THE WORLD RELIGIONS SPEAK ON
"THE RELEVANCE OF RELIGION IN THE MODERN WORLD"
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edited by
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Papers and Commentary

presented by
leaders of the world's great religions
at the
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At sunrise beside a lotus pond in Calcutta’s beautiful funeral Gardens on the Ganges, the delegates joined their many voices in one universal prayer for peace and the well-being of humanity.
Left to right, Sr. Nancy Lohandwa, Sr. Betty Math, Colombo; Mrs. Dickerman, Headmistress, St. John's College; Dr. A. H. Shete, Principal, St. John's College, India; Mr. and Mrs. Friedmann, Rabat, Morocco.

Left to right: Rev. Peter Faller, Sr., Colombo, representative of the Vatican Secretary for Non Christians; H. W. Dore, Jr., Executive Director, the Temple of Understanding.

Left to right: the late Father Thomas Morrin, Abbey of Gethsemani, Kentucky; Fr. William Lamy, Khan, Ottawa; Mr. Bertrand Kaulfuss, Old Greenwich, Conn.

L.S.N. Rev. Ernest Peterson, New York City, with Mrs. R. K. Bota.
Preface

by

FINLEY P. DONNE, JR.
Executive Director, The Temple of Understanding, Inc.

For centuries it has been more or less assumed that the different religions of the world could have little communication with one another. This assumption seemed particularly valid as between religions separated geographically or along ethnic and linguistic lines. What, for instance, would American Baptists have to say to Buddhists from Thailand, and vice versa, about matters with which their religions might be concerned? It has also held true in many localities where members of different religions were citizens of one country, spoke the same language and even went to the same schools.

The religions themselves have often contributed to trying to keep their members isolated from the presumably dangerous doctrines of others. There have been some good examples of fruitful dialogue, notably the effort in the United States to eliminate prejudice between Christian and Jew, and the recently created Congress of Religions in Ceylon, which is helping to reduce traditional tensions among the Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Muslims inhabiting that island country. But for the most part the great religions have indeed followed separate paths, and have learned little about one another.

Perhaps in days gone by, although the sad history of the many wars that have been mainly religious in motivation argues otherwise, the world could look upon interreligious separatism without too much concern. A Christian in America or Europe might comfort himself with the thought that he did not need to bother about what Hindus in India or Buddhists or Shintoists in Japan were thinking and feeling. If he felt compelled to do anything about them, he might support missionaries bent on converting them. Nothing more was necessary. Now the circumstances are radically changed. In respect to travel-time, Calcutta, Bangkok and Kyoto are not nearly as far from Dubuque or Mid-Europe as they were. Nor are they as distant ideologically, economically and politically. The prospect is that they will be even closer in the future. With the threat of atomic warfare
the younger generation, in the United States and abroad, appear to have adopted a distinctly negative posture, one might dismiss these questions as frivolous or politically motivated. As it is, we are persuaded that they need to be faced and if possible answered. Unless unequivocal answers can be supplied, man is in danger of losing what has been his most reliable readying-stick, his assurance that there is something in the universe greater, wiser, more elevating than himself. He is in danger of drifting helplessly, without direction, at the mercy of every wind of emotion or storm of passion, and at last being engulfed.

Relevance, a word which has fairly recently begun to come into common use — or, indeed, into excessive use — needs to be borne carefully defined in our context. Too many individuals are using it as an excuse to rebel merrily against legitimate authority, which they declare irrelevant to what they consider their needs. Too many politicians, whether leaders of revolts or defenders of privilege, declare that the ordinary rules of civilized behavior are irrelevant to modern conditions, and so ask to be applauded for violating them. What I mean by relevance was set forth in a brief paper that was mailed to the delegates to advance the conference:

Relevance obviously must always mean relevance to something. Thus, the wind is relevant to the tree whose branches it sways, and the tree is relevant to the wind, but a tree in Bombay is only remotely relevant to the glance of Alaska, nor are the glories immediately relevant to it. In the case of our Conference, its theme being The Relevance of Religion in the Modern World, we are thinking of the ways in which the various religions, with their ancient histories and their modern practices and observances, are applicable to the fate of men in the second half of the Twentieth Century. How do they contribute to the growth of mankind in an age which features scientific development, material advancement and political power and seems so often to overlook the needs of the spirit? What lessons does religion have to offer to those who have been led to place their faith in the computer and its offspring, the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile, the moon rocket and the networks of telecommunication! What can religion say to the countless young people in every land who have seen how unstable we are to cope with injustice, war, famine and racial and religious prejudice, and who therefore are tending to pull away from our institutions?

We are asking these questions of the individuals who will come to the Conference as members of the different religions. We are not hoping that any of them can speak authoritatively for the whole of his own religion, because the sort of requirement would compel him to talk in generalities, or in derogatory terms. Our thought is, rather, that each delegate attack these questions as an individual member of his religion — as a scholar,
inform, inspired and, in some cases, hierarchical member of his religion, but still as an individual person with his own personal views.

Although the papers collected in this volume represent the personal views of the authors, we believe they afford a very fair and acceptable insight into the positions of the religions themselves, justifying the title, "The World Religions Speak".

Of course, the delegates who came to Calcutta did much more than merely present their views. They also, for the better part of a week, mingled with one another in an informal and spiritually enriching way. The hours of participation in the regular sessions of the conference were greatly outmatched by the hours they spent in informal and animated conversations, in small and large groups. What resulted was a communication that, in the words of Thomas Mann, who was deeply involved in all of it, was "not communication, but communion." There grew up, under our eyes, a transcendent spirit of brotherhood, emerging from the mutual discovery of one another by men of true and abiding faith, each in his own religion.

There was present at all times a warm current of religious feeling, which found expression in many ways, but most of all in the prayers, mostly quite spontaneous, and led by men of different religions, in which all the participants joined at the beginning and end of every session.

Finally, as the reader will see, this book has two main Sections. Section I comprises the papers given at the conference, as well as some extemporaneous remarks. Section II is devoted to action taken by the delegates to activate what was brought forth and perpetuate what was created at the conference. As stated in the Final Declaration, the delegates voted unanimously to request the Temple of Understanding to hold another such conference as soon as possible and further, to ask it to explore the feasibility of establishing a world body of religions dedicated to continuing and extending the kind of communication among the world religions that was initiated at Calcutta. We consider that a mandate. We shall do our best to comply with it.

Washington, D.C. 1962

Foreword

by

Stuart Mudd, M.D.

Vice President, World Academy of Art and Science

Since our hominid ancestors first evolved to become human, thoughtful men have observed and pondered the world about them. Even the most primitive men could observe the ordered progression of the stars about the poles with each diurnal cycle and their movement through each season. They could observe, even through with only simple understanding, the marvelous self-regulating capabilities of living beings to perpetuate themselves and to adapt to changing conditions through progressive evolution. Primitive peoples sought to interpret the forces of nature in animistic terms intelligible within their own experience.

The emergence of the prophets and founders of the world religions gave men more enlightened conceptions of the universal order and its mysterious and all pervading harmony. As a practitioner of natural science, I regard the prophets and saints of the world religions, and those who have followed them, as predecessors in the search for enlightenment.

To understand the cosmic order is the goal of science. Can we truly understand the microcosms of the atom, with its unimaginable complexity of electron whirling about their nucleus? Can we truly understand the complexity of the atomic nucleus, with its protons, neutrons and powerful binding forces? Whence the regularity, the stability, the order in these incredible microcosms? Can we adequately comprehend the ordered evolution of cosmos clouds, stars and galaxies in the macrocosmos? Can we really understand a living cell, even a microbial cell? We visualize with the electron microscope cell membranes, cytoplasm, a nuclear area, with its skin of desoxyribonucleic acid bearing the genetic blue print. We even break the genetic code and discern how the alphabet of four base pairs is translated into the alphabet of twenty amino acids, and these in turn into the catalysts which regulate structure and function. We isolate the enzymes and their substrates, and reconstitute their several functions one by one. But the microbial cell, invisible to the naked eye, carries out simultaneously and in a few minutes an ordered succession of chemical
interaction, transformations and synthesis which the most modern laboratory in a scientific world cannot duplicate. Where the logicians, the ordered sequence, required for survival! Whence, indeed, the urge in religionists and scientists alike to probe the ultimate mysteries and to achieve a harmonious relationship to the divine or cosmic order.

At the core of every scientific problem into which I ever have been inspired in sufficient depth, is mystery, the profound mystery of order and adaptedness. I aspire to gain in understanding of this mysterious cosmic order by the procedures in which I have been trained as a natural scientist: observation and experiment; induction; deduction; verification.

To the religious who aspire to gain in understanding of the ultimate mysteries of the spirit and its relation to the divine order, by whatever means of inspiration, meditation, devotion prescribed for him, should the scientist not say:

"We are all seekers. May we both gain in understanding and in achieving harmony with the mysterious order in which we live."

A great contemporary scientist has written: "To pursue science is not to disparage the things of the spirit. In fact, to pursue science rightly is to furnish a framework on which the spirit may rest... Science has a simple faith, which transcends utility. Nearly all men of science, all men of learning for that matter, and men of simple ways too, have it in some form and in some degree. It is the faith that it is the privilege of man to learn to understand, and that this is his mission."

The understanding to be sought embraces the ecology of our entire planet, the well-being and quality of life of all mankind. This understanding should include the religious insights and aspirations of men, the varied discoveries of science, the useful applications of technology. The goals should be optimally viable economic and social organization in relation to the entire planet, the good life for all mankind, the union of survival in the presently emerging world is not one particular religious, ethnic or political group, but mankind.

The primary purpose for which the World Academy of Art and Science is chartered is to provide a forum for the discussion, without bias, of matters of concern to all mankind. Certainly the world's religions are of profound significance and relevance to man.

As an observer at the Spiritual Summit Conference from the field of natural science, it has been profoundly encouraging to me to see that all religions share the common aspiration to gain in understanding of the divine or the cosmic order, and to bring men into harmonious relation to each other. As a working scientist, this is also my aspiration. It is encouraging, also, to see that the orientation to human conflict of all religions stresses justice, compassion, love. There is thus a common human basis of aspiration and behavior for all men of good will.


Opening Prayer: Mrs. Dickerson Holaster: We thank Thee, heavenly Father, for gatherings such as this, and for the steady out-pouring of Thy love and Thy light. We ask only that Thou continue to guide and protect us in this holy endeavor to create a Temple of Understanding. Ignite our hearts and minds with the force of Thy creative action, upon this beautiful planet, for the weary children of earth, we may light the flame of understanding. We ask only that this symbol of illumination may never dim, but be fed by Thy constant and our constant care. Amen.

An Invocation: Dr. V. Radhawan: He who is Brahman, Shiv, Vishnu, and the Sun to the followers of the Vedas; the impersonal absolute, Brahman, to those who follow the path of knowledge. He who is Buddha, Anu and Atara Manda to the followers of the traditions of Buddhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism. And for those who are the followers of the Jesus of Christ, and Mohammed, He who is Yahweh, God and Allah. The same one which is in diverse forms, that one truth we adore.

Closing Prayer: Father Thomas Meillon: I ask you to stand and join hands in a little while. But first, we realize that we are going to have to create a new language of prayer. And this new language of prayer has to come out of something which transcends all our traditions, and comes out of the immediacy of love. We have to put now, aware of the love that unites us, the love that unites us in spite of real differences, real emotional friction. ... The things that are on the surface are nothing, what is deep is real. We are creatures of love. Let us therefore join hands, as we did before, and I will try to say something that comes out of the depths of our hearts. I ask you to concentrate on the
Introduction:
The Relevance of the Great Religions
for the Modern World

by

Huston Smith

Professor of Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge

This paper, here presented as an introduction, was delivered by Dr. Smith as the concluding address of the First Spiritual Summit Conference, Calcutta, October 1963. It is essentially a call for world peace, a call of all men to live in peace. It is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Smith to Thomas Merton, whose death a month after the Conference was a source of some distress to those who knew him.

Religion can, of course, be irrelevant and often is. No human endeavor is more impressive, and one that traffics with millions is bound to emerge to emerge a mixed bag. In this respect religion is no different from other corporate enterprises. Education which quickens and represses, government which orchestrates and restricts. Religion has been revolutionary and conservative, prophetic and priestly, catalytic and inertia. It creates barriers and levels them, raises church budgets and rates the oppressed, makes peace with inequity and redeem, in part, the world. We acknowledge this motley record right off for it would be a sad miscarriage of our Conference intent if in the act of assembling religion's dialectic it were inadvertently to widen the gulf between them and their critics—between those for whom "religion" is a good word and those for whom it is not. No representatives from the Socialist nations are here. In view of their Marxist premise that religion is obsolete this is not surprising, but it is none the less a fact. So to this absent third of the world we say: whereas the ecclesiastical movement's first phase sounded the potential unity among Christendom and its second phase is exploring the unity latent in religions, we look to a third phase that will seek the unity latent in man, the unity underlying the ideologies that divide him into secularist, socialist, religious, or by "emane" whatever.

Religious relevance takes different forms according to the period in question. To propose to distinguish three great ages through which man has passed with an eye to what religious relevance has meant in each.
INTRODUCTION

You must give an eye to how you behave toward your fellow. For assessed human relations can reduce life to shambles. Religion isn't exhausted by intersubjective relations, but it stops in its tracks if it tries to skirt them. Yoga (spiritual techniques) must be proffered by sannyas (moral precepts), dhyana (meditation) and purna (wisdom) by siks (ethical observance). "If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). But "he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20).

Hence the Golden Rules of the great religions which we have reaffirmed this week: Christianity's "Do unto others..."; Judaism's "What does the Lord require of thee but to do justice, love mercy..."; Jainism's ahimsa and anagha; Buddhism's anicca and Dhamma, its "boundless heart toward all beings"; Hinduism's "highest [sages] who judge pleasure or pain everywhere by the same standard as he applies to himself" (Gita, VI, 3); Islam's man who "gives his wealth... to his kinsfolk and to orphans and to the needy and the wayfarer... who sets slaves free... and pays the poor due"; Shiva's "harmful to serve"; Confucius' human-hearted "These expressions of personal concern for the well-being of others have been the glory of the religions during their axial periods. They account for a good half of the resonance across cultural lines that has characterized this Confluence, for in the allurement of their ethics the great religions are much alike.

1. This brings us to the third great period in human history, I shall call it simply the Modern Age and mark it as having been inaugurated by the rise of modern science in the Seventeenth Century and the Enlightenment in the Eighteenth. Our Modern Age differs from its predecessors in many ways, the pertinent one for us here being that it was social structures as maladaptive. In previous ages institutions - family systems, caste and class, feudalism, kingship, chief and-cum-empire - were assumed to be divinely ordained, irreplaceable, indestructible, a piece with the order of the universe. Modern men treat them as contingent, and by the same token fallible. The corollary is immense. For if society can be changed, it often should be changed, in which case its members are responsible for seeing to it that it is changed.

Obviously this new perspective enlarges the scope of ethics enormously. Whereas religion's ethical dimension was minimal in the Axial Period and personal in the Axial Period, today it has become both personal and social, both individual and collective. For to repeat: if social structures can be good or evil and are subject to man's will, man is responsible for their quality.
INTRODUCTION

As the backdrop of these three stages of human history the question of religious relevance becomes more manageable. What makes religion relevant depends on the age in question. Archaic religion was relevant without causing much in the way of ethics at all, for ethics were then a major problem. But if religion had sided ethically in the Axial Period when ethics had become a problem, we wouldn't be assembled this week as representatives. Having lost step with relevance, it would have disappeared.

Similarly today, social ethics having emerged as man's new responsibility if religion doesn't assume its share of this responsibility it will lose the relevance it has thus far enjoyed. Personal kindness is no longer enough. Institutions affect man's welfare no less than do interpersonal relations. This being so, enlightened compassion calls for social responsibility as much as it does face-to-face good will.

Base: It is now an established fact that if a child does not get a certain minimum of protein before the age of six he will be mentally deficient for the rest of his life. Our Conference is meeting in a city in which more inhabitants have no homes but the streets, where garbage serves as bathrooms and sidewalk corners are at once bedrooms for men and stables for beasts. Here in this Calcutta where 'Above the packed and pestilent town/Death leads down' no amount of personal kindness is going to insure that all children will receive the protein they need. For no other reason than that most of the persons who are in a position to see to it that they do live geographically removed. Direct, face-to-face kindness (the 'cup of water given in my name') won't solve the problem, but indirect, organized institutional kindness (trucks, or Save the Children Federation, or more equitable trade agreements) might.

Base: It took all of human history up to the middle of this century to develop an economy—that of the United States—capable of growing at the rate of 5% per annum. Such a growth rate, if sustained, would enable children to be roughly twice as wealthy as their parents. Less than twenty years separate us from now and already two economies (the West German and the Japanese) are pushing 8% per annum growth. If economies sustain this order of growth, children stand to be roughly six times richer than their parents and thirty-six times richer than their grandparents. These figures point up the fact that after capital accumulation reaches take-off momentum it increases exponentially. This places nations that take off early at an enormous advantage; they leave other nations not just behind but increasingly behind. The gap between them and less developed nations widens. The consequence is that if events proceed on present course, the world is going to become in the remainder of our century even more unbalanced in wealth and power than it already is. As the population explosion is entering in the "have not" nations, the "have" nations will represent a decreasing proportion of the world's population while presenting an increasing proportion of the world's wealth and power. Pointing us this trend towards a world composed of islands of affluence on a mainland of misery, the situation is neither just nor healthy.

Base: Ten years ago it came clearly to view that for the first time in human history enough metabolic and mechanical energy is available to provide high standards of living for everyone in North America almost immediately and everyone in the world within forty years despite the population explosion. All that stands between us and such universal affluence is invasion of the social institutions needed to effect the requisite distribution.

Man's well-being has always been conditioned by his social matrix. The point of the above examples is to emphasize that this matrix, which now can be controlled, needs be controlled. We have reached the point in history where to be indifferent to social structures is, in the last analysis, to be indifferent to people.

The moral that religion should convert to social action! Not precisely. Religion should take up social action but not confine itself thereto. Moreover, in becoming active toward society it should be active in a special way. These distinctions are not simple but they are important, sufficiently important to occupy us for the balance of this paper.

Religion has three dimensions: transcendental, personal, and social. To some extent all three have been present from the start, but they have come to prominence successively. Archaic Religion kept religion's transcendental component at stage center, attending almost entirely to adequating man's finite, ephemeral acts to the heroic paradigms that lodged them in eternity. Axial Religion added personal concerns to the repertoire and sought the education of conscience, compassion, self-knowledge, and forgiveness. In adding social responsibility to preceding agents, Modern Religion effects a third great extension.

But it must be an extension, not a replacement—everything turns on this distinction. If in the Axial Period religion had relinquished eternity for love of neighbor it would have caused in religion for ethics: it did not, of course, do this: statements like "We love, because he love us" (1 John 4:19), and "It is not for the love of creatures that creatures are dear; but for the love of the Soul in creature this creatures are dear" (Mihaldh-Aryapada Upanishad, II, 4) make clear that the ethics of Axial Religion was in direct touch with its religious source. Whether the social thrust of Modern Religion is genuinely religious or only seemingly so is being in actuality indistinguishable from secular social actions depends on whether it represents an ex-
tension of religion’s transcendental and personal concerns or has relinquished the

The distinction, timelessly important in deep-thinking, imperceptible ways, is about to become politically important. The United States is a case in point. Churches are no longer political organizations; they are not. But clergy and laymen are becoming politically active, marching on Washington, destroying draft records in Milwaukee, abetting revolutions in South America. A paradox in the making, one that could develop into a major contradiction. The Supreme Court has already been invoked and the problem is in its infancy.

Nothing can save the Court from the headaches that are in store for it, but the principle that should guide it in its decisions seems to be clear. If it is the one just stated, Social action is religion when its agonists are equally at work on religion’s personal and transcendental dimensions.

These three dimensions figure so prominently in this discussion that it behooves us to take a moment to identify them a little more precisely than we have so far. Religion’s social dimension is reasonably self-evident. It consists of its efforts to change social structures (create world government, put fair housing laws) or affect the influence that flows through structures already in existence (foreign aid appropriations, or whether in the U.S. $8.6 billion will go into anti-ballistic-missile or the ghetto).

Religion’s personal dimension revolves the direction of concern, channeling it toward the self and its inward journeys. It is antithetical to the religions outlook to see all life’s problems as externally originated; to see them diminishes the soul’s status, reducing it to a pawn that could be manipulated into fulfillment or defeat. Given the soul’s vulnerability, it is conceivable that defeat might be engineered, but fulfillment never. For fulfillment cannot be borrowed; even with grace it must in part be won. Hence solitude, spiritual exercises, discipline ranging from prayer and fasting to asepsis. To characterize these as inward journeys is accurate in that they seek to change one’s own self, but it would be a mistake to assume that they involve a retreat or withdrawal from the world. On the contrary, the paradoxical object of most soul searching and spiritual homework is to liberate the dungeon of the self to enable it to open up to life more freely, fully, and joyfully.

The central object of personal religion is to strike contact with religion’s transcendental dimension, but the latter needs to be separately identified to make clear that just as there is secular social action, there are secular self-improvement programs, psychoanalysis, sensitivity training, and the like. Religion’s external dimension is fundamental, both personal and social religion proceed from it and continue to draw from it. It is also elusive. Historically in the West we could have identified it by invoking the word “God”, but in our century the contours of that word have blurred, beyond which stands the complicating fact that it has no equivalent in Afro-Asian faiths. Eternal religion is hung up on “why” questions, beginning with why anything exists rather than nothing. It deals with the individual’s stance toward his world, whether he feels at home in it or alienated from it—the ways he belongs to it and the ways he does not belong to it but is separate from and stands over against it, grounding thereby to an ultimate beyond it. Eternal religion grapples with the failure that in some form or another visits everyone—how we can live with ourselves and feel acceptable when in so many ways we are not; how content is in some way with everything can happen, as we feel in some sense it does, when in the long run it would appear that nothing matters. Running throughout is the question of meanings: how life can be meaningful when so much of it reads like an idiot’s tale. Eternal religion knows that there are no definitive answers to these questions. It ranges in time and space for insight—prayer, vision, a revelation which, by paring words, will disclose directly why we exist and the world is the way it is in something of the way loving explains why we are male and female.

IV

Even Communists now concede that “faith for the Christian can be a stimulus for social commitment,” a marked qualification of their original perception of religion as the voice of the people. It would be pleasant to think that religion’s transcendental and personal dimensions protect it against the special dangers to which social efforts are heir—fanaticism, pyrrhic, mere ends country, and discouragement—but nothing turns on this. With such safeguards or without them, religions must join the world.

Its social efforts differ from those of secularists primarily in their personal and transcendental roots but there is another difference: religion’s guiding social goal must be general. Images of a new heaven and a new earth, of sons lying down with lions, of mental and spiritual lepers broken into phallic forms are vague, but in this case savingly vague. For sharpened much further they become ideologies. Ideologies have their uses, but sooner or later all are surprised by history. One or another may merit qualified support at a given moment, but to become tied to any would be to lose the freedom and flexibility religion needs if its social voice is to be timeless and contemporary. Probably no social goal more specific than that every child of God have an equal chance at life’s opportunities accurately unqualified religions endorsement.

Though there are good that religion must now include all three of the components enumerated. It would be foolish to contend that everyone should
Some people are beginning to agree. In "Up to Our Steeples in Politics," two ministers chide their fellow Christians for swallowing the prevailing American assumption that "the political order...is the only source and authority to which we can and ought to repair for relief from what ails us..." Politics has become an end. We have been pulled into believing that whatever ails us...can be cured exclusively by political and social nostrums."

"If there be East and West/It is not wisdom," sang that delightful, Tibetan saint Milarepa. In view of what East has to learn from West today about religious relevance and West from East about religious relevance, his words acquire new meaning.
The Relevance of Hinduism

by

Dr. V. Raghavan
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On the subject of the relevance of Hinduism today, I desire to place before you my ideas from a special as well as a general point of view. Although I say this to make a start, I am sure I will not be able as I go along to keep the two points of view separate. In fact, what I want to say on behalf of Hinduism will, I hope, gain strength from the latter point of view; for it is on the general, the fundamental and universal aspects of Hinduism that I propose to concentrate my short exposition so that its relevance and validity may be seen in their true proportions and depth.

Modern developments have brought the peoples of the world together for good and bad. To make good or bad out of these developments is solely in our hands. One of the results which should be deemed good, or out of which we should still try to derive as much good as possible, is the meeting of cultures and the study of the writings and religions of other peoples. The study of Hinduism by those not professing that religion - as also by those who profess it but have come under the influence of the theories and interpretations of the former - may be considered to have had, so far, three phases. The first began with the academic orientalist; and the second what the missionary cultivated as part of his proselytization. The third is a recent development, indeed a part of a phenomenon which embraces the whole of Asia.

It began with the end of the Second World War and the disappearance of colonialism, accompanied by the wakening of the several countries of Asia into their new freedom, in which they have been faced with problems of developing their economy, industry and production and extending the benefits of the welfare state to as large a sector of their people as possible. The development of these countries became the concern of those more affluent, with whose aid these new programs have been undertaken. In the wake of these extensive aid programs, economics and social scientists, particularly from the biggest aiding country, the United States, had been visiting the aid areas and carrying out, in their own way, field work and

textual and contextual studies to assess the impact of the aid given, the tempo of the process of development and the quantum and nature of the achievement. Among these economists and social scientists, so far as India is concerned, and with rare exceptions, we find the latest critics of Hinduism.

A considerable literature has grown up on the theme of tradition and modernity, with several variations of this title. Some of the authors of these works, as also their students and followers in this country itself, have been extremely vocal with their own findings about the incompatibility of religion and technological growth, and about Hinduism as (in their view) an impediment to progress and all that modernization implies. India itself, under the leadership of the first prime minister of the country after Independence, opted for such planned development. Although the influence of Western civilization had, during the British period, made itself felt on the Indian mind, in its modes of thought and in its patterns of westemized behavior, the impact of modernization has been more potent since Independence by reason both of its acceleration and its sweep. Even to comparatively detached a student of Hinduism as the present Spinkling Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford, Professor Ziesemer, says in his book Hareenam (London 1947): "The struggle between the old and the new in which we see the new on the one side triumphant, however protracted and bitter the struggle, is still going on. Hinduism is living through a time of crisis which threatens the very pre-suppositions on which it has hitherto been built, and it is too early to say how and in what direction it will transform itself: but transform itself it must . . . ." What Professor Ziesemer gives as his own final answer, we shall come to later.

The apprehensions which those who attach value to religion have formed are the subject of discussions in numerous books by leading thinkers of a different and larger background in the West, which is the mother and gran in modern times of all the new ideologies and movements leading to the orientation of human effort to scientific and technological development and growth of production, trade and affluence, and finding expression not only under the capitalist system but also under that of socialism and communism. The industrial revolution, the increase of machinery and automation and the attendant social, mental and intellectual changes have been analyzed with great concern and wisdom. One wonders if the apostles in the West as well as their counterparts in the East, who want to alter the entire face of the East and change the very structure of its society and re-fashion its mode of thought, pause to listen to the other voices of the thinking West, the elite there, and profit by their warnings about the other side of the picture, about the attendant and growing evils of this system as it affects individual life, social conduct and state policies. For example, Michael Townsend, writing some time back, asked in the chapter on The Standard of Comfort in India, in his book Asia and Europe how it was
fair, or justified or worthwhile, to tamper with the value-structure of India on the basis of one's own ailed convictions that comfort and civilization are identical. The recent book The Money Maker and His Profit: Cultural Formulas in Educational Advertisements, released in this context, the oriental fable of a monkey seeing a fish in water, thinking that it is uncomfortable, and out of a humanitarian desire to save it, sitting itself out of the water: the fish being hardly grateful for this, not being able to live at all outside. The American social scientist, mentioned earlier, who has pronounced Hinduism a stumbling block to economic and industrial development, has generally been guided by the principles of the German sociologist Max Weber whose works have gained a fresh vogue with them. We shall therefore examine the basic ideas of the Weberian thesis.

To his Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism (1922, The Free Press) Weber wrote: "The spirit of Capitalism cannot find congenial motivational sources or support in the spirit of Hinduism. It could not have occurred to the Hindu to see the economic success he had attained through devotion to his calling as sign of his holiness. . . ." (p. 332). What does Wares mean by salvation here? Could any religion see this or have such a conception of salvation? Elsewhere he defines the capitalist spirit as the temper of single-minded concentration on pecuniary gain. To the assignment of such an over-riding importance, such singleminded devotion to pecuniary gain, Hinduism cannot of course subscribe, in fact, to be solely motivated by material gain is considered reprehensible. Here, at the time of the disintegration of his proposed conversion, tells his brother Lakeshman that one to whom material gain is all and end-all of his life is to be determined, "Deepam paurushaprameke!" In his Basic Concepts in Sociology (English translation, London 1956), Weber speaks of a "goal-oriented course of conduct or behaviour" as a value-oriented conduct, i.e. conduct according to one's notion of how he feels called upon to act as required by a sense of duty, honor, beauty, religion, etc. Here, of course, he widens the base of conduct from the pure profit motive to duty, beauty, duty, etc. In fact, he is unconsciously referring to the whole gamut of the springs of human action which the Hindu concept of the four purushas explains adequately. The Protestant ethic that Weber postulates as the most potent basis of the profit-making urge and all that comes out of the enterprise may also be combined. To quote André Guillery (Essays on Hinduism, pp. 309-310), "the fact and most ruthless capitalists were born up in the tradition of Calvinism," believing that good works and inner life were without eternal significance, they gave up charity and self education and turned all their attention to getting on in the world, to what Weber, in India we refer to as Chaturya. The Protestants have not been the only successful business magnates and entrepreneurs. In his essay "A Criticism of Max Weber and His School" in the collection The Wasmuth Tenth and Tenth, Vol. 1, edited by
spatial, aim, which together form the fundamental aspirations of man. Various and the religious or spiritual ideal exercise a constraining influence on the pursuit of profit and pleasure and it is here that the difference comes between Hinduism and Western and the new cult of gearing up the whole people and the whole process of life to industry and production.

The above ideas within the framework of Hindu thought provide enough basis for building up and developing our economy with the aid of modern technology. To have some basis in one's own tradition or accommodating new ideas it is an excellent thing, for it neutralizes an allergy to new ideas by making them, through identification or interpretation, integral parts or continuations of parts of one's own tradition. It smooths transition and avoids revolution or sudden destruction. Traditional Culture and the Impact of Technological Change by George M. Foster (University of California at Berkeley) has the following observations embodying the same valuable ideas:

When new tools and technical innovations can be adapted to traditional power patterns, the probability of acceptance is greater than if no attempt at accommodation is made. (p. 90)

... in all societies traditional institutions have recognized roles; if new forms can be integrated or associated with these traditional roles, they have a better chance of being accepted than if there is nothing to integrate. (p. 91)

Dent speaks of how in India there is a tendency in cultures to interpret the preferred innovation in terms of the dominant theme and existing mode of society. (p. 89)

The point of view is something like this: the culture is all good or all bad. Basically all cultures are reasonably good, otherwise they would not have survived... real progress is made when it springs from and builds on the good things already existing in a culture, rather than when it is defined in terms of an approximation of the American way of life. ... All could be greatly improved within the economic limitations of each country building on what exists rather than by trying to approximate to standards that had been developed for Americans in the U.S. (pp. 89-90)

Further he does not believe that industrialization must produce a carbon copy of Western social institutions; different kinds of social and political institutions can support an individual economy as is clear from the Soviet example. ... This is not simply the morality of cultural relativism. It is not simply tolerance and broad-mindedness. It is basic wisdom for the regional agent. For in every culture there is reason for every element. Sometimes the reason is no longer valid then their will not be dangerous. At other times the ways are still valid and change may spell disaster. (p. 91)

The normal Hindu is the householder, the pujari, one in the second of the four stations of life. This second station of life is praised as the highest, as it supports the other three, the student and the two classes of those who have retired from active life, bhaktiswaras, upangitas, and Sayans. To support these classes of society, the householder must have sufficient resources. Hospitality is enjoined as one of his primary duties, and this, along with the important concept of dana, making gifts and helping the poor and the unfortunate, and Ipsa, setting up charitable establishments and works of public utility, tanks, wells, parks, avenues, trees, and so on - all these form part of the Hindu conception of socialism or the social obligations of man, by which the more affluent is made to share his wealth with the less fortunate. There is a Mantra in the Rigveda which says that he who cooks or eats for himself alone eats sin. The Bhagavadgita puts it with an edge when it says that he who comes more is a third to be punished - "Adhitam praddhitham na iti sa tathah artham." The word of Vaishnavayaka states that to attain salvation, it is not necessary to renounce life or leave the house but if a man as a householder earns wealth by righteous means, it is well grounded in the knowledge of the ultimate principles, it is hospitable to guests, performs his duties by his ancestors and is a speaker of truth, he too is liberated.

What is more relevant today than the philosophy of dharma, the performance of one's appointed duty devoutly as an act abhorrence of the Lord, which the Gita taught (XVII) - "Svayam karya abhajatu swabhima"? The injunction of Veda and Dharma Sutta that one has to perform his ordained duty and that his neglect is to be averted for imprints sufficient righteousness to work, it is further sanctified by the Gita in the doctrine, quoted earlier, in which every act man performs as his duty is a flower with which he adores God. It is interesting to note some Catholic parallels:

In the New World Duty of Man, Continuing the Faith as Well as Practice of the Present Age, we read, "...the man that serves God by continual application to the duty of his calling and state of life, besides the comfort of a good conscience which is of all others the greatest happiness, such an honest and industrious laborer may entirely depend upon the goodness of God, that he will always take care of him" (Gita, Yajnavalkaya vyanjanah). H. M. Roberton, who quotes the above in his criticism of Max Weber's thesis, quotes also the following: "There are duties to be performed in all conditions of life and it is in acquitting oneself of these duties that one is sanctified." The great epic the Mahabharata, brings out the dignity and sanctity of one's calling in two dastardly famous stories which the grand old man of the royal house of the Kauravas, Bhishma, parades to King Yudhishthira, the stories of the merchant Tulsidas at Banaras and the virtuous hunter, Dharma Vyadha, in the forest. In each of these two cases a Brahman, proud of his learning and austerity, is made to go to the merchant and then the hunter for enlightenment on the secret of dharma in actual practice.

The conception of performing one's duty in a disinterested and perfect way, unsullied of gain or loss of advantage, as acts which one has to perform, constitutes the teaching of jiva-jnana in the Bhagavad Gita. It is this which formed a powerful inspiration to some of our greatest leaders of public life in modern times, Tilak and Gandhi. Such a conception of
action and duty effects also a syncretism between the secular and the sacred. This doctrine of Sadvashram is part of the functional organization of society, the world, usually referred to as caste, and often attacked these days and considered by the social scientists referred to above as an impediment to the advancement of the country. The caste of Hindus need not engage as for long now, as it has figured in several books and discussions. I shall content myself only with one quotation on it, from M. Kotnis's Asa and Embope (p. 72). He says "I firmly believe caste to be a marvelous discovery, a form of socialism, which through the ages, has protected Hindu society from anarchy and from the worst evils of industrial and competitive life - it is an automatic peer law to begin with and the strongest known form of trade unionism." The caste is comparable to an orchestra in which, irrespective of the nature of the instrument one plays, all contribute to a common end of a rich and perfect symphony. There is no high and low in this. The fisherman in Kailasa's play Jagran, when the city guards ridicule him for his calling, replied that however reprehensible from other points of view, one's calling is not to be abandoned. "Saktis aha and simritas na kothi na kothi vismarjanai" (Act V prelude).

It is one thing to point out how, within the framework of Hinduism, there are concepts and beliefs which could form an adequate basis and motive force for modern development, so that it is not necessary to throw Hinduism overboard for this purpose. It is quite another thing to accept wholesale the new doctrine that economic development is the sole aim of our life. What is the difference between this doctrine and the Marxist ideology? As has been shown above, on the basis of the concept of purushartha, religion and spirituality are as much the legitimate and natural impulses and aspirations of man as economic gain. No apology is needed on behalf of religion. Nor does sovereign religion have to bow to the new manner, adjust itself to its gradually declining position, and eventually fade out.

The assumptions, on the basis of which the changes that have been coming are taken for granted as if inevitable, are never proven or universally accepted. First among them is the idea of a linear progress. Many doubt whether there is such a process at all. Some see rather a rhythm of ebb and flow. Some, with the Hindus, see the movement as cyclic. Some, taking their stand on the second law of thermodynamics, consider that energy is running down and order passing slowly into disorder. "And we should expect after ever-increasing complexity of life," says Karl Popper in his Prolegomena, "a return to simplicity... science itself might show us the way." (pp. 214-25) If all this change is justified in the name of history, one may with authority say that historicalism is not a value (A. B. Hume, Ernest G. Marx) and what has to be done inevitably is not necessarily what might be done. Religious truth is beyond time and history and any attempt to bring it up-to-date will only dilute or distort it. In the modern context, for example, it is being made into something merely "humanistic" - almost a sociological form, say "a kind of shelter whereby the world is to become easier and more pleasant place to live in." (K. N. Rajmohan). It is sometimes said that Hinduism is much engaged in individual salvation and does not attach much importance to working for others' salvation. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Such an assumption would negate the whole history of the achara, smruti and mystics of Hinduism, and the role they have played. Attention can be drawn to several contexts and ideas in Hinduism and its writings which speak of men of knowledge and realization still functioning for the benefit of the world, Kansa, and being as active after attaining knowledge as during their striving for it, with this difference; that their present activity is free and unbinding. The real world continues in our midst for our welfare, as Kansa says of his sage Kanva. Krishna has explained this clearly in the Gita, pointing to himself as the example of one continuing to be active, although free from any objective of personal gain. This is the ideal of a jivan mukti that has been taken by some of our thinkers as an ideal for the ideal public worker. Nor is there real substance in the argument that Hinduism suffers from a pessimistic outlook. To know the real value of material things it not pessimism. He is a fool who thinks that merely by multiplying one's wants or goods one is adding to his happiness.

The more the wants and desires are fulfilled, the more they grow, says Vyasa, even as by gratifying fire, you do not quench it but only inflame it more:

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The discoveries, breakthroughs or new ideas to enjoyment are not unmitigated blessings; they bring with them the reactions, decent of or undreamt of. The real remedy to this is the religious ideal, of chastening the course of the second and third powers, the science and art of the first three. In fact as embodied by Karna and Yudhisthira, and as enshrined immortally and with unending fascination by Vyasa, shama has, on the active plane, been the most inspiring ideal of Hinduism. It is still a potent force animating the nation. Zarathushtra, whose questions about the survival of Hinduism I quoted at the beginning of this paper, answers the question by saying that so long as this abiding ideal is there, Hinduism will not disappear. Zarathushtra says that this ideal is "what gives to Hinduism in all its phases its peculiar bitter-sweet flavor - the flavor too of a thirst for righteousness in a sunless world and a constant yearning for truth wherever it may be found. This flavor is enshrined as nowhere else in the legendary figure of Yudhisthira, the gentle compassionate 'King of righteousness' and in the historical figure of Mahatma Gandhi who declared that 'Truth is God.'"
... a system of which the essential basis is production for profit," observes J. D. Breslau (National Scientific Research - Progress 1994), "Scared by its own impetus into the present highly unstable and dangerous economic and political situation where plenty and poverty, desire for peace and the preservation for war exist side by side." The situation is best reflected in that country which is the model for the whole world now, the United States. Guided by its own ideals and time, tested by the concepts of its religious culture, some of which have been explained in this paper, India, should strive to evolve her own type of modernization. That is quite possible is what strikes a foreign student of India and Hinduism - W. C. Field Smith, who asks in his Modernization of a Traditional Society (Indian Council of World Affairs, Delhi), "Can the U.S. and the Soviet Union both be modern but in different ways? Are we sure that modernity will not be (or cannot be) multiform? Could India become modern in quite a different way yet?" (p. 6) If such a third way evolves in this country, we may say, it will, once again, be by the triumph of the role and relevance of religion, of dharma.

In the course of its long history and its building of different schools, Hinduism gave certain scientific analyses which are also relevant today when we are in the midst of many religions and want to understand them. Religions grow in particular times and areas and among particular peoples; and arise on different backgrounds and social and cultural features. When they expand over further areas and are accepted by more peoples, more such features become incorporated into them. For example, in the Hobbesian Lectures of Dr. Edward Hitch, Intelligence of Greek Ideas and Images upon the Christian Church (London, 1879), one reads the story of how the simple Sermon on the Mount took the creed of Greek philosophers, and thus something Semitic came under Hellenistic influence. It is the duty of the discerning to see the core, through the external and the historical.

This insight helps us with real understanding, transcending manas such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Sanatana and so on, names which may produce mutual allergy during discussions in a collection.

In its laboratory, Hinduism has given us a thorough scientific analysis of all religions. No religion can escape these two characteristics. Just as all food, from whatever area and of whatever substance, color, taste of consuming, etc. has to be assimilated as carbohydrates, proteins and fats, so also have all religions to be analyzed into the three approaches or sargam: jana, Kali and japa. As akshi sarga, several of them cut across their historical and cultural milieu and come together under one process. Their appeal or applicability also gets widened accordingly, leaving behind race, geography etc. Men take to these approaches by character and mental attitude and other cultural equipment, which Hinduism calls adhikar. Adhikar, meaning fitness or competence, is another idea which is relevant in the context of understanding the period of Hinduism and its organization of its multiple cults and practices on a ladder scheme, each of which is not in conflict for the ascendant, but is transcended when the higher zones is reached in his upward progress.

Hinduism makes a rational approach to man and his capacity, need and qualification, and instead of prescribing the same treatment to all, gives each what suits him or will be fruitful to him in his stage. As Lean Northrup says in his Religion in the Modern World (London, 1903), "There are degrees or plans of reality. There is no discrepancy between the planes of reality. I am, always a symbol of the higher and as such can suggest or evoke it." (pp. 32, 33). The classical exposition of the three paths, or jana as they are also called, is in the Bhagavad Gita. In the Bhagavad Gita, the most popular and powerful of the sargams, the same Krishna, in the course of his discourses to his kinman Udiyava, prescribes this receipt for persons of different character and equipment: "The path of knowledge is for those who are weary of life; those who have yet desire should pursue the path of sublimation through yoga; and for those who are not completely indifferent nor too much attached the devotional path bears fruit."

The implications of kama, jana and its relevance in an imposter of action have been stated already. All action done in a devout spirit, as discharging men's duty and as participation in a divine program is not only a form of adornment; it is also a great aid to the disciplining of oneself, a discipline. Jana is the most widespread form all over the world and it appeals to the bulk of humanity for reasons adduced by the Bhagavad. But it has some attendant features which have to be overcome in the larger interests of religious understanding. To love oneself only and to believe that that is the only road to salvation breeds sectarianism and the urge to convert others. History is too full of the wars and the destruction of cultures in the name of such religions. To quote Aristotle Huxley in his Even and Means, "It is the business of the rational idealist to curb continually upon this all-important fact. In this way, perhaps, he may be able to mitigate the evil tendencies which history shows to be inherent in the way of devotion and the belief in a personal deity."

The third and highest path is that of knowledge, which does not cherish either acts or devotion but includes them and eventually transcends them. Knowledge also idealizes acts in the form of rites and rituals, by giving them symbolic and mystic interpretations which are meaningful as meditative exercises. This intellectualizing of acts began with the Brahmanas and Upasniks and was developed later as a regular interpretative scheme to bring out a higher meaning from the myths and stories of the epics and epics, thus taking the former out of historicity and saving the latter from vulgarity. This de-materialization, as a social scientist would designate it, serves as a golden link between action and knowledge, and devotion and knowledge. The best-known of these zedical acts is japa, mentally rever-
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Form, charity is the recognition of the fundamental identity of myself and my neighbor. This true charity is by no means synonymous with altruism, for altruism as such tends to be more impotent than active.

