

To Father Thomas Merton
with profound regards -
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The Emergent Design

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sonal adjustments to it frequently have not been viable. His attention has been directed exteriorly upon the machines that occupy most of his waking hours. And along with this outward projection of his attention, the discoveries of science have made men, especially those relatively uneducated in the particulars of science, aware of powers and creations that seem awe-inspiringly remote, as if they are above nature and man. Separated from a known world which he had previously taken for granted and in which he had felt himself necessary, he ceased to think in the old terms. In time, with the apparent change in values, he ceased to be able to analyze his surroundings and form meaningful standards for action in his changed surroundings, until he "ceased to have a conscience."¹³

III

AN ORIENTAL DESIGN

The loneliness of this separation and its ultimate responsibility for all man's sorrow, was seen by the early Buddhist philosophers. Buddha, himself, tried a reconciliation through the ignition of man's moral personality which would bring ethical action nearer to the center of our existence. But in his reluctance to encourage Brahminical theology and an all too complacent version of divine love, he may have given analytical reason the place of extreme authority. Communion in love is not wholly covered by the ethics of compassion, though in his own character and personality the Buddha revealed the higher way.

The Buddhist would say that separation or narrow individuality exists only in the mind of one who is conscious of his ego, but that in reality "never for one moment do men escape beyond the influence of the rest of existence which is forever drawing them to itself."¹⁴ This Buddhist statement is not a theistic affirmation, nor a denial, but an indication of the greater-than-oneseif which is reached through a process of service, transcendence, and participation. Such a confrontation of the great design does not diminish the true self, but it would mean a gradual renunciation of the ego with which we often identify our personality.

This is the ego that thinks in terms of "I" as a single indestructible unit that possesses certain knowledge, material things, virtues, talents, which are designated as "mine." The Buddhist does not deny the existence of the individual, but he denies the ego that thinks in terms of what is "mine." The person's individuality is determined not by possessions,

whether material or spiritual, but by action in relation to a transcendent self. Every man serves those about him in one way or another — sometimes to their benefit, sometimes to their detriment. Every man participates both physically and spiritually in the life around him. This service and participation in turn serves and participates in a greater context of space and time. Perhaps a shift from the question of whether or not a man will serve and participate to how he does serve and participate suggests the difference between the sense of ego and the sense of the true self.

Loneliness comes from an ego's wrong identification and feeling of sacrifice when it does not find an environment centered on itself. The Buddhist transcends this ego by his consciousness that he possesses nothing, but only partakes of life in a way peculiar to his circumstances and abilities. He is not absolutely unique in a fixed way, but in a dynamic way he is a particular personality. He is constantly acting and reacting through his growth in compassion and enlightenment, to an order of absolute reality.

The Buddhist *nirvana*, then, is not extinction but transcendence, for even as we leave behind the traces of the ego we ascend in the truth of our self. The entire existence becomes relational with our new being. Though the Buddha withholds from us the immediacy or the assurance of our participation in this larger existence, he lays down the ethical steps, the eightfold Noble Path which through right action, right awareness, right livelihood, and other essentials for the higher arrival, including right speech, prepares us or leads us toward the larger selfhood. Avoiding any discussion on the destination, the Buddha blue-printed the steps which are a part of that arrival; the further stages will be known as we arrive, not before. His is a grand design of moral truth and finalities that are understood only as they are experienced.

In such a framework, as Irving Babbitt said in his posthumously published essay on "Buddha and the Occident," "one must deny oneself the luxury of certain affirmations about ultimate things and start from the immediate data of consciousness." Babbitt's description of the contrast of humility in Christianity and Buddhism is good for emphasis of the point — although his interpretation of Christian humility does not cover the full context of Christianity. But he does capture the Buddhist emphasis on reticence. "The essence of humility in Christianity," he says, "is the submission not merely of man's will but the will of Christ himself to the will of a divine personality. If one is to understand how Buddha

avoids asserting any such personality and at the same time retains humility one needs to reflect on what it means to be a critical and experimental supernaturalist."¹⁵

Thus, reticence can become a positive virtue when it is based on the honest awareness that what is personally unknown cannot be personally affirmed. Neither something called the "intellect" or the "will" — which Babbitt says have taken ascendancy in the Occident — is of prime importance for the Buddha. Babbitt says further that Buddha, for his part, is neither a rationalist nor an emotionalist, and that "no small confusion has resulted from trying to fit [the Buddha] into one or the other of these alien categories."¹⁶

As to the nature of the self, apart from the ego, the Buddha used a simple illustration. As a mother loves her only child, so must we love one another. This is *aparimeya manasa* or "the measureless mind" which the illumined self possesses.

