PERSPECTIVES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURE

Edited by
SNEH PANDIT

Foreword by
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To
the Memory of
Professor Prem Nath
True Philosopher and Humanist
Foreword

The editor of this volume has done me the honour of asking me to introduce it to its prospective readers, the reason being my having presided over the symposium at which the essays printed in the volume were first presented by their respective authors. But she knew another reason too, namely, that I used to hold Professor Prem Nath, to whom this volume is lovingly dedicated, in high esteem and regard and in warm, friendly relationship because of his deep humanity, his urbane and liberal humanist approach to life, men and things and for the largeness of his heart. The lines that follow are therefore in the form and spirit of a modest tribute to the memory of one who lived up to what he preached.

This volume is given to an elucidation of the perspectives in the philosophy of culture; the title of the book is indeed self-explanatory. Being no student, formally speaking, of philosophy as understood as an intellectual discipline, I dare not say anything in this regard. But as a student of the history of human civilization and of history of ideas, I have ever been deeply interested in the cultural evolution of human society in general, and of Indian society in particular. This interest led me to a search for what was actually meant by the term or concept ‘culture’. I remember to have given my inaugural address at the symposium, ex-tempore, from notes, but later, I had the opportunity to put down my ideas in writing. Since the written piece has gone to the making of a chapter of one of my publications, namely, An Approach to Indian Art, there is no point in repeating what I said, now more than a decade ago. Briefly my contention has been that culture meant, in both Indian and Western tradition, ceaseless cultivation of the soil of life so as
to make life yield a rich harvest, materially, intellectually, aesthetically and spiritually. I also took some pains to point out that it was a dynamic concept and an all-pervading one and that it was only in modern times that the concept was narrowed down to refinement alone of mental, aesthetic and spiritual qualities in the human context. I believe, I also tried to point out that the relation between culture and human activity in the realm of art was a very close one.

Today I recall with some amount of sadness the three days of the symposium when Professor Prem Nath and myself used to sit side by side, listening to the papers that were being presented and participating in the discussions that followed, discussions that brimmed over the symposium into the leisurely hours of non-work. This volume presents the papers alone; the discussions and the silences and the human relations which were as much a part of the symposium itself as the papers, do not find any place in it. Personally, I miss them.

During the last years of his life, Professor Prem Nath was under the attack of a deadly disease that never ceased to inflict deep wounds and severe pains. I have never seen a man suffering so bravely, looking up at life with a smile on his face while fighting death all the time. All those years he lived bravely drawing from an inexhaustible source of silent courage. He was indeed a fully cultured man.

I feel happy that his admiring colleagues and friends have chosen to dedicate this volume to his memory.

Niharranjan Ray
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Preface

In March 1967, the Department of Philosophy, Panjab University, under the leadership of its Head, Professor Prem Nath, organized at Chandigarh an All India Seminar on the Philosophy of Culture, which brought together philosophers, writers, artists and historians to discuss the problems of culture, religion and society. The papers which appear in this volume were all presented by the delegates to the seminar. This volume is specially dedicated to the memory of Professor Prem Nath who inspired not only the discussions of this seminar on Philosophy of Culture but many others which sought to understand and define man in the totality and fullness of his being, and who is unfortunately no more. Philosophy for Professor Prem Nath was more than a purely academic discipline and even when the demands of rigid thinking sought to confine it within the strict boundaries of analytical thought, he extended its boundaries to encompass the reality of the human situation.

It was one of his central beliefs that while science and technology had proved to be great enlightening and ameliorative forces, they had alienated man from his cultural roots; technology had enslaved the popular mind without offering any compensations to the spirit. Consequently man faced a crisis within himself to sort out which posed one of the major challenges to the intellectuals of the world. Philosophy and the social sciences no doubt were required to build up strict abstract models, but these disciplines should not consequently allow themselves to be abstracted from the existential situation. If the task of philosophy is to understand the world, as Bertrand Russell declared, it is also its business to change it as Marx would have it. And in attempting to change it,
Professor Prem Nath maintained, it is essential to have access to man’s social and cultural conditions. In India particularly the neglect of the study of cultural dynamics and its effect on the growth of the human personality has cost the country a long-drawn out sterility.

It was in accordance with this position that Professor Prem Nath pursued avidly the broad based study of culture, and inspired not only this seminar, but several others, which took up allied issues. Ironically, the last series of active discussions he was able to organise were on Philosophy and Social Change in which he participated while lying gravely ill.

During the sixteen years of his leadership in the Department of Philosophy of the Panjab University, he worked incessantly for the acceptance of these ideas, which were developed in departmental seminars, all India forums and private discussions. His own writings also emphasized the need to understand the human psyche in all its inter-relations and interactions. The irrational forces which influence and mould the individual must be taken account of even as the rational forces are and philosophy must undertake amongst its other tasks, to reveal the vast unconscious of humanity and thereby bring to its study a richness which in its job as a purely analytical study it was not always able to do.

Consequently, his approach to all problems was inevitably inter-disciplinary and a true understanding of the human situation required the multi-dimensional richness which a study of culture could bring to it. Pure reason has its limits and often when it is extolled to the neglect of other values, it led to “the collapse of a world view” even as Albert Schweitzer lamented. His plea was always for the study of philosophy as a study of the inter-relations of means and ends, whereby there would be no unnatural divorce between thought and action, but a significant interaction. In this Professor Prem Nath could sympathise even with John Dewey’s much misunderstood demand that philosophy be a tool of action.

Professor Prem Nath was a humanist in the widest sense of the term. He was committed in action to the philosophy he
taught, and formulated intellectually. In this he was able to transcend the domain of the mere pedant and scholar and bring to the understanding of the individual, society and culture penetrating insights. His influence on those around him, was both of his personal life and of his profound understanding.

The dedication of this volume on Philosophy of Culture to this noble philosopher, teacher and humanist is a very small tribute.

In the preparation of this volume, my special thanks are due to my colleagues in the Department of Philosophy, Panjab, University, particularly to Dr. Veena Malhotra, Miss Geeta Manektala, Miss Neelam Bedi, Mr. Satya P. Gautam, Mr. Ezra Daniel and Dr. Indu Jalota for helping to go over the script and assisting to prepare the index.

Panjab University,
Chandigarh
October 1977.

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Introduction

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To ask what is the nature of culture is to ask what is the nature of man himself. What is the manner and mode of his being and his expressing, of his silence, and his communication of his living and his interaction. To talk of culture is to talk of all the patterns of human activity which reveal man to himself and which bring him into relationship with his environment. It is to talk of men’s activities within groups and of the group’s reactions within the larger whole of society.

Culture in its broadest sense is a search for meanings and values. Anthropologists and sociologists who make a study of a people’s culture do so through the study of their language and religion, their customs, rites and rituals, in order to discover the values they pursue and the meanings they bring to bear on problems of concrete living. A philosophy of culture examines the very basis of those conditions which constitute culture. It does not try to evaluate the meanings that emerge from the pursuit of certain values, rather it goes into the very pre-supposition of meaning itself, as it is presented to us, through language, myth, religion and art. The questions that a philosopher of culture asks, therefore, are very different from those that are asked by the sociologist, anthropologist or historian. What are some of these questions?

Among others one such question is how man relates to his environment and how he grasps the nature of reality. Is it through knowledge as a mediate act whereby the intellect grasps forms of reality external to it, or is it through the categories of thought, projecting nothing but their own logical form? If either be the case, man as a concrete individualized
being must remain for ever cut off from his cultural base and roots and understand reality only through the mediacy of abstract forms.

Such a view of man and reality which fails to take account of the variety and totality of actual experience becomes distorted, and results inevitably in the scepticism of modern language philosophy. A purely logical view of the world results in the complete dissolution of any truth-content of language and the realization that all knowledge is nothing more than a fiction of the mind. Accordingly man is doomed to remain cut off from his psychic base and can never establish a direct and meaningful contact with reality.

Against this one sided distorted view is the one that takes account of man's total being as expressed by him through myth, ritual, literature, and art, these modes, too as Ernst Cassirer among others has shown are like logical forms, symbolic but they are not forms empty of content. They are rather, in their symbolic projection organs of reality, "since it is solely by their agency that anything real becomes an object for intellectual apprehension, and as such is made visible to us." The symbolic forms of myth, religion and art "appear as symbols; not in the sense of mere figures which refer to some given reality by means of suggestion and allegorical renderings, but in the sense of forces each of which produces and posits a world of its own."

The understanding of myth, religion and art, which are fundamental to a study of culture therefore becomes fundamental to a philosophy of culture which involves much more than a base theory of knowledge. The so called "irrational forces" of man's emotional life and psyche, the ineffable realms of his experience are not thereby discounted as error, caprice or emotional indulgence, but taken to be basic to the understanding of man's mentality. These forms are not regarded as deviations in the path of the logical development of thought, but taken to represent it in its essential creativity.

Consequently man in his creativity, as a complete and total being, man as a creature of rational and irrational forces,
man as a social and ethical entity, communicating and inter-
relating with others, yet transcending social and historical
limits in his uniqueness and utter loneliness, really provides
the central questions in the philosophy of culture.

But since the philosophical understanding of any subject
makes its own demands in terms of description, speculation and
analysis, several other questions also arise which seek to elu-
cidate not only the nature of culture as such, but the concepts
upon which its study is based. An important business of phi-
losophy is to provide definite and satisfactory meanings to the
terms and concepts we employ in talking about any subject.
In the field of culture there are a vast number of such terms,
for the subject does not confine itself to a narrow area, but
includes almost every aspect of man's emotional, intellectual
and spiritual development.

The essays which have been presented in this volume touch
upon the diverse aspects of the philosophy of culture. Whereas
some seek to analyse the theoretical foundations of culture and
the terms upon which they rest, others seek to define the role
of language, religion and art in the development of a cultural
mileau, still others go into questions of society and the inter-
pretation of history. The essays do not attempt to give final
answers to questions or to construct exhaustive theories of
culture, they mostly throw out suggestions and raise questions,
often very lively ones, which demand further analysis, research
and invention. The essays should therefore be considered as
exploratory rather than as final, their aim being mainly to
start a debate rather than conclude one.
Theoretical Foundation of Culture

A. K. Sinha

A theory of culture presupposes a scientific analysis of society as well as of personality. A metascientific theory of culture can be constructed only through a scientific analysis of social structure, and its multi-functional patterns. The various social systems and social institutions constitute the foundations of cultural patterns. Persons who constitute the termini of social units may be regarded as the fundamental entities of a cultural pattern. They constitute the cultural wealth of a social structure.

