SPRING 1965 VOL. 13 No. 2

TOMORROW

A JOURNAL OF METAPHYSICS, COSMOLOGY AND TRADITIONAL STUDIES

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE GRAAL
René Guénon

THE DELIVERED ONE AND THE DIVINE IMAGE
Frithjof Schuon

THE SECRET OF SHAKESPEARE II
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and
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A JOURNAL OF METAPHYSICS, COSMOLOGY AND TRADITIONAL STUDIES

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RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD

by Lord Northbourne

'There is nothing . . . that has nothing to do with religion, because there is nothing that has nothing to do with God. . . .' writes Lord Northbourne in this book. He sees the contemporary drift from religion not as an isolated phenomena unrelated to other contemporary phenomena, but as a manifestation of a relatively recent change in the point of view from which man considers his own life and the universe in which he lives.

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EDITORIAL

If it can be said that man collectively shrinks back more and more from the Truth, it can also be said that on all sides the Truth is closing in more and more upon man.

Martin Lings.

Someone remarked to us recently that the conditions under which we are living, and to which *Tomorrow* has been drawing attention for some time past, have actually worsened during the last ten years. It is as if the baleful effects of the Reign of Quantity are more marked today than ever before, and that a certain acceleration in the anti-spiritual, ever more material tendencies of our times is taking place. It is characteristic of an "inverted' epoch that every fresh move 'downwards' ; each disappearance of those old customs and rites that once constituted a true civilization ; every breakdown, in fact, of anciently established standards of conduct or human behaviour, shall be hailed as 'progress' by those who imagine some virtue lies in change for change's sake, or a motiveless movement so long as movement is maintained. That there is a sustained movement away from the things of the spirit and towards materialism it would be difficult for even the most infatuated observer to deny, and the effect of this movement can even be seen on the churches and in other religious quarters.

No one acquainted with the *Vishnu Purana*, for instance, or the sacred writings dealing with the various cycles through which the world passes, need accept any of these statements on faith. They have only to be studied, and it will soon be observed that the conditions which it is said will prevail during what the Hindus call the *Kali Yuga*, and what René Guénon has designated as the Reign of Quantity, are today to be plainly seen in increasing strength in almost every direction around us. Guénon has dealt with this matter in considerable detail in his *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times*, and it is to this work, together with his *The Crisis of the Modern World*, that we would refer our readers, if they have any doubts as to the nature of the times through which we are currently passing.

That this downward movement towards pure materialism will continue for some time is inevitable, and it is also likely to bring forth and, indeed, has already done so, many false panaceas, pseudo religions, or 'systems of spiritual development,' the counterfeit nature of which can easily be judged by their complete inability to produce any genuine results.

Notwithstanding the somewhat gloomy picture outlined above, there are certain advantages for those who are intent on divorcing themselves from the modern mentality and its hedonistic values in order to lead lives of spiritual quality. The Prophet of Islam said : " Verily ye are in an age in which if ye neglect one tenth of what is ordered, ye will be doomed. After this a time will come when he who shall observe one tenth of what is now ordered will

be saved," while the *Vishnu Purana* says "in the Dark Age men can achieve the highest virtue by a very small effort." It might even be said, in this sense, that these times are particularly propitious for leading a spiritual life and thus indirectly gaining an understanding of the present state of the world by the sole valid method of reforming and understanding oneself.

This is not to say that it is a simple matter to lead a qualitative life under modern Western conditions ; in fact success may well largely depend on the extent to which we are able to withdraw from, or insulate ourselves against, the more injurious facets of the age of science and materialism. In pointing out one of the advantages of living in these dreary times, we also endorse the suggestion made in various writings in this journal, that a valid spiritual life may only be lived, with a minimum risk of deviation and to maximum effect, within the framework of a properly orthodox tradition, and, if possible, under the direction of one who has already 'gone the way himself'. For, as Frithjof Schuon has pointed out, " Spiritual treasures do not accommodate themelves to just any sort of framework".

It is not our intention to proselytize on this or on any other subject. The average Westerner is already sufficiently bedevilled with the urge to convert others to his way of thinking, right or wrong ; an attitude which has caused more people to join each other in an organised wilderness than probably anything else. It is one of the functions of *Tomorrow* to bring to the attention of readers certain matters of pressing moment, which are not based on guesswork or mere speculation. It is sufficient for us that this knowledge should be presented through carefully selected articles and then left to the judgement of the reader. In this way no one will be excluded, except by his own choice, from the means both of comprehending the state of the modern world, and of ridding his mind of meretricious glamour.

Pseudo Tibetan

Yet another book has been written by Cyril Henry Hoskins, who claimed to be T. Lobsang Rampa, a Tibetan lama, until a group of Tibetan scholars exposed his true identity. He then said "My book explains everything. It is all true. I exchanged identity with a Tibetan lama in 1947 by transfer of soul". Presumably what he should have said was "I exchanged identity with the son of an English plumber" !

Unfortunately there are people who still accept this absurd claim, without realizing that much of the book is nonsense and in no way reflects accurately the life of a Tibetan lama. His latest book makes the pseudo nature of his assertions even more plain, when he writes that it is "a special course of instruction in psychic development and metaphysics " which "step by step . . . . . provides the methods whereby anyone can develop their (*sic*) psychic powers to a degree never before thought possible". The book may or may not be entertaining fiction. It has no bearing on real Tibetan lamaism, and readers would be well advised to leave any courses in 'psychic development' well alone.

Tomorrow

If *Tomorrow* is to continue making available the kind of writings which have appeared in recent issues, we really do need many additional subscribers. Readers can assist by introducing the journal to anyone they think likely to be interested. We can supply a free descriptive leaflet and subscription form, in limited quantities, for this purpose.

We are also instituting a Friends of Tomorrow Fund, to which anyone may contribute who would like to support us in our efforts to publish some of the little writing which is of real importance in these troubled times. Contributions to this Fund will be gratefully received and all will be acknowledged.

F. CLIVE-ROSS.

René Guénon

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE GRAAL

In connection with the Knights of the Round Table it is not irrelevant to show the meaning of the " Quest of the Graal," which, in legends of Celtic origin, is represented as their principal function. Every tradition contains such allusions to something which, at a certain time, became lost or hidden. There is, for example, the Hindu *Soma*—the Persian *Homa*—the " draught of immortality " which has a most direct relationship with the *Graal*, for the latter is said to be the sacred vessel that contained the blood of Christ, which is also the " draught of immortality." In other cases the symbolism is different: thus according to the Jews it is the pronunciation of the great divine Name which is lost;[2] but the fundamental idea always remains the same, and it will later appear to what, exactly, it corresponds.

The Holy Graal is said to be the cup used at the Last Supper, wherein Joseph of Arimathea received the blood and water from the wound opened in Christ's side by the lance of Longinus the Centurion.[3] According to legend, this cup was carried to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea himself along with Nicodemus;[4] and in this can be seen the indication of a link established between the Celtic tradition and Christianity. In fact, the cup plays a most important part in the majority of ancient traditions, and this, no doubt, applied particularly in the case of the Celts. The cup is also to be observed in frequent association with the lance, the two symbols then becoming in a certain way complementary; but it would take us far from our subject[5] to enter into this.

Perhaps the clearest expression of the Graal's essential significance is found in the account of its origin: it tells that this cup had been carved by the angels from

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[1]Translator's Note—This article forms part of a book *Le Roi du Monde*.

[2]The " Lost Word " of Masonry also comes into mind in this connection as likewise symbolizing the secrets of genuine initiation; the " search for the Lost Word " is only another form of the " Quest of the Graal." It justifies the relation pointed out by the historian Henri Martin between the " Massenie of the Holy Graal " and Masonry (see *L'Esctérisme de Dante*, by René Guénon ed. 1957, pp. 35-36); and the present explanations should elucidate what was there said of the extremely close connection between the symbolism of the Graal and the " common centre " or all initiatic organizations.

[3]The name *Longinus* is related to the name of the lance itself, in Greek λόγχι (pronounced lonké); the Latin *lancea* has the same root.

[4]These two personages here respectively represent the royal and sacerdotal powers, as did Arthur and Merlin at the institution of the Round Table.

[5]We merely observe that the symbolism of the lance frequently relates to the World Axis; under this aspect the blood which drips from the lance has the same significance as the dew emanating from the Tree of Life; it is well known that all traditions unanimously affirm that the vital principle is intimately linked with the blood.

an emerald which fell from Lucifer's forehead at his downfall.[6] That emerald strikingly recalls the *urna*, the frontal pearl which, in Hindu (and hence in Buddhist) symbolism, frequently replaced the third eye of Shiva, representing what might be called the " sense of eternity."[7] It is then said that the Graal was given into Adam's keeping in the Earthly Paradise, but that Adam, in his turn, lost it when he fell, for he could not bear it with him when he was driven out of Eden. Clearly, man being separated from his original centre, thereafter found himself enclosed in the temporal sphere; he could no longer rejoin the unique point whence all things are contemplated under the aspect of eternity. In other words the possession of the " sense of eternity " is linked to what every tradition calls the " primordial state," the restoring of which constitutes the first stage of true initiation, since it is the necessary preliminary to conquest of " supra-human " states.[8] Furthermore, the Earthly Paradise represents the "Centre of the World," as will be made even clearer when the original meaning of the word *Paradise* is considered.

What follows might appear more enigmatic: Seth obtained re-entry into the Earthly Paradise and was thus able to recover the precious vessel; now the name Seth expresses the ideas of foundation and stability and, consequently, indicates, in a certain manner, the restoration of the primordial order destroyed by the fall of man.[9] It can therefore be understood that Seth and those who possessed the Graal after him were by this very fact, able to establish a spiritual centre destined to replace the lost Paradise, and to serve as an image of it; thus possession of the Graal represents integral preservation of the primordial tradition in a particular spiritual centre. The legend tells neither where nor by whom the Graal was preserved until the time of Christ; but its recognizably Celtic origin leaves it to be understood that the Druids had a part therein and must be counted among the regular custodians of the primordial tradition.

The loss of the Graal, or of one of its symbolic equivalents, is, in brief, the loss of tradition with all that the latter includes; nevertheless, the tradition is, in truth, hidden rather than lost; or at least it can only be lost as regards certain secondary centres, when they cease to be in direct relation with the supreme centre. So far as the latter is concerned, it always preserves the deposit of tradition intact, and is not affected by the changes which occur in the outer world; thus, according to various Fathers of the Church and in particular Saint Augustine, the flood could not touch the Earthly Paradise which is " the dwelling of Enoch and the Land of the Saints "[10] and whose summit " touches the lunar sphere," that is to say finds itself beyond the domain of change (which is identified with the " sublunary world "), at the point of communication between the Earth and the Heavens.[11] But, just as the Earthly Paradise has become inaccessible, the supreme centre which is basically the same thing, may, in the course of a particular period, not be

[6]Some say it was an emerald which fell from Lucifer's crown, but there is here a confusion arising from the fact that, before his fall, Lucifer was " The Angel of the Crown," which is in Hebrew *Hakathriel* (that is *Kether*, the first *Sephirah*). The name has, incidentally, the numerical value 666.

[7]On this point see *Man and His Becoming According to the Vedanta* R. Guénon (Luzac, 1945), p. 144.

[8]On this " primordial " or " edenic " state, see *L'Esotérisme de Dante*, R. Guénon, 1957 ed., pp. 45-48 and 68-70; *Man and His Becoming According to the Vedenta*, pp. 174-175.

[9]Seth is said to have remained in the Earthly Paradise for forty years. The number 40 also carries a meaning of " reconciliation " or " return to the principal." Periods measured with this number are very frequently encountered in the Judeo-Christian tradition: for instance, the forty days of the Flood, the forty years in which the Israelites wandered in the desert, the forty days which Moses passed on Sinai, the forty days of Christ's fasting (Lent has, naturally, the same meaning); and there are, no doubt, other examples.

[10]" And Enoch walked with God; and he was not (in the exterior and visible world), for God took him." (*Genesis* 5: 24). He was then carried into the Earthly Paradise, as certain theologians such as Tostat and Cajetan have also believed. On the " Land of the Saints " or " Land of the Living," see the discussion in this book.

[11]In conformity with the symbolism used by Dante which places the Earthly Paradise at the summit of the mountain of Purgatory, identified by him with the " polar mountain " of all the traditions.

externally manifested, and it can then be said that the tradition is lost for humanity as a whole, for it is only preserved in certain rigorously closed centres, and the mass of men no longer participate in it consciously and effectively in contradistinction to the situation in the original state;[12] such is exactly the condition of the present period, the origins of which extend far indeed beyond what is accessible to ordinary and profane history. The loss of tradition can, according to the case, either be taken in this general way, or related to the eclipsing of a spiritual centre which more or less invisibly governed the destinies of a particular people or civilization. It is therefore necessary, each time that a related symbolism is encountered, to consider in which sense it should be interpreted.

The Graal, accordingly, represents two strictly interdependent things at the same time: one who integrally possesses the " primordial tradition," who has attained the degree of effective knowledge which this possession essentially implies, is thereby reintegrated into the fullness of the " primordial state." The double meaning inherent in the very word *Graal* relates to these two things, " the primordial state " and " the primordial tradition," for, through one of those verbal assimilations which frequently play a far from negligible role in symbolism, and which further have much more profound reasons than one would imagine at first glance, the Graal is at once a vessel (Old French *grasale*) and a book (*gradale* or *graduale*); this latter aspect plainly designates the tradition while the other more directly concerns the state itself.[13]

We do not intend to enter here upon the secondary details of the legend of the Holy Graal, though each has its symbolic value, nor to pursue the history of the " Knights of the Round Table " and their exploits; we merely recall that the " Round Table," contructed by King Arthur[14] from the plans of Merlin, was designed to receive the Graal when one of the Knights had succeeded in overcoming it and had brought it from Britain to Armorica. This table is also a symbol, probably of great antiquity, one of those always associated with the idea of spiritual centres that preserved tradition; the presence of twelve principal personages around the circular shape of the table is, moreover, a formal link with the cycle of the zodiac, a particular which reappears in the constitution of all the centres in question.[15]

One other symbol relating to a different aspect of the Graal legend, merits special attention: it is that of *Montsalvat* (literally " Mountain of Salvation "), the peak standing " on distant shores that no mortal approaches," which is represented as situated, in an inaccessible region, in the midst of sea, and behind which the sun rises. It is at once the " sacred isle " and the " polar mountain," two equivalent symbols; it is the " Land of Immortality " which is naturally to be identified with the Earthly Paradise.[16]

Returning to the Graal itself, it is easy to realize that its primary significance is fundamentally the same as that of the sacred vessel wherever it is encountered, and notably in the East that of the sacrificial cup which originally contained, as pointed out above, the Vedic *Soma* or the Mazdean *Homa*, that is, " the draught

[12]The Hindu tradition teaches that in the beginning there was only one caste, which was called *Hamsa*. This indicates that all men then possessed, normally and spontaneously, the spiritual degree designated by this name, which is beyond the distinction of the four present castes.

[13]In certain versions of the legend of the Holy Graal these two meanings are firmly fused, for the book becomes an inscription traced by Christ or by an angel on the cup itself. There are ready comparisons to be made here with the Book of Life and with certain elements of the symbolism of the Apocalypse.

[14]The name *Arthur* has an extremely remarkable meaning which attaches it to the " polar " symbolism and which we shall perhaps explain on some other occasion.

[15]The " Knights of the Round Table " are sometimes fifty in number (fifty was, among the Hebrews, the number of the Jubilee, and also relates to the " reign of the Holy Spirit "); but, even then, there were always twelve who played a preponderant role. The twelve peers of Charlemagne in other legendary medieval accounts may also be here borne in mind.

[16]The similarity of *Montsalvat* to *Meru* was pointed out by Hindus, and this led us to examine more closely the significance of the Western legend of the Graal.

of immortaility" which confers or restores, for those who receive it with the requisite disposition, the "sense of eternity." But within the limits of our theme it would not be possible to consider at greater length the symbolism of the cup and what it contains; this would require a special study for suitable development; what has been said lead directly to other matters which are of the greatest importance,[17]

[17]Translator's Note—These were dealt with in subsequent chapters of *Le Roi du Monde*.

The value of this practice (repetition of the name of Amitabha Buddha) is this. So long as one person practises his method (of spirituality) and another practises a different method, they counterbalance one another and their meeting is just the same as their not meeting. Whereas if two persons practise the same method, their mindfulness tends to become deeper and deeper, and they tend to remember each other and to develop affinities for each other, life after life. Moreover, whoever recites the name of Amitabha Buddha, whether in the present time or in future time, will surely see the Buddha Amitabha and never become separated from him. By reason of that association, just as one associating with a maker of perfumes becomes permeated with the same perfumes, so he will become perfumed by Amitabha's compassion, and will become enlightened without resort to any other expedient means.

Surangama Sutra.

After the body, clothes are the next nearest environment of the human soul and have an incalculable effect upon it, as the ancients well knew. Their dress, while it varied superbly from civilization to civilization, was always a reminder of the dignity of man as the representative of God on earth. But in western Europe we have to go back almost a thousand years in order to find clothes which bear comparison with those of other theocratic civilizations, or with the dignity of simple nakedness. It is true that in the late Middle Ages Christians still continued to show a certain sense of form and proportion in what they wore, but an unmistakably mundane, secular note had been struck, the fateful herald of what was to come. From the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, while the rest of the world continued to remain faithful to traditional dress, European fashions went through paroxysm after paroxysm of extravagance and vanity, a sort of death agony of spirtual values, to end up with a dress which, as the Arab says of it, "reeks of atheism." To have an objective view of the anti-spiritual nature of modern fashions, it is enough to remember that in the sacred art of many civilizations blessed Spirits in Paradise are pictorially represented, without the least incongruity, in clothes such as were worn by the artist and his contemporaries. Let us imagine such a picture painted by a modern artist with the figures dressed accordingly. It is significant also that the more "correctly" they were dressed, that is, the more obtrusively representative their clothes were of our century in any of its decades, the more shattering would be the effect.

Martin Lings.

From: Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions.