And yet silence, rather than words, would be the Buddha's answer to the ultimacy of existence, of truth. "When the layman Visakha asked the nun, Dhammadinna what *nirvana* was, she said: 'You push your questions too far, Visakha. The religious life is plunged in nirvana, its aim is nirvana, its end is nirvana. If you wish, go and ask the Lord, and as he explains it, thus bear it in mind.' The Buddha said to the layman: 'The nun, Dhammadinna is learned. She is of great wisdom. If you had asked me the question, I should have explained it as she did, that indeed is the answer. Thus bear it in mind.'"¹⁷

We are led up the steep road, alone with our light, to the mountain top where the dawn will break — and the whole valley, and the journey will then spread before us. In the meanwhile we experience work, the *shilas* or the disciplines, the quest of perfection without the joyous reassurance or a sense of knowing the goal. We may know when we have taken a step on the path, but nothing more. We know a path implies a goal, but we can no more describe that goal than we can describe the perfect vision while our sight is still dim and "uninformed."

Like Lao Tzu's *The Way*, elusive and yet continuous and luminous, the Buddhist path has intrigued the human mind with an implied sublimity. The modern world comes anew to Buddha's philosophy in order to tear the veil of easy assumptions; above all, to share in his bold adventure into reality, both known and unknown, which our "ignorant knowledge" keeps us from entering.

As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan states, the *nirvana* that is the goal of this bold adventure is a concept "parallel to that of *mokṣa* (release) of the Upanisads. . . . it means the blowing out of all passions, reunion with supreme spirit (*brahmanirvana*). It does not mean complete extinction or annihilation, but the extinction of the fire of the passions and the bliss of union with the whole."¹⁸

India's perennial religious traditions, it may be pointed out here, are not being illustrated in this paper. The main Indian stream, it can be noted, is strongly theocentric, affirmative and nearer to the Christian emphasis. The cosmic background is there but *purusaḥ*, God the Divine Person, is proclaimed in the Vedas along with *pita*, God as Father. In spite of contradictions and deviations inevitable in a large compendium of texts, individual seers are recognizable as men of God, as true servers and believers. The *Upanisads* entered into a deep confluence where man's holy spirit met the divine through prayer and prayerful work. In connection with service, it should be added, the word *asrama* meant a community of work — not escape from responsibility — where men and women shared a devotional life which combined meditation and the practical arts, both as spiritual leaders and as young aspirants.

While "negating the negative" and using critical methods to rule out false identifications India's true religion spoke of divine reality as that which exists, *astiti*: not somewhere else but here and now, *ihaiva*. *Bhuma*, the Ground of the real, and the positive meaning of *ṛkarma*, action belong to essential Hinduism. An immense range of ontological thought from monism to modified dualism and to the dualistic approaches can be found in Indian philosophy but it is *bhakti*, devotional love that the *Gita* and later texts and traditions cherish as man's highest religion. This is a rich tapestry, with many colored threads joined and sundered but the central design of faith is unmistakable.

Along with such positive faith came India's early quest of the precision sciences like mathematics, medicine, astronomy, shipbuilding, gemnology, botany; they could hardly have built great architecture by negating the world and retreating into the Himalayas. Fringe-groups and also some genuine ascetics were not the grand designers nor did they belong to the centrality of India's religion. But denial too can sometimes be a form of affirmation, as every religion testifies; the highest forms of monastic orders constitute a pure witness of faith. Dr. Schweitzer, however, was right when he criticized "life-denial" as the danger of cosmological Hinduism; excessive speculation can and did minimize the need

of immediate action. But such attitudes were not due to India's essential religion, they are rather attributable to a number of other causes which had to be remedied.

Incidentally, a concentration on material science may well become the main characteristic of Asia which was once the home of science: the spiritual current would then have to be activated with Western help. Western stimulation, above all, the profound impact of Christianity, has brought not only India but the whole of Asia and Africa back to their identity as well as given them new dimensions of responsibility.

This is the emergent design. If the nation states, both East and West can curb their violent separatism or their large scale semi-tribal military alliances, the leaven of divine humanity will more effectively work in an integral world.

Buddhism will bring its new contribution to civilization. Though it arose within the context of other Indian traditions, its unique offering then and now is its emphasis on the realization that truth is a many-faceted jewel. The purity and radiance of the search for truth have been crystallized in the figure of the Buddha himself who deepened his own understanding of the subtlety of truth through a life of service and prayer. To millions of the faith he is the center and exemplar of this search for truth. Buddha reaffirmed the meditational and greatly strengthened the ethical-actional side of the Indian tradition. While retaining the terrestrial foothold the Buddha-mind took men ~~to men~~ beyond the cosmic verge into what he called the transcendent *nirvana*, not away from the known, but to the threshold of the still unknown, through a continuous process of *enlightenment*.

But Buddhism did not and cannot stand alone. Judaism and Islam with their strong monotheistic influence, the supreme message of Christianity, and now the new dynamism of the ecumenical movement in the Christian faith as well as the testimony of *Pacem in Terris* which we shall consider in some detail, are there for all mankind.