It was on the basis of this one fundamental impersonal being, with his diverse personal forms, that Hinduism organized and reduced to understanding all his numerous forms and modes of worship that continuously manifest themselves. The universality and the eternal stability and vitality of Hinduism rest primarily on this fundamental. If Hinduism can call itself vishnu dharmam or philomor philosophy, it is because of this truth. There has been a continuous tradition of the philosophy of dharma among all nations; the Greek philosophers, too, spoke of the one God with many names. The great relevance of this today is that it provides a key for the great religions to unlock their inner unity and to understand each other better but also direct their energies spent on criticism or conversion to a common effort against irreligion, pseudo-religion, and social, political, and national substitutes for religion. The appreciation of this Hindu standpoint is gradually growing among students of religion and comparative religion all over the world, holding forth perhaps, in the not very distant future, the hope of the emergence of a world religion based on this universal principle.

In the book THE CIVILIZATION OF INDIA (New York 1943) Western R. A. F. KENYER speaks of this universality: “In all religions there are ‘unlosable’ essentials which appear in history in different forms and interpretations. With relations between religions thus relieved of confusion, at once by the growing unities of their indescribable contents, the understanding and acceptance of variety follows.” It is our hope that this understanding, the coexistence of the many chains of troubles besetting humanity, will grow in relevance and depth and be strengthened by the work of the Temple of Understanding.

Pramana Samskrita

\[\text{Sri parivara epigraha - Git}\

“Cherishing each other, let us achieve our common goal of supreme welfare.”

\[\text{RELEVANCE OF HINDUISM} \]
Christianity in a Pluralistic World

by

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ADDITION

Is the Christian religion still relevant today? Can it still give us men and women of the Twentieth Century, the faith we need in order to go on believing that reality is infinitely more than what appears to the eyes of our practical wisdom, the light that will illuminate our hearts and minds, and make us feel confident that human life has a meaning and leads somewhere? The law which, redeeming us from the isolation of our self-centered individualism, will inspire us to work in fraternal collaboration with all our fellow-men to the building up of a new world of peace and justice and universal brotherhood?

Many people ask themselves the question: Has modern science destroyed the very foundations of religious faith? Has modern philosophy demonstrated that life is absurd and meaningless? Has modern sociology made it clear that the City we have to build must be a profane and secular one, where human relations will be strictly functional and impersonal? Besides, has not history itself sufficiently exposed the insecurity and irreligion of the Christian religion? A dream, a beautiful dream it was, but has not that dream failed to materialize, and Christianity proven inadequate to its task of establishing peace, justice, and brotherhood?

It is a fact that many modern men and women of Christian heritage are inclined to regard the Christian religion as a thing of the past, a precious heirloom, a rich treasure-house of poetic images and symbols, a certain way of life inherited from their forefathers, with a familiar cycle of feasts and rituals and perhaps a code of personal conduct, but no longer the stupendous message that was to transform the world, the Divine Revelation which called men to freedom and joy. Like the two disembarked disciples walking away from Jerusalem towards Emmaus, they too would probably say: "We had great hopes, but...".

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

What is Christianity? The whole Christian religion can be expressed in the simple formula: Jesus is the end. Few words proclaimed the central mystery revealed in Christ, the mystery of the Incarnation. Not a new metaphysical system, not a new ethical code, not a mystical gnosis or theological idea. A fact, an event, at once historical and transcendent: The West was saved. The humble reality of our earthly and human existence becomes one with the eternal and absolute plenitude of light and life and joy. Jesus, the Jew, who lived and taught, suffered and died in Palestine, is the Lord, Yahweh, the One whose name is ineffable, the One without a second, to whom the Prophets have witnessed in all ages and nations: Jesus, the God-Man, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Saviour who died for the sins of all, and rose on the third day to lead men into the new life, cali-
ing all to be sober in faith as sons of the Father, to live in the freedom of the spirit as the members of one family, one people of God? I think this is Christianity.

THREE OBJECTIONS TO THE RELIGIOUSITY OF CHRISTIANITY AS A WORLD RELIGION

Has this Christianity still any relevance for the men of our time? Does not its historicity restrict its universal significance? Does not its proclamation of Jesus as the Lord and Saviour of all make it necessarily intolerant, and therefore unsuited to the secular and pluralistic world in which we now live? Does not its supernatural call to sacrifice and redemptive death make it alien to the modern spirit of humanism and the growing preoccupation of men with the earthly tasks that must be attended to here and now?

HISTORICITY AND CATHOLICISM

According to our Christian belief, God chose to come and enter into our human history. Jesus, in whose death the plenitude of divinity, was a Jew who spoke the language of his time, who accepted the traditions and customs of his people; not the universal man of the philosophers, but a particular man at a particular moment in history.

Yet we know that he died precisely because he stood against the narrow particularism of the religious and political leaders of his nation. Jesus preached a gospel of salvation that was not to be restricted to any particular race or people. The history of the Christian religion has continued the history of Jesus: because it incarnates itself deeply in the various societies and nations that accept its message, Christianity becomes historically conditioned and limited in its outward forms. But it always remains greater than any one of its particular expressions; it has never allowed itself to become the exclusive monopoly of any one race or nation. It is continually entering into new forms of vital synthesis with the new cultures and traditions of the people who profess it. Therefore, though always concrete and historical, it remains of universal significance.

In recent times, we have all witnessed the considerable effort of aggiornamento, i.e. renewal and adjustment to modern conditions, that has been undertaken by the Christian Church in the Second Vatican Council: ancient theologies and traditional systems of theology, administrative structures and institutional forms, practical cycles of conduct and discipline, all these historical legacies of human origin have been, and are being, re-examined in the light of Christian Gospel and with regard to the changing conditions of our modern world.

INTOLERANCE AND PLURALISM

But, we ask ourselves, is not the Christian religion radically unsuited to the religious pluralism which, more and more, becomes normal in our modern secular societies? Does not its very claim to universalism and catholicity make it naturally intolerant and even perhaps fanatical? Is it not a fact that, in the case at least, the Christian Church rarely participated in inter-religious conferences, and that it showed little respect for non-Christian religions?

It is certain that religious tolerance has rightly come to be considered as one of the most praiseworthy achievements of the modern mind. Here, in India, in a very special manner, intolerance is thought to be incompatible with genuine religiousness.

Is the Christian religion, in fact, intolerant? And what is its attitude towards religious pluralism? These questions do not concern Christians only; they concern all sincere believers, how to reconcile, without compromise or fitchfloss, a deep attachment to our own religious beliefs and a trancelike attitude of respect towards and fraternal collaboration with non professing other beliefs? How to keep in harmony the healthy and normal desire to share with others that which is for us a source of inspiration, and which we firmly believe to be truth of universal value, with the tolerance which is the necessary expression of our respect for the spiritual and personal freedom and dignity of our fellow men?

In our modern world, this question has assumed a very great importance. Men belonging to different religious traditions come every day into new forms of association, believers and unbelievers, Jews, agnostics and materialists must meet and collaborate in a thousand ways. The days are past when there was a clear line-up, a nearly insepable unity, between religion and culture, the profession of a particular faith, and social or political membership in a certain community. The "closed society" has had to make room for the "open society". Uniformity of religious belief and practice can no longer be imposed by modern secular societies.

In the 13th Century and during the first decades of the 19th, the answer most commonly proposed to the problem of religious pluralism was that of ecumenism. Under various guises, this synthesis prevailed in many places. It was often well-meaning, generous and idealistic, but it was in fact confusing, and it could not but be distasteful for all sincere believers. Christianity could have no truck with it. It was in fact the outcome of the philosophy which, directly or indirectly, dominated much of western thought for a long time: the metaphysical idealism of Hegel. Religion came to be regarded by many as a branch of philosophy, and the various religions of the world were supposed to be nothing but varied manifestations of the universal religion which, like the idea of Hegelianism, objectified itself in time and space.
through some dislocational process. Positivism and agnosticism came in the wake of idealism. Comparative religion and the first attempts to establish inter-religious conferences and parliaments long suffered from the dominating influence of scholars who were too often idealists, positivists or agnostics, philosophers rather than personal religious believers. Syncretism may have had its good points: it broke some barriers, it brought together some people who formerly had lived in complete ignorance of each other. It is today, like so many other 19th Century ideologies, a thing of the past.

The pluralism is an altogether different thing. It does not aim at promoting a new religion artificially constructed. It simply approaches the diversity of religious traditions with respect and an effort at positive understanding; it fosters an attitude of dialogue and collaboration, without asking anyone to abandon or belittle what is sacred and true to him. It is not based upon a philosophy and it does not reduce living faiths into categories of a preconceived system. The tolerance it teaches is not the agnostic's or the pragmatist's theoretical relativism, but the personal and existential respect every man owes to his fellow-men and the freedom of his conscience. With this pluralism Christianity is in complete accord.

The last Vatican Council, in its official Declaration on the attitude of the Church to the non-Christian religions, clearly stated that Christians should "through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions . . . recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among those belonging to other traditions"; the same Declaration invites us to consider "what men have in common and what draws them to fellowship." The religion of Christ is not out to destroy any of the precious values found in the various spiritual and cultural traditions of mankind.

I may add that Christianity, because of its belief in Christ Jesus, the God-Man, is opposed to all forms of fanaticism and intolerance. Christians do believe that Christ is the Word of God who illuminates every man, that his salvific grace reaches far beyond all the visible limits of the historical Church which he founded, and that no man of good will is outside the influence of his Life. That is why there can be no impediment in our zeal to proclaim his gospel; we know him to be there, already invisibly at work in the hearts and minds of all men.

Besides, true pluralism means freedom from social and political compulsion in religious matters. Christianity has again and again opposed various forms of spiritual totalitarianism and regimentation. The separation of Church and State, the clear distinction between temporal and spiritual realms, the sacred principle that religious faith must be the free assent of man to what in conscience he believes to be true: these are essential values in the eyes of all Christians. This is why genuine pluralism is in perfect harmony with Christian doctrine.

—PATRICK FALCON

—CHRISTIANITY IN A PLURALISTIC WORLD

OTHER-TOWEDNESS AND HUMANISM

Our third question was whether Christianity was not incompatible with true humanism; whether a modern man, intent on his responsibility here and now in the world, should not find irrelevance a religion that proclaims the kingdom of Heaven, that insists on the sinfulness of man and his need of supernatural grace; that affirms the primacy of spiritual values; that recognizes suffering, poverty, and detachment as ways especially blessed by God. The "other-worldliness" of Christian may seem to set it against the spirit of our modern age. I am sure that much of this is not peculiar to Christianity: all the religions of mankind may, in various manners, face the same challenge. Is the need of a religious faith still truly matters more in the Twentieth Century?

What are the great problems that beset the minds of men today? The sub-human misery of vast masses of men, and the under-developed condition of many regions of the world; the racial hatreds that divide men; the terrible anxiety caused by the possibility of nuclear warfare; the population explosions; the widespread dissatisfaction of youth, and the growing attraction of violence. Has religion a vital role to play in the solution of these agonizing problems? Has Christianity any relevance in our modern world context? Do men today still need religion?

I believe that the first thing which men stand in need of today, and lacking which they can never solve this century's earthly problems, is a strong and inspiring sense of hope. Only religion can give this hope. This religious hope is not the consolation to which men resort when everything else has failed them; it is not a Utopian optimism based upon some romantic idea of the natural goodness of man; this hope does not bypass the world, it looks at the world and man in the world with realism and a keen awareness of all that is evil in the world and in the heart of man, but it vanquishes all despair about man and about the world because it is founded upon an unshakable faith in God as creator and redeemer of the world. It gives us confidence and courage to accept our task in the world with joy and determination. Science, sociology, psychology, economic planning, all the technological resources of modern times, must be marshalled to solve our problems, but all these would be of no avail if, deeper than all these, a living hope were not there to inspire men. Modern man is anxious; he is frustrated in the midst of plenty, or desperate because of material insecurity and insecurity; he hunger for meaning, purpose, a constructive and prospective answer to his present crisis. I sincerely believe that religion has never been as relevant as it is today to the solution of our most vital human problems.

The second thing which our modern world needs today, a thing which again religion alone can give, is succour for man as a person. Man is more and more reduced to a mere number in a series, a creature whose personality is
threatened by the machines and institutions which our technological age has created. He feels small, a small cog in an immense and impersonal machine, and he is often treated as a mere object, a thing manipulated by powerful forces that crush his human dignity. I believe that religion is the only real safeguard of true humanism because it alone proclaims the unique greatness of man. For a religious believer, every single man, whatever his rank or his intelligence, his race, his power, is worthy of infinite respect because he is loved by God, called by God to share in the divine life, because he is a temporal creature with an eternal destiny, a material being endowed with a spiritual soul. This personal and spiritual dimension of man is often lost sight of nowadays; this is why so many solutions proposed to our human problems fail to solve them; they do not take into account the total reality of man.

If religion is needed by man to keep his hope alive and to safeguard the respect due to him as a person, religion again is vitally needed by modern man to protect his freedom. And, first of all, religion clearly affirms this spiritual freedom against all the doctrines and ideologies based upon determinism. It further educates man to freedom, this freedom having to be conquered through a life-long struggle against the compulsions of passion and instinct. Religious faith alone can free man from all the impersonal forces that enslave his mind and his heart: our modern world, with all the power of mass propaganda techniques, makes it difficult for us to keep mentally and spiritually free. Public opinion, fashion, political ideologies, practical materialism with its commercial idolatry of money, sex and pleasure, these are tyrannical masters; to remain free, we must maintain in our lives a clear awareness of absolute values. Only through being firmly anchored to the absolute can we fight successfully against these impersonal tyrannies. I should add, and this takes us even deeper into the very reality of religious life, only through our humble and loving reliance upon divine grace can we possess our truth and minds in freedom.

But most important of all, I see that which the world requires if the problems that face us today are to be solved. Not the sentimental philosophies of romantic idealism, not the facile and abstract "love of humanity" preached by philosophers, but the doctrine of self-sacrificing love which only religion can inspire. Men today realize better than before how much all are organically united in the human family, and yet bitter conflicts still set men against men in our modern world. The very individualism of modern society has painfully increased the competitiveness of men. The 19th Century doctrine of "lightened self-interest" has proved shallow and deadly. If our racial hatreds are to be surmounted, if justice and some equality are to be brought about among the people of the world, if our functional and mechanistic life is to be made humanly livable, we need more and more men who can love. But love does not come easily to man; without religion, all human loves tend to become selfish and narrow.

I was expected to speak of the relevance of Christianity in the modern world. The things I have and just now are true, I believe, of the Christian religion they are true also of all the great religions represented here. This is why I have purposely abstained from promoting them as exclusive characteristics of Christianity. To save men from anxiety and despair, to preserve and foster the respect man is entitled to as a person, to help him in his struggle against all that would enslave him, and unstintingly to call all men to love, this is the duty of all religious believers, and in the fulfillment of this sacred duty we must all eternally collaborate.

The task of making religion relevant in the modern world

That religion is relevant today is clear to us. Yet there are many all around us who question or deny this relevance. It is therefore important that we ask ourselves why many modern men and women find religion irrelevant.

One reason may well be the fact that, often, the language of religion, its conceptual representation and imagery, have become meaningless for many. A constant effort has to be made to re-interprete our religious beliefs in terms clearly intelligible and significant to people living in the world of today.

Another and more fundamental reason is that, in the minds of many, religion is associated with social and political conservatism. Great religious leaders and dedicated believers have always been rebels who refused to compromise with injustice and untruth, but there have been numerous others who never suspected their religion wholeheartedly. At various times, political leaders have exploited religion by patronizing it; religious believers have also sought in various ways the support and alliance of worldly forces, thus compromising the spiritual purity and freedom of their religious action. Besides, the conflation of religion of all forms of violence and hatred has created the impression that religion is hostile to social change.

It is the duty of all religious men today to work uncompromisingly and fearlessly for social justice, peace and true brotherhood among men of all races and nations.

Thirdly, religion is looked upon by many modern people as superstitious and irrational; this is mainly due to the long and unjustified prevalence of last century's rationalism and positivism. We have seen that contemporary philosophers have denounced the geometrical simplifications of rationalism and many leading scientists today recognize that the seeming conflict between science and religion was the result of misunderstanding. The acknowledgment of "mystery" and transcendence has come back into the very midst of modern thought, including scientific thought. Many of the philosophers and scientists of yesterday created against religion. This widespread error can be overcome only if religious believers will enter into a
cordial and respectful dialogue with all believers, so that these prejudices may be removed and all may perceive that religion gladly accepts the discoveries and certitudes of genuine science and never seeks to stifle the illumination of his intellect.

CONCLUSION

Is the Christian religion still relevant today? Is modern man still in need of religious faith? As a Christian priest living in close touch with young Christian people, as a college teacher who has known personally many students belonging to different religious traditions and communities, I can answer without hesitation that religion has never been so relevant as it is today in this world—which is, all around us, searching for a way to more justice, more freedom, more love and brotherhood.

As a priest and as a scholar, I see the need for a renewal of religious faith and practice. The youth of our time is hankering for faith, hope and love. I believe that the world that is growing under our eyes is, more eagerly and sincerely than ever before, searching for absolute values. Men, young and old, are in fact more religious than men have ever been before.

Whether they will or will not find the answers they are now anxious to discover may greatly depend upon the manner in which we believers not merely teach them our religious doctrines, but bear witness to them through our lives.

The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path

by

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Throughout history the practice of adherence to and belief in religion has been a virtually universal aspect of human society. And, as a rule, the increase in complexity and sophistication of a given culture borne with it an accompanying increase in the level of ethical and philosophical development of that society's religious thought.

Today we find materialism, skepticism and indifference. True, these anti-religious attitudes existed in earlier times, even in ancient Greece and India. But in earlier times they were largely confined to select groups of philosophers or other exclusive minorities. Today these ideas have penetrated to nearly all social levels (regardless of education) among the advanced nations of the world. In Europe and America they have insidiously encroached upon the traditional forms of religion. Educated members of the free Western nations have begun to follow the same dictates.

It is not religion alone which seems threatened. Ethics, philosophy, metaphysics and mysticism also appear to suffer before the onslaught of industrialization, science and psychology. Such concepts as justice, virtue, infinite being and transcendental absolute which occupied the minds of the ancients are now challenged as being hypothetical and false. At worst they are pure verbiage and delusions lacking empirical and experiential verification. Spiritual experiences now take the status of psychological phenomena and sometimes can be better induced by chemistry than by meditation or prayer. Ethics as a philosophy suffers the same fate as metaphysics. Ethics as a behavioral code for conducting one's life, is, in the eyes of traditional moralists, becoming mocked and discarded.

Such are the features of the modern age. What then of religion? Even the newest of the existing major religions: Islam, is well past its first millennium. Christianity rapidly approaches its two-thousandth birthday, while Judaism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism all share roughly contemporary origins dating around 3000 B.C. Judaism and Hinduism extend even further back into antiquity.
Instead of memorialising upon Ultimate Reality, he spoke of craving and sorrow, of ordinary human experience. For, he explained, it is in the here and now that we can act and thus affect our destinies. Moreover, the Buddha never claimed a monopoly on truth. The truth was there for any man to find. His authority lay only in the fact that he had discovered it first and could show others the way to this discovery.

In order to explain the central concepts of Buddhist teaching and practice we should first note the way in which Buddhism views man and his relationship to the world about him.

The Buddha regarded the question of ultimate beginnings as irrelevant to the problems of life in the present. Change and cause and effect are the paramount features of the Buddhist concept of the universe. All things mental, physical and social go through an unending process of birth, growth, decay and death. Nothing finite is static, immutable or unchanging. Whatever has an origin is subject to cessation, be it man or mountain, consciousness or constellation. And what is it that regulates this unending flux and mutation? The answer is cause and effect. Each existing condition becomes the cause of future conditions, and these effects in turn become the causes of conditions which arise after them. Even the world itself will, after great eons of time, wear away but other worlds have existed before, and others will continue to arise into the unending future. There need not then be a beginning or an end to time but rather eternal cause and effect with world evolutions and dissolutions stretching back into the infinite past and continuing into the infinite future. All of these concepts are clearly stated in the Pali scriptures and require no degree of alienation or reinterpretation to find compatibility with the view of modern science.

Such is the way in which Buddhist views man and the world. How does this relate to the religion as lived and practiced?

In Buddhist thought the central issue in life is neither philosophical in the sense of resolving ultimate mysteries nor religious in the sense of worship, veneration and ceremonies. Rather the prime concern is happiness and sorrow. There are moments of true happiness and fulfillment and moments of sorrow, frustration, irritation and despair. All this comes about through cause and effect, and pleasurable and displeasurable mental states are no exceptions. Thus the solution to suffering is to understand those factors which produce desirable or undesirable states of mind and with this understanding to guide our lives in such a way as to minimize the unwholesome while developing the wholesome to its maximum possible realization. Consequently the central teaching of Buddhism is the Four Noble Truths.

The first of the Four Truths simply states that suffering, frustration, discomfort and unwanted experiences in general are an inherent aspect of life. The second states that the primary cause of such discomfort is desire or misdirected pleasure seeking. Third, we are told that suffering can be overcome; and fourth the means by which this is done.
The last of these Four Truths, known as the Righteous Path, thus forms the basis of Buddhist practice. It includes the disciplines, the practices and the insights by which one may grow spiritually.

Feelings and desires determine our behavior and also our consequent happiness or sorrow. Therefore, the purpose of the Righteous Path is to produce, by means of self-training, a new and better human being and to enable one to progressively mature towards the relative or absolute realization of the Noble Truths. These practices are both negative and positive. On the negative side one seeks the eradication of greed, hatred, egotism, delusion. The positive ones are to cultivate and develop kindness, compassion, equanimity, wisdom and insight. Greed, hatred and other unwholesome mental states are not only predisposed to sorrowful consequences, in addition they are in and of themselves agitated and discomforting. Conversely, kindness and compassion are more than forerunners of happy conditions; by their very nature they are rich and rewarding experiences.

One should be noted that Buddhism regards the human mind as a compounded phenomenon of various attributes and qualities. Consequently the techniques for development and purification of the mind must likewise be multi-dimensional and varied in accordance with individual needs. Extending the mind to right understanding; guiding speech, habits and profession into harmonious life patterns; cultivation of discipline and energy and meditative stilling of the mind to bring about awareness of noble thoughts and feelings that normally escape awareness – these are the techniques by which one progresses along the Righteous Path. This is the practice of Buddhism as originally taught by the Buddha himself.

Now, acknowledging that actions are preceded first by thought and motivation, we see that good and evil originate from the mind. Thus a mind which has realized the Buddhist goals of subduing greed, hatred and egotism while developing kindness, wisdom and compassion is a mind which will have a natural and spontaneous virtue. The need for arbitrary rules of conduct will be greatly lessened and one's goodness will be genuine rather than enforced.

It may be seen that while Buddhism proceeds from a very different set of premises than most other religions, we note a nearly complete agreement as to the standards of ethical conduct: love, kindness, charity and generosity are universally hailed by all of man's great religions regardless of what concepts their doctrines are built upon, and Buddhism not only teaches us to be kind, but psychological practices tells one how to achieve the genuine feeling that is kindness. For kindness and compassion, like all other aspects of the mind and this universe, arise through cause and effect.

In our discussion of Buddhism to this point we see it as a system of psychological principles and practices which an individual can apply to the renovation of his own spiritual advancement and emotional well-being. Thus the prime value of Buddhism in the modern world is that it shows one a way to happiness and peace of mind regardless the political and social environment. However, it would be erroneous to assume that the Buddha's doctrine was personal to the evolution of concern for human relationships and society as a whole.

The reason for emphasis upon individual development was founded upon the principle that the blind cannot lead the blind; or as the Buddha stated, "One, himself sunk in the state of greed and delusion, cannot pull another out of that mire." One should first purify oneself to be able to show the way to others.

We can only have a better world when we first have better people. Fear, jealousy, egotism, greed and evil are the original cause of human strife, be it petty crime or global war. Education, legislation and arbitration, while useful countermeasures, will not suffice to penetrate to the core of human motivations and alter one's basic feelings. Buddhism is structured to do just this, in fact such is its primary concern.

Personality cannot be separated from society. While the sum total of personality determines the character and quality of a given society, conversely every individual influences and determines the development of personality. This fact was readily acknowledged by the Buddha. He did not advocate social reforms such as we think of today but did deal directly with the social injustices of the time. Perhaps the best example is the caste system. He did not advocate a social revolution to replace this system, but any person who became a Buddhist ceased to have caste identity and thus was no longer subject to caste regulations. He thereby afforded men and women a way to escape from the moral injustice. In similar manners he opposed slavery and elevated the social status of women.

Recognizing that civilizations have flourished under a variety of different political systems and that because of the universal law of change no society or culture will endure forever, the Buddha did not advocate any particular type of government. When speaking of monarchs he said the responsibility lay with the king, and the king should cultivate justice, charity, compassion and virtue both for the prosperity of the nation and as an example for the government officials and common citizens. A few democratic states existed at the time of the Buddha, and of these he said that they would continue to flourish so long as the citizens could assemble and meet in harmony and maintained good moral standards.

In the centuries following the Buddha, his followers built hospitals and rest houses in accordance with his teaching of compassion. The great Indian Emperor, Asoka, in the Third Century, B.C. as a result of his conversion to Buddhism, stopped all wars and conquests, built wells and carried out other acts of public welfare. Other Buddhist rulers have followed this example.

And of illness he said: "Whoever would honor me, whoever would follow me, whoever would take my advice, he should walk upon the sick."
And to his disciples he said, "Go forth into the world to spread the Teaching for the benefit, welfare and happiness of all beings." Once kindness and compassion gain prominence in human motivations, then will men strive to better the world in whatever way their immediate environment affords, be it food given to a hungry stranger or a multi-million dollar campaign against world hunger.

Thus, we should all try to follow his sublime steps. May all beings be well and happy in a just peace.

Religion in the Twentieth Century with Special Reference to Islam

by

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unto Allah belong the East And the West and whithersoever ye turn, there is Allah's countenance.

Lot Allah be All-Embracing, All-knowing. (Koran 2, 112)

O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord! Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the two created a multitude of men and women. (Koran 4)

O mankind! (O we have created you male and female) and have made you tribes and nations that ye may know one another. Surely the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you. God is All-knowing, All-aware. (Koran 49, 13)

Religion changes its aspect in the varied context of history and it may even have different meanings in different phases of an individual's spiritual development. If at one time the dogmatic context seems to be decisive; at other times it is the emotional attitude or moral commitment which expresses best the meaning of religion. But it is futile to consider any one aspect as exhaustive of the religious life or (to speak the language of Indian tradition) to consider kau, bhakt or jnana as exclusive expressions of religious awareness. Even dogmatic involvement cannot be isolated from the attitude and behaviour of the religious individuality. Dogmos offer metaphysical commitments which others can accept or reject. It is a peculiarity of the religious situation that dogmas cannot be accepted or rejected on purely rational grounds.

This is indeed true of all metaphysical propositions. Their claim to truth does not rest on theoretical evidence, and religious metaphysics has seldom pretended to offer any rational verification. Reason has only a two-fold function. It clarifies concepts and delimits the area of their application. The claim to truth goes beyond the domain of reason, and reference is made to non-rational evidence through non-rational means. Even when rational theology has brought out arguments in support of its contentions, these arguments have not been absolutely decisive. Their intention has been to create an atmosphere in which the dogmatic contentions become relevant. Hence a religion is bound to be a multi-dimensional structure and its
God. Religion is not born of fear nor is it a reaction against fear. The fear of natural objects which gives rise to defensive mechanisms in primitive man has often led to the wrong conclusion that it is fear which provokes religious consciousness. What gives rise to religious consciousness is really something else—the pervasive dread (Agal) which persists as a basic condition of man even when no objects are associated with it. It is of course true that this dread is basically the dread of death; all that potentially or actually threatens life evokes it. But even when man is mortally afraid there is not necessarily a religious response. Modern existentialism is carried by a genuine religious motive: to encounter man in his ontological nakedness and isolation. But what religion means is the realization that man is not basically isolated. It reveals to him that essential isolation and loneliness can be countered by a metaphysical realization of divine participation. What comes first metaphysically is not isolation, but participation and communion. Although in human knowledge isolation takes precedence over participation, the development of scientific consciousness can eliminate fear, but it cannot overcome dread. Dread can only be transcended in religion and only to an extent ultimately overcome. The knowledge of man's own self has a transcending movement and leads beyond personal isolation. Thus in religious consciousness man is not forsaken and forsorn but participates in a cosmic life, though this participation in a cosmic process is given varying expressions in different religions. In our religious perspective, man is a creature alienated from his own nature; women with the responsibility to make good the errors of the outer manifestations. In another religious perspective, what is to come is determined by what we do here and now. Since the whole life of the earth, the earth's life as a whole, is determined by the events of the outer manifestations. Since the whole life of the earth, the earth's life as a whole, is determined by the events of the outer manifestations. Since the whole life of the earth, the earth's life as a whole, is determined by the events of the outer manifestations. Since the whole life of the earth, the earth's life as a whole, is determined by the events of the outer manifestations. Since the whole life of the earth, the earth's life as a whole, is determined by the events of the outer manifestations.
The relevance of religion is shown by the answers that it can provide in the stress and strains of modern life. Life has always been a challenge and the ability to meet it adequately is what guarantees its preservation. These challenges are not directed to man's physical existence alone but to the totality of his being. Again we refer to the existential character of these challenges. Inadequacy of response leads to mental disquietude and ultimately to disintegration of the personality. Life seems pale and bloodless and devoid of meaning and significance. Art and religion both make the insignificant significant but the transformation is much more profound in religion. The seemingly insignificant does not become significant only in so far as it is informed with meaning in an aesthetic framework. What religion does is not only to make the insignificant lose its insignificance but also to expose all hollow pretensions to value and significance.

In other words, the seemingly insignificant is shown to be insignificant only in a temporal context, and to be significant in terms of eternity.

The relevance of religion is not confined to any one level of human existence. It ranges from the lowest to the highest levels, from the economic to the metaphysical level. But it must be conceded that it is metaphysical conviction that determines even economic attitudes and behaviour. Islam's attitude to wealth and the hoarding of wealth is a classic example. In spite of the common notion that Islam is a naive world-affirmation, there is a strong negative note in the Koran: "What else is the world but an illusion, and a sport and play?" This does not mean that the world is nothing but an illusion; only that it has developed a strong illusionary aspect. And this illusionary aspect is created mostly by over-emphasis on economic worth, and rivalry in worldly increase. The distinctions of wealth are not substantial, nor are the divisions made by race, religion, language, or geographical descent. The one most respectable before God is the one who fears the Lord and the best provision for what is to come is piety. Thus it is always the transcendental reference that is decisive.

Thus religion cannot claim any viability if it cannot maintain its relevance equally in the lowest and the highest human reference. The religious and the secular man are distinguished not only by the absence or the presence of the transcendental reference, but by the extent to which the transcendental is made effective. The pragmatists rightly emphasize that a religion which is not relevant for action is dead, though they ignore the fact that the transcendental reference has its own validity, and the human commitment makes no difference to it. Thus in Islam there is a close and inseparable bond between faith and action. A faith which does not work and which is ineffective in life cannot lay claim to any recognition; even for at human judgment is concerned man is judged only by what is accessible to our knowledge. Poets are taken to task for not being able to live up to their visions, for distorting the vision from action. The inward life is accessible only to God. Thus in this recognition of the inaccessibility of man's inward life to external scrutiny there is involved a commitment to the uniqueness of personal existence and its sanctity. Man exists in his own right as an autonomous being. In spite of the fact that he cannot live outside social, regional, nationalistic, and religious affiliations, he is still something more than any of these contingent associations in which he is called to play his role. This naturally awakens in man the right sense of values, leading him to eschew over-emphasis on goods, which have only an instrumental worth and which by no means touch the intrinsic merit of man. Islamic philosophy is based on the concept of man according to which he is precariousiy poised between his divine origin and his eventual alienation, between his innate goodness and his propensity to evil.

When the Koran affirms that man was created in the best of forms and then thrown into the lowest depths it is referring to the idea of man who is created in the image of God and his subsequent failure to live up to his divine image. Human beings are divided into categories, some fulfilling the divine purpose and others betraying it. Indeed, from God we come and into God we return, but the question is how we return. For us it is important to realize our original roots and then to strive to move back to the origin in a way that is consonant with the divine purpose.

What is important to note is the idea of humanity as an organic unity, as one community. Men are created from a single self and, "Whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whoso saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind." (Koran-V, 32).

The Koran is addressed to man as man, to man who is unique in creation, and who has been assigned a mission which he himself ventured to choose without of course fully realizing the consequences of what he was choosing. In a remarkable passage, the Koran speaks of man as opting for a responsibility which nature refused to accept: "Let us offer the trust onto the heaviest and the earth and the mountains, but they shrink from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man, assumed it. Surely he has proved a tyrant (against himself) and foolhardy!" (Koran-XXXIII, 12).

What is it then which distinguishes man in creation? It can only be something from which all his other activities follow and which makes him qualified to create beauty and to become a moral agent capable of judging his own actions. It is reason which includes both theory and practice, thought and deed, that enables man to lead his life according to his own insight, without seeking guidance from nature and without being entirely predetermined in his activities.

What is then wrong with the world we live in? What ails the modern...
mind! The relevance of religion is brought home most emphatically when it is confronted with the problems of modern man. Man has become a problem for himself. Strangely enough, in spite of the fact that technological advances have brought man nearer and nearer, there has been no corresponding growth in men's spiritual relation to one another. Scientific advancement in the sphere of human welfare is nothing compared with man's advance in self-destruction. Death which is a most natural and spontaneous culmination of man's career on earth is artificially invoked by scientific ingenuity, and the mortality that should be accomplished at a matter of course is now brought about as a matter of force. But the question is not only how long man lives and to what distances in the infinite space he can fly, but how he lives in the short span of life granted to him as an individual. The same may be said of nations. Every man has his own norm, and every nation has its own termination. The question is how an individual or nation disposes of its potentialities within its own temporal framework. Two ways are open to either: to cooperate with God in establishing a meaningful order, or betray the purpose of creation and fail to a state which is worse than that of an animal. If man is created in God's image he should reflect those basic attributes of God which have human relevance and the principle which should govern human relations should be one of cooperation and goodwill and not of rival and resentment. Before the vision of a God who encompasses all that is, the world we know and the worlds we know not, human weight and equals on petty issues lose their significance and man is called to know what he is, in order to do what he ought to do. Islam takes in full account sex, wealth and the will to power as the main drives of human life which can take hold of man to the detriment of his spiritual growth. As the Koran puts it: "Beautiful for mankind is love of the joys (that come) from women and offspring and stored-up wealth of gold and silver, and horses branded [with their mark], and mule and land." (III, 19).

But if man is given only to the satisfaction of his instinctive drives, his perspective of values is distorted and this twin in his value-consciousness leads to moral pathology, to socio-economic imbalance and mental dis-equilibrium. Inward peace, which the Koran refers to as title and reconciliation, is the condition in which man is reconciled with the order of the universe and the condition in which he should breathe his last. Religion then has a double function to fulfill. It is to insist on man's super-temporal destiny, his uniqueness which is incalculable in this world and at the same time to awaken in him the consciousness of unity with the whole of creation. Manhood is one whether as the poet T.S. Eliot said, human beings are part of one another insomuch as they belong to one another. Islam recognizes the unity of human community by invoking the historical consciousness, by bringing to mind the panorama of nations succeeding one another and coming to their end, not so much by mechanical necessity as 

would say, but by a theological necessity which compels nations to take to wrong ways, when they have achieved plenty. They are then pulled with power and tend to exploit the weaker and even to annihilate them in their own interest. The fall of nations and the extinction of civilizations has been man's own responsibility. Hence if man is to repeat his own past history and is to escape the possibility of total annihilation which is being brought constantly nearer to realization by the new developments in scientific invention, he must awaken in himself a new consciousness of unity, and if a new civilization is to emerge we have to learn to live not only with one another but for one another, o else there will be none left to mourn the fate which man will meet.

Islam has a dual aspect. It is not only a message which became historically effective and vocal through the Prophet at a certain period of time, but equally a message which was proclaimed in every period of history through the different races of divine consciousness whom we call Prophets. The burden of the whole message is insistence on divine guidance and human responsibility, an exhortation to good words and a call to good deeds: "Every soul is a pledge for its own deeds" (Koran-XLIV, 20). "Unto Him goeth good words ascend and the pious deeds doth He exalt" (Koran-XXXV, 19).

What is most abhorrent is the misbelief that is done in the name of reform, and the confusion that is created on earth after it has been given to us as an ordered whole. The pattern of life of man which follows the straight path, and who alone can truly prosper, is given in unambiguous language. Commanded as he is to the transcendent vision, "He gives his wealth, for love of Him, to kindfolk and to orphans and to needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, underwrite proper worship and pay the poor due. And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere. Such are the God-fearing." (Koran-II, 176).

Thus what the world needs is neither the birth of a new man nor the return of the old but the reawakening in man of the divine consciousness which is eclipsed more and more by worldly distractions and the will to power. Only when they help one another "unto righteousness and peace," and "not unto sin and hostility" can nations and individuals attain felicity or inner prosperity. Then only will this world become an abode of peace where all individuals or groups will be free to follow the pattern of life which is consonant with their genius.
Judaism and its Relevance to Modern Problems

by

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SECTION I

The question we are considering (The Relevance of the World's Religions) in the form in which we are considering it, already bears the stamp of a secular age. It implies that the scale in which we weigh our respective religions is the scale of contemporary problems. Religion then stand or fall by virtue of their ability to supply answers to problems which are not of their own making and which, indeed, they might not choose to consider as the preeminent problems of human existence. Another age might have faced the question in precisely the opposite way — have accepted the religious outlook as beyond argument and employed it as a scale in which to weigh contemporary problems.

This caveat is suggested for two reasons. On the one hand, it is a reminder that the weight of a thing may vary depending on the world in which you weigh it. Thus in weighing myself on the scales in the planetarium of New York City, I found that I weighed some 2,796 pounds on one scale, 37 pounds on another and about 78 pounds on the third scale. In the first case I was weighing myself on the planet Jupiter, in the second case, on the moon; in the third case I was being weighed on earth. Nonetheless, the essential "I" remained the same no matter what the ostensible weight, although the ability of that "I" to function might be radically different on each of the three bodies. Similarly, a religion would retain its essential quality under different situations of time and circumstance, although it might function more effectively in one period than another or in one set of circumstances than in another group of circumstances. Secondly, we ought to bear in mind that most religions address themselves to a wide variety of problems, social and personal, eternal and temporal, human and divine. A request that a religion be interpreted in the light of one set of circumstances, inevitably means that the response will be, in some degree, unbalanced and distorted and involve an emphasis upon one or several aspects of the religion to the apparent neglect of other facets.

Nonetheless, it is fair to say that to the problems of contemporary society Judaism offers an approach born of a long and unique history. Its emphasis has always been on man in cooperation with his society and man in the society of society. Its greatest figures have always been men who labored in the midst of society rather than men who withdrew from it to seek individual holiness. It has doctrines and laws set forth in the Old Testament, the Bible, which have been elaborated and developed in a vast literature in many languages over the course of several thousand years. Because it is the outlook of the Jewish people which has had the unique experience of living dispersed among other peoples for 2,000 years, almost always under conditions of persecution, without losing its identity or being brutalized by its experiences, it has acquired perceptions and emblems which have been denied peoples living under more normal circumstances. A major theme in its history and beliefs has been an optimism about the world and about the responsibility of man to cope with social circumstances. All of these elements have been combined in an unusual and possibly unique melange of faith, theology, history, culture, peoplehood, law, ritual and skepticism. It would be possible to consider Judaism fruitfully under any one of these headings. I propose to consider it, in the light of our topic, as a system of personal and social ethics and behavior, and to make only glancing references to these other approaches. At background elements, however, I propose to present some broad brush-strokes about the Jewish conceptions of God, Torah, man and the Jewish people before proceeding to a consideration of what I am calling the Jewish system.

GOD

Judaism starts with the assumption that God is one and unique and concerned with man. The nearest thing to a creed that is offered in the Biblical verse, "Hear O Israel the Lord is our God, the Lord is one" which has become the central declaration of the Jewish prayer book. Ancient Judaism understood this to be a denial of all idolatries, of all multiple conceptions of God and of all assertions that God has various manifestations or aspects which are harmonized by a fundamental unity. It elected a pure monotheism. And modern Judaism, holding to the same tenet, is equally opposed to the whole gamut of secular idolatries including the philosophies which turn the man of society or man into God.

How man comes to know God is, of course, a key question in any religion's outlook. While Jewish philosophers in relatively late periods in Jewish history, like Saadia in the 9th century, Haiyeh in the 11th century and Maimonides in the 13th century, offered variants of the rational proofs of God, the Biblical source of Judaism proposes other views. It suggests that God is apprehended by man in two ways. On the one hand, God reveals Himself to aspiring and gifted individuals like Abraham, Moses and the
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conclusion is that, nevertheless, God Himself is self-bound by His ethical nature and cannot discard it.

These challenges to God, contained in the Bible, reveal another strand of Jewish thought and that is a skeptical strand. There is no such thing as blind belief and understanding faith. Man's role is to wrestle with God and with belief as his role in nature is to wrestle with the universe. It is only through this sort of challenge and response that man can grow and win through to some understanding of God and of human destiny. Thus, in a sense, God grows, and takes on different dimensions as man grows and understands more. It is for this reason that science and the expansion of scientific knowledge have been regarded as a threat to the Jewish outlook. More knowledge is simply a stronger base from which to engage in an assault on meaning and purpose and to understand them more fully. This doctrine also has its consequences in social philosophy. It means that social institutions ought to be approached with the same spirit of skepticism and with the conviction that unless they serve to better man's lot and to direct his purposes to good ends they ought, properly, to be challenged.

THE TORAH

Hand in hand with the idea of God goes the Torah. The term is applied, in a limited sense, to the first five books of the Bible, - the five books of Moses. These volumes which are a combination of a poetic myth of creation and of the origin of man, of the early history of the Jewish people from the time of Abraham through the days of Moses, of personal and social law and of oracles, are the first of the sacred texts of Judaism.

From the point of view of social philosophy, however, they are very much more specific. They incorporate a constitution for the Jewish people to apply in setting up their society in the land of Canaan to which they are moving. While they contain broad general principles for personal and ethical behavior, they include detailed regulations for the social ordering of the society.

By themselves, however, the five books of Moses never constituted the sole basis by which Jews sought to live. The books of Moses were the base of an inverted pyramid from which a far reaching literature of interpretation developed. Judaism is a religion not of the Bible, but of books. The rest of the Bible, the Apocrypha literature, the Talmud, the code, the commentaries, the legal and ethical treatises, represent an expanded Torah. The whole corpus of Jewish learning and of Jewish historical experience is what is really meant when the term "Torah" is used in its fullest sense.

The science of the Jewish Torah is that it is, in a figurative sense, a vertical text. A man reading the words of the Bible does not get a picture of the Jewish outlook. It is the way that the Jewish people understood to under-

1 For varying points of view on revelation: Abraham Heschel, Torah and the Challenge of the Modern Poli
desis (New York: Schocken, 1963), and other sources.
stand the text and to live by it is decisive. Thus, for example, while the Bible speaks of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth", the corpus of Jewish law and lore called the Talmud interpreted this in more monetary damages and proceeded to spell out how these are to be computed. The Talmud is decisive, not the Biblical text.