Frithjof
Schuon

THE DELIVERED ONE AND THE DIVINE IMAGE

Iconoclasm is not a new phenomenon in India : from the beginning of modern times there have always been Hindus, or so-called Hindus, who have seemed no longer to want to understand the true role of their sacred images ; perhaps concern to escape superficial and humiliating, or even insulting, accusations, and to align themselves with a moralism that is all the more crushing for being highly conventional, most often overrides serious considerations. We do not have in mind here the integral adoption of a traditional perspective—such as is the case with Islam—in the name of a particular manner of mental approach to the Absolute ; certainly, the objections of Moslems to images are not justifiable directly or objectively, that is to say from the point of view of Hinduism itself, but they may be justified indirectly or subjectively in so far as they are bound up with a spiritual attitude of " abstraction "; when this attitude is fully conscious, the " temple of idols "—to speak in the words of Ibn Arabî—may symbolize the " heart " sheltering the divine realities.[1] Moreover, had it not been for Arabian idolatry and the memory of Mesopotamian and Mediterranean idolatry, Islam could have shown itself less exclusive in principle ; but it is the intrinsic value of its attitude that counts, an attitude which is even to be found—incidentally, and as a method—in the heart of those civilizations most given to figurative symbolism.[2] However it may be, our criticism of iconoclasm is obviously aimed, not at a particular traditional perspective, but at the fact of submitting—should the occasion arise—to an influence incompatible with the tradition to which one belongs, in this case Hinduism, since it is of Brahmanical India that we wish to speak ; and it is less Moslem influence that we have in view here—since, outside of conversion pure and simple, it is fairly slight in this respect—than Western influence, which alone carries a " civilizing " reproach and a Protestant purism,[3] and which alone creates the corresponding

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[1] The following *hadîth* furnishes the key to a universality limited by no question of form : " I (*Allâh*) am, in the thought of my servitor, that which he thinks I am. Let him meditate, then, (on Me) according to his highest aspirations!"—This *hadîth* may be compared with the following passage from the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* : "Whatever the (divine) form may be that a believer seeks to worship with faith, I (*Krishna-Vishnu*) make his faith unwavering. Informed with such faith, he (the believer) engages in worship of that form, and thus he attains the fruits he desires and which I have ordained for him." (VII, 21 and 22). In other words, God renders one's faith firm in the measure that it is sincere, which it can hardly be in no matter what perspective, the chances of its being sincere diminishing in proportion to the degree of intrinsic heresy.

[2] The Cistercians and the Zen Buddhists are examples of this, in a relative sense. Islam more or less tolerates on a profane level which may exist *de facto*, images that " do not cast a shadow," that is to say paintings, on condition that they do not portray either God or the face of the Prophet.

[3] In the sense of *angélisme hypocrite*. Catholic and Orthodox Christians, while not opposed

psychological complex. In a word, whatever may have been the influence of Islam in various Hindu spheres in the past, Hindu iconoclasm of the twentieth century is indisputably of modern inspiration, whence precisely its half-scientific, half-puritanical flavour.

In this mental climate, there is an opinion which seems to be accepted as a sort of evident truth in all too many spiritual circles in India, namely that the presence of one " delivered in this life " (*jivan mukta*)[4] in an *ashram*[5] can render superfluous or even intolerable the presence of sacred images, and all the more so their worship, though the image be that of the Divine Prototype itself to which the " delivered one " belongs whether by his method or even by right of " incarnation." This attitude would be warranted if it were a matter of a purely methodic exclusion motivated by some Advaitic point of view—just as the replacement of ritual prayers by a single, quintessential orison can be justified on such a plane—but the rejection of images, as soon as it takes on the nature of a religious ostracism, or indeed of a rationalistic reflex, is quite obviously inadmissable in a society possessing a sacred art of figurative character.

Objectively, the true function of sacred images is symbolically and sacramentally to represent a transcendent Reality, and subjectively, to permit the fixing of the mind upon this symbol in view of obtaining habitual concentration upon the Reality contemplated, something which can be conceived in devotional as well as in intellectual mode, or in both manners at once.[6] In connexion with the question of the one who is " delivered in this life," we will add the following : in reality, and through its own nature, the divine image is a complement of the holy man and relates in one way or another to the Divine Prototype that it materializes or sensorializes : if the saint " is Râma " in accordance with the pole of *Âtmâ* which is " Consciousness " (*Chit*)—that is to say, in accordance with the " interior " or subjective reality—the corresponding sacred image is identified with Râma in accordance with the pole which is " Being " (*Sat*), or in accordance with the objective aspect of that reality, the two manifestations, interior and exterior, coinciding in " Beatitude " (*Ânanda*), which is the third element of *Âtmâ*;[7] for the two phenomena, the saint as well as the divine image, manifest Râma, hence the Divinity. It is the element " Beatitude " which directly produces the spiritual manifestation : it is indeed that which transposes the Divine into the phenomenal world and which, through its in some way dynamic character,[8] sets " in motion " —or causes to " shine "—the static poles of the Self : " Being " and " Consciousness."[9]

To the objection that it is the very body of the one who is " delivered in this life " which manifests the " divine form " or the aspect " Being," correlative to the aspect " Consciousness " that the sage realizes, one must reply

to the worship of images, naturally reject the form it takes in Hinduism ; here it is a question, not of principle but of content.

4 Really or supposedly, but that is beside the question.

5 A sort of hermitage where a *guru* lives and where disciples and pilgrims gather.

6 " Although Vishnu is the inner soul of all that exists, he nonetheless humbles himself to enter into a ritual image (*archâ*), owing to the power of the *mantras* and of the *gurus* . . . Just as burning fire penetrates all things, though its power to burn is not perceptible and becomes plainly visible only when it is produced by the rubbing together of two sticks, even so Vishnu, who penetrates all, is not perceptible to the ordinary man but becomes visible in the symbol through the effect of the *mantra*. It is for this that one must adore Vishnu with all one's heart, through images made by human hands in conformity with the prescriptions of the Sacred Books." (*Padma-Tantra*, III, 26, 2-7). It is to be remembered that according to the Eastern Church the icon is not properly speaking a human work, but rather a manifestation of the heavenly Model itself. The icon has been compared to a window from earth to Heaven and from Heaven to earth ; the gold background of the paintings reflects the celestial aura, the luminous substance that envelops deified beings and thus in certain respects rejoins the symbolism of the " light of Tabor."

7 We are referring here to the Vedantic ternary *Sat, Chit, Ânanda* (*Sachchidânanda*), which represents the three internal " dimensions " of *Âtmâ*.

8 For this is *l'Amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle* (the love that moves the sun and the other stars), as Dante would say.

9 The reader will have recognized here the analogy of this doctrine with the theology of the Trinity.

that the sacred image is much more truly the body of this " Consciousness " than the human body that incarnates it, or which is supposed to incarnate it ; only in the case of the great *Avatâras* themselves, such as Râma, Krishna, or the Buddha, does the body manifest *Sat* as directly as it does *Chit*, whence their superhuman beauty, charged with the supernatural, to which traditional accounts bear witness. If it happens that a holy man or woman possesses physical beauty, this appearance is nonetheless, in most cases if not in all, of an entirely other order and—in the framework that is being considered here—in nowise renders superfluous the devotional worship and contemplative use of the sacred image ; features that are necessary in the *Avatâra* may be merely contingent in the spiritually realized man.

* * * *

But in order that the image may truly serve as body of the one " delivered in this life," so that it may be *Âtmâ* as he is—or more precisely, so that it may be *Sat*, " Being," as he is *Chit*, " Consciousness "—it must conform to what might be called the cosmic laws of divine representation. It is important to understand, first of all, that the purpose of art is, not *a priori* to induce aesthetic emotions, but to transmit, together with these, a more or less direct spiritual message,[10] hence suggestions emanating from—and leading back to—the liberating truth. Certainly, art belongs by very definition to the formal order, and who says perfection of form, says beauty ; to claim that art has nothing to do with beauty, on the pretext that its immediate end is spiritual, is as false as to affirm the contrary—that beauty is the exclusive end of the work of art. Beauty essentially implies container and content : as to the container, it consists in conformity to the laws of harmony, it is thus regularity of structure, whereas the content is a manifestation of " Being " or of " Knowledge," or again of " Beatitude "—which brings us back to the ternary of *Âtmâ*—or more precisely a varied combination of the three elements ; it is, moreover, these contents that determine *a priori* the container. To speak of beauty " pure and simple," with pejorative intent, is a contradiction in terms, since beauty cannot but manifest truth, or an aspect or mode of it ; if sensible harmony " delivers " after its manner and under certain conditions, it is because it is truth.

Certain theoreticians of art—be it said in passing—have arrived at the conclusion, worthy of Zeno of Elea, that the beauty of a beetle is not inferior to that of a man, nor the beauty of a shed to that of a cathedral, and all this on the pretext that every thing that is perfect in itself and on its level—or every work perfectly " well made "—possesses all the beauty of which it is susceptible ; in short, that beauty admits of degrees only at the interior of the same order and not in virtue of the nobility or meanness of the order where it manifests—by necessity moreover, since, so it appears, beauty is to be found wherever there is the fullness of a possibility, no matter how inferior that possibility may be. This is to forget—from an excess of zeal, no doubt—the nature or indeed the very notion of beauty : beauty is not only a matter of formal rectitude but also of content, as we have said, and the content of beauty is its richness of possibilities and cosmic generosity, so that there is a beauty which possesses or envelops and a beauty which gives or overflows. Harmony of form is not only the trueness of a square or a triangle, as certain expeditious and frigid theories would have it—it is also, and essentially, the

[10] Profane art, if it is not sacred art, is nonetheless not to be identified with antitraditional art ; it may perfectly well on the one hand respect at least the negative rules of universal art, and on the other hand assume a function analogous to sacerdotal art, even while being no doubt much less central than the latter ; between sacerdotal and profane art there are, moreover, intermediate modes. Let us further add that on the part of the artist the initial subjective preoccupation with a particular aesthetic value—as the case may be—in nowise opposes the profound function of art nor consequently the spiritual perfection of the work, for, all things being interrelated, it goes without saying that aesthetic emotion may convey, as it did for Râmakrishna, a spiritual intuition or even a truth which the artist may not necessarily be conscious of, but which will be transmitted none the less.

manifestation of an internal infinitude ; it is such in so far as it is all that it is capable of being.

The first aim of sacred art is didactic, whether it is a question of a catechism in figures for the use of the unlettered or, on the contrary, of a metaphysical or mystical doctrine suggested by signs—which does not at all mean that the two things are separate ; sacerdotal art endeavours to express a symbolism that is either simple or complex,[11] and in so doing, it transmits at the same time, and inevitably since its language is one of form, an influence of beauty, hence of joyous " expansion " ; if it sought visible harmony for its own sake, it would fall into the arbitrary and into that individualistic and sterile impasse which is naturalism. The error of this latter is, not that it is blind to aesthetic qualities, certainly, but that in the first place it lacks sufficient reason in the very measure that it takes itself for an end in itself—or, which amounts to the same thing, in the measure that it attributes glory to the artist or to the sensible model alone—and secondly that it violates the rules resulting from tradition on the one hand and from the nature of things on the other. Naturalism in art violates tradition because it is unaware that style is a providential discipline proceeding from a genius at once spiritual and ethnic and developing according to the laws of organic growth in an atmosphere of contemplative piety which is not in the least individualistic or Promethean, and it violates the nature of things because in painting it treats the plane surface as if it were three-dimensional space, and the immobility of the surface as if it could contain movement ; in sculpture, naturalism treats inert matter as if it were living flesh, moreover engaged in motion, and it sometimes treats one material as if it were another, without regard for the soul of each substance, and so on.[12]

To paint, then, is to recreate a vision, adapting it to the plane surface and, if there is movement, reducing it to its essential type ; to sculpture is to recreate a vision, adapting it to inanimate matter, or a particular kind of matter, and likewise reducing it, if there is movement, to a particular phase that is as it were static. At the same time it consists in recreating the object rather than copying it, or in copying it while recreating it according to an inner vision at once traditional and personal, or according to the life that we project into it in virtue of our knowledge, or again, according to the life that it projects into us in virtue of its ontological and divine content.

By means of all these considerations it has been our intention to insist once again on the fact that the image acting as a complement to the one " delivered in this life " can be " divine " only on condition that it is sacred in its form and through its genesis ; and this implies the observance of spiritual and technical rules that tradition alone can guarantee.

* * * *

Sometimes this idea of " image " can be understood in a larger sense, going beyond the question of works of art : it may be admitted that in the case of Shrî Râmana Mahârshi, for example, it is the sacred mountain of *Shiva*, Arunâchala, that serves as a permanent symbol of the Principle likewise " incarnated " in the sage, and which is thus his true body ; inversely, one might say that the body of the Mahârshi is

[11] An image is simple in so far as it represents a particular heavenly reality, and complex in so far as it includes, as may be the case, a particular group of symbols, indicating for example divers attributes or functions.

[12] In a stylized painting—an icon, for example, or a Vishnuite miniature—the absence of three-dimensional vision and of movement does not trouble us, for the painting presents itself as such and not as a substitute for the objective world ; it is not merely this or that, it is above all a painting. In naturalistic art, on the contrary, the objective accuracy of the drawing and the subtlety of the shading intensify the lack of space and movement : the figures are as if congealed in an atmosphereless void. In statuary, where inert matter and immobility create an analogous impression, the contrast between model and copy becomes intolerable and confers something spectral upon the work. Naturalism partakes of the nature of delusion and magic, but the reaction against it, since it comes from below, gives rise to much worse and strictly perverted aberrations, with the exception of a few works, or categories of works, which however do not form a school.

a manifestation of Arunâchala, of the earthly *lingam* of *Paramashiva*, in human mode. In an analogous way, the disciples of Mâ Ânanda Mayi might consider her as a human manifestation of the Ganges in its aspect of " Mother," which is to say that worship in the environment of this saint could coincide, in the absence of other supports, with the traditional worship of Mother *Gangâ*. In the case of Râmakrishna, there is no doubt that the image which represents him adequately, and for purposes of worship, is that of the *Shakti*, not under the terrible aspect alone but rather, indeed, as she appeared to the saint, under the aspect of beauty and maternal love.[13]

This said, it will perhaps not be out of place to make mention here of an abuse correlative to iconoclasm, namely the disparagement of *Avatâras* in the interest of exalting living sages, and even false sages : because one wishes to give prominence to the worth or merits of a particular contemporary master, one finds no better means than to affirm that the personage in question is superior to Shankara and even to Krishna or Vyâsa, whose supposed limitations and whose not less imaginary demerits one then proceeds to enumerate with an astounding lack of spiritual instinct, traditional knowledge, and sense of proportion ; too often we have had to witness, in prefaces or other texts devoted to *gurus*, this sort of ignorance and presumptuousness with regard to spiritual ancestors infinitely —and as it were ontologically—superior to all that our own age can produce or offer, and who cannot be equalled by very reason of their degree of cosmic manifestation. It must be said that this kind of abuse is especially typical of our century, where a belittling and degrading psychology is mingled with a constant concern for demagogy ; let us point out in this connexion the singular incapacity of our contemporaries to represent to themselves the Apostles, whose " simplicity " is confused with the kind one knows from ordinary experience and which is merely a type of vulgarity. In India, people readily compare someone like Gandhi—who is not himself responsible for this—to Lord Buddha, whereas in fact there is no common measure between them, to say the least.

But to return to the question of images : nothing is more divergent on the plane of spiritual values than wisdom, which is interior, and art, which is exterior ; between them lies all the difference between essence and form. Yet " extremes meet," and nothing is closer to wisdom and sanctity than sacred art, or the liturgy, in the widest sense of these terms, which explains the value, in nowise disproportionate, that traditional civilizations attach to these disciplines. The image of the Divine—and here we have in mind sacred calligraphy as well as anthropomorphic representations[14]—the divine image, we say, is like the visible face of the Truth : it allows to shine through, and in a language both direct and graduated, that which spirituality hides in the depths of hearts.

The greatest of all miracles is theophany, or differently expressed : there is in reality only one miracle from which all others derive, and that is the contact between the finite and the Infinite, or the unfolding of the Infinite in the bosom of the finite. The divine image is a sacramental crystallization of this miraculous meeting, whence its lightning-like evidence, like that of the inward miracle. For there is nothing in the world more evident than the miracle.

13 " *Kâli* is verily *Brahman*, and *Brahman* is verily *Kâli*. It is one and the same Reality . . . When It engages in these activities (of creation, preservation, and destruction), then we call It *Kâli* or *Shakti* . . . When there were neither the creation, nor the sun, the moon, the planets, and the earth, and when darkness was enveloped in darkness, then the Mother, the Formless One, *Mahâ-Kâli*, the Great Power, was one with *Mahâ-Kâla*, the Absolute . . *Shyâmâ-Kâli* has a somewhat tender aspect . . . She is the Dispenser of boons and the Dispeller of fear . . ." (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, New York, 1942) " As the Mother She (*Kâli*) is no longer grim and fearful as in Her dance of death, but appears to Her devotees in a majestic, gracious form full of sweetness and love, showering benediction upon all and opening up their understanding." (*Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, Calcutta, 1936).

14 Not to forget categories of art such as the Buddhist *mandala*, where geometry combines with calligraphy and, as the case may be, with human figures.

THE SECRET OF SHAKESPEARE II

Martin Lings

Henry IV

If *Hamlet* is Shakespeare's first really great play, the outlook which dominates it is none the less already to be found in several of his earlier plays. Particularly striking in this respect is *Henry IV* which, in its two parts, must have been written within three or four years before *Hamlet*, probably between 1597 and 1599.

For Dover Wilson *Henry IV* appears to be no more than what might be called an " exoteric " morality play. He says : " *Henry IV* was certainly intended to convey a moral. It is, in fact, Shakespeare's great morality play."[3] He adds : "Shakespeare plays no tricks with his audience . . . . Prince Hal is the prodigal, and his repentance is not only to be taken seriously, it is to be admired and commended. Moreover the story of the prodigal, secularized and modernized as it might be, ran the same course as ever and contained the same three principal characters : the tempter, the younker, and the father with property to bequeath and counsel to give".[4]

This is altogether convincing, as far as it goes ; but the story of the prodigal has in itself a deeper meaning also, in addition to the one which Dover Wilson seems to be considering here. Is it conceivable that this could have escaped the notice of the man who, within the next ten years, was to write *Hamlet* and *King Lear*? Not that there need be any question of "either . . . . or." Dover Wilson is unquestionably right, and *Henry IV is* a morality play ; but that would not prevent it from being, at the same time, something more than a morality play. The idea of different meanings existing simultaneously at different levels, however strange it may seem to us, was altogether familiar to men of letters throughout the Middle Ages and even down to the end of the XVIth century—witness Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.