To sum up, the Buddhist philosophy apart from the inspiration of the Buddha personality, was as a great Western scholar remarked, unitive "starting from the many."¹⁹

Actually, it implies this unity even when it does not declare its full faith in individuality or in the frame of a divine personality, but its emphasis is on the diverse aspects of that unity. We can see how this consciousness of diversity would lead to sympathy for the differences

within the whole of reality, to the compassion that the Buddha spoke of. The Aristotelian tradition, on the other hand, started from unity; but the splendor of the Buddhist compassion is not there, nor its transforming power.²⁰

IV

CONTEXT AND CONTENT

The contrast with Western scientific thought, therefore, is evident. This latter begins with unity and analyzes the aspects of this unity. Buddhist philosophy begins with the many, and when it analyzes, it reveals a process, a number of coordinated ultimates; it does not fraction.²¹ In stressing the transiency of perception, Buddhism emphasizes the paradox of a dynamic continuity of reality. This can be called the Buddhist doctrine of the hidden affirmation.

But the new design is witnessing an approach toward the meeting of Western and Eastern thought on this emphasis on dynamism. It seems that in the past Western scientific thought deviated from religion in an ever widening gulf precisely on this matter of emphasis of the dynamic. Scientific inquiries emphasized processes of change while religious thought emphasized a unity in all life.

1. *In Religious Thought*

But now, to look first at the emerging design in religious thought, we realize that leaders in this field are stressing the dynamism that underlies all reality.

The entire encyclical *Pacem in Terris* of Pope John XXIII is based on the premise that the integrity of the individual person is the ultimate standard of all social order. To begin with individual persons and then consider the way in which this plurality of people are related to one another in a social order is undeniably to begin with the many and to reveal a process. Pope John following the Christian revelation sees the individual conscience as the basis of this social order. He implies that the make-up of the individual conscience is a very complex process, and that for individual consciences to work together in a social order is an arduous task. He specifically refers to the strong contrast of "the turmoil of individual men and peoples with the perfect order of the universe."²² Thus it is not a naive wish for unity that he is describing but an awareness of a supreme human responsibility contributing to a design wherein the

individual can take initiative and responsibility for his action. We can see with even a little reflection that this cannot in reality be an oversimplified design. It is as complex as any operation must necessarily be when it includes and co-ordinates many diverse parts.

How, then, does Pope John describe this complex but meaningful design? It is well to look at it in some detail.

The person, having as he does an individual conscience, "has rights and duties of his own, flowing directly and simultaneously from his very nature, which are therefore universal, inviolable and inalienable."²³ These rights of the individual and the corresponding duties that he has to attain and preserve in their specific form for himself and others are to be found in all the multiple aspects of man's life. To avoid misinterpretation it is important to consider the difference between static categorizing and the way in which Pope John speaks of them as complementing one another in a continual interplay. He uses them not to suggest a rigid formula that can describe all relations of human society, but to help men to become conscious of a "world of values" which they continually manifest in their relations with others.

In *Pacem in Terris* Pope John speaks of the need to attain and preserve these inviolable and inalienable rights and duties within such aspects of man's life as scientific contributions to human welfare, man's moral and cultural values, his worship, his choice of a state of life and place where he will live, and man's economic and political activities. In all of these facets of a man's life must his individual integrity be maintained. In all is his conscience his standard of operation.

He specifically described the opposite of this condition as inhuman. In his words, ". . . any human society that is established on relations of force must be regarded as inhuman, inasmuch as the personality of its members is repressed or restricted, when in fact they should be provided with appropriate incentives and means for developing and perfecting themselves." A society that is human "should enable men to share in and enjoy every legitimate expression of beauty, and encourage them constantly to pass to others all that is best in themselves, while they strive to make their own the spiritual achievements of others. These are the spiritual values which continually give life and basic orientation to cultural expressions, economic and social institutions, political movements and forms, laws, and all other structures by which society is outwardly established and constantly developed."²⁴ If men live out their lives in an environment that does not encourage them to express what is best in

themselves, they do indeed "live lives of quiet desperation," of frustration, of incompleteness. They are hindered in the fulfillment of their own thought and action and thus can see the world around them only through a lens fitted for someone else's eye.

Certainly we can point to progress in certain aspects of our present society in this matter of appreciating individual integrity. In his encyclical Pope John describes three groups that have achieved far greater independence in this age than they had previously. Growing out of this independence is their insistence on being regarded as persons with a share in the forming of human life — their own and that of human society. "First of all, the working classes have gradually gained ground in economic and [political] affairs," and then "applied themselves to the acquisition of the benefits of a more refined culture. Today, therefore, workers all over the world refuse to be treated as if they were irrational objects without freedom, to be used at the arbitrary disposition of others." Secondly, women now take greater part in public life and "are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity." With this awareness for them also comes the refusal of tolerating "treatment as mere material instruments." Finally, a characteristic that distinguishes present social and political life from that of the past is the fact that "all nations have either achieved or are on the way to achieving independence," so that "there will soon no longer exist a world divided into nations that rule others and nations that subject to others." These nations no longer want "to feel subject to political powers located outside [their] own country or ethnical group." With the gradual disappearance of an inferiority complex "which endured for hundreds and thousands of years" in these three groups, there is at the same time "an attenuation and gradual fading of the corresponding superiority complex which had its roots in social-economic privileges, sex or political standing. . . . On the contrary," Pope John concludes, "the conviction that all men are equal by reason of their natural dignity has been generally accepted," and with this an increased consciousness of each individual's rights and duties, of a world of values "both of that life which they live interiorly in the depths of their own soul and of that in which they are united to other men in society."²⁵