A provisional definition of society must be given here before an attempt is made to construct a theory of culture. This definition, however, must not be arbitrary. A definition of society must be based on valid constructs which are established through empirical confirmation. However, before a provisional definition of society is given for further scientific analysis and metascientific speculation, it is necessary to state and criticise those definitions which are theoretically inadequate. It will be, thus, shown through a process of elimination that there can be only one legitimate theory of society. There cannot be alternative theories of society in the same way as there cannot be alternative theories of physical and organic pheno-
mena. If perchance there are alternative theories concerning a particular aspect of nature, they may be at best called 'doctrines' or 'models'.

Any theory whatsoever must be rooted in science, and it must have heuristic significance. A theory can never be constructed on purely a priori grounds. A theory is not just a systematised body of opinions of a particular doctrinaire. But, on the contrary, a theory is an inter-related system of valid constructs which gives us an insight into an aspect of nature. It explains a phenomenon rationally and intelligibly. It is necessary, therefore, that a theory must satisfy the requirements of empirical tests in order to avoid ad hoc explanations. Hence, it is one of the chief aims of science to construct a theory. A theory, however, has also a philosophical aspect because the science from which it emerges has always some heuristic significance. In fact, a theory is the meeting point between science and philosophy.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, some of the doctrines of social structure may be critically examined. These doctrines or interpretations of society may be broadly classified into three main types, viz., metaphysical, organismic and functional.

(i) **Metaphysical Doctrines of Society**: Plato and Aristotle maintained that the existence of society was natural, but ethical society could be ushered into existence through the institution of a just government. Thomas Hobbes maintained that human society was in a highly disorganised state when people lived in a state of nature. But later through social contract organised society was ushered into existence. Locke and Rousseau also held the same view. Hegel maintained that the civil society was a phase in the process of the dialectical process. T. H. Green maintained that society was spiritual in its nature, and its members were eternal and timeless spirits; hence, there is harmony between individual good and social good. Josiah Royce maintained that society was an ethical order in which ethical individuals realise their moral ends. J. E. McTaggart maintained that reality itself was a society of finite spirits. A. N. Whitehead explained society as a nexus. In his view, a nexus
Theoretical Foundation of Culture

is a collection of actual entities. A special type of nexus is a society. A society is a nexus which has some form of order, and enormous complexity. Charles Hartshorne has also maintained that reality was essentially social in its nature. In his view, the entire world may be regarded as society.

The metaphysical doctrines of society have no significance from the scientific point of view. The constructs which are used in these doctrines are not empirically tested. None of these doctrines can claim the status of a theory of society.

(ii) Organismic Doctrines of Society: Paul Lilienfeld, Alfred Foullee, Herbert Spencer, Oswald Spengler, C. H. Cooley, and many others have defined society as a living organism. According to them, the functions of society are similar to those of a living organism.

The interpretation of society from the organismic point of view is wrong. Society may be regarded as an organism only in a metaphorical sense, and not in a literal sense. The conception of society as an organism involves isomorphic thinking. The application of biological models for the description of societal processes is illegitimate. There are fundamental differences between human society and living organism. An organism has birth, growth, reproduction, recuperation, decay, and death. A society, on the other hand, does not have such organismic characteristics. The organismic metaphors which are used for the explanation of societal processes give merely pseudo-explanations which have no significance from the scientific point of view. The uselessness of organismic interpretation of society is now admitted by all social scientists.

(iii) Functional Doctrines of Society: In the contemporary period a large number of social thinkers have defined society from the structural-functional point of view. E. E. Bergel has defined society as 'structured' because it has distinguishable parts. In his view, the constellation of relatively stable parts of a society refers to social structure. The term 'social function' refers to the various dynamic processes within a society. Social function refers to the various adjutative activities of social units within the social structure. The social
structure determines the various functions of a society. Emile Durkheim gave a systematic formulation of the logic for the study of society. He used the term 'function' instead of the term 'purpose' because society does not necessarily produce useful results.² A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and B. Malinowski explained social phenomena from the functionalist point of view. Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton are the chief exponents of the functionalist interpretation of society. Parsons' framework of social doctrine gives prominence to the structural-functional base. He gives almost identical definitions to the terms 'mechanism' and 'function'. In his view, the nature of a social system can be known through the analysis of social actions of individuals in a given social situation.³ R. K. Merton has given greater emphasis on the functional interpretation of society. In his view, the functional analysis gives us knowledge of the social structure with its various components in interplay.

The interpretation of society from the structural-functional point of view is inadequate. The functionalists in the field of sociology have been influenced by the technological concepts and methods. They very often make use of technological models for describing the structure and functions of a society. P. A. Sorokin has compared the various units of a social structure to the various parts of an automobile.⁴ C. A. Lundberg has clearly pointed out that society is analogous to a physical system in which there is attraction and repulsion between its members.⁵ R. K. Merton has used the expressions 'social network', 'social mechanism' and so on for the description of social phenomena. D. F. Aberle and others have defined society as "a group of human beings sharing a self-sufficient system of action which is capable of existing longer than the life-span of an individual, the group being recruited at least in part by sexual reproduction of the members."⁶

The views of the functionalists suffer from the defect of isomorphic thinking. The error of the early social thinkers consisted in the fact that they defined society in organic terms under the influence of the nineteenth century theory of organic evolution, and the fallacy of the contemporary sociologists con-
sists in the fact that they have defined society in technological terms. The contemporary sociologists, have failed to understand the fact that the concept of 'society' is basically different from the concept of an 'automaton'.

I have defined society from the teleological point of view in my *Social Philosophy* (1962), *Principles of Sociology* (1963), and *A Prolegomena to the Philosophical Foundations of Society* (1965). I have maintained that the interpretation of society alone can claim to be the legitimate theory of society. I have defined society as a systematic organisation of teleological individuals. It is not an organism. It is not born; it does not reproduce itself; it does not completely perish. It is not a structural-functional mechanism. The error of the functionalists in sociological theory consisted in the fact that they tried to explain the nature of society from the behaviouristic point of view. They pictured human personality as a reacting mechanism which functions in response to the incoming environmental stimuli. This is the basic error of the contemporary behaviouristic psychologists. In my *World-View through a Reunion of Philosophy and Science* (1959), I have inter-

The teleological principle, in my view, is the governing law of a personality which integrates and regulates the behaviour pattern of an individual. Creative purpose constitutes the central theme of an individual's life. As a creative person he creates a creative field through the incessant creation of novel and original values. An individual is not only creative, but also appreciative. He creates the field of appreciation when he is confronted with novel and original values. In fact, an individual is creative-appreciative. It is by virtue of his creative-appreciativeness that an individual is an integrated member of a society. There is a continuity between the individual and society due to the operation of the basic principles of creativity and appreciation. An individual-in-society is the concretized expression of the principle of creativity-appreciation. Individual and society as the two distinct and polarized categories are illegitimate abstractions. Individual-in-society is the basic individuo-social reality as the inevitable expression of the laws
of creativity and appreciation which operate via its multiple termini.

From the standpoint of my social theory individuals are the termini of the various social units and institutions. Aspects of society are in the intervening spaces between individuals. The interstitial social aspects which subsist between individuals may be called 'social bonds'. Social bonds interrelate and integrate the members of a society. The principles of creativity and appreciation produce the creative field and the appreciative field which intersect and complete the circuits between individuals and society. The principle of creativity establishes the link between the creative person and society via the field of creativity. The principle of appreciation, on the other hand, establishes a link between individuals as aspects of society and the creative person as a unique creator of values via the field of appreciation. Taken in this sense the locus of the individual as well as of society is at the same place. In other words, the loci of both the individual and society are in the same creative-appreciative persons. The loci of society subsisting in the creative-appreciative persons may be called 'located society'.

Apart from the located society there is the 'projected society' which subsists in the intervening space between individuals. The loci of projected society are in those regions where the field of creativity and appreciation intersect and interfuse. Social purpose emerges through the fusion of the aspects of the projected society. Creative advance and cultural progress of a society are the expressions of social purpose. In other words, projected social nuclei play a very important role for social solidarity. Lasting social bonds are in the projected social nuclei. Projected social nuclei play a very dominant role in cultural progress.

From the standpoint of my teleological interpretation of society the cultural nuclei originate when there is intensification, extension, and qualitative richness of intersecting fields of creativity and appreciation. The diversity and the qualitative richness of cultural nuclei are determined by the
nature of the intersecting fields of creativity and appreciation. Cultural nuclei are expressions of social purpose. Social purpose steers society, and enhances its cultural progress. Cultural nuclei becomes numerous and qualitatively diverse with the creative advance of society.

Cultural nuclei are the products of the conflux of the fields of creativity and appreciation. After they come into existence through the conflux of the fields of creativity and appreciation, they acquire relative independence. Cultural nuclei may be called 'transpersonal' in the sense that they are objective and relatively independent. Transpersonal cultural nuclei tend to raise a society to higher and higher stages of cultural progress and refinement. There is cultural diversity in a society in which there is preponderance of cultural nuclei. There is cultural diversity only in a free and 'open society'. The possibility of cultural diversity is ruled out in a totalitarian and 'closed society'.

Culture is the excellence of a society. It is possible for almost all types of societies to have cultural nuclei which may be either few or large in number. In aboriginal and mediocre societies cultural nuclei are sparsely distributed throughout their respective populations. In a civilised society there is dense constellation of cultural nuclei. These cultural nuclei are formed when circuits are continuously being completed between creation and appreciation of values by creative-appreciative persons in the various walks of life. Cultural nuclei are formed through the integration of various sorts of values, such as intellectual, aesthetic, and ethical values.

Culture has been defined in different ways by various social thinkers. The various interpretations of culture are based on the different conceptions of society which may be briefly stated below:

(i) Personalistic Interpretation of Culture: J. S. Mackenzie maintained that culture is primarily an individual possession. Nevertheless, cultural values may be shared by all persons of a society. C. M. Case defined culture as the unique achievement of human personalities.
The personalistic interpretation of culture is inadequate. It cannot explain the nature of transpersonal culture which is the expression of society as a whole, and the common possession of all the members of a society. The personalistic definition of culture is too narrow.

(ii) The Rag-Bag or the Omnibus Interpretation of Culture: According to E. B. Taylor, culture includes experiences which are acquired by individuals as well as social groups in a society. It includes beliefs, knowledge, art, morals, customs, laws, and the patterns of behaviour and habits of individuals.\(^1\) P. A. Sorokin has defined culture as the sum total of everything that is created and modified through the conscious or unconscious behaviour of two or more interacting individuals.\(^2\) According to S. F. Nadel, culture refers to the totality in the 'dimension of action'.\(^3\) R. T. Lapiere has maintained that culture in the totality of customs, traditions, institutions, and so on which are inherited by the members of a society from generation to generation.\(^4\)

The rag-bag or the omnibus definitions of culture are too broad and vague. These definitions are so wide and vague that they fail to distinguish between the systems of traditions and customs and culture. Most of such definitions lack exactness.