According to Dante " writings are to be understood and should be expounded chiefly according to four meanings "[5] or in other words the literal meaning should be considered as a veil over three others, which he specifies as " allegorical, moral and anagogical." The same principle is to be found also in other arts : the idea that a true work of architecture should have at least three meanings was certainly familiar to Freemasons as late as the XVIth century. A cathedral, in addition to its literal meaning as a place of worship, was planned as a symbolic image of the whole universe, and by analogy, as an image of the human being[6], both body and soul. The symbolism of a building as an image of the human

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3 *The Fortunes of Falstaff*, Cambridge University Press, 1964, p.14.
4 *Ibid*, p.22.
5 *Il Convivio*, II, cap. 1.
6 For details of these correspondences see Titus Burckhardt, *Principes et Méthodes de l'Art Sacré*, p.70 (Derain, Lyons, 1958).

soul, the inner world of man, corresponds to the fourth and highest meaning mentioned by Dante, the one which he calls " anagogical," and which he illustrates by interpreting the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt to the Promised Land to mean, in addition to its literal or historical meaning, the exodus of the soul from the state of original sin to the state of sanctification. Now this is also the highest or deepest meaning of the story of the return of the Prodigal Son, and it could be said to underlie all faithfully told stories of the prodigal, including Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, even without the author's intention. But Shakespeare's intention is undoubtedly there ; we do not need to examine his text over carefully to see that he conceived the newly crowned King Henry V's rejection of Falstaff as representing more than salvation in the ordinary limited sense of the word ; for him it is clearly no less than the equivalent of the Red Crosse Knight's victory over the dragon in the *Faerie Queen ;* and this victory signifies the soul's final purification, its final complete triumph over the devil.

Dover Wilson does in fact unlock the door and open it for us, even if he does not open it very wide. We must be grateful for his timely reminder that " Shakespeare lived in the world of Plato and St. Augustine ; since the French Revolution we have been living in the world of Rousseau ; and this fact lays many traps of misunderstanding for unsuspecting readers."[7] He also says : " The main theme of Shakespeare's morality play is the growing up of a madcap prince into the ideal king."[8] Putting two and two together, it must be remembered that in the world of Plato and St. Augustine no man who was less than a saint could possibly pass as " the ideal king."

But, it may be argued, this does not prove that *Henry IV* has a truly esoteric significance, since even from the point of view of an exoteric morality play no limit can be set to the extent of Prince Hal's reform. His world is very remote indeed from the world we live in, the world of mediocrities and relativities in which epic is stifled beyond breathing point, while the psychological novel thrives and grows fat. There is an unmistakeable ring of the absolute about the last scenes of *Henry IV* which makes it difficult, from any point of view, to attribute to the new king anything that falls short of perfection. None the less this play can be said to have two meanings in relation to the human soul, one exoteric and moral, and the other esoteric and mystical ; but as elsewhere in Shakespeare these two meanings are not altogether distinct, for the lower meaning as it were opens on to the higher. *Henry IV* can be considered as a morality play in which the final perfection is looked at quite objectively and remains far above the spectators' heads, although it serves as a shrine of orientation for their ideals ; and it can be considered as an esoteric or mystical drama the purpose of which is to draw the spectator into subjective identity with the hero. The presence of this higher meaning presupposes that the author himself has something more than a purely theoretical understanding of perfection.

As regards the text itself, one of the keys to this meaning lies in the son's indentification of himself with his dead father. A strange "alchemy" has taken place by which the spirit of the old king is reborn in the person of the new king whose former faults—*affections* or *wildness* as he calls them—have died and lie buried with the old king.

> *My father is gone wild into his grave,*
> *For in his tomb lie my affections,*
> *And sadly with his spirit I survive.*
>
> (*Pt.* 2, *V*, 2)

The young king also uses the image of the corrupt tide of vanity flowing out into the waters of the ocean so that a new and truly royal tide may flow in. Not far below the surface here, as elsewhere in Shakespeare's plays, lie the words of the Gospel " Except a man be born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The heir's identification of himself with his father is important because in order to have a full

[7] p. 7.
[8] p.22.

understanding of *Henry IV* it is necessary to understand that " Everyman " or the human soul is represented not merely by the Prince alone and by the King alone, but also, above all, by a synthesis of the Prince and the King. In its static aspect, as a fallen soul that " smells of mortality " and must die before a new soul can be born, the soul is personified by the King ; and the symbolism is strengthened by the fact that the King is a usurper to the throne, just as fallen man is a usurper to the throne of earth which belongs by rights only to man in his original state, man created in the image of God. On the other hand, in its dynamic aspect, inasmuch as the soul is capable of being purified, and inasmuch as the foundations of the new soul are being laid there, the soul is personified by the Prince who, at any rate according to the logic of the play, will not be a usurper when he becomes King. It is not only the faults of the Prince which die with his father's death but also the stigma of a crown that had been usurped. The dying King says of his own wrongful seizure of the throne :

All the soil of this achievement goes
With me into the earth . . .
How I came by the crown, O God forgive,
And grant it may with thee in true peace live.
(*IV, 5*)

The substance of the soul of " Everyman " is also represented by England which is in a state of discord and which is gradually brought into a state of peace. The two plots of the play, the bringing to order of the Prince and the bringing to order of the country run parallel to each other and have the same significance. Civil war is a most adequate symbol of the fallen soul which is by definition at war with itself ; and the meaning of this particular internal strife in England is heightened by the King's intention to convert its energies, as soon as possible, into a holy war. The whole play is in fact consecrated by beginning and ending as it were in the shadow of the Holy Land. At the beginning of part I the King announces his intention of leading a crusade to Jerusalem ; and towards the end of part II he reaffirms this intention, announcing that all preparations have been made to set out for Palestine as soon as the rebels at home have been defeated :

Now, Lords, if God doth give successful end
To this debate that bleedeth at our doors
We will our youth lead on to higher fields
And draw no swords but what are sanctified.
Our navy is address'd, our power collected,
Our substitutes in absence well invested,
And everything lies level to our wish.
(*IV, 4*).

The rebels have in fact already been defeated, but the news has not yet reached him. Symbolically connected with this is another " already " which, though it dawns on him later, he has also not yet grasped : he is already in " Jerusalem "—the Jerusalem Chamber of the Palace of Westminster where this scene takes place ; and here, shortly after his just quoted speech, when news comes that the civil war is at an end, he suddenly sinks down in mortal sickness. For the moment the play's deeper meaning wells to the surface as it were and obliterates the other meanings. The only connection between the good news and the King's illness is a spiritual one: the end of the civil war means that the pilgrim's journey is at an end, that the old soul is now almost ripe for death so that the new soul may be born. If the King is no more than dying and not yet dead, this is simply because the return of his prodigal son has not yet been altogether fulfilled. Once this has taken place the King asks to be carried back into the Jerusalem Chamber, in order that he may die *in Jerusalem*.

The Jerusalem Chamber has also its meaning for the Prince. We may remember that in the *Faerie Queene* the Red Crosse Knight is only able to overcome the dragon because the fight takes place at the threshold of the Earthly Paradise, within reach of the Waters of Life and the Tree of Life.[9] Now Jerusalem is symbolically equiva-

[9] Spenser died in 1599, about the time that Shakespeare was writing this play. *The Faerie Queene*, which death prevented him from finishing, is mentioned here and elsewhere as an example of symbolism parallel to Shakespeare's at the end of the XVIth century, without any suggestion that Spenser had a profound understanding of the symbolism that he was using. It would perhaps not be

lent to the Earthly Paradise; and the Prince's real victory over himself, when he speaks of

The noble change that I have purposèd

takes place as he stands by his dying father's bed at the threshold of the Jerusalem Chamber, before his final meeting with Falstaff. This symbolism is strengthened by another ; for if any particular moment can be assigned to the Prince's victory, it is at his foretaste of royalty when, believing himself to be by rights already king, he places the crown on his own head.

The last scenes of *Henry IV* pt. 2, if adequately performed, make an undeniably strong spiritual impact. But neither part of *Henry IV*, when taken as a whole, has anything approaching the closely knit intensity of a play like *Hamlet*. In particular, we cannot help noticing that there is no real conflict : like the killing of the dragon the rejection of Falstaff symbolizes the most difficult thing in the world, and yet the Prince has not had, as far as we can see, the slightest difficulty in rejecting him. Secondly—and this weakness is connected with the first—Shakespeare makes the rejection of Falstaff very dramatic, but he has not previously brought home to us dramatically Falstaff's utter villainy. The villainy is there in the text, but we only discover it by analysis ; the plot of the play does not depend on it at all, so that at the end we have a certain sense of disproportion which leaves us with a vague feeling of injustice. But it may well be that we partly owe the excellence of some of Shakespeare's later plays to his experience in writing this. Perhaps when conceiving the part of Iago he said to himself, thinking of Falstaff : " This time there shall be no mistake!"; and perhaps when he set Hamlet to kill the dragon he said to himself : " This time it shall *not* be easy!"

Hamlet

The basic theme of *Hamlet* is summed up in the Prince's own words :

Virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock
but we shall relish of it.

(*III, 1*).

This means : It is no use plastering one or two superficial virtues over our old stock, that is, the original sin which permeates our nature, since in spite of all such virtues, we shall still continue to reek of the old stock." But in order to express fully what is in Hamlet's mind here we must add : " There is only one thing which can effectively wipe out the stench of our old stock and that is *revenge*, or in other words, a complete reversal of the state of affairs which caused the Fall."

In its immediate impact upon us sacred art[10] is like a stone thrown into water. The ever widening ripples illustrate the limitless repercussions that are made, or can be made, upon the soul by this impact, fraught as it is with several meanings at different levels. One meaning can, as we have seen, open out on to another deeper meaning[11] that lies beyond it. In this way sacred art often conveys far more than it appears to convey, far more sometimes even than the mind in question is conscious of or could take in by way of ordinary didactic teaching.

The initial impact itself captivates the mind and the emotions. According to the literal meaning of *Hamlet*, our sense of Queen Gertrude's culpability goes far beyond the sin of marriage to a dead husband's brother, just as we are given many strong and obvious reasons why Hamlet should kill Claudius, enough at any rate even to make us forget for the moment that revenge is unchristian. None the less, it would be true to say that there is no common measure between the literal meaning of this play and the deep sense of urgency that Shakespeare instils into us. There is something mysteriously enormous and unfathomable about the Queen's guilt. Moreover, so long as we are in the theatre we are not far from feeling that revenge is the most important

unjust to say that compared with *the Divine Comedy* and the best of Shakespeare, *the Faerie Queene* is like a plane surface as compared with a form of three dimensions.

10. Shakespeare's plays cannot be considered as sacred art in the full and central sense of the term, but they can be considered as an extension of it, and as partaking both of its qualities and its function.

11 Needless to say, not every detail in the text has a deeper meaning. Conversely, there are certain details which only make good sense on the deepest plane of all.

thing in the world; and we are right, for there *is* nothing more important, and indeed nothing more Christian, that what revenge stands for here.

The Ghost's revelation to Hamlet is, as regards its symbolic meaning, like a puzzle with a few missing pieces which it is not difficult for us to supply in the light of those pieces which we are given—the garden with its fruit trees, the serpent, the guilty woman. The *Genesis* narrative is undoubtedly here. There is also, explicitly, the first-fruit of the Fall, the sin of fratricide. But the Fall itself was in fact a murder also, the slaying or making mortal of Adam by the serpent, and the forbidden fruit was the " poison " through which that murder was effected.

The Queen is not merely Hamlet's mother ; she is his whole ancestral line going back to Eve herself ; and inasmuch as she is Eve, she represents, in general, the fallen human soul, especially in its passive aspect. In other words, she represents that passivity which in man's primordial state was turned towards Heaven and which after it lost contact with the Spirit has come more or less under the sway of the devil or, in the words of the play, having *sated itself in a celestial bed* has come to *prey on garbage*. Like the father and son in *Henry IV*, mother and son here can each be taken separately as representing " Everyman," but above all they are to be taken together as constituting fallen human soul, Hamlet himself being the personification of its active aspect—its conscience and its intelligence. The attitude of the son towards his mother, which many people consider to be something of an enigma and which has prompted more than one grotesque explanation, is amply explained if we consider that allegorically mother and son are one person, different faculties of one and the same soul.

Unlike the writer of epic, the dramatist has a very limited space at his disposal. Consequently he often chooses to build a house of more than one storey. In *Hamlet* the soul is not only represented by the Prince and his mother ; its state is also reflected in the condition of the country. Not that there is actually a sub-plot of civil war as in *Henry IV*, but none the less *Something is rotten in the state of Denmark* and *The time is out of joint* and needs to be set *right*. Moreover, as a parallel to the whole action of the play, the soul of King Hamlet is being purified in Purgatory.

But the dead King has also another aspect. Just as Adam was not only the man who fell but also the most perfect of all creatures, made in the image of God, so also King Hamlet, who in a sense corresponds to Adam, is not only a purgatorial pilgrim but also a symbol of man's lost Edenic state. It is in virtue of this that he refers to his own marriage with Gertrude as *a celestial bed*. and is spoken of by Hamlet in terms of human perfection :

> *A combination and a form indeed*
> *Where every god did seem to set his seal*
> *To give the world assurance of a man.*
>
> (*III*, 4).

It is also in virtue of this aspect that he acts as spiritual guide to his son.

The difference between simple piety and mysticism might almost be summed up by saying that the averagely pious man looks at the story of the Garden of Eden for the most part objectively, whether he takes it literally or allegorically. The mystic, on the other hand, looks at it subjectively as something which intensely, directly and presently concerns himself. Again, the averagely pious man is aware of the existence of the devil, but in fact, if not in theory, he imagines him to be more or less harmless and has little idea of the extent of his own subservience to him. In general he is extremely subject to the illusion of neutrality. But the mystic knows that most of what seems neutral is harmful, and that *one may smile and smile and be a villain*. The Ghost initiates Hamlet into the Mysteries by conveying to him the truth of the Fall not as a remote historical fact but as an immediate life-permeating reality, an acute pain which will not allow his soul a moment's rest ; and every man in fact is in exactly the same situation as the Prince of Denmark, did he but know it, that is, if he were not

> *Duller . . . . than the fat weed*

That roots itself at ease on Lethe wharf.
(I, 4).

What the Ghost says to Hamlet could almost be paraphrased : " Latterly you have been feeling that *all is not well.* I come to confirm your worst suspicions and to show you the remedy. Since man has been robbed by the devil of his birthright, there is only one way for him to regain what is lost and that is by taking revenge upon the robber."

With all the ardour of the novice, in answer to his father's last injunction *Remember me!* the Prince replies :

Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there ;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter.
(I, 4).

Spiritual wisdom, from a wordly point of view, is a kind of madness ; and so madness can be made to serve, in certain contexts, as a symbol of spiritual wisdom. Shakespeare avails himself of this possibility more than once in his plays ; and in *Hamlet*, in addition to its more outward meaning as a stratagem and a blind, the *antic disposition* which the Prince puts on serves above all to underline the drastic change that has taken place in his life. In his soliloquys he shows no trace of madness ; but as soon as he has to face the world, that is, when Horatio and Marcellus enter, shortly after the exit of the Ghost, the new found spiritual outlook which fills his soul almost to bursting point has to find an outlet in what Horatio describes as *wild and whirling words.* It is under cover of this " wildness " that Shakespeare momentarily allows the deeper meaning of the play to come to the surface, for what Hamlet says is :

And so without more circumstance at all
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part
You, as your business and desire shall point you,
For everyman hath business and desire
Such as it is ; and, for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

And prayer, which in the widest sense of the word may be said to comprise all forms of worship, is in fact man's chief weapon of "revenge".[12]

It is not however Horatio and Marcellus who represent the world in *Hamlet.* They do so in this scene only incidentally, because they are the first living creatures that the newly initiated Prince is called upon to face. But he soon takes them both half into his confidence, and later he confides everything to Horatio. The world, not only in its incomprehension, but also in its allurements, everything in " ordinary life " which it is difficult to give up but which the man who has taken his vows must break with altogether and leave behind him is summed up in the person of Ophelia. Hamlet's subsequent visit to her, which she describes to her father, would seem to be prompted by the vain hope that it may not be necessary to turn his back on the world altogether, or that it may be possible as it were to take the world with him. But when he looks into her face he sees that he must go his way alone ; she would be quite incapable of sharing his secret ; and so he leaves her without saying a word.

In the " nunnery scene," where we first see them together, Shakespeare once more allows the deeper meaning of the play to rise to the surface under cover of Hamlet's " madness." The first part of the spiritual path is " the descent into Hell." The deeper meaning of Dante's *Inferno*[13] is the descent of Dante into the hidden depths of his own soul. The novice has first to

[12] The already quoted line :
Let me wipe it (my hand) *first ; it smells of mortality*
which brings the deeper meaning of *King Lear* to the surface, is spoken by Lear when he is mad. The fact that Hamlet's madness is feigned whereas Lear's is not makes no difference to its symbolism. Another kind of " madness " which has the same significance is the " folly " of the professional fool.

[13] The references here and elsewhere to Dante do not mean to suggest that Shakespeare owes anything to him directly. Of this we know nothing. *The Divine Comedy* can none the less help to throw light on certain aspects of these plays because it is based on principles with which Shakespeare was certainly familiar.

learn the meaning of " original sin "; he must come to know the evil possibilities which lie, almost unsuspected, beneath the surface illusion of being *indifferent honest*. The gist of all that Hamlet says to Ophelia in this scene is in the following speech :

> *Get thee to a nunnery ; why wouldest thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest ; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious ; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do, crawling between heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves all ; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery.* (*III*, 1)

This calling of oneself to account has a remarkably close parallel in the hovel scene in *King Lear*, where Edgar, also under cover of feigned madness, accuses himself of having been

> *false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand, hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey.* (*III*, 4).

Elsewhere " the descent into Hell," that is, the discovery of sinful propensities in the soul which were hitherto unknown, takes the form of actually committing the sins in question, as happens, for example, with Angelo in *Measure for Measure* and with Leontes in *the Winter's Tale*.