The question of a political framework or government that preserves the integrity of the individual often seems like the practical difficulty that renders impossible what is theoretically good. But perhaps this scepticism is based more on an assumption that fixed formulas are necessary than on the difficulties of the real situation. It is most assuredly impossible to refer to fixed formulas for guidance in conducting a government that preserves

individual integrity. Rather it is only in a workable combination of public authorities, citizen participation, and operating legal structure that a government can achieve that common good wherein every man is "enabled to achieve [his] own integral perfection more fully and more easily."²⁶ Pope John says specifically, "This requires that, in constantly changing conditions, [because constitutions are set up to ensure the preservation of human rights] legislators never forget the norms of morality or constitutional provisions or the objective requirements of the common good, . . . [and] that the civil authorities be "men of great equilibrium and integrity, competent and courageous enough to see at once what the situation requires and to take necessary action quickly and effectively." Further, it is necessary that they "have clear ideas about the nature and extent of their official duties . . . and at the same time meet the exigencies of social life, adapting their legislation to the changing social scene and solving new problems; . . . [that] those who administer the government come into frequent contact with the citizens, [because] it is thus easier for them to learn what is really needed for the common good; . . . [and that the] legal structure be in conformity with the moral order and [correspond] to the level of development of the political community." This is a description of a complex, ever changing order, always working for a goal whose external evidence changes with each moment; namely, the rights and duties of the individual. And yet, as difficult as such a complex task may be, in so far as any government fails to maintain its dynamic objective, "it not only fails in its duty," Pope John says, "but its orders completely lack juridical force."²⁷

He further states that this same design of equality that must characterize the relationship between individuals, and the individual and the state, must also be the basis of the relationship between states. States of whatever size or wealth or strength "should pursue their particular interests without hurting others." This necessity forbids such things as any "trace of racism, the limiting of the strength and numerical increase of . . . minority peoples," and the outlay of intellectual and economic resources for the destructive purposes of war rather than the assistance of societies who are in need of these resources for their own development and their chance to collaborate in a world society.

If we consider this principle of equality and cooperation in light of the current national and international situation, we realize how essential to the design is our affirmation of it. Without this affirmation there is no equality among races, and without this affirmation our intellectual and economic resources are not used for the assistance of societies so that they

may contribute in their own unique way to the world society. Instead one group uses its power to create an imbalanced order wherein its own will prevails over all others. Neither by retreating from conflict nor by anxious concern for an either-or solution will we achieve balance and proportion in the situation. We can do so only if we are at once aware of the circumstances, and if we are personally free to evaluate the significance of all the factors involved. We can hope to solve problems and settle issues only when we accept the individual rights of the people around whom the conflict revolves.

The cause of an imbalanced order is often self-deception, and ignorance of what we can learn from other peoples. This frequently causes one powerful group or individual to see their own role as that of benevolent protector; but it should be noted that benevolent oppression is still oppression. It cannot be otherwise if it is destructive to the free participation of all individuals in the society of which they are part.

The affirmation of the design is not just an "Amen" to the proposals and standards of some prominent group or individual; it is a free response for each person to the unique value of every individual with whom we share our life.

Now besides forbidding those things that directly attack the integrity of an individual state, Pope John tells us the natural equality of states demands certain action. We cannot help but recognize that in many aspects of human life, some groups have more abundance than others. Once we have recognized this inequality of distribution and at the same time the dynamic interplay of rights and duties in persons and societies, it is evident that people must sometimes take an active part in promoting this interplay. There may be inequalities in capital, goods, manpower, or political restriction of some person's freedom to "fittingly provide a future for himself and his dependents." We cannot deny that such deprivation does exist, and that where it is found it destroys the balance of a design whose principal harmony is found in the freedom of the individual to best express his own nature. Thus, in order to create this balance and harmony among diverse individuals, it is sometimes necessary that "peoples . . . set up relationships of mutual collaboration, facilitating the circulation from one to the other of capital, goods, and manpower," and that those in a society where there is political freedom and where the common good permits facilitate the freedom of others by such actions as the acceptance of immigrants who are deprived of their integrity in another land.²⁸ And it might be added that "immigrants in another land"

describes not only those who dwell in another land geographically but also those who are restricted in the pursuit of their own worthy goals even while they move about physically in the same area as politically free individuals.

To facilitate the circulation of capital, goods, and manpower, Pope John points out the desirability, indeed the inescapable fact of the "interdependence of national economies . . . , so that they become, as it were, integral parts of the one world economy. . . . At the present time," he says, "no political community is able to pursue its own interests and develop itself in isolation, because the degree of its prosperity and development is a reflection and a component part of the degree of prosperity and development of all the other political communities."²⁹ He points to the United Nations Organization as a practical means for furthering the harmonious design of this world community through "varied forms of cooperation in every sector of human society," and he considers their Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved in the General Assembly of December 10, 1948, to be "an act of the highest importance." He specifically refers to the preamble of this declaration which proclaims that "the recognition and respect of those rights and respective liberties is . . . an ideal to be pursued by all peoples and all countries."³⁰ Again, the emphasis on the harmonious cooperation of the many.