The tradition of Jewish law was that the five books of Moses represented the revealed word of God and were intended as a guide for man's behavior. However, as has already been indicated, works like the Talmud which represented the summarized views of generations of sages did not hesitate to override the very text of the Bible. They did so with the double conviction that the injunctions of the Bible represented conclusions which could also be stated by the use of reason and that the interpretation of the tradition undertaken by the majority of a properly constituted religious and judicial body, like the Sanhedrin, equally reflected the revealed word of God. The bent of the scholar sages who held themselves to be the successors of the prophets is reflected in the Talmudic story of the sage who represented a minority viewpoint and who called upon Heaven to validate his view. A voice from Heaven promptly intervened to proclaim his point of view as the correct one. The majority group responded by quoting the Biblical statement, "the Torah is not in Heaven" and going on to say that since the Torah had been given into the hands of men, the responsibility lay with them and that they operated by majority rule and that Heaven had no right to intervene. The Talmud goes on to represent God as being delighted with this ruling.

This excursus on the Jewish conception of Torah is necessary to make two points. On the one hand, it may clarify the difference between the Jewish and Christian approach to the same Old Testament which both of them hold sacred. Christianity abandoned the legal regulations of the Mosaic Books which include the social laws. Judaism held them binding upon itself and proceeded to develop a great vertical text in the attempt to explicate the laws. On the other hand, that vertical text, the Talmud and all the works of the centuries, is the key to the Jewish social philosophy. Judaism was not content to abide with abstract ethical principles and not even with detailed social regulations unless all other implications had been fully explored. It recognized that, in its own ancient world, it shared certain ethical principles with the Greeks and others and yet lived in a different way and with other emphasis and it concluded that life patterns had to be spelled out in detail. The situation is analogous to one suggested by Anaximenes. Toshniwa records a trip that he made from London to Delhi by jet plane and notes that the only things he actually saw in his entire trip over one half of the globe were the London airport, the Delhi airport and one Alpine peak which peeped its head above the clouds. He goes on to observe that a native of India travelling from a nearby village to Delhi by ox-cart saw more of life and history and experienced more than he did in gazing half the globe. In the same vein, one might observe that on the jet-plane level most religious and ethical systems say much the same thing. The distinction comes in the ox-cart journey over the rough terrain of daily personal and social living. It is on that ox-cart journey that Judaism concentrates in its expanded Torah.

Because Judaism was a system which made no distinction between religious and social life, it undertook to legislate, religiously, in its classic texts, such decisive things as the laws of serta, of charity, of agriculture, of social reform, of the limits of governmental power, of advertising and of monopony. Most of this legislation is the product of the Biblical period and of the early centuries of the Christian era, much of it was applied internally until a century ago in Jewish communities which enjoyed semi-autonomous status within larger communities. And from this legislation and the manner of formulating it, one may readily extrapolate Jewish views on social problems and may discuss the tone of social attitudes which prevail within the Jewish community today.

**THE CONCEPTION OF MAN**

The Jewish conception that God guarantees purpose and meaning to the universe and to the human endeavor and that the Torah is a guide to living is accompanied by a distinctive conception of the role of man.

Fundamental to the Jewish conception is the notion of the dignity of man and of the uniqueness of the individual. It is set forth in myriad ways in the Jewish tradition. Man is represented as created in the image of God, (Genesis) that is as a posessor of reason, and, therefore, every human being is precious. He who kills one man, we are told, destroys an entire world and he who saves one man saves the entire world (Talmud; Sanhedrin).

Further, we are advised, that only one man was created so that no man might say, my father is superior to yours; that man was formed of clay of many colors so that no one might say, my color is superior to yours, that the King of Kings, unlike human kings who stamp out coins each one identical with the other, stamps out many coins (souls) but each one is unique. (Talmud; Sanhedrin and Midrash: Bereisit Rabba).

The Jewish tradition approaches the question of man and his role from another significant direction. It proposes the notion that God and man are partners in the creation of the world. Man has been given the capacity and the direction. It is his responsibility to bring the world that might to be into being. This doctrine is linked to the doctrine of free will and it is regarded as a partial answer to the problem of evil in a world in which God is held to be good. However, its major concern is to indicate that the world of man is still coming into being and that man is a co-creator with God.

The humanitarian emphasis of the Jewish tradition is quite plain in these and other treatments of the role of man. The human being is central and
nothing that degrades the human is tolerable. It is in this vein that Martin
Buber, the modern Jewish philosopher, insists that one must continually
seek the "I-Thou" in the universe against the "it." Man must be treated on
every level of relationship as a "thou," never as an "it" to be employed for
someone else's advantage. It is in this light, too, that one must judge
the role of states and societies and of technology and science in our lives. They
exist to benefit the individual man, subject to the rights of other men, and
they cease to fulfill their proper function if they become a Procrustean
bed to which the individual toes conform.

A humanistic outlook often involves conflict with religious viewpoints.
In Judaism the attempt is made to make them interdependent. Thus the
Talmud portrays God as saying, "It is all right if they desert Me, but let them
obey my Torah." In a similar vein, the Talmud (Tractate Berachot)
discusses the question of when the Shema prayer answering that "God is
One" is recited in the morning and suggests that it is not recited until a
man can see his pillow in the glimmering dawn at a distance of four
paces. Thus it makes the point that God is not one until man is one. Perhaps
the most significant phrase of the concept of man's role in the famous passage
in the Sifra (a first century rabbinic text) which interprets the phrase in
Isaiah "ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord" to mean "if you are my wit-
nesses, then I am God, if you are not my witnesses, then I am not God."
This apparently heretical passage was intended to make the point that the
God of metaphysics does not need man to affirm his existence. He is self-
sufficient. But the God of religion, that is the revelation of God in the
world, depends upon the meditation of man. Thus not only does man need
God, but God needs man.

Jews and Modern Problems

To understand the play of Jewish ideas, one must know something of the
self-image of the Jewish people and something of their history. Judaism
does not exist in a vacuum. It is the body of spiritual and intellectual ideas
which is carried by the Jewish people and constitutes their national purpose.
Ideas, of course, have no boundaries. They are the common possession of
anyone who chooses to accept them. But what ideas come to mean in
practice depends upon the society in which they are nurtured and applied.
The early biblical view of the role of the Jewish people is quite plain.
Abraham breaks through to an awareness of God as the one and only God
of all the universe. He rejects the gods and idolatry of the highly sophisticat-
ed world of the 19th Century B.C. in which he lives, and dedicates him-
self and his family to the worship of the one omnipotent God and to making
Him evident in the world. God, in turn, enters into a covenant with Abra-
ham through revelatory visions, the content of which is that Abraham's
descendants will prosper and inhabit the land of Canaan in which Abraham
has settled. Some generations later, after the experience of slavery in Egypt,
and in the process of redemption from that servitude, that covenant is
renewed under the leadership of Moses, at Mt. Sinai in the desert. That
covenant is now expanded to include a group of laws and moral precepts
by which the Jewish people ordain to live, personally and as a society
once it is established. It does establish itself in the land of Canaan and founds
its society. This is the theme of the five books of Moses.

In this conception, the Jewish people become at once "a chosen people"
and "a teaching people". They become a people selected by God to live by
certain laws and canons, which extend far beyond the ritual and embraces
every aspect of personal and social life. They also become a people who
has elected to live in this manner. They are thus, in Isaiah's sense, witnesses
to-God in the world. The God pro quo is that they will enjoy the favor of
God and know prosperity. However, as the Biblical story unfolds and as the
prophets expand the original theme, the obvious advantages fade away.
It becomes clear that God's goal is that all the world come to live in peace
and harmony and enjoy prosperity. Nations are righteous, whether or not
they are clearly aware of the one God, they will prosper, since God is equal-
ly the God of all peoples. That is the burden of the Biblical book of Jonah
in which the great city of Nineveh is portrayed as on the road to doom and
destruction because of the evil of its ways. God sends Jonah, an Israelite
prophet, to save them of their fate and they see the error of their ways,
repent and are spared. And the concluding line of the book makes the
point plain that they are spared simply because there is both human and
animal life in Nineveh. "Should not have pity on Nineveh, that great city,
wherein are more than six score, a hundred and twenty thousand persons
that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also
much cattle?"

It is important to note that Nineveh is spared not because its people
have become Jews or worship the one God or accept the Torah, but simply
because they repent of wicked behavior and adopt a social attitude and
morals which are what the Talmud characterizes as the seven laws for
the children of Noah, that is, Laws of Natural Reason. The Jews on the other
hand are expected to conform to all the detailed regulations of the Torah
and to the exclusive worship of the One God, in order to win redemption.
If they fail to do so, they are subject to heavy national punishment at the hands of God. Jewish history is fraught with tragedy - the scattering of the State of Israel and Judah in Biblical times, the de-
struction of the central Temple in Jerusalem, exile from the land of Israel,
dispersion among the nations and unending persecution. Nonetheless,
through all these experiences the essential prophetic theme is maintained,
that these events occur because the Jewish people had failed to live up to
the high standard which had been set for it in the Torah.

The bargain struck at Sinai thus becomes a very dubious proposition.
They became citizens of "a portable Fatherland", of the world of ideas and practices which constituted the expanding Torah. Citizenship in this portable fatherland depended upon literacy, upon a willingness voluntarily to accept ideas as binding elements and upon common practices. This was buttressed by the creation of communities all over the world which, for centuries, had similar institutions, such as synagogues, schools, public welfare funds and mutual courts which rendered judgment according to Jewish law. These institutions were accompanied by a vibrant internal creative life which enabled the Jewish tradition to change and grow as it faced new conditions.

There are obvious parallels to this situation. Any religion which is worldwide is engaged in uniting its adherents by common ideas and practices, even while they give political loyalty to the state in which they reside. What gives the Jewish situation a special cast is that it was nurtured by a small group, living in a variety of cultures under conditions of persecution. It involved few apparent advantages and many obvious disabilities. It, therefore, required more deliberate decision and it depended very heavily upon creating a community steeply literate in the Jewish tradition.

The social implications of this experience are particularly significant in a world in which the threat to human existence is so monumental that the need for people to live together in unity is greater than it ever was before. The Jewish experience is a reminder that if people living under diverse circumstances can be brought to adhere to common ideas about the nature of man and society and of the responsibility of every man to a portable fatherland of ideas, the quality of international social life may be improved. These need not be necessarily religious ideas, although one significant line of approach is to explore the social ideas and ideals which religions have in common. As the same time, however, they must be more than vaguer ideals to which all give casual and meaningless assent. To be effective in motivating men to sacrifice immediate and apparent advantage to long-range goals which are capable of yielding greater advantages, they must enjoy the authenticity and cogency with which religions have been able to invent them in the past.

One further aspect of the Jewish historical experience is worth pondering. For close to two thousand years, Jews have not possessed governmental power. That experience has shaped and directed their attitudes. Having observed empires rise and fall, they have come to distrust the effect of power and the uses of power. Having seen violence rampant for long periods in many countries, they have come to believe that violence destroys and never builds. Having observed extremists through the centuries, they have come to believe that while extreme dedication to great ideas may be admirable, extremism in action is rarely admirable or useful. Yielding to the truths of their own religious vision, they do not hold that it is an exclusive truth nor deny that there are many facets to truth and many ways to understand
The combination of Jewish theology, thought and experience which has been sketched above indicates the direction and emphasis of Jewish social ethics. Clearly, we are not talking about specific programs. They are political measures which vary with time and circumstance and possibility. We are speaking of the spirit in which a religious approach to the problems of existence and society and of the demands it makes upon its adherents. Thus the biblical programs for dealing with poverty, including such laws as leaving the corners of the field for the poor and the obligation to lend money or seed to a fellow Jew without interest and the laws of the amputation of limbs in the biblical year are merely guide-lines to a philosophy of social responsibility for the impoverished. They were succeeded, as times and economic circumstances changed, by a series of community chests and funds and taxes for public welfare. The law of concern and responsibility for the needy, however, is clear in the Bible and becomes the basis for different solutions to the same problem.

Some of the central social ideas of Judaism which have been understood and applied in different ways at different times are the following:

1. Every human being is moral person;
   however figuratively this is understood.
   He has free will in the image of God.

The Talmud records a debate between two of its great figures as to the most significant statement in the Bible. Rabbi Akiba endorses the verse "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Leviticus); Ben Aza proposes the statement, "In the image of God created His own" (Genesis) because it implies the inherent dignity and equality of all men.

The corollaries which flow from these statements, as they are formulated in Jewish law, are many and varied. Men are to be treated equally before the law. One man must not be sacrificed for another nor even for the whole community. "How do you know?" says the Talmud, "that your blood is redder than his?" Murder is, of course, forbidden although it is recognized that there are situations where the use is one of unavoidable self-defense. However, the concern with human life ultimately became so strong that by the first century the Jewish religion's courts had virtually abandoned capital punishment.

There are the greater implications of the doctrine of the sacredness and dignity of human life. The more significant applications are in the nuances of ethics. Murder is defined as anything which shortens a man's life. Stealing involves a man's mind or opinion as well as his purse. Taking advantage of the disadvantaged - the blood, the dead, the lame, the woman, the aged - is held to be a crime. Obviously, not all ethical crimes can be handled by the court. A great many of them are in Jewish law, but other things, more noble, are described as "deeds free in human law but guilty by Divine law" or as "an exempt from punishment but forbidden."

The positive side of the conception of the dignity of man is very far-reaching. Society owes man an opportunity to live. He is entitled to the basic necessities of life as a matter of charity, but is justice. Israel Zangwill's novel, King of the Sournotts (Beggars) makes the point ironically. The Jewish beggar patronizes the French banker on the grounds that he is the banker who does his duty and thus earns merit. In broader terms, however, the conception of dignity and sanctity of personality means that even help must be given with due regard for the feelings of the recipient, and so Maxweh's speaks of the eight roots of just giving, in which anonymous giving to an anonymous recipient and helping a man to help himself are at the top of the ladder.

Since man does not live by bread alone, the welfare of his body and soul become the concern of the community. The Jewish community, was, therefore, frequently organized to provide medical services and special care for the aged and the orphaned. More important still, it established the pattern of universal compulsory education for boys from the age of six on, as early as the First Century.

A concept which starts with the dignity and inherent worth of man clearly has no limit in its application. If it is taken seriously, it becomes a spur to social reform until the point is reached where the society does proper justice to every individual. In the formulation of Reform it means that every individual must be treated as a "man" - a subject of ultimate concern, every as God is treated as a "Thou" by man and man is treated as a "Thou" by God.

In the complicated life of our day, this doctrine acquires new nuances. It implies not only that social justice is a burning moral obligation, but also means that the human consideration must come first. In an age where technology, computation, the manipulation of men and the machinations of men for the functioning of society are becoming a commonplace, the ideas of the sacredness and dignity of the individual needs renewed emphasis.
2. The goal of religion, in the view of Judaism, is to establish the Messianic society in this world.

Many ancient mythologies had a vision of a golden past which had been lost to man by virtue of his fallings. Judaism too starts with the image of the Garden of Eden. But it was dedicated to the idea that a golden future is the goal of history. It believed that however humbly man approached the goal, he would ultimately achieve it because God has so ordered history.

This notion pervades all aspects of Jewish life and thought. It is a recurrent theme of the prophets; it engages the legalists and the philosophers; it is embedded in folklore and it was the leaven in the tort dough of Jewish existence for long centuries. Most strikingly, it is the theme of the Kaddish prayer which is recited in memory of the dead Judaeans believe in immortality, but its highest testimony to the deity is the assurance that he may have contributed in some way to the advancement of God’s Kingdom on earth.

Judaism entertains the vision of perfectible man and perfectible society because it is very much a “this world” religion. It would contest the notion of Wiccansians that “religion is what man does with his solitude” even though it has its own very considerable mystic strain. It would deny that man’s primary business is to make his peace with God, although it believes in immortality, or rather it would say that he best fulfills the will of God when he fulfills his obligations to his fellow man. Thus the Kol Nidre prayer, the prayer of the Yom Kippur day, which is devoted to prayer, fasting and introspection, asks for forgiveness for the vows made to God and not fulfilled, a assurance that God will forgive. But Jewish law specifies that vows made to men are never forgiven unless they are fulfilled (Mishnah Yoma).

The belief that both society and man can be perfect does not grow out of any overly sanguine notion of human nature. Judaism recognizes that man has a capacity for great evil, although it does not believe he is immersed in original sin. But it believes that he has a capacity for great good, too, and that the business of man is to make the good prevail over the evil. The materials for the good life are available to man in the world about him and in his own capacity to master and relish human nature. Judaism is sanguine that he can master human nature and social nature, too.

The Messianic age to which Judaism points is one in which justice will prevail within man and society, one in which there will be peace between nations and within man himself, one in which Harmony will be achieved in the natural world and in which “the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.”

Judaism is not alone in this vision. Christianity, its daughter religion, took over the same hope for the future, although its theological premises differ and its Messianic vision has a supernatural cast as against the naturalistic bent of Judaism. The result, however, is that Western civilization bears the imprint of the Messianic idea.

A Messianic vision is no guarantee that there will be a Messianic outcome. And certainly the Jewish Messianic expectation has become much more diffuse than it was in the past. But it has lent a tone to Jewish life and to Jewish social goals which continue to be pervasive. It at least leads Judaeans to stand in opposition to the disenfranchising which hold out little hope for the future or which envision the future in terms of HOMER’S BRAVE NEW WORLD or CLINTON'S NAJIBUR GHUH-DOOR.

In social terms, the Messianic tone in Judaism means a commitment to what is called the liberal-political point of view. It means labouring for human rights, for freedom of opinion and freedom of investigation. It means a belief that knowledge and education are stepping-stones to better personal and social life. It involves a commitment to social justice, a conviction that with will and energy society can and must solve problems of want and scarcity, a laboring for peace and an opposition to discrimination. It means a belief that most problems can be solved by peaceful means, a tolerance of opposing points of view and an opposition to violence.

This fear of attitudes, and the attendant actions drawn from a belief in the worth of the individual and a commitment to a Messianic future are, I believe, characteristic of the Jewish stance in the world today. They may be confirmed by observing the voting patterns of Jews in the countries where they live and by noting the customs which they commit themselves.

3. The heptameter is the mark of Jewish social attitude in justice

Horne’s statement that “since the days of Moses, justice has been spoken with a Hebrew accent” is a reflection of the fact that the Bible insistently harks upon the theme of justice, that the great Jewish holidays are built upon the theme of God sitting in judgment of man and man sitting in judgment of himself. From the statements in Deuteronomy, “Justice, justice shalt thou pursue”, through the ory of Amos “Let justice roll well up as the waters”, through the docile Job’s appeals against God for just treatment, justice is a recurrent concern of the Bible. It is not that Judaism is uninterested with love as compassion. The love of God for man and of man for God, the love of neighbour and love of the stranger are intrinsic themes in the Bible and in all of Jewish literature. And the concern for compassion is no less. The insistent injunctions throughout Jewish writing “as God is compassionate, so be you compassionate” and the concern for “the last of all living things” is very great. In the Jewish view there may be the key to personal relations and perhaps the key to relations between man and God. However,
for Judaism, justice constitutes the best base for the social structure and love and compassion are graceful adornments. Judaism is neither pragmatic about the working of society. It believes that justice is a measurable quality and that love and compassion are not. It recognizes that love is rarely given to the stranger, often not to the neighbor and sometimes not even to oneself, but that justice can be rendered even without liking. Thus in Biblical teachings it insisted that a court owed equal justice to rich and poor alike. It should not be swayed by the power of the rich and it should not be swayed by the plight of the poor. Even in the case of the poor, it should first render justice and then, as a matter of grace but not of right, act with compassion.

Justice, of course, goes beyond mere law. It was to the knotty problem of how to translate abstract ethical principles into just law that the Jewish religious genius addressed itself. In consequence, Halakhah, the system of combining law and ethics, is the high water-mark of Jewish literary creativity after the Bible. That it often achieved triumphant results may be seen in the passage from Talmoi Sanhedrin, quoted earlier in this paper, in which the court in exhorting witnesses in capital cases to be very cautious in their testimony presented a philosophy of the uniqueness of every human personality as part of its ordinary proceedings.

It is a sense of realities that led Judaism in the past and in the present to believe that the effective remedy for social ill is justice rather than love. It is simply easier to inflame law with justice that it is to displace hate or indifference with love. It is easier to maintain just laws than it is to retain the emotions of love. It is easier to unlock the doors of the court or the parliament than to unlock the doors of the human heart.

But if justice is to be real justice, it must have companions in its train. An old Jewish legend has it that God first attempted to build the world on the principle of absolute justice. It failed. He then attempted to build the world on the principles of absolute mercy. It too failed. Our world is compounded of a mixture of the principles of justice and mercy. It goes on building on.

SECTION III

In discussing some of the social attitudes of Judaism, I have been tacitly accepting the thesis that if one changes the world one changes man. This is only a fraction of a religious outlook. The fundamental purpose of any religion must be to present answers to ultimate questions and not only to social and often transient phenomena. It must, in short, deal with man's relation to God, with meaning and purpose in the universe, with the nature of religious experience and with man's relation to himself. Here the mystical and the natural, prayer and ritual, life temporal and life eternal all join hands.

Much of this subject is outside the scope of this paper. But I propose to suggest that a fundamental emphasis in Judaism, as in most religions, is that the way to change the world or to generate the attitudes which change the world is to change the individual. For that purpose, Judaism has devised a system which is the heart of its religious outlook.

There are two fundamental religious ways of becoming a changed man. One, a way which Christianity has elected, is that if you believe strongly enough, you will become a changed person. The other, the Jewish position, is that if you become a changed person, you may become capable of belief. In Judaism, therefore, religious faith is automatic and not a fact.

This Jewish view is born out of a belief that religious capacity is an art form. A genius for religion or a talent for religious experience are at least as rare as genius in music or painting or literature. The same holds true of genius or talent in the realm of ethics. There is no reason to assume a democracy of ability in these realms any more than in the realm of the recognized arts.

While it is possible to live meaningfully without being talented in one of the arts, any religion would deny that it is possible for man to live significantly as a full human being without religious and ethical capacity. The question then becomes, how does one take the ordinary man, un-talented in these realms, and develop his capacity? In the realm of the arts, the procedure is clear. Enough instruction, training and direction and persistent practice will convert a non-pianist into a fair or competent pianist. It will not, of course, make him a talented pianist unless the extra touch is there.

Judaism has sought in the same vein to develop a system to take ordinary human beings who may have the desire but not the talent for religious and ethical life to make them competent in these realms. Its goal is not to convert every man into a Moses or an Isaiah but rather by dint of detailed training, instruction, practice and discipline, to make them more spiritual and ethical human beings.

The system has worn out over the course of the ages reaches into every aspect of a man's life. It touches every aspect of a man's life, his prayers, his dress, his personal habits, his sexual relations, the division of his day, the expenditure of his money, his relations to his family, his friends and himself. It bids him on the one hand to immerse himself in sacred texts, to devote some hours to such study throughout his life, and it bids him on the other hand to immerse himself in water and learn how to swim.

Obviously, no one observes the system in its entirety. No one could, even if we were not living in a pluralistic society with various systems competing for our attention and concern. But it is clear, too, that in the past and in the present those who live in large measure by the system develop a "Jewish character." They become capable of reacting automatically in ways endorsed by the religion, or spiritually and ethically sensitive to the varied exigencies of life. We all face too many ethical decisions a day and
have so many life experiences in a day that we have no time to reason about most of our problems and experiences. It is the total character, the built-in attitudes, that finally speak in any given situation.

The thrust of the Jewish system might be seen in three rather casually selected examples.

The first is the injunction that a man ought to recite a hundred benedictions of God each day. The occasions for the benedictions are varied — putting on a new suit of clothes, beholdng a wise man, hearing thunder, rising to confront the dawn, the process of excretion. The intention of the injunction is to make man continually aware of the extraordinary in the ordinary, to force him to take a few seconds at each encounter with life and to make him recognize the awe, the wonder and the mystery of existence.

The Sabbath affords another example. Here the Jewish tradition has manipulated time to shape man's attitude. In ordered time each hour is the same as any other. In personal time, an hour may be an eternity. Judaism invented the notion of taking one day a week out of the routine of life and giving it a different character in the hope that the experience would set the tone for the other six days of the week. Thus many things are forbidden on the Sabbath. Labor and purchasing and riding and a whole host of daily routine activities are prohibited. But the Sabbath is not merely a day off. It is a totally different day, for other things are enjoined. It is a day for extended prayer, for speculation, for study, for the cultivation of friendship, for closer family association, for familial dining and chanting. It is a short strenuous day, but the demand is upon the spirit rather than the body. And because it is impossible to order that a man change his outlook at 6 a.m. the whole day is surrounded with rituals, the lighting of candles, benediction over the wine, special foods and the like. And when the Sabbath is observed, the purpose is achieved. Man is removed from the routine of events and made conscious that he belongs to the realm of the spirit.

The dietary laws of Judaism offer a third example. They reflect another aspect of man's life - the fact that he is an animal, subject to physiological needs, passions and lusts. The great problem in human life is how to spiritualize the markedly animal elements of our life. Judaism makes one attempt among others through a spiritualization of a frequent animal action, the process of eating. It bids a Jew wash his hands with a benediction as a reminder that a table may be an altar, it calls for a benediction before eating, for a lengthy value-studded benediction after eating and it limits what foods a man may eat.

These examples illustrate the interest of the entire elaborate system and that is to train-wash or soul-wash an ordinary man into increasing sensitivity to the spiritual and ethical implications of living. At the end of a life-long struggle he may be capable of religious experience or he may not, but he will have realized his capacities.

The interrelation between this method and the social ethics of Judaism which has been discussed before should be obvious. It is easy to formulate social values. It is difficult to get people to live by them. Practical and political solutions to problems change as conditions change. How then does one get a man to eat the right things, to distinguish between justice and injustice, to elect the humane, to strive to perfect society rather than to despair of it? Judaism has sought a formula which would make the ordinary man as well as the spiritually and morally gifted man capable of responding in the right way to the problems of personal and social life. It is a method which for periods of time has produced whole communities of pious and sensitive men who, if they were not prophets were at least in the tradition. Religions which can do this - and Judaism is certainly not alone - are relevant to any time.

**SECTION IV**

Having responded, however inadequately, to the question of what is the relevance of religion to our time, a religionist is entitled to raise the contrary question. Ours is essentially an irreligious age. It is an age which daily challenges old values, which assures that all values are relative. It is an age of great technological and scientific virtuosity, but one in which man is being bent to the demands of technology rather than bending technology to his needs. It is an age in which scientific truth is the criterion by which we live, but it is also the age in which it has become clear that science is dedicated to a truth which is not concerned with moral responsibility or life values. It is an age of great and golden potentialities, but it is also an age of great violence, brutality and unending war.

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Confucius and the I-ching

by

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I wish, first of all, to extend to you the cordial greetings of the President and Members of the China Academy of the Republic of China, for it is as their delegate that I find myself among you here in Calcutta. I am going to present to you the important teachings of the remarkable Chinese classic, the I-ching or Book of Changes, which constitute the less well known aspect of Confucianism and which may throw some light on the world situation to-day.

The I-Ching is perhaps the most ancient and venerated among the several books known at the five canonical classics of China. Its teachings constitute the essential basis of Taoism and Confucianism and have been an important source of inspiration and enlightenment to philosophers and scholars throughout the long history of China.

The importance of the I-Ching is clearly reflected in the fact that it was the subject of intensive study on the part of Confucius, in the evening of his life, after he had returned from his long and fearless wanderings among the feudal states and settled down in his native state of Lu. It was said of him, by the "grand historian" Ssu-ma Ch'ien, that he applied himself with such diligence to the study of the I-Ching that the feathers thongs which bound the bundle tablets of his copy gave way three times from wear and tear. In the annals of Confucius, he is reported to have said on one occasion, when he was already advanced in age, that if a number of years were added to his life, he would complete his study of the I-Ching, and thus save himself from falling into grave errors.

Before I proceed to deal with the basic tenets of the Book, I should like to relate a few more facts about our Master, who came to be the greatest of our sages and teachers, and whose teaching led his people to the path of Man's well-being, the "Taof of Spirit and Earth."

According to Ssu-ma Ch'ien, Confucius was born in the year 551 b.C. in the state of Lu, somewhere near the present town of Chi Fu in Shantung, or the province of the Eastern Mountain under the shadow of Tai Shan, the most sacred peak of China. He lost his father when he was three years old, and was brought up by his mother. When he was nineteen he married, and about the same time took up an administrative post in Lu. After many experiences, he became, in 531 b.C., Prime Minister of his native state. So great was his success, that the rival state of Ch'ii, fearing his growing influence, sent a company of female dancers and musicians to the Lu ruler, who thereupon neglected the affairs of state and closed his door to Confucius. Confucius forthwith resigned his position and, followed by many of his disciples, set out in 517 b.C. upon his travels, which were to last for thirteen years. He visited many of the feudal states of China, staying now in one and then in another, undergoing many hardships and dangers. When he returned to his native state, he spent the last years of his life in moral and historical studies, in editing the classics, and in teaching his disciples. He died in 492 b.C., and was buried in Chi Fu, where his tomb is kept in good repair as a place of national pilgrimage.

The spread of Confucian's teaching began not long after his death. After mourning their Master's death, the disciples separated and each went his own way to carry on his teaching with their own exponents and commentators. Thus there grew an ever-widening circle of scholars who took up the study of the old classics collated by Confucius; and as time went on these ancient writings took deep root in the minds of the people.

Ever since, Confucianism has inspired Chinese thought. It molded the national character; it touched every corner of the people's activities; it permeated their life in every aspect, moral, political and social. It vitalized Chinese civilization which has survived to this day in its struggle against rival and foreign doctrines. In our everyday speech we often use its words to make a point, but they carry more weight than the passing slogans of our day.

In pronouncing his eulogy on Confucius, Ssu-ma Ch'ien writes:

Numberless are the princes and worthy men that the world has seen in its glorious life, forgotten after death. But Confucius, though only a humble cultivate-many number of the common people, remains among us after more than ten generations. He is the model for such as we should be wise. By all, from the Son of Heaven down to the student of the Six Arts, the supremacy of his principles is fully and freely admitted. He may indeed be pronounced the amount of our sagas.

That the I-Ching is a main source of Confucian's ideas and ideals is testified by his disciple Tzu-kung. The latter said that his Master needed no teacher, or guru, since he learned from King Wen and King Wu, the early Chou rulers who lived six centuries earlier. Now, King Wen was the author of the main text of the I-Ching. Therefore, to learn from King Wen was to learn from the I-Ching. While imprisoned at Yu-li by the last wicked sovereign of the Shang dynasty, King Wen studied the six symbols of the sixty-four hexagrams. These hexagrams were composed by Fu Hsi, the legendary
founder of Chinese civilization in the third millennium B.C. King Wen explained the I-Ching, one after another, in short paragraphs giving indications of their significance in the various circumstances of life. These sixty-four-term essays are symbolical expressions of various important themes, mostly of a moral, social, or political character.

This exposition was continued by his son Tan, better known as the Duke of Chou, who by means of symbols or emblems expanded the significance of each line of each hexagram. He pointed out the good or bad fortune indicated by each line. The combined significance of the six lines as interpreted by the Duke of Chou corresponds, in general tenor, to his father King Wen's interpretation of the whole hexagram.

When Confucius, several centuries later, devoted himself to the study of the I-Ching, he wrote ten appendices, called the "Ten Wings", to elucidate the texts of King Wen and the Duke of Chou. In one of them he told how Fu Hsi had discovered the eight trigrams and given China her first astronomy. In the other appendices, Confucius gave directions on the conformity of the human to the cosmic situations represented by the symbols, and explained the sequence of the hexagrams, and so forth.

Confucius's veneration for King Wen is borne out by the remarks he once made to his disciples when confronted with great danger. He said, "King Wen being dead, has not his message been passed on to me? If God had wished this message to vanish, then I, King Wen's successor, should never have received it; but if God has not yet wished this message to vanish what harm can the people of Chou do to me?"

This reference to the will of God by Confucius testifies to his belief in the existence of a Supreme Being or Divine Spirit indwelling the universe. The earliest symbolic representation of God in Chinese is a wedge pointing downward, without any anthropomorphic significance whatsoever.

On another occasion, Confucius said, "God bestows the power that is in me; what have I to fear from such a one as Hoan Tsui?" Again, in reply to a disciple who asked him what he meant by saying that nobody understood him, Confucius said, "I do not murmur against God, nor do I grumble against man. My studies are pursued here below; but my penetration rises high; and there is God: He knows me."

Thus Ch'aouangs spoke of God whom he represented, as the Chinese will do, by the ideograph depicting the great vault of heaven called Ten, the abode of God. During his long life with its many vicissitudes of fortune, he was sustained by a sense of the divine revelation first received by Fu Hsi, relayed by King Wen, and handed down to him. He sought audaciously the realization of sagehood whereby, as he said in his exposition of the Chin Hsingram, he could, "in his moral attributes, harmonize with Spirit and Earth in his brilliancy, harmonize with the sun and moon; in his even tenor of life, harmonize with the four seasons; and in his good and well fortune, harmonize with gods and demons."

Now, what are the cosmic texts taught by the sage-author of the I-Ching? At our time is limited, I can only set forth two or three of the eternal doctrines. The Book teaches us that there exists one boundless formless Principle, one Absolute Reality, which underlies all manifested conditioned being. It is called in the I-Ching the T'ieh Chi, i.e., Supreme Ultimate. This Ultimate Reality is the One Life, the One Self-existence, the Absolute All-in-All, Eternal and Infinite, the Causeless Cause of all things, to which all things equally return. The phenomenal universe, with all things contained therein, is the outward manifestation of this Absolute Reality.

In Chinese the T'ieh Chi, which is only by intuition, has two aspects called Yin and Yang, that is, the Receptive and the Creative. These two aspects of principles, being inseparable parts of unity, are always at work in space and time, interplaying and co-operating with each other, and it is the interplay and co-operation of these two cosmic forces that causes the ever-changing phenomena of our universe. In the world of relativity as we know it, these two polar opposites appear as spirit and matter, father and mother, day and night, light and darkness, life and form, good and evil, motion and rest, the positive and negative poles of electricity and magnetism, and many other dualities familiar to us in daily life. I am sure my Hindu friends here will agree with me that these two aspects of ultimate reality are in agreement with the Hindu teachings regarding the absolute or Pardhanta with its twopposites, Praada and Mahaprada; and that this duality correspond to the Hindu duality of Mahaavastara and Prakrata. In the text of the I-Ching are many sayings expressing this truth. For instance, one of the Ten Appendices to the Book (The Great Treatise) says: "the creative rhythm of Yin and Yang constitutes what is called the Ten." Again: "In the [[Changes]] there is the Supreme Ultimate which engenders the two primal forces [Yin-Tung]."

In Western literature, this principle of interaction of Yin-Yang is known as the Law of Polarity. It is interesting to note that this law has been expanded by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his essay on contemplation in the following manner:

Polarity, or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature: in darkness and light; in heat and cold; in the sky and water; in male and female; in the imagination and execution of plants and animals; in the tangible and invisible; in the embodiment of fluid and of sound; in the moving and immobile; in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinities. Superposition of magnetoism in one end of a needle, the opposite pole of magnetic takes place at the other end. If the earth rotate, the earth north. To empty less, you must confine more. An invisible future heightens nature, so that each thing is dual, and suggests another thing to make it whole; as sound, water; man, woman; subject, object; in the upper, lower; man, woman; less, more; etc. etc.

Modern science furnishes some illustrations of this central doctrine of the I-Ching. Let us, for instance, take the case of the atom. As we all know, the
solid atom, once considered the indivisible and unchangeable basis of the universe, can now be broken up into tiny granules of negative and positive electricity, respectively known as electrons and protons, the electrons revolving around the proton, or the nucleus, just as the planets revolve around the sun. If we had the faculty of being able to observe the atom of hydrogen, we would notice the dizzy circuits of a negative electron revolving round a positive nucleus at the rate of six thousand billion times per second. Recently, physicists have also discovered that the whirling electrons themselves are also both positive and negative, corresponding to the masculine and feminine aspects of the Absolute.

Another principle taught in the Book of Changes is the absolute universality of the law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, eb and ow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of day and night, life and death, sleeping and waking, is a fact so perfectly universal that it can easily be recognized as one of the fundamental laws of the universe.

This law of periodicity is also known as the law of cycles and the law of growth and decay. Suffice it to note here that all things are subject to the law of growth and decay; there is hardly anything of which the outward expression, in the sense of possible development, is not limited. Even the culture of a nation must die, once the meaning it embodies has found full expression. The rise and fall of civilizations, the regular succession of the four seasons, the eb and ow of the tides are all governed by this basic law. In accordance with this law, worlds, solar systems and universes, too, have their birth, growth, decline and death. Own expressed this truth long ago in the following lines in his Analects: "There is nothing constant in the universe. All eb and ow, and every shape that's born, bears in its womb the seeds of change."

In a unique fashion, the I-Ching also embodies and expounds the law of reversion in extremis, i.e., the reversion of one pole to its very opposite at the extreme point, similar to the change from night to day and day into night at a certain moment. In Western philosophical terminology, this law is known as the law of antithesis, a Greek word used by Hegel to signify reversion to the opposite. The truth is that when the creative principle, Yang, has reached its extreme limit, the bright power of Yin appears and causes daybreak. Herein lies the explanation of the phenomena of cycles - cycles of creation which can be found in all things, in the rise and fall of civilizations, the regular succession of the four seasons, the eb and ow of the tides, and so forth.

This principle may be perceived in the following diagram called the T'ai Chi T'ou, i.e., the diagram, of the Supreme Ultimate with its two aspects Yin-Yang:

Here the Yang principle, indicated by the white portion, is born from the centre and gradually grows, expanding and increasing till it reaches its utmost limit of manifestation, as represented by the straight line at the upper part of the diagram. At this stage of fullness and maximum expression, its polar opposite, Yin, begins automatically to manifest itself likewise. Yin, indicated by the black portion, appears from the centre and gradually grows, expanding and increasing till it attains its utmost limit of manifestation, as represented by the straight line at the lower part of the diagram. Thereupon Yang is born and the cycle is repeated ad infinitum. This alternate growth and passing away of Yin-Yang, their successive influx and efflux, and their transformation at an extreme point are simultaneous manifestations of two basic laws taught in the I-Ching, namely, the law of cycles and the law of antithesis.

Now, if it is true that this cyclic law of periodicity operates in all spheres of existence, then the old belief that the progress of mankind has an automatic character and proceeds to the form of a straight line does not hold. In fact, the belief which emerged in the West in the Nineteenth Century has been exploded by our two world wars. Furthermore, history has shown time and again that mankind rises to the heights only to fall again into the abysses. The progress of mankind does not take a linear form, but proceeds in waves rising and falling through various peoples and civilizations, rising to serve nature's purpose and falling after the purpose has been fulfilled. Even within a nation, such successive waves of regeneration and degeneration, of the rise and fall of the race, are clearly perceptible. This is the Samsara of Buddhism.

What we perceive in human life is also perceived in the starry vault of T'ou. Every astronomical revolution, every return of a wandering planet to the same point in the zodiac which it has touched and re-touched be-
fore, proves this truth of cyclic alternation as a universal law. Throughout nature we find this dual characteristic—construction on the one hand and destruction on the other. This is why the history of both the inferior and the superior kingdoms of nature moves through a series of well-defined epochs. In the I-Ching it is frequently pointed out that the end of each evolutionary wave is succeeded by the beginning of a new one. Owing to this overlapping of the two waves, both the decaying and the nascent phases of civilization co-exist. Their mutual play precipitates temporary confusion.

It seems that we are today moving through a transitional period which marks the decline and end of an outward phase side by side with the commencement and growth of a new one. This epochal decline is brought about by an increasing manifestation of the evil of materialism which has been inherent in the pasting phase. Thus materialism—with its belief that reality is solely contained within sensual objects, that the mind of man is a mere lump of nervous matter in his head, with its denial of the existence of a super-mind in the universe, and with its setting up of a laissez-faire philosophy in the conduct of life—represents the essential culture and actual practice of mankind in the declining phase, whatever its pretended culture is supposed to be. The I-Ching teaches that during its early and intermediate phases the historic cycle proceeds slowly, but when it approaches its culmination, the momentum of change, disintegration and destruction increases with dramatic speed.

This process of development, acceleration, and transformation is indicated by the first line of the second hexagram, Kau, the symbol of Earth. This line shows its subject "treading on hoarfrost, leading to the formation of solid ice in due course." Commenting on this text, Confucius writes: "The dark power of Yen has begun to take form. Allow it to go on quietly according to its nature, and the hoarfrost will become solid ice." Commenting on it further, he writes: "The assassination of a ruler by his minister, or of a father by his son, is not the result of events of a single morning or a single evening. Its causes have gradually accumulated—through the absence of early discernment."

However, at the general turning-point when a new cycle is about to open, the disturbance of conditions becomes like a great avalanche, men and their methods going to devasting extremes. At the final stage, the movement of events becomes accelerated and leaps forward energetically like a horse out of control. In the Book of Changes this situation is symbolized by the sixth or topmost line of the Kau Hexagram which signifies "the fighting of a host of dragons in the wilderness causing injuries and bloodshed to all of them, the victorious as well as the defeated."

It seems that we are confronted today by such a terminal period, the closing of an entire cycle of world history. At the same time the ascending phase, i.e., the spiritual phase, has also started its course, so that we really stand in a transitional stage between the two. Hence the presence at one and the same time of two contradictory currents in our civilization as, for example, the innate desire for sensuous pleasure occupying one group of human minds on the one hand and on the other an earnest desire for spiritual understanding and transformation of consciousness into transcendental wisdom occupying a different group.
Monastic Experience and the East-West Dialogue

by

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Foreword: As the reader will observe, this article consists in part of notes intended for further development. It is a working document, given a sinistrally blemished picture of one of the closest of contemporary poetic minds at work.

1. In all the great world religions there are a few individuals and communities who dedicate themselves in a special way to living out the full consequences and implications of what they believe. This dedication may take a variety of forms, some temporary, some permanent; some active and some intellectual; some ascetic, contemplative and mystical. In this paper the term “monastic” is applied in a broad way to those forms of special contemplative dedication which include:

(a) a certain distance or detachment from the “ordinary” and “secular” concerns of worldly life, a monastic solitude, whether partial or total, temporary or permanent;

(b) a preoccupation with the radical inner depth of one’s religious and philosophical beliefs, the inner and experiential ground of those beliefs, and their outstanding spiritual implications;

(c) a special concern with inner transformation, a deepening of consciousness toward an eventual breakthrough and discovery of a transparent dimension of life beyond that of the ordinary empirical self and of ethical and pious observance.

The monastic “work” or discipline is not merely an individual affair. It is a personal and communal. Its orientation is in a certain sense supra-personal. It goes beyond a merely psychological fulfillment or the empirical level, and it goes beyond the limits of communicable cultural ideals (of one’s own national, racial, etc. background). It aims at a certain universality and wholeness which have never yet been adequately described — and probably cannot be described — in terms of psychology. Transcending the limits that separate subject from object and self from non-self, this development achieves a wholeness which is described in various ways by the different religions; a self-realization of Amma, Void, of life in Christ,
of East and West (annihilation and reintegration according to Sufism) etc.

This is not necessarily a matter of personal charismata (special divine illumination or prophetic talk) but it is to some extent expected to follow from discipline and isolation into a sort of “enlightened” state, that is to say a special mode of life and of consciousness which must exist in any community, even if it is not recognized. The special formation required to meet these conditions is imparted by experienced persons, or judged by a community which has shared something of the traditional consciousness we may call mystical, contemplative, enlightened, or spiritually transformed.

2. At this point — a parenthesis on the problems of language. There are great difficulties inherent in words like “mystical”, lack of agreement on their meaning, etc. Without deciding all these problems here, what matters is to clarify the distinction between the “monastic” type of dedication, the “monastic” quest for a higher type of consciousness, from “active” types of dedication oriented to “good works” like education, care of the sick, etc. (since they include today scholars who have a more sympathetic understanding of monastic questions and problems than many monks have). Monastries are generally not monastic. Monastries are generally not monastic. Monastries are generally not monastic.

