that these great Saints of Islam, if confronted with a novice, would say as it were with one voice, quoting the Qoran: "Enter houses by their doors"; and the first door to be entered with a view to any mystic path is the particular religious form of which that mysticism is the heart, the exoterism of which it is the esoterism. But Idries Shah's book does far more to belie than to confirm this vitally important introductory truth.

Martin Lings

Myth and Religion of the North

By E. O. G. Turville-Petre

Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 50s.

The qualifications of Professor Turville-Petre to provide us with the first full account for English readers of the mythology and religious practices of the Scandinavian peoples are so well known that to enumerate them would seem faintly impertinent: the present volume is as clear and comprehensive a work as we should naturally expect. Drawing upon the original sources and upon the latest archaeological evidence, Professor Turville-Petre discusses the validity of those sources, the various theories relating to the myths themselves, and goes on to a detailed description of the principal Nordic divinities with their respective legends and cults. In conclusion he describes the concepts of Kingship, death and what in Christian terminology we know as the "Last Things" which were associated with this ancient wisdom and have passed into the stream of our religious inheritance. The value of such a survey to students of history and of religion is apparent. What needs to be stressed in this journal is the revelation here presented to the ordinary English reader of a world of symbolism virtually unknown to him and yet constituting a vital element in his country's tradition and so in his own spiritual and intellectual life. In the present age, when on the one hand traditions are everywhere crumbling and on the other it is only too easy for the individual to sample a remote tradition while disregarding that which is near to him as his own self, it is urgent that we should rediscover that which, being already our own, can be assimilated by us and so provide us with nourishment.

The images of Scandinavian mythology live in

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the common memory of the people of these islands, together with those of the Celtic faith. Professor Turville-Petre observes that we need not of necessity postulate a Christian influence upon the Nordic myths to explain those parallels between the two systems which he fascinatingly points out; rather it would seem that two streams, arising independently, mingle naturally together and so enrich one another. Thus we find Odin, Lord of death and of sacrifice, hanging for nine days and nights upon the World Tree, the sacrificial victim offered up by himself to himself, wounded by a spear, his thirst unslaked, crying out loud as he grasps the secret wisdom in the moment of death. There was a time, according to Professor Turville-Petre, when the scene upon Calvary and the scene described above were not unnaturally confused in the minds of simple folk: now perhaps is the time to relate them with understanding in full consciousness.

It remains only to mention the series of remarkably fine photographs which illustrate the subject-matter of this invaluable book.

Lois Lang-Sims

The Sacred Journey: The Pilgrimage to Mecca

By Ahmad Kamal

Allen and Unwin, 25s.

This book is a detailed description in Arabic, with an English translation, of the very complex Islamic rite of the pilgrimage to Mecca. Other more or less summary accounts of the Pilgrimage are no doubt to be found in English, but I know of no other account which gives, as this does, the full text of all the prayers that it is customary to make at the various points of the journey.

The last ten pages form a kind of appendix which is concerned with visits to Medina and Jerusalem, the second and third holiest cities of Islam. These lesser pilgrimages are not part of the great Pilgrimage, but they are strongly recommended, and Medina is in fact nearly always visited by pilgrims on the way to or from Mecca. Some of the prayers made on these lesser pilgrimages are not translated, but are given in Arabic only.

It is difficult to pass over in silence a gratuitous and doubly monstrous remark made by the author in the first chapter: "Today Islam is opening its eyes after a sleep which has lasted nearly a thousand years." Which is the worse? The belittlement of the spiritual giants that Islam has produced during the last millennium? Or failure to see that the so-called "Renaissance" that the Near East now boasts of is just as lethal to Islam as the European "Renaissance" was to Christianity?

But apart from this the book is sober and objective, and thoroughly deserves to be described as a document of lasting value. The attractive arrangement and printing are not unworthy of its contents.

Martin Lings

Energies

By J. G. Bennett

Coombe Springs Press, 15s.