Nor is this emphasis on the complementary nature of the individual and the environment of which Pope John speaks something new to Christian thought. It is the basis of its very origin. Where history has been the witness to a departure from this design, it has witnessed, even among those who profess to be Christians, a falling away from the original and still basic spirit. Christian theologians of our time explicitly point out that the foundation of Christianity is based upon the two basic qualities of honesty and love. These basic precepts of Christ's moral teaching are described as "profoundly liberating, because profoundly in accord with human personality. . . . these two [qualities of honesty and love] are the fulfillment of man's orientation to personal activity in knowledge and love. Actually, Christ's teaching could be stated, 'Be true to the personal way of being which you possess.'" Christ decried the excessive legalism that was strangling the Old Testament religion in His day "precisely because it overlooked the primacy and dignity of the person. 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.'" ³¹

We can begin to appreciate the degree to which He stood for "clarity and freedom in situations of choice"³² when we consider the central

meaning of His passion and death; that is, that "a member of the human race triumphs in a supreme act of human freedom over the mystery of evil that would have divorced man's personal living from God." And the triumph of this freedom, a freedom that man acquires through a certain detachment from the attractiveness of creatures, is seen to be complete in the Resurrection and Ascension. These are mysteries that embody "the victory over evil by subduing death and [the guarantee of] a glorious destiny for all men who deeply wish to possess it."³³

The meaning of the New Testament, then, has always been a profoundly personal one. It is evident that the great Christian theologians of our time are aware of this. And they speak also of "the profoundly social nature of man's redeemed personal living." The Baptism of man into the Mystical Body of Christ and the revelation of a trinitarian God are seen by true Christians as means through which man can begin to understand just how deeply he is a part of a social communion. "Man, by the very fact of his being a created and limited person, is oriented to life in society." In the context of human personality, "to think and to love, to 'open up' to truth and goodness, especially when these are found in other persons, is to exist truly as a human."³⁴

We can see, therefore, in Eastern and Western religions, an awareness of the balance of the *immanent* with the transcendent. The language and the emphasis of particular aspects differ. But each in its own language and symbol indicates that the personal exists only by virtue of its relationship to what is outside and beyond itself. And both traditions speak of a certain detachment that is necessary to see this reality.

In Western thought, the growing awareness of both an *immanent* and transcendent God goes back before Christianity. In the tradition of Judaism we find that the early generations of Israelites received a germinal insight into "the dignity of each human person." "While there is a great deal in the legislation of Moses that is derivative from and parallel to other ancient law," a theologian in the Judeo-Christian tells us, "a new vision of the personal greatness of the human being [appeared in] the fact that Yahweh . . . manifested an interest in the people of Israel and . . . brought them into a covenant relationship to Himself." In Deuteronomy, midway through Old Testament History, the first commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord, the God," shifts the concept of law from an emphasis on "a restriction upon human behavior in an imposed legalistic way" to "a guidance . . . for a profound and freely chosen personal commitment." And with "the inspired employment of the husband-wife

imagery in the prophets beginning with Osee (about 750 B.C.) . . . the view of Yahweh as the loving and faithful husband of Israel" did much to reorientate the Israelites understanding of their God as well as to see the sacredness of human love in contrast to the "erotic religions of their neighbors."³⁵ The imminence of God is also emphasized in the expression of His personal help to Job in his suffering, and His rescue of Noah from the peril that surrounded him.

These aspects are most meaningful to persons brought up in other traditions. Without being literalists, they can understand the spirit of a personal relationship.

And complementing the awareness of the personal, the emphasis on social justice, "unique to Israel among ancient peoples," shows us that the awareness of environment found in other traditions was affirmed in Judaism. "Much of the message of the great prophets concerns itself with a castigation of social ills; and the prophetic oracles make it clear that social justice is not something incidental to God's covenant dispensation. Isaias, for example, will express Yahweh's displeasure with His people in the beautiful imagery of Israel as Yahweh's chosen vine; and he will point out explicitly that the fruit of the vine which God expected to find, and which He did not find, were actions of social justice."³⁶

2. *In Other Disciplines*

As in religious thought, so too in other fields of inquiry do we begin to see a new awareness of the complementary and necessary relationship between the individual and the environment surrounding him. This same concept of dynamic interplay is very much in the vision of present day social thought. The development of sociology of religion, of anthropology, and of various schools of psychology—even such disparate ones as those of Gestaltists and experimentalists—are based on the study of the relationship between individual and environment.