Continuity on this point is nevertheless present in the Western Church, especially now, when the very notion of the “contemplative life” is under attack even in the (Catholic) monastic milieu. Having arrived in a general way to these problems, one might emphasize two points:

(a) Even in the highly active “west” there is nevertheless a monastic tradition which is primarily contemplative and this tradition is being renewed even in the Protestant milieu which was originally hostile to it.

(b) There is a real possibility of contact on a deep level between this contemplative and monastic tradition in the West and the various contemplative traditions in the East — including the Islamic Sufi, the mystical lay-contemplative societies in Indonesia, etc. as well as the better known monastic groups in Hinduism and Buddhism.

3. A word on Orthodoxy as distinguished from Catholic (Western) mysticism. The emphasis on contemplation in Greece and Israel. The Hesychast tradition. Athos. Problem of Orthodox monasticism today.

Though Catholic monasticism is less frankly contemplative, it is in a better position for dialogue with Asia at the moment because of the climate of openness following Vatican II. Christian monasticism has a tradition of adaptation and comprehension with regard to Greek philosophy, and many Catholics realize that this could also apply very well to Hindu and Buddhist philosophies, discipline, and experience. An articulate minority sees, it is ready for free and productive communication. Encouragement has been offered by the Vatican Council.
To return to our main theme, we can easily see the special value of dialogue and exchange among those in the various religions who seek to penetrate the ultimate ground of their belief by a transformation of the religious consciousness. We can see it as the point of starting in those disciplines which claim to prepare a way for "spiritual" self-transcendence (with due reservations in the use of the term "spiritual").

Without asserting that there is complete unity of all religion at the "yes" - the transcendent or spiritual level - that they all are from different dogmatic positions to "yes" at this summit is it certainly true to say that even where there are irreconcilable differences in doctrine and in fundamental belief there may be profound similarities and analogies in the realm of religious experience. There is something new in the observation that holy men like St. Francis and Sri Ramakrishna (to mention only two) have attained to a level of spiritual illumination which is at once universally recognizable and relevant to anyone interested in the religious dimension of existence. Cultural and doctrinal differences must remain, but they do not invalidate a very real quality of existential likeness.

3. The purpose of this paper is primarily to make clear that, on this existential level of experience and of spiritual maturity, it is possible to achieve real and significant commonality and peace among many bodies. We will consider in a moment what this "much more" may be. For the present, one thing above all needs to be emphasized. Such dialogue in depth, at the very heart of monastic and of human experience, is not just a matter of academic interest. It is not just something for which foundation money could be obtained. That is probably true, but this paper is not considering that particular aspect of it. This is not just a matter of "research" and of academic conferences, workshops, study groups, or even of new institutional structures - producing results that may be fed into the general accretion of our facts about man, society, culture and religion.

I speak to a Western monk, who is preeminently concerned with his own monastic calling and dedication. I have left my monastery to come here not just as a research scholar or even as an author (which I also happen to be). I come as a pilgrim who is anxious to obtain not the information, not just "facts" about other monastic traditions, but to drink from ancient sources of monastic vision and experience. I seek not only to learn more (quantitatively) about religion and about monastic life, but to become a better and more religious monk (qualitatively) myself.

I am convinced that communication in depth, across the lives that have hitherto divided religious and monastic traditions, is now not only possible and desirable, but most important for the destiny of Twentieth Century man.

I do not mean that we ought to expect visible results of earth-shaking importance, or that any publicity at all is desirable. On the contrary, I am convinced that this exchange must take place under the true monastic conditions of quiet, tranquility, solitude, leniency, reverence, meditation and contemplation. I am convinced that what we might call typically "Asian" conditions of non-shouting and of patient waiting must prevail over the Western passion for immediate visible results. For this reason I think it is above all important for Westerners like myself to learn what little they can from Asia. I think we must seek not merely to make superficial reports on the Asian traditions, but to live and share those traditions, as far as we can, by living them in their traditional milieu.

I need not add that I think we have now reached a stage (long overdue) religious maturity in which we may be permitted to remain perfectly faithful to a Christian and Western monastic commitment, and yet to learn in depth from, say, a Buddhist or Hindu discipline and experience. I believe that some of us need to do this in order to improve the quality of our own monastic life and seen to help in the task of monastic renewal which has been undertaken within the Western Church.

4. At this point - a parenthesis on the problem of "monastic renewal" - state of confusion resulting from a collapse of formal structures that were so long ago properly understood - erosion and formal misreading, etc., or external observance for its own sake - a traditionalism that was engendered of its truly living content, equalization of genuine tradition, discipline, contemplation - evoking the monastic life, that has resulted in a true monastic crisis in the West. It is surely probable that many hitherto flourish monastic institutions, which preserved a genuine living continuity with the Middle Ages, may soon cease to exist. Both good and bad in this. Will Asian monasticism somehow or other face the same kind of crisis? Source of the problem: obsession with "relevance" to the new generation - but the problem is only half understood. In reality, the secular quasi-monastic movement of the hippies in America shows that the accumulative dimensions of life (which some months and energy are actually repudiating) is definitely relevant to modern youth.

5. In order not to prolong this paper any more, let us confine ourselves to a couple of very important topics that of communication between monastic traditions, and that of the more obvious misreadings we must avoid. Necessarily both topics will have to be treated more briefly than we might desire.

6. The question of communication is now no longer fraught with such great difficulties. The publication of classic Asian texts and of latest research, especially in English and in German, has led to the formation of what one might call an inter-cultural vocabulary. We are well on our way to a workable inter-religious lexicon of key words - mainly rooted in Sankett -
which will permit intelligent discussion of all kinds of religious experience in all the religious traditions. This it is fact already being done to some extent, and one of the results of it is that psychologists and psychoanalysts, as well as anthropologists and students of comparative religion, are now able to talk a kind of lingua franca of religious experience. I think this “language” though sometimes pedantic, seems to be fairly reliable, and it is now at the disposition of theologians, philosophers, and plain monks like myself.

This is a first step only, but it is an important step— which will often have to be completed by the services of an interpreter. He in his turn will be more helpful if he knows the “common language,” and is interested in the common pursuit of inner enlightenment. Inconceivably, however, this kind of communication cannot get far unless it is carried on among people who share some degree of the same enlightenment.

Is it too optimistic to expect the monks themselves to make this contribution? I hope not. And here we come to the “something more” that I referred to above. True communication on the deepest level is more than a simple sharing of ideas, of conceptual knowledge, or formalized truth. The kind of communication that is necessary on this deep level must also be common beyond the level of words, a communication in authentic experience which is shared not only on a word level but also on a non-verbal one.

The non-verbal level is that of the unpolluted and undefinable expression, the pre-disposition of mind and heart, to carry for all “monastic” experience whatever. This demands among other things a freedom from emotions and passions, a candid liberation from external social dictates, from conventions, limitations and mechanisms which restrict understanding and inhibit experience of the new, the unexpected. Monastic training must not form men in a rigid mold, but liberate them from habitual and routine mechanisms. The monk who communicates on the level that I am speaking here must be not merely a passionate observer of external traditions, but a living example of traditional and interior realization. He must be able to live to new experience because he has fully utilized his own tradition and gone beyond it. This will permit him to meet a disciple of another, apparently remote and alien tradition, and find a common ground of verbal understanding with him. The non-verbal level will then, at least ideally, be that on which they both meet beyond their own words and their own understanding in the silence of an ultimate experience which might conceivably not have occurred if they had not met and spoken…

This is what I would call “communication”. I think it is something that the deepest ground of our being cries out for, and it is something for which a lifetime of striving would not be enough.

19. The wrong ways that are to be avoided ought to be fairly evident. First of all, the striving for inter-monastic communion should not become just another way of adding to the immense body of the endlessly fruitless and trivial discussion of everything under the sun, the inescapable chatter with which modern man tries to convince himself that he is in touch with his fellow man and with reality. This contemplative dialogue must be reserved for those who have been seriously disciplined by years of silence and by a long habit of meditation. I would add that it must be reserved for those who have entered with full seriousness into their own monastic tradition and are in authentic contact with the past of their own religious community—besides being open to the tradition and to the heritage of experience belonging to other communities.

Second, there can be no question of a facile syncretism, a mish-mash of semi-religious verbiage and petter, a desecration that admits everything and therefore takes nothing with serious seriousness.

Third, there must be a scrupulous respect for important differences and where one no longer understands or agree, this must be key clear—without useless debate. There are differences that are not debatable, and it is a useless, silly temptation to try to argue them out. Let them be left intact until a moment of greater understanding.

Fourth, attention must be concentrated on what is really essential to the monastic quest; this, I think, is to be sought in the areas of true self-transcendence and enlightenment. It is to be sought in the transformation of consciousness in its ultimate ground, as well as in the highest and most authentic devotional love of the skytype— but not in the acquisition of extraordinary powers, in miraculous activities, in special charismata, visions, levitation, etc. These must be seen as phenomena of a different order.

Fifth, questions of institutional structure, monastic rule, traditional forms of cult and observance must be seen in relatively secondary and are not to become the central focus of attention. They are to be understood in their relation to enlightenment itself. However, they are to be given the full respect due to them and the interests of dialogue and communication should not be allowed to submerge structures that may remain very important to help to interior development.

60. It is time to conclude. The point to be stressed is the importance of serious communication, and indeed of “communion,” among contemplatives of different traditions, disciplines and religions. This can contribute much to the development of man at this critical point of his history. Indeed, we find ourselves in a crisis, a moment of crucial choice. We are in grave danger of losing a spiritual heritage that has been painfully accumulated by thousands of generations of saints and contemplatives. It is the peculiar office of the monk in the modern world to keep alive the
Extemporaneous Remarks by Thomas Merton

Editor's Note: During the morning of the second day of the conference (October 19, 1959) Father Merton spoke as a preface to the presentation of a part of his personal philosophy. He spoke as a Christian monk who had lived in the world, as other monks of other religions gathered here in Calcutta, for spiritual brotherhood.

Thomas Merton's sudden death near Kingdom Valley, little more than six weeks after the conference, was a tragedy not only to his friends, but to all who cherish the spiritual in man, and all who value the poet's ability to penetrate the truth with words that sing.

Thomas Merton was the author of 25 books, the most famous of which, The Seven Storey Mountain, is an adequate prelude to reading the dozen or so volumes of spiritual autobiography. In recent years he had published several works relating to other religions, including a study of Zen Buddhism and a collection of Mahatma Gandhi's spontaneous ecumenical visibilities.

He was only fifty-three when he died. What further wisdom might have come from his pen, as a result of his visit to Asia, we shall of course never know, but what he said at Famine in Calcutta affords us at least a clue.

First, let me struggle with the contradiction that inhabits me, in appearing before you in what I really consider to be a disguise, because I never, never wear this. What I ordinarily wear is blue jeans and an open shirt; which brings me to the question that people have been asking to a great extent: Whom do you represent? What religion do you represent? And that, too, is a rather difficult question to answer. I come with the notion of perhaps saying something for monks and to monks of all religions because I am supposed to be a monk.

In speaking for monks I am really speaking for a very strange kind of person, a marginal person, because the monk in the modern world is no longer an established person with an established place in society. We realize very keenly in America today that the monk is essentially outside of all establishments. He does not belong to an establishment. He is a marginal

A classical collar.
person who withdraws deliberately to the margin of society with a view to deepening fundamental human experience. Consequently, as one of these strange people, I speak to you as a representative of all marginal persons who have done this kind of thing deliberately.

Thus I find myself representing perhaps hippies among you, poets, people of this kind who are seeking in all sorts of ways and have absolutely no established status whatever. So I ask you to do me just one favor of considering me not as a figure representing any institution, but as a statusless person and an insignificant person who comes to you seeking your charity and patience while I say one or two things.

Are monks and hippies and poets relevant? No, we are deliberately irrelevant. We live with an ingrained irrelevance which is proper to every human being. The marginal man accepts the basic irrelevance of the human condition, an irrelevance which is manifested above all by the fact of death. The marginal person, the monk, the displaced person, the prisoner, all these people live in the presence of death, which calls into question the meaning of life. He struggles with the fact of death in himself, trying to seek something deeper than death, because there is something deeper than death, and the office of the monk or the marginal person, the meditative person or the poet is to go beyond death even in this life, to go beyond the dichotomy of life and death and to be, therefore, a witness to life.

This requires, of course, faith, but as soon as you say faith in terms of this monastic and marginal existence you run into another problem. Faith means doubt, Faith is the suspension of doubt. It is the overcoming of doubt and you overcome doubt by going through it. The man of faith who has never experienced doubt is not a man of faith. Consequently, the monk is one who has to struggle in the depths of his being with the presence of doubt; and to go through what some religions call the Great Doubt, to break through beyond doubt into a serenity which is very, very deep because it is not his own personal serenity, it is the serenity of God himself, in us. The only ultimate reality is God. God loves and dwells in us. We are not justified by any action of our own, but we are called by the voice of God, by the voice of that ultimate Being, to pierce through the irrelevance of our life, while accepting and admitting that our life is totally irrelevant, in order to find relevance in Him. And this relevance in Him is not something we can grasp or possess, it is something that can only be received as a gift. Consequently, the kind of life that I represent is a life that is open to gift, gift from God and gift from others.

It is not that we go out into the world with a capacity to love others greatly. This too we know in ourselves, that our capacity for love is limited. And it has to be completed with the capacity to be loved, to accept love from others, to want to be loved by others, to admit our loneliness and to live with our loneliness because everybody is lonely. This is then another basis for the kind of experience that I am talking about, which is a new approach, a different approach to the eternal experience of the monk. The monk in his solitude and in his meditation seeks this dimension of life.

But, we do have to admit also the value of traditional monastic ways. In the West there is now going on a great upheaval in mysticism, and much that is of underlying value is being thrown away irresponsibly, foolishly, in favor of things that are superficial and showy, that have no ultimate value. I do not know how the situation is in the East, but I will say as a brother from the West to Eastern monks, be a little careful. The time is coming when you may face the same situation and your fidelity to your ancient traditions will stand you in good stead. Do not be afraid of that fidelity, I know I need not warn you of this.

Behind, then, all that I have said is the idea that significant contact are certainly possible and easy on the level of this kind of monastic experience, this pietistic level of experience - not necessarily institutional monasticism, but among people who are seeking. The basic condition for this is that each be faithful to his own search.

And so I stand among you as one who offers a small message of hope, that fact, there are always people who dare to seek on the margin of society, who are not dependent on social acceptance, not dependent on social routine, and prefer a kind of free-floating existence under a state of risk. And among these people, if they are faithful to their own calling, to their own vocation, and to their own message from God, communication on this deepest level is possible.

And the deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion. It is wordless. It is beyond words, and is beyond speech and it is beyond concepts. Not that we discover a new unity, we discover an older unity. My dear brothers, we are already one. But we imagine that we are not. And what we have to discover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are.
The Unity of Religions

by

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Differences do exist. Distinctions can be recognized. Subtle variations of opinion can be pointed out. And yet all religions and religious masters have been giving one single solitary message everywhere: that there is a greater reality behind the obvious pluralism that we are observing all around. The various forms and names and their different functions are each one of them as important as any other one.

In this respect the Upanishads of Indi give us a beautiful analogy or metaphor of the tree. The trunk is not like the branches; the branch is not like the twig; the twig is not like the leaf; the leaf is not like the flower. But together we call it the tree.

If the trunk's function and form are different from the branches' and the twigs', the leaves' function and form are different from the flowers'. Each of them has a distinct form and expression and function, and yet all of them together we call the tree.

This is not because the trunk is exactly like the branch, nor that there is no distinction at all between the flower and the leaf; it is because deep inside there is a sap that flows, that nurtures and nourishes and nurtures all branches, all buds, all leaves, all flowers, all fruits, and hence we say that the tree is one.

Similarly, for Vedantism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism: there are as many religions as there have been masters who have inspired man to live the robber life, and until and unless we come to contact and recognize and understand the factors that breed these pluralistic phenomena, they are confusing indeed. And yet in and through them all there is a sap that runs continuously on. In this life, in the various religions, one person may call it God, another may call it Atman, another Buddha; others may call it by other names. But the one reality is that there is a great consciousness, a greater soul, a greater factor in each one of us. And we at this moment, not recognizing the different steps in us, but identifying with the outer cares of a physical body and a mind and perhaps some portion of our intellect, look at the world and recognize the world in different ways.

I can come in contact with the world only when I relate myself to the world. In my relationship to the world the question arises of the relevance of religion in life. The relevance of religion in life is only to organize my relationships with the world around me. I relate myself to the world from different standpoints in myself. Physically, I am seeing you all as human beings. Emotionally, I may love you, or I may hate you. Intellectually, I may be able to appreciate you, or not appreciate you. But from each standpoint I get a new evaluation of all.

When I came into this hall, I met and talked with Father Fallon. All I knew was that he is a French professor here at the University. He speaks fluent Bengali and he is translating the Bible into Bengali. That is all. But after we have heard and listened to his beautiful paper, don't you think that you can look at him with a different eye altogether? I do. Before, I saw him only as a physical form, and I have seen many priests and padres, and I thought: This is one among them. But when you understand him, you feel that there is a deeper cheer in you that is touched by him, because he could talk to us from a deeper level.

And still we go into these questionings of ourselves. Where can there be any solution or relevancy in life? Therefore, the movement for seeking the relevancy of religion in life is not merely a horizontal movement; it must be vertical. It must be a spiritual quest, an attempt by each individual to unfold himself in himself, away from the paltry passions of the flesh, the agitations of the mind, the endless questionings of the intellect. This can come only on the transcendence into a higher plane of consciousness, when masters and generations have been able to realize this unfoldment, to their extent those masters have been able to impart their hope, their peace, their tranquility to others around them. This doesn't mean that every one of us will be able to unfold spiritually immediately. It is not necessary. Even in this scientific age, not everyone is going to become a Buddha. There may be only one Buddha, one James Joyce or one great scientist here or there, but they contribute their knowledge. Other scientific men, men of ordinary science, try to live up to it. Similarly, spiritual masters and spiritual total unfoldment may not come to everybody. It is not necessary. But the moment we have this vision in ourselves, we must understand that it is not necessarily the Scriptures, the Bible, the Koran, the Upanishads that will bring about relevancy to life in religion.

In this context, I most especially say that in earlier sessions there was general bemoaning from the platform that, due to the tragedy at Darjeeling we could not go to the peaks of the Himalayas and climb the sacred heights. Ah, is it the divine plan that has brought us here. Because what is our problem? Our very question here is how to bring into religion relevancy
to life. To go back again to the Himalayas! No, it is how to bring religion from the Himalayas, from the churches, from the mosques, from the books, into the market place. That is exactly what we are trying to find out, and therefore there is its symbolic righteousness that we could not do it in the Himalayas. We have to do it here, now.

Therefore, friends, here is the right atmosphere. In the time we will be spending here listening to and understanding the paper and discussions, we will be constantly trying to find out how we can bring this idea to the ordinary man. Continue your victory over the world around. What matter if it is through scientific understanding? Continue that. Through economy! Continue bringing forth more wealth into the world. Let all the politicians try to discover how it can be distributed beautifully and equally all around the world. All these efforts must go on, but they must go on inspired by a greater understanding of the utility and greater goal in which we are all one regardless of distinctions of race or creed or color. And this ideology can come only when that spiritual dimension is taken at the religious level.

At the religious level, there will be and there should be distinctions, but in the realm of the spiritual one must recognize the intellect itself. There you enter the realm of peace and tranquility. In that larger and more complete dimension of the greater consciousness, there is no distinction between man and man or even between man and matter. There is no distinction at all, whether among plants or animals or humans in that awakened mode of higher awareness. Politically we know that there is government of the people, by the people, for the people; but practically we know there is government of the people, by the people, for the people. We also know that if this ideal and understanding is once accepted, when we are living in this world, we must say at all levels let there be new orientation, a new vision, a new dimension altogether; that with this we can all solve our problems. Poor one corner of love in the world, shake the world, and keep it there. All problems will precipitate and go down, the clear waters of peace can come to the top.

The entire problem is why should I love, what exactly is love, why should I identify with you? After all, you are so different. But once I understand that between you and me there is no external difference, that the higher planes of imagination are one and the same, with this understanding certainly there problems can be solved. To that extent, from that spiritual standpoint there is relevance of religion in the world.

At the religious level the church, the mosque, the temple, may not look like a temple. Religious ritualism must be distinctly different. In the shape and form there will be distinctions, but the fundamental spiritual awakening makes use of all these instruments. The mighty experience is indeed where there is calm, peace and tranquility. Towards this man is moving. Whether we like it or not the word is that we are being pushed ahead. You find even international political organisations joining together in crying, peace, peace, peace. The world has to move ahead because essentially man is demanding it. This great effort we can put forth through all of our great institutions. Where the emphasis is ultimately for spiritual unfolding, rather than a mere bogy or a mere political subscription to a faith or an institution: working through the institution, with the help of faith, in the grace of the Lord, we can reach an unfolding within ourselves and come to experience it. This seems to be the ultimate means, goal or solution of bringing religion to the relevance of ordinary life. I am not here to talk of the problems that already exist. The various speakers have already pointed them out. For this, understanding is necessary.

The Temple of Understanding, the Viveka which is called Vedanta Viveka, has the power to analyze the problem that is facing us and to find out what exactly is the cause of reality in and through the nature that is ever expressing itself around us. this Temple of Understanding which has organized this great function and under whose auspices we shall be discussing understanding for the next three or four days. Let us come to a solution to the problem: at least we see the distant horizon of a brighter day, when there shall be new understanding in the world and we shall learn to handle each other without various mental intuitions, fanati-
cisms, or religious obsessions, political distinctions or racial differences. Let us learn to see in and through them all, the core, the oneness that is shimmering at all times, trying to express itself and fulfill itself in and through man.
Zoroastrianism—"This Spoke Zarathustra"

by

Dadarji N. D. Minocherji Homji
High Priest of the Zoroastrians, Bombay

I am grateful to the Temple of Understanding for inviting me to participate in this inter-religious meeting, in which we shall seek to approach current problems not from the sociological viewpoint but from the religious one. I shall treat religion as "a system of ultimate values and norms of conduct . . . as such it tends to constitute the supreme synthesis of the dominant values and norms of conduct" (RECONSTRUCTION OF HUMANITY, page 14).

The same source observes that the leading religions have "failed in the cardinal point, in making the overt conduct of their followers conform to the Golden Rule, to the principle of love towards their fellows, to the ethical norms of the Sermon on the Mount".

Let me also observe what U Thant said, in his message on "Religion and Peace", on 7th March 1964: "It is wholly appropriate that devout men of goodwill should join in search for peace at the present time. This search transcends religious differences, for peace and brotherhood of man are among the basic tenets of religion . . .". And lastly, we quote President Lyndon B. Johnson, whose message on March 15 appears in the same book referred to above. "The billions we appropriate to conquer poverty will be worth little unless we vanquish the most crippling poverty—man's insufficiency of understanding, his meagerness of spirit. The dollars we spend to eradicate disease will be wasted unless we isolate and control the deadliness of microbes—man's capacity for hatred, his penchant for violence".

The world today suffers from IDM, i.e. Poverty & Prejudice, Discrimination among races and Disaffection in the family, and a belief that Might is Right, which means, in other words, Power without Morality, leading to violence in individuals and groups, and when it is organized by the state, to war.

Science seems to reveal today more the destructive side than the constructive one. So science on the destructive side stands for RIP! But on its constructive side, science also stands for RII: Research with Restraint, i.e. consideration for humanity, Idealism and Industry, embodying its technological application, and Progress with Peace, so that values may be established, where "O" stands for social organization for equal opportunities for the self-development of individuals as well as of nations; "R" for Reason and Rationality and Right, in place of rage and rancour and wrong; "I" for the Dignity of the Human Being—Black or White or Yellow; "E" for equity, i.e. Moral Justice enabling us to interpret laws rightly and apply them ethically; and, "I" for Right is Might, not its opposite. Zarathustra's principle for establishing order in the Universe is given in the five Gathas or the Songs: Gatha Ahuna-vafith iucacac is mankind the threefold lesson of Truth, Wisdom and Love, or Right and Love. It has seven chapters. The first chapter is the Prophet's pledge (Yasa 22.4) to remove darkness, selfishness and violence and to establish light, selflessness and love, called in Avesta, Aha, Vish Mau and Ezahar respectively. In the second chapter, we have the background of darkness, selfishness and violence, (Yasa 22.5) to remove which the Prophet is born. The same picture is drawn in Bhagavad Gita (Chapter IV, 1, 2). In the third chapter the Prophet outlines his philosophy of the two Powers of Maimunye: The Principle of Substance and the Principle of Resistance. It has been generally but erroneously believed that Zoroastranism believes in a God of light and a God of Darkness. Nothing can be further from the truth, because our ancient faith is a monotheistic faith, believing only in One Who Created. The fourth chapter connotes the Philosophy of Life. The Prophet stresses the need of reason over sentiment and He exhorts people (in YS. 21.7): "Let the man of wisdom speak to a man who is eager to know, let not an ignorant man lead others astray!"

He also exhorts each person to make the choice between the right and the wrong for himself or herself and not to believe anything on mere hearsay, so that selfish men may not spread untruth.

In the fifth chapter, the Prophet shows his grim, uncompromising opposition to the teachers of false values, to all anti-social elements—political or economic—called Cofane. Chapter six shows selflessness as the remedy for selfishness, which is the root of all wrongs in the world. Zarathustra taught that selfishness is sweetness and selfishness is bitterness, as is borne out by our experience. Chapter seven points out the path of the Liberation of the Spirit through action—through good deeds, so that renovation can be achieved slowly but steadily.

The second Gatha, Ushtha-van, teaches man the life of altruism: Others first, myself afterwards. This Gatha also embodies the Golden Rule: "Do as you would be done by".

The third Gatha, Spenta Mainyu, embodies the all-pervasiveness of the spirit of God. Man should recognize the presence of the good spirit in every man and in every being being too. This teaches one to be loving and considerate to others and avoid misunderstanding and violence.

See the Appendix on page 105.
in every human is a Christ contended.
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed.
The fourth Gatha, Vahisdatthu, means moral power. Power and morality should go together. Today's science, when it becomes the handmaid of political power, is base and antidote, i.e., creating poison or destruction first, and then finding its remedy. Research without restraint will lead man to destruction. Power on the path of Sreva Mantriya is the destruction which we witness all around us. To develop beneficent power is the discipline of life, whereas destructive power is an untamed animal let loose. Good deeds of service and sacrifice are the best prayers, says Zarathustra.
The fifth and last Gatha, Vahisdatthu, means the crown of fulfillment. In the first chapter of the first Gatha, Zarathustra gives his pledge: "As long as I am physically capable and have the will power, I will teach mankind to yearn for truth." After gain opposition and struggle, the Teacher of Truth succeeds in establishing order and harmony in the world, and hence He drops in the final song his satisfaction on the fulfillment of his white dream.
Truth from this perspective provides double strength. And those who come as staff, remained to enjoy. (p. 23, no. 47).

To sum up we shall have general observations on our topic. To begin with, one cannot say that religion has been tried in the past and found wanting. But it is true to say that religion has been found difficult and left untried.

By religion, I mean the fundamental principles which are identical to all the religions. When children are taught these identical fundamental principles in their impressionable age, the phrase, "the man of a foreign country" to itself foreign to their minds. One meaning of the term "foreign" as given in Chambers' Dictionary is "alien, repugnant," and this in mid-century of the 20th Century!

Such a definition and concept can only lead to violence, because the children are brought up, by practice and precept, according to the dictum, "This person is my own, and the other fellow is a foreigner." If science and technology advance without reference to and a consideration for humanity, civilization and culture will be a dream of the past.

We can get some idea of the destructiveness of violence and war by considering the monetary cost of a modern heavy bomber: equal to this of constructing thirty school buildings or two power plants or two hospitals. One fighter plane costs as much as half a million bushels of white; and a destroyer as much as ten thousand dollars for 200 people (from the American Baptist, 1951).

The world suffers, says an apostle of Zoroastrianism (Yusuf XII, 198-198; Sacred Books of the East, vol. XXIII, pages 111-12), from four types of wrongs - social, economic, political and moral. The first is the person who

Indeed in his conscience, the Duce, oblivious to the social good; the second is the leader called the Buddha in Avesta, meaning literally the brigand; the third is the tyrant, misrepresenting power and authority, for as Louis Aragon puts it, "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely," and he is called Satan in Avesta; and the fourth and the last is the person ruled by Ahriman or passion, greed and violence.

As a man of religion, i.e., as a man of sympathy and fellow feeling for man and even of all sentient beings, I can only intercede (ICMM: the Intercontinental Bellinic Ministry) as "I see the Bankruptcy of Man, Mind and Morals" in which man has ceased to be an individual and become a machine, having no knowing and feeling. (Please refer to C. J. Jung in his The Undiscovered Self).

Let me end on the note of the universal man, as Tokyo puts it in Ask, Religions of Man. Another apostle of Zoroastrianism prays in that story past (Yusuf XIII, 363, B. E. XXXI, pages 227-229): "I bless (or pray for) him who is truthful with Goodness (that is, with all the values of good life), whenever he may be, between Heaven and the Earth, with (or for) a thousand healing remedies and for one thousand of the same." Rambam, the great rabbi whose motto was: "The world is 100, the whole world becomes (in the influence of this education) one happy home, one happy home!"

APPENDIX

Consulting references from the Avestan Scriptures, of which most are from the holy Gatha of Zarathustra himself, having closely noted respecting the subject meaning of an subject.

As for the first place of that's gone, the sacred text is a life on earth; the life of a nation where one can live without the life of a higher righteousness without. (Yusuf XIII, 25).

Yeople:Venain

Those men and women both we adore;
Whose mercy spreads itself through
Sah Asia, the strange land of life;
Where are the sight of their souls more
At least and noblest mortals (recognized).

Yeople: Are these the true Lords of Mortals? (Yusuf XIII, 12)


And so as I have told and said the good's
If earth wanted to be fair and fair for Truth.

To you the Soul of Mother Earth complained:
"Wherefore Yeavam me birth? Who fashioned me?"
Zoroastrianism - "Thus Spoke Zarathustra"

When Sheo Thrus Thou send, O Minus, to protest
Us all, whom (names therein) we wish, to reach,
Other than Thums own Life? and Thy Law?
When both those are aroused within ourselves,
Aske shall be JatWd, O abantu. — —
Sheo Thrus thee send to Thrus (Th, 47.)

(Shosang, King.)

Both ask, Truth and False, ou acsha avan,
O Minus, by Thy (Hashing) Fire Divine;
The Parsey Thrus (hashav) hook JatWd, Saha,
As They proceed to each one indicative; — —
Complete satisfaction shall be (Thrus) one find,
Thy blessings fill the Truth's (One) shall resp. (Th, 30.)

That man, indeed, who never keeps us
As stay earthy, led by Artas Law.
I am dedicated to be Minas Auras.
Both one of these, who have seen me and who are,
With my presence will I call by name,
And serve (Thrus) hook my death. (Th, 28.)

(*This is the original Gathare of which
Yonghe Heaven is a paraphrasis in p. 3. 6. No. 2. 109.)

——— Those who opposed Him, even they have learnt
To reverence the Teachings of His Faith.
And know the Good Cord in every act. (Th, 31.)

May brotherhood Men, for which we yearn,
Ceres does recognize, restore the hearts
Of man and mankind of Zarathustra's Faith.
Bringing fulfillment unto Vahsh Mena" — — (Th, 16.)

(*The Life of Law—Light of Law)

(All the above quotations are from The Religion of ZARATHUSTRA
By Dr. J. J. KURKENDALL, Ph. D., Birmally.)

"Thus and again, again our word..."
And silence remain on earth, Men, —
"To Ahura Mazda, the Supreme Being."
"No other being than Yours ever, O food."
"Kia ashras, Zoro, wisdom born." (Th, 26.)

How with your feet the In potrà Truth I reach,
And with the other man egads they saw three. — —
Before you show which of two Fools to tread, — —
Dealing out my care, seek me for aid. — —
Before the great New Age is gathered in
Wake up. what is expected. Shosang's Book. (Th, 13.)

If I will only live here, and here, and here,
Whoever thins truth ordered for ye, O. men. — —
The Laws of Hayyam, the laws of fire, — —
That Falsehood brings in "punishment" evermore.
Then Truth looks in a false. Life, Life, — —
Upon all such the Light Divine shall dawn. (Th, 38.)

Wherever works and deed are silent, best,
Though love of Fohsana, through search for Truth,
The yearnings and the prayers of my heart;
Raws, Ahura, through the Enkare in Sere,
My Life, and wake as Thou waken. — — (Th, 2.)

This do acquire of Thee, vouchsafe unto me the Truth thereof:
How devote my spirit unto Thee
In Holy Service done with all my strength: — —
This the Religion, Wisdom taught us... — — (Th, 46.)

This do I acquire of Thee, vouchsafe unto me the Truth thereof.
On who side shall I stand, the Truth or False?
Shall I confide with Fohsana, who do ill?
Or with their victims, as foraying for Truth?
This Fohsana, who ever spurns the Truth's pious plea,
Dost not Unahw_MPai who Mother Earth? (Th, 44.)

This do I acquire of Thee, vouchsafe unto me the Truth thereof:
Our only Poo, the Maker, how will I
Deliver Artas Holy Hand?
Then though the Holy Truth, I'll wake here alone.
And through frustration of their evil hopes.
Through suffering and pain redeem their lives. (Th, 44.)

This do I acquire of Thee, vouchsafe unto me the Truth thereof:
Have shall I, Mazda, guided by Thee, reach
The Goal, extant, and be one with Thee?
Fish was casting round of faith unwavering?
'Myself life bound, through Thy Truth. — —
On the way my Guide. — — Fly Holy Word. (Th, 47.)
Buddhism and the Other World Religions

by

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Religion, in general, has been the most powerful guide and protection as well as the greatest consolation of humanity. It is the father of all the cultures and civilizations, the literatures and fine arts of mankind. It was through religion that we human beings learned to control our animal instincts and to aspire to higher and nobler goals. No religion in the world teaches man to do evil. On the contrary, every religion supplies man with spiritual nourishment and helps to elevate his mind above mundane affairs. All religions seek to temper human emotions, and in theory at least, should help to reduce tension and conflicts among individuals, races and nations. Despite glaring examples of failure in this respect, the religions of the world have brought about more consolation and peace of mind than any other power on earth. It is on this basis that we say there is a great deal in common in the main aims and objectives of all religions, despite differences in their beliefs and rituals.

WHAT IS BUDDHISM?

What the Buddha taught and spoke to his followers is popularly known as Buddhism. Some call it a religion, others consider it a philosophy, still others think of it as both religion and philosophy. It can also be called a way of life. The Buddha's teachings are guidelines for man's spiritual and intellectual uplift which are helpful not only in man's present life but also in the lives to come, and ultimately for the attainment of the "sunnam bhûnum" of Buddhism, called sabbhat. The Buddha Himself called His teaching dhamma, the Doctrine and Discipline.

As a philosophy Buddhism is not merely the love of wisdom or a search for wisdom, it is the encouragement of a practical application of the Buddha's teachings for the cultivation of knowledge and more useful life until one attains enlightenment and becomes the Master over all the forces of evil that keep him bound to the world and its cycle of birth, suffering and death.

Buddhism also advocates the search for truth and purity of mind. It is neither speculative reasoning nor theoretical dogma; nor is it mere acquisition and storage of knowledge. It is the application of knowledge to life; looking into life and not merely at it. It is neither a pessimistic nor an optimistic approach to life even though one can, to some extent, see the qualities of both in it.

THE CONCEPT OF GOD

Various branches of Christianity, as well as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, teach hatred of the devil and love of God. Buddhism teaches the fear of evil and love of good. Evil is personified in Buddhism as "Mara", roughly equivalent to Satan in Christianity. While other religions are founded on the worship of God, Buddhism is based on the worship of "good". In a way, the purpose of the worship of God and the worship of good is the same, both having as their objective the betterment of man's character. The former prays to God for happiness, salvation and protection while the latter seeks to achieve the same goals through belief in "good" and loving kindness. It is quite certain that neither God nor good would ever be with the wicked. The real purpose of all religions is therefore to teach man to have good thoughts and to do good actions so that he can rise above the wickedness that has been with him from time immemorial.

IS BUDDHISM ONLY FOR LIFE HERE AFTER AND NIBBANA?

Not, it's certainly not. Nibbana is the ultimate and is far away, just like the heavenly life with the Creator in a religion that believes in God. According to Indian religions, lives in the hereafter are the natural result of actions in present and past lives. All the Indian religions such as Jainism, Hinduism and Buddhism speak of a recurring rebirth. According to Buddhism and Jainism every being has an unending past and an unending future life. Moksha in Hinduism, kevala in Jainism and nibbana in Buddhism are final goals that are to be achieved through effort and understanding.

The past is beyond control; the future is only in thought. We therefore have only the present to build up the future. Thus Buddhism as a doctrine of action depends only on the present. "Attâm samuñcay, nappajjappokay, anac. Pacciyappaya jayet".

The Buddha said that he left followers "do not repent the past, do not depend on the future, but live and act in the present." On another occasion He said: "One's duties and work should be done today itself, Who knows whether death comes tomorrow".

To clarify this further he said: "Well expounded is the doctrine by the Blessed One: to be self-realized with immediate fruit, to be but approached
Buddhism and World Religions

child even at the risk of her own life, even so one must cultivate a boundless heart towards all living." The Bible says, "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

With so much in common between the religions of the world, it is unfortunate that there exist even today such wide gaps of misunderstanding and such ignorance of the true meaning of the teachings of the different religions. The followers of the different religions of the world would think less about the infallibility of their own faiths and a little more about the good in other religions, there would be greater understanding among the peoples of the world. This is the only basis upon which lasting peace between races and nations can be built. I have attempted to show the relevance of Buddhism to other world religions. Now let us take a look at ourselves and the great problems that confront us today.

Our Modern World

We have great religions which speak eloquently about the lofty ideals of man. We have science developed to great heights in every field of human need. We have schools and universities in thousands to disseminate knowledge in abundance. The modern world with its modern, maximum efficiency buildings, television sets and jet planes, with its space and satellites circling the globe, is subject to unprecedented anxieties. We are witnessing both a psychological and a moral breakdown. Mankind is losing respect for law and order. Crime and violence are increasing, and youth is revolting against the established social order, parental control and discipline. In spite of the great increase in knowledge which is now available to most people and the material progress that has been achieved in the past few decades, there is a sharp rise in crime and in mental insanity. We are also faced with the ever greater danger today of an atomic holocaust which would result in the total annihilation of the human race. Is this the world we are building with all our spiritual and scientific knowledge? What then is the reason for this gloomy prospect? Where have we gone wrong? With all our intellectual advancement we are still children of emotion, and the question which we must ask ourselves, Have we regressed? Where can we now look for guidance and direction?

Solution

The one and only solution to this dilemma is religion. Politics was never the answer to it and never will be. But religion is losing its sway over the people of the modern world. Religion has failed to lift man above the material. It has preached "Love thy neighbour", and has conspicuously done so. It has praised poverty and deplored the excessive pursuit of wealth, but men of religion have sought wealth and power. It is not surprising therefore that religion is losing ground. It is time that each

The Concept of Universal Brotherhood

This is a teaching common to all religions. Those who have faith in a Creator inevitably accept what is meant by "Universal Brotherhood". In Buddhism and Jainism the concept is explained in the doctrine of non-attachment (Universal Love) and in Hinduism in the world-soul. The Buddha's Mattanammasutta, the discourse on the happy results of acts, enumerates eleven results. The Buddha said in the Karaniya Manta Sutta – the discourse on Duties and Universal Love: "Just as a mother would protect her only

to be seen, capable of being enticed upon; to be attained by the wise, each for himself."

In the Dhammapada he says: "Here he rejoices, herefore he rejoices, in both the world the well-doer rejoices. He rejoices, he exceedingly rejoices, seeing his own good deeds."

In another verse he says: "Health is the highest gain, contentment is the greatest wealth, courage is the best knowledge."

On leading an economic life his advice was: "One portion of the income should be spent on living, two portions of it should go for the business that brings the income and the fourth portion should be preserved, thinking that it would be useful in business in the future."

Such sayings of the Buddha abound in the 36 books of the Tripitaka. The whole Parabrahma Sutta, the discourse on Rain, gives a long list of 89 actions that cause man's ruin in this life. In the Sigalovada Sutta, – the discourse on advice to the householder, Sigalī gives instructions on how to live happily with wealth and prosperity in this present life. Even though there may not appear to be the same teachings in the same words in other religions, there can be no doubt that none of them has anything to say contrary to those teachings of the Buddha. It is fair to say that those are applicable to followers of all religions.

The teaching of the Buddha can be divided broadly into two parts. The first part is for the individual who sees this life as a span of misery and longs to put an end to it. Fortunately such individuals are few. A major part of his teaching is devoted to these individuals because it is they who require the most help.

The second is for the individual as well as for the society in which he lives. It teaches how to live a progressive, useful, well-balanced and happy life through righteousness which is well accepted in the five precepts of Buddhism, namely: To refrain from killing, stealing, committing adultery, telling lies, and taking intoxicating drinks which cause intoxication and blindness.

As in Buddhism, eternal happiness is the ultimate goal of every religion. Whether it be the Buddha's Nirvana, the Christian and Islamic Heavens, the Hindu Moksha or the Jain Ajna, it is an expression of eternal happiness.
religion turned to its basic sources and preached what its founders really had in mind. But the chief need today is a united voice of all religions raised against evil and hatred, a voice that will convince mankind that love and compassion must prevail if the human race is to survive.

A SOKA'S APPEAL

Some 2,600 years ago the Buddha said, "Soka Sanghastra Samgha-dhamma Pravasi" ("Pleasure is concord among the many, but more pleasant is concord in those who have self-control"). The great Indian Emperor Asoka (268-232 B.C.), who is said to have learnt Buddhism under the Venerable Saint Mogaliputra Tissa, found truth in the teachings of the Buddha and made the ideological base of a peaceful and prosperous empire. He united many diverse elements - social, social and religious. His monumental edicts pronounce a noble example of tolerance and understanding. One of them (Edict XII) declares:

One should not only honour one's religion and not condemn the religions of others, but should indeed honour others' religions for one cannot be another. So doing, one helps one's own religion to grow and renders a service to the religions of others. In doing otherwise, even through devotion to one's own religion, one digs the grave of one's own and also does harm to another's. Correct is good. Let all therefore, be willing to listen to the doctrines professed by others.

The words that Asoka promulgated, some 2,500 years ago, remain as good, fresh and pertinent as ever.

In the land of the Buddha and Asoka let us decide and hope for unity of religions, at least to help to solve the great problems of today. To me that is the best way for the world's religions to demonstrate their relevance in the Twentieth Century.

May all beings be happy and peaceful.

Jainism - A Way of Thinking and Living

by

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It is customary with us to commence our day and work with a brief prayer and I will do so now.

The prayer just recited is a prayer offered by the Jains. I have prayed that our conduct in life be guided by 4 principles - maapna (gratitude), pramapna (appreciation), karmapna (compassion) and sadhantapna (equanimity).

I shall endeavour to explain these at a later stage in my discourse.

Today men live in a world which is full of strife and frustration. Commercial values keep gaining precedence. Men seem to be full of greed, envy and hate. Not only do we try to keep up with the Joneses but we try to reach out for their throats. There is a sense of isolation within human beings and hate-spreading ideologies keep gaining more ground. Our different faiths have a common aim, "to make us realize the essential brotherhood of man". In practice they make us more aware of the divisions among us.

Why have we all met here today from the four corners of the earth? Not to argue dogmatically over differences, but to break the barriers of nationalism and racism - to learn something from each other, to see the same object from one another's point of view so that we can understand each other better and help each other the better in solving our problems. The goal for each of us is the same, though the approach may be different. Argument will not take us any nearer the goal. I am here reminded of an incident which will bear out my point.