Mr. Bennett recently published a highly coloured autobiography which led up to the prominent part he played in attracting press publicity and disciples for the Indonesian Pak Subuh. *Energies* is a reprint of lectures he gave in 1956 as "Director of the Institute for the Comparative Study of History, Philosophy and the Sciences" at Coombe Springs, together with questions and answers following the lectures. In non-technical language they reproduce the substance of a section of his book *The Dynamic Universe* which is an interpretation of one aspect of the teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff. Interested readers are invited to apply to the Institute if they want to learn more. But, in contrast to all this, the preface and postscript tell of the author's experience of "surrender to a Higher Power" thanks to Pak Subuh

THE WAY AND THE MOUNTAIN

by Marco Pallis

Marco Pallis is well known for his earlier book, *Peaks and Lamas*, which went into a number of editions and was translated into several languages. In that book, starting out from a story of travel and mountaineering, the author described his gradual discovery of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. After the war Marco Pallis returned to the East for three years, during which time he was allowed to enter Tibet to continue his studies under Lama teachers. *The Way and the Mountain* has taken shape in the light of these experiences; in this sense it can be regarded as a continuation of the preceding work, although the viewpoint is different. Of the various aspects of spiritual life with which it deals, some are presented in a specifically Tibetan framework, while others draw on a wider field for their illustration. None of the material derives from purely scholarly research, which is not the author's primary interest, but every chapter touches on a question that has affected, directly or indirectly, either the author himself or his acquaintances. The whole work has a practical bearing on spiritual problems of the present time in intention and fact.

The chapter on the Dalai Lama and his function is the first of its kind to appear in a European language, and is especially interesting in view of the recent events in Tibet. It is based on traditional data, and is designed to meet the need for exact information as well as to dispel some curious misapprehensions prevailing in the West.

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and go on to assure us that the Unitive Energy of the Love of God finds its fullest expression in the Faith, Doctrine and Sacraments of the Catholic Church. This suggests that interested readers wanting to learn more should apply to the Church rather than to Mr. Bennett's Institute. M. M.

Three Muslim Sages

Avicenna—Suhrawardī—Ibn 'Arabī

By Seyyed Hossein Nasr

Harvard: University Press: London: Oxford University Press, 32s. ($3.95)

The title of this book has been carefully chosen. The author might have named it "Three Muslim Geniuses," but this, though altogether justified, would have been too vague. He could not have named it "Three Muslim Mystics" or "Three Muslim Saints" because Avicenna can scarcely be called a mystic, let alone a saint. Nor could it have been entitled "Three Muslim Philosophers," because Ibn 'Arabī can only be called a philosopher in the literal sense of the word, that is, a "lover of wisdom." As the author very rightly points out, he is not a philosopher in the usual sense:

"The resemblance between metaphysical and gnostic doctrines of this order and philosophy are more apparent than real. Muhyi al-Dīn, unlike a philosopher, does not try to encompass all of "reality" in a system and to give a systematic exposition of its various domains. . . . He writes under immediate and direct inspiration so that his writings do not possess the coherence one expects of ordinary works. His aim is to give a real *theoria*, or vision of reality, the attainment of which depends upon the practice of the appropriate methods of realization. With Ibn 'Arabī as with other masters of traditional wisdom, doctrine and method are the two legs which must be co-ordinated in order to be able to climb the spiritual mountain."

Suhrawardī is the only one of the three who might be called both philosopher and mystic. But as regards this last word, it is none the less a little disconcerting to read his list of four categories into which he divides seekers after knowledge:

"1. Those who begin to feel the thirst for knowledge and thus embark upon the path of seeking after it.

2. Those who have attained formal knowledge and perfected discursive philosophy but are strangers to gnosis; among these Suhrawardī names al-Fārābī and Avicenna.

3. Those who have not considered discursive modes of knowledge at all but have purified their souls until, like Hallāj, Bistāmī and Tustarī they have attained intellectual intuition and inner illumination.

4. Those who have perfected discursive philosophy as well as attained illumination or gnosis. Among this group . . . he counts Pythagoras, Plato, and in the Islamic world, himself."

Although the words "having perfected discursive philosophy" mean no doubt far more than they might appear to mean it is not easy to understand how a true mystic could make anything of this kind a condition for being in a higher class than someone like Hallāj, for example. One feels that the author should have commented on this point. But to complain of this omission is not merely a criticism; in reading the book one learns to value the author's opinion in general, and one would like to have it as regards this particular.