In the physical sciences as well we see the design. Understanding has advanced as these scientists have discovered more about the environment's effect on the individual and the essential force that the individual unit exerts on its surrounding field. Biologists have discovered the influence of the individual gene on all life. And they have reached that point after long study of the many factors that determine the composition of this individual force. The discovery of the atom showed us the design in another field. The physical makeup of this small unit and the force it can generate were discovered through study of the composition and behavior of the forces surrounding it.

seems to begin with the premise that we can no more deny the necessity of social order than we can ignore the increasingly evident physical unity of the universe. As John Dewey said in a letter to me in 1949 at the time of the World Peace Conference at Santiniketan, there is the realization, on the one hand, that "it is for us who inhabit this one physical world to determine by our efforts and aspirations whether this physical oneness shall be a blessing or a curse." To decide this, he says we have the choice between "more numerous and more destructive conflicts than existed when physical barriers kept many peoples apart, or . . . moral unions of peoples who know that by cooperation with others they can best fulfill their own destiny."

Toyohiko Kagawa was saying much the same thing in a letter received from him for the same opinion: "Now the world is one. There is no longer a clear-cut distinction between East and West. The vast Pacific Ocean is no longer a fathomless moat separating the East from the West." And he too points out that this only makes clearer the need for further decisions about spiritual values. He says, "while the earth has become so much smaller in size, with the development of modern communications, man's heart has not become a bit broader nor humbler. The establishment of a new international state is urged upon us by outside factors, but the inner spiritual preparations for it are yet to come."

And not only is the question of values related to this international political problem, but also the question of practical means to achieving the values desired. As Dewey pointed out then, this brings in another whole area of man's knowledge—his conscious efforts in education. Dewey said it was "perhaps *the* means—of making the ideal an actuality," because "the aim of education is to bring understanding, and genuine understanding is reciprocal; it is agreement and comprehension which expel [the] ignorance that breeds suspicion and fear and conflict."

The relationship between the political and religious aspects of life is seen in the life and writings of Mahatma Gandhi. The impact of a man upon the actual course of a nation has never been greater than his. And we can see that he was very conscious of the motives for his action, the values that inspired it. "I want the freedom of my country," he tells us, "so that the resources of my country may be utilized for the benefit of mankind." He also tells us, "For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive, I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India. Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not differ-

ent from that of a patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian." Lest the point be missed, he says specifically, "There is no conflict between private and political law." Thus he also is saying that international, national, state, and community problems are really solved by focusing on the integrity of the individual. He refers to "a new and matchless weapon, or rather an extended application of an ancient and tried weapon," which he has presented to India. But, he says, "I cannot use it for her. I can use, have used it, for myself and feel free. Others have done, and feel, likewise. If the nation uses the weapon she becomes free."³⁷

That weapon is *ahimsa*—love. It is to Gandhi a personal quality, a national quality, and also a religious one—the link between man and God. "God I *know*," he says in italics, "is Truth. For me the only certain means of knowing God is non-violence—*ahimsa*—love. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth."³⁸

His description of this weapon suggests both its personal foundation and its pervasiveness. He writes, "Scientists tell us that without the presence of the cohesive force amongst the atoms that comprise this globe of ours, it would crumble to pieces and we would cease to exist; and even as there is cohesive force in blind matter, so must there be in all things animate and the name for that cohesive force among animate beings is Love. We notice it between father and son, between brother and sister, friend and friend. But we have to learn to use that force among all that lives . . ." This "love," he says, is something we must "learn to use"; that it is not just a passive object to be merely observed or even merely appreciated. These belong to it as well, but more is demanded. An affirmation is demanded.

He goes on, "I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction and, therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life, we have to work it out in daily life. Wherever there are jars, wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love. In this crude manner, I have worked it out in my life. That does not mean that all my difficulties are solved. Only I have found that this law of love has answered as the law of destruction has never done."³⁹

We have already referred to the separation of science and religion and described some of the condition out of which this separation took place. Now we must seek their inner relationship. Others have indicated

what a significant quest they consider this to be. Whitehead has said he does not think it is an exaggeration "when we consider what religion is and what science is . . . to say that the future course of history depends upon the decision of this generation as to [this] relationship."⁴⁰

If we wish to ask this question, however, perhaps it is first necessary to ask what is the sphere of each.

Einstein tells us that science is the sphere of those "imbued with the aspiration towards truth and understanding," while the "source of feeling" is the sphere of inquiry of religion. Inquiry into empirical phenomena and events occupies the man of science, while the man of religion inquires into the source of man's feeling about these phenomena. From Einstein's context, it would seem we must include a sense of evaluation in his word "feeling." He tells us "science can only ascertain what is, . . . how facts are related to, and conditioned by, each other. Religion [on the other hand] . . . deals . . . only with evaluations of human thought and action." Each, then, has its proper sphere of thought and inquiry.

Seeing this fact leads us to the very important consequent fact that each has its limitations. "The scientific method," Einstein tells us, "can teach us nothing else beyond how facts are related to, and conditioned by, each other; [and] . . . outside [this] domain value judgments of all kinds remain necessary. On the other hand, religion "cannot justifiably speak of facts and relationships between facts."⁴¹ In almost the same breath with which he describes each field, therefore, Einstein says that each is incomplete, that both need the influence of each other. Even more directly, he tells us that religion without science can be reduced to anthropomorphism. We can see that in such a condition it is limited to a kind of self-contained introspection, a self-centered feeling that appreciated life only from a subjective point of view.