At an eye clinic where many patients were waiting for treatment, there were four who were blind. One of them inadvertently touched a window.
Jainism is not a sect nor just one more conflicting ideology— it is a way of thinking and living.

The greatness of Jain philosophy lies in the fact that its teachings secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number, not only of men, but of all living beings, under all circumstances. Its philosophy is not essentially founded on any particular writing or external revelation, but on the unfolding of spiritual consciousness which is the birthright of every soul. More words cannot give full expression to the truths of jainism which must be felt and realized within.

The Jains are advocates of the development theory, hence their ideal is the development of man in all aspects—physical, mental and spiritual. Through knowledge and endeavor, the individual develops and unfolds the potential within him.

The word Jain is derived from the generic term “jina”. A person who conquers his lower nature i.e. passion, hatred and the like and brings into prominence the highest and achieves the state of the supreme being is called a jina. There have been several Jinas and there can be many more in the future. A jina who is a guiding force to his followers, reviews principles of religions andzigodhikates the community is called a “Tirthankara”.

According to Jain tradition, Adinath, who dates back to the beginning of the world, was the first Tirthankara, and founder of the Jain religion. Today, we live in the era of Bhagwan Mahavir the 24th and last Tirthankara. Bhagwan Mahavir was born in 598 B.C. in modern Bihar, lived to the age of 72 years and attained moksha i.e. salvation, in 528 B.C. He revived the Jain philosophy 2500 years ago. Since that time Bhagwan Mahavir has been the spiritual guide of the Jains.

Even now about a million Jains in India practice the preachings of Bhagwan Mahavir and it is the duty of their mentors to guide them in practicing it in its spirit in this rapidly changing world. “What then, is the essence—the spirit of jainism?”—you may ask.

Jainism, viewed as a whole rests on the four pillars which are ahimsa (non-violence), samayak (theory of relativity), acharjya (non-acquisition) and karm (deeds or action).

NON-VIOLENCE, THEORY OF RELATIVITY, NON-AQUITION AND DEEDS OR ACTION

Of these, Bhagwan Mahavir has said:

"सोन नीला नि सकाशात हसिने न गरिणाम।"

The instinct of self-preservation is universal. Every animate being clings to life and forestalls death.

The universe is not for man alone, it is a field of evolution for all living beings. Live and let live at the motto of Jains. Life is sacred, not only irrespective of caste, color, creed or nationality, but it is sacred to all living beings—at all levels—right down to the tiny ant or the humble worm.

There is not an inch of space in the Universe where there are not immemorable infinite living beings. The entire Universe is full of living beings. A man cannot even sit quietly and breathe without killing and harming life around him.

Then the question will arise, How can a man live in this world without taking life and thereby committing violence? Life at that rate will become impossible.

An answer is given in the Dasa Vakalika Sutra as follows:

अहं देश अ विदेशे

Perform all your activities but with great care. It demands constant wakefulness. Where an action is done with due care not to hurt anyone no violence is committed. The emphasis has been laid on the word “care”.

As long as man lives as a member of society, besides what he owes to himself for his spiritual betterment, he owes a great deal to the society in which he has to live.

Man in his desire to continue his life, so that he may do the highest good while living here, is obliged to destroy life, but the fewer and the lower the forms of life he destroys, the less harmful the laws or deeds he gener-
This philosophy makes the Jainist Catholic in his outlook and ever ready to understand the nature of other systems of theology.

This brings us to the third pillar of Jainism, parigraha (non-acquisition).

It is not here said: “It is easy to wise oneself from iron chains but not from the attachments of the heart!”

What are these attachments of the heart? Things that you desire so much that you spend all your energy in acquiring them and when you have acquired them, you get so attached to them that their loss would render your life most unhappy. The principle of non-acquisition teaches us not to give too much importance to acquiring worldly things - a house, a car, comforts of various kinds, and not to value them so much that their loss would mean the end of the world for us. Every man needs things to make life comfortable. Jainism does not enjoin a Jainist to renounce everything; that is only for the Sadhak - the ascetic. But Jainism does enjoin that even a layman should set a certain limit to his desires, his wants, so that he does not keep on acquiring and accumulating and in the process deny others what they need.

The ideal is to cut his requirements to the bare minimum.

This non-acquisition or non-possession should extend even to attachments to human beings - to our dear ones. It would be unnatural for a parent not to love his or her child, but there should be no possessiveness about this love. It is this possessiveness that is called attachment, and one should try not to be bound by it.

How strange is the mind of men! It does not appreciate what it has and hankers after what it has not. Neglecting the light of the soul that burns within it, how long will it grope in the darkness of the world without casting shadows that ever shade it?

Let me cite here how a Muni was given a practical lesson in this matter by a number of stray dogs. The Muni, engrossed in his philosophical thoughts of acquisition and renunciation, was passing through a street. Suddenly he was disturbed by the barking of dogs.

He saw that a dozen dogs were chasing one dog who was running away with a bone in his mouth. Soon they caught up with him and mauled him. Bleeding from the wounds, the dog dropped the bone and was left in peace. No sooner had he dropped the bone than another picked it up and he too met with the same fate; and so the chase for the bone and the consequent punishment went on.

Reflecting on this ugly incident the Muni realized this truth. So long as the dog clung to the bone, he had to bleed for it; the moment he gave it up he was left in peace.

Did not the dog, initially and spiritually, to gratify his lust for acquisition, and would he not attain serenity if he renounced it? thought the Muni.

It is only human desire, but the noblest desire for man should be to
attain a state of "desirelessness"—when he can accept things as they come to him, and can look on indifferently when they leave him.

This ancient principle of limited possession is extremely significant and valuable in the context of the economic conditions prevailing in the world today. The object is to secure equitable distribution and economic stability for society. A social order based upon this principle of limited possession will certainly prevent unnecessary accumulation of wealth and its insatiable counterpart, poverty and wretchedness. It will lay the foundation of a welfare society—a modern term.

The principle of pilgrimage can guide every individual, society, or nation in its positive efforts to enhance the happiness of mankind in general.

After having dealt with non-violence, the theory of relativity, and non-acquisition, we come to the last pillar on which Jainism rests, the law of karman (deeds or action).

Karma is shaped by deeds done during the previous incarnation as well as deeds done during this life. We enjoy the fruits of those good deeds now, during our present life. But we should be careful not to fret away or misuse those fruits—rather we should think of meriting our destiny for the next incarnation, ever progressing in our spiritual evolution. It is easy to waste these fruits, much more difficult to utilize them in shaping our future destiny.

Jainism explains joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity, and differentiation in physical, mental and spiritual abilities through the theory of karman. It explains the problem of inequality and apparent injustice in the world.

Karma denotes that substance which is continuously shaped by the results of our bodily and mental activity. We produce karma through all our daily activities. Different kinds of activity produce different kinds of karma which may ripen either immediately or after some time, or even in one or another of our subsequent existences.

And yet, the philosophy does not view the soul as hopelessly conditioned to act and react upon the consequences of its earlier deeds, as if it were an automatic machine, and beyond all responsibility for its mental activities and action. On the contrary, it clearly states that the individual is gifted with a certain amount of freedom of will. It emphatically declares that the soul is invested with the freedom to exercise its own resolution.

Acting under its own free will, it can break the heaviest fetters of this law. It implies that, to a considerable extent, by positive application of one's own free will, the soul is indeed the lord of its own life.

Good deeds that spring from love, compassion, charity, hospitality, and selfless service assure the bliss of happiness, whereas bad or undesirable deeds will sow the seeds of future sorrow.

Life existed before this life and will continue to do so after death. It is here on this shore and will be there on the opposite shore, too. In between

is the flow of birth and death. Because of karma and attachments the soul has to revolve in the cycle of birth and death.

Bhavagni Malaviya while explaining the true nature of the soul said:

The nature of the soul is like that of a hollow glass, i.e. it keeps apart. But when this hollow glass is given several coats of clay, then, even though its inherent capacity is so long kept off, it will sink.

Similarly a soul coated with violence, falsehood, dishonesty, inconstancy, anger, pride, hypocrisy and greed becomes heavy; despite its original virtue to keep apart, it sinks to the bottom.

But when the layers on the glass peel off one after another, it will gradually recover its tendency to keep apart. So, too, the soul. Were it to get rid of all the vices by acquiring right corresponding virtues—non-violence, truth, honesty, temperance, forgiveness, mental, spiritual and generosity, it could reattain itself and regain its natural virtues of lightness and steerability.

Having explained the four pillars of Jain philosophy, let me get back to the prayer in which I have asked our conduct to be guided by atman, appreciation, comprehension and consciousness.

By atman we mean the attainment of a mental state which would want to be friendly with, and bear goodwill towards, one and all.

Just as the dry bed of a lake is covered with a myriad cracks, because it is devoid of fresh water, similarly a religion that is not sweetened with the milk of human kindness is soon weakened by the cracks of internal discord.

Mere austerity may shrivel up a man's nature even as he does penance and practices renunciation, but his heart must be full of love.

What supports this on a wide scale? Surely not the much-trumpeted deeds of the blistering bearers but the entire sacrifice of the humble servants of humanity. Little deeds of utility such as the one you will bear presently.

A young Buddhist trudging along was startled by a scream of terror. A harried jill—an outcaste—had been bitten by a cobra. Failing to get anything to check the venom from spreading through the blood streams, he snapped his holy thread with his pen-knife, tied it tightly round the foot and saved her life.

A cry of relief was raised by the orthodox. Could anything be more sacrilegious than the holy thread being tied round the foot of an untouchable?

The answer given by the youth was very brief, but to the point. What could be more humane than the saving of a human life with a holy thread?

A humanitarian approach to life is holier than the mere wearing of a holy thread. Religion has to be practical and not theoretical. It should pulsate with life.

The aim of religion is to establish peace and harmony both at home and in society. Love and tolerance alone can promote concord at home and elsewhere.
The spirit of unity, if understood well, can bridge the gulf between one religion and another as between one nation and another.

Appreciation and compassion are in a way two other aspects of unity.

Appreciation: In this world, we come across those who are better than we are in many different ways. Too often we see the sad spectacle of men filled with envy for those who are more fortunate than themselves. Our prayer teaches us that we should learn to appreciate those who are better, admire them if they are worthier than we are, whether or not they are of the same religion, race or country. If this is practiced much of the envy and jealousy we find in this world will be removed.

Compassion: Compassion should govern our attitude towards those who are less fortunate than we are. It should extend even to the erring and the criminal.

After all, when Jainism believes that living beings often suffer because of their past misconducts, does it not behave a true Jain to extend compassion rather than criticism to one who pays for his misdeeds of the past?

Empathy: Equanimity is more of an introspective virtue. It governs our attitude towards ourselves, irrespective of the world around us. We achieve a certain balance of the mind that remains unaffected in spite of the vicissitudes of life. Whether the world treats us well or ill, whether we reap a reward for our good deeds or not, we should maintain that serenity of mind that brings contentment in its wake.

When a tiny pebble is dropped into the still waters of a pool, the pool is soon covered with ripples. It is in the very nature of water to break into ripples. But when the pool is frozen, even if you drop a stone in it there is hardly any disturbance in its smooth, hard surface.

The mind reacts to circumstances by breaking into ripples of disturbance. One would say that this is but natural. Perhaps - but is it inevitable? When the mind is trained to exist structurally all outward disturbances it will acquire a calm that nothing can ruffle.

I hope I have succeeded in making it clear that these four principles, when put into action, guarantee the highest amount of happiness and peace within the brotherhood of all living beings. I wish them to be universally adopted and followed for the benefit of all living beings.

That then is the basis of Jain philosophy in a nutshell.

It is a philosophy which can be practiced by a follower of any religion.

It is indeed very difficult to distill the elusive essence of religion so as to use it in one's daily life, but he alone is truly religious who carries out the precepts of his religion in all his dealings with the world.

We have spoken at some length to explain, to each other, the fundamental principles of our religions and how the essential elements in all are very similar.

Coming to the problems that face us, they, too, are essentially the same; the menace of destructive weapons of war, the misuse of racism, the problem of economic imbalance, the unrest among our youth.

After having discussed what is left for me to add about mistakes or bombs if the killing of a worm is an act of cruelty to a Jain, it would be superfluous to talk about the enormity of wiping out the human race! So, too, we have already covered the ground for the misuse of racism. If we recognize the fact that the soul is the same, whatever outward form it may be given, where then is the reason for racial prejudice? In aprajapata (non-acquisition) lies the solution for the unequal distribution of wealth. There need not be any "law" about it. Jainism is not like any of the modern "isms". 2500 years ago Bhagwan Mahavir gave us the antithesis to unequal distribution of wealth—his doctrine of aprajapata.

The last problem—youthful unrest—calls for a more detailed analysis. I will endeavour to show how we may deal with it.

WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF RELIGION TO MODERN YOUTH?

Is not modern youth justified in demanding why so many crimes have been committed in the name of religion? He has read in his history books lurid accounts of persecution and atrocities by religious fanatics in all parts of the world. He is fully conscious that it is right, and right, that rules the world. He sees the truthfall and the just behooved by the selfish and the unscrupulous, and no god rush down to the rescue in their heavenly chariots as one is told in legends. How can he then believe that 'God's in His heaven—all's right with the world'? He sees for himself that all's wrong with the world, and he doubts whether there is a God in heaven or anywhere, and if He exists, whether He is omnipotent as they make Him out to be.

Jain philosophy, with its theory of Karma, can explain to him that sufferings of an individual or a nation or a race are the result of misconducts of the past, that there is a causal relationship between the woes of this life and the evil done during an earlier incarnation, and so he cannot maintain that there is not justice in the world. As for religious persecutions that fill him with revulsion, the tolerance and broad-mindedness that Jain philosophy emphasizes might persuade him to modify his outlook on religion. Amity and appreciation would not be incomprehensible to him, for youth is not wicked. If approached with sympathy and understanding, he will respond. Think of the stress and strain of modern life. The speed, the noise, the hectic bustle of today has robbed the young man of the opportunity to move in life with measured strides. The machine has taken the place of hands. The building creative energy of youth was formerly channelled into constructive crafts, be it spinning, weaving, pottery, metal-work, wood-work, carving or whatever. Today that energy is turned into destructive channels.

In what way can religion help to divert this flow of energy once again
Sikhism and the Sikhs
by
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It is a matter of great privilege to us that this ecumenical religious conference is being held in India. The credit of the intiative and organization of this Summit assembly of representatives of the world religions goes to the Temple of Understanding.

I shall begin by discussing the main principles of the Sikh religion. In this, I shall use the term, "Sikhology" instead of "Sikh theology". The term Sikhology is being employed here for the first time. Although the literal meaning of Sikh is disciple or learner yet its (unshorn hair) is a basic requisite of the existence and identity of the Sikhs. So much so that we say in our Ardas or prayer, "Waheguru, Jaa Sikh Smd, rooan soh Nin" ("O wonderful God, sustain us to maintain our faith in Sikhism, with unshorn hair, till our last breath"). Although the suffix or title of "Singh" is an essential part of every Sikh's name, yet sikhologically it is conferred on him, and is the reward of his regular bhawan, administered to him by the five baptized Sicos of high character, called "Pend Piaras". Attributively, the God of the Sikhs is described in the Mool Mantar as:

There is only one God
Who is Pure in True
When a Component or All-One, Fearless, Immortal, Timeless
Unborn, Everchanging
And who is realized by the Grace of a true Preceptor.

His existence is taken for granted and no ontological and teleological intricacies and controversies are entertained by Sikhism.

The practical morals of Sikhism, as enshrined in two Trinetra, are essential ingredients of Sikhology, the code of conduct or morals of life for the followers of the Sikh religion: the belief in exhortation, providence, soteriology, the fatherhood of God (though Sikhism has also treated God as a husband and the human soul as a wife, always yearning for union with Him), monotysthenic, the existence of heaven and hell, (though they are
not described in detail), the merits of married life and the efficacy and necessity of prayer, are accepted by the Sikh religion. The Sikh prayer Ardas is unique among prayers in the world religions in that it contains the history of the Sikhs, their Gurus and their martyrs, their struggles, sacrifices, sacred places and shrines.

Sikhism is a universal religion. So, the Ardas ends with the words: "Nanak Naam shahar baal, Tareh Manni sarla da Wale" ("O Nanak, the power of God is ever increasing and by the grace of His Will, all may be blessed"). The word "all" includes all animate beings. The grace and voluntary service of one's fellow-beings, confession of one's imperfections or sins, and the recitation of japa (singing early in the morning for meditation) and humility, are considered especially important in Sikhism.

The sacred scriptures of the Sikhs basically comprise the Guru Granth Sahib and the Composition of Guru Gobind Singh contained in the Dasam Granth, though the writings of Sri Guru are also revered by the Sikhs like Gurbani (the Word of the Guru). The followers of Sikhs have received these scriptures direct from the hands of their Gurus from Guru Nanak, the founder of the faith, to Guru Gobind Singh who concluded its contents and founded the Khalsa Path.

Secondly, its scriptures have been written in the language of the people, the script for which was invented by Guru Nanak, and that is why they are called Gurmukhi (from the mouth of the Guru).

The Sikh scriptures are written and set in the classical notations of Indian music, and being the music of nature, have harmonized and recorded the hymns of the saints of the lowest and humblest origin. The present spiritual Guru or guide of the Sikhs is the Guru Granth Sahib, to a volume of which they bow and give respect as the people do to their living prophets or founders of religions. Therefore, being present in the volume by Guru Granth Sahib, the saints of different castes and parts of India are respected as much by the Sikhs as their gurus.

The Sikh concept of evolution needs a small note. Sikhism believes in creation and, being aware of evolution, professed scientific vision long before the birth of exact science as we now know it. In recent times, many of the old religious beliefs about the age of the universe and the nature of the earth have been replaced by the new discoveries of evolutionists, anthropologists, geologists, paleontologists, astronomers and physicists. But Guru Nanak said in the Fifteenth Century, "There are countless heavens and earths and all the departments of knowledge have exhausted their resources to determine them exactly, and confess their inability with one voice."

He says about the age of the earth, "No sage knows the time and day of its origin. Only its Creator knows it." Guru Gobind Singh has written, "all describe the universe according to their knowledge but O God, none knows how you created it." Guru Nanak was aware of microbes or micro-organisms and while admonishing the Brahmins for his concept of human

impurity or soul he says to them, "If you believe in it then there are living beings in dust, wood, grains of food and water which gives life to all.

Only knowledge can dispel the superstition of soul."

Religion and politics are not divided in Sikhism. The ethical doctrines of religion must be maintained in putting political principles into practice. That is why a Sikh is called "sanjath-shirt" (saint-soldier). This is why he invokes in his Ardas, the victory of the sword and the cooking-potter (drinking-pot). This is why the sixth Guru wore the swords of Mundi and Padi. The existence of Harmandar (The Temple of God) and Adi Tala (The Throne of God) are the greatest proofs of the symbols of religion and politics like the combination of soul and body so that the political life of the Sikhs may be directed by the moral truths of their religion.

The Sikhs have two types of trinity - the spiritual trinity and the temporal trinity, both of which are essential and interdependent. The spiritual trinity comprises Guru (preceptor), Granth (holy Bible of the Sikhs), and Path (The Sikh community). A Sikh has to remain under the guidance of the decision of his community. His willingness surrender to the decision of the Khalsa Path is the proof of his spirit of democracy, infused in him by the Sikh gurus, especially by Guru Gobind Singh. The temporal trinity of Sikhism consists of five kins (earning an honest livelihood by his work), five dharam (helping the needy) and five japa (meditation for the realization of God). The practice of the balanced combination of these trinities makes one an ideal Sikh. But the artifices of life are always below the mark of the ideals. This is the purpose for which all of us have assembled here - to bridge the gulf between religious ideals and practical life. The concept of grace is one of the most important features of Sikhism. A Sikh believes that his qualities without the grace of God have no value.

None can question anybody's ethnic origin or ideology while sitting in paag (the row of the persons being served with food in the Sikh religious, folder), sagi (the Sikh congregation) and while bathing in a tank (a holy place of the Sikhs). As a matter of fact the Sikh gurus founded these institutions to eradicate caste and the practice of untouchability. These institutions are not only religious in nature but also have a very great sociological importance. Most of the employees and priests of the major religious shrines of the Sikhs belong to the lower communities and the present Head Granth of the Golden Temple, Amritsar, the Mecca of the Sikhs and the president of the supreme religious body of the Sikhs, are originally ascents of the lower communities. But Sikh baptism abolishes man's former caste and makes him sair or chief.

At present, three problems are taxing, or rather torturing, the conscience of the well-wishers of humanity - the dangers of racial discrimination, poverty in plenty and the future of religion in the modern materialistic, warmongering and scientific age.

First of all I take up the problem of racial discrimination. Broadly speak-
ing, race connotes the physical and ineritable characters of a human group which differ from those of other groups of races. Japan. Yet it has a term "race" as a scientific term. It has a very limited history, but in this paper, we cannot go into its details. The fact is that many people believe themselves to be racially superior to other sections of mankind and think that this gives them the right of domination over them. "Racism" has become the "other's term" to express emotionally conditioned contempt against certain groups of human society.

The concept of the universalistic and mythological term, race, is rejected by every legitimate thinker, and replaced with the term "ethnic group." The greatest dissent against the race concept and racism is given by the greatest anthropologists and other scientists of different fields of enquiry like Casimir, Klasper, Carter, FAMED, Houghman, Hooeke, Hoooe, Ruth, Parsons, Herring, and Felli. Besides these, anti-race scientific research papers of Cesare, Kleppner, Littler, Luft, Strasner, Litte, Roos, responsive, Morland and Newcomb, have been published by society, to reject scientifically the increasing and perilous concept of racism. Unlike also the publications of social scientists and physical anthropologists and geneticists against racism on July 16th, 1916, July 25th, 1922.

What is the result, is or 20 years after the publication of these statements? Has racism faded? Not at all. It teaches us that science cannot incite the spirit of the basic Biblical belief, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" — the neighbors may be the human beings of any country and color not necessarily men of one's own class. The Sikhs, as taught by their religion, have never done any wrong to anybody on the basis of racial discrimination. As Guru Gobind Singh has said: "Mauj Ki paay ahsay dey pathiyan" ("Recognize the whole of the human race as a unitary brotherhood"). Guru Arjan Dev says as follows: "Bhau saad sa thay paak sa thay Sange mohey na te bari nahi agyan Sargi may lim to le ben sa." ("Our otherness of descent has been ended, since our company with the congregation of the Spiritual comrades, none is stranger or enemy to us. We are in tune with all.

Can the lessons called from scientific laboratories teach these lessons to us? Not at all, because fraternity is the offspring, not of science, but of religious faith.

Now comes the problem of poverty amidst plenty. Poverty amidst scarcity sounds natural but poverty amidst plenty is a paradoxical statement. It shows that the materials for the needs of man are plentiful but their distribution is defective. Self-sufficiency has overcome the spirit of common welfare. The legislation of old age, industrial and public service pensions, care by relatives, almshouses, national and international financial aids, have not been able to destroy the demon of poverty in general and the monster of misery of orphans, the aged, the diseased, the disabled and the unemployed, in particular. Too many selfish persons, exploiters, withhold and control too much of the wealth. The world needs better distribution of its wealth.

Before this can become a reality, we must have a revival of sympathy, honesty, fellow-feelings, and a realization of the wealth and greatness of simplicity which are the concepts of religious faith, conscience and ethics. Religion teaches man to earn his bread with his hard labor and by the sweat of his brow. On seeing the poor growing under the weight of want, but selfish people enjoying great luxuries, Guru Nanak said: "The enjoyment of illegitimate wealth is ruin to a Mohammedan and beast to a Hindu." Legal measures to banish poverty, to bring equality by equitable distribution of wealth, cannot be effective unless all earn their livelihood with honesty and hard work, and help the needy as their moral duty; the motivating force from within, as Guru Nanak says: "Bari chai yee Man ly sa gae na mana" ("One's forced charity is neither quality nor generosity"). The concept of poverty does not lie in the amount of one's wealth. It lies in the opulence or poverty of one's possession of contentment. The greatness of a man is not shown by the largeness of his wealth; it is shown by the smallness of his wants. The rare wealth is called contentment which is the source of wealth, wisdom and peace. Guru Arjan Dev has rightly said: "Jia savaih sain ke o raajay" ("None could be satisfied without contentment"). Hence religion is indispensable to divide equitably plenty as well as poverty.

The problem of this modern, materialistic and war-torn age is baffling and appalling. Man has crossed the stage of low-energy and high-energy production and has arrived at the stage of atomic energy. The achievements at this stage have dared him and he is now aiming towards his own destruction at break-neck speed. Power and booty were the causes that incited man to wage war for the annihilation of his own species and its hard-developed civilization. The modern warring concept of "nation" has replaced the primitive belligerent concept of "tribe." Man's materialistic views of life have strengthened his humanity. The first World War was fought with weapons, the second World War was fought with machines, but now man will wage war with missiles, supersonic air-fighters, poisonous gases, atom bombs, hydrogen bombs and rockets. In the second World War, the German called this type of conflagration "Blitzkrieg." Space travel and interplanetary voyages have intensified man's vanity still more. Medical science is promising him security and longevity by many wonderful discoveries and extraordinary operations, the transplantation of hearts being the latest. These prodigious achievements are weakening his faith in God. Formerly war used to be local or limited in effect but now being universal in destructive power, the whole of humanity suffers from regimentation, censure, destruction of the biological quality of the race (the best men and the youth being killed), destruction of cultural heritage and the creation of an ever-increasing compulsion of the defeated party towards waging another
especially to stop the increasing treachery of challenging youth, to
meet the modern trend of society and to satisfy the scientific and
imperative-attitude of the people, because after all science is also a systematic study
of the works of God, scientifically called Nature, by rigorous observations
and inference. Its success also depends on the extent to which different
faiths can agree to serve all human beings equally and alike without any
discrimination of creed and country (in spite of having doctrinal differ-
ences) so that the world at large may be humanized, spiritualized and immu-
nized against the onslaughts of the blind and destructive forces of material-
ism.

CONCLUSION

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion and has no dogmatic conflict with the
modern science of cosmology, the age and chronology of earth and the
discovery of new planets, about which Guru Nanak foretold the scientists
in the 15th Century. It has no concept of "The Chosen People" because it
basically believes in panhumanism and brotherhood. It rejects human
discrimination of all categories - racial, social, cultural, religious and eco-
nomic. It believes that the energy and efforts of men are great gifts of
God and so their results also belong to the Lord Almighty. This concept
purges egoism and egotism. This is why Guru Gobind Singh has enjoined
on the Sikhs the greeting, "Waheguru ji ka khal sahib, Waheguru ji is jathaka"
("The Khalsa belong to God and so their victory also belongs to Him").
Sikhs believe that in the Kingdom of God the pure will rule and the
Sikhs sing every day in their prayers, "Tujh kare jeevan, and naino se jeev" ("The pure will rule and no rebel will be left unconverted"); its scriptures are
don-romanticist and universal. The militancy and spirituality of the
followers of Guru Gobind Singh are merged together in a sacred sym-
phony. It has courage to crush the tyrant but uphold the righteous. Its
baptism, prayer, sangat, langar and sainis are the ideals of democracy and hu-
man equality. It places more emphasis on the merits of a noble deed than
on mental theory of creed. It is a practical way of life and is not conditioned
with the hodge-podge of soul-struggling intellectual exercises. It is a religious
synthesis having the noble ideas of other faiths. It believes in the earning
of one's livelihood with one's hard labor, lot knows, which is its first fund-
amental because it condemns selfishness and exploitation, and believes that
work is worship. Humility to serve and the spirit to face sufferings and
troubles for humanity are its essentials. It is the youngest of all the major
religions of this world. Therefore, being the youngest faith, it can easily
make adjustment with young times and younger generations.
The Relevance of the Protestant Branch of Christianity to the World Today

by

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I am pleased to be with you at this Spiritual Summit Conference, not alone as a member of the board of The Temple of Understanding, but as informally representing the National Council of Churches of the United States of America. However, I do not speak for the National Council, nor can I expect to speak for the many Protestant branches of Christianity, or even my own, which is the Presbyterian-Reformed tradition which has churches in more than seventy countries of the world. Rather, I speak as an individual.

First, I would mention some aspects of Protestantism that I think are relevant to the new world that is emerging where we need to understand each other and communicate with each other as never before in human history.

It must be understood that we Protestants are fragmented into diverse groups with differing emphases in theology and various convictions as to what is of priority in faith and life. According to the World Almanac [1986 edition], there are 193,990,000 Protestants. The Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity represents 184,100,000, and the Roman Catholics are listed with 334,270,000 adherents.

It will be seen from these statistics that Protestants, though not a majority group do have a sizable number of individuals within the total Christian community. However, we are broken up into approximately three hundred different denominations and sects.

In my judgment, independence and sectarianism are not relevant in the world in which we live. We cannot live in isolation from each other. The forces of technological and scientific advance, together with the increased speed of communication and transportation, make us live in a "global village." To be rigidly sectarian in such a world can be a hindrance rather than a help to constructive progress.

We Protestants are trying to come closer together. In this great land of India where we are now meeting, one of the most exciting Christian advances in church union was accomplished with the formation of the United Church of South India. Other such unions as that of the United Church of Canada, the formation of a National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and in fact, the institution of the World Council of Churches, are steps toward togetherness rather than increased fragmentation. Though this is a trend, we have a long way yet to go.

Secondly, I do not like the argumentation that has at times occurred in the family of Protestants. We write long papers and we engage in endless debates about what is the mission of the Church, what are the needs of mankind, and the role we ought to play in the drama of life. Within our ranks we have called each other bad names. We have engaged in painful conflicts of ideology and concern as to our mission. I am convinced that this kind of interaction is destructive to the united influence needed to guide mankind into higher levels of intelligence, harmony, and peace.

Thirdly, we have often been poor missionaries. I know that for some of the other world religions the missionary zeal of the Christian community has been a source of irritation. All here will understand the motive, when I tell you that the majority of the Protestant peoples of the world believe deeply in Jesus Christ. We, at our best, love Him, worship Him as God's Son, and try to do His will. In the New Testament, which tells of His life and teaching, there is the admonition, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

Within the variagated churches that make up Protestantism, leaders in our various sects have interpreted these words in different ways. Some have come to your lands and been insufficiently arrogant in trying to impose the religion of Christianity on your people. Many Christian missionaries have had inerarrably bad manners. There can be no place for chestpounding nor any attempt to impose one set of beliefs on anyone else in the kind of world in which we live. We need, as never before in human history, to communicate with each other, to listen to each other, to have respectful regard for each other, and then, as world religious, to inspire leaders in government to form the organizational structure needed to carry the human race forward toward peace.

Fourth, another aspect of Protestantism that I would call irrelevant is ourour failure to appreciate other world religions. All branches of Christianity have been so devoted to their faith, have been so convinced that they had "the light and the truth" that they not alone have been offensive to some other faiths, but blinder have been over our eyes, keeping us from seeing the rich merit, the noble dedication, the high ideals of other world religions. I am sure you know, as I do, that there have been dedicated and devoted Christian apsects who have done much good throughout the world in education, medical care, and agriculture, and they continue to do so. The missionary movement was prompted by the most idealistic of
motives. But often there was lacking the sensitive appreciation that is needed to live and work together today.

Fifth, there is another item which has been emphasized by Protestant Christians and often has been pushed beyond the point of wisdom, namely the right of the individual. I believe deeply in the doctrine that God alone is Lord of man's conscience. Its emphasis led to some of our most creative thinking and to the development of constructive ferment that has caused mankind to think and to move forward.

But in some instances, within the Protestant community, that great thesis has been misapplied. It has permitted individuals and groups to become arrogant, to condemn others who do not share their convictions. It has made for alienation where there ought to be reconciliation. It has created confusion where there ought to be harmony. It has allowed self-willed, and at times mentally and emotionally unbalanced, individuals to preach their strange doctrines under the banner of the eternal spirit of wisdom and of truth, namely God Himself.

Sixth, in some instances Protestantism has appeared to support economic, political and military forces that have been seeking their own ends rather than the ends of the ultimate good of the human race. We are all at home with our own cultures. We all love our countries. It would be strange if it were not so. But those of us devoted to the high world of religion, who are dedicated to furthering the ultimate well-being of the human race, cannot approve of such an attitude and such a spirit as I have mentioned above, not accept it as relevant today.

So I stand before you in conclusion. I repeat, I do so as one individual. But I think I reflect the spirit of a wide segment of the many groups that make up Protestant Christianity.

But now, having confessed some faults — and there are many, many more — let me speak of some aspects of the Protestant heritage and convictions that I think are worthy of being reaffirmed as we think of our several world religions.

First of all, one matter that I listed as among our faults may, properly applied, be a source for some of the greatest helpfulness and service to the human family, namely, the right of the individual conscience. The longer I study history, the longer I live, the more widely I travel, and the more friends throughout the world I listen to, I am convinced that we go forward through strong individuals more than by any other force. Who can measure the power stimulated in the world by Gandhi? Or Buddha? Or Jesus? And the endless circle of great souls that have been inspired by their genius, their wisdom, their love.

The problems of the world cannot be solved alone by committees or committees of committees, however great their military, political, or economic power. These often are thought to be the hinges on which the doors of history are swung. It is not so. It is individuals who, in freedom of conscience, have come to point the way out of immediate dilemmas, who bring the light that is needed for man's next thrust forward on the road of human progress.

We Protestants believe in this. God speaks "in a still small voice" to individuals of acceptiveness. It was so in the life of Moses and Mohammed, and in hundreds of others in all religions who have led their fellow men.

Out of this conviction of personal freedom will come many strange and individualistic voices. But because we are all "stamped within with the image of the Divine" mankind will know which is the voice that speaks the new truth that needs to be heard. This is relevant.

Secondly, Protestantism is relevant, in my judgment, in that it is constantly seeking to keep in balance belief and action. Our Bible has the phrase, "Faith without works is dead." This means that we are not alone to engage in prayer, in renewing our creeds, in liturgy and in worship, but we are also to engage in works for the good of mankind. Loving service to our fellow men gives evidence of the depth of our faith.

I grant you this leads to much shifting of the balances between these two kinds of religious observance. We Protestants are constantly pricked in mind and conscience as to what to do now and how to do it.

But I say to you that this tension deserves to be included in the assets that mankind has won by thinking and praying and living across the centuries. In my work in Washington, D.C., we have a wide variety of conferences. A recent one brought together young Protestant clergymen from across the country. Their emphasis, as it came forth at that conference, shocked some older and more conservative Protestants. To one who I heard the church say "Forget about rhetoric! Stop preaching! Listen to man's needs! The structures of society must be changed! The Gospel is preached — not in words but in acts that seek justice, equity and prosperity for all of God's children." Holding these views, they create tension. They may at times push the pendulum too far, and then others must pull it back, but the tension is there, and it is healthy.

For a time I served as pastor of one of our churches that is a part of the Reform movement in the United States. Occasionally I would get a letter addressed to me at "The Reformed Church." I felt a certain excitement on these occasions. Because of it is a reforming body, seeking to find out how God's truth and light and wisdom and judgment apply to the changing scenes of our society. I say to you that this spirit and point of view is worthy and relevant.

As we work together and pray and move forward together, this sense of "reforming" — reforming our relationships individually, and then our groups, nationally, racially, religiously — can be a force for great good.

"One is our Father. All we are brothers." How do we make this truth and vision a reality without constantly being engaged in finding ways of reforming, of reforming?
Again, the majority of Protestants believe that the person and the teaching of Jesus Christ have been, are, and will always be a redemptive force in personal life and in history. Friends, I put this before you as a relevant fact for our modern world. You cannot understand the majority of Christians without understanding that we believe this deeply.

We do not contend we are worthy of Jesus Christ, but we honor and worship Him and seek to follow in His Path. And we feel that path will lead us to God’s Kingdom and to the brotherhood of man.

Before I close this paper I must share with you some thoughts of colleagues and old friends in the Protestant ministry to whom I wrote telling them of my assignment to prepare these words for you.

All of them spoke warmly of the validity of our meeting together. The voices were one in declaring that our world religions must face each other, talk to each other, learn from each other, so that together they may be a more effective instrument for the service of God and man. However, as I have tried to indicate to you in speaking of the nature of Protestantism, their ideas differed as to what is relevant about our religion. One emphasized that although we are institutionalized, in our freedom we are not dominated by the institution. In freedom the Spirit of God can lead men to change the institution.

Another said Protestantism’s relevance was in its sensitivity to the individual, its emphasis on personal confrontation of man to man, the attempt to express Christ’s divine love in human love.

Yet another mentioned the constant efforts of Protestant Christianity to find “reconciliation” between freedom and order, and also between God’s grace and man’s sinfulness.

I cite these only to underline how diverse we Protestants are, and how individualistic in our emphases.

But the spirit of each of my colleagues bespeaks a concern, a commitment and a lovableness which is the spirit that graces our meeting here.

And the poet of India’s Punjab, wrote “the true end of the men of the earth is to love each other.”

We Protestant Christians believe that. And behind our outward noise and diversity, that longing “to love each other” is in our hearts. I have found it in the hearts of all who are at this conference. Letting that spirit be present in all our gatherings here, a shining step forward will be made.

Religion as a World Force: A Jewish View

by

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This conference could only have held in the Twentieth Century. We are able to gather from all parts of the world because of technical advances which have occurred in this century. Rapid and mass communication systems now enable us to cover distances of space and language. But the same forces which have made for the technical and scientific conditions which have brought us together, have also created a new ethical situation for man. Science which has conquered space has also produced Hiroshima. Man has the capacity to eradicate malaria but has also to exterminate his neighbor. The blessing and the curse of progress hang over us all. United by the promise and the threat as never before, we who take our respective theologies with some seriousness have become a little more humble about our religious certitudes, a little more conscious of the fact that perhaps our truth is not necessarily the truth of others. Slowly we are opening our minds to modes of thought and faith of which we have been hitherto so innocently ignorant or which we deliberately ignored. This conference will fail if we come here to press our truth against the truth of those who do not worship as we do. It will not succeed if we merely learn to tolerate one another. It will achieve its purpose only if we try to grasp for the truth that underlies all systems which strive for the redemption of man.

What I have to say about Judaism and its relevance to Twentieth Century man is presented in the spirit of these introductory remarks. According to Jewish tradition, Hillel, a great Rabbi who lived in the Land of Israel in the 1st century B.C., when asked to define Judaism in a brief sentence replied: Do not do unto your neighbor what is hateful unto you — this is the Torah (teaching); the rest is commentary. Having neither the talents nor the poetry of Hillel, I shall require more time and doubtless say far less than he. Allowance must therefore be made for my own limitations.

Judaism, like Hinduism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism, is one of the several older religions of mankind which have continued to be meaningful to contemporary men, like thev developed in the first millennium B.C.
just as men were first discovering the ethical dimension of deity. Like them it modified, corrected, and changed its doctrines to meet the challenges of different cultures and civilizations.

As an historic religion Judaism has a beginning, a middle, and an anticipated ending. It begins its history with the creation of the world by God, it continues with the description of the discovery of God by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and it reaches its midpoint when, through Moses, the God discovered by individuals becomes the God of a nation — that is the God of a society of men operating within the framework of historical time. During the age of the prophets (until approximately 500 B.C.) and the Talmudic period which followed it (ended in A.D.), Jews discovered that just as knowledge of God could not be confined to particular individuals, so it must ultimately not be confined to particular nations. In the end all nations are destined to recognize God: all men will become Israel. The ultimate purpose of Jewish history is therefore to reach the end of Jewish history — not to say that all men will become Jewish means the same as saying all men will become non-Jews. National distinctiveness will disappear. "On that day the Lord shall be one and his name will be One," says the prophet Zech.ii.10, and indicates that all mankind shall also be one.

To begin then with the beginning: What is the significance of the story of Genesis for modern man?

The idea of creation posits a view of a cosmos which is open-ended and dynamic. Other conceptions insisted that there was no creation and that the world was eternal, that is a static and closed system. The Bible is not a philosophical work, but it nevertheless implies a world of becoming. It is not a scientific work in biology but its account of the creation indicates an evolutionary progression from simpler to more complicated forms of life. Men created in the image of God is placed at the pinnacle of the creative process. He becomes an institution of God on earth and is promulgated that he shall ultimately rule the world by means of his will and his intellect. According to a Talmudic legend God gave man the Torah but denied it to the angels. The history of man is the history of becoming. Man, God's agent on earth, is driven from paradise on earth with right knowledge. All through the prophetic literature this knowledge of God is consistently defined as ethical knowledge. "It hath been told thee O man what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee: only to do justice and love mercy and walk humbly before thy God." (Micah 6:8).

Maintaining an ambivalent view as to the nature of man the Bible portrays man neither as an incorrigible sinner nor as a blameless saint. He is rather viewed as a free agent who is given an ethical option: "I have put before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life." (Deuteronomy 30:19). Judaism is neither pessimistic nor optimistic about the future of man. Man can be a sinner or a prophet or both, or neither. God affords man the power of choice.

Judaism's idea of talmud (returning) which we loosely translate as repentance but defines the nature of this ethical option given to man. The Jerusalem talmud contains a difficult passage which deals with the doctrine of repentance. It reads: "They asked wisdom. What is the punishment for a sinner?" Saul said to them, "Evil shall pursue the sinner!' (Proverbs 11:31). They asked prophecy: What is the punishment for the sinner? Saul said to them: "The evil that sinners shall suffer, it shall be that it shall be" (Ezekiel 31:8). They asked God: What is the punishment for the sinner? Saul said to them: "Let him repent (be), make a return) and he shall be forgiven." Thus it is written, He shall show the sinner the way (Proverbs 15:19), meaning, He will show the sinner the way of repentance. "(Jerusalem Talmud, Miklat 7a).

Professor S. Amis, my teacher and colleague, has brilliantly interpreted this passage and with your indulgence I shall quote him at length:

"In the first stage as expressed by the answer of wisdom, namely that sinner consists in being pursed by evil, it implied the conception of sin as a natural phenomenon which has its effects like any other natural phenomenon. The effects resulting from sin are not confined to the person committing them. It is a manifest of the mythological concept of sin as an offense against nature. Sin has immediate effects like any other natural phenomenon, just as parting and death are two in-firm results in a bomb which is detonated in a building whether it is done knowingly or involuntarily. In Biblical legislation, however, sin was bound up by conscious and choice. Only a selfish act committed knowingly could be considered a crime. Thus, the mythological-natural concept of sin was discarded and replaced by the prophetic concept of sin... Pencel... with the emergence of man as the being who has an idea of 'having to be', a goal. Sin is an offense against nature as its, but against an 'ought'. It makes no difference whether this 'ought' being is given in the form of a law or is granted in the ethical consciousness of man... The soul that sinners will die.

"But in the prophetic view there is yet a mention of man's creative ability to transgress sin. In the third or latest stage... it expressed the capacity for creativity as an essential characteristic of human personality... By introducing repentance to God, the possibility of deriving it from nature is suggested. Only a God who transcends nature can be the ground of a creative, self-constructing act. In a naturalistic conception of the world the possibility of repentance is a paradox. Repentance implies the possibility that the sinned became righteous. The sinner who is the reposing, subject and the object into which he has transgressed himself now remains the same. The sinned repentance involves an act of jumping out of one's skin. Spence had gone too far to separate repentance. In man's conception of the world as a completely closed system regret and remorse would serve no purpose... man can neither undo the past nor undo himself.

"In our passage God grants the possibility of repentance, it is a creative act that is possible only in an open universe. The idea of God as the one who creates out of nothing eliminates the possibility of creativity. Repentance... is an act of consciousness and the idea of man as created in the image of God implies man's capacity for creativity."

The relevance of such a view of man in our own age is of course quite clear. This view rejects the mythological fatalism of all closed systems, be they Marxist or behaviorist. The divine ideal has placed before man the vision of what ought to be and the man who strives to live must overcome what he
is, a creature of dust, a product of the animal world and become what he ought to be: "A little lower than the angels."