One would also like, in connection with his very positive estimate of Avicenna, to have his explicit opinion (he gives it implicitly and in general) about Ghazālī's sweeping condemnation of the philosophers and about Averroes' retort. He mentions both these works in passing, but they are so well known and so intimately connected with the main theme of the book that a more detailed consideration is called for, if only in a note.

The book has in a sense two themes, one dynamic and one static: it serves to make a clear distinction between philosophy and mysticism

and as it were to guide the reader from the one to the other; and it also serves to introduce us to a perspective which combines the two—it is here that the word "sage" comes in—and which is somewhat alien to Islam as a whole, not because it can be called in any sense unorthodox, but because it has been developed outside the frontiers of the main body of Islamic orthodoxy.

"The theosophy of the school of Suhrawardi became gradually integrated with the philosophy of Avicenna on the one hand and the gnostic doctrines of Ibn 'Arabī on the other—all in the matrix of Shi'ism and in fact serving as an isthmus between philosophy and pure gnosis."

The genius of the three sages, each on a different plane, is quite overwhelming. First of all we are dazzled by the extraordinary gifts of Avicenna. In the next chapter the "climate" has changed somewhat. We are told of a dream in which Suhrawardī "saw the author of the *Theology of Aristotle*—whom he thought to be Aristotle, but who in reality is Plotinus—and asked him if the Peripatetics like al-Fārābī and Avicenna were the real philosophers in Islam. Aristotle [Plotinus] answered, "Not a degree in a thousand. Rather, the Sūfīs Bistāmī and Tustarī are the real philosophers."

In other words: "The real lovers of wisdom are not the philosophers but the mystics."

It is not, however, until the last chapter on Ibn 'Arabī that the author takes us to the plane of pure mysticism. In forty concentrated pages he gives us a masterly introduction to one of the greatest saints of Islam; and in passing he says many things that urgently needed to be said, and corrects many errors. Above all he does not allow us to forget, what almost all Western Orientalists have persistently forgotten about Ibn 'Arabī, that "like other great saints and sages, his greatest 'masterpiece' was his own life, a most unusual life in which prayer, invocation, contemplation, and visits to various Sūfī saints were combined with the theophanic vision of the spiritual world." Let us quote also the following passage:

"The importance of Ibn 'Arabī consists in his formulation of the doctrines of Sufism and in his making them explicit. His advent marks neither a "progress" in Sufism by its becoming more articulated and theoretical, nor a deterioration from a love of God to a form of pantheism, as has been so often asserted against Ibn 'Arabī. Actually, the explicit formulation of Sūfī doctrines by Muhyi al-Dīn signifies a need on the part of the milieu to which they were addressed for further explanation and greater clarification. Now, the need for explanation does not increase with one's knowledge; rather it becomes necessary to the extent that one is ignorant and has lost the immediate grasp of things through a dimming of the faculty of intuition and insight."

Both in this chapter and as a whole, Seyyed Hossein Nasr's book is what an introduction should be. Admittedly the subject is vast; but though the "room" is necessarily small, it is none the less full of open windows.

Martin Lings

The Future of Man

By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Collins, 30s.

Father Teilhard de Chardin was educated and later trained as a Roman Catholic priest through the very special disciplines of the Society of Jesus and was a man with very exceptional gifts. His views on *The Future of Man* have already been critically examined in this Journal by Titus Burckhardt with a clarity and force which could not be bettered. How strange that they should come from a Jesuit scholar-priest! He speaks of a process of inevitable evolution of and on the earth (or on any suitable planet) under the influence of solar radiation and natural selection which leads to man and to the development of a terrestrial "skin" of consciousness. Provided we are not overcome by a *taedium vitae* it will lead on, thanks to pressure of population, machinery, computers and automation, to mankind becoming a sort of collective superman of higher consciousness able to contact and merge

into an "Omega point," thus escaping the physical doom of our planet. In this setting the references to Christ as the apex, to the Incarnation as the grafting on of something new, to the Parousia and to the Last Judgment seem as if patched in by another pen for the main burden of the argument seems more consonant with the outlook of Sir Julian Huxley's Humanist Society rather than with that of the author's Church.

M. M.

The Strange Case of Edmund Gurney

By Trevor H. Hall

Duckworth, 25s.