Ironically, in being concerned only with feeling, religious inquiry cuts itself off from vast areas of feeling, because it rejects vast areas of empirical and phenomenological events to which the individual can react. And science too suffers from isolation. Without religion, "science is blind."⁴²

It would seem that men are beginning to see that what we may call religion allows people to see the value of their work. It enables the scientist to see the value of his own participation in the discoveries he makes. For unless he sees this, and the implications of such a vision, he is at best a smoothly running machine. He is hardly of the same species as men conscious of emotions that spring from the very center of life.

Others as well speak of the necessary relationship between science and religion. We have said that religion limits the very scope of its operation to the extent that it is unaware of scientific understanding. We might ask specifically what science has to contribute to religion. In short, it can illuminate man's understanding of truth and beauty. In itself, science is better understood than any direct consideration of truth and beauty, because it is both more concrete and more objective. It can then do great service for man when he reflects his scientific knowledge back upon his own subjective existence. For example, psychology has done just this. To quote William E. Hocking in *Science and the Idea of God*, "Psychology rescued religion from speculative and dubious services of metaphysics and gave it a firm ground in the self-validating experience of man."⁴³

Good grief!! a Cartesian feeling!

And the natural sciences alone are equally incomplete. We cannot expect them "to give us direct insight into the nature of the spirit; . . . however much we learn about the physics and chemistry of the bodily processes with which we find perception and thought objectively linked . . . we shall not hope to penetrate [the world of the spirit]."⁴⁴ Whether this be called the "purpose of nature" or the meaning or value of observable phenomena, it is a reality disclosed through something other than scientific inquiry. While "science gives us an understanding of the mechanism of nature, [something outside the realm of science] discloses the Spirit behind the mechanism."⁴⁵

Faith is one term men commonly use to describe this aspect of our life that reveals meaning and purpose. It should be noted, however, that where this term connotes fixed and predetermined concepts, it is inadequate to describe what we are talking about here. But by whatever name we call our search for meaning and value, we cannot deny the necessity of linking this pursuit to our inquiry into verifiable phenomena.

We find men referring to their realization of this very fact. Loren Eiseley tells us in his book *The Firmament of Time* that "the western scientific achievement . . . has not concerned itself enough with the creation of better human beings, nor with self-discipline. It has concentrated upon things, and assumed that the good life would follow." The consequence, he says, is that "it [now] hungers for infinity."⁴⁶

This is a valid statement. In some cases man has forgotten altogether the question of meaning and value. But in other instances this does not really describe the situation. Some have specifically denied the validity of the question. One of the best concrete realizations of a person who

It is a spirit incompatible with the drive for mastery, and as a rule, the approach must be made alone."⁵² It is a spirit of inquiry that has gone beyond the anxiety and craving of a man who seeks to possess knowledge. It is, rather the "spirit of science" that is "the effort of the mind to reach and enter the wonder of the universe from the atom to the star and from life to thought."⁵³ As Dean Muelder said in that same University Lecture to which I referred in my introduction, when we no longer feel the need to seek security "primarily in the flux of circumstances," when we are no longer enslaved by "the anxious either-or of social pressures," then we can begin to see the subtleties that allow a man "to transcend the conflict without retreating from it."⁵⁴

The nature of the inquiry is not easily seen or described. "You can," Birrell says, "see the course the mind follows in this effort, and feel its drive toward the heavens . . . only when [it] is keyed to a high pitch, is directed by intuition controlled by reason, and free of all external restraint. . . . Then it is that science, art, history, and religion all seem to converge into a single whole, each portraying a facet with a color of its own yet each reflecting something of the rest."⁵⁵

"It would be a shame," he says, for man "to falter when we have come so far; for if the fertility of a planet is life and the fruit of life is mind, then the human species becomes the first sign of real wakefulness in the solar system. And this," he believes, "is our true meaning and significance."⁵⁶

He goes on to say, ". . . we are merely on the threshold of discovery and should not jump to conclusions concerning the nature of reality from our first flickering glimpse of it. As we emerge into the light . . . we will not be disappointed or disillusioned by its radiance." As he points out, "The mystics of all religions and all ages confirm this." Of course each one's own language of his own time and place is unique, but each one expresses somehow "an experience which combines thought and feeling in an indivisible whole and brings the individual mind seemingly into closer union with the divine essence or ultimate reality."⁵⁷

The Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore pointed out the limited degree to which we have found this unity and the reason for this lack. He described the limitations of our world of knowledge due to ignorance and of our world of personality "restricted by the limit of our sympathy and imagination" as "the dim twilight of insensitiveness" in which "a large part of our world remains to us like a procession of nomadic shadows." "According to the stages of our consciousness we have," he claims, "more

or less been able to identify ourselves with this world, if not as a whole, at least in fragments; and our enjoyment dwells in that wherein we feel ourselves thus united."⁵⁸ He claims this feeling of "fundamental unity" as well as diversity is "corroborated . . . in the hopes expressed in the history of . . . peoples [other than his own]. Each great movement of thought and endeavor in any part of the world may," he says, "have something unique in its expression, but the truth underlying any of them never has the meretricious cheapness of utter novelty about it. The great Ganges must not hesitate to declare its essential similarity to the Nile of Egypt, or to the Yangtse-Kiang of China."⁵⁹

As the artist has always understood if he is a great artist whose work endures, the meaning of the universe is seen in the full understanding of a particular concrete subject. And he has also known that the design cannot really exist unless he affirms it, unless he gives it expression.