This he can do through Torah — the teaching — through knowledge of himself and the natural world, not a knowledge which leads to a fanaticism acceptance of what is but a knowledge which would assist him to arrive at what ought to be.

The discovery of personality, of the self, however, can be deemed to an internalizing ego-centered at the expense of the society of men — a kind of spiritual oxymoron. At the mid-point of its history Judaism discovered society, the people of Israel. God makes a covenant not with individuals alone but with a society of men. If we examine the Ten Commandments we will find that except for the first commandment against idolatry, all are ethical in nature, i.e., they involve not only the self but the self in relation to others. Man can transcend himself only through mankind.

We all know the dangers of nationalism which in the West has led to the forgetting of the individual’s ethical responsibility for the alleged good of the nation. The prophets also indicate what Judah stood — he did so in the name of the nation. But prophetic Judaism maintained the razor’s edge between the self and society. Note that the Ten Commandments, although they form the covenant between God and the nation, are stated in the second person singular, they are addressed to “You.” In the Nineteenth Century a Jewish saint, concerned that the rabbi and clatter at public worship might distract him from concentrating upon the meaning of his prayers, removed himself to a private room which adjoined the synagogue hall, but he left the door between the room and the synagogue open, as if to indicate that God can be approached by the individual but only if that individual is also part of mankind.

Today all over the Western world youth is in revolt against the excesses of a highly impersonal industrial society which has turned government agencies and universities into unfeeling machines. But in their attempt to rediscover their own humanity — young men and women tend to reject all society and seek salvation only in cultivation of the self. The discovery of the self, however, has meaning only if it liberates the individual from the shackles of personal passions and avatars so that he can rejoin mankind and form a society of redeemed men. Mass society must not be allowed to destroy the integrity of the individual. (The Talmud teaches that he who destroys one soul, destroys a universe), but the individual cannot escape his responsibility to God and man by reverting in the contemplation of the self alone.

We are told that when the children of Israel stood on Mt. Sinai, they proclaimed their faith in the revelation by declaring: We shall do and we shall hear — which in the Hebrew also means understand and observe.

Ultimately the test of any religious ethic is the deed. In the famous passage of Deuteronomy which I quoted, in which God gives man the choice between good and evil, life and death, Moses proclaims: "The word is very right unto thee, that thou mayest do it."

Most religions have been eloquent with the word but evasive with their doing. Contemporary young people have come to question the grandiose utterances of man. They are instead demanding committed action in place of words. Some have even suggested that only through the act does man discover the program of redemption and that ideologies shall not precede the ethical act but follow it. "We shall do and then understand."

As the sainted Rabbi Isaac Basch put it: "Judaism has its word . . . to do. The deed becomes the proof of conviction. Judaism too has its doctrine but it is a doctrine of behavior which must be explored in action that it may be fulfilled."

Never has there been so wide a gap between the professional views on social issues of our several faiths and the deeds which need be done in order to fulfill these views. There is great virtue in expressing what "ought to be" but the ultimate proof of conviction is the creative act of fulfillment. Perhaps here is an area which transcends theological diversity. Men of the spirit of all nations, races, and religions can join a unified and uniting program of social action. Our several faiths engage in programs of relief and education, work for peace, fight hunger and disease. Could we not at least integrate these programs into some more coherent plan if only by exchanging ideas and information and opening our resources of communication to all parties striving for peace and plenty in the name of God?

Religion if it has any relevance to man must never make its peace with what is, but must strive for what ought to be. It must move from the discovery of man to the redemption of mankind — from the liberation of the self to the salvation of society.
Buddhism in the Present Age

by

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Never before in the history of mankind has the validity of religion been questioned as it is today. The situation is such that many in the present generation seem to feel that religion has very little—some would even say nothing—to do with the ever-increasing problems of mankind. Many scholars and critics of modern civilization have pointed out our poverty of spirit, in contrast to the abundance of our scientific and technological achievements. Drunk with his material prosperity and the triumph of his intellect in mastering nature, man has seemingly become utterly indifferent to the pursuit of virtue. Everyone seems to know how to live, but not what to live for. Ours is a life of such deep dilemma that our own splendid civilization becomes the major cause of spiritual chaos. The extent to which the dangerous situation in which man finds himself has been talked about, might lead one to say that the deepest problems are of a religious nature; the present generation, however, remains skeptical about the possibility of finding a solution there.

What has been happening in the religious situation since the advent of the modern age is that man has become increasingly unwilling to accept the validity of the supernatural. There are many who hold that religion must go, on the theory that psychological science has proven that man's belief in the supernatural is derived from childhood experiences. I suspect that the mass of mankind would readily agree with Sigmund Freud's analysis of religion. The mood of destressing the supernatural is well illustrated in Freud's book entitled The Future of an Illusion. According to Freud, the idea of God is conceived by man in order to cope with the threatening forces surrounding him, which he feels are beyond the control of his reason. Freud tried to prove, by means of psychoanalysis, that religion is an illusion, and a hindrance in realizing maturity. As Enich Fuchs excellently summarizes it:

Religion, according to Freud, is a repetition of the experience of the child. Man copes with threatening forces in the same manner in which, as a child, he learned to cope with his own insecurity by relying on and admiring his father. Freud compared religion with the educational measures we find in childhood.

One remarkable change which has taken place in the modern age is that man has moved on the notion of the "strong man" freed from subordination to the supernatural. Man has affirmed (out of his faith in reason) that he had better develop his own power of reason as well as his capacity to love, rather than relying on supernatural help. Although there has not been even the slightest sign of man's achieving this goal, the present majority seems to believe that the spirit of "rationalism" must be retained.

Facing this trend, religious scholars have concluded that this is an age of "pride of intellect," a man-centered rather than a theocentric age. Accordingly, theological or philosophical studies have been focused on a reinterpretation of the supernatural, which would combat the prevalent skepticism. But no matter how earnestly they advance the notion of the supernatural the situation remains the same. Moreover, being so preoccupied with this purpose, the religious scholars themselves have failed to remain aware of what are the primary religious concerns. The primary concern for most religious scholars, if not for all, must be belief in the supernatural. With the exception of Buddhism, a non-theistic religion, if I am not mistaken, religion has traditionally been allied with the idea of a supernatural Truth and Power. However, what I would like to point out here is that mere philosophical or theoretical speculation on the supernatural is not necessarily religious. As Kierkegaard remarked, the religiousness may be regarded as a group of people who are caught by utterly unhuman curiosity. It is time for all religious scholars to give their thoughtful attention to this criticism.

The majority of Japanese Buddhist scholars should also feel guilty in the light of the criticism of Kierkegaard. In the atmosphere of modern rationalism most, if not all, of us have emphasized that Buddhism is "a rational religion," while criticizing the weakness of current rationalism. The term "rational religion" is a very curious, almost unintelligible expression. However awkward it may sound, the studies of Buddhism in Japan have gone along with this line in the belief that the more we make explicit the unique rational principle of Buddhism, the more we are able to meet with and give solutions to the problems embroiled in modern rationalism. However, in this climate, the concern of Buddhist study has been focused on the "logic" of "oneseness," "suchness" or "naturality" which is certainly neither formal nor dialectic. "Logic," no matter what sort of logic it may be, is certainly not the primary concern in Buddhism. This confrontation between religion (belief in the supernatural) and the so-called "logic" of the contemporary denial of the concept, has cast the present generation all over the world into intolerable doubt as to man's potential to develop his power of reason and love. This doubt is intolerable, because modern man believes there is no way to build a better world, if man fails to develop his power of reason.
Today people see a dark cloud beginning to form. People are continually witnessing such horrifying incidents as the assassinations of great figures who were men determined to achieve peace and brotherhood, the senseless killing of the war in Vietnam, and the violent struggles of students against the existing system of our society. Witnessing these, people begin to doubt if men will ever improve understanding. We have gradually become aware that we have learned to fly like birds through the sky, but we have not yet learned to live together as brothers. The Nobel-Prize-winning nuclear physicist, Dr. Tonnesen, expressed his serious concern about this situation of man's soul. He said that if he himself determined to search for a fire unknown to man on a vast wild plain, and when he found a new fire he was satisfied. However, he said, when he saw the new fire spreading on the vast plain, he thought man had serious problems within himself.

Thus one might say that man has become a stray sheep who is unable to find, either in religion or within his own mind, the lamp to guide him through the horrifying darkness. The only thing he has in this hand is an improved means of exploring the physical world. In short, modern man's once cherished belief in man's reason is facing its total collapse. This was impressively shown when a natural scientist composed his commentary on the success of Apollo V by saying that he hoped this would make people on earth aware of the senselessness of war. What disbelief in man's power of reason! No one believes anything anymore. And yet people are longing to find a world where we may live together as brothers.

If we look carefully at the present world, we may notice a little lamp of hope in the midst of darkness. We can hear a voice which says something of a very religious nature. I met a man who expressed his feelings as follows: "I am sick and tired of hearing so many people arguing in terms of good and bad, right and wrong." The feeling he expressed is of cardinal importance. It expresses a keen doubt about the justice of judging others in terms of good and bad. As long as man throws doubt on judging others in terms of this dualism, there is always a path to the heart of religion.

What Buddhism regards as the essential problem for every man is the realization of wisdom and compassion within himself. In the pamphlet of the Temple of Understanding, we read the words of the Buddha as follows: "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would have found hurtful." As they are quoted in the same pamphlet, Confucianism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism have very similar words. These explicitly express the ultimate goal for man to realize.

However, as we have seen before, man is living in a world where he feels like a fool if he acts in accordance with the teaching. People say that to follow this principle is impossible in this society. Since the present majority has lost a sincere religious concern, it is natural that the words of religion are not received seriously. As Pasteur pointed out, "People go to churches and listen to sermons in which the principle of love and charity are preached, and the very same people would consider themselves fools or worse if they hesitated to sell a commodity which they knew the customer could not afford."

But to my mind there is still a wonderful thing in man's mind, no matter how irreligious people appear to be. It is true that as long as we are alive it is impossible to be free of self-centeredness.

Deep-rooted selfishness is the basic nature of man. And yet it is also a fact that man is improved when he sees someone paying a rock aside on the road to clear the way for others. Here we meet the contradictory nature in man. The deeper our awareness of this contradiction becomes, the more we are able to listen to the teaching of compassion.

The more aware of compassion we become, the more we are aware of the sin of selfishness. This awareness that man's self-centeredness is truly sinful is the essential basis for the virtues of understanding, love and justice. The words of Martin Luther King, Jr., in his address on the occasion of his receiving the Nobel Prize are impressive. He said:

The movement does not seek to liberate Negroes at the expense of the humiliation and enslavement of whites. It seeks no victory over anyone. It seeks to liberate American society and share in the self-liberation of all the people.

What makes this impressive is that it so explicitly expresses the unselfish determination embodied in the struggle for freedom and justice. There have been many struggles for freedom, justice, liberation and peace, but one can scarcely find a struggle like his. Almost all other struggles all over the world today are mere or less selfish. This is the reason why people cannot help but regard those struggles as dangerous. But, by contrast, the struggle that was led by Martin Luther King, Jr., is certainly a bright torch of hope in the midst of darkness, and here is something very important for every religious to consider if he intends to realize the role and validity of his religion.

People are of two minds, divided into two camps. Each has its own standard of justice. Each regards justice as that which serves its own interest. If this is the case, and I believe it is, the term "justice" no longer means what it is supposed to mean. In the minds of people now the word "justice" is regarded as one which effectively evokes the fighting spirit in men's minds. People of the present should realize that justice rests only in the realm of non-self. The word justice does not stand for the justification of a particular interest.

To seek the realization of justice in this world is to seek a way to free man from his self-centeredness. This is of cardinal importance if man is to achieve his goal of becoming a truly compassionate and enlightened person. As long as Buddhism is able to lend man to this goal, the words of Buddha will reach into men's minds.
Long ago one of our Vedas declared, "Truth is one; Scholars described it variously." This is something fundamental to Hinduism. Again and again saints and sages have reaffirmed this. Today we hear a Sikh friend spell out how Guru Nanak reaffirmed this. Later, in Bengal, the Brahmo Samaj again reaffirmed this, as did Ramakrishna at about the same time.

But he did it in a way which was entirely different from the way others had. He was born a Hindu. Naturally he practiced his own religion, but he was not content with Hinduism alone. He said, "Let me practice Islam, and let me practice Christianity also." He practiced them with the help of experts. What made him do this I don't know. But he did it.

And finally he declared, from his own experience, not as a matter of intellectual assent, not merely acquaintance in something which was already widely accepted in Hindu society, but as a matter of his own personal experience, that: "Religions are like so many paths, leading to the same place." He lived at a place not too far from here, a place called Dakshineswar, in the northern suburbs of Calcutta. He used to say: "If you come here by the Ganges River, you take a boat, but if you are coming by road you walk or you hire a carriage, and come here. It is a matter of choice or a matter of means, but you come to the same place. It doesn't matter what is your mode of travel, you come to the same place." Some of you may have read what the Gita says in this connection: "It doesn't matter what path you choose, you all come to me." Me, The Guru. It makes no difference how we travel. Similarly, in our great Sanskrit text you find this idea described with a little imagery. It says: "Look at the rivers. They start from different places. They travel together in the Himalayas, for instance, some elsewhere. Their travels cover hundreds of miles. They are different; some are straight, some are crooked. But their ultimate goal is the same, it is the sea. All of them finally flow into the sea."

That is what we are. We are different from each other. We have to be different from each other, if we are going to be ourselves. I can't be your prototype, just as you cannot be my prototype. You and I differ in many ways. Our food habits are different. The kind of clothing we wear is different. We have to be different. It is God's wish that we differ. It is natural that we should differ also in our religious beliefs. But, what is important that we recognize that, underlying the different religious faiths, there is much that they have in common. They are the same truths, only they have been spelled out differently, in different ways. The language has to be different; the manner of presentation also has to be different. We have different backgrounds, we have been brought up in different traditions. But our goal is the same. It is wrong to stress the differences which mark different religious beliefs, for there is also much that they have in common. Or, to be more precise, there is a common ground which exists between the different religious points of view. Why, therefore, emphasize only the differences?

But if you think -- one might almost say, if you recognize -- that there is one common truth, to which all of us are slowly wending our ways, it will be a mistake. It is not that easy. We forget that religion is not just an intellectual exercise. It is living and becoming. It is the realization of this. You fill your hearts with God-consciousness. Merely talking about the unity of religions will not take us anywhere. We may be nice to each other, we may pat each other on the back and say, "Yes, friend, I believe you are a good man. You have a very fine religious tradition. I have every sympathy for you." That is not going to take our hearts anywhere. Only if we get close to God, if we really care for God, if we really love God, then only will it be possible for us to love our fellow man.

You praise us here in India for religious tolerance. Lots of people like to stop at religious tolerance. And yet the same people make it plain to us, in their individual behavior with the man living next door, that they are most intolerant. An intellectual assent is not enough. It is being and becoming. Your love for God should be such that you cannot but love your fellow man also, because you realize they are also the children of the same God whom you worship.

So, it is with God that we should fill our hearts, if we are going to achieve the purpose of this conference. Let each of us be a simple but sincere Temple of Understanding. It is not a matter of constructing something with bricks and mortar, this Temple of Understanding. It is something that you and I are, individually, or collectively. It is a question of how we treat each other, how we love each other. That is what the Temple of Understanding is going to be. It is not merely creating a physical symbol to help solve the problem of religious discord. It is something that we are able to achieve through a process of growth and development in our religious life, something that will broaden our hearts, which will embrace everybody, which will not emphasize the difference that exists between one man and another. That is what the Temple of Understanding is going to be.
Islam and the Modern World

The Pertinence of Islam to the Modern World

by

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One speaks so often today of that idea or element being no longer pertinent to the modern world that one forgets both the essential reality of the doctrine and idea which are of permanent significance and the real needs of the modern world. Whatever is not fashionable in this whirling pace of superficial change is suddenly declared outdated and irrelevant, whereas in actuality what is trivial and irrelevant is precisely that world or climate of thought which rejects and ignores the permanent and permanent truths, the truths which have always had meaning for men because they have appealed to something permanent in man. If a whole segment of modern humanity no longer finds meaningful the personal truths of religion and the wisdom that has been cultivated and followed by ages throughout the ages, it is most of all because the very existence of this segment of humanity has itself ceased to have any meaning. And taking itself and its imperfect perception of things which it calls the "existential predicaments of modern man" too seriously, this type of man is not able to turn the sharp edge of its criticism toward itself and so does no more than criticize the objective, revealed truth contained in all orthodox and authentic religions, which in reality are themselves the only possible judge and criterion of man's worth and value. The pertinence of Islam to the modern world, as the pertinence of any other authentic religion, must be discussed in the light of the ontological priority of the one to the other, that is, religion justifies from the absolutely Real and the message of Heaven, whereas the world is always relative and whether it be modern or ancient remains the "world". The modern world is no less "the world" than "the world" to which traditional religious imagery refers. In fact, quite the contrary, it is more removed from the immutable and the Permanent than any other "world" of which we have historical knowledge, and it is therefore even more in need of the message of the Immaculate.

1 Excerpted in abracus.
out the outward difficulties which beset certain religions based on continuous daily rituals.

The daily Muslim rites also bear the great advantage upon man of being able to carry his center with him. The great makka of modern man can be reduced to his loss of center, a loss which is so clearly depicted in the chaotic so-called literature and art of modern times. Islam offers the direct remedy to this illness. In general, prayer places man in the axial and vertical dimension which points to the Center. In particular, the Islamic rites make possible the "carrying" of this Center wherever one goes. The fact that wherever one may be on earth, the daily prayers are directed toward Mecca, the supreme center of Islam, indicates clearly this reflection of the Center whenever and wherever one happens to be praying. By virtue of the power of these prayers man continues to possess the Center which coordinates and harmonizes his activity and his life.

The cardinal Islamic doctrine of Unity (al-Iman) itself emphasizes this need and the necessity for integration. God is One and so man, who is created in "His Form", must become integrated and unified. The goal of the religious and spiritual life must be the complete and total integration of man in all his depth and amplitude. Modern man suffers from excessive compartmentalization in his science and education as well as in his social life, which through the very pressure of technology tends to disintegrate social bonds and even the human personality. The Islamic ideal of Unity stands in stark opposition to the multiplicity and division, reversing the centrifugal tendencies of man which make him ever more prone to disintegrate his soul and energy toward the peripheral, and returning the soul to the Center.

Today everyone cites for peace but peace is never achieved, precisely because it is spiritually inclined to expect a civilization that has forgotten God to possess peace. Peace in the human order results from peace with God and also with nature. It is the result of the equilibrium and harmony which can come into being only through the integration made possible by Islam. Islam has quite unjustly been depicted as the religion of the sword and of war, whereas it is a religion which seeks to bring about peace through submission to the Will of God, as the more Islam, in Arabic meaning both peace and submission, indicates. And this is made possible by giving each thing its due. Islam preserves a remarkable equilibrium between the needs of the body and those of the spirit, between this world and the next. No peace is possible in a civilization which has reduced all human welfare to animal needs and refuses to consider the needs of man beyond his earthly existence. Moreover, having reduced man to a purely terrestrial being, such a civilization is not able to provide for the spiritual needs which

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1 See S. H. Nair, "Religion and Brotherhood, their Meaning and Manifestation in Islamic History" in ISLAMIC STUDIES, pp. 7-14.
2 Concerning the significance of the Zikr in Islam see S. H. Nair, ISLAM AND BRANCHES of ISLAM, Chapter IV.
nevertheless continues to exist, with the result that there is created a combination of crass materialism and an even more dangerous pseudo-spiritualism, whose opposition to materialism is more imaginary than real. And that we are faced with the embarrassing fact that even the terrestrial life which has come to be cherished as the final end in itself. One of the basic messages of Islam to the modern world is its emphasis on the importance of giving each thing its due, of preserving each element in its place, of guarding the proportion between things and discriminating between the male and the female. The peace that men seek is only possible if the total needs of man, not only as an animal but also as a being born for immortality, are considered. To be concerned only with the physical needs of men is to reduce men to slavery and to produce problems even on the physical plane whose solution is impossible. It is not religious but modern medicine that has created the problem of over-population, which religion is now asked to solve, by taking away the sacred meaning of human life itself, if not totally, at least in part.

Likewise of vital concern today is peace between religions. In this domain also Islam has a particular message for modern man. Islam considers the acceptance of anterior prophets as a necessary article of faith in Islam itself and asserts quite vigorously the universality of revelation. No other sacred text speaks as much of the universality of religion as the Qur'an. Islam, the last of the religions of the present humanity, joins in this domain Hindukus, the first and most primal of existing religions, in envisaging religion in its universal manifestation throughout the cycles of human history. In the metaphysics and theology of comparative religion, Islam has a great deal to teach to those who wish to study comparative religion as a more serious plane than just collecting historical and philological facts. The reason, in fact, why Muslims have been less interested than followers of other religions in comparative religion in modern times is mostly that they have not found any disconcerting theological challenges to Islam by discovering the existence of other authentic and valid spiritual traditions.

Finally, in discussing this theme of peace, something must be said of the inner peace which men seek today desperately, desperately enough to have created a whole army of pseudo-yogins and spiritual leaders to establish themselves in the West. Men now feel instinctively the importance of meditation and contemplation but alas only too few are willing to undergo the discipline in the matrix of an authentic tradition which can guarantee them access to the joy which only the contemplation of the celestial realities makes possible. That they turn to drugs or self-realization centers or the thousand and one "pseudo-masters" from the East who are using a veritable revenge upon the West for all the West did to Oriental traditions in the colonial period.

Islam possesses all the means necessary for spiritual realization in Surah, which is its inner and mystic dimension. Surah cannot be practiced without Islam, but Islam can lead those who have the necessary aptitude to the inner court of joy and peace that is Surah and which is the foretaste of the "gardens of paradise". Here again the characteristic of the contemplative way of Islam, or Surah, is that it can be practiced anywhere and in nearly every walk of life. Surah is not based on outer withdrawal from the world but on inner detachment. As a contemporary Sufi has said, "It is not I who has left the world; it is the world that has left me." The inner attachment may be combined with intense outward activity. Surah achieves the wedding of the active and contemplative lives again in character with the unifying nature of Islam. The spiritual force of Islam creates, through intense activity, a climate in the outer world which naturally induces man toward meditation and contemplation, as is seen so clearly in Islamic art. The Muslim opposition with which, by definition, the world of activity is concerned is resolved into an inner peace which is a characteristic of the One, of the Center.

Islam, like all other authentic religions, bears a message from the eternal directed to that which is immovable and permanent in man. As such it knows no temporality. But in addition it imposes certain characteristics, placed there providentially, to enable men in any circumstances and in any "world" to be able to follow it and to benefit from its teachings. Were there ever to be a world for which religion in general and Islam in particular were to have no meaning at all, that world would cease to possess any meaning. It would become sheer illusion. As long as there is any element of reality to the world, or to a world, Islam continues to possess a valid message for that world, for this message comes from the Truth, and as Islamic metaphysical doctrines teach us, Truth and Reality are ultimately one.

1 On the spiritual principles of Islamic art see T. Borchardt, "The Zen and the Art of Islam", The Zen and the Art of Islam, London, 1960, pp. 165ff. See also T. Borchardt, SUDU STUDIES IN EASTERN ART, London, 1960, Chapter IV.
The Significance of Religion to Human Issues in the Light of the Universal Norms of Mystical Experience

by

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Beloved Om of God:
Towards the One, the perfection of love, harmony, and beauty, the only being, united with all the illuminated souls who form the embodiment of the Master, the spirit of godhead...

We are meeting on this historical occasion, made possible by the Temple of Understanding, in order to seek together a way of cooperation between the present-day leaders of the great world religions, with a view towards building a better world. We hope that in the prevailing atmosphere of communion with the spiritual preceptors and contemplatives of all religions, custodians of their predecessors, teaching in all epochs of history, we may be enabled to scrutinize human affairs of our times. We are aware not only of being the heir of various religious traditions, but of echoing a deep aspiration, felt dimly by some and more powerfully by those who have an intention of the same kind towards which the thought of the planet is progressing—the point of convergence of human consciousness attained to its highest pitch in our time—to discover the contribution of religion to the solution of human problems. We are overwhelmed by the magnitude of the forces that are being brought to bear on human issues that are being raised here, at the great dialogue of the world religions about to be woven among those to whom so many are involved in life look for guidance, and who may be considered as the ambassadors of the great traditions of the contemplatives who themselves have wandered across the outskirts of the soul in the pursuit of that to which each one of us aspires in their moments of silence. People look to us desperately, urgently, to do something concrete. How can we communicate the vision of unity at a conference of this kind to the masses, so that it may have an influence on the way people think, which will in turn affect the way they live. It is a matter of communicating vision. Perhaps the most wonderful and sacred moments of our life are those when we respond to something we had not yet realized or glimpsed in our perspective. One feels like exclaiming: well of course, so it is.

We are living in a highly significant era in the history of our planet, in which the mind of the planet, taken globally, is undergoing a shattering revolution. Mental frontiers and collective "sens" are giving way to higher lethargies. The plant in the throes of welding itself at the cost of overcoming frustrating resistances, into a whole not only in the domain of politics, science, technology, and art, but also in that of religion. We are tackling something so fundamental that I think it true to say we are living not in the atomic age, not in the electronic age, but in the age of inter-religious encounterability, including all members of the human family, which is of course the original meaning of the word. The present meeting is a landmark, in a very slow process that has been unfolding itself for a long time and which, until recently, remained confined to those on the grow of human progress. Only now in it beginning to have an influence upon at least the most progressive strands of the issue.

The Sufis have played a pioneering role here. As you probably know, Emperor Akbar, himself a Sufi, convened a Congress on Religion, the first in history to my knowledge. This took place at Fīrūz Shāh, near Agra, in the 16th Century. Cyrus (Emperor Khurshid), the Mughal Magi-King, who freed the Jews from Babylon and was regarded by them as the "amirated one" (Cōhīn), promoted religious understanding centuries earlier. Interestingly enough, the Sufis carried the heritage of the tradition of the Magi, as Shīh Bābūlī Darawandhi has shown. In 1883, Père Vilayat Inaīyat Khan, my father, was sent to the West by his Pir of the lineage of the Chishti Sufis to bring a message of religious unity. He instituted the Universal Worship in which the holy scriptures of the world religions are read from the same altar. And on the last day that he was among his disciples in Suresnes, near Paris, on 23rd September, 1926, he laid the foundation stone of the "Universal" temple, church or mosque of all religions. The Master had designed it in the form of a fourfold human being sitting in meditation and turned towards the four cardinal points. It was to serve as a center for all religions. Since man is the real temple of God, the temple should have the form of man, yet cosmically. I am sure that he would be pleased that this scheme of world importance will now be carried out by the Temple of Understanding, under Mrs. Holcroft's leadership. No sooner had we met here, than we understood why she had been earmarked from above for this great venture. It is important for the present stage of the evolution of the planet Earth that a temple should be built in our time as a point of convergence. Mahārāja Gandhi set the example by including the holy scriptures of several of the great religions in his daily prayer meetings. And today many organizations are working to foster religious rapprochement; here we might mention the Baha'i faith, the Ramakrishna Mission, the World Congress of Faiths, The World Spiritual Council, the World Fellowship of Religions, the Geestelijke Revol in Holland, and the Congress International Interreligieuses which convene every year in Paris and which I also held last year.
in Rome and will hold in London. The end of this Congress is always a joint service of worship where Hindu swamis, Buddhist bhikkhus, Zoroastrian dasturis, Jewish rabbis, Catholic and Orthodox priests, Protestant ministers, and Muslim imams pray side by side at the same altar.

We wish these world congresses and conferences to have an effective impact upon the religious masses of the world, but we will be defeating our purpose if we present the various dogmas of each religion in a "dialogue de souff", a dialogue of duel but courteous and amiable well-wishers, at most reciprocally tolerant, each one professing the virtues of his creed. The truth have an advantage over the devil in that generally they try to shun. But when we seek beyond the formal differences, the underlying human experience of the divine, then something happens which may have a moral and more powerful weapon, the most powerful weapon, for it is moved by the power of conviction. Where men bear down on their highest ideals, bear shoulder to shoulder together at the round table of the real community which is the service of the spiritual growth of the world, and seek to understand one another across the abyss of religious particularities, in the exchange and sharing of their ideals, the common denominator of spiritual experience becomes evident of itself.

We do not advocate syncretism or any new form of proselytism, for syncretism is a jumbled juxtaposition of dogmas. We affirm the fundamental unity of human norms faced with actual experience. Tolerance means that we should tolerate the intolerant. And as the overall mind of the planet matures from superstition to realization, it is important for men and women in our time to examine objectively how they stand in the religious landscape. Many are Muslim, or Hindu, or Buddhist, or Christian, or Zoroastrian, or Jewish, or Sikh because they were born in a family, a community or a country where that particular denomination prevailed. Sometimes, out of a feeling of loyalty, the adherence to a faith tends to neglect studying the religion of others and, in certain cases, assume a prior the superiority of their own creed. We think the child who says: "My mother is the most beautiful woman in the world," it most touching, but we know that when he is grown up he will realize that other women are also beautiful. There are those exceptional few who, having deeply and thoroughly studied all religions, have made a definite choice of one to which they are drawn by temperament.

We rejoice in the wealth of the different forms and beliefs and, of course, respect those who say, "For my part, this is the religion that corresponds most to my temperament or aspirations," and we hope that, as a result of his confrontation of points of view, an intuition may arise in us leading us to the discovery and appreciation of aspects of our own religion unknown heretofore. But do we ever ask ourselves to which religion God belongs?

Where human thought, blind to its appeasement, itself in the thought of another in reverential communion, then new perspectives open up by the miracle of the interjection of soul. In the friendship of those who have shared bread at the same table a new loyalty is born so that some come to see the prophetic claim of religious revelation as a total sweep instead of considering its plates separately. HASLAM INAYAT KHAN taught his disciples to open the windows of their consciousness to the wider perspectives of the procession of human destinies progressing towards a fulfillment that cannot be assessed by an individual consciousness, and to grasp divine guidance beyond the various media through which it manifests itself.

Think of the strength that would be generated if the religious powers of the world were to join forces. There is a growing ministry which has abandoned outer forms and allegiances, or anything but the most formal membership in churches or religious institutions, but wishes very sincerely to delve into the real subject matter of religious experience and draw out the essence. It is not good enough to say that we believe that all religions are one, but we should be able to show where the parallels are to be found and point out this. Times have changed. We cannot limit the march of progress by allowing ourselves to be trapped by hardened formal observances, when there is a fresh breeze of spiritual freedom blowing in the fields of religion. For this fast-growing elite, the study of comparative mystical experience is important, and they are setting a trend pointing to where the future lies. In fact, it is in the realm of mystical experience that religions meet although in dogmas they diverge. There is a common subject of science called the science of religion. Here religion is studied from the standpoint of experience rather than dogma. It may be considered as a science adjacent to psychology; the psychology of the higher states of the thinking process. The actual application of the art of science is the practice of meditation.

The role of religions in our society can be assessed by the fact that it was the innate striving of the creature for communication with an ultimate reality that triggered the influential leap, in the course of evolution, from the animal to man. If man has been able to lift himself to the point of devising the intricate system of thought-forms and material amenities that form the majority of civilization, it is because, at some time in the course of the evolution, a creature, he took that step that brought him into a new dimension of thought, namely the awareness that he was part of a great reality beyond his existence considered individually. For evolution is spurred by the rising of consciousness becoming more and more efficient and conscious at each point of forward progress. Intelligence becomes awareness of the reflex act whereby it cognizes itself as being the one that cognizes, as described by Aristotle. According to TUAN DE CHARDIN, that which catapulted the leap forward from the state of the animal to the state of man was that change of focus from the animal's knowing to the human being's knowing that he knows. Granted that the cells of the body are endowed individually with a measure of consciousness — a consciousness of
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all this he is subject to change, dissolution, imperfection, a devil. This is why the Upanishads move in their historical sequence towards the concept of the ultimate reality as being other than the physical or mental states of being or even the states of being corresponding to the levels of the soul. One may find oneself at a stage in which one is bewitched by the manifestation of His beauty, by the forms of the world, called yajya (signs) by the Sufis and which, according to them, express the profile of His countenance. Again these forms might appear to one as shadowy, haloes, when one passes through the "light of the senses" depicted psychologically by St. John of the Cross, and further on the road one may pass yet another stage wherein are revealed the subtle signs of God's Being, called afya by the Sufis, the divine attributes or the archetypes of qualities latent in all human personalities. The Persian Sufi poet, Jalaluddin Rumi, declared, "Sometimes He abolishes our intuition of His transcendence in order to reveal to the contemplative the image of His immanence, and sometimes He shatters the veil of His immanence before the eyes of those lost in its contemplation in order to lift them into the mysteries of His transcendence."

It is the immanent aspect of reality that is called, ecstatically speaking, "pubil," and ecstatically it is referred to as Brahman, according to the Chandogya Upanishad. Yet it is referred to in more transcendental terms in the Mundaka Upanishad as Atman, the matrix of all created being. In Islam or Judaism, emphasis is placed on the "utterment", that is the transcendence of God. However, references to this aspect of God in His immanence are to be found amongst the mystics. An Iranian Dervish, Baha quli, says: "All I see is Him." Another Sufi, the universally accepted poet, Ahmad Jami-an-Nuri, an Egyptian Dervish, once cried out in his ecstasy: "Seek Him not there where He is only a potential, for 'here' He is a reality." The Sufis have developed in their practices the art of promoting the swifterower into the higher levels of awareness by seeking, through the veil of outer forms, signs of the Divine Countenance. This is particularly in the glense of a mystic who has been startled by the discovery of the divine in His physical manifestation, for the glance reflects a vision that he has grasped in a flash of extreme lucidity — the magic of the reflection of the divine countenance passing from one contemplative to another, the secret and transforming power of the divinity.

It is divine immanence which is the hallmark of Christianity. Man should have existed forever to an archetype of the divine image before the beginning of the world is a profound revelation. For it is still more overwhelming to discover that this archetype manifests itself in the course of time. This is, in the key to the theology of the trans-historicity of Christ. For the Easterns, Christ is an event in the realm of the soul and this gives Him His theological character. However, that cosmic sense captured by the soul should become an event inscribed in space and time and subject to the control of the senses is the miracle of life, and it is this miracle that is
feted in Christianity. Incarnation, the passage from transcendence to immanence, the infusion of the Self into the ego, is the great challenge to reason, the "impossible possibility." As in the case of the poet: "How can the sacred accomplish itself in a temporal act and infinity in a finite act?", the Mandala Upanishad raises the question: "In what object can this all be known?"

For Islam, incarnation, had, is unendurable and, indeed, blasphemyous. Manzur al-Hallaj was crucified for asserting the incarnation of spirit in matter. On this point we engage deeply the most joyful phase of the dialogue between Christianity and Islam. At our Paul Congress, the Christian answered: only faith has the force to glean the tran-historic beyond the historic for it does not, as reason does, reduce cosmic events to the phenomena of the senses. It calls upon the act of higher states of thinking in the transformation of the notion of God. If the epiphany is that which appears in the historical framework, the resurrection is that which transcends beyond the historical plane. When Christianity used the historical Christ as a springboard to the resurrected Christ, it was a way of expressing a metaphysical truth according to which the personal aspect of God may serve as a springboard to the transcendent at the dawn of awareness. Yet by limiting incarnation to one person, the Christians made it difficult to account for the experience of the baffling encounter with the Holy Spirit whereby it permeates and infuses the soul with a fresh lease on a life greater than life. Of this experience, called "transforming union" in the Ennead, Plato on Jesus, St. John of the Cross says: "The Holy Spirit celebrates joyous festivities in my soul." The Hymnology, the early Christian liturgists who abandoned the philosophical squabbles of the Orthodox Church of the 6th century to follow the example of Jesus, in the solitude of the desert, bear witness to the experience of the incarnation of the spirit in the Beth which Gregory of Nica called "Thronos.

The "otherness" of God in the aspect of transcendence wards off the danger begetting all mystics, of confusing their experience of their own act of existence, which Martin Buber calls their phenomenological individuality, with the foundation of all existence. It is to guard against this dangerous amalgamation of the ego that the Jews respect the veracious distance, the immensity of the interval, between man, shattered by the divine tremendor, and God in His absoluteness as the "One That Is." That is why the Jews have little room for incarnation or the testimony of an identity with any form whatsoever of God. The only bridge thrown over this abyss between the divine and the personal is the adage: "Man is made in the image of God." Thus, it is the mirroring of the divine visage which transfigures the faces of the Khulad, causing them to tend more and more to resemble the perfect image, Adam Kadmon. And does not Metatron (the nearest to God's throne), the mysterious personage seated on the Merkaba, the Divine Chariot, in the vision of Ezekiel, correspond to a descent of God into His immanence? And did not Rabbi Ezra say: "God limited Himself in order to make creation possible."

We could place in a second category those mystical experiences which do not refer any more to incarnation or immanence. Here the contemplative adjusts his awareness to a feeling of being part of the total soul of the universe, anima mundi, the psyche-sphere, pantheism. Theoretically, this order of reality refers to an aspect of God known by the Hindus as Atman which functions, in Sufi terminology, in the realm of Itebi. This awareness lifts one not only to a higher dimension of vision but indeed to a higher level of being, corresponding to a higher level of thinking, and as such, it is the moving power of religion. It involves arts of meditation other than those concerned with perception and imagination. The Rāmānụsa Dātā of the Rāmānuja Sūtras of Panūjā is an experience of identification with the ground of one's soul, anima mundi, and it is only in the later Panavaśtha that Atman is anthropomorphized as "the Lord of all His", obviously beyond soulness. At any rate, the experience of soulness requires the annihilation of identification with the physical universe and, therefore, isolation. A Sufi, Jumāl, said that the path to union passed through the station of isolation, ṭuṣiq, a return to the static in which one was in pre-eminence, according to the Qira, before one was involved in the process of becoming. This means, of course, a switch-over from identification with the physical to awareness of being, qua soul, an integral part of soulness. Al-Hallaj stressed the utterly different nature of this level by qualifying it as uncreated. Therefore, the aspect of God related to this level is other than that of God as the Creator; one stands at this level in a different relationship to God than that of the creative aspect which implies "otherness." In fact, the relationship here is in the discovery of identity, and it was for asserting the identity between that which says "I am the soul of the soul and a reality, called "meaning Truth," that is considered to be God as it is uncreated (as opposed to God, that is, created) that al-Hallaj was suspended on the cross. Meister Eckhart had been equally arraigned before the Pope of Avignon for having asserted that the soul is "material immaterial.""
had not already whispered, "It is I!", said al-Hallaj. The notion of the personal I undergoes transformation; it is first seen as the vehicle of the Supreme I, then completely vanquished: "O take away my I, I, I, from between You and me," cries al-Hallaj. In Islamic metaphysics the contemplative uses the word he when addressing God in his impersonal and transcendent aspect. Referring to God in his immanent, and therefore personal aspect, they use the word as the emanated potent person yet more interior than oneself. The Quran says: "Closer than your jugular vein..." These two facets of the same reality are linked in the famous interjection of the Devotees: anaa layta!

As soon as the notion of self undergoes a transformation whereby it identifies itself with individual totality, new dimensions of cognizance open up: non-dualistic cognizance. This stage is depicted in the Hadith of the Prophet: "He is the eyes through which I see, the ears through which I hear..." the same state is described in the Brhad Aranyak (Upnishad): "He is the unseen seer, the unheard hearer..." The nondualistic forms of cognizance can be outlined as follows: Where there is duality one sees another, one hears another, one thinks of another; but where all has become one, how can the one who sees see himself, by what knowledge can the knower know himself? This form of cognizance is often called intuition. In perception there is a subject perceiving and an object perceived, but in intuition, the notion of the perceiver and that of the perceived are both obliterated. And consciousness, when freed from the channels through which it ordinarily functions, attains a higher order of reality. When all notion of an ego, or a self-functioning through an ego, has been obliterated, all that remains is the Absolute, the non-created, the non-become", as in the Christian world, one becomes one with the creator. This may be experienced when one descends into the deep strata of the psyche corresponding to transcendental levels beyond the threshold at which the non-manifested passes into the realm of manifestation, into those for reaches where the treads of all beings are latent and from which they blossom forth by dint of the eternal play of the forces of light in their process of perpetual self-renewal.

It is through an expanded awareness of this sort that the personality of man may knit into his being non-physical, one might say, ideal components. Here, once more, the role of religion is evidenced as a catalyst in the formative process of the personality. If, as YOGA MAD Jivan KAN had said: "The fruit of human work is the establishment in each of us of an absolutely original center in which the universe is reflected and in which it is mirrored," then surely our purpose in life is to incorporate in our being ever wider fields of reality. At the start our personality carries a heritage from all levels of the universe, and as it unfolds it enriches itself through communication with all orders of reality. It gathers impressions from the angelic spheres and also impressions from the levels of the archetypes of pure beauty. A thought, enfolded by an emotion of glorification, can transfigure a face, and if it becomes permanent it may leave an indelible mark on the personality and even on the actual flesh. That the entire universe, including all the planets of existence and those of the non-manifested, should become ourselves is the great miracle of man; and it is only in striving to realize this that man can integrate himself in the total purpose for which he was created. Therefore, human problems can only make sense in the perspective of spiritual awareness.

The relevance of religion becomes yet more inextricably evident when one realizes that the attitude of glorification forces consciousness to adjust itself to a finer setting: the focal point of consciousness at the deeper levels of the psyche takes precedence over the activity of consciousness at the periphery where the notion of individuality has its roots. It is only from this vantage point at the summit of our being that we are able to comprehend the great human issues in their totality and avoid losing ourselves in the particular. In this light, meditation can be seen as the act that enables one to meet the challenging question: what is the purpose that one must achieve during this brief sojourn on the planet? If man fulfills his purpose in life by accomplishment, that is by applying his creativity in order to materialize his ideal of perfection, he limits himself to his true statement, that is by the illumination of consciousness which it rises above the limitations of the vehicle in which it functions. If creativity is the way of materializing an ideal, then it is a form of glorification, for the features of all created beings are made of things through which the angels express their glorification of God. Glorification is the fountainhead of all beauty. Our religious ceremonies are but the shadows of that great universal worship celebrated in the heavens by the choirs of heavenly beings on all planes, and our prayers drift a chant across the mist separating our earthbound plane from the celestial one through which a communication may be established with the powers that be. Therefore, there are great rejoicings in the heavens today as leaders of the world religions meet in a spirit of communion.

There is a divine guidance piloting the forward march of human destinies and the sacred task of all those human beings to whom others look for guidance, whether they occupy official positions in religious institutions or not, is to stand on earth amidst all strife as the custodians and also the vassals of divine sovereignty, so as to ensure that the divinity plan may be carried out. Maybe some of us are aware, at those rare moments when we feel most intensely the heartbeat of creation pulsing through ourselves, and indeed beyond ourselves, of the innate longing of all created forms for perfection, or rather, for the objectification as a living reality of the vision of perfection which our Maker has entrusted to us, to materialize. By such awareness, we grasp a purposefulness and may watch this purpose fulfilling
Thy light is in all forms, Thy love in all being;
In a loving mother, in a kind father, in innocent child,
In a helpful friend, in an inspiring teacher.
Let us know Thee in all Thy holy names and forms:
As Rama, as Krishna, as Shiva, as Padghita,
Let us know Thee as Abraham, as John, as Zarathustra,
As Moses, as Jesus, as Mohammed,
And in many other names and forms, known and unknown to the World.
May the Message of God spread far and wide.
Dissimulating and masking the whole of humanity,
One single brethren in the Fatherhood of God.
in C. E. N. Joan described the troubles of modern civilization to what he called "the drooping of the object". By "the object" he meant absolutes, objective values (truth, beauty, goodness, God) which are located in an order of reality not subject to time and space. "The drooping of the object", therefore, means the denial of absolutes which now appear to be subjective only, the inventions of men rather than of the gods. When this occurs in history, as in the present age, the human ego swells up and proudly imagines that it creates everything, and that nothing is impossible to it. At the same time, however, it necessarily turns in on itself, and becomes morally subjectively in its lack of objective standards, "trends and codes", by which to be guided.