Despite Hamlet's *antic disposition*, all that he says to Ophelia in the " nunnery scene " makes profound sense. But " the world " is quite uncomprehending ; for Ophelia it is all nothing more than

> *Sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh.*

In *the Divine Comedy* the discovery of the soul's worst possibilities and purification from them are treated separately. The *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* correspond to an altogether exhaustive Confession followed by a full Absolution. The " architecture " of Dante's poem demands this separate treatment, as also the fact that it has an eschatological as well as a mystical meaning. Occasionally, as we shall see, Shakespeare also treats the two phases separately, but more often, as in *Hamlet*, he represents them as taking place simultaneously. The killing of Claudius will mean not only the bottom of Hell but also the top of the Mountain of Purgatory, for revenge means purification.

When Hamlet, on his way to speak with his mother, suddenly comes upon Claudius praying and is about to kill him, he refrains from doing so on the grounds that to kill him while at prayer would amount to sending him to heaven which would be *hire and salary, not revenge*. According to the more outward meaning, that is, according to *Hamlet* as a morality play, the Prince's failure to kill Claudius at this juncture springs from the inability to take decisive action, the readiness to snatch at any pretext for procrastination. At this level a more or less blind eye has to be turned to the actual pretext given. None the less, it is difficult to pass it over altogether as an unpremeditated excuse which flashes across Hamlet's mind and is seized on without being weighed, because later in the play Hamlet deliberately sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to a sudden death, *no shriving time allowed*, without even knowing whether they are in the plot against his life or not—and in all probability they are not. We can accept the normal idea of revenge without too much difficulty, even in a morality play, for revenge is or can be a name for justice. But what sin can compare with the implacable determination to send a soul to Hell?[14] And how is such appalling malevolence to be reconciled with the fact that Hamlet is unquestionably a man of great nobility and magnanimity of character, with a profound love of good and hatred of evil and with even much of the priest in his nature—witness the wise, benign and moving sermon he preaches to his mother in the next scene? It must be admitted, with regard to these questions, that

[14] As answer to this question we may quote from *Measure for Measure* (written about the same time as *Hamlet*) what the Duke says about sending a soul to Hell. He has been trying to prepare Barnardine for death, a criminal justly sentenced to be executed for murder. When asked if Barnardine is ready to die, the Duke replies :

> *A creature unprepared, unmeet for death ;*
> *And to transport him in the mind he is*
> *Were damnable.* (*IV*, 3).

the play's deeper meaning strains here the outward sense almost to breaking point. But once the deeper meaning is understood, the difficulties vanish. Revenge on the devil must be absolute. It requires no apologies. There must be no scruples and no compromise. But the time is not yet ripe. There would be no revenge, and therefore no self-purification, in killing Claudius at that moment because Claudius is not himself. Sometimes the soul's worst possibilities may manifest themselves only partially, in such a way that it would be quite easy to overcome them. But nothing final could be hoped for from resisting them on such an occasion ; it is only when those possibilities really show themselves for what they are, when they are rampant in all their iniquity, only then it it possible, by stifling them, to give them the death-blow or mortally wound them. As Hamlet says :

> *When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,*
> *Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed,*
> *At gaming, swearing, or about some act*
> *That has no relish of salvation in't ;*
> *Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven*
> *And that his soul may be damned and black*
> *As hell, whereto it goes.*
>
> (*III*, 3).

In this scene the devil is far from manifesting himself fully in Claudius. The dragon has not yet come out into the open. Or in other words, Hamlet has not nearly reached the bottom of Hell. He has not even had yet *any direct* experience of the full villainy of Claudius. All that he has learnt so far is relatively indirect compared for example with what he finds when he opens the letter to the King of England and reads Claudius' instructions to have him beheaded immediately on arrival ; but the very bottom of Hell is only reached when the Queen lies dead and Hamlet's own body has tasted the poison. Meantime, before he can kill the great devil he has first of all to account for the lesser devils—Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern ; and like Dante's " cruelty " towards some of the sufferers he sees in Hell, who are really elements in his own soul, Hamlet's attitude becomes immediately understandable and acceptable and reconcilable with his nobility of nature if we realize that all the victims of his revenge are in a sense part of himself.

What has so far most impeded Hamlet upon his path is a certain apathy, sluggishness and lack of fervour. *Lapsed in time and passion* is the way he describes himself. The basic cause of this half-heartedness, the chief reason why it is out of the question that Claudius should be killed at this moment of the play is that the soul is divided against itself, being still, in so far as it is represented by the Queen, largely under the Devil's domination. It is only in the next scene that a certain unity of soul is achieved when Hamlet wins his mother over to his side.

This scene is as it were the centre of the play. Personifying the soul that is afraid of its conscience the Queen is afraid of her son and has been holding him at bay. Even now, when the two are to be alone together at last, she has contrived, or rather let us say willingly consented, to have a third party present, one of the devil's spies, hiding behind the arras. Polonius is the embodiment of hypocrisy. His presence at the beginning of this scene means the presence, in the soul, of the determination to brazen things out. The Queen's first words to Hamlet are shameless in their effrontery :

> *Hamlet, thou has thy father much offended*
>
> (*III*, 4).

But when Hamlet's sword pierces the body of Polonius, conscience pierces through the soul's mask of self-justification, and with all possibility of intervention at an end the soul is forced to listen to its better self:

> *Leave wringing of your hands. Peace, sit you down*
> *And let me wring your heart ; for so I shall*
> *If it be made of penetrable stuff,*
> *If damned custom have not braz'd it so*
> *That it is proof and bulwark against sense.*

The Queen is eventually driven to say:

> *O Hamlet, speak no more:*
> *Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul ;*
> *And then I see such black and grained spots*
> *As will not leave their tinct.*[15]

[15] Nothing I can say to myself will make them leave their black tint to take on a lighter colour.

No sooner is the soul's repentance assured than its good angel appears. Gertrude, representing the lower part of the soul, cannot sense directly the spiritual power which the ghost of her dead husband represents ; but Hamlet sees and hears it, and under its inspiration he tells his mother what she must do.

In this scene, which is really an epitome of the whole play, even the literal sense rises to heights that are almost mystical. It is as if the drama's outer meaning, in virtue of which it is a morality play, had been drawn up to the level of its inner meaning. For whether we consider the Prince to be addressing another person or to be addressing his own soul, he is in any case speaking with an exaltation worthy of a spiritual master who is admonishing and counselling a disciple.

According to the first Quarto[16] version of this scene Hamlet succeeds in destroying once and for all Claudius' hold over Gertrude. Moreover she promises to help Hamlet to accomplish his revenge. This is left out of the masterly revised text of the second Quarto,[17] which leaves the audience with the impression, not that Gertrude has completely conquered her weakness for Claudius but that she is well on her way to doing so and that she is sincerely repentant and determined to give her son all the passive support she can. They feel that like Hamlet himself, she still has some obstacles to overcome ; and indeed if she had not, and if Hamlet had not, Claudius would have to die then and there.

To judge from the cuts in the First Folio edition of *Hamlet*, published only seven years after Shakespeare's death, we may assume that the full text of this play was considered then, as now, too long for the requirements of theatrical performance. Unfortunately one of the passages nearly always sacrificed is Act IV, scene 4, without which the balance of the play as a whole is seriously upset. In this scene Hamlet, on his way to the Danish coast to set sail for England, has a glimpse of Fortinbras, the young Prince of Norway, who is leading his army through Denmark to fight against the Poles; and this glimpse reveals to Hamlet a hero endowed with all those virtues which he himself most needs to develop.

Fallen man stands between two perfections, one past and one future, that which was lost and that which is to be gained. In this play it is the dead King Hamlet who stands for the past perfection and its loss, whereas Fortinbras represents the perfection in which the redeemed soul, after its purification, will be reborn. It is he whom the dying Hamlet is to name as his heir. The analogy between the symbolism of this play and that of *Henry IV* is by no means exact in every detail; but the dead King Hamlet partly corresponds to the dead King Richard II, whereas Queen Gertrude and her son, taken together, correspond to the synthesis of King Henry IV and his son,[18] while Fortinbras in a sense corresponds to that son regenerated as King Henry V. But this scene, where Fortinbras first appears, is needed above all in that it marks a stage in the development of Hamlet, who drinks a new strength into his soul from his vision of the hero prince. In the soliloquy which is prompted by this foretaste of his own true self there is a ring of confidence and resolution which we have not heard before. It must be remembered in this connection that the symbolism of honour throughout this play is inextricably connected with the symbolism of revenge. In other words, as the incentive to revenge, honour means spiritual aspiration.

In *Hamlet*, as also in *King Lear*, the play begins with worldly wisdom in a state of triumph. It is as if Shakespeare had set up a pair of scales, and to begin with he allows the weight of worldly wisdom in one scale to lift the opposite scale of spiritual wisdom right up into the air, so that it

16 1603.

17 1604.

18 Needless tosay there is no exact correspondence here between parent and parent and between son and son. It is true that Gertrude is burdened with guilt towards King Hamlet just as Henry IV is burdened with guilt towards King Richard ; but Prince Hamlet, the censurer of self and others, also has much in common with Henry IV, whereas Gertrude in some respects comes closer, symbolically, to the repentant prodigal Prince Hal.

appears as " light " as folly. But as the play goes on, more and more weight is thrown into the spiritual scale until, even before the last act, it has sunk down to rest on a solid, sober foundation. By the time *King Lear* is drawing to its close the Fool has disappeared, Edgar has ceased to feign madness, and Lear has recovered his sanity. Similarly in *Hamlet* we seen no more of the Prince's " madness " after he has left for England ; and when he returns he astonishes Horatio with his new-found strength and determination. Meantime it is the scale of worldly wisdom which, found sadly wanting, hangs poised aloft in insecure suspense; and the " lightness " of this world, unstable and transitory as it is, racing towards decay, ruin and death, is pictured in the madness of Ophelia. For her there are only two categories—the dead and the dying.

And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead.
Go to thy death bed.
He never will come again.

(*IV, 5*).

Ophelia's madness is like a mirror for the failure of all worldly aspirations, the shattering of all worldly hopes ; and it is significant, considering what she stands for in the play as a whole, that the corpse which is being buried in the church-yard scene is none other than hers.

In this scene, Hamlet, who is himself to die the next day, has the inevitable certainty of death brought home to him with a concrete realism which makes his bones ache, and those of the audience too. He is made to hear death in the knocking together of dead men's bones as the grave-digger throws down one against another ; he sees, touches and smells death as he takes the jester's skull in his hands ; he even almost tastes death as he remembers how often as a child he had put his lips against what is now no more than two rows of teeth set in two jaw-bones :

Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft.

(*V, 1*).

Moreover the scene is to end with the actual burial of everything that had represented, for Hamlet, the possibility of earthly happiness. His own days are numbered too, for it comes out that the grave-digger had taken up his profession on the day that Hamlet was born, thirty years previously ; and for him the Prince is already almost a thing of the past, one who has not only come but gone. There is a strange and sudden chill about the words, spoken with the objectivity of a chronicle :

It was the very day that young Hamlet was born ; he that is mad, and sent to England.

We are reminded by this scene that more than one mystic has sought before now to familiarize himself with death by laying himself out in a coffin ; and this is precisely what Hamlet is made to do here. It leads up to his speech in the final scene where he expresses his readiness to die at any time. What does it matter if a man die young, since no man really ever possesses any of the things he leaves behind him at death?

Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?

We have come a long way from the fears expressed about death in the most famous of his soliloquys.

That soliloquy, *To be or not to be . . . .*, marks Hamlet's lowest ebb. As has already been pointed out in an earlier chapter, he goes somewhat back after the first encounter with his father before he begins to go forward. We cannot start to trace the development of the soul he represents until the play-scene, in which doubts are altogether removed and faith confirmed. Onwards from there, the soul gains singleness and sincerity from the reconciliation between Hamlet and his mother ; confidence, resolution, a sense of true greatness and even a foretaste of perfection from the glimpse of Fortinbras ; resignation to death and a foretaste of death from the churchyard scene ; and complete trust in Providence from the discovery of Claudius' letter to the King of England. Hamlet's discovery of this plot to have him killed in

England takes place shortly after he sees Fortinbras, but we only hear of it in the last scene of the play. He ascribes, with considerable insistence, every detail of his escape to Divine intervention, and his account of what happened enables trust in Providence to take its place as cornerstone in the remarkable image of royalty which Shakespeare gives us in Hamlet at the beginning of this scene. Without the least arrogance, but with an altogether objective sense of values, he dismisses Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as *baser natures* who have perished for daring to step between two *mighty opposites*, that is, between himself and Claudius—*mighty* because, as we may interpret, since all Heaven is on his side, as he now knows beyond doubt, the clash is ultimately between Michael and Lucifer.

Why, what a king is this!

exclaims Horatio in wonderment. It is significant also that only here, for the very first time, does Hamlet mention among Claudius' other iniquities, that he has robbed him of his rightful crown ; and when Horatio implies that there is no time to be lost because news of what has happened will shortly come from England, and when Hamlet replies :

It will be short ; the interim is mine ;
And a man's life's no more than to say " One "

we know that Claudius has not long to live.

The keynote of this opening passage to the final scene is maturity—readiness in every sense of the word, and it is summed up in the words *the readiness is all.* " Everyman " knows that he has almost come to the end of his journey and that the end will be victory but also, necessarily, death. The confidence in the one and the foreboding of the other are expressed in Hamlet's words to Horatio :

I shall win at the odds. But thou
wouldst not think how ill all's
here about my heart.

These words, with their combination of victory and death, are equivalent to Henry IV's:

And wherefore should these good news make me sick?
(*IV*, 4).

as he hears of his victory over the rebels. Symbolically the two situations are identical ; Henry IV here corresponds exactly to Hamlet before the fencing match. All that remains to be achieved, in either case, is the complete redemption of the other aspects of the soul, represented in *Henry IV* by the Prince and in *Hamlet* by the Queen. As regards the Queen, " the return of the prodigal " has in a sense already taken place ; but art demands that it should be clinched beyond all doubt. In this respect, what is generally accepted today as the final text is almost certainly more elliptical than Shakespeare originally intended it to be when he conceived the play. After the King and Laertes withdraw together at the end of Act IV, scene 5, the first Quarto has a scene in which Horatio tells the Queen of Claudius' unsuccessful attempt to have Hamlet killed in England and of Hamlet's return. When the Queen learns that her son is back in Denmark. she tells Horatio :

Bid him awhile
Be wary of his presence, lest he fail
In that he goes about

which means, freely paraphrased : " Tell him to make quite sure that Claudius does not kill him before he kills Claudius." But although this scene is left out in all the later editions of the play, according to the final text a letter is brought from Hamlet to his mother, presumably telling her everything. Moreover, on the basis of Claudius' remark at the end of the churchyard scene:

Good Gertrude, set some watch upon your son,

we may imagine that mother and son have ample time to discuss the whole situation. However that may be, the Queen would be certain that Hamlet's life was in the greatest danger, and she would be watching Claudius' every move. It is very likely, to say the least, that she is suspicious of the drink that Claudius has prepared for her son, and that she drinks from it herself to test it. Though not clear from the text, this can be

made clear by the actress. But even if we do not accept this interpretation, Shakespeare has completed his symbolism beyond all doubt by making this last action on the part of the Queen an act of direct disobedience to Claudius who had forbidden her to drink, and by making her final words whole-heartedly on the side of her son :

> *No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet,—*
> *The drink, the drink!—I am poison'd.*

As to Hamlet's last words, it is no doubt significant that they are a message to Fortinbras. This, together with the entry of Fortinbras immediately after Hamlet's death makes a certain continuity between the dead prince and the living one. There is a suggestion that Hamlet is mysteriously reborn in Fortinbras, though Shakespeare does not indicate this "alchemy" explicitly here as he does in *Henry IV*. At the end of *Hamlet* the stress lies rather on what rebirth leads to. " Except a man be born again . . . . ". If the play as a whole corresponds to an interpenetration of Dante's *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, the *Paradiso* is none the less not merely implicit. It is expressly anticipated in Horatio's farewell prayer for Hamlet :

> *Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!*

Shun asked Ch'eng, saying " Can one get Tao so as to have it for oneself ? "
" Your very body," replied Ch'eng, " is not your own. How should Tao be ? "
" If my body," said Shun, " is not my own, pray whose is it ? " " It is the delegated image of God," replied Ch'eng. " Your life is not your own. It is the delegated harmony of God. Your individuality is not your own. It is the delegated adaptability of God. Your posterity is not your own. It is the delegated exuviae of God. You move, but know not how. You are at rest, but know not why. You taste, but know not the cause. These are the operations of God's laws. How then should you get Tao so as to have it for your own ? "

Chuang Tzu.

The " clairvoyants," according to the schools to which they belong, go so far as to see " fluids " or " radiations," just as there are some, particularly among the theosophists, who see atoms and electrons ; here, as in many other matters, what they in fact see are their own mental images, which naturally always fit in with the particular theories they believe in. There are some who see the " fourth dimension," and even other supplementary dimensions of space as well . . . . . in recent years, under the influence of the new physics, occultist schools have been observed to go so far as to build up the greater part of their theories on this same conception of a " fourth dimension " ; it may be noted also in this connection that occultism and modern science tend more and more to join up with one another as the " disintegration " proceeds step by step, because both are travelling towards it by their different paths.

René Guénon.

FROM PILGRIMAGE TO CRUSADE

Thomas Merton

I

The " sacred journey " has origins in prehistoric religious cultures and myths. Man instinctively regards himself as a wanderer and wayfarer, and it is second nature for him to go on pilgrimage in search of a privileged and holy place, a center and source of indefectible life. This hope is built into his psychology, and whether he acts it out or simply dreams it, his heart seeks to return to a mythical source, a place of "origin," the "home" where the ancestors came from, the mountain where the ancient fathers were in direct communication with heaven, the place of the creation of the world, paradise itself, with its sacred tree of life.[1]

In the traditions of the great religions, pilgrimage takes the faithful back to the source and center of the religion itself, the place of theophany, of cleansing, renewal and salvation. For the Christian there is, of course, Jerusalem, the Holy Sepulchre, where the definitive victory of life over death, good over evil, was won. And there is Rome, the center of the Catholic Church, the See of Peter, the place of indulgence and forgiveness. There are also grottoes and springs blessed by visitations of the merciful Mother, sites of repentance and of healing. There are countless tombs of saints, places of hierophany and of joy.