Everyone is not an artist. Yet whatever a man's work, however he frame his questions of his world, to affirm the design means to reject the practice of giving subjective categories ultimate, univocal meaning; but at the same time to recognize the reality of the subjective. Not a sentimental subjectivity that encourages a very limited consciousness, but one aware "that the power and will of the human mind is but [one] symptom of reality; that we when we are most human, most rational, most aware of love and beauty, reflect and represent the spirit of the universe. (Then we begin to see that) love and hope (and) light (all belong in) our knowledge of the universe."⁶⁰

Perhaps it is well to end with the thought of individuals who are living examples of this design, who understand that truth is a question of values which we form out of the variety of circumstances in which we find ourselves. Also, transcending and including all circumstances is man's relation to the Divine, and his relationship to other men in the light and knowledge of the supreme revelation.

Today a Western saint in action proclaims "Reverence for Life" which he has practiced for over half a century; his unremitting service is before us not as a creed but a consecration. A spiritual giant yet humble and bound to all who "bear the mark of pain", Dr. Albert Schweitzer has united the torn heart of many continents and people in his vigil in Equatorial Africa. On the Indian road walks Vinoba Bhave carrying the message of peaceful revolution along tree shaded villages, rice fields and horizons of wheat and millet; over ten million acres of land have gone back to the landless through one man's relentless goodwill. A

frozen feudal system that stood between irresponsible wealth and the helpless dispossessed has been broken down without terror and bloodshed: this is the new design.

The awakened conscience of a great people strikes against discrimination in this country: under the youthful leadership of a great American, a true Christian, men and women of all colors and ages have marched toward an adjustive and irrevocable freedom. Boston University takes pride in its scholar, Martin Luther King, who learned here and is now teaching us the new way. Already martyrdom has come to many who joined his movement but a heroic love has united millions as they prayed and forged a kinship that triumphed over shame and suffering.

Men and women across great distances are sharing a redemptive assurance though we still scan the future in fear of new wars and new cruelties that irrelevant leadership still clings to as a seal of power. Organizations like the World Council of Churches have stood up against injustice and war and witnessed to the power of the living Christ; they have urged the inclusion of all nations so that the United Nations can claim full reality and honor. The American Friends Service Committee helps in building up new communities with a trained initiative; their dedicated workers, in every part of the world, arrange for the meeting of minds and for the reduction of conflict. The *Sarvodaya* peace and welfare centers in India and the Catholic Worker in USA serve the people in their daily needs testifying to the spirit of redemptive love.

So both individual action and the sanction of religious organizations affirm the perennially new emergence; they bring us nearer to the divine inheritance that Gandhi and Pope John have brought to us in this dark but hopeful hour.

Boston University

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Note on the Author

Born in Serampore, West Bengal, India Amiya Chakravarty earned B.A. and M.A. degrees from Patna University and his D.Phil. from Oxford (1937). He has done research at Oxford and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton; and has taught at International University of Tagore (Santiniketan) and the University of Calcutta, as well as at Howard and Yale Universities and the Universities of Kansas and Michigan. He has been Professor of Comparative Oriental Religions and Literature at Boston University School of Theology since 1953.

Professor Chakravarty served as literary secretary to Rabin-drath Tagore (1926-33), joined Gandhi in several "peace marches" (1946-48), and has been closely associated with Albert Schweitzer on several occasions. His studies of religious, cultural, linguistic, educational, and political problems have taken him to the Caribbean, many parts of Africa, India, Ceylon, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, the Soviet Union, France, Great Britain, Canada, and other countries. He has been a delegate to many international conferences, including those sponsored by UNESCO in Paris in 1955 and 1957 and San Francisco in 1957, and adviser to the Indian Delegation at the United Nations. He is much in demand as an interpreter of international affairs.

During sabbatical leave, in the first semester of 1963-64, he inaugurated the Tagore Chair of Humanities at Madras University and gave lectures as the first occupant of the chair. In December, 1963 he was awarded an honorary D.Litt. degree at Visva-Bharati University of Tagore by Prime Minister Nehru.

His writings include *Chalo Jai* (in Bengali, 1963), which won a UNESCO prize; *Ghare Ferar Din* (poems in Bengali, 1964,) for which he received a grant and the citation by the National Academy of Letters, New Delhi; *The Dynasts and Post-war Poetry* (1934); *The Saint at Work* (1950); and *The Indian Testimony* (1952). He is editor of *A Tagore Reader* (1961), and a contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Saturday Review*, and other periodicals.