(iii) Evolutionary Interpretation of Culture: According to Oswald Spengler, each culture is an organism.\(^5\) In his view, each culture has a beginning, a development, a full blossoming, a decay, and a final collapse. The same phase of development and decay are distinguishable in a culture. According to W. F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff, culture is subject to the principle of growth like all other phenomena of nature.\(^6\) R. M. MacIver holds that culture is almost identical with social change.

The evolutionary interpretation of culture is unsatisfactory. Culture is not an organism. It does not necessarily follow a deterministic pattern of development and decay. It cannot also be regarded as identical with social change. Social change is necessarily culturally progressive in its nature.

(iv) Interpretation of Culture as Artificial Creation: J. B. Gittler maintains that culture is man-made. In his view,
culture consists in the accumulated products of symbolization. The artificial conditions of existence which are brought into existence by human beings may be called 'culture'.

There are certain elements of truth in the definition of culture as an artificial creation. However, artificial productions through advancement of technology and applied sciences do not necessarily represent the cultural refinement of a society. In a totalitarian or a police state there may be tremendous technological advance without corresponding development of culture. The ancillary aspects of technological civilization do not necessarily refer to culture.

(v) Teleological Interpretation of Culture: I have maintained in Philosophical Foundations of Society that culture refers to the common orientation of a group of creative-appreciative persons towards creative ends. It refers to the conflue of creativity and appreciation of its creative-appreciative members. Creative-appreciative members of a society are responsible for the formation of a cultural system. It refers to the living experiences and value-creations of creative-appreciative persons. The culture of a society is dead and stale, if it merely represents the system of norms created by the earlier generations of mediocre persons. There can be no culture in a society in the absence of creative purpose of at least some of its members. Every society has at least some members who are creative in some sense. Cultural nuclei are formed in a society when creative persons by virtue of creativity raise 'phychic fields' of appreciation in their fellow-members of their society. Cultural nuclei are formed when the fields of creativity and appreciation intersect and interfuse. The extensiveness of culture depends upon the number of its cultural nuclei. The subtlety and refinement of a culture depends upon the quality of cultural nuclei.

From the standpoint of my teleological theory of society cultural nuclei are the expressions of projected society. They are the expressions of social purpose. On the social plane culture is the expression of the integration of cultural nuclei. It degenerates into tradition if the constellation of cultural nuclei are relatively stable. Living culture is dynamic. Cultural
flux is identical with social progress. Cultural progress accelerates creative advance. There is diversity in the midst of harmony in a culturally progressing society. Creative advance is multi-directional in a culturally progressing society.

When we study the different phases in the development of culture down the ages we find that the concept of 'culture' has been changing from epoch to epoch. In the earliest stages of human history the emotive and the conative aspects were predominant in culture. During that period religious and ethical values formed the foundation of culture. In the next phase the cognitive aspect also formed the integral part of the emotive and the conative aspects of culture. During that period the intellectual and aesthetic values together with religious and ethical values formed the foundation of culture. Poetry, painting, literature, art, and the like were the main forms of cultural expressions. Romanticism formed one of the most important aspects of culture. In the third phase of social development the cognitive aspect of the highest order constitutes the basic aspect of culture. Metaphysical theories profoundly influenced the formation of the cultural values of a society. Materialistic philosophy profoundly influenced the formation of culture in the Communist countries. Likewise pragmatic metaphysics influenced the formation of culture in America. In the contemporary period metaphysical doctrines are in disrepute, and the futility of metaphysics has been recognized by logical positivists and the exponents of scientific philosophy. During recent times, particularly in the Western countries, science has become the foundation of culture. Scientific culture has dispelled superstitions and dogmas. It leaves no room for wishful thinking and frothy sentimentalism on the part of its members. It ensures precision and objectivity in the creative expressions of its members through emphasis on the 'maximincon principle', i.e., maximization of experimental variance, control of extraneous variables, and minimization of error variance. The scientific foundation of culture has a rationalizing effect on individuals.

There is acceleration of intellectual creativity by the creative persons of a society in which science constitutes the founda-
tion of a cultural pattern. The members of a such a society being trained in scientific method can very quickly grasp and appreciate the intellectual values. Scientific theories can be tested and observed publicly. Errors in scientific research can be easily detected through the built-in checks in the methodological procedures. A scientist does not accept any statement whatsoever as valid even though it may look fascinating and promising without empirical confirmation. He engages himself in rigorous research for the investigation of hypothetical propositions relating to the supposed relations between certain phenomena of nature. He tests his hypotheses through empirical confirmation and relates them to nature. Science has brought about a radical metamorphosis in his way of thinking. It has proclaimed the triumph of predictability, relative precision, and objectivity of the items of knowledge. It has tremendously helped in ushering into existence a new form of culture which is basically different from the ethico-religious, aesthetico-romantic, and metaphysico-mystical cultural patterns. In the new pattern of culture which is founded on the superstructure of science persons are emancipated from dogmas, superstitions, prejudices, and above all the self-deception of mysticism. The members of the newly emerging scientific culture have an unusually novel experience of intellectual freedom which was unknown hitherto for centuries. Science as the central theme of culture is the promise of the modern world.

In conclusion, I shall give a generalized formula of culture, which may be stated as follows:

\[ C = f (ca) \]

That is, culture is the function of creativity and appreciation. This formula is superior to C. A. Ellwood’s formula: \( C = f(I) \) which indicates that culture is the function of intercommunication.9 Finally, I may say that civilization is the excellence of a society in its physical aspect, and culture is the excellence of a society in its psychic aspect.

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2. Durkheim, E., *The Rules of Sociological Method*, p. 97,
It is futile on my part to attempt any definition of culture at the very outset, although the nature of my theme may make it rather unavoidable. In fact, the whole paper as I have conceived it, is indirectly an attempt at definition by introducing what I regard as the basic element in culture, viz., language. Historians and sociologists have long been accustomed to take the meaning of culture for granted by subordinating it to, and in fact even equating it with those institutions that have contributed to the development of a particular society. Thus we have heard of ‘Indian culture’, ‘French culture’, etc. Culture, therefore, according to historians and sociologists would be constituted by an empirical survey of such diverse social facts as caste, religious institutions, political organisation, the Indian educational system, etc., in so far as they were found and described with reference to ancient India. This appears to be an unsatisfactory attitude to the problem; in any case, even after such an elaborate empirical enquiry, we would still find the meaning of ‘culture’ as elusive as ever. Owing to this reason, ‘culture’ has become one of the most misused terms in English language. Similarly, the word *kultur* in German has become not only misused, but also abused by political theoreti-
cians and employed for wrong purposes, as for example in the well-known use of the term *kultur kampf* by the Nazis.

I would not like to reduce the question of culture to one of language. This task is not undertaken with the same aim as the logical positivists who would talk of reducing all philosophy to language, and set about analysing philosophers’ vocabulary. It is rather an attempt to conceive of culture in no other terms than the formal and ideal tools of thought, which is capable of abstracting into and sometimes building forms and patterns out of the empirical, into a realm beyond the empirical. This complex structure of patterns together constitute the culture of a group or of a person. In such a conception, language would be a basic element, as without it no pattern—in fact no thought—is possible. For the purpose of this paper, I intend using the term ‘language’ in as broad terms as possible, so as to include not only ordinary language of communication, the language of science and discourse but also the language of mathematics, of music, of visual art and even tools of enquiry—both material and ideational. I use the term ‘language’ in short in the same broad sense in which the philosopher Derrida has used it in his *Logic* (1948), but our definition of culture is not formulated in the same narrow social reference within which Derrida conceives it. Derrida would consider the development of language only in what he calls the ‘cultural matrix of inquiry’ with its reference to the social framework of tools, arts, institutions, traditions and customary beliefs in so far as they are employed in social inter-communication. For us, to restrict culture to the social framework would be arbitrary, to conceive of such great creations of individual conception like *Quantum Mechanics, Relativity, the Electro Microscope, the Ninth Symphony, Hamlet, Statue of David* and the *Last Supper* (though they represent achievement of different kinds of language in different spheres of science and art) as a product of the social matrix of enquiry, would be to ignore the depth of the symbolism itself and to conceive it simply in trivial terms of intercommunication.

For, art is mainly a matter of individual enjoyment of the creative artist whether it is of Leonardo, Beethoven or Shakes-
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peare. When it is communicated through a language it becomes an object of aesthetic enjoyment by others. It is such a pattern of conceived forms (empirical or extra-empirical) that constitutes culture. Historically speaking, therefore, the culture of any group of people is an organized complex of such ideational forms expressed in different types of language. The culture of ancient India would then be constituted by its literature (drama, poetry, prose, etc.), its art (both visual and auditory), science (both pure and empirical)—yes, by the 'forms' of its social and political organisation. The culture of Europe would similarly be represented by the complex of ideational patterns of art, science, technology, literature and social norms. The distinction between various 'cultures' (to use the term in its plural form as the empirical social scientists do) appears to me not to consist so much in the distinction of empirical institutions, of psychological attitudes (the 'psychophysical' complexes), but in the structure of the 'ideal' forms conceived by these different 'groups'. The structure of 'language' (using the term broadly as we did before) is the most fundamental element characterising the culture of a people.

Culture then is a concept of value; its axiological basis consists in the degree of precision and formal perfection 'language' can attain in art and science. For instance, in the forms of dramatic art a greater self-consistency in symbolism (which thus gradually loses its empirical reference) is attained. The prose drama at the bottom of the scale is a naive attempt to represent an empirical situation as it has or as it might occur in an actual empirical situation. Such an attempt at empirical representation might sometimes present us with the ludicrous, as for example, Shakespeare's Macbeth in prose presented by actors with an American accent. Higher to this in scale would come the poetic drama, where a more complexity of linguistic pattern is achieved at the cost of being less empirical and less communicative. Higher again in the scale would come the opera (where the spoken word is eliminated altogether, thus reducing again the empirical reference and enhancing the pattern of the symbolism). As the symbolism becomes complex, its communicability would diminish; this is
the case not only in the sphere of art (the above is only an illustration) but in the realm of scientific theory of mathematics, of technology and even of a social organisation. This point goes against those who argue in favour of a pragmatist theory of culture. Culture is a complex of symbolic forms, the essence of which consists in conceptual abstraction of forms from the empirical. In such a conceptual abstraction, owing to the diminishing of empirical reference, the capacity of forms to be intercommunicated also decreases. Nevertheless, it remains true that a culture of a group or society is represented by such a complex of symbolic forms. Certainly, if Beethoven or Einstein are typical products of western culture, it does not consist in their work being communicated. Their language and creative works are understood hardly by five per cent of Europeans even in Europe.