In this present state of indiscipline, we need a direction, a hope and a philosophy to save us from sheer chaos. In the volume on the Universal Churches, ACMIR TOENNER expressly rejects the theory formulated by Gustav and Sir James G. FLENNER, of the churches as "vacuums" which cut away the tissues of civilization. On the contrary, "in seeking God", says TOENNER, "man is performing a social act", and indeed, without the fruits which religions supply, civilizations cannot long endure. Among these fruits are a belief in human fellowship, and hence power to overcome discord in human society; a solution to the problem of the meaning of history, and the means of exercising the peril inherent in the worship of man-made "deities". He holds that this religion that shapes civilization.

Religion, however, should be dynamic and penetrate all forms of human life besides influencing every type of human activity. In modern times, the central axis of religious concern has shifted from matters of ultimate salvation, and of heaven and hell, to questions pertaining to the meaning, necessity or uselessness of religion for the life.

An endeavor has been made in this paper to scrutinize the fundamental principles on which Zoroastrianism rests, and to determine whether a contemporary Zoroastrian is able to derive from his faith inspiration and inner strength to face the challenges of the modern world. Each of four principles will be discussed in its wider connotation. These principles appear in Yama 12:4.

**Reformation:** One should endeavor to promote unity amid diversity, and be tolerant of the views of others. Significant differences drop between races and various kinds of social orders; between wealthy nations and these which are less influential. What results is mutual distrust, enmity, conflict and hardships. Man is at once the cause and the victim.

God did not create man for life in isolation, but for the formation of social unity. For, in his inmost core, man is a social being, and unless he relates himself to others, he can neither live nor develop his potential.

**One of the salient features of the modern world is the growing interdependence of men, a development very largely promoted by modern technical advancement. Nevertheless, brotherly dialog among men does not reach its perfection on the level of technical progress, but on the deeper level of interpersonal relationships. These demand a mutual respect for the full spiritual dignity of the person.**

**Barriers do exist between individuals and nations but a sympathetic understanding of other relations acts as a social cement.**

The attitude of tolerance helps to promote unity among nations and also stimulates inter-religious friendship. Albert Schmitt believes the view that Western and Indian philosophies should aim at the common, good of mankind, instead of each attempting to prove itself right in opposition to the other.

Moreover, for the propagation of one's faith, the employment of force can never be justified, as cruelty and oppression are the very negation of spiritual wisdom and sublimity.

We are all searchers for the truth, and we ought not to be intolerant and assert that ours is the only religion that possesses the truth. Each individual has been endowed with a free will and has the right of making his own choices, after hearing the truth. An indifferent or false teacher distorts God's message, brings about mischief and leads one astray.

Tolerance towards others is cooperative where a pluralistic society prevails, so that all mankind should live as one family. Universality of thought and philosophy of outlook is demonstrated in the frivzai Yash where the foundation of holy men of all nations, including Turks, known in history to have been the enemy of Iran, are reverently invoked. Moreover, respect is paid to all spiritual masters, and the highest stage of existence to all holy men of the past, present or future.

Nonviolence: Non-violence or, positively put, love for all creation, is fundamental to Zoroastrianism.

While religions have existed non-violence as the supreme virtue, some men have held the view that wars are means to good ends. Moreover, declared that violence is perfectly moral, and in fact even more moral than compromise; moreover, war is natural to man as motherhood is to woman.

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2. C. E. N. Joan, The Ganges to Be (1931).
If we are to save our children from future wars, we ought to assert our faith in basic human rights. Article 2 of the Charter of Human Rights of the United Nations lays down an obligation on the member states to cooperate with the Organization in promoting universal respect for human rights and freedoms and universal observance of them. A firm determination to respect other men and their dignity, as well as the ethical practice of brotherhood, are absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace. We should favor universal brotherhood - a universal brotherhood which is the greatest good to all - so that there may be good will among men and misgivings may vanish everywhere.<br>
<br>Love is the motive for the fight against evil that is going on in the world. Man should defend his freedom against the power of enemy forces. In the Zoroastrian philosophy, Mithra is the special guardian angel of animals, and the second day of every month in the calendar is named Mithra and is consecrated to him. In our age when there is the painful danger of our being driven towards the abyss of non-coexistence due to a nuclear holocaust, may this short prayer which offers us hope be the guiding principle of our destinies (Yasna 43).<br>

May understanding overcome misunderstandings; Peace triumph over discord; Generosity overcome sourness; Reconcile one's wrath; Tolerate one's difference; Truth over falsehood.

Knower wherein: This may be explained as self-sacrifice of service of mankind; it is losing our petty selves by serving God.<br>

The disturbances which so frequently occur in the social order result in part from the natural tensions of economic, political and social forms. But at a deeper level, they flow from man's pride and selfishness, which contaminates even the social sphere. Freedom acquires new strength, by contrast, when a man consoled to the unavoidable requirements of social life, taken on the manifold demands of human partnership, and committed himself to the service of the world community. In every religious tradition are regarded as specially sacred. The most sacred verse in Zoroastrianism is said to be the Yasna Vayasa. The third concept in this prayer lays emphasis on the importance of service. After gaining knowledge and having filled the heart with love, the fulfillment and the crown of human life should take the form of service to mankind. It is this spirit of service which crowns human life with perfection.

Zoroastrianism enjoins active service, and not contemplation away from the world, as the duty of man. In this world of joy and sorrow, happiness and misery, life should be ideal if it were not for the sympathy, kindness and love of fellow-men. Unbearable is the burden of life when one is unaided. One cannot years for anything more earnestly than to serve man with generosity and effectiveness. Life is incomplete when man lives for his own self, oblivious of the needs of others. The person who brings light into the lives of others himself receives light. 

For a Zoroastrian it is a principle of selfishness which forms the basis of a worked life. Wellborn, a sacred union of two persons, where sympathetic understanding and absolute self-sacrifice ought to reign.

At another level it is a principle of frustration, which leads to competition with Absolute Reality. Zoroasthrih himself offered his very life and being as a sacrifice to God, it is when one is imbued with the determination to serve, that the soul is transported into the realms of light. The divine enrapuures us, as we all strive for the spark of divinity within us. The deep urge of the inner self to relieve the distressed leads to a merger with God. Abraham states that when this union takes place there is boundless joy, an all absorbing ecstasy. God is there and the soul is in God. This spiritual experience is creative, as it brings about a change of consciousness.

Adam: Zoroastrianism is suffused with the concept of ahk. Ahk is the divine plan. It is the immutable eternal law of God, according to which the universe has come into being. The cosmic process is not unchanging, since there is a pattern, an order which directs evolution. This cosmic process progresses towards its fulfillment by following the law of ahk. Ahk is the very foundation of Zoroastrianism. And yet, ahk is by its very nature, difficult to define. Only sublime inspiration could have drawn from Tennyson's comprehension of its essence:

That God who ever lives and loves,
One God, one love, once divinity,
And one for ever divine intent.
To which the whole creation yearns.

Such is God's creation. The infinite plan encompasses the totality of God's creatures, from the highest to the lowest. God intended creation to be the organic of His expression. He has not changed His plan from time to time, discarding one idea after another until He devised the form of man. Revolution moved to bring creation to its peak. Men! He is the local channel through which God speaks. Intelligence and God-consciousness are the attributes which make man co-operative with Him. Partaking of the divine nature, man knows of the inner life, and of the promised bliss if he follows the path of ahk. Man hungered for spiritual freedom, and holds God in his mind's eye as the true parent of the eternal law. The summit of man will be attained when all men act in full accord with the law, the law that forms the basis of all life. The pathway already lies within him. The power to walk it lies there also. Man has the right to be free from any limiting experience.

There is something nothing in Plato's description of God: "—That truth is his body, and light his shadow,". In Zoroastrianism, the law of ahk exalts truth, and equates truth with God. Truth or righteousness is the secondary connotation of ahk. Hence the prayer:

O Manda, grant that I perform all actions in harmony with righteousness and acquire the wisdom of the living mind, so that I may bring happiness to the soul of the universe.

The righteous attain the highest goals — truth, wisdom, perfection, immortality. But if we talk to righteousness only in the expectation of a future reward, such an action becomes divorced of righteousness. He who passes the fiery test of truth, chooses to follow God's path and so belongs to Him. He furnishes himself, while there is time, with a store of righteousness, for the great journey his soul will have to undertake one day.

Those who overcome evil in their own persons and around them in the world prepare the way for the coming of the Kingdom of Righteousness. Zarathustra has laid the foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness, and has opened the stupendous task of building and establishing and completing it. It is left to man to bring that day near or to keep it at a distance.

CONCLUSION

The essence of Zarathushtrianism has an elevating impact on the dignity of the person, by the way in which it strengthens the sense of human society and induces the everyday activity of man with a deeper meaning of life. It offers man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. But this has to be attained through one's own efforts.


d (1594), 24:2.5

(1594), 23:21

(1594), 34:23

(1594), 24:21

(1594), 34:23

(1594), 34:23

Zoroastrianism is a religion of action, and the Prophet's message emphasized the importance of right action for furthering the divine plan. Everything in a Zoroastrian cries out for action. Thought is noble, but action is nobler. To live is to act and work.

The law of fate implies a regular and ordered progress in all manifestations. The divine seed is in us, but it must be nurtured and permitted to mature. Nothing under heaven is complete and perfect, but we ought to strive for perfection. Progress is the Zoroastrian watchword and the most salient trait of the Zoroastrian character. It is the prerogative of every man, and he ought to realize that he has the capacity to raise himself above his animalities and attain his full spiritual stature.

The aim of Zoroastrianism is to lift mankind to a new level; the world is the scene of his spiritual evolution. The purpose of life is that man shall know himself, his divine origin, his almost incredible potentialities as a child of God and a co-worker with Him. The outward thrust of the Eternal is molding man on to his manifest destiny.

But doubting man grasps, ponder, hesitates... and is lost. Only when he lets the divine flame within him spark upwards will all doubt be penetrated. And how can this be? Only through action. The springs of life are all within. This is the secret of life. An integral part of this is the power of choice. Man alone can choose, make decisions. This is echoed in the teachings of the Prophet. Man has been endowed with intelligence which enables him to attain the state of interaction between the human and the divine. But first, he has to know who he is and what he is. He is on a voyage of self-discovery. His progress in the world will depend on the wisdom of his deliberate choices.

Gautama Siddartha awakened to the truth and resolved to become the Light-Bearer. The realization of Nirvana came to him, and, he preached that it could come to any man who desired it.

As the eternal message of the Buddha lives, so does Zarathushtra's voice. Tagore says, "He was the watchman in the night, who stood on the lonely peak facing the East and broke out singing the praises of light to the sleeping world when the sun came out on the rim of the horizon". 2

Zarathushtra's religion is not alone a matter of academic interest, nor merely the guide of a community of a hundred thousand. It is addressed to all humanity, without limitations of space or time. But today it is in Zoroastrian hearts that its configuration shines as the symbol of it ever burns in their temples.

Narx has said, "It is remarkable how the Parsees, as they have been called, have quietly and unostentatiously fitted into India, made it their home, and yet kept quite apart as a small community, tenaciously holding on to their old customs... They have prospered in business and many of them are the leaders of industry in India. They have had practically no contact with Iran and are completely Indian, and yet they hold on to their old traditions and the memories of their ancient homeland. 1 It is to their adopted homeland, India, that they hold allegiance. The spirit of service and the love for freedom deeply embedded in the Zoroastrian character urged them to throw off the fetters of foreign rule in India. Imprisonment, confiscation of property, humiliation, etc., all was willingly accepted. These are the Zarathustrians who have cut themselves headlong onto the path of asha—the Orient of Righteousness... When a disciple asked the Sufi mystic Janayad of Bagdad: "I am told that you possess the pearl of divine knowledge, either give it to me or sell it to me", Janayad answered: "I cannot sell it for you have not the price thereof, and if I give it to you, you will have gained it too cheaply, you do not know its value. Cost yourself headlong, like me, into this ocean (of God) in order that you yourself may find the pearl." 3

Jesus as a Message for our Day

by

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My topic is the relevance of Jesus as a message for our day. In our world today a kind of civilization is emerging which in many ways is different from the civilizations of previous generations. Science, technology, ideas, varied loyalties, and values have their own strong influence in transforming our present day life. A stormy situation, either in the form of war, or as racial, social, or economic upheaval, casts shadows of gloom and despair. The world seems to be experiencing pain, which may either be death, pangs or birth pangs. The bewildering and distorting changes that are rapidly taking place in our times confound people who do not know how to respond to them. Among these changes are waves of political uncertainty, economic instability, and social unrest. Never was man so well-informed and so terribly confused. He is rich in knowledge but poor in wisdom. In the midst of scientific inventions and technological developments modern society is increasingly becoming depersonalized. Man's sense of loss and the cheapness of his life in a technological age call for a reaffirmation of individual worth, not alone but in community. The individual man spends his time in factories, schools, offices, theaters, business places, local, national, and international organizations and conferences, where he has to make innumerable, multifaceted and quick decisions.

For all this a new man, a man loved and guided by a superhuman power, every moment of his life is the need of the hour. It is this kind of man alone that will untangle the tangled world of our day. But how can such a man be produced? He needs spiritual renewal, a constant reintegration not only of his body and mind but also a spiritual tool for his poor soul. This is why Jesus emphasized that a man should be born over again. The word of Jesus Christ, his Gospel, as it is found in the New Testament, has relevance to our day, especially its call of renewing man, broadening his outlook on life in all its aspects, and a developing beautiful attitude in him. The beautiful spiritual qualities of Jesus, given in the 5th chapter of the Book of Matthew, aim at building up spiritual maturity in all who understand them, and who follow these wonderful teachings in their day-to-day lives. Here are given the eight steps which are essential in helping become a new man: humility, mourning for lost sins, spiritual meekness, spiritual appetite, meekness, purity of heart (that is, freedom from selfishness, jealousy, hatred, ennui, fault-finding, etc.), peace-making, and finally readiness to suffer for all just and righteous causes.

The Christian must believe that Jesus not only taught these beautiful attitudes but lived them himself, and so in order to develop these qualities of life one has to keep before oneself that Jesus as the ideal and perfect example to be emulated.

There are a few aspects of the message of Jesus, the New Testament, which have relevance to the world today, a scientific and technological age desperately needing men and women. These aspects are, firstly, acknowledging the sovereignty of God, with just carnalism. God is the head of all ethical principles. If God is not just to man in his day-to-day life then all hope is lost. Jesus envisions the coming into being of the Kingdom of God, the establishment of God's reign. He asks man to pray for this kingdom, and work for it and conform his will to God's will. The prayer which he taught his disciples says, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth." We need to know his will and do his will in every sphere of our life and in all our relationships.

The significant thing is that Jesus emphasized exclusively moral considerations. He asked men to repent and submit themselves to the moral discipline which would prepare them for final judgment of a strictly ethical nature. He was so emphatic about ethical matters that he did not really give much importance to ritualistic and ceremonial religion. He was not springing in his words of condemnation of the orthodox religious men who, he said, did all their works to be seen of men. He advised his disciples to pay attention to these words but not to follow their practice, for he said they say one thing and act another. Jesus believed that man could not be good and could do nothing unless he was in constant fellowship with God.

Conformity with God, he maintained, would consequentially bring man close to his brother man, in his love and concern for him. Jesus himself served the needy, the downtrodden and the rejected people. He had love and compassion for them. He took a towel and basin and washed the feet of his disciples. He taught that those who serve others were the greatest of all in the Kingdom of Heaven. His disciples then and all through the ages have followed his example and served humanity just for the love of their Lord and Master.

Although the teachings of Jesus have political and economic implications they were centered on the question of right and wrong in an absolute sense. In the Sermon on the Mount he said what I tell you is that anyone who

Delivered extemporaneously at the Baha’i Assembly, October 26, 1948.
I heartily welcome the organizers of this symposium in their attempt to explore an impartial and liberal approach to different views of religious faiths in this world, and to find out how world fellowship of the different religions or a unity of hearts amongst human beings can be promoted.

There are two ways of approach—(1) The sincere, real and practical approach having relation to the actual condition and nature of human beings and (2) an idealistic approach having little or no practical value and merely indulging in the luxury of high-sounding words. If we sincerely want to obtain a real and abiding effect, we should face facts boldly. The fact is that there exists no 100 percent identity amongst individuals. Each is a conscious unit having independence of thinking, feeling and willing. Individuals, as a result of their different actions, achieve separate environments and personalities. Every individual has his peculiar nature, distinct from any other. So, obviously individuals will vary in their opinions and tastes. This is quite natural, and it is an unnatural thing to attempt forcibly to engage individuals in one kind, faith or particular ideology. Accordingly, cultivation of tolerance of others' views is essential for world peace and unity. Indian sponsors of religion appeared to have that insight and tolerance, for very many independent views have cropped up in India and have flourished simultaneously. Want of tolerance makes us sectarian, and that spirit motivates the forcible conversion of others, which brings turmoil and unrest in the world.

Religion should give equal scope to all individuals for their respective spiritual development according to their attributes. Indian saints have classified the nature of human beings in three broad groups—smara, opilia and saminda. Simple people are smara, sincere, generous and non-violent. As such they have an altruistic mentality and render distinguished service. Raja people are opilia. However, they are active and do good to others with the motive of getting a return for their actions or of self-aggrandizement. They won't tolerate harm to themselves, they have

The Essential Brotherhood of Mahatma: A Hindu View

by

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the spirit of taking revenge. Yawo people are indolent, out-and-out egoists and of violent temperament. They are indiscriminate; in their pursuit of enjoyment, they completely disregard the interests of others and will do anything to fulfill their selfish desires. So, taws, editions and breeding people vary in their tastes, habits and nature.

For this reason, three forms of teaching religion have been prescribed for the three groups, according to their eligibility, and seeking to give them scope for gradual elevation. These three modes of teaching are related to the apparent self, and as such they are changeable.

There are still higher and higher thoughts of religious existence which transcend those three qualities and relate to the eternal function of the real self. If we want quantity we must sacrifice quality and if we want quality, evidently we shall have to sacrifice quantity. Both cannot be achieved at one time. However, the primary point to be noted here is that there should be tolerance amongst members of different religious views, and respect for others' views, as well as equal scope, for their spiritual upliftment. Another point to be noted here is that we should have the patience to understand the underlying spirit of different religious faiths and not merely indulge in disputes regarding the ritualistic aspects of religions which will certainly vary in different parts of the world.

Nowadays we find lack of discipline rampant in every sphere of human life - political, social, economic and even educational. Student unrest is one of the most serious problems of the day. It is extremely difficult to proceed with constructive work when people are prone to indiscipline. To fight against disruptive tendencies and indiscipline, a radical treatment of the minds of the people is required. Here we feel the necessity of moral and spiritual values in human life. There are two ways of treating diseases – pathological and symptomatic. In pathological treatment the root cause of the disease is ascertained first, and then the remedy is prescribed. The process of symptomatic treatment may be easier but it does not have a lasting effect; it may give temporary relief. A better treatment through the pathological process brings about permanent relief.

To determine the root of unrest we ought first to determine the meaning of the self. I strongly believe that ignorance of our real self is the cause of unrest, discord and anxiety. The real self is not the physical tabernacle. It is something other than the gross and subtle body. We consider the body to be the person, as long as we observe consciousness in it. The moment the body is bereft of consciousness, it loses its personality. "I" am "I" when the conscious entity, i.e. the entity that thinks, feels and wills is present in me, and "I" am "not-I" when it is absent in me. Hence, the entity whose presence and absence makes me, "me" and "not-me", respectively, must be the person.

This conscious entity (soul) is designated as Atman in Indian scriptures. Atman is indestructible, it has no origin and no end. If we plunge deep into the matter, we can trace our existence with the Absolute Conscious principle whom we call Godhead, the Fountain Source of innumerable conscious units. The Godhead is termed Sat-Chit-Anuwa, i.e. He is All-Existence, All-Knowledge and All-Bliss. Individuals are parts of rays emanating from Him, and as such one of His eternal existing potencies. Individuals cannot live independently. They are all interconnected and coexisting, through retaining their own individual characteristics.

It has already been stated that differences in individuals are unavoidable, as they are conscious units. Now the problem is to find a common ground and interest for the solution of these differences. A sense of common interest can be fostered among individuals, if they know that they are interconnected, are parts of one organic system and are the sons and daughters of one Father. Here is the task of all religious teachers. It is to teach people that all beings of the world are clearly interconnected. Although materialism or femalism in God (Nika) according to some particular faith, and eligibility of the individual, religious bigotry which beggars reason is condemnable, as it is against the real interest of the individual and society. Real religion teaches love for one another.

Lord Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu propagated the cult of all-embracing Divine Love which brings universal brotherhood on a transcendental plane. According to him, the goal of our external relation with the Supreme Godhead, Sri Krishna, is the root cause of all afflictions. Srikrishna is God of all gods, Supreme Person having All-Existence, All-Knowledge and All-Bliss, beginningless yet the Beginning of all and Prime Cause of all causes. The word "Krishna" means one who attracts all and pleases all by His Wonderful Enchanting Beauty, Majesty, Mysteriousness and Supremacy, and this denotes the highest conception of Godhead with all perfection. He is the object of All-Love. So, remembrance of Sri Krishna or God is the divine panacea of all ills. The content and most effective way of remembering God is chanting of the Holy Name which can be practiced by all, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, age, health, economic, social and educational status, at any place or time.

In the Vedic culture we find the theory of the cycle of time within the period of infinite time, which has four stages in accordance with the predominance of religiousness and irreligiosity. The four ages are designated as yugas, era, daya and night. In maya yuga (the first age of the cycle of time) wisdom predominated in men, and as such they were unaware of the transitory nature of the world, and thereby were not fascinated by it; concentration without interruption was possible and meditation (dhyana) was prescribed as the common religion suitable for all. In next yuga (next age in the cycle of time) when the spirit of activity predominated and people were attached to worldly objects, yajna (sacrifice) i.e., offering of the things of attachment to the Lord, was prescribed as the common religion to divert the attention of the people from material objects of attachment and turn their minds
towards Him. In Sanskrit, japa (next and more degraded age) when people were addicted to worldly objects, aghara (worship of deities) was prescribed as the common religion for gradual realization of concentration of the mind, by directing all the senses and objects of attachment to 33rd Service. In the present age, kali yuga (the last and spiritually most degraded age of the cycle of time), when people are firmly attached to worldly objects, they are incapable of performing meditation, japa (sacred recitation) and aghara (worship of Deities) rightly and as such chanting of the Holy Name of God is prescribed for them.

Today, the world is taking tremendous scientific strides. Modern scientists are performing wonders. But in spite of their marvellous accomplishments and despite their pride in Twentieth Century civilization, it is puzzling to see that science is so much engaged in inventing destructive weapons and thereby imperilling the whole human race. Any moment there may be a conflagration and the whole world may perish. Saints are deeply concerned as to how to avert such a calamity. More material scientific accomplishments are unable to save the world from such a danger. Of course, scientific inventions or achievements as such are not condemnable. Everything depends on the proper use of things. Science may be used for the good of humanity and also may be used for the destruction of human civilization. It is imperative to consider the problem and diagnose the source of conflicts and mutual distrust amongst nations and individuals. So long as nations and individuals have separate centers of interest, tension is inevitable. Nobody can avoid it.

This world is limited. When there are many claimants for one limited object, disputes amongst claimants are unavoidable. It is because of this that Indian saints differ from the leaders of the West or from the westernized leaders of our country, in their manner of tackling the problem of peace. In fact, genuine saints of the world are wise enough to see the fundamental defect in the attempt of the so-called best brains to achieve world peace. They assert with great emphasis that any practical solution of the problem is not possible so long as people do not change their present craving for sensual enjoyment and greediness for mundane wealth, and direct their attention towards the Unlimited, the Infinite, the Absolute. The leaders of different religious groups should clearly and emphatically point out and teach their followers the painful and perishable character of worldly objects and the facility of sensual enjoyment. They should create interest in man for the worship of God which brings about real happiness.

Unless and until the eternal relationship of the people is known to them, and they realize that they cannot exist and be happy without the Godhead, who is All-Like, the natural inclination of the people towards the Godhead and diversion of their attention from the material aspect of life cannot be paralyzed. As long as people have the conviction that their only interest lies in material prosperity and sensual enjoyment, discord cannot be avoided. More belief in the existence of God will be of great benefit to humanity, by restraining people from committing sins, and leading them to do good to others; they will have fear of punishment for bad deeds, and encouragement to seek reward for good deeds. Wars of patience and tolerance originate from lust. Any activity which leads to the satisfaction of one's own gross and subtle senses is termed lust. Hindrance to the fulfillment of lust breeds anger, and that brings conflict and malice amongst individuals and nations. So long as people do not understand that they are inseparably connected, and until the activities of the people are God-centered, mere sentimentalism or fictitious ideas will not be able to foster real love amongst individuals.

If we know that the infliction of harm to other animate beings is detrimental to our own interest and will bring harm in return, we will not be encouraged to harm any individual, any even any sentient being of the world.

If we can love the Absolute Whole, I mean the Godhead, we cannot have the impetus to injure any of His parts. So, according to me or the teachings of Lord Gauranga, Divine Love is the best solution of all the problems of the world.

1 In Hindu terminology, a saint is a wholly dedicated living holy man.
Religion and World Problems

by

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When I arrived I picked up one of the many fascinating pamphlets which have been available to us and read for the first time a story from the life of Woodrow Wilson. He, one day, was told that his glance was slipping down toward his mouth and he said, "Oh, line, then I can see what I have to say." I knew only a few moments ago that I was to say anything this morning and I am somewhat in the position of Woodrow Wilson. But I am delighted by this opportunity to say a few words. I am not going to tell you too much about Quakers because after all we are one of the very smallest of the many sects and religions represented here and that would enable us to put a very few facts at compared to the size of other groups that have spoken. I would like, however, to take advantage of this opportunity to underline a few of the things already said, the many very wise and inspiring things which have been said and which seem to me to point toward the main purpose of this discussion on the relevance of religion to the world today. I remind you that the relevance of religion to the world today is spelled out in the problems listed for discussion yesterday afternoon and which have been held over for further discussion this morning. They are: poverty in the midst of plenty, racial and religious prejudices and discrimination, the destruction of youth, the cult of violence, and the costs of war.

The little sect or denomination to which I belong, Quakers, is rooted in the idea that there is "that of God in every man." This was the phrase used by George Fox. It was taken from the older religions. Many of you, in speaking of the beliefs of your religions have brought out the same point. To Quakers this means that the ultimate blasphemy is war, because in destroying man, man is destroying God. And therefore Quakers are traditionally pacifists. But that pacifism is not just a negative manifestation. It is against an evil, war, but we do believe also that this requires of each of us that we not only abstain from war and from killing but that we enter into the service of man. Since so many of you have said exactly the same thing, from your point of view of your denominations, I think that we can take heart that it will be possible for us to find common ground and to move toward a discussion of the relevance of religion for the world today.

I think we are all grateful, however, for the emphasis that several of you have placed upon the negative aspects of this question, beginning, I think, with Dr. Doreen, who spoke about the irrelevancy of some religions to the world today. The irrelevancy of much in Christianity to the world today. The fact that so many of our churches and religions, although I suppose, we can speak only for Christianity, have left the big questions of war and peace, poverty and youth, and injustice aside. In each great war the sanction of the major religious organizations has been found for that war and perhaps there is little beginning of a movement in the other direction in the fact that so many American religious leaders now find it impossible to support the war in Viet-Nam, now find it necessary and consistent with their religious beliefs to support the groups which are working for racial equality and justice in the United States. Therefore, we do have a beginning, perhaps, here in our own Christian group, of a recognition that these problems of the world cannot wait, that we cannot live our good Christian lives without facing them.

When we come to the question of violence, as has been said so many times so beautifully here: there, too, how can we possibly deny that religion has been involved in a problem which the very fundamentals of religion are concerned? When you look at the life of Gandhi and Buddha how can one justify the use of war and violence? And yet, by and large, as I've lived here in Asia for two years, I find comparatively few of the religious leaders in Asia giving frontal attention to this problem, although more and more are doing so, and more and more are seeing the relevance between what is happening in terms of communal conflict in India, for example Hindu-Muslim conflict, and their religious beliefs. They see them as a denial of their religious beliefs. And yet communal conflict is growing. A Muslim scholar reported at a meeting I attended the other day that in the year 1960 there were more deaths in India from communal conflict, from Hindu-Muslim conflict, than in the combined nine years preceding that time.

So, while we can speak only of the irrelevancy of Christianity, I think we might at the same time suggest that all of us from the point of view of our religions take a look at the irrelevancies as well as the relevancies of religion for the problems of the world today.

I will close by citing one statement by a Quaker leader, with which a number of you, I gather from the many fine things that have been said, would agree from the point of your own religions. William Fox, the founder of Pennsylvania, and one of the early Quakers, said, "True Godliness does not turn men out of this world. It helps them to live better in it. It excites their endeavor to mend it."

1 Delivered extemporaneously at the Baha Academy, October 22, 1960.
Religion in an Age of Scientific Achievement

by

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There are at present a number of higher religions, which may broadly be classified into:

A. Buddhist: (1) Theravada in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia with some adherents in Assam, Tipperah, West Bengal and other places in India, in Chittagong, Comilla, Noakhali etc. in Pakistan; (2) Mahayana in Japan, Korea, China (now officially extinct in mainland China), Nepal and Tibet; (3) Vajrayana in Tibet (including refugees in India, Sikkim, Bhutan and Mongolia).

B. Jainism in India

C. Sikhism in India

D. Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Zoroastrianism.

E. Hinduism with many sub-sects.

A man's religion is determined rather accidentally, by his birth in a particular family, following particular beliefs, customs, ceremonies and forms of worship. The practical test of a religion is its success or failure in helping human beings overcome sin and suffering in the phenomenal universe. A human being cannot realize the reality unless and until he frees himself completely from his innate self-centredness (i.e. desires (asat) along with (tantra). The Upanishads teach 'Ji aman an, anam ni - chinn anat' that (or bhu), the reality is yourself; I am that (bhu). The Reality in Buddhism is termed Nibha in Hinayana and Sattva (full enlightenment) in Mahayana.

As stated above, the primary object of a religion is to guide human beings to overcome sin and suffering. The very first discourse of Lord Buddha was to lead human beings out of the suffering, concomitant to existence in this mortal world. He exemplified the four truths (agamiyas) thus: dham (suffering), dhamasamudaya (origin of suffering), dhammacatvada (cessation of suffering) and dhammacatva-gaana-pratik (the way of ending the suffering). The way is then explained thus:

1. sma: Right Speech: abstention from false speaking, malicious talk, rough talk, frivolous talk, right action: abstention from killing, stealing, transgressing through lust or adultery: right means of livelihood: right exertion: avoiding unoriginated evils, removing originated evils, developing unoriginated good, increasing unorigination good.

2. sama: Self-awareness of the physical body, feelings, mental states, and teachings: right meditation: right resolution.

3. pare: Right view, i.e., accepting the doctrine of Buddhism.

CONSTITUENTS OF SUFFERING BEING ANALYZED

A living being is composed of matter (rupa) and mind (citta). By rupa is meant the physical body made of five elements, viz. earth, water, fire, air, and space. The first three are imperceptible, i.e. earth cannot be conceived without water, but air and likewise the other three elements. In other words, everything in this world is a composite (saamana, saamana).

It is worth while to say a few words about the Buddhist philosophical outlook. It should be dealt with, according to the Buddhist system, under three heads. These are dhamma, which has been outlined above; anatta and anicca. Anatta means non-entity, and it has a very specific significance.

Before the Buddhist conception of soul or self is discussed it is necessary to state the view of the early Upanishads and Vedanta school of thought. According to them, every living being has an individual soul (jiva), which is pure and remains unaltered by his deeds, good or bad. It serves, however, the purpose of carrying the karmic effects of the present life to its future existence. This notion is identical with the Great Soul (brahman), the Absolute Reality. It is something like air put in a colored bottle. The air merges in the other air when the bottle is broken. In Buddhist philosophy this Vedantic conception is criticized as illogical, because two elements of contrary nature such as air and glass can never remain together. Likewise, a pure soul cannot remain in an impure body. Hence, it is not possible that a pure soul can exist in an impure body. In Buddhist philosophy it is explained thus—even being composed of five constituents (dhamma), one of which is akarita (impression), it is this akarita which passes at the time of death to a new being appropriate to the karma effects. For attaining the supreme happiness the new being, if a human being, must depend on his own exertions to attain emancipation (moksha). No guru or spiritual preceptor can help his disciple to gain it. All that he can do is to guide him in the right path. This idea is expressed in the Dhammaratna (stotra) and in these words: "The Self is the lord of self, i.e. who else could be the lord? By a fully controlled self, one attains the lordship, which is difficult to obtain."

In his last discourse, the Mahaparinibbana-sutta (II. p. 106) given just before his departure from this mortal world, Buddha said to his disciples,
"Be a shelter to yourself, a refuge, none else can be the refuge." This was followed by his laying emphasis on the practice of "sati-passanā" (self-awareness).

From all that has been said above, it is evident that a Buddhist has to depend on his own exertion to realize the Absolute Reality.

The third of the three headings basic to Buddhism is anicca (impermanence). By anicca is meant that all worldly existences, whether of living beings or objects, are temporary and disappear after a certain period of time. In Buddhist philosophy this period of time has been explained elaborately. A bare idea of it is being attempted here. The time factor has been conceived as an infinite period of time (Maha). The human body and mind undergo change every moment. The change is not ordinarily perceptible, unless a week or a month passes. The finger-nails are growing every moment but they become apparent only after some time. Talc, for instance, a seed. It does not grow on a stone. It has to be placed in suitable soil where the conditions are made appropriate by fertilizing the soil. The seed is called in Pali leva (cause) and the prepared soil pañca pañjara (conditions). The seed dissolves in the soil, changes every moment, becomes a protrout and then sprouts. By further nourishment it becomes a tree and ultimately produces fruit. This fruit again gives rise to another tree. It is on this analogy that Buddhist philosophy explains the rebirth of the being. As a matter of fact, there is no death or rebirth. It is a continuous process, having no termination. Between death and rebirth there is theoretically no gap; it only appears to common man as a drastic change. By following the atta-sangata, upāsanā and various other meditational processes a monk or a man can put an end to the continuity of existences by attaining Nibbāna, the Abhava. This is the teaching of Lord Buddha.

From what has been stated above, it will be clear that Buddhism was and is both a cultural and a religious movement. As a cultural movement it may also be pointed out that it had a missionary spirit. It had no scruples against propagating the religion among foreigners and indeed among all people irrespective of caste or creed. It is because of this spirit that Buddhism could spread over Eastern and Central Asia. Another remarkable feature of this cultural movement was to allow the Buddhist scriptures to be translated into any language. Buddha had the foresight to give the dictum: "sakata anuvattā Buddhavasātāvāsā" and so today there are Buddhist scriptures in Sinhalese, Burmese, Thai, Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese, Japanese and, recently, English. A few texts have been found in defunct languages like Khotanese, Uigur etc.

THE PRESENT PROBLEM

The present craze for science and technology is to utilize atomic energy. So long as study and research about this energy was confined to scientists, it was fully appreciated by the people, but unfortunately it has passed into the hands of the technicians who have conceived it as an unthinkably means of destruction and devastation of the human race. It is now being controlled by the politicians, who are interested only in enlarging their empires and enjoying all the material benefits at the cost of others. Even today one shudders at the thought of the havoc created at Hiroshima by the atom bomb, and the whole world can now be converted into a Hiroshima.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION

Now we have to consider what extent religion could be helpful in solving this problem. In this connection it has to be noted that many or religions have two aspects: the formal aspect and the essential aspect, the historical aspect and the spiritual aspect. The formal or historical aspect is represented by the organized form of religion which is also the popular form. The popular form of religion is based on local traditions, customs, rites and rituals. This form of religion has reference to the social, economic and even geographical conditions under which it came into existence. So this form of religion may change from time to time and place to place. Certain practices that are quite useful under one set of circumstances may become obsolete under another set of circumstances. What is in keeping with one situation may become an anachronism in another situation. So under new circumstances, in new situations, old forms may give place to new forms.

What is true of other human institutions is also true of the institutional form of religion. Here it has to be borne in mind that it is the institutional form of religion that gives rise to differences among various religious groups and communities. Much innocent blood has been shed in the name of this form of religion. Even wars have been fought. So it is not desirable that we dispense with this form of religion. It is neither desirable nor possible to do so. We
A Rethinking of Christianity

by

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I. MAN IN THE MODERN WORLD

The first half of the Twentieth Century witnessed two world wars as well as great progress in science and technology. What seemed to promise a universal brotherhood of peace and prosperity turned out to be a tool for war and destruction. In spite of the formation of the United Nations the world is still split and at war against itself. Our civilization is finding itself caught in a great contradiction between plausible unity and actual disunity, between the possibility of better understanding and the deepening of misunderstanding, among people, among social groups, and among the nations.

The whole world is thus facing a serious crisis. However, we also realize that our society itself is today in a process of disintegration, from which process the individual person cannot escape. Man is indeed falling to pieces, he is losing himself; he cannot find his own identity, personality, subjectivity, and even "existence." The problem of the world is in the last analysis the problem of man. And man asking now the most basic of all questions: "What is man?"

This present day problem of man cannot be understood apart from the impact of Western civilization upon the rest of the world. And the main factors that make up Western civilization may historically be traced back to Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian sources. Elements of Greek culture and Hebrew religion have been combined in various and intricate ways and even the formation of Christianity owed much to ideas of Greek and Latin origin, though it claimed to be the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. It is, therefore, impossible for us to ignore Christianity as we take up the problem of man in the contemporary world. We have to ask: How much and in what way have the influences of Christianity contributed to the inte-
gratation and/or disintegration of modern man and his society? Then and thus does Christianity become our common problem. It is not something that should be taken for granted, dogmatically or traditionally, but it is something that needs to be re-examined both in reference to the past and with a view to the future of mankind. No fair-minded Christian is able to escape the urgency of the task. To be sure, there has been no lack of self-criticism, radical or moderate, on the part of Western Christianity through the centuries. But Christianity is in our day finding itself in a new situation. It is being faced with challenges coming from the very civilization it has helped to develop. It is finding it necessary to deal more squarely than ever with the non-Christian religions and cultural traditions of the world.

It is, however, not the Christian religion alone that is being challenged by the contemporary civilization of science and technology. All religions and values are made objects of either doubt or attack wherever scientism and materialism penetrate. Christianity can no longer stand alone. Its problems cannot be avoided without reference to the problems faced by many other religions. A new attitude and a new approach should be found by Christians if their religion is ever, not only to maintain itself, but to bring some positive contributions to the growth and maturity of mankind. For in the present age the religions of the world are inevitably brought into a relation of mutual dialogue in an unprecedented way.

II. The Problems of Christianity

Since the Eighteenth Century attempts have been made to seek Christian unity in the face of the rival claims for the ultimate truth made by various churches and sects. The theological discussion on the "essence" or "genius" of Christianity was continued until the twentieth, and then a more realistic approach was proposed, which took the form of the ecumenical movement. The World Council of Churches was thus formed, and its first assembly was held in Amsterdam in 1948. On the Roman side, Pope John XXIII called the great ecumenical council (Vatican II) in 1962, which was continued by his successor Paul VI until the fall of 1965. Between the churches and denominations, especially between Catholics and non-Catholics, new modes of communication are now being built for the sake of better understanding and cooperation. Both the World Council and the Vatican have also developed programs for re-examining Christianity's relationship to non-Christian religions. This does not mean that all eccenonomic problems are now being settled. It would be true to say that problems are being discovered, and in some cases, rediscovered. Many a venture, along theoretical, practical, and organizational lines, is still needed for the solution of those problems.

The above is a rough description of the recent phenomenon of Christianity. But we have now to ask a more "essential" question, as to whether the problem of unity and diversity and that of cloisteredness and openness may be traced back to the very structure of Christian thought itself. This was the theme once taken up by Ernst Troeltsch in his book Die Aus

...
to find in it the dimension of depth, where distance and openness are in paradoxical unity.

Since the apologetic method is universally applicable and has actually been employed by mystical thinkers of all religions, there may be provided by it a ground for the meeting of thinkers of different religious convictions for the sake of a better mutual understanding. If, for instance, Buddhists and Christians come together for a colloquium on such a basis, the “companions” of the Buddha and the “love” of Christ will be found to be very near and akin to each other. The “particularisms” of Christianity is not thereby lost but is so purified that the particular and the universal work together in a dynamic sort of dialectic.

III. MATURITY OF RELIGION

Self-reflection and self-criticism make a religion humble and open, rather than narrow and arrogant, as long as it is rooted in the experience of the ultimate in a unique way. For the experience has the two aspects of “givenness” and “search.” The ultimate reality reveals itself to man, but man is not able to grasp the full meaning of the revelation. Givenness, if genuine, does not make the believer compliant but rather invites him to search for the truth in which he has already been granted a share. Since divine revelation is always unique to each religion, man’s search for the ultimate truth cannot be made in the same way in all religions. Nevertheless, since the ultimate truth cannot but be one, it is possible for us to say there is common search for truth in all genuine religions. If so, it will also be possible for the members of different religions together to be engaged in study and discussion and even meditation. It should be regarded as a sign of maturity that a religion has developed such an attitude of openness and readiness to learn, not only from its own source, but also from other religions.

And it is only under this attitude of common search for truth that a common endeavor of all religions for the betterment and integration of human society will be possible. In this age of history where the dignity of man is taken for granted and yet so much ignored, and where both man and his society are brought into a rapid process of disintegration and degeneration, all great religions of the world are naturally concerned about the phenomena. But this is a problem that they should all cooperate to tackle, for which only mutual understanding and thinking will give them proper qualifications. What is most needed today is not simply cooperation on the secular, cultural, and scientific level, but cooperation with a deeper religious foundation. Nothing short of it will be equal to the problem of man, because it is basically a religious problem.

There are in this world prejudices, hatreds, inequalities, rivalries, violence and wars. At their roots they are all religious problems; religions therefore
cannot be indifferent to them. Undoubtedly more common action is needed for their solution, but actions which do not come from deep meditation and prayer cannot be truly effective in the spiritual transformation of man for the maturity of his humanity. What is needed most is not self-sufficient contemplation but hard thinking and reflection coupled with prayer and meditation, always in faith, hope and love.

"Are the religious relevant?" is a question often asked by religious people themselves. They should rather ask themselves whether they are honestly and earnestly trying to make their religions relevant. And the beginning of this effort will only be made by a self-examination of and self-reflection on the history and content of their own religions. History reveals to their embarrassment what share the religions have had in the fostering of prejudices and hostilities. This should make man humble and penitent, but not frustrated. As long as the eternal source of light is still shining above the clouds, he need not despair of the darkness below in which he finds himself. Instead of blaming and accusing each other, the religious of the world should seek to turn people's eyes to that Light Transcendent. Again speaking on behalf of Christianity, the best positive contribution it can bring to the renewal of mankind will be to be a witness to that love revealed by Jesus Christ in its purity, in which the most universal works in and through the most particular.

**A Baha'i Viewpoint**

by

Dr. H. M. Munji

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India, Kanpur

What a happy coincidence that this unique Conference is being held this year when we, the Baha'ís all over the world, are celebrating the Centenary Year of the Proclamation of Baha'u'llah, the Divine Founder of the Baha'i World Faith. It was in 1863 that Baha'u'llah (literally: The Glory of God) sent out His holy invitations to all the rulers and religion heads of the world asking them to unite, in the name of God and for the sake of humanity, and thus lay the foundation for understanding the universal harmony of the entire human race. He said:

"O people! consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship."