There is something innately unhealthy in psychic phenomena, particularly when their significance is exalted out of all proportion to their relative unimportance. One has only to view the dubious history of spiritualism, or spiritism as it should more correctly be designated, with its frauds and delusions, its sentimentality and *naïveté*, to be apprised of this fact inasmuch as it relates to the attempt to regard such phenomena as being of religious significance.

Psychical researchers have generally been regarded as operating in a more detached and scientific manner, sincerely anxious to discover the truth. Unhappily it is rapidly becoming ever more apparent that some researchers have been little better than many spiritualists at distorting and manufacturing "evidence," and have not hesitated to lie and cheat in order to attain their own ends. It is as if some demoralizing influence attaches to the whole subject, which misleads and confuses erstwhile decent people, leading them into dishonesty and deceit. In spiritualists this is bad enough; in psychical researchers it is worse because they are, generally speaking, more intelligent than the former. Perhaps the wish, the desire to "prove" something at all costs, fathers the dishonest action or ill-reached conclusion.

In recent years no man has done more to throw light on to some of the "classic" cases of psychical research than the author of this new book, Trevor H. Hall. It is no exaggeration to say that the results of his investigations have been quite devastating. For his pains he has been attacked and abused by the pro-spiritualist faction, although all their accusations of "digging up dirt" (which should apparently be left safely under the carpet), denigrating the dead and those unable to reply to him, and so on, have not resulted in any of his conclusions being decisively disproved. As one of the investigators of Harry Price's "most haunted house in England" he took part in showing that many of the "facts" had either been manufactured or distorted out of all recognition, generally by Price, and that it is highly doubtful whether Borley Rectory was haunted at all!

From Borley, Hall turned his attention to a number of lesser cases, incidentally showing that Price's "Rosalie" was open to grave doubt, before dealing with Sir William Crookes and his paramour, the fraudulent medium Florence Cook, in his book *The Spiritualists*.

Now he turns his attention to some of the early experiments of the Society for Psychical Research and the mystery surrounding the death of one of its founders, Edmund Gurney. As a result of his researches and carefully marshalled facts, it becomes evident that both experiments and experimenters, like the "proof" adduced by spiritualists, just cannot stand any proper and searching examination. In fact it is apparent that the early volumes of the Society's *Proceedings* are completely worthless, inasmuch as they report the "thought-reading" of the Creery sisters, and the "thought-transference" of Smith and Blackburn, all of which the author shows to be plainly fraudulent from beginning to end.

Of those involved in these "investigations," F. W. H. Myers has been ably dealt with by

Archie Jarman, both in *Tomorrow* and in his publication *Dr Gauld and Mr Myers*. Frank Podmore, an active homosexual, was discovered dead in mysterious circumstances, in a lake near Malvern Wells, and to him Mr. Hall devotes an Appendix. It is, however, with the strange death of Edmund Gurney that the book is chiefly concerned. He was found dead in the locked bedroom of a Brighton hotel, in 1888, and at the subsequent inquest the jury returned a verdict of accidental death. This Trevor Hall questions, and offers an unexpected solution to the enigma of his death, whilst also examining the early efforts of the S.P.R. to "prove" telepathy. It would be a pity to reveal the many high-lights in this absorbing book and the reader is recommended to procure a copy for himself. It reads like a detective story as the author gathers his facts and presents a convincing picture of the dubious, shifty and at times tragic events surrounding the early years of the S.P.R. Not the least entertaining part of the book is a unique picture from the collection of Dr. Dingwall, showing the spirit "Geordie" photographed behind the cabinet with his trousers down, whilst preparing for a séance by the "medium" J. S. Smith, *circa* 1894.

Once again Trevor Hall has performed a notable service in the interests of truth. That the Society for Psychical Research and its early "investigators" emerge rather badly (the Society still has not repudiated its early volumes of *Proceedings*), is not the fault of the author. He has only been concerned to discover the facts, and to follow where they lead. No doubt he will be attacked by those who hate to see the falsifications on which their theories have long been based, swept away, and others will complain that those criticized are no longer alive to defend themselves, as if this provides any sane reason for not establishing the truth and revealing error wherever one is able to. That the whole final picture is a murky one may well be due to the very nature of the subject, as suggested at the beginning of this review.

F. F.

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