Hindu 'culture' again does not consist of those empirical facts brought to light and described by the empirical sociologist. It would essentially consist of conceptual facts beyond the reach of the empirical scientist—those complex forms of religious symbols, of myths, of philosophical thinking, science and mathematics, music, pictorial art, architecture, literature, etc., which are incapable of being analysed or described in simple empirical terms.

The empirical facts, the extent of material and technological advancement had better been expressed by the term civilisation. The historian and the empirical social scientist in fact are interested in 'civilisation'—the extent of material and social advancement, therefore, are rightly concerned about empirical facts—about social and religious institutions, about industrialisation, economy and technology. It would be impossible to test the extent of culture empirically.

The test of culture is mainly formal; in the sense of attainment, it involves the ability to create and grasp the conceptual patterns—to live through a symbolic experience by the artist or the spectator or the listener. The degree of this attainment precisely means the degree of purity of the created conceptual scheme—pure in the sense of internal consistency, pure of an empirical reference. The mathematical language of science, its
logic is an example of this conceptual framework. Perhaps in the micro-cosmic world, the scientist shows a greater degree of abstraction than in the macro-cosmic. The divorce of an ideational pattern from empirical logic and from spoken and written language is even more obvious in art. It has a language, a symbolism incapable of being grasped empirically. It is these complex structures of languages that would together go to constitute culture.
Culture, Communication and Silence

SACHINDRANATH GANGULI

Introduction

The title may seem a little presumptuous for we have placed silence seemingly on a par with concepts involving positive expression; but it is precisely this aspect of silence that we want to emphasize in this paper. Silence is a phenomenon which exerts a positive influence on the culture we build up.

Culture not only develops through the possibility of communication but also changes its form through a widening of communication with the length and breadth of the world. A culture which is alive rejects nothing good as alien. Culture and communication have been, more than ever, inseparably connected. Yet so far as culture is concerned, this communication has been mostly verbal. Language plays the most important part in our culture today. But unfortunately our verbal manifestation, being a constant source of ambiguities, have been our own traps. Our over-dependence on eloquence has led us to forget the constructive role of silence in our system.

* With the permission of the Editor of Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, New York, in which journal this article appeared in its issue of December 1968.
of expressions. Properly interspersed silence can and does give an aesthetic excellence to our language-habits which otherwise can be very dull and monotonous. On a more serious level, silence gives us *security* and *freedom*; it is undoubtedly true that we are somehow embarrassed about this fact and try to guard the borders of language with a dogmatic zeal. But the strong feature of silence makes itself felt round every corner through a set of statements which should fairly be called the "silencers" of our language. As soon as we try to identify this zone of silence we tend to become *subjective*. We thus alternate between an act of individual decision to be silent or to participate in the social game of speaking out. Every culture is necessarily influenced by this alternation; a little unsteady perhaps, but fruitful nevertheless. Culture breeds and fosters the individual in its uniqueness and yet the individual feels cramped through expressing and participating in his culture. Strange, how culture itself brings in us the consciousness of being dissatisfied with it. It has been customary to lament for the days that are gone and wail at the contemporary times for being the most critical period in history. Mankind is destined to miss on something even when men are convinced that they have progressed far beyond their barbarian forefathers. However irrational this attitude may apparently seem to be, there is an element of truth in this expression of agony and anxiety for the times we are living in. The basis of such restlessness within us is a deeply rooted sense of an essential malady of our culture; we somehow, though often very vaguely, realize a sort of maladjustment between the *freely deciding individual* and the *rule-governed society* in which we move and have our being. The individual cannot help, and perhaps justifiably so, feeling that after a certain point his role in society is not only unrewarding but positively injurious to his individual existence. Whenever we try to take a comprehensive view of human civilization and culture we are impressed by a continuous tension and strain dominating the depth of individual minds. Let us describe this tension a little further.

There is something so tiring about being cultured. The amount of strain that one has to go through in order to respond
smartly to all the social signals, e.g., greet your guest with a smile, inhibit your disdain at the sign of your "very helpful" neighbour, learn this and that—and all this just to participate in a common system of behaviour prevalent in the community we live in. One is always afraid to be picked up as a sheep out of the flock, or a man without culture. One is burdened with rules of behaviour and yet must not show the signs of strain (like a ballet dancer). We often hear nowadays of the stress and strain of modern living because the material and non-material aspects of culture have been so very complicated and elaborate. Subjectivity is a virtue, one must practise only in one's solitariness. The individual, naturally, very often cracks under the pressure of keeping up with the demands of his own culture. But one can hardly do without his uniqueness as an individual. It is only natural, therefore, that the individual will want to come off the stage for a little while and retire into his own inner self. In short he wants to retire. It can be regarded as a real need for a wakeful individual to want to sleep a little, to run away from the world of noise and crowd into the world of silence and solitude. However, asocial this holiday-self of a being is, this is as much essential to him as his weekday-appearances. The more we obey the rules of culture, the more we feel trapped, perhaps a little too excited and choked. Silence for such an individual is not merely an odd luxury but a veritable relief born out of a rather strange sense of integration of our experiences in our personality. Apart merely from the fact of obeying the rules of behaviour in the society, there is one specific aspect of these social encounters in general which demand an exacting attention from us, because the rules in that field are very vague and ambiguous. This aspect is the aspect of communication in our culture. A culture literally thrives on and excels in its complexity of communication. The more complex the system of communication is, the more tiring becomes its execution. This may possibly be the reason of the malady of a modern man, or for that matter any man since he lived in a culture. When silence comes as such a relief it is not merely of a negative value but positively enriches the individual and prompts him sometimes to use new kinds of statements, pointing to and yet not
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describing, the world of silence. In this paper we shall mainly be concerned with this aspect of culture. The scope of culture is too vast to be discussed adequately in one paper; we, therefore, have selected the most important aspect of our culture, that is, communication. The nature of the tension mentioned earlier will be properly, at least we hope so, explained through the phenomenon of language. Our analysis will, therefore, chiefly centre round the problem of communication; an analysis which will identify the referred to "malady" as essential to communicating animals. The tension, that we suffer from our desire to express, is not accidental or temporary but intrinsic to the language-oriented culture that we have. The conflict, to put it very tersely, is between our desire to express and the failure of expression—the ultimate insignificance residing side by side the totality of significant discourse. We shall not, in such circumstances, try to offer a therapy or a solution but only shall try to identify and determine the true nature of this existential vacuum (the "malady").

Section I

In the above section we have made many vague remarks regarding the relation between culture and individual in order to present a rough idea as to the contents of this paper. In this section, therefore, we shall try to explicate the notion of culture and the role it plays in determining the role of an individual inside a specific culture-pattern.

To avoid a common confusion let us distinguish in the very beginning between culture and civilization. Very often the two expressions "culture" and "civilization" are used synonymously. This happens more often when we talk about ancient civilizations or cultures. Of course this usage is quite harmless when we consider the fact that civilization is a term with wider connotation which includes within it the meaning of the term culture. However, it is safer to try to distinguish, as far as possible, the difference of meaning between these two terms; this is especially necessary since the two terms cover the two different aspects, i.e., the internal and the external, of human progress with a difference of emphasis. To the anthropologists
the word "culture" has a very wide significance; according to Tylor culture is: "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." The word "civilization" also, as mentioned earlier, is used in a very wide sense. In its literal meaning, it not only refers to the sum of attainments characteristic of life in an organised city or state but it also has been used to cover all the achievements which mark off man from animals. Nevertheless, civilization and culture should be distinguished at least on the ground that the former expresses an *objective attitude* and the latter a *subjective attitude*. For Kant the idea of morality was essential to the idea of culture and which gives it a subjective character; civilization, according to Kant was, on the other hand, a matter of objective, outward behaviour. Among recent writers, Professor MacIver writes: "Our culture is what we are, our civilization is what we use." In other words, culture is concerned with the intrinsic values and spiritual freedom of man, with the ideals that we cherish for their spiritual worth; whereas civilization is related with the mechanism or apparatus which man uses in order to control the conditions of his life in his outside world. In this paper we shall try to interpret this subjectivity of culture not merely in terms of the *problem of expressing* ourselves but also from the fact that we, for fear of insecurity, often relapse into the *world of silence* and the total subjectivity in our attitude is constantly replenished. Of course, our emphasis on the sense of internality in culture does not mean that we are losing sight of the fact that culture is really a superstructure based on social habits and our organic capacities as biological entities. A leading expert in the field defines culture as follows:

The human capacity for culture is a consequence of man's complex and plastic nervous system.

In its fullest sense, culture is a series of integrated patterns for behaviour developed from mass habits.

And yet Hoebel himself admits that culture is not merely a set of integrated social behaviours. A society of ants have all those characteristics and yet we do not pre-suppose culture in
their society. Culture signifies more than a series of conditioned social behaviours according to a set of rules. This overplus (along with Ginsberg) can be identified as the internality of a culture. Culture is a context where an individual not only becomes an expert in handling and operating efficiently certain tools and executes certain performances but also learns how to regulate his life according to certain values and norms. In other words, there is a scope of individual improvement qua individual. It is this sense of the word "culture" that we wanted to distinguish from the word "civilization". However, correctly speaking, the word "culture" stands for social as well as individual aspects of behaviour. The former sense brings culture nearer to civilization; it is the latter sense which, therefore, can be regarded as peculiar to culture. This factor of culture is well brought out by K. Jaspers in his book *Man in the Modern Age*:

"The general sociological situation is not the decisive factor in our destinies, being, rather that which threatens our annihilation. The decisive factor is the developing possibility of a self-hood which is not yet objectively extant........."

It is this subjectivity which gives culture its peculiar importance in guaranteeing the individual excellence and freedom. It is by admitting this sense in our culture, that we shall try to show an eternal alternation between the objective world of expression and the subjective world of security and absolute freedom. These two senses of the term are clearly brought out by Prof. Horton when he classifies the characteristics of culture under the two following heads: (1) material aspects, and (2) non-material aspects; this is such an exhaustive classification of the various meanings of culture that even the sense of the word "civilization" is brought under this description. To quote Horton:

"From their life experiences, a group develops a set of rules and procedures for meeting their needs. The set of rules and procedures together with a supporting set of ideas and values, is called a culture.