The Universe is wrapped in an ecstacy of joy and gladness. The scriptures of past dispensations celebrate the great timber that must needs grow this most great day of God. What is it with him that hath lived to see this day and hath recognized it. ... Select your chance, turn it as a fleeting moment in this day exhilarating centuries of a bygone age. ... Neither sun nor moon hath witnessed a day such as this.

It is heartening to note that this Conference of ours is in keeping with the spirit of the Baha'i Faith in this age.

The most important and emergent question of the world today is a planetary solution for the whole of mankind, for a living peace and justice in action.

The failure of highly vaunted schemes, spiritual despair and heartless intrigue are everywhere evident. What if the disease mankind is suffering from? What are its causes? Can we do something about it?

The importance of oneness, the increase of godless movements and the weakening of the pillars of religion has brought about an unprecedented crisis, unprecedented because it is a world crisis, demanding a universal solution on all levels and in all walks of human life.

Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'I Faith, wrote: "The world is in truth moving on towards its destiny. The interdependence of the people..."
and nations of the earth, wherever the leaders of the divine forces of the world may say or do, is already an accomplished fact. Immunity in the economic sphere is now understood and recognized. The welfare of the part means the welfare of the whole, and distress of the part means distress to the whole. The revelation of Bahá'u'lláh has, in His own words, "sent a fresh impulse and set a new direction" to this vast process now operating in the world. The fires lit by this great ordeal are the consequences of man's failure to recognize them. They are, moreover, hastening its consummation. Adversity prolongs, worldwide, afflictions, allied to chaos and universal destruction, must needs conspire to raise the nation; stir the conscience of the world, distill the masses; precipitate a radical change in the very conception of society and coalesce ultimately the disjointed, bleeding limbs of mankind into one body, single, originally united and indivisible.

Indeed, the lessons of two worlds have not sufficed to bring mankind to its senses. We are numbed with fear and do not wish to dwell on the awesome reality of atomic warfare. Philosophers, economic systems and politicians have led us nowhere. It is crucial for mankind to find out whether religion has the answer. Hence, the question of its relevance to modern society: the economic plight of the world and the injustices we see everywhere. How powerful is religion to revolve the failings of man and the world?

**A World in Travail**

"The world is in travel and its agitation waxeth day by day," said Bahá'u'lláh, "the face is turned toward war and every man must stand." Each shall be in its plight to disclose it how could one be judged and how. Its pernicious will long continue. And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limits of mankind to quake. Then and only then will the Divine Standard be unfurled and the Nightingale will while its melody.

"How long will all humanity persist in its ways of woe? How long will the insolence of the rich increase? How long will the poor go hungry? How long will the wind of despair rise, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divides and afflicts the human race is daily increasing? The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, Instruct in the prevailing order appears to be immediately inevitable.

"The vitality of man's belief in God," Bahá'u'lláh has testified, "is dying out in every land; nothing short of His wholesome medicine can ever restore it. The corruption of ungodliness is eating into the vital of human society; what else but the elixir of His patent revelation can cleanse and restrain it?"
all the kings, emperors and rulers of the whole world, summoning them
one and all, to the Divine Banquet of world peace through living world
unity in all its inter-dependent walks of humanity in its entirety. Among
these are (i) Spiritual Unity, as a foundation, (ii) Social Unity, as the Ground
Floor, (iii) Economic Unity, as the 1st Floor, and (iv) Unity on the Govern-
mental level as the Dome of the Super structure of an Enduring Planet-
Wide Most Great Peace.

This being a Spiritual Summit Conference, I shall say a few words about
the spiritual solution offered by the Baha'i faith for world unity and peace
through Divine love.

All prides, prejudices and chauvinisms must be forgotten once and for all,
for Baha'u'llah says: "The Tabernacle of Unity hath been raised. Regard ye
not one another as strangers. ... The whole world is but one country and
mankind its citizens. ... One people of the World; Of one tree are ye all the
fruits and of a single branch the leaves."

All religions arc fundamentally one. It is only the outward and non-
essential aspect of religion which is changed by the Divine Will in accord-
ance with the evolving necessities of human beings living in every age.
Religion must be the cause of the unity of the entire human race, or else
it is not worth the name. It is not religion which separates man from man
and divides humanity. It is our misunderstanding based on misinterpreta-
tions of the divine scriptures that has played havoc. Hence, it is obvious that
we should come to a universal understanding and nothing less. Herein lies
the realization of our true aims and objects.

We should first come together, understand each other on a global scale
and try to adjust with one another and co-ordinate all our affairs. Then
and then alone we will be guided by the Divine Plan to merge into the
mighty ocean of the love of God and His infinite mercy and be as one soul
and one body living with the breath of God and functioning in complete
harmony to His pleasure.

Religion must be in full harmony with human reason and science, or
else it is mere superstition. On the other hand, science must be controlled
universally by God-fearing men for the benefit of the whole of the human
race and its richest services should be utilized in the establishment of
paradise on earth.

Of course, the golden age when men will truly be able to live as brothers
in the same family is still far away. We have only to look about us to see
how tragically true this is. Indeed, we often ean the forces of destruction
by uncontrolled powers of science and politics. We see young people in every
country asking the question, "What should we do to prevent a universal
suicide which we are going to commit?" In conclusion let me once again
quote Baha'u'llah who spoke in unequivocal terms about the harmony
between all religions of the world and the working together of all the peo-
ple on this planet.

That the diverse communions of the earth, and the manifold systems of religious
belief, should never be allowed to foster the feelings of animosity among man, as, in
this day, the essence of the faith of God and His religion. These principles and laws,
these firmly established and mighty systems, have proceeded from one source (God),
and are the rays of one light (Divine). That they differ one from another is to be attri-
uited to the varying requirement of the age in which they were promulgated.

And last but not least, Baha'u'llah says: "O people! Consort with the follow-
ers of all religions in a spirit of fragrance and fellowship."

OBLIGATION OF RELIGION

The Obligation of Religion in our Era

by

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"The Relevance of the World's Religions to the Present-day World" is the theme of the Spiritual Summit Conference here as Calcutta, India, under the auspices of the Temple of Understanding, Inc. This conference proposes to study and discuss how the world's religions can cope with the various problems of the present-day world; for instance, those of poverty in the midst of plenty, food, population, racial and other discrimination, causes of war, human alienation, etc.

At this conference, the study and discussion ought not to end in fruitless idealistic talking. The reason is that religion does not mean idealistic thought or idealistic philosophy, but real practice in daily life for the sake of "religion and being relieved"; that is the actual devout action itself.

This conference, therefore, should not be satisfied with writing out, through mutual talks among the conferences, a mere idealistic answer to the above-mentioned problems. It should not be confined to mere preaching on everybody's spiritual attitude to cope with the situations mentioned above. As for me, I think we should debate and clarify the part the world's religions should and can play in pointing out the crimes of these problems, in eliminating these causes and eventually in solving the problems. Of course, I will not confound educational work with political activity. This conference should not be a so-called religious education which speaks only ideologically of the foundation of world peace, if it aims to build the foundation of world peace through mutual understanding and cooperation of the world's religions. The conference should be not only a good teaching who has a strong will to achieve world peace, but also should be a powerful man of action who aims to build the foundation of world peace, because only a powerful man of action can be a good educator and a good leader. The powerful man of action, who aims to establish the foundation of world peace, can only foster in everybody's mind a free spiritual

1 Provisional translation.
following tendencies observed in religious circles as a whole, are the main ones:

1) Religionists for the most part are concerned only with the relief of individual souls, not with worldly and material problems in daily life. They are apt to take it for granted that when they must be concerned with worldly and material problems, their aim should be to relieve the daily lives of individual persons, and that the great social problems should be left in the hands of politicians.

2) Each religious sect or denomination considers its own doctrines to be absolute and is apt to dismiss the doctrines of any other sect or denomination. Furthermore, it is apt to be too proud to think of mutual understanding and cooperation among the world's religions.

The history of humankind is changing rapidly. The above-mentioned problems are all caused by the rapid change of historical society. It will be impossible for politics and scientific or technical progress alone to solve them. If each religious sect or denomination does not realize this fact and try to play an active role in their solution, they will remain permanently unsolvable. This is why “The Relevance of the World’s Religions to the Present-day World” is so important a theme.

If my way of thinking is correct, the religions of the present-day world must continue to be concerned with relieving the daily life of each individual, because only by repeatedly performing this can the relief of the individual soul be accomplished. The relief of each individual, in the actual phases of his daily life, has a great deal to do with the various social problems with which we are confronted, because the solution of the latter alone can perform the former. Only if we find the solution of the social problems, can the problems of the daily life of each individual be solved. Thus, man can barely be saved. We must not lose sight of this.

It is needless to say that the solution of all great social problems is beyond the abilities of any single religious sect or denomination. Such a great task can be performed only by mutual understanding, cooperation, and mutual participation of all the religious sects and denominations of the world.

Therefore, it is not too much to say that this conference is a very timely attempt because of its intention to clarify the relevance of the world’s religions to the present-day world through mutual understanding among them.

At this conference the first thing we must do will be to humble ourselves and consider why all the traditional religions have been powerless to solve the problems before us. Secondly, we must seriously consider casting off the superficial skin of the present religious institutions, so we work together, for by cooperating on these significant tasks we shall contribute much to improving mutual understanding and cooperation among the religions of the world. Examining ourselves humbly and wishing to cast off our skins is an indispensable basis for this.

Mutual understanding and cooperation are not mere ends to an end with man. They are inherent in man. Why? In the doctrine of Konko-kyo, the relationship between God’s existence and man’s existence can be expressed as follows: Kami (God) exists within man and man exists within Kami.

Here, we must be careful not to misinterpret. “Kami exists within man,” means that the existence of man is required to that of God, and the former is the basis or the ground of the latter. God reveals Himself in the midst of the actual life of man through man’s prayer to God.

The function of God is to save man in response to his prayers. Such a function of God is not his only function. It is realized only through the existence of man who prays to God for mercy. The passage through which God, the Absolute, makes His appearance in man’s prayer to God. This is what ‘Kami exists within man’ means.

On the contrary, “Man exists within Kami” means that God’s existence is the basis or the ground of man’s existence. Man can exist because he is supported, brought up and helped by God. Moreover, man’s existence is based on that of his fellow creatures. With the human beings, “we exist within God” is no less true than “we exist within our fellow creatures.” The existence-relation in this sense, between God and man and between man and his fellow creatures is founded. Through such twofold relationships man is helped, becomes prosperous and happy, and at the same time God’s earnest desire is fulfilled. It is especially to be noted that such relationships do not deny God’s absoluteness in the least. On the contrary they make it clearer.

Mutual understanding and cooperation in international relationships and interreligious relationships are as important and indispensable as those in relationships among human beings. For the realization of world peace and human happiness all the nations of the world must cooperate with one another beyond so-called nationalistic egoism. The same is the case with the various religions of the world. They must not confine themselves to their own shells, but try to understand one another better and cooperate with one another for a common purpose; for realizing world peace and human happiness. This is what religion should be. Only thus will the nations prosper and the various religions be able to fulfill God’s great desire for establishing world peace and saving human beings. All religions must have a devout and broad-minded heart to embrace the world and all human beings, including those of other religions.

The Temple of Understanding is destined to establish a world body of religions by repeatedly holding such Spiritual Summit Conferences as the present one, by promoting mutual understanding among the
world’s religions to enlighten the people of the world and by building up the foundation of world peace. I strongly feel that the establishment of such a world body of religions is an attempt, which deserves admiration. I will do my best to cooperate in any attempt of the same nature and it is earnestly hoped that the authorities of The Temple of Understanding will make an unstring effort towards this goal.
The Founding of the Congress of Religious, Ceylon

by

AL HAJ S. M. A. RASCHID
Patron, The Congress of Religions, Colombo, Ceylon

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent. Ten million thoughts pass through my mind. Ten million thoughts which pass through the minds of a few people dedicated to bringing about unity, peace, and goodwill in the name of religion. The message I give you is the way in which we established the Congress of Religions in Ceylon, a small country, a country which represents the heart beat of the world, because if you look at any common power you will see that Ceylon is at the center of the globe. As such it acted as a heart of religion.

We were just three, one who was dreamed of with communication, before I am confident about the approach of religion towards solving man's problems. The other was a Theosophist, a man who was accused of making a synthesis of all religions. The third man, very ironically, was a man who was equally outspoken. His outspokenness brought about the accusation that he was a communist, a man who was an atheist, a man who tried to promote religion but was himself an atheist.

These three different people put their heads together to give sound effect to the thought, to the feelings that have come throughout the ages of man in the name of religion.

In this very country where we are assembled, in 335 B.C., Aesop said, "No man reverences his own religion unless he reverences other religions also." Then we have a man, Mohammed, who said, in the 7th Century, A.D., in Sura II, verse 146, "There shall be no compulsion in religion." In the 20th Century, we have St. Francis of Assisi who said, "Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love;" That was in the past. Just a few years ago, a man, a common man like you and me, was the first martyr, not for religious tolerance, but for religious equality. That was none other than Mahatma Gandhi. It is in the frame of things, I think, it is the divine will, that we are assembled here, in the country of the first man to lay down his life, not for religious tolerance but for religious equality.

1 Delivered contemporaneously at the Baha'is Assembly, October 21, 1951.
These were the spirits which moved us in Ceylon. Our task was not a very easy one. You may say, "Oh, Ceylon has its people, it is a very small country, therefore it was easy for the Congress of Religions to be established, and it was possible for them to function, for the whole world to talk about. But we can't do that in any other part of the world, with any other nation." Our problems were much greater than the problems that confront other nations. Just two years before we established the Congress of Religions, there was, not in the name of religion but in the name of languages, mass murder, hostaging, arson, and other crimes. All this in a country which for over 3,000 years cherished and loved religious and social tolerance. We were doomed. We were terrified. It was a result of this event that we thought that the time had come for us to establish the Congrès of Religions where we could not merely see the nation from evil because religion throughout centuries has saved mankind. But in the process of saving mankind from evil it has saved mankind from realizing the good things on earth; a decent living, homes, something to eat, and something to sleep on. There is no doubt that it saved the nations from war, but it also saved them from realizing the good things on earth. Therefore we substituted the word above the nation.

We thought, at the Congress of Religions level in Ceylon, that we would serve the people. How did we achieve this in a very small way. We started off by agreeing in advance that there should be tolerance, that there should be equality, that we should bring all the religious leaders, both the laity and the clergy, together and whenever there was anything to be done, that it was done using religion as a base. The only form of communication that we have today is on a religious basis. Any other form of communication would be on a negative basis. If we tried to approach our problems from a political, ideological, or social communication could we have so many people against us? But if we were to use the spiritual channel of communication, nobody could object to us. It was in that context that we used the spiritual channel of communication in establishing the Congress of Religions.

We are not a mere organization, doing nothing tangible. On the very eve of my departure from Ceylon we presented to the national government a demand, in the name of the Congress, for a just wage as a measure of social justice. We also demanded from the government minimum standards of housing and sanitation. We also demanded from the government, not in my words, we were demanding from the government, that religious education, both primary and secondary, should be readily available. The Prime Minister of Ceylon has accepted these demands and we are sure they will be implemented in the near future, if not by this Prime Minister, by the future Prime Minister.

So, we are functioning in a very tangible way. It is in that context that you each one of you, have to function. Go back to the place you came from.

A may be a lane, it may be a street, it may be a village, it may be a city, it may be a state. Irrespective of what it is, go back with this noble message of establishing small Temples of Understanding. You may think the problems are very great. They are not. If each one of you thinks it is a worthy cause, there will be hundreds and hundreds of small Temples of Understanding, which in the near future could be federated under the aegis of the Temple of Understanding in Washington, D.C. Go back and establish it.

I can give you an example of how it can be done. As I said, there were three people who thought of the Congress of Religions. They were not readily accessible to the masses because one was supposed to be a communist, the other a Theosophist, and one was about to be excommunicated from the church. One of us became President of the a 50-year non-existent Congress of Religions. The three of us became officers; we had no members.

It was then that we thought of a membership for an organization, you can do that. Be the five-sixths of the movement; in whatever name, in whatever way it is done. Go back. It is not a formidable task. Each one of you go back, establish a small Temple (a temple can explode today and wipe out the world) Temple of Understanding which can create and recreate the world. Go back to your country. I would appeal to the Temple of Understanding that the religious leaders who are represented at this Conference be brought into the general working body of the Temple of Understanding. Eventually when these small Temples of Understanding are established, the Temple of Understanding in Washington can take the initiative in formulating a world federation of religion or a united religious organization.
The Congress of Religions: Ceylon; A Report
by
OLIVER L. ABYE KARA
General Secretary, Congress of Religions, Colombo, Ceylon

Editor's note: The Congress of Religions in Ceylon serves as an example of what can be done within a single country, where the religions in the past have had little communication. As the report indicates, the Congress of Religions has fostered both the potential and the complexities of genuine inter-religious communication (among Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity) in a realistic and productive spirit.

This report was presented in absentia.

The Congress of Religions was formed about five years ago for the purpose of fostering harmony, understanding and tolerance among adherents of the World Religions in Ceylon, thereby opening up a way for the creation of an integrated society serving the Nation through religious harmony.

In a message to the Congress, on the occasion of its inaugural Convention, the Governor-General of Ceylon, Mr. William Gopallawa said:

This effort is a most laudable one and the time for making it most opportune. The rapid changes taking place today as a result of progress in science and technology have made it necessary for men to wage a continuous battle in order to see that spiritual values are not overwhelmed. If man is not to become a victim of his own creation, it is necessary that the ethos of worldly achievements should not lead to the discarding of spiritual truths. It is therefore to religion that we must turn if the proper progress and development of mankind are to be insured. All religions are equally useful for this purpose, and all religions must therefore unite to see that spiritual values are preserved. It is with this firm conviction that I sincerely wish all sincere to the Movement that is being inaugurated today for the achievement of religious harmony in this Island of ours, which is so dear to all of us alike, whatever religion we may profess.

The Aims and Objectives of the Congress of Religions, as embodied in its Constitution, are four in number. They are:

1. To establish and maintain an Inter-Religions Council composed of religious leaders of the community to resolve acrimony and allay suspicion among religious denominations.
2. To sponsor action that promotes mutual understanding between religious denominations.
3. THE CULTURAL UNIT

In order to further the second and third objects of the Congress, Cultural Units were formed with the responsibility of promoting understanding and religious unity through cultural relationships between religious denominations.

In order to promote understanding, the Cultural Unit organized public meetings and film shows aimed at developing an appreciation of the fact that every world religion has valuable cultural expression and a worthy moral heritage.

At such meetings, while each speaker representing a particular religion speaks on the subject from the point of view of his own religion, no comments are made on what has been expressed by previous speakers representing other religions, nor are there any comments from the audience, the members of which are expected to arrive at their own conclusions.

Among the themes that have already been presented at such meetings are:

1. "The Family and its Social Significance."
2. "Parental Responsibility."

Apart from such public presentations, the Cultural Unit of the Congress of Religions organizes discussion groups among the members of the Congress in order to encourage dialogue between religious denominations. Here the members present participative activity in the expression of ideas with a view to determining areas of agreement, and also accepting areas of disagreement. As dialogue of this kind requires a consciousness of brotherhood and the excluding of prejudice, such discussions are not open to the public. The dialogue is the common search for the good which religion now possesses separately and is not a compromise on the fundamentals which each one accepts.

We of the Congress of Religions consider all religions to be fragrant flowers in a spiritual garden, and each member has the right to choose the flower which he considers the best.

In order to promote religious unity, the Cultural Unit celebrates the festivals of the World Religions, in public, in a non-religious way.

The Congress does not involve its members in the rituals of any religion. In order to honor such occasions, a lecture by a distinguished exponent of that religion is presented. The topics of the lectures that have been given on these occasions thus far include:

1. "The Social and Political Philosophy of Buddhism and the Task of the Buddhist."
4. "Some Unique Features of Al-Kuran."

A further expression of this same idea of unity, which the Congress sponsors, is participation in the celebrations of special events in the life of religious institutions or religious leaders and also participating, as a mark of respect, in the funeral observances of religious leaders.

3. SOCIAL ACTION UNIT

We have in Ceylon today two distinct types of social service. Firstly, there are the Denominational Social Services, which are based on spiritual values and reach a high standard of expression. However, the weakness in this type is that, in a multi-religious community, such social services do not galvanize the community or neighborhood as a whole.

Secondly, there is the State-sponsored social service, which, though enlisting the cooperation of the community as a whole, lacks the quality that comes from spiritual expression.

The Congress of Religions, while accepting the value of both these types of social service, advocates a third type of service which is of an inter-religious character, based on the potential spiritual virtues common to all religions. This type of social service is, in our opinion, able to galvanize the community as a whole.

At the Annual Convention of the Congress, held in October, 1941, certain proposals relating to family life, adolescence, and adult society were discussed under the theme "The Conservation of the Moral Values of the Nation." A joint declaration embodying these proposals and accepted by the Council of the Congress was signed by leaders of religious denominations and community organizations in the country.

We are now working out a program to bring these proposals direct to the community, in towns, villages and neighborhoods.

In order to convey to you an idea of the type of proposals adopted, I quote below two representative examples:

1. Proposal No. 1 — the Home:
   "The home must be considered a basic human need as it is vitally necessary for the stability of the family, the fundamental unit of society. The home creates the environment which the family discharges its moral and spiritual functions as a basic unit of society. The morality of the home is stabilized by adequate housing and a just wage."
   "Proposed No. 2 — Social Responsibility:
   "We suggest that Social Responsibility Units on an inter-denominational basis be established to focus attention on current problems affecting community life, such as the democratization of corrupt practices and lags in administration, which particularly affect the less privileged members of the community. Such Social Responsibility Units can function on a national basis, giving a social direction to spiritual endeavor."
I. The Administration Unit

The Administration Unit of the Congress of Religions performs two functions. While it carries out the administration of the Congress affairs through its officers, it also attends, at the same time, to the development and the extension of the movement.

Authority for the general administration and the management of the affairs of the Congress is vested in the General Council which is the governing body of the Congress. It is composed of members of the parent body, representatives of the branches of the Congress and Representatives of organizations affiliated to the Congress.

The Executive Committee which performs the administrative functions, is responsible for the management and the administration of the affairs of the Congress, subject to the overriding decision of the General Council.

Conclusion

Taking into consideration the fact that a detailed report of all the activities of the Congress of Religions and its branch organizations would make a very bulky document, I would like to confine myself to the outlines that have been enumerated above and conclude by saying that since its inception, a few years ago, the membership of the Congress continues to grow rapidly, year after year, persuading us that this world idea which we represent and which is right for our times is also ripe for our times.

Further information about our activities can be readily obtained by writing to the General Secretary, Congress of Religions, 71, Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 7, Ceylon.

Introduction to the Manner of Communications Between the World's Religions

by

The Reverend John C. Haughton
Associate Editor, America, New York

I would like to begin my remarks by putting them in the context of the beautiful words of Dr. Horizon Stowe last night. As you recall, he divided the ages of man into three; the primitive, the axial, and the modern. I would like to submit some additional prolongations to those remarkable ideas. I think, first of all, that we could perhaps divide the ages of man into a fourth age, as yet unnamed, depending on how the religions of man react to the new phenomena that are about us. I think, secondly, that what is a constant in all four ages and moves one age into the other is a difference in communication. As Dr. Stowe remarked, we moved from the primitive groups, in which man was only in contact with what is called a primary group, into a new age when man was in contact with a further grouping which we might call a secondary grouping. The changes upon the religions themselves were crucial and cataclysmic, as the religion of man moved from an eternal focus to a more ethical one. I would submit that the ages of man moved from the axial into the modern, perhaps at a stage a little bit earlier than the age of enlightenment, and that the reason why the human course of events moved from the axial to the modern was largely due to the invention of the printing press in the sixteenth century. Once we had the printing press we had a new means of communication and man could therefore be in touch with a new world of ideas. Prior to that he was only in touch in a face-to-face way with ideas. I think we are moving into a fourth age. I think the fourth age, like the first three ages, is going to crucially and deeply affect the religious history of man.

What I would like to talk about this morning is the shape and meaning of this fourth age, not in any theoretical way but in a very practical way. I think that the barometers of this new age were the invention of the telegraph in 1844 and the telephone in 1876. These two simple scientific devices made it possible for man to transcend his geographical confinement and be in communication with men that he did not see. Even more important, and more immediate in the twentieth century, the development of the
What I mean by an inter-confessional world is a world which makes use of the mass-media to be in communication, religiously, with one tradition over against another tradition, where the religions will be in dialogue with one another by means of the mass-media, overcoming their ignorance of each of the other religious traditions in the world. They will be escaping from the cold war of ignoring one another which has been our history up to this time, conditioned as each is of a geographical enclosure which has now been made needless as a result of the communications satellite. The world therefore will be named according to our reaction and our response to these new phenomena. It could also be called a trans-confessional world, in which the religion of man will be the object of commentary by the scientists of the satellite communications system. Man's belief will be observed, noted, talked about.

Or, the much more likely and frightening situation is that the new means of communications will make our world post-confessional, because of the fear of communications experts to touch on the sensitive point of the religious beliefs of man. Rather than touch on this sensitive point, the communications technicians can very easily ignore the religion of man, remain silent about them. The result will be a new secularization of life, promoted by these very mass-media in which no form of transcendence will be acknowledged, by the very means whereby man learns about the meaning of man.

It therefore remains for us to grow somewhat about the phenomena within reach of all of us. It is up to us whether or not this world will be trans-, or post-, or inter-confessional.

I think that there are three imperatives laid before us. One is theological, one is procedural, and one is practical. The theological imperative which is laid before us this time, we have to catholisize or universalize the religious traditions in which each find ourselves. What I mean by catholisity is the generalization of the religious tradition from the limitations which surround it. Those limitations are historical, national, cultural and conceptual. The process of catholisity or catholization of religious elements brings our particularity and particularism into a wholeness or a universal possibility of communication. Each of the religions must take seriously the imperative to universalize in particular tradition, by changing the conceptual framework within which it has grown into that tradition.

For example, in the Judeo-Christian tradition the imperative, which has been fairly successfully met, is to take the revelation of a universal human experience and remove it from the mythic context in which it is communicated to us. I am thinking in this particular case of the Adam and Eve story. When you strip away the mythic elements from the meaning behind these elements you have universalized a human experience, and added the revelation to that experience so that it can be communicated to a universe. Or take the process of catholizing worship, which moves away from magic,
from the phenomenal, partly from the external, ritual, to a more interior and yet socially meaningful event. I think that if a religion does not respond to the imperative of catholicity it will gradually find itself becoming an object of curiosity and eventually a museum piece, a stage along the long road of man's history which becomes more and more curious to man. The imperative for each of our religions is catholicity.

The second imperative, which I call procedural, has been called in the West ecumenicity. Each of the religious places itself is dialogic relationship to the other religions, each religious element is examined, refined and deepened. The ecumenical process makes the resources of each religion capable of being appropriated by the rest of the religious traditions of man.

The third imperative which weighs heavily upon us, and upon this very privileged group brought together by the Temple of Understanding, is the need for a catalytic agency through whose instrumentality the first steps of inter-religious communication on a worldwide scale might take place. This agency, obviously, would see itself as servant of the communications function and would not, therefore, exist for its own sake. It would react flexibly to the new communications possibilities which we find facing us not, rather than woodfully, its executive membership would be made up of those who were representative of the world's religions.

I would like to take some immediate, practical steps which can be taken by each of you in this room but can be engineered in a more effective way by the catalytic agency, the Temple of Understanding. Each of these steps takes seriously the imperative of interreligious communication and go on propelled by that imperative, to different population layers of the universe.

One of the first steps which would be taken, by this catalytic Temple of Understanding would be to approach the academic community which, as you know, is a worldwide phenomenon. In approaching the academic community it would promote the idea of a world university. The idea of a world university does not mean building or creating any new university. It means that each of the departments, the relevant departments of sociology and anthropology, history, theology and philosophy would be compered in the faculties and the resources of six, seven, or eight other universities from other parts of the world where peculiar competence is in some other religious tradition. Consequently, the University of Baghdad, compered with Harvard University's sociology, anthropology, history, would take an active part in the academic; the University of Calcutta, the University of Moscow, one of the universities in Taiwan, one of the universities in Brazil; and you get the idea of an inter-religious communication at the academic level where graduate students and faculty would be interchanged, and we would be gradually overcoming the ignorance which we have of the other beautiful religious traditions of man, through the competence of the academic community.

A second step, given these new communications phenomena, would be for the Temple of Understanding to send an exploratory committee to UNESCO to investigate the plausibility of a council of the religious under the auspices of UNESCO. It would seem that UNESCO would be an appropriate agency for such a world council of the religions, since it represents a world force, but does not itself represent any one of the religions. Such an association would seem not only a good thing but a necessary thing, since at the root of most political disorganization is the religious ignorance that we have of one another.

A third step which each of us here can do something about, and the Temple of Understanding can do something very effective about, would be to convince the many private corporations and foundations of the crucial need for endorsing a center where the various religious leaders of the world can live in for two periods of time so that they may come to an appreciation of, a sympathy for, and a knowledge about, the other religious traditions. It is the religious leadership's ignorance of the other religious traditions that makes this cold war go on and on and on: and it must be terminated soon, for the interests of all religious men. I believe it is clear this such of us here, and the Temple of Understanding in particular, can provoke the centers of spirituality and mysticism in the universe to enter the initiative in assuming the condition necessary for the religions to engage in dialogue. I suggest that it would be a good thing if each of these centers of spirituality and mysticism were to open itself formally to men of other religious traditions, to go and live in those centers. Nothing would do more for inter-religious dialogue than an ecumenical approach to mysticism. All have so much to lose by staying apart, so much to win by coming together, that it would be a tragedy if spirituality continued to be enemies of the day.

The next step involves the many international youth organizations that exist across the globe. Each of us, and the Temple of Understanding in particular, could promote the idea with these international youth organizations, that they should put themselves of an inter-religious footing, at least for ad hoc conferences, so that the various religious traditions of man might come under the bright examining light of the young mind and thus encounter all of the beautiful things that come from that mind and might be enriched by such an examination. I would suggest that each of us can be representative of the attempts of the young to communicate across the boundaries of varying belief systems.

Finally, it seems to me the highest imperative of all that lies upon the shoulders of all of us it to be in professional contact with the communications media men, to make them see the need to assign a high priority to man's religious convictions. We ought to convince the communications
personnel of the probability of man speaking for himself about his religious beliefs, through the media, rather than being spoken for, or spoken about, or observed.

Another point is what can be done on a national scale about interreligious dialogue. Ceylon has been a beautiful example of what can be done if we concentrate our gaze on a national perspective, and the interreligious harmony or disharmony within a single nation.

In conclusion, it would seem to me that the immediate task of the catalytic agency, which is and can continue to be the Temple of Understanding, is the creation of a pool of the existing materials which are of major importance in the religious traditions of mankind. I am speaking primarily of a repository of the world's scriptures, and the various materials which are authentic, authoritative, and of major importance, and which have been developed over the course of time and perfectly describe the various elements of each of the traditions.

A second imperative upon the Temple of Understanding is not just the creation of such a pool of important religious material but making it an active pool, a distribution center, if you will, whereby material can be sent out across the world, so that the people of one tradition can see and hear the meaning attached by other traditions to the religious beliefs of men.

The most important task of all is for some agency to take seriously the fact that the world will be in touch on a global scale through the satellite system. But to be in touch with the universe means there has to be a context which you can hear and about which you can think. We must begin to develop those materials which can be bounced off the satellites, and which materials will communicate the religious meaning to a universe.

It seems to me that this is the most crucial task for this agency, right now to take seriously the development of communications material which will make religious communication a reality.
The First Spiritual summit Conference
Calcutta, India, October 13-16, 1960

The Spiritual Summit Conference was convened in Calcutta under the auspices of the Temple of Understanding, Inc., Washington, D.C., U.S.A. It brought together thirty-two distinguished spiritual leaders of ten world religions—which among them have 1,600,000,000 adherents—Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Baha'i, Zoroastrianism, and Jainism.

Meeting with the religious leaders were: a panel of distinguished scholars; representatives of youth; and more than forty members of the Board of Directors and Friends of the Temple of Understanding, headed by Mrs. DICKERMAN HAZELTON, President and founder, and Mrs. B. K. BIRLA, of Calcutta, Chairman of the International Committee. There was also a large and sympathetic attendance of believers in understanding who came from every part of India. FREDERICK D. HEBB, Jr., Executive Director of the Temple of Understanding, was general chairman.

The opening session, held in the garden of the Isla Academy of Art and Culture, was attended by more than 200 persons. Principal speakers were Mrs. BIRLA, the honor of the Conference; Mrs. HOBBS; His Excellency Sri DHARMA VIRA, Governor of West Bengal, who extended official greetings. Messages of good will were read from many notables, including Mrs. INDIRA GANDHI, Prime Minister; the President and Vice President of India; "The King and Queen of Sikim" Padre, Cardinal MARZILLI, President of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians, and U TIALANGT, Secretary General of the U.N.

Most of the sessions were held in the spacious auditorium of the Isla Academy. On the morning of Friday, October 15, the entire Conference crossed the Ganges River by steamboat to the Calcutta Botanical Gardens, to join in prayer for peace and the salvation of mankind. Another meaningful event was a reception given by Mr. and Mrs. B. K. BIRLA at their residence, "Vanastal Vihar."

As an evening session, held in the Grand Hotel, featured addresses by Mrs.
The final session under the chairmanship of Dr. Dhamm culmination in the passage of a Declaration calling for concerted efforts to encourage further communication among the world’s religions. It was also resolved to celebrate in 1969 the 200th anniversary of Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism.

OFFICIAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SPIRITUAL SUMMIT CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORLD’S RELIGIONS

CHRISTIANITY:
The Rev. Peter Falleen, S.J., Calcutta, representing the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians; The Rev. Dr. John R. Dyken, Director, The National Presbyterian Center, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Harald E. Stokke, international affairs representative for South Asia, the American Friends Service Committee; Rev. Atanidze Wonechipchen, Director of His Imperial Majesty’s Private Cabinet for Religious Affairs and Administrator of the Ethiopian Orthodox Mission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Thomas Merkert (Brother Louis), Abbey of Gewersheim, Tepping, Kentucky; Bishop A. J. Siew, the Methodist Church in Southern Asia; Mrs. Sanford Kaufman, Church Women United, National Council of Churches of Christ; Shri Barabara Narayana, Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, Purchase, New York; Roland Gorman, New York, University of University Church.

BUDDHISM:
H.S.H. Prince Pooy Dhirali, President, World Fellowship of Buddhists, Thailand; Mr. Ani Sanghevan, Secretary-General, World Fellowship of Buddhists; Dr. Radhakrishnan, representing Lord Arjul Komo Otsamaru, Nagi Hirogami, Kyoto, Japan; Ven. Prejewnanda, Mara Pitera, President, Buddhist Vihara Society, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Hardison Mariko, Nomin Hiroshi, Kyoto, Japan; Ven. Mahasthavir N. Jayaratana, Mahabodhi Society of India, Calcutta, Mrs. Cyma Town considered.

HINDUISM:
Swami Ghosmanandaji, Chittajay, Bombay; Dr. V. Raghavan, University of Madras; Professor Asita Ghose, University of New York; Swami Madhav Gopalanji, Gomati Math, Calcutta; Swami Lorenz, Ramananda Mission, Narendrapur.

ISLAM:
Dr. S.W. Vahiddin, University of Delhi; Dr. Velayat Hayat Khan, Ecolle Internationale de la Médiation, Paris; Al-Haj S.M.A. Rauch, Colombo, Ceylon.

JUDAISM:
Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, Temple Israel, Great Neck, New York; Dr. Erika Schneidman, Hebrew Union College School of Archaeology and Biblical Studies, Jerusalem, Israel.

CONFUCIANISM:
Dr. Wei Tiu, College of Chinese Culture, Taipei, Taiwan.

ZOROASTRIANISM:
D.R. Q. B. Minoochand Homji, Bombay; Hon. B. Dhall, Bombay.

JAINISM:
Mrs. Vatulala Amin, Divine Knowledge Society, Bombay, representing Monshiri Chibbaran.

SHIKHISM:

BAHAI:
K. M. Mann, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of India, Delhi.

SOCIAL SCIENTISTS:
Dr. Hanover Smith, Professor of Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Dr. Stuart Mose, Professor of Microbiology Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania, Vice-President, World Academy of Art and Science; Dr. Ernst Haaken, Emeritus, Professor of Family Study in Psychiatry Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania; The Rev. John C. Haas, S.J., Former Professor of Theology at Georgetown University, Associate Editor, "American"

STUDENTS:
Arthur Sherberg, Teachers College, Columbia University, Assistant Director, International House, New York; Mrs. Barbara Haas, Americana University, Washington, D.C.; Tom Hoagland, National Taiwan University.
Taipei; Miss Susan Hriet, Wheaton College, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

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THE FIRST SPIRITUAL SUMMIT CONFERENCE
Calcutta, India, October 21-26, 1968

A DECLARATION

I. We, members of the world’s religious faiths, with their two-and-a-half billion adherents, assembled in the First Spiritual Summit Conference, under the auspices of The Temple of Understanding, having here demonstrated that inter-religious communication is possible and fruitful, see these facts as significant for the present and for emerging world of tomorrow;

We see that science, technology, political and industrial forces, with all their power, have so far not been able, either alone, or in combined effort, to produce the kind of world that all men desire.

We believe it is time for all peoples and nations, including the leaders of our major secular institutions, to recognize the relevance of the world’s religions to the fate of man in the present century.

It is our judgment that the religions themselves must now actively seek increased communication with one another and together speak to our total human community and assist in creating the conditions for the better world. The prejudices and misunderstandings that have stood between us in the past must give way to a climate of understanding and co-operation.

II. Therefore, we challenge the leaders of the several world faiths to take creative initiatives in forming a strong international, inter-religious world body. We recognize that the development of such an instrument will require the elevated thought, prayer, study, patience, firm vision and conciliation of many dedicated men and women. But this Summit Conference sees such a Council as a necessity in this 20th Century. We are aware of developments of inter-religious communication, as in Ceylon, Japan and other nations. We are convinced that such steps should now be developed on a world-wide scale.

As a move toward this end we instruct The Temple of Understanding to consult with the leaders of the several world religions, looking to the calling of another Summit Conference in 1969 to weigh the desirability of creating such an inter-religious world body. The intention is that authorized representatives of the several world religions shall be present as delegates.

We further recommend that all delegates, leaders and participants to this first Summit Conference send progress reports.

Further, as a more immediate step, it is our mandate that the Temple of Understanding implement the guidelines for inter-religious communication, namely; The Academic Community; The Family of Nations; The Private Corporations and Foundations; The Centres of Spirituality and Monasticism; International Youth Organizations; The Communications Media; and that it create pools of information on the world religions and develop facilities to create newsreels for the mass media.
The Temple of Understanding, Inc.

Founded in 1969 by Mrs. Dickerman Holister of Greenwich, Connecticut, the Temple of Understanding, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to education about the world's religions, and to the proposition that education will bring an understanding of which the religions may build a future of cooperation and mutual respect.

Its programs, of which the Spiritual Summit Conference in Calcutta was an example, are financed by private contributions. It plans eventually to construct a world center to be known as the Temple of Understanding.

The administrative offices of the Temple of Understanding, Inc., are at 1221 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C. Its officers, Board of Directors, International Committee and International Scholars Advisory Committee are listed below:

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Kyoto, Japan
Glossary

The following terms have been briefly defined according to the specific religious traditions to which they are primarily used. These have been indicated in abbreviations as follows:

Bad = Buddhism
Jad = Judaism
C-T = Confucianism-Taoism
Jsh = Judaism
Ch = Christianity
Ssh = Sikhism
Bh = Hinduism
Zs = Zoroastrianism
Is = Islam

Agap (Gk.) = selfless love for neighbor.
Alexa (Bad; Han) = harmless; the view of non-courage in life.
Akalanka (Jad) = the recognition of all particular religious conceptions as relative.
Anekantiya (Pali) = doctrine of non-acquisition; non-attachment.
Atman (Hin) = the self; the unity of the self and universe.
Baha (Hin) = devotions; the devotional way of attaining release.
Bodhisatwa (Hin) = one who is in the student stage of life.
Brahman (Hin) = the absolute universal Being; the One.
Dharma (Bad; Hin) = duty; religion; one of the four ends of man. (Pali: dhamma).
Diksha (Bad) = the understanding of human existence as suffering or pain caused by change and impermanence.

Gosok (Gur) = the hymns written by Zarathustra expressing his revelations of God (Avesta, Manda).
Gosha (Hin) = a dialogue between the Lord Krishna and the warrior-prince Arjuna found in the Bhagavad-Gita, containing the fundamental religion and ethics of Hinduism.
Gnu (Elhn; Sikh) = the holy, spiritual guide who has attained insight.

Hedhahas (Sik) = doctrine of Righteous law, generally based on Scripture.
Nishkama (Bad) = the tradition emphasizing self-purification by following the Noble Eightfold Path toward enlightenment or Mahasam; see Tenets.

Image (C-T) = hieroglyph symbols representing the many possible combinations of the Ten-Yin in sets of six.

Jin (C-T) = the basic Confucian principle of virtue as humanity, "human-heartedness," benevolence.
Glossary

Jew (Heb.) – one who has attained spiritual release.

Jew (Heb.) – knowledge, the knowledge way of attaining release.

Kama (Heb. int. Sibh) – desire or action, in past and present incarnations, having determinative effect to the destiny of the individual.

Karma (Sud) – the principle of compensation, charity, kindness, love, tolerance.

Karma (Sud) – the fundamental scripture of the 8th, revelation of Allah as recorded by the prophet Mohammad.

Kshamsa (Bud) – the tradition emphasizing the attainment of enlightenment for the sake of helping others achieve the same.

Maha (Sud) – a sacred syllable, word or verse; embodiment of a deity or cosmic force as sound.

Maha (Sud) – the mythical first man of the universe to whom are attributed the fundamental moral and ritual precepts of Hinduism.

Maha (Sud) – the personification of evil and delusion.

Maha (Sud) – the principle of Zero; universal love.

Maha (Sud) – explanations of the written laws of Moses, originally given as oral law, but later reduced to written form.

Maha (Sud, Hindu) – release from the karmic cycle of rebirth, the final end of man.

Maha (Sud) – understanding of human existence as interaction of mind and mental substance.

Maha (Sud) – realization of release from the world of suffering, from sorrow. (Hindu, Buddhist).

Purush (Sud) – the concept of intuitive wisdom.

Prana (Sud) – the basic mental substance of the universe; primal blind energy.

Prana (Sud) – the period of rest and inaction following the dissolution of the universe; separation of prana (consciousness) and prakriti (matter, energy).

Prana (Sud) – pure consciousness; also used to refer to the principle of soul or the plurality of selves in the universe.

Saddhu (Sud) – a course of spiritual discipline.

Saddhu (Sibh) – one who has renounced worldly things; ascetic.

Sama (Sud) – experience of the phenomenal world; life understood as flux and change.

Sanadri (Sud) – Court of justice.

Sanathana (Sud) – existence, consciousness, bliss respectively which together express the universal Absolute.

Shakthi (Sud) – the traditional sacred law.

Siva (Sud) – one who practices asceticism and tends toward mystical experience within the Islamic faith.

Siva (Sud) – the Buddha's teaching in the form of a discourse or sermon; also one of the three main divinities of the canon of Buddhism.

Tan (C-T) – the Absolute Reality of which the phenomenal universe is a manifestation.

Term (Sud) – the principle law of the 10th Biblical Talmud.

Theravada (Sud) – the way of the elders, equivalent to Hinduism.

Tan (Sud) – The Written Law, the basic legal code of Judaism (usually referring specifically to the Five Books of Moses).