Christian pilgrimages to Jerusalem, which simply followed the example and pattern of much older Jewish pilgrimages, began in the fourth century A.D. St. Helena's pilgrimage and the finding of the True Cross took place in 326. Less than ten years later the splendid Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre was dedicated. It would attract thousands of pilgrims from the West. Already in 333 a Pilgrim from Bordeaux, in France, was writing about his visit to the Holy Places. One of the liveliest and most interesting of all written pilgrimages is that of the nun, Aetheria,[2] who probably came from Spain and visited not only the Holy Places in Jerusalem but the monks of the Egyptian desert and of Palestine, even going through the Arabian desert to Mount Sinai where there was as yet no monastery, but where there were colonies of hermits living in huts and caves. Large numbers of these anchorites escorted her enthusiastically to the summit of the mountain, where appropriate texts from the Bible were read, Mass was sung, *eulogiae* or spiritual gifts (consisting of fruits from the monks' orchard) were passed around and the joys of the Christian life were generally

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1 Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, London, 1960, pp. 59-72. See also, by the same author, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*.

2 *Le Pèlerinage d'Ethérie* (Latin text and French trans. by Hélène Petré). Sources Chrétiennes, Paris, 1948.

celebrated in the very place where God had given the Law to Moses. Note that at this same time, St. Gregory of Nyssa was writing his Life of Moses[3] which is in fact a description of the mystical itinerary and ascent of the monk to God in "dark contemplation." The geographical pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey. The inner journey is the intrapolation of the meanings and signs of the outer pilgrimage. One can have one without the other. It is best to have both. History would show the fatality and doom that would attend on the external pilgrimage with no interior spiritual integration, a divisive and disintegrated wandering, without understanding and without the fulfilment of any humble inner quest. In such pilgrimage no blessing is found within, and so the outward journey is cursed with alienation. Historically, we find a progressive 'interiorisation' of the pilgrimage theme until in monastic literature, the '*peregrinatio*' of the monk is entirely spiritual and is in fact synonymous with monastic stability.[4]

Aetheria's account of her pilgrimage tells us much about the liturgy of fourth century Jerusalem where the Holy Sepulchre was regarded as the normal station for daily celebration of the Eucharist, and where the True Cross was set up, under the roof of the same basilica, on what remained of the rock of Calvary (Aetheria calls it simply the *martyrium*—the place of martyrdom or of witness). Note that even though Calvary was there, the Eucharist was celebrated specifically at the Holy Sepulchre, not on Calvary. The sacred events of the New Testament were re-enacted liturgically at the place where they actually happened. The liturgy of other places in the Christian world was simply intended to reproduce and remind the pilgrim of what he could see in its perfection at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was in every sense the "center of the world" not only in terms of ancient geography, but in the more important and sacred sense. It was the centre par excellence of *Truth*, the place of the *True* Cross of which all other crosses would be mementoes and representations. The place of the true Holy Sepulchre, which would be recalled by the sepulchres of the martyrs in each altar of sacrifice. The place where the Saviour had truly walked, spoken, preached, healed, suffered, risen, ascended. The places themselves in their reality bore witness to that truth : but they were, far more than that, sacraments of truth and of a special life-giving presence.[5] If Jerusalem was the place of the *anastasis*—the resurrection, the regions around it were filled with the *martyria* where the apostles and saints had borne witness to the power of the resurrection. Finally, there were the monks in all the deserts of Syria, Palestine, Arabia and Egypt, who were living witnesses of the resurrection. The Pilgrimage of Aetheria was, then, a sacred journey to the center from which the whole Christian world was charged with the true presence of the resurrection and glory of the Saviour.

II

The fall of Rome to the Barbarians in the beginning of the 6th century and the invasions that poured down over the East as well as over western Europe, temporarily cut off the Holy Land from the West. Though Jerusalem was then practically inaccessible to most European Christians, pilgrimages continued unabated elsewhere. But now they received a new character, imprinted upon them by the Celtic monks of Ireland.

Peregrinatio, or "going forth into strange countries," was a characteristically Irish form of

[3] *La Vie de Moïse* (Greek text and French trans. by Jean Daniélou. Sources Chrétiennes, Paris, 1955 (2nd edition).

[4] Valerius of Vierzo, *Epistola de B. Echeria*, P.L. 87:424. See also the important article of Dom Jean Leclercq : "Monachisme et pérégrination du 9e au 12e siècles." *Studia Monastica* Vol. 3 fas. 1 (1961), pp. 33-52. This study traces the development from *stabilitas in peregrinatione* to *peregrinatio in stabilitate*.

[5] For example, St. Silvinus, St. Ulric, etc., wished to venerate Christ in the very place where He had accomplished the mysteries of salvation. Leclercq, *art. cit.* 37-39, 43.

asceticism. The Irish "*peregrinus*" or pilgrim set out on his journey not in order to visit a sacred shrine, but in search of solitude and exile. His pilgrimage was an exercise in ascetic homelessness and wandering.[6] He entrusted himself to Providence, setting out with no definite aim, abandoning himself to the Lord of the universe. Since Ireland is an island, this meant entrusting oneself to the hazards of sea travel, and there are records of Irish *peregrini* who simply floated off aimlessly into the sea, abandoning themselves to wind and currents, in the hope of being led to the place of solitude which God Himself would pick for them. In this way some came to Wales or Cornwall or to the Hebrides, Orkneys, and Shetlands. Others, doubtless the majority, made use of their considerable skill in navigation and followed indications that had perhaps come to them down years of seafaring tradition. Such were St. Columba, founder of the great monastic center at Iona,[7] and St. Brendan whose legendary voyages[8] are thought, by some, to have brought him even to America. This has still to be convincingly proved. But there is historical evidence that Irish monks were in Iceland[9] before the coming of the Danes in the 8th century, and they had also visited the Faroe Islands, as well as the Shetlands and the Orkneys, not to mention Brittany, which was entirely populated by Welsh and Irish monks in the 6th century.

It is true of course that many of these pilgrimages brought Irish monks into inhabited places where the natives were willing and ready to receive the Christian message. The monks then became missionaries. The main reason for their journeys was not the missionary apostolate but the desire of voluntary exile.[10]

An *Old Irish Life of St. Columba* (a panegyric, not to be confused with the essentially historical life by Adomnan) describes the pilgrim spirit as belonging to the very essence of Christianity :

> "God counselled Abraham to leave his own country and go in pilgrimage into the land which God had shown him, to wit the 'Land of Promise' . . . Now the good counsel which God enjoined here on the father of the faithful is incumbent on all the faithful ; that is to leave their country and their land, their wealth and their worldly delight for the sake of the Lord of the Elements, and go in perfect pilgrimage in imitation of him."[11]

The example of Abraham inspired many other Irish pilgrims, including Saint Cadroe, and his companions, who went forth to seek the land which the Lord "would show them."[12]

It was, of course, the vision of the "Land Promised to the Saints" that inspired the fabulous voyage of Brendan and his monks. In Celtic pilgrimages there is a reawakening of the archaic mythical theme of the "return to paradise"[13] under the guidance of God or of His angels. But this is something more than "mere myth." The mystic spirituality of the Celtic monks is built on a charism of pilgrimage and navigation.

The objective of the monk's pilgrimage on earth may be imaginatively described as the quest of the "promised land" and "paradise," but more theologically this goal was described as "the place of resurrection"[14]—the place divinely

6 H. Von Campenhausen : *Die asketische Heimatlösigkeit*, Tübingen 1930. Dom. L. Gougaud, *Christianity in Celtic Lands*, London 1932, pp. 129 ff. N. K. Chadwick, *The Age of Saints in the Early Celtic Church*. London 1961. Prof. Chadwick calls this "one of the most important features of Irish asceticism and its chief legacy to after ages." p. 82.

7 Adomnan's *Life of Columba*, Ed. with trans. and notes by the late Alan Orr Anderson and by Marjorie Ogilvie Anderson. Edinburgh, 1961. "de Scotia (Ireland) ad Britanniam *pro Christo peregrinari volens* enavigavit," p. 186.

8 *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis*. Ed. by Carl Selmer, in *Med. Studies U. of Notre Dame*, XVI, 1959.

9 See quotations from the Icelandic *Landnámbók* (11th or 12th century) in Gougaud, *op. cit.*, p. 132. Also a quote from the *De Mensura Orbis* by Dicuil (9th century) in L. Bieler, *Ireland the Harbinger of the Middle Ages*. London 1963, p. 119.

10 Leclercq, *art. cit.*, pp. 34,36.

11 Quoted in Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 83. Cf. Leclercq, *art. cit.*, p. 36. See also J. Leclercq : "La séparation du monde dans le monachisme du moyen âge" in *La Séparation du Monde*. Problèmes de la religieuse d'aujourd'hui. Paris 1961, p. 77.

12 Leclercq, "Monachisme et Pérégrination" *passim*, esp. pp. 37, 39, 41.

13 Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries* (see footnote 1). Cf. Anselm Stolz, O.S.B. Théologie de la Mystique, Chèvetogne ; Dom G. M. Colombas, O.S.B., *Paraíso y Vida Angélica*, Monserrate, 1958.

appointed, in which the monk is to settle down, spend the rest of his days in solitude, doing penance, praying, waiting for the day of his death. To leave Ireland in search of this privileged place was to "go on pilgrimage for the love of God" (*peregrinari pro Dei amore*) or "in the Name of God." If the pilgrimage were a "navigation" then the monk was seeking for a "desert in the sea."[15] The Irish had a predilection for lonely islands.[16] In the voyage of St. Brendan, one of the Faroe islands covered with wild seabirds becomes transformed into a monastic and liturgical paradise, the place *par excellence* for the celebration of the Easter Mystery.[17] The Holy Sepulchre has been replaced by the Desert Island. In any event, the object of pilgrimage is to take the monk to *his* peculiar and appointed place on the face of the earth, a place not determined by nature, race and society, but by the free choice of God. Here he was to live, praise God, and finally die. His body would then be buried in this spot, and would there await the resurrection. The pilgrimage of the Celtic monk was not then just endless and aimless wandering for its own sake. It was a journey to a mysterious, unknown, but divinely appointed place, which was to be the place of the monk's ultimate meeting with God.

In the 8th and 9th centuries, when communication with the East was once again open, Irish monks went on pilgrimages to Egypt and the Holy Land, and in many cases their desire was either to settle at a Holy Place and die there, or else to find "the place of their resurrection" on the way back, and remain there, often as recluses, or solitaries living in completely enclosed cells built against the wall of a Church.[18] Thus the 9th and 10th centuries record the presence of scores of Irish monks living in cities of Germany, Burgundy, Lorraine, etc., either as scholars teaching in schools, or as recluses.[19]

Soon there were many secondary aims in the pilgrimage. Monks went to spend a time in *peregrinatio* with other monks and in monastic centers where they could find instruction and example. Or else they went to obtain liturgical and other books[20] which they copied in their own monasteries. The five pilgrimages of St. Benedict Biscop to Rome are famous examples of this. Others went to Rome to obtain relics needed in the dedication of monastic churches or altars.[21] Some even went on pilgrimages in the hope of martyrdom,[22] others to escape death at the hands of invading Vikings.

Whatever one may think about some of the special forms taken by the Celtic *peregrinatio*, the records, historical as well as literary, bear witness to a profound spiritual integration in the culture from which this practice emerged. The external and geographic pilgrimage was evidently, in most cases, something more than the acting out of psychic obsessions and instabilities. It was in profound relationship with an inner experience of *continuity* between the natural and the supernatural, between the sacred and profane, between this world and the next : a continuity both in time and space.[23] For the

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[14] Chadwick, *op. cit.* pp. 82-83 ; Kathleen Hughes, "The Irish Monks and Learning" in *Los Monjes y los Estudios*, Poblet, 1963, pp. 66 ff. Eleanor Shipley Duckett, *The Wandering Saints of the Early Middle Ages*, New York 1959, pp. 24-25.

[15] Adomnan, *op. cit.* I.6. (Cormac) tribus vicibus herimum in ociano laboriose quaesivit . . . pp. 222-224.

[16] Bieler, *op. cit.* p. 119.

[17] *Navigatio Brendani*, c. 11., p. 22 f.

[18] Dom H. Leclercq., O.S.B., "Celle" in *D.A.C.L.*, ii, 2870 and "Reclus" *D.A.C.L.*, xiv, 2149 ff. Rotha Mary Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England*, London 1914. P. McNulty and B. Hamilton, "Orientale Lumen et Magistra Latinitas—Greek Influences on Western Monasticism (900-1100)" in *Le Millénaire du Mont Athos*, Chèvetogne, 1963, esp. pp. 197-199, 216. Dom L. Gougaud, *Ermites et Reclus*, Ligugé, 1928.

[19] O. Doerr, *Das Institut der Inclusen in Süddeutschland*, Münster 1934.

[20] Chadwick, *op. cit.*, pp. 36, 37, 50-53.

[21] See Dom H. Leclercq, "Pèlerinages à Rome" in *D.A.C.L.*, xiv, 53-54. This applies more to Franks than to Celts who were less enthusiastic about pilgrimages to Rome. Witness this ancient verse : "To go to Rome is great labour. The King you seek you will not find unless you bring Him with you." However, St. Moluca, disciple of St. Maedoc, pleaded with his master for permission to go to Rome : *Nisi videro Romam cito moriar.*

[22] J. Leclercq, "Monachisme et Pérégrination," pp. 42-43.

[23] See M. L. Soejstedt, *Dieux et héros des celtes*, quoted

Celt, as for archaic and primitive man, the true reality is that which is manifested obscurely and sacramentally in symbol, sacrament and myth. The deepest and most mysterious potentialities of the physical and bodily world, potentialities essentially sacred, demanded to be worked out on a spiritual and human level.

The pilgrimage of the Irish monk was therefore not merely the restless search of an unsatisfied romantic heart, it was a profound and existential tribute to realities perceived in the very structure of the world, and of men, and of their being : a sense of ontological and spiritual dialogue between man and creation in which spiritual and bodily realities interweave and interlace themselves like manuscript illuminations in the *Book of Kells*.[23a] This resulted in an astounding spiritual creativity which made it impossible for the Celtic monk merely to accept his existence as something static and "given," or his monastic vocation as a juridically stabilized and sedentary existence. His vocation was to mystery and growth, to liberty and abandonment to God, in self-commitment to the apparent irrationality of the winds and the seas, in witness to the wisdom of God the Father and Lord of the elements. Better perhaps than the Greeks, some of the Celtic monks arrived at the purity of that *theoria physike* which sees God not in the essences or *logoi* of things, but in a hierophanic cosmos : hence the marvellous vernacular nature poetry of the 6th and 7th century Celtic hermits.[24]

As Dom Leclercq points out[25] pilgrimage was to remain a "form of hermit life" and a logical, though exceptional, constituent of the monastic vocation.

III

In the meantime quite a different concept of "pilgrimage" was growing up in Irish circles.

The penitential systems of Ireland and Anglo-Saxon England in the 6th to 10th centuries completely transformed the old concept of ecclesiastical penance.[26] In primitive Christianity, the only formal penance imposed by the Church was public penance, and in the earliest times this could be performed only once. The transition to private and indefinitely repeatable penance was made under Celtic influence. One of the most important forms of penance was *peregrinatio*, pilgrimage, or exile, especially to an island, *relegatio in insulam*.[27] Instead of doing public penance in full view of the local Church (for instance, by remaining outside the Church in penitential garb, fasting and performing other prescribed works, until reconciled) the penitent was sent off into exile, either perpetual or temporary. He might be sent to a lonely island, or simply turned out into the alien world to wander without a specified goal. The penitent just "peregrinated." Only after the eighth century was the penitent sent to a specific place or perhaps to a distant bishop to *receive* a penance, and then when he returned to his own Church, after giving proof that his penance was completed, he was absolved. We must always remember that at this time absolution was given only after the penance had been completed. After the 9th century the goal of the penitent pilgrim was most often Rome, where he was sent to have the Pope decide his case and impose a suitable penance and send him back to his own bishop for absolution.

in R. Y. Creston, *Journal de Bord de Saint Brendan*, Paris 1957, p. 221.

23a Francois Henry, *L'Art Irlandais*, *Zodiaque—La Nuit des Temps*, 1964, II *passim*, esp. pp. 83 ff.

24 See Kenneth Jackson, *A Celtic Miscellany*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1951, p. 301 f. G. Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics*, Oxford, 1956. L. Bieler, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

25 "Aussi la pérégrination continue-t-elle à être présentée comme un forme d'érémitisme, et, comme telle, dans la logique de la vie monastique." *Monachisme et Pérégrination*, p. 41.

26 L. Vogel, "Le Pèlerinage Pénitentiel" *Revue des Sc. Rel.* XXXVIII 2, 1964, pp. 113 ff. Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, New York, 1964. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

27 Chadwick notes that the Scilly Isles had been a penal settlement in Roman times and that some Priscillianist heretics had been sent there. She also cites the questionable tradition of St. Columba's exile in penance for a sin of violence. *op. cit.* p. 102. Vogel, *art. cit.*, p. 127, does not think the medieval penitential practice of exile is traceable to Roman Law.

Some penitents preferred to go direct to Rome, over the head of their own bishop, but this was reproved.[28]

It is not quite exact to regard this *peregrinatio* as a purely private and face-saving form of penance. On the contrary it had a semi-public character[29] and was imposed for scandalous faults. The penitent pilgrim was driven forth as an outcast, dressed in rags or sackcloth, barefoot, perhaps even wearing a chain.[30] He was under strict obligation to keep moving, for he was a "wanderer" ("let him not spend the night twice in the same place" said one of the Penitentials).[31] He was not allowed to bear arms, and was therefore sent totally defenseless among strangers who might be barbarians and pagans (for instance the Picts in Scotland or many of the inhabitants of lands east of the Rhine). The pilgrim who was not carrying out a canonical penance, wore a distinctive garb and badge. The pilgrim thus became a familiar figure in the Europe of the Dark Ages, and he was easily recognizable as a sacred person. If he were a canonical penitent he was, like Cain, one on whom the curse of God rested, one who was being punished and healed, whom *man might not touch* (Gen. 4: 13-15). He was, so to speak, a holy outcast, a consecrated tramp, living under a mystery of execration and protection, overshadowed by inscrutable love, a mystery and portent to every man. It was a sacred duty to protect him, feed him, give him shelter and show him his way. Faliure to shelter and protect pilgrims was declared to be the reason for punishment by an invasion of Lombards in Southern France.[32] Since one could not count even on the faithful to respect the pilgrim and penitent these travellers were sometimes provided with official letters of identification.[33] Special hostelries for the numerous pilgrims of Irish or Anglo-Saxon race were provided both at the chief places of pilgrimage and on the way there, and the Anglo-Saxon hostelry in Rome was supported by taxation in England.[34] Thus the penitent pilgrim, though cast out, had a very definite and indeed privileged place in the Church.