... ... ... ... 

This social heritage may be divided into material and
non-material culture. Non-material culture consists of
the words people use, the ideas customs, and beliefs they
hold, and the habits they follow. Material culture con-
sists of man-made objects such as tools, furniture, etc."
Following the manner of speaking quoted above, we can bring
the communicational aspect of culture under the non-material
culture. To be precise, then, our concern mainly will be with
this non-material culture. The influence of culture on one's
life and personality can hardly be exaggerated. From the time
before one is born until one's death, his life is designed by his
culture. His culture provokes him to behave in a certain
way—defines his attitudes, values, goals; his culture not only
determines his own behaviour, but gives him clues to assess
others' behaviours too. On top of all this his culture provides
the myths, legends, and supernatural beliefs he will live by.
Knowingly or unknowingly we are products of our culture.
Such all-round influence of culture on our personalities does
not seem surprising when we consider the fact that much of
what we call our empirical selves are really created and built
up in and through a social stage. Prof. Horton, mentioned
earlier, put this fact metaphorically as "man is the prisoner
of his culture." Even the cosmological beliefs are likely to
be, to a certain extent, influenced by culture. According to
Cooley, Mead and many others the very emergence of the self
is a social process. The individual looks at himself as if he were
another person. Granted all this we should not, by any
chance, be tempted to forget the creative part of the individ-
ual. It is indeed true that the ego is a social emergence; but
from this social process the self that emerges is not altogether
harmonious with the society. The individual is not only unique
in that all the other individuals of nearly the same environ-
ment are very different, but the individual builds up, as it were,
a 'hard core of individuality'. This 'hard core' may be, or
perhaps is, due to the social influence; but a self-conscious
individual who already possesses this sense of individuality
starts exerting itself and thereby changes the conditions of his
own culture. The desire for self-assertion is an undeniable
trait in almost every individual, though the effectiveness of
such assertion may vary from person to person according to
conditions—external and internal. This assertion very often takes the form of social defiance; the desire to defy our own rules is a universal feature of human animals. That is why the sociologists have to distinguish between "real culture" and "ideal culture". Incest, in most societies, is forbidden; and how self-gratifying and exciting to commit it! The harder the defiance the greater the ego-satisfaction. This paradoxical feature of our living in a culture helps explain the permanent agony in us, and especially of modern men. Whenever this self-assertion is thwarted in his culture the individual starts feeling rather insecure and painfully in bondage. A philosophy, therefore, which preaches that life is suffering seems so attractive to us. However, to come back to our theme, just as culture influences the individual, in his turn, influences the culture he lives in. The two main points through which such inter-relationship is established are: (1) a feeling of security which encourages and inspires new dimensions of self-expression and thereby extends the borders of non-material culture more than we can properly cope with; (2) through an identification of, in the inner world of the individual, self with freedom; this gives him a taste of absolute freedom. In other words, the two urges of Security and Freedom are, to begin with, the most covetable and powerful gifts from the society; yet a desperate pursuit of them by all of us, or at least a few of us, may modify, in the sense of enrichment, the entire culture and also leave a distinct character to the "ethos" of specific cultures. In the sequel, we shall see how silence helps these feelings in us. Tersely speaking, the security-feeling comes to us through our language and successful communication, and the freedom-feeling comes through our resignation to silence.

Section II: Culture And Communication

The faith that my feelings can be communicated, that my ideas can be understood, accepted and spread makes me feel secure. The worst fear is the fear of being misunderstood. Through communication we rise above our loneliness—we explore a common world with others; man feels anchored and tagged to a universe wide enough to make him feel his existence.
The non-material culture is mostly developed centering round this possibility of communication. Communication, of course, is a term with wide connotation. Most of our behaviours, when in contact with other individuals, can be regarded as communicative. The instinctive cries of pain, or alarm or joy, etc.,—the marvellous message-dance of the bees, all these animal communications do not really concern us here except as a reminder of the fact that communication is essentially a social affair and consequently predominantly rule-guided. For our purpose communication will stand for verbal communication only; this being the differentia of human culture. The possession of language is the greatest characteristic of our culture.

Today the importance of language in a culture can hardly be over-rated. Language is also intimately tied up with culture that every new addition to the linguistic heritage also changes the frontiers of culture. The enormous importance of the problem can be seen in India’s indecision to change from English to Hindi. A large section of our people mistakenly think that the choice of language is merely a matter of convenience; it has hardly anything to do with our culture. As a result we have decided to retain English quite oblivious of the possible consequences that our culture will face. One can never graft a foreign language as the medium of expression just because this is convenient; convenience, again, is a vague and relative term. The unhappy choice of English in India is being felt in various cultural fronts, e.g., Rock and Roll as dance, our dress, our food, lack of original thinking, love of western ways of life, ragging as fun; these are only the few among others. I am merely pointing to a sociological fact, that by choosing a particular language we are changing the entire culture as well; if such changing experiences are not properly integrated, a bastard culture is sure to take the place with all its pathological significance. As a matter of fact, to a sensitive observer, miserable signs of this hybrid culture in India have already started showing up. I cited the example of India, just because we are very keen to overlook the instance at hand, and such a sore instance at that. Choosing a foreign language is not merely to change the present contours of our
culture into a hybrid monstrosity but also to be absolutely in the dark as to the future shape of our culture; a culture, cut off from its own tradition and unsure about taking another, experiences an agonising void which heavily tells on the individual members. The last is the most serious symptom of a cultural confusion because one is not free to change one's tradition and an effort to that effect gives us a feeling of being rootless. A serious sociological investigation will immediately reveal that the choice of a foreign tongue for the people of our country has been cruel to the members and devastating to the society. Another contradiction that the society is nurturing instead of solving, is the creation of a new class of elites who have acquired efficiency in that foreign tongue, and, naturally, have vested interests as opposed to the rest of the people; a distinction, peculiar to the colonial countries (between ‘ham-log’ and ‘sahab-log’). Culture is as much dependent upon communication as communication upon culture and this passage is guaranteed only so far as the members of a group have, at their disposal, a language which they can conveniently manipulate. Choice of a foreign tongue, therefore, amounts to choosing not to communicate or, at best, thrive on a ‘minimum communication’ principle. This is happening regularly in our academic institutions and universities. English, being the medium of instruction, both the students and the teachers are unnecessarily going through a wasteful mechanism of translation either way. Such an academic atmosphere, apart from being barren, is positively injurious to any thinking individual; the result is desperate crammering. Language is not used to convey sense but only uttered to produce a jargon. Of course, what is said here does not hold good for each institution but, at the same time, accurately describes the general trend of our academic toil. On top of all this, the gap between the educated and the uneducated is gradually widening. The so-called elite group who have very smugly resorted to the foreign language are allowing, and with quite a pride, the vast cultural traditions lying beyond their world (a world which is neither here nor there) to be atrophied for lack of any communication. We have indeed digressed a little but citing the case of India as a concrete instance is not too far away from our original point
that a particular culture and language are so intimately con-
ected that it is impossible to try to separate them. The case
of India, on the other hand, is a very cogent piece of evidence
for our thesis that the fate of a culture is linked too hard with
the fate of its language. The following lines from an expert
in the field of communication research will help us to see the
full implication of such a connection:

"The full effect of a word upon its hearer may depend
not only upon the context but upon the whole physical
and psychological environment and, on many occasions,
upon his experience of the culture of which the language
forms an integral part."

Let us now pass on to the discussion of language and com-
munication exclusively. Language is so much a part of our
daily life that we often tend to look at it as a natural act like
breathing but we realise as soon as we attend a little that there
is nothing natural or automatic about language. We do not
inherit language; we acquire it only by intensive learning. It
would be rather pompous and pedantic to describe here the
elaborate sociological researches into the history and origin of
language; it is enough to know for our purpose that man has
possessed language as long as he has possessed culture and
language has been developing since then. The antiquity of
language is borne out by various considerations arising out of
modern investigation into the nature of various languages. To
mention a few of these evidences we can start with the number
of languages spoken in all parts of the world; they will cer-
tainly add up to several thousand. The second important point
is that known languages, ancient or modern, cannot be classed
in terms of their level of development. There are neither
primitive languages nor highly developed ones, if we take into
consideration only the structural features. In other words, all
languages possess a definite and clear cut system of grammar.
This grammatical aspect of languages, when highly generalized,
betrays the logic of languages. Our concern will be mainly
with this logical aspect of language vis-a-vis its social aspect of
proper communication.

Language is, broadly speaking, a system of symbols. The
two words in the above line need a little explanation. Language performs an essentially social function helping us to get along together, to communicate and achieve a co-operation and understanding amongst us. As such language has to obey certain rules—rules which are available to all of us when we use language. In other words, however arbitrary the nature of signs may seem, once they are accepted in the corpus there is no more anarchy in their combinations. Their combinations are well-organized and rule-governed. All the moves we make must be according to rules. However fascinating it may seem to us, a private language is a misnomer. Just as any sound is not a word, any handling of the pawns on the chess board is not a ‘move’, similarly, any utterance is not a significant statement. A move is either correct or incorrect; a statement is either true or false. Where intelligibility and communication are the ends, absence of rules will defeat the very purpose. A full set of elements with rules of combination is what is meant here by a ‘system’. It is not a system like physics which is highly rigorous, i.e., where moves are fairly predictable: moves in ordinary language are or may not be always predictable, but at least the moves must be identifiable to elicit response in a definite context. How far these rules are enumerable, objective or even followed, is a matter we shall discuss later. ‘Symbols’ are the words in a language. They are symbolic as opposed to their being ‘iconic’ as well as for their self-transcending reference to things and entities. It is this part of reference that will be important for our purpose here. Another distinction will not be out of place here. Talking in a language and talking about a language are two very different things. The former may be called the object-language (by following a common fashion in philosophy) and the latter the meta-language. When we speak about the language, obviously language can be shown to have all sorts of laws for the three specific aspects, e.g., syntactics, semantics and pragmatics. But when we are suggesting that language is a ‘system’ where moves can be judged to be correct or incorrect we are not referring to any meta-linguistic rules, but rules existing inside the language to be adhered to by the participants. Any positivistic analysis of language has to start with an analysis of words.
Words, mostly stand for things, entities, or relations. These non-verbal elements can be regarded as the referents of which the words are generally names. At an advanced stage of learning this feature may not be explicit: as when we learn the meaning of a word through certain synonyms in the dictionary; but such verbal learning cannot go on indefinitely. It stops at a point when one has to learn the technique of referring to a non-linguistic element through a verbal symbol. This naming operation plays a powerful influence on our mind and without this basic referring habit of language we can hardly learn the art of communication. The story of Helen Keller is a very good case in point. Before she could either see or hear Helen became blind and deaf at the age of eighteen months. Her parents put her under the guidance of a remarkably patient nurse; the nurse hated to give up and persevered in her task to teach Helen the language. Up to the age of nine, Helen uttered words and phrases and yet they meant nothing to her. She did not get a clue to communication. It was all a verbal play for pleasure which had no sense. Suddenly, one day, when Helen was playing with water she realized the idea, which flashed, as it were, into her mind that ‘everything has a name’. Only then, a sign turned, for the first time in her life into a symbol with content. At a much earlier stage of our childhood this idea of reference is revealed to us and we start learning words at a great speed. “Everything must have a name” is the clue to our primary linguistic consciousness. The objects which lay outside us became significant to us as soon as we started naming them, separately and collectively. By giving a name to all that we observe we, as it were, seem to exercise (of course in a very primitive level of culture and consciousness) a superior power over those things existing in nature. Giving names to things thus gives us a strange sense of security. Things appear less cruel and powerful as soon as they get names from us. This primitive awareness instilled in us in the very beginning of our culture, almost a magical power in the heart of words. Primitive people were governed to a large extent, by mere words. The concept of logos or Sabda-Brahma are clear indications of a tremendously exciting faith that we suddenly developed towards language through the use of words.
or symbols. 'What's in a name' attitude is only a recent state in our symbolic consciousness. In the beginning names wielded a great influence on our personalities; in short, it was a stage of materialistic or "entitative" consciousness. Let us quote a few lines from J. G. Frazer to describe the influences that names exercised on the primitive people:

"Unable to discriminate clearly between words and things, the savage commonly fancies that the link between a name and the person or thing denominated by it is not merely arbitrary and indeed an association, but a real and substantial bond which unites the two in such a way that magic may be wrought on a man just as easily through his names as through his hair, nails, or any other material part of his person.... Some Esquimox take new names when they are old, hoping thereby to get a new lease of life."

But we need not pride ourselves that we have shaken off all such primitive superstitions. Today, we ourselves recognize many taboo words, especially in the context of social gatherings, commerce or even religion. It is a matter worth considering why to call one's superiors by his first name is being discourteous or even disrespectful. There are all kinds of such social nuances in our or other societies which indicate an uneasy feeling associated with at least some kinds of proper names. Whatever the mythological or anthropological interpretation of such characteristics regarding words and their uses, so far as words are used as elements which need to be tagged to the external referents, the language becomes simple and less ambiguous. In Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* no less efforts were spent to uphold a reference theory of meaning with regard to words. To quote his exact words: "An elementary proposition consists of names. It is a nexus, a concatenation of names.

As a matter of fact Russell also in establishing the philosophy of Logical Atomism initiated the trend when he asserted that all descriptive terms can ultimately be reduced to 'logically proper names' or 'terms of acquaintance'. The strength of this "word-as-reference" attitude lies in the ability to award an available objective theatre to our learnt expressions. We want to point the meanings of words *out there* for anybody
to see and agree. The idea of truth gets rooted to a public world of things. Surely, this is the best way to understand and impart information. For every utterance there is a concrete object (according to the above-mentioned theory)—independent and yet nameable, and, therefore, somehow a manipulable entity. The self can come out of its hesitant, shy subjectivity and throw itself into the objective world. We know the world and know each other. What attitude could give us greater security? In our encounter with the external world the attitude mentioned above helps us enormously to keep confident and steady in the face of a host of unfamiliar stimuli. The full significance of the statement, "Knowledge is Power" draws its inspiration from this basic faith in the "word-for-a-thing" attitude. Not to be able to name a thing is to put it into the region of the ineffable, wherefrom it incessantly threatens our confidence of expression. All this is said in the above to prove the point that our possession of language, even in a primary level, i.e., the act of naming, generated in us a sense of security. Now again, this sense of security made us feel freer to—a sort of freedom which one enjoys when he is out to conquer the world including his own self; a consequence of intense smugness.

But unfortunately, even the reference-attitude does not succeed for long. With the advancement of our language the act of naming does not appear so simple as that. All the noun words are not like tables, chairs and bipeds; to be more precise, the meaning of every word in a vocabulary cannot be learnt merely through pointing at the referents because there aren't any. All names are not proper names. There are class terms, terms expressing emotions and personal experiences, abstract terms and, last but not least, the theoretical terms pertaining to a scientific system. Yet all these terms are empirical terms. In other words, the meaning of such terms generates vagueness. We just cannot lay hold of a listener and point out to him what I mean by 'man' or 'tooth-ache' or 'anger', or 'charity' or 'force' respectively. There is an essential vagueness in their meaning. We shall take up each kind of terms mentioned and dwell on their vagueness to show why we call this
vagueness essential. John Locke, the great English empiricist philosopher, summed up the vagueness thus: "When we begin to fix by means of words... abstract ideas... there is a danger of error. Words should not be treated as an adequate picture of things; they are merely arbitrary signs for certain ideas—by historical accident and liable to change."

Let us start with the 'class term'. Empirical terms representing classes have vagueness so far as they admit of borderline cases. The paradigm class of such terms should be colour terms, say 'blue' or 'green'. There is sure to be a set of objects which can be arranged so that they follow the following order: blue-blue-green-blue-blue-green. Can we determine, except by an arbitrary convention, where an object ceases to be blue and can be called green? It is easy to do that for the final points but all the rest falling in between the clearest cases of blue and green complicate the matter. The meaning of any colour term is sure to be vague for the above reason. This sort of vagueness about meaning is intrinsic to an empirical term for classes can be arranged in point of degrees of similarity. As for the terms expressing abstract qualities like charity, kindness, etc., the vagueness is pretty obvious. When asked to state precisely the meaning of such terms our answers are always vague. Even here, there are borderline cases. Giving alms to beggars is indeed an act of charity; but giving poison to the person who wants to commit suicide? We really don't know. We can, of course, always decide by some other means, but never from the meaning of such terms alone.

Thirdly, regarding the terms expressing personal experience, e.g., tooth-ache or terms of emotions. Here we face that notorious problem of the 'privacy of experience'. Meaning is expected to be something which can be publicly communicated. But are our tooth-aches, or even joy for that matter, ever adequately communicable so that the possibility of misunderstanding is completely and finally eliminated? In saying all this we should not be understood to mean that communication is just impossible; we are merely asserting that there is only an essential vagueness in the meaning of such terms with the result that we are always aware of a possibility of misunder-
standing. This constant apprehension of being ‘misunderstood’ greatly affects the psychology of the users of language.

Finally, when we come to ‘theoretical terms’, we discover that vagueness inherent in them is not so much regarding their meaning-specification but their connection with our experience. In other words, these terms seem to draw their meaning not so much from available public experiences but from the system to which they belong. This creates a new dimension in the problem of understanding. We seem to idealise and abstract from our experience to impart an accuracy of meaning to such terms. Naturally, therefore, there shows up a gap (and a logical at that) between their meanings and their application. The important fact to be noted here is that this awareness of a gap leads us, and actually has led a lot of thinkers, say, P. K. Feyerabend, to think of the problem of meaning from a completely different direction. Usually, the habit with the empiricist philosophers was to specify the meaning of higher order terms in terms of lower order terms; that is, the pressure of understanding goes up, according to them, from the bottom to the top in a system. The new outlook with regard to theoretical terms, i.e., they are the results of abstraction and idealisation, completely reversed the attitude to the problem of meaning of the theoretical terms; the meaning of a term, therefore, is taken to the top which exerts a pressure on the terms occurring at the bottom of a theory or a system. In short, all words have a specific meaning with reference to a particular theory. Meaning cannot be known in isolation, it is theory-laden. The traditional faith in empirical facts (or ‘experiences derived through senses’) as the ultimate legislator of meaning is thus shaken even for empirical sciences. Certainly, this behaviour of the terms does not make their meaning vague. but only makes us feel that there is a final arbitrariness in the application of such terms to our experience. The result is the same, that is a sense of insecurity creeps into our mind whenever we discover that the Truth and also meaning of what we say are not determined by a common observable world or nature but merely by the principle of convenience or even an aesthetic choice. The arbitrariness involved in the meaning of such
terms allows a freeplay to certain subjective factors so solemnly avoided by us to maintain the objective purity of our language.

There is another difficulty with regard to terms of experience. The difficulty which has been called the "open texture" by F. Waismann. When we try to describe the characteristics necessary for identifying a member inside a class we can never be sure that we have done it adequately. There is always an openness: Waismann, of course, distinguishes this character from obscurity or opacity of meaning, but as one reads through his article named "Verifiability," one is sure to admit that this open texture undoubtedly leads to a vagueness of meaning for such terms, e.g., empirical terms. Let us take the case of an animal which has all the regular characteristics of a cat except that it alternately gives birth to kittens and lays eggs. Shall we still call this animal a cat? The difficulty is obvious in deciding such cases; an empirical class is always open and never finally closed in respect to its meaning-extension.