Pilgrimage or perpetual exile were usually given as penances for the worst crimes,[35] murders, incest, sacriligeous sins of violence or of lust, and if the penitent were convinced of his need for penance and forgiveness, there is no question that he would take his penance seriously. Unfortunately, when it became common to send the worst offenders on pilgrimage as penance for grave crimes, one of the results was that large numbers of criminals were turned loose, to live an irresponsible and wandering existence in common.[36] They naturally tended to band together, and when they did their influence on each other was perhaps not much help in carrying forward their repentance and conversion.

Alcuin complained, in a letter,[37] of the dangers that came from associating with the riff-raff of the roads, the jugglers, the thieves, and the pilgrims of various shades and dispositions who were met everywhere. Even genuine pilgrims who fell in with these others tended to suffer grave damage from their contact, and St. Boniface lamented that there was hardly a city on the way from England to Rome that did not have a few fallen Anglo-Saxon women living there as whores[38]. They were among the many for

[28] Council of Seligenstadt, 1022/23. Vogel, *art. cit.*, pp. 143-144.

[29] Vogel, *art. cit.*, p. 118.

[30] Numerous references given in Vogel, pp. 130-131.

[31] Canones sub Edgaro Rege, England, 10th century. Quoted by Vogel, p. 127.

[32] St. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* VI 6. H. Leclercq, "Pèlerinages à Rome", *D.A.C.L.*, xiv, p. 52.

[33] *D.A.C.L.*, *loc. cit.* One penitent even carried an identification in Latin verse by Venantius Fortunatus, *id.* 52. on *litterae tractoriae*, see Vogel, p. 133.

[34] D.A.C.L., *loc. cit.*, xiv, p. 60. St. Fiacra is supposed to have been the first to establish a hostel for his fellow Irishmen on the Continent. It was near Meaux, France.

[35] See penitential of Vinnian n. 23 quoted in Bieler, *op. cit.*, p. 52. Chadwick, p. 102.

[36] "Le pèlerinage pénitential aboutit en fait à sélectionner les pires criminels et à les lancer sur les chemins." Vogel, p. 130.

[37] *Ep.* 289.

[38] See the famous letter of St. Boniface to Cuthbert of Canterbury (*MGH. Epp.* III 78, p. 354) of which Vogel says that it "constitutes a sociological document of the highest order," *art. crit.*, p. 140.

whom pilgrimage, on the continent, was hardly a spiritual success. Note that on the continent especially, pilgrimage was imposed as penance on clerics and monks who were considered scandalous and even incorrigible, doubtless as a last resort[39]. In fact, since the monk was already living in a public state of penance, he was not able to perform the ordinary public penance according to the ancient and solemn discipline. The paradoxial result of the penitential pilgrimage in the Middle Ages was to *increase* scandal by turning loose clerics and monks of disordered life to wander in public in situations that invited them to further sins that could hardly be kept hidden.[40] There was consequently a strong reaction on the part of the eleventh century reformers against the "gyrovagues" or wandering monks.[40a]

We have seen that pilgrimages were originally intended as expiation, by a defenceless and non-violent, wandering existence, of the worst crimes of violence. Now in the 9th and 10th centuries, even killing in war was regarded as a sin requiring expiation.[41] In the Anglo-Saxon Penitential of Theodore of Canterbury, a soldier who killed a man in war was obliged to a forty-day fast even though he may have killed his enemy in the "ordinary line of duty," under obedience to his officer. Later penitentials distinguished between offensive and defensive killing. One who attacked an enemy and killed him was obliged to do penance. One who killed another in self-defense was not obliged to do penance, but was *counselled* to do so for the good of his soul. Burchard of Worms in the 11th century equated killing in war with ordinary homicide and assigned seven years of penance, without distinction as to offence or defence.[42]

Pilgrimage was not usually given as a penance for killing in war. But persons who had accumulated many penances for various sins, might find themselves faced with a staggering burden of penitential "tarrifs" to pay off. In order not to have to fast and do penance for scores of years, they had their multiple penance commuted to a single pilgrimage, which took care of everything.

With this, the juridical systematization of pilgrimage began, and pilgrimages were imposed by the Inquisition as afflictive punishments.[43] The Church recognized places of Major Pilgrimage, such as Jerusalem and Rome, Canterbury and Compostella. There were also minor places of pilgrimage such as Le Puy, St. Giles, Rocamadour, in France.[44] Ponce de Léras, a twelfth century brigand in the central mountains of France, abandoned his life of brigandage, made restitution, went on pilgrimage to Compostella and returned to settle down as a lay brother in a Cistercian monastery he had founded.[45] This was a standard medieval pattern for a successful conversion of life. As a matter of fact it introduces us to a new pattern, in which 'wandering eremitism' is, no longer favoured as an ascetic ideal, and in which the '*peregrinatio*' of Abraham is imitated by the monk who leaves 'the world' for the cloister and stability of the monastery. In the 11th and 12th centuries we find frequent attacks upon 'false hermits' who wander about. The monk who has entered the cloister will no longer leave to wander further afield. His perfection will consist in his stability.[46] However, as Dom Leclercq points out,[47] the monk in the cloister will read the

39 *Rule of St. Benedict*, C. 38, Cf. the quotation of I Cor. 5: 5 in the Rule, C. 25.

40 Vogel, p. 126.

40a St. Peter Damian *Opusc. XII.* 9-14 and 20-25. PL 145:260 ff. G. Penco "Il Capitulo de Generibus Monachorum nella Traditione Medievale" *Studia Monastica*, 1961, 41 f. J. Leclercq, "Le poème de Payen Belotin contre les faux ermites." *Rev. Ben.* 1958, p. 52 f. A fourteenth century English rule for hermits says that anchorites "in loco" deserto solitarie vivere debent non autem in mundo vagari ut solent. Liverius Oliger, O.F.M., "Regulae tres reclusorum et erimitarum." *Antonaianum*, III, 1928, p. 300.

41 Vogel, p. 145.

42 Vogel, p. 146; cf *PL* 140, 952.

43 Vogel, p. 135.

44 For a complete list of places of pilgrimage see Vogel, p.135.

45 *Hagiologium Cisterciense*, Aug. 1.

46 Texts quoted by J. Leclercq, "Monachisme et Pérégrination," pp. 40-49. Cf. above, note 40a.

47 "On ne peut s'empêcher de penser que de tels récits étaient, en quelque sorte, les romans d'aventures

narratives of saintly pilgrims as his 'adventure stories.' He will also take a passionate interest in the crusades. As a matter of fact, in the case of the crusades, an exception will be made. Many Cistercians accompanied the crusades as chaplains, and Cistercian foundations were made in the Near East. In any case, the same spiritual crisis which led to monastic reforms in the 11th and 12th centuries led at the same time to a revival of itinerant eremitism and also, above all, to the great mass-*peregrinatio* of the crusade.[48]

IV

It is often thought that the sole. or chief reason for the Crusades was the fact that Christian pilgrims suffered harrassment from the Moslems who were Masters of Jerusalem.[49] It is certain that the popular enthusiasm that drove thousands of knights and common soldiers to the East in 1095 was an eruption of zeal for the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre. But it must be remembered that the first idea of the Crusade, which goes back to Gregory VII in 1074, was a project for the defense of Constantinople, an essentially "ecumenical" venture, by which it was hoped that the union of Greek and Latin against the Turk would heal the schism that had begun in 1054. Actually, Constantinople was a holy city and a place of pilgrimage. The first Crusade was itself an enormous pilgrimage, a Holy War preached and organized by the Church, led by an armed bishop, Adhémar, ordinary of Le Puy, one of the "minor" places of pilgrimage in France. The various armies converged on Constantinople, and then went to take Jerusalem.

Pilgrimages to Jerusalem had opened a familiar way to the armies of the Cross. In the first half of the eleventh century, Robert II, Duke of Normandy, had to make a barefoot pilgrimage to Jerusalem to expiate the murder of his brother, Duke Richard III.[50] In 1073, Count Theodore, murderer of Conrad, Archbishop of Trier, went as a penitent pilgrim to Jerusalem. These two examples among many[51] show that the crusaders were not all launching out into the unknown. Noblemen who had done penance and visited the Holy Sepulchre were now also attracted by the prospect of settling in this most sacred of lands, and having castles of their own in Judea or Galilee, there to await the second coming of Christ and the resurrection.

In the mind of Pope Urban II the Holy Crusade was to be not only a great unification of Christendom against the Turk, but a magnificent and general act of repentant faith that would culminate in the moral reform and total renewal of Christendom. The "land of Promise" which the Holy Father envisioned was a general state of holiness, unity and perfection in the whole Church, East and West, a Christendom united and renewed in peace at the Holy Sepulchre.

Since the 9th century, very serious and sustained efforts had been made to limit wars among Christians. While promulgating the Crusade, the Council of Clermont (1095) also made the "Truce of God" of general obligation. This prohibition of fighting from Septuagessima to Trinity Sunday and from Wednesday to Monday all year, had previously been imposed by local councils. Pope Urban was seeking a paradise of peace in Christendom, united in defence of the Holy Land which symbolized the peace promised to all men of good will. As a standard Catholic historian observes,[52] "he commanded Christians to make a truce to all hostility that sprang from private interests. Thus the very notion of war was altered under

des moines du moyen âge" J. Leclercq, "Monachisme et Pérégrination," p. 40.

48 J. Leclercq, in "*Histoire de la Spiritualité Chrétienne*" (Leclercq-Vandenbroucke-Bouyer). Vol. ii, p. 165.

49 Pilgrims, being foreigners and Christians, were naturally suspect, but Moslems usually understood the idea of pilgrimage which plays a central part in the religion of Islam. St. Willibald was arrested in Edessa in 723 but released when an aged Moslem assured the police that he had many times seen Christians like this one "fulfilling their law." H. Leclercq, *D.A.C.L.*, xiv, p. 163.

50 Vogel, pp. 128-129.

51 *Id.* 129 ; see references.

52 Mourret-Thompson, *History of the Catholic Church*. St. Louis, 1941. Vol. iv, p. 282.

the influence of the Roman Pontiff." War was now to be waged only in obedience to the Church which was intent upon restricting the use of violence to what was absolutely necessary for the defence of Christendom. In the sense that the Crusade was expected to unify Christendom and consolidate Christian power in a way that would permanently subdue Islam and hold off all future aggression from without, it was explicitly considered as a "war to end wars." This eschatological hope accounted in part for the tremendous expectation and enthusiasm of the first Crusaders.[53] War against the infidel now became a sacred duty for all because it was the pledge of unity and peace within Christendom as well as of permanent peace for the Christian world. Hence the Crusade was regarded as one of the greatest and most meritorious good works. There was no "Truce of God" in killing Saracens, because the sooner the great work was accomplished, the better it would be for all.

But above all, in the intentions of the Popes, the Crusade remained essentially a pilgrimage, but a mass pilgrimage of all Christians united in the expectation of the imminent return of Christ. The eschatological hope was expressed in the hymns and marching songs of the Crusaders.[54] Just as pilgrimage had been the commutation of all other penances, so now the Crusade, the super-pilgrimage, amply satisfied for the sins of a whole life-time, even a life-time of brigandage, lechery, murder, blasphemy, impiety, anything. The Crusade became the *epitome of all penance*. In fact there was a great deal of sincere penitential ardour among the first Crusaders. They fasted and prayed before battles, they multiplied processions and acts of devotion. They were in general dedicated to a true spirit of poverty and austerity befitting pilgrims. The proof of one's profound and sincere conversion and loyalty to Christ and His Church was one's readiness to undergo hardship and privation, and do battle against an enemy who, quite naturally, came to be regarded as the incarnation of all the forces of evil. St. Bernard emphasized that the presence of infidels at the Holy Sepulchre was an outrage and insult to the Saviour.[55] Urban II at Clermont urged the faithful to take up arms against an "abominable . . . impure people . . . (who had) ravaged and stained the holy places."[56] He had barely uttered his call when the cry went up everywhere, *Deus Vult!* "God wills it!" The same cry, "It is written!" had launched the Moslems, a people of pilgrimage, upon the holy war.

It has been noted that for St. Bernard (who preached the second Crusade) a deep vein of Augustinian pessimism about fallen man in a world of sin coloured his ideas.[57] For St. Bernard, salvation outside a monastery was, to say the least, extremely difficult and doubtful. Though he was himself not friendly to pilgrimages for monks, he felt that the Crusade offered a unique opportunity for penance and salvation for multitudes of Christians who would otherwise most certainly be damned. "I call blessed the generation that can seize an opportunity of such rich indulgence as this, blessed to be alive in this year of God's choice. The blessing is spread throughout the whole world and all the world is called to receive the badge of immortality."[58] But if this is the case, then the Crusade is a Jubilee open to everyone—not only to an elite but to all sinners. It is not merely a question of a challenge to noble knights: there is a terrible moral risk for anyone who refuses to take this unique opportunity.[59] St. Bernard even more than Urban II believed that the Crusade was a providential opportunity for the total renewal of feudal society.

With exaltation and immense relief the first great army of repentant sinners started for the East, assured by Pope Urban himself that if they

53 Leclercq, in *Histoire de la Spiritualité Chrétienne*, II, 166. See references to Dupront, Rousset, etc.
54 *Id.*, 167.

55 St. Bernard, Letter 458 and *De Laude Novae Militiae*.
56 Mourret-Thompson, *loc. cit.*, p. 283.
57 Ch. E. Delaruelle, "L'Idée de croisade chez S. Bernard," in *Mélanges S. Bernard*, Dijon, 1953, p. 57.
58 St. Bernard, Letter 363.
59 Delaruelle, *art. cit.*, p. 58.

died on the expedition they would possess eternal life without further delay. "The robbers and pirates," said Oderic Vital, "criminals of every sort, moved by grace, came forth from the abyss of their wretchedness, disavowed their crimes and forsook them, and departed for the far off country."[60]

Thus we see that in the course of time the peaceful and defenceless pilgrimage the humble and meek "return to the source" of all life and grace became the organized martial expedition to liberate the land promised to Abraham and his sons. It is surely significant that in the middle ages this conception of the Christian life became deeply embedded in European man: the "center," the "source," the "holy place" the "promised land," the "place of resurrection" becomes something to be attained, conquered and preserved by politics and by force of arms. The whole Christian life and all Christian virtue then takes on a certain martial and embattled character. The true life of Christian virtue now becomes a struggle to death with pagan adversaries who are wickedly standing in the way of one's divinely appointed goal and perversely preventing fulfilment of a "manifest destiny."

Meanwhile, of course, certain ambiguities appeared in this conception of the Christian life as a mystique of martial and political organization. In the second Crusade these ambiguities made themselves decisively felt: if the Crusade is a war to annihilate the enemy, then strategy comes first and the army should besiege Aleppo. If it is primarily a pilgrimage, then the crusading pilgrims should go up to Jerusalem. Yet the king had not made a vow to conquer Aleppo, only to go to Jerusalem.[60a] Thus the concept of an essentially embattled Christian society tended to become inseparable from the Christian outlook, one might almost say the Christian faith. Christian eschatology in the West took on a very precise historical and social colouring in centuries of combat against the Turk. It was defense of Western Christendom against Eastern and pagan autocracy and power.

It would be naive to underestimate the sincerity and the deep spiritual motivation of the Crusades, just as it would be naive to ignore the fact that the violence, the greed, the lust, and the continued depravity of the worst elements continued unchanged. In point of fact the crusades had an immense effect on European and Christian society in the West. They certainly opened the way to renaissance and modern Christendom. But the paradise of spiritual benefits that had been hoped for, was never attained. On the contrary, from the point of view of East-West relations in Christendom, the Crusades were a disaster. They certainly made all reunion between Rome and Constantinople unthinkable for centuries to come.

Above all, the Crusades introduced a note of fatal ambiguity into the concept of pilgrimage and penance. What was intended as a remedy for sins of violence, particularly murder, now became a consecration of violence. There is, of course, a distinction between war and murder, and the sacrifice entailed by warfare can certainly be regarded as "penitential." But a man prone to violence and passion, a potential or actual murderer and sadist, is not likely to make too many fine distinctions when he discovers that he can now not only kill people legitimately, but even offer his acts to God as "good works" and as "penance," provided he concentrates on infidels, regarded as the embodiment of all evil. Yet we know that the Crusaders did not confine their warlike activities to what was juridically "holy." The sack of Christian Constantinople and the internecine battles among the Crusaders themselves are there to prove it.

Finally, a very interesting development took place in the Crusades. The mystique of sacred love was, in the 12th century, very close to the courtly love of the Troubadours. But we find curiously enough that a typical troubadour, Jaufré Rudel, who took part in the second Crusade, could sing in the same breath of the love for little Jesus in Bethlehem, and of a more secular love for the "distant lady" in whose

60 *Orderic Vital, Historia Ecclesiastica*, ix, PL 188:652.
60a Delaruelle, *art. cit.*, p. 54.

"service" the loyal knight will risk death and imprisonment. The Crusade becomes merged with the romance of courtly love. At the same time the sacred element tends to be neglected by those who like Bertrand de Born are engrossed in the martial glory and exploits of the knights.[61]

V

So much for the East. There remained the fabulous paradise of the West. It is curious that in the folklore tradition of Spain, the "Lost Island" of the West, identified with the Brendan legend to the point that it was given Brendan's own name, remained the paradisiacal refuge to which the Kings of Spain and Portugal might flee from Moorish invasions,[62] just as in the Celtic legend the "land of promise" in the western ocean was evidently regarded as a place of refuge from the Norsemen.

Christopher Columbus was most probably aware of the Brendan Legend[63] as well as of such classic medieval descriptions of the "Lost Island" or Perdita, as that of Honorius of Autun (or more exactly, William of Conches):

> There is a certain island of the Ocean called Perdita, and it excels all the lands of the earth in the beauty and fertility of all things. Found once by chance, it was later sought again and not found, whence it is called Perdita. To this isle, Brendan is said to have come.[64]

The description has all the mythical qualities of the lost paradise, and Columbus' idyllic description of his landfall on Hispaniola showed that the new land appeared to him to be in every way an earthly paradise. He did not believe he had discovered Perdita, however, and Spanish expeditions in search of the "Lost Island" continued even after the discovery of the American mainland.

Brendan's Island was marked ("tentatively") on maps as late as the eighteenth century.[65] It was even formally renounced by Portugal in the Treaty of Evora (1519) so that if it ever were found, it was already assigned in advance (by the Apostolic See) to his Catholic majesty of Spain.