In the above section we have talked only about general terms; it may, therefore, be pointed out that in the case of particular terms such vagueness, as is being upheld here, is absent. Since these terms have got a clear referent, it is only natural to presume that they are free from any intrinsic vagueness of meaning. But a little analysis will reveal that even these particular terms are equally vague. It is generally accepted by us in everyday learning that we learn the meaning of a lot of words by ostensive pointing. But truly enough, Wittgenstein pointed out that this 'pointing' pre-supposes a fair amount of linguistic excellence. To illustrate: when we are pointing to a child the yonder table and utter "Table" or say fully "This is a table"—the vagueness comes in through sheer physical limitation. When we are pointing at the table, what are we really pointing at? Is it the colour, or the shape, or the material? Then again our fingers, our usual instrument for pointing, are too tiny to cover the whole object. How does my pupil know whether we are pointing to only a "part" of the table or "the whole entity"? If we explain by saying that we mean "the whole"—we presume that the learner has enough linguistic skill to know the meaning of phrase "whole
entity". "Whole entity", again, cannot be pointed out. This apart, the idea of a "whole entity" depends on the particular theory of the world and reality we subscribe to. To a set of people, say, the sincere followers of Bergson, Whitehead, Buddhism, etc., the world is a flow of transitory events of a process. He will never be able to understand what we, with our ordinary theory of individuals, mean by a "whole entity". Perhaps these difficulties or/and ambiguities, or vagueness are not ineradicable. With proper care we can get out of quite a number of these difficulties, but it is certainly not possible to eliminate such vagueness completely. Thus, vagueness of meaning even in the case of words with supposedly particular reference is a fate we can hardly avoid. This points to a failure of the intended purpose of language—the purpose of ideal of precise communication, and results in a keen sense of frustration on our part, psychologically speaking. We are under a constant fear of being misunderstood. This is certainly a feeling of insecurity. With language we wanted to be secure and free—we wanted to express ourselves to others unambiguously; everything should be open and above board. Instead, ironically enough, we build up a world rather shaky, full of subjective uncertainties due to meaning-vagueness of words or symbols. This vagueness we can call "intrinsic vagueness", i.e., vagueness involved in symbolic reference. But even when words are regarded or entertained in a metalanguage as signs, there is still a vagueness which we shall term "extrinsic vagueness" or "identification vagueness" (instead of "meaning vagueness"). This is a difficulty constantly faced by the language-scientists or communication-engineers, when they try to describe a sample of conversation between the two people. The scientist immediately finds that any attempt to make quantitative assertion about this sample is beset with difficulties. Let us see what an expert says in this connection: "There is first a difficulty in providing a selective basis to quantitative measurement of information, conveyed by the science, because the vocabularies used by the two individuals,... are virtually impossible to define. What total range of sounds or words or gestures, or phrases does it use? Added to this there is a further difficulty in defining sets of signs to be called their
"vocabularies." Secondly, it is almost impossible to define, standardize and specify utterances since no two individuals speak exactly alike. The field of phonetics and signal analysis is thus no less beset with difficulties originating out of an "identification-vagueness" of words as signs. Enough has been said in the above to prove that the practice of communication is far behind its ideal. The goal of communication is thus never achieved; nothing can be more frustrating. The failure of communication in the above section has been limited to the meaning of words. The best act to impart clear meanings to words is through a reference-act. But this is just where we fail. This kind of failure, let us call, the "Applicative failure" of our language which we shall distinguish from the "Descriptive failure" to be taken up in the sequel.

To fight our way out of this gloomy trap of vagueness we can either, (a) take recourse to an extremely private method like intuition to identify the meaning of words in personal consciousness, or, (b) attempt to formalize the problem of meaning by pursuing an over-public method of mathematics or logic. As for the former way we can cite instances of the systems of Plato or Bergson or many Indian philosophers. The second means, mentioned in the above, is manifested in the tendency to incorporate a word into an elaborate descriptive system, so that the concept of meaning is regarded more as 'verbal connectibility' rather than reference or 'ostensive applicability'. Very loosely, we can call this the 'dictionary' attitude to meaning—an attitude which is sure to snap at the endpoints of experience. As a result, we retreat from the public world of facts or experience, either into a subjective world of indescribability or, in a world of conventions. Such conventions are often prompted not so much by a desire to communicate as to indulge in an aesthetic game of building up of theories as alternative structures. What is displayed in such cases is not a passion for impersonal truths existing out there in nature but a sort of skill in choosing verbal axioms and definitions. However, since both the recourses mentioned presuppose the existence of an efficient descriptive system of language, it
is wiser for us to see whether and how far description is fraught with vagueness as well.

The sense of descriptive statements depending on the words is sure to be infected with vagueness if our above analysis of word-meaning is anywhere near the truth. To start with, let us represent a typical communication situation to see where-from the vagueness creeps into our descriptive efforts. A successful communication can be regarded as enabling us to have similar reference in a primitive level of descriptive. The uttered expressions of a speaker act as a meaningful stimulus to excite in us responses and communication involves identifying and discriminating between these responses. These responses, ordinarily speaking, are nothing other than experiences, actual or possible. It is only our similarity of experiences that assures success in understanding in a primary level of communication. Werkmeister summed up the nature of communication as follows: "When I pronounce the proposition which is meaningful form, I produce within the first person experience of listener a specific experiential complex—involving both form and qualitative content—which symbolizes for him the referent I mean". Depending on 'similarity of reference' for communication (even if it be in the primary level) is only to fall a victim to the same vagueness as exists in our referring acts. In other words, an objective world which is common to both the speaker and the listener econtaining referents has to be presupposed and yet it is precisely here that vagueness comes from. Let us illustrate graphically the case of a simple communication situation in the following way:

![Diagram]

Communication

\[ E \rightarrow R \rightarrow E \]

A

Experience-Complex

B

Referent

Experience-Complex

E=Expression, A=Speaker, B=Listener, R=Rules
In the above figure we notice that apart from a common world of "Referents" there must be an objective set of 'Rules' independently of the participants from where they both should draw the final validity of the statement. "We are talking of or having similar experiences". It should be amply clear by now that even here vagueness cannot be avoided. It is not merely the world of referents but also the rules through which vagueness creeps in. Rules have to be stated through words; consequently, the same fate awaits our understanding of the rules. That is why, Wittgenstein in his latest book, Remarks on Mathematics upholds the belief that we are nowhere compelled to "follow a Rule"—not even in the world of logic or mathematics; and all because rules have to be understood finally in terms of ordinary language. But some may point out that the ideal cases of descriptive discourse are the theoretical systems, say, physics. But, what applies here applies mutatis mutandis in those sciences; for sciences, as well, have to presuppose and obey a set of Rules. As a matter of fact, we have no holiday from Rules when we participate in a common language. The Rules may not be explicitly stated but they are always there to guide us. A secondary effect of such rule-guided moves in language is that our initial desire for freedom is not fulfilled and we crave for a rule-free world—the world of silence. However, we shall dwell on this point later. Our interest at present is to see how far the world of description can give us security by enabling us to build up a rigorously objective world of communication. Unfortunately, we discover that this is not an odd demand even in science. The vagueness that resides in description originates mainly in the differences of our subjective worlds, worlds which cannot be eliminated completely from the domain of meaning and communication. If we properly classify all the factors involved in a descriptive communication we reach the following analysis (page 40).

From the analysis, we are in a position to appreciate that an admission of personal factors is sure to make any form of communication subject-dependent and, therefore vague, leading to a sense of insecurity—the insecurity of being misunder-
| Socio-Biological factors (a kind of general conditioning and constitution roughly similar among different individuals) | Personal factors (Emotive ties, memories, attitudes more or less different in different individuals) | Conventional factors (Adherence to a definite set of explicit principles commonly known and agreed upon and particular fields of used in knowledge, like physics, etc.) |

stood. Even sciences are no exceptions. It may so happen that in different kinds of communication different factors predominate with different degrees of intensity. But that does not forbid us to say in a general way that a system for all to share through description is shaken and we cannot help feeling absolutely frustrated. The great value that keeps the habit of description going, is the idea of truth existing independently of any language-system. If conventions are substituted for such an objective value, the choice between two rival theories in science becomes only aesthetic. This is exactly what many philosophers have upheld, e.g., Durkheim, Popper (however much he denies it), and Poincare. At this point some philosophers may desperately try to retain the necessary character of the a priori in any knowledge-system. One may suggest, as it is actually suggested by many, that the set of a priori is uniquely fixed and exists independently of any specific language. The mode of knowing them is intuition. In short these a priori are pre-linguistic suppositions,—the absolute preconditions for any language whatsoever. But such a view appears unacceptable for the following reasons: Apart from the philosophical difficulties of admitting 'intuition' as a public mode of knowing there arises a logical difficulty when we pursue the implications of this view far enough. Let us suppose that there is a class of intuitions which we name M. M is supposed to be neutral to any language which amounts to saying that if there are two alternative languages, say, L & L' the class M will be, of necessity, expressed differently in L & L' (L & L' being two entirely different languages, i.e., where both the elements and Rules of formation and transformation are different) respectively named N & N'. The contention of the philosophers
stated earlier will be that though N & N' are differently construed in L & L' respectively, they have "an identical content". But this judgment cannot be significantly made. To know the identity of the content of N & N' there must be rules of such identification; and in which language then will these rules be stated? They can neither be stated in L or L'. They can only be stated in a common metalanguage, say, L". In that case, we are not entitled to pass the judgment that N & N' have identical content because if L & L' come under a common metalanguage L", they are no more different languages but only sub-languages under the language L". In other words there will be common rules of translation from one language into another. What we want to say here is not that "there is no such identity" but that even if there is, we cannot significantly say that. In short, therefore, we cling to our 'a priori set' as if they are unique just on pain of security. But to know this is to lose this sought-for security, adult thinking finds no satisfaction in as if necessity or objectivity but wants real necessity and that is not to be found anywhere, not even in the world of our a priori presuppositions. Let us sum up what we have said so far: language has to have Rules; but they turn out to be less rigorous than we intended them to be. Thus, though the Rules existing in our language impart a sense of security, it does not make them necessary for we can reasonably entertain the possibility of an alternative set of rules. Rules, thus, contribute to our frustration and we start feeling a kind of dejection which cramps our sense of freedom. We long for a rule-free zone and silence comes to our rescue. The self comes out of its silent corner to objectify and externalise itself in and through expression, through an advancing symbolic consciousness; but unfortunately, through "applicative" and "descriptive" failure we are frustrated and are pushed back again into the subjective world beyond language—the world of silence. This is the full picture of the restless cycle inherent in our verbalistic culture. We are tossed between these two worlds incessantly. This unsteadiness is, thus, essential to our culture which every age discovers and describes as the "crisis of the age". Such an alternation is finally unavoidable. According to K. Jaspers: "Since man
can find no completion in the realisation of his life as a whole, soaring above life, he builds for himself a second world, the world of the mind, in the space wherein he becomes articulately sure of himself in the general form of his being......cutting loose, for a moment, from mere Reality, he finds his way back into the being that he has become through the visions and the creations of his mind." The above lines very powerfully describe our retreat into a world of our own except that such a world cannot be again "articulate" as Jaspers thinks. Religious faith and our faith in a world of values are sometimes clung to in this world of silence through a mystic identification and that is why we indulge in the "indescribable", the "unsayable", the "anirvachya". End-points in the world of language act as silencers. With the above remarks, we come to our final section where we shall discuss the nature of, and the 'pointers' to, this world of silence.

Section III

The word 'silence' does not have the same sort of solemnity as the word 'shantam' has for us. The word 'shantam' has a deep metaphysical significance; phrases like 'shantam, shivam, advaisham' have contributed to the depth of its connotation.