In one word, the Renaissance explorers, the conquistadores, the puritans, the missionaries, the colonizers and doubtless also the slave traders and pirates, were in their own way deeply influenced by the mythical paradisiacal aspect of the Americas. But it was a paradise into which they could not penetrate without the most profound ambiguities.

They came, in a way, as "penitents" or as men seeking renewal, deliverance from the past, the gift to begin again. But at the same time the pattern of this renewal forbade neither self-enrichment nor the free enjoyment of the opportunities which the "paradise" so generously offered (native women). It also prescribed, above all, as a sort of vestige of crusading ardour and as an earnest of absolution, an uncompromising zeal in the subjection of the infidel in his conversion, or perhaps better, his extermination. It was also a good thing to build Churches at home with Inca gold. While St. Theresa of Avila was following her interior and mystic itinerary (not without some very energetic peregrination about Spain, founding Carmels[66]) her brother was in the Kingdom of Quito getting rich. When he returned to Spain, he financed the Carmel of Seville (where St. Theresa enjoyed the view of the river with the galleons of the Armada back from the Indies). Nor is there any reason to doubt the depth and sincerity of his own inner life, troubled only by certain violent reactions which his sister, though she had never experienced such things, did not find surprising.

There were in the Indies the lush and tempting beauty and fantastic opulence of nature. There were the true and legendary riches, from the mines of San Luis Potosi to the lake of Eldorado

61 Delaruelle, *art. cit.*, p. 66.

62 C. Selmer "The Vernacular Translations of the *Navigatio Brendani*," *Medieval Studies*, XVII, 1956, p. 150.

63 H. B. Workman, *Evolution of the Monastic Ideal*, Boston, 1962, p. 196n.

64 *De Imagine Mundi*, I. 36, *PL* 172:132.

65 W. H. Babcock, "St. Brendan's Explorations and Islands" in *Geographical Review*, July, 1919, pp. 37-46.

66 *The Book of the Foundations*, in the Complete Works of St. Theresa, trans. by E. Allison Peers, London and N.Y., 1946, vol. iii.

and the fountain of eternal youth. There were the Indians and their cities, appearing now as idyllic "noble savages" in utopian communities, now as treacherous devils indulging in infernal tricks and sunk in the worst forms of heathenism.

Thus the European white man set foot on the shores of America with the conflicting feelings of an Adam newly restored to paradise and of a Crusader about to scale the walls of Acre.

The mentality of the pilgrim and that of the crusader had fused together to create a singular form of alienation : that of the Puritan "pilgrim father" and that of the Conquistador. Centuries of ardent, unconscious desire for the lost Island had established a kind of right to paradise once it was found. It never occurred to the 16th century Spaniard or Englishman to doubt for a moment that the new world was entirely and rightly his. It had been promised and given to him by God. It was the end of centuries of pilgrimage. It was the long-sought land of promise and renewal, where the old deficiencies and limitations no longer existed : the land of the new beginning not only for the individual but for society itself. The land of refuge from persecution. The land of peace and plenty, where all the iniquities and oppressions of the old world were forgotten. Here peace and unity were bought at the price of Christian courage in battling with the wilderness and with the infidel. To conquer and subjugate the native population was not regarded as an unjust aggression, as usurpation or as robbery and tyranny, but on the contrary as proof of one's loyalty to all the values dear to the European and Christian heart since Charlemagne.

It is true, however, that some of the missioners had a different and more mystical view of the newly regained paradise. But their solution was only more logically and consistently paradisiacal ; as in the primitive and religious Jesuit utopias in Paraguay, or the communities of Vasco de Quiroga in Mexico.

These were, indeed, admirable and virtuous efforts. But for the greater part, the Pilgrims were rushing upon the lost Island with a combative ferocity and a wasteful irresponsibility that have tainted the fruits of the paradise tree with bitterness ever since.

Somehow it has been forgotten that a paradise that can be conquered and acquired by force, is not paradise at all.

So the story of man's pilgrimage and search has reached the end of a cycle, and is starting on another : now that it is clear that there is no paradise on earth that is not defiled as well as limited, now that there are no lost islands, there is perhaps some dry existentialist paradise of clean ashes to be discovered and colonized in outer space : a "new beginning" that initiates nothing, and is little more than a sign of our irreversible decision to be disgusted with the paradises and pilgrimages of earth. Disgust with paradise, but not with crusades! The new planet is apparently to be the base for a more definitive extermination of infidels, together with the mass of less agile pilgrims so occupied in keeping body and soul together that they cannot be singled out as pilgrims to a promised land.

And yet the pilgrimage must continue, because it is an inescapable part of man's structure and program. The problem is for his pilgrimage to make sense—it must represent a complete integration of his inner and outer life, of his relation to himself and to other men.

The Bible has always taken man in the concrete, never in the abstract. The world has been given by God not to a theoretical man but to the actual being that we are. If we instinctively seek a paradisiacal and special place on the earth, it is because we know in our inmost hearts that the earth was given us in order that we might find meaning, order, truth and salvation in it. The world is not only a vale of tears. There is joy in it somewhere. Joy is to be sought, for the glory of God.

But the joy is not for mere tourists. Our pilgrimage is more than the synthetic happy-making of a vacation cruise. Our journey is from the limitations and routines of "the given"—the *Dasein* which confronts us as we are born into it without choice—to the creative freedom

of that love which is personal choice and commitment. Paradise symbolizes this freedom and creativity, but in reality this must be worked out in the human and personal encounter with the stranger seen as our other self.

As long as the Inca, the Maya, the Mestizo, the Negro, the Jew, or what have you, confronts us as *Dasein*, as a lump of limited and non-negotiable *en-soi*, he will seem to stand in the way of our fulfilment. "*L'enfer, c'est les autres*"[67] and we will seek paradise by combating his presence, subduing him, enslaving him, eliminating him.

Our task now is to learn that if we can voyage to the ends of the earth and there find *ourselves* in the aborigine who most differs from ourselves, we will have made a fruitful pilgrimage. That is why pilgrimage is necessary, in some shape or other. Sitting at home and meditating on the divine presence is not enough for our time, though it still retains its right place, integrated in a "Catholic" whole. We have to come to the end of a long journey and see that the stranger we meet there is no other than ourself—which is the same as saying that we find Christ in him. We find God not by excluding "the other" but by melting *all* in the unity of one Christ.

For if the Lord is Risen, as He said, He is actually or potentially alive in every man. Our pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre is our pilgrimage to the stranger who is Christ our fellow pilgrim and our brother. There is no lost island merely for the individual. We are all pieces of the Paradise Isle, and we can find our "Brendan Island" only when we all realize ourselves together as the Paradise which is Christ and His Bride, God, Man and Church.

It was in this spirit that St. Francis went on pilgrimage—on his own original kind of "crusade"—to meet the Soldan : as a messenger not of violence, not of arrogant power, but of humility, simplicity and love.[68]

And it was in this spirit that Pope John XXIII wrote *Pacem in Terris*.

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[67] J-P. Sartre, *No Exit*. This expression sums up the existentialists' meditation on hell.

[68] G. Basetti-Sani, O.F.M., *Mahomet et Saint François*, Ottawa, 1959.

To the "primitive" man, first and foremost a metaphysician and only later on a philosopher and psychologist, to this man who, like the angels, had fewer ideas and used less means than we, it had been inconceivable that anything, whether natural or artificial, could have a use or value only and not also a meaning : this man literally could not have understood our distinction of sacred from profane or of spiritual from material values : he did not live by bread alone. It had not occurred to him that there could be such a thing as an industry without art or the practice of any art that was not at the same time a rite, a going on with what had been done by God in the beginning. Per contra, the modern man is a disintegrated personality, no longer the child of heaven and earth, but altogether of the earth. It is this that makes it so difficult for us to enter into the spirit of Christian, Hindu or Buddhist art in which the values taken for granted are spiritual and only the means are physical and psychological. The whole purpose of the ritual is to effect a translation, not only of the object, but of the man himself to another, and no longer peripheral but central level of reference.

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS AND SPIRITUALITY

D. M. Matheson

There are innumerable English jokes about how there is nothing a Scotsman likes better than a prolonged metaphysical discussion. Whatever truth there may be in this there is no denying that the Englishman of today, perhaps through some form of mental laziness, tends to be allergic to metaphysics or to subtleties of dialectic.

We are assured that in the Eighteenth century the leading officials of John Company learned in contact with Mogul courts to lard their conversation freely with tags from Hafiz and other Persian poets rather as they would have larded it with Horace in London ; but for all that we may suspect that they remained strangers to the subtle symbolisms of this Sufi poetry. Warren Hastings was atypical in grasping the importance of the Bhagavadgita and sponsoring 180 years ago the first English translation.

Since 1785 there have been many translations into English of Hindu sacred texts and of commentaries on these texts, although there are still large fields almost untouched. Moreover books setting out popularised, simplified and distorted versions of Hindu doctrines are to be found in bookshops everywhere. Many of these claim to teach disciplines which give new powers to mind, memory or body. There are also gramophone records on sale giving instruction in *Hathayoga* exercises and one Midland town has even organised large and very popular public classes in which some of the simpler *asanas* and control of breathing are taught to pupils whose aim—one may suspect—is a rather indefinite one of learning relaxation and getting better health.

Nobody could deny that an ill-organised body, undisciplined imagination and uncontrolled attention involve waste of precious energy and are a handicap in any serious undertaking, but all this is a very long way from the metaphysics or the spiritual paths which are the central concern of Hinduism and its sacred scriptures.

There is a gulf between the outlook of the world in which we live and that of traditional India and very few are the authors who have been able with true understanding to bridge that gulf and set out faithfully for the West what can be put into books of its doctrines. Some books have been distorted by methodical misrepresentation, others by powerful preconceptions in the writers' minds. Above all, and very understandably, there has been incomprehension of subtle and complex ideas which Hindus would not have thought of trying to master without the personal guidance and experiment involved in actually following a spiritual discipline under a qualified *guru*.

In recent years Hindu doctrines have been approached by some Europeans from a new angle —that of one or other of the schools of analytical psychology. This does not apply to Freud, who was a sceptic in these matters, so much as to Jung and many who were in some degree his disciples. Jung's uncomprehending and arrogant approach to Hindu doctrines has been compared to that of a Chinese emperor to the learning of barbarians from the West. Notably his misunderstanding of the doctrine of the Atman, the Self, helped to falsify the whole of his interpretation. But other workers in this field have also gone exploring India and some have come to suspect that certain tenets of Western psycho-therapy based on a study of mental and psychic maladies among Europeans have not their supposed universal validity and that there are confusions between different levels and a blindness to realms beyond the psyche.

Some of the resulting books have been very slight but *Western Psycho-Therapy and Hindu Sadhana* by Dr. Hans Jacobs (Allen and Unwin 35/-) can be welcomed for a number of reasons. The author tells us that from an early age he was concerned to find an answer for himself to some of the problems side-stepped by Western science. After study in the Vienna school he became a pupil of Jung from 1936 to 1939 and then practised as a psycho-therapist, mainly in Australia, for nine years before going to Ceylon and India for four years. Since writing this book in Germany he seems to have returned to India. As he says he is personally responsible for the translation of most of the wide range of Sanskrit texts he quotes it would seem that he must have made a serious study of Sanskrit.

From internal evidence one supposes the author's mother tongue to be German and there are occasional unfortunate turns of phrase, some of which may be due to careless proof-reading, but on the whole the style is admirably clear.

A good deal of the book is taken up with criticism—forceful and clear—of Jung and Freud and of the treatment of schizophrenics and psychotics by shock, chemical and surgical techniques. There are also, regrettably, extensive case-histories of his own psychotic patients, reproductions of the pictures they painted for him during treatment and his interpretation of those pictures. In all this part he appears to lose sight of the profound difference between psychoanalysis and Hindu *sadhana*[1] which he so clearly expounds in other passages. It is as if he could not get away from his past.

A more important criticism of the book may be connected—if one may thus psychologise—with something in the author's past colouring his judgment. It is when he says of the traditional religious beliefs of the West as they come down to us that they are now too trivial, too insignificant and too used-up to be any longer usable. Nobody could dispute that they are denied or ignored by a very large part of our peoples today and are often presented in a form so watered-down as to be barely recognisable, but it is not intelligent of Dr. Jacobs thus to denigrate the value of what remains. He tells us he has traversed India from its Southern tip to Kedarnath, from Bombay to Calcutta, that he has lived in Benares, that he watched the great gathering of Kumbha Mela (which takes place only once in twelve years), and that he has taken part in sessions of prayer and chanting, of *japa*, lasting round the clock and he has also had the benefit of contact with some of the great exponents of orthodox schools of Hindu doctrine and spiritual practice. He will have seen how the peoples of India, often excitable and credulous, are very much swept up in the agitations of corrupt politics and the industrialising and modernising of their country, and are often, as he says, seemingly indifferent and sceptical about religion. But he must surely have seen that underneath all this there is still widely persistent a belief in the reality of the Goal spoken of by the sages of old ; even if the genuineness of this or that *sadhaka* may be questioned in circles of Western-style culture the idea of the Delivered Sage will be in some

[1] There is no satisfactory English equivalent and Dr. Jacobs rejects the frequent misuse of the word *yoga* as a translation.

sense venerated. And this could not persist apart from the omnipresence of something of the Hindu tradition—its external forms as well as its devotees and sages.

The great merit of Dr. Jacobs's book lies in his sympathetic and understanding exposition of the Hindu point of view. He shows very clearly the nature of the blinkers worn by most Indologists and especially by many of the Germans. Among the exceptions he singles out R. Guénon, whose expositions are the more remarkable because he never went to India, and Sir John Woodroffe, who managed to combine with a distinguished official career study under a *guru* at Banaras and is indeed believed by many to have received the initiation of the Gayatri Mantra.

He warns us, not only against the prejudices of Indologists but also against those *ashrams* from which there today emanates a stream of literature in English and where one is liable to meet Americans and Europeans. In these he says that a teaching is presented which is in fact simplified, denatured and distorted. This is a sweeping judgment and indeed he himself cites with reverence more than one spiritual master—Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi is one of them—whose ashram is or was sought by European admirers. None the less the warning is valuable and he might well have taken warning to approach with more caution the writings of Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda.

A number of investigators have been intrigued and puzzled by the way in which some African tribes settle all their tribal problems by arriving without voting at a unanimous consensus of opinion, so firmly are we conditioned to a divisive, " this-or-that " way of looking at things. The traditional Hindu world exemplifies a strong adsorptive tendency ; it relies on the general atmosphere to make one out of two, to ingest points of view which stray from orthodoxy. Even in our own times aberrant manifestations have been thus neutralised ; probably Dr. Jacobs met persons who would be considered traditionally fully orthodox but spoke admiringly of Vivekanda and Aurobindo having in mind only the positive aspects of their work.

We do not live in such an atmosphere. We are busily preoccupied with peripheral matters where fields of study are increasingly fragmented and often manage to hold in different fields an astonishing variety of mutually incompatible views.

St. Bernard wrote with scorn of the many whose " supreme desire and only care it is to investigate the manner and order of things done . . . They call themselves natural philosophers but by us they are more rightly called vain and curious men." They represent what is the most admired aim of our modern educational system in seeking to meet the " need " for more rapid technological advance.

On the one hand many would define man as deriving from a fertilised ovum in which is imprinted a genetic pattern—a mathematical or physico-chemical formula—which determines everything of the subsequent cellular multiplication and diversification and maintains the structure more or less intact till it perishes. In this definition thoughts and memories are defined as electro-chemical impulses. Man is then no longer thought of as coming on the scene " not in entire forgetfulness but trailing clouds of glory "; from beginning to end he is in this view a material compound. But they do not apply such thinking to themselves. Scientists may devise elaborate series of experiments for the express purpose of proving that all animals including man are automata and that the inconvenient idea of bodily operations being purposive to a foreseen end can be safely eliminated as an unneeded hypothesis, but somehow they exclude themselves from the category of those whose operations are not purposive. For all their theories they none the less try to hide even from themselves the sharp ineluctability of their own death and decay or to drape it in the fanciful periphrases of the " mortician."

Christians would no doubt say that besides the body and the genetic structure of the scientists there is an immortal soul, though they are not always very clear what they mean. Sometimes

they think of the soul as something like the life-principle, rather as Hadrian probably did when composing on his death-bed the poem addressed to his soul : " *Animula, vagula, blandula, Hospes, comesque corporis, Quae nunc abibis in loca . . ?*"[2] Sometimes perhaps they think of it as just themselves, " not leaving out the warts " but only the materiality. In any case all of us in the West are accustomed to envisage things historically—even immortality.

Modern logicians and mathamaticians would say it is possible for a series not to have a first term in contrast to the common view that what has no end has no beginning, but human immortality is none the less apt to be envisaged as an endless extension of time after death which yet has its beginning at birth.

A very different outlook is to be found in the East and it is not easy for us to divest ourselves of our view of time and really understand it. There is a much more definite approach both to the idea of time and " outside time " and to what we are to mean by " man."

Scientists now assure us that psychic life in man begins some time before birth and that, if he is not considered as beginning at the moment of conception, his life really begins with his psychic life. Psycho-analysts even claim to have contacted and brought to expression intra-uterine memories. Be this as it may it is rare for man to retain in adult life conscious memories even of the first year or two of life ; in that period he seems to live in the moment and in the animal field of sensory needs and satisfactions while learning to interpret sensory data and to control bodily functions.

Such memories as we do consciously retain even from the first three years or so are usually connected with bodily discoveries or acute sensations. Even from the first four or five years the memories we retain are often in part spurious ; either adults built them up by talk or we ourselves did so in frequent telling of them. On such grounds I strongly suspect my seemingly clear memories of Swinburne and of Queen Victoria ; perhaps Dr. Johnson's memory of Queen Anne was also built up in this way.

Instead of taking man's life as starting before birth we might in another sense take it as starting after he begins to talk—not in isolated words recognised as symbols (in the original Greek sense of the word) for a particular object or for a whole category of objects, but in connected speech. At this stage a hierarchy of quality or value begins to be established, emanating either from himself or from his environment, and dreams and imaginations begin to range widely. I and other are separated.

The developments noticeable at this stage it is fashionable to explain, after Freud, as incidental concomitants of the development towards reproductive maturity. There is no need to rush to the other extreme and maintain that they have no close connection with sex because one believes their primary importance to be connected with the beginnings of a new and supra-sensory possibility, though one which in most cases soon fades into the light of common day.

At each moment we are assailed by a battery of potential stimuli to our various senses but we respond only to such as appear to be significant. Undeniably most men live out their lives on the basis that significance is attributable only, or almost only, to what concerns their " animal " nature—sex, food, physical danger, comforts, dominance of others and the like. Dr. Jacobs quotes an Indian saying that what we think we become, and it applies not only to our thinking.

If, as Blake asserted, the wise man and the fool do not see the same tree it is because the former has learned to see the tree not as a *cedrus atlantica* or as so much vendable timber but as a symbol or reflection from a suprasensual order

When Plato related, or invented, his account of a feast or drinking party at which Socrates relates a story of his meeting with Diotima he wrote for readers who in this sense had something of wisdom and were also familiar with the idea of the inadequacy of words in relation to things divine. Eleusis did not teach through

[2] Little, winsome, wandering thing, Bosom friend and guest today, Whither now, my soul away . . . . ?

words and, though Plato has warned us that we do not know all he taught, we can be fairly sure that words were not the sole means of instruction at the Academy.

The new horizons of which we catch glimpses in early childhood introduce us to the Muses ; poetry, for example, is not just a matter of rhythms and surface meaning, for it seeks to convey through subtle overtones arousing in us sympathetic vibrations more than can be explicit in words. Among illiterate and " primitive " peoples one can still meet with diction and images which are in this sense poetry, but everything in our world conspires to banish divinities ; even music tends to be regarded just as a sensory stimulant, its composition as mental ingenuity in producing novel and exciting effects. And, sad to tell, Indian music has begun to be affected in the same way as one cannot but note from the loud speakers which blare out sentimental music from films in every bazar.

The intuitions of childhood are most likely to fructify where the climate of opinion favours belief in the existence of higher possibilities for man, where religious faith and symbolisms are in the air and, above all, if there is contact with someone in whom the possibilities in question have been in large measure actualised. But our society is dedicated to a worship of technics and quantity. The economics of machine production require the making of large batches of goods as nearly identical as possible and this in turn requires that the mass media of propaganda should be directed to creating a corresponding market. Uniformity in " keeping up with the Joneses " must be inculcated so that these goods come to be regarded as necessities. Suitable titillation of sex appetites disastrously becomes a means for inducing a conviction that fullness of life means a more elaborate standard of living. Fortunately for the advertisers there, is alas, no limit to the number of things people can be trained to look on as necessary.

It was not always so in the West. Such founders of the modern scientific method as Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo deliberately abstracted from the total range of impressions we receive from nature those elements having quantitative aspects between which mathematical relations could be shown to exist and held other qualities to be wholly subjective and without existence apart from our senses, but we must remember that Copernicus had been influenced by the Pythagorean and neo-Platonic doctrines he had met in Italy to believe that numbers were primarily symbols of quality and that somehow mathematics held the key to the manifest universe. He cannot be supposed to have foreseen that the scientific method would lead to the vivid world of the Middle Ages, rich in beauty and instinct with purpose, being dismissed by science as an illusion and the real world being conceived as consisting of " material particles " moving according to mathematical laws.

For anyone literate in elementary algebra $4x=y^2=2(x+y)$ is a precise statement, but it is a statement about quantities only whereas in human experience there is always some element of quality. The stronger the element of quality the less can the words of prose fully and explicitly correspond to it. Words have not only such private and personal associations as psychologists lay stress on in their free association tests, they also often have " historical " associations for a given society and at least some have a well nigh universal significance as symbols. " The Tao which can be named is no longer the Tao," and the nearer to the Tao, we might say, the less can words directly serve to define.

" Whatever is here is there ; Whatever is there is here : From death to death he goes who sees things here as different." This dictum of the Kathopanishad could be paralleled in many other sacred writings. It is possible to study the material and psychic worlds as books in which are reflected truths that lie above and outside the world of form. If that is not the case with modern science is it not because scientists have prejudices, false preconceptions and blind spots—they are not unique in this—and so pose loaded questions, carry out loaded experiments and refrain from

asking themselves questions about " awkward " phenomena?

But, to return to the Hindu approach to the questions of time and man's relation to it, it is useful to recall what was more than once said by Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi : " Why do you want to know what you will be before you know what you are now? If you do not understand yourself, what is the use of trying to understand the world?" Certainly Hindus speak of leaving the body at death only to be somehow reborn but the real Goal is envisaged as a Deliverance or a Realisation going beyond conditions and so also beyond time.

" If thy bonds be not broken while thou livest," sang Kabir, " what hope is there of deliverance in death? It is an empty dream that the soul must pass to union with Him because it hath passed from the body. If He is found now, He is found then : if not, we go to dwell in the city of Death."

Both in Hinduism and in Buddhism there exist disciplines related to the question : " Who am I? " They sound rather like stripping an onion of its skins: not this; not this; not this. The very process of thought is stilled and what remains is in one sense no thing, in another a vision of Reality. The Mahasatipatthana Sutta describes an analogous Buddhist practice for the setting up of Mindfulness, one which would appear horrible to an unprepared Westerner who tried to carry it out. It calls for sitting in suitable posture in a quiet, solitary, place and establishing by meditation and visualisation a tranquil consciousness of the body as impermanent in all its doings; then it must be realised as dying, as dead, as decomposing, as reduced to dust ; there follows a dispassionate externalising in turn of all feelings, all thoughts and all ideas. It must be deeply understood that none of all these have real existence.

But it would be quite wrong to suppose that this leads to a negative result as might seem inevitable from a Western standpoint.

Dr. Jacobs believes that the essential content of Hinduism will come to be known and rightly understood by at least an elite in the West and will then have as great an effect as the Renaissance, though in the sense of a true spiritual rebirth. I would be glad to feel able to share his confidence but can only pray that his own *sadhana* may be protected from error and blessed.

He quotes from the Kularnava Tantra one warning passage worth requoting. " In this world are countless masses of beings suffering all manner of pain. Life ebbs away as if it were water out of a broken pot . . . . The individual soul passes through hundreds of thousands of existences. yet only as man can he obtain the truth. It is with great difficulty that one is born as a man. Therefore he is a self-killer who, having obtained such excellent birth, does not know what is for his good. Some there be who, having drunk the wine of delusion, are lost in worldly pursuits, reck not the flight of time and are not moved at the sight of suffering. There are others who have tumbled in the deep well of the six *Darshanas* (the orthodox Hindu schools)—and are idle disputants tossed on the bewildering ocean of the *Vedas* and *Shastras*. They study day and night and learn words. Some again, overpowered by conceit, talk of *Unmani* (the state beyond thinking) though not in any way realising it. Mere words and talk cannot dispel the delusion of the wandering . . . What then is there to do? The *Shastras* (sacred texts) are many, life is short and there are a million obstacles. Therefore their essence should be mastered . . . "

The world depends on its saints, for it is they who keep it in touch with God, independently of whether or not anyone is aware of their presence or of their sainthood. It is not the scientist, not the entrepreneur, *nor yet the altruist who is the real benefactor of humanity, but the saint.*

Lord Northbourne.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions

by Martin Lings

Perennial Books, 12s. 6d.

This unusual book is beyond all doubt sufficiently far-reaching, weighty, and original to merit considerable attention. It is written by one whose objectivity and seriousness of intention (as evidenced by the unusually comprehensive nature of his learning, and his anything but superficial judgement) set him apart from the ordinary run of authors and critics.

We live in a world of revolution, in which change has become self-justifying. By a few the process of change is seen as a progressive violation of one accepted norm after another, but most people accept it without question, and the revolutionary *élan* proceeds apace. What was previously false is now " true," and what was previously held as true is now " false."

We are faced with a situation similar to that in the fable of the Emperor's new clothes. What is necessary more than anything else is simply that someone should speak the truth ; and this precisely is what this book does.

" If a man could come from the far past into the present, which would strike him most, the skill of our dentists, for example, or the rottenness of our teeth?"

The author takes a hard look at our times, and deals mercilessly with many current illusions. Having drawn attention to the continual and almost consciously hypocritical misuse of such words as " intellectual," " spiritual " and " mystical " as applied to various aspects of our age, he adds : " Yet if it be reality that is wanted—and realism is supposed to be one of the ' ideals ' of our times—then let it be admitted that the space-rockets rise from a world which is in fact starved of upward movement upon all higher planes, a world dominated by an outlook which is in many respects abysmal and at the best utterly flat."

Let us quote here too what he says about the modern superstition of progressism which has supplanted the ancient virtue of hope : " The virtue of hope consists in looking upon human life as a journey which leads to the infinite and eternal satisfaction of all possible desires, provided that certain conditions, well within our capabilities, are fulfilled . . . It was only after a large part of humanity had ceased to believe in the possibility of a ' vertical ' progress, the progress of the individual towards the Eternal and Infinite, that men began to fix their hopes on a vague horizontal ' progress ' for humanity as a whole towards a state of earthly 'welfare' of which there are many reasons to doubt not merely the possibility but also the desirability—assuming that it is to be the ultimate fruit of trends

now at work—and which in any case no one would ever be free to enjoy for more than a few years, the brief span of human life . . . All that remains (*superstat*) of hope is a ludicrous optimism which struts into the future on minute precarious stepping-stones of human 'achievements,' many of them exceedingly questionable, across a quagmire of ruin which it refuses to see."

Martin Lings reminds us that the modern civilization was to a certain extent anticipated in ancient times : " The flat ' horizontal ' outlook which later came to be known as humanism was already rife in the pre-Christian West and is stamped on almost all north Mediterranean art of two thousand years ago and more. The modern civilization is not merely the death-agony of the Christian civilization. It is also a prolongation of the death-agony of the Greco-Roman civilization which, having been cut short by Christianity, was ' re-born ' at the Renaissance."

He draws however upon the uncorrupted heart of classical antiquity to illustrate the end which traditional wisdom has in view, and in referring to Plato's allegory of the cave, provides one of the most convincing expositions of this famous allegory which one is likely to come across.

Martin Lings evidently accepts Coomaraswamy's view that mythology is not only a " figure of speech," but first and foremost a " figure of thought." In delving in the vast field of mythology, he has a sureness and lightness of touch which enable us to see clearly what the myths are driving at. His skilful use of mythology as an instrument of precise description facilitates an understanding in depth of many of the issues with which he deals.

It must not be thought that the author is a prophet of gloom. In the Chinese symbolism of *yin-yang* there is a white spot, however tiny, in the midst of the black, and he points out that in spite of everything the present age possesses certain unique advantages. In this connection he quotes a highly significant Islamic tradition that in the earliest days he who omits a tenth of the Law will be damned, whereas in the latter days, he who accomplishes a tenth of the Law will be saved. The author interprets this message of mercy with subtlety and clarity. His exposition is both exhilarating and heartening. It is the climax of the book.

Martin Lings's writing has a peculiarly "evocative" quality. We know that what he says is true. And we feel that we should already have known it —perhaps, even, in some fashion, that we did know it, but had forgotten, until now we are reminded again. There is a sweetness and gentleness in the author's style, and a generous quality in his judgement, which at the same time is not without a most virile implacability.

The dust cover of the book bears a magnificent emblem which (the publisher has informed me) was taken from a Red Indian buffalo skin painting. It portrays a majestic sun generously radiating light and warmth, and is clearly a primordial symbol of the Universe penetrated by Divine Wisdom and Divine Mercy. At the same time nothing could more perfectly symbolize the spirit and intention of this truly remarkable book.

William Stoddart.

Iamblichus' Life of Pythagoras

Translated from the Greek
By Thomas Taylor.
John M. Watkins, 63s.

In reviewing this second impression (limited to 500 copies) of the 1926 edition of Taylor's original 1818 edition of Iamblichus' life (with a collection, of Pythagoric sentences from Stobaeus and others) the reviewer must give due praise to the three authors of the book. To begin nearest in time : " Watkins' book-shop " (in literature made immortal by Yeats's reference to it in *A Vision*) is one of the few remaining places in the world where works of a kind of knowledge not taught in the Universities but at all times valued by those who wish to become learned in spiritual tradition, are to be found, new or second-hand, in the front of the shop or, more likely, in the back. From time to time such excellent works as

Book Reviews

G. R. S. Meade's translations from the Gnostics, reprints of Boehme's works, and other classics of spiritual learning, have been issued under the imprint of John M. Watkins. The small number of those who buy such works is compensated by the value such readers attach to their possession, and, it might be hoped, by the importance to society, even in this age of mass-culture, of even so small an élite as five hundred in forty years who would have a use for the only existing English translation from the Greek of the *Life of Pythagoras*.

Thomas Taylor, "the English Pagan," first translator of Plato's works into English, friend of Blake and Flaxman, who placed in the hands of his generation for the first time English versions of the basic texts of neo-Platonism, (including a great deal of Plotinus) had worse than indifference to contend with. His labours, undertaken without support or financial reward, brought upon him the derision of the reviewers (*The Edinburgh Review* was particularly outraged by the *Timaeus*, expressing the opinion that Plato intended such a nonsensical work as a satire), and the amused contempt of such men-of-the-world as Horace Walpole, who dismissed Taylor with such other "enthusiasts" as the Methodists, or de Loutherburg the faith-healer. Yet among the élite who learned from him in his own life-time were Blake and Coleridge, Shelley and (probably, though not certainly) Keats. It was in fact Taylor who taught to the English poets of the Romantic movement the use of mythological symbolic discourse, together with the meta-physics of the Platonists which underlies the symbols. A generation later, through Emerson and Bronson Alcott, Taylor became the teacher and inspirer of the American Transcendentalist movement. The Irish renaissance of our own century was no less indebted to him, many of his works remaining on the bookshelves of Mrs. Yeats to the present day. His style as a translator is stiff and pedantic ; but in conveying exactly the fine points of philosophic distinction, he often is better than MacKenna, the later translator of Plotinus. Emerson called him with truth "the best feeder of poets since Milton"; and AE (George Russell) spoke for his circle in Dublin when he called him "the uncrowned king." For the knowledge he transmitted and himself taught is the true learning of the imagination, and the only foundation of true imaginative art in Europe. One may liken the Platonic tradition to an underground river which throws up, from time to time, springs and fountains ; and whenever its waters flow, there is a renaissance ; as there was in Florence through the editions of Ficino, which were in turn the texts from which Taylor made his English translations.

Iamblichus lived in the fourth century A.D., during that last great flowering of the Platonic tradition which produced in turn Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Julian, Proclus ; the first and the last not inferior to Plato himself. His *Life of Pythagoras* (who lived from 582 to 429 B.C., a hundred and fifty years before Plato (429-347 B.C.) is in part legendary, in part based no doubt upon oral tradition ; but also upon documents since lost. It is full of repetitions, as if published from notes which had never been given their final form. In an age in which accuracy is determined by carbon-14 tests rather than by quality of meaning or the value of what is transmitted, Iamblichus cannot hope to be much heeded ; it is for poets to see meaning in the philosopher's golden thigh, and the arrow of the Hyperborean Abaris ; for, as with the lives of Bede or Milarepa, dreams and divinations are mixed with "facts" of a historical kind ; as indeed they are in any real life.

Yet through the veils and obscurations of time we can still catch some flavour of that prototype of all intellectual élites, the Pythagoreans ; and even of the figure of their founder Pythagoras, never directly named by his followers so great was the respect in which he was held. It seems certain that such a man really was born on the island of Samos, and spent many years travelling the ancient world studying in such schools as then existed : in the ancient community on Mount Carmel, and for many years in Egypt. Pythagoras later returned to Greece, settling finally in

Crotona, one of the Greek colonies of Southern Italy founded during the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. We may even now catch a faint echo, a flavour, of a world of young colonies, young cities anxious to learn the first principles of social life. They were, one might say, men emerging from archaic barbarism, eager to develop those faculties which most distinguish man, as man, from all other animals, crowning their race with a new dignity. It was not Lawrence's "dark gods" whom such men reverenced, but the discipline of reason, abstinence from the grosser appetites for the sake of the better cultivation of the mind ; the subjection of the passions to the rational virtues of temperance, prudence, fortitude, justice, and the civilizing power of music.

For the Pythagoreans were more than a school of philosophers ; themselves initiates of all that constituted knowledge in the ancient world, they were the self-appointed teachers of civilization, the rulers of such cities as Crotona and Metapontum, making and administering laws. At the present time when the first principle of Plato's *Republic*, that the ignorant should be governed by the wise, is being everywhere abandoned, it is well to remember that " the golden chain of beings " was, at least in principle, observed by man as he first emerged into the dawn of civilisation. " It belongs to a few only to apprehend and opine rightly ; since it is evident that this pertains to the intelligent alone. But they are few. It is manifest therefore, that a power of this kind does not extend itself to the multitude."

The Pythagoreans therefore had a double responsibility : as the appointed guardians of the fragile treasure of knowledge, they were bound by strict vows of secrecy and silence. They obeyed a strict and abstinent rule of life, avoiding meat, wine, and all kinds of intemperance. Initiation was completed only after many years of physical, moral and intellectual discipline ; and many failed to complete the exacting course. Many of their " mysteries " seem to have been such things as numerical and geometrical laws and theorems ; and Pythagoras was doubtless right in his belief that even such matters should not be made known to the profane, since they are to be understood only within an entire context of knowledge of universal laws, which he professed to teach.

Thus, long before Plato, the Pythagoreans were those " guardians " who were fitted to be rulers of the city precisely because the knowledge they possessed was of a kind to make them indifferent to the concerns of the Cave ; the intellectual and spiritual enlightenment they had received, the moral and physical discipline which they imposed upon themselves, their continual mindfulness of the brief and precarious nature of earthly life, earned for them a pre-eminence which they deserved precisely insofar as they did not desire or value it. Needless to say they were at last driven out by tyrants and parties hostile to, and incapable of, a way of life so lofty ; but the resonance of their quality of knowledge and being remains to this day.

Kathleen Raine.

The Hymns of Zarathustra

By Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin

Beacon Press, $1.65

First published in 1952 and now issued in the United States as a paperback, this translation of the Gathas or hymns of the prophet Zarathustra, represents a new attempt by Professor Duchesne-Guillemin, to render them into a European language. His French original translation, reproducing as nearly as possible the words Zarathustra actually spoke, has been put into English by Mrs. M. Henning.

F. F.

The " broad mind " of the humanist is simply a narrow mind that has been flattened out.

Martin Lings.

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