Occasional relapse into silence has perhaps a good therapeutic value for any individual, and specifically for the anxiety-ridden souls of modern men. The psychological effect of meditation can hardly be exaggerated. Fortunately for us in India silence has always been upheld not only as a relief but also as a method of enjoying the highest truth or bliss. The entire tradition of yoga speaks for 'chittashuddhi' which depends on purifying and emptying the mind of verbalism too. It is in this richer sense that we are using the word 'silence' and not merely in the negative sense of absence of speech. Apart from the disputable fact that silence has a therapeutic value, there is another role of silence. Silence positively contributes to determining the scope of language in our culture. A knowledge of the right time and place to be silent is absolutely essential for an individual inside a specific culture-system. We are not expected to make a noise at a funeral. There are many such
social occasions where the individual members are expected to
preserve silence; silence is almost an institution for certain
social contexts. For an individual, silence has several uses;
sometimes, silence is comforting, sometimes it adds an aesthetic
elegance to our personalities, etc. Let us cite a few views on
silence: "He knew the precise psychological moment when to
say nothing," or, "He had occasional flashes of silence, that
made his conversation perfectly delightful."  

Of all these various roles that silence plays, the most impor-
tant at least for our purpose, is the role in which silence par-
tially restores to us a sense of security and a sense of freedom.
In the above we have discussed how our language-habits stand
in the way of an individual to achieve these two goals. Let us
see how silence acts as the restorer of these two basic pursuits.
We shall, therefore, try to answer the two following questions
throughout this section: (1) 'How does silence give us secu-
urity?', (2) 'How does silence help us to enjoy freedom?' In
answering the first question the best thing is to look into histo-
rical evidence. Since the scope of this paper does not allow
us to make detailed historical incursions, we shall rather limit
ourselves to a few quotations and mostly carry on an analysis
of the representative trends of thoughts so far as these refer
to silence either explicitly or implicitly. These writings
demonstrate clearly that the main reason why silence has been
upheld is because silence gives us an ultimate security. We
always have felt that, somehow, truth is richer than what our
descriptive mechanism can cope with and consequently, very
often we have developed a sort of 'thoughts-that-lie-too-deep-
for-tears-attitude'. Whether in the east or in the west, some
writers have betrayed an intense faith in silence for enabling
us to know the final truth. "Silence is the element in which
great things fashion themselves." We have desperately strug-
gled to preserve the "richer truths" in the world of silence.
This attitude is remarkably present mostly in the writings of
the mystics, poets, and religious thinkers. Their abundant use
of metaphors indicates how language is acting as a constraint
on their desire to express the truth. In our analysis of lan-
guage we found how communication is ill-fated to be vague.
Our natural belief that there are ultimate truths which are absolutely clear and necessary leads to that. This failure makes us feel insecure; we discover holes in our net of description through which the so-called important truths are slipping through. We want to preserve them somewhere where they will be finally secure; the automatic dodge, therefore, is to cry out, "Silence please" by making them "unique and indescribable." Words are not good enough, they are not rich enough to express the necessary truths to which are rooted the very meaning and purpose of life. In the words of a poet: "... Words strain,

Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still."

Therefore, we look forward to a zone of silence. To continue with the same poem, "Words, after speech reach.

Into the silence."38

A random search of literature, ancient, medieval or modern, will confirm what we are trying to say here. A more recent poet, Helen Spalding, finds out an inevitable sense of security in silence:

"That sound assuming silence,
.. .
The music an antique fragment easily hammered
To dust and waste; inverted to intrusion.
Instruments, apparatus, in touch.
The rest finally silence."39

Though it is predominantly the poets and religious thinkers who openly admit silence, the philosophers and scientists are no exceptions. Being more tough-minded than the poets the philosophers do not make an admission of an escape into silence openly, but nevertheless, in their writings they implicitly betray the same feeling of 'security-in-silence'. This attitude of the philosophers is amply manifest in the traditional search for certainty—the search for a secure foothold in thought. We said that the philosophers admit silence impli-
cruelly, because they do not openly uphold it but admit a set of primitive propositions or concepts beyond which they will not allow any further description. How boldly Descartes announced his cogito ergo sum as the ultimate starting-point. It is mostly the modern philosophers, who with their sophistication in using language, discovered in spite of their objectivity, the undercurrent of subjectivity and consequent vagueness in every kind of linguistic move. Prompted by this failure, even such philosophers as Schlick, Carnap and others of the same school stated that the ultimate content of our experience is incomunicable. The true spirit of taking refuge on pain of security in the world of the 'indescribable' is best illustrated in Schlick's discussions on the primitive propositions of sense which he calls the Konstatierung. These Konstatierung are the basis of all empirical descriptions but they themselves are not describable. These primitive statements, Schlick writes, cannot be written down. For as soon as we try to write them down we make them relatively stable which really they are not. They are very much like Russell's 'demonstratives' which constantly change. Such examples need not be multiplied for that way we shall unnecessarily lengthen our paper; but from what we have cited already we can legitimately conclude that philosophers are no less interested in falling back upon the zone of silence.

It is time now that we try to determine the exact relationship between the world of silence and the world of language. Silence influences our language indirectly through some kinds of statements. These statements lie on the border. But there is by no chance any logical connection between these two domains. The steps or marks through which we retire into the world of silence only suggest and do not strictly imply this world. These steps or marks, of course, fall into the domain of language or other forms of expression. Properly speaking, these steps or points or statements through which we request others to be silent, can be called the "silencers" of our culture. Our culture is only full of such silencers; sometimes, indeed it is hard to recognise them as silencers and only then we confuse them with ordinary descriptive signals; a lot of the cur-
rent metaphysical obscurity originates from such confusion. These silencers can be classified in the following way; this will help us know the way they operate as (A) social, and (B) individual; social or individual silencers can again be divided into, (i) statements, and (ii) gestures. Finally, these silencers can either be, (a) explicit or, (b) implicit. Gestures are mainly social silencers. When in course of conversation, one spreads up a newspaper over his face the other or others are supposed to take this as a cue to stop talking any further; or when we wave our hands in a particular way we are asking others to stop. Even statement-silencers are used in social context. By using such statements we hope to keep others quiet or just to get rid of them. Any culture obeys such silencers. Implicit silencers are all statement silencers; they are mostly used in polite conversation or exact descriptive discourses. We saw earlier how the 'basic propositions' of some modern philosophers can be regarded as implicit or explicit the function of a silencer is to guard the borders of language. To use a silencer is to request others not to pursue the desire or argue any further; metaphorically speaking, the silencers can be regarded as the 'red-light' area of our language. As soon as we come across such an area the best and the wisest thing to do is to keep quiet. In science the implicit silencers are the set of ultimate a priori assumptions so far as they act as the 'primitives' of the system. We should note here that in silence, or for that matter, even in ordinary language there are no absolutely ultimate or fixed set of silencers. We can always stretch further our desire to describe; but there must be, logically speaking, a point beyond which we cannot proceed and wherever we stop we shall use a set of silencers. Therefore, the existing silencers in a system are only relative.

In ordinary language we use silencers both implicitly and explicitly. All our 'decision-expressions' ought to be regarded as the implicit silencers. Mistakenly enough, we often think of a decision as the 'best course after the evidences for and against have been properly weighed'. But then we are confusing decisions with 'reasoned conclusions'. A decision is the ultimate silencer. It is unfair to ask, though we often do,
whether a decision taken is the 'best' decision. It is rather naive to ask someone when we know his decision, "why has he decided......"? Truly speaking, however, far we pursue ultimately we shall be silenced by the final-decision-statement—a kind of answer which is best expressed as "That is That". In value-discussions we often resort to silencers in the following form, "I like....."; sometimes to make the silencer explicit we add, "Anyway, I like.....", etc. In metaphysics and religion the key-concepts are turned into silencers, e.g., the concept of God, self, being, nothingness, nirvana, miracle, maya, etc. These concepts are said to be 'indescribable' being the elements in the world of shantam (silence). In Nasadiya sukta in the Vedas the Being is the 'indescribable'. In Brahma Sutra Bhasya (3rd. adhyaya, 3rd. pada, sutra 17) the atman is described as "Upashanto yam atma". In the Mundaka Upanishad the para vidya is construed as silence. Moreover, the psychological stage of the highest encounter with Truth and Reality (turiya) are generally accepted as indescribable (anirvachya). Little search into our ancient literature of religion and metaphysics will easily enable us to make a very long list of such references. For our purpose, we have sufficiently quoted to confirm our thesis that our language is strewn with silencer-statements. It is through these silencers that we are to reach the world of silence to regain our security lost in our descriptive efforts. What is necessary is only to be aware when silencers are being used; otherwise we shall create unnecessary and avoidable verbiage and make a casualty of 'sense'. This is our answer to the first question posed earlier, which is: "How does silence give us security?" In answering the second question 'How does silence help us enjoy freedom?' let us begin by stating that we are presuming that freedom can be absolute. A state of absolute freedom we assume as a state where no rules have to be obeyed, no answer is required of one. By definition, therefore, such a state of freedom cannot be described. For, as soon as we try to describe we are committed to obey, at least, Rules of Description. Even metaphor is of no use since metaphors are dependent on the literal sense of the words where some rules of identification or reference will be needed to stick to the 'meaning-core' of those
words. We have been so thoroughly conditioned to believe that fundamental freedom of an individual lies in an increment of his linguistic skill that we seldom see the trap we fall into when we excitedly try to describe a state of absolute freedom. Though we all agree that freedom is essential for every individual we invariably search for it at wrong places; we try to speak about it or describe it through our language, systematically losing our freedom by that very effort. This is indeed a paradox of language. Ask a man when or where he is free completely, he is sure to be misled if he is tempted to participate in the game of language, and no wonder he is immediately under the obligation (what can be more opposed to freedom?) of obeying some Rules; consequently, he loses his freedom in the bargain. There can be an act of freedom but we are unable to describe it. My decision to describe may be an absolutely free act but as soon as we enter the world of language to put that decision into practice we lose our freedom. In other words, we can decide to be free by preserving our silence. To enter into such a world of freedom we must use a set of silencers either ‘individual’ or ‘social’. The case of the Indian yogis and sanyasins can be cited for confirmation; the first temptation that they overcome is the temptation to communicate. To put the matter more metaphysically, it is only in utter subjectivity that we can feel free, or more precisely speaking, be free. This is how and why only silence helps us enjoy our freedom.

In the beginning of this section we said that silence influences our culture only ‘indirectly’. Let us explain that. How silence modifies our culture is rather difficult to decide because there is no describable passage up and down this world of silence and that is so by the very definition of silence. Therefore, the influence can only be indirect, e.g., the subjectivity that is inherent in our culture through the two points of security and freedom. This may be the reason why in recent times we are, from time to time, coming out with various creeds just to defy the choking objectification skilfully catered through an overdose of technical advancement. We sincerely resist the computer’s taking the place of individuals. It is in his silence, again, that the individual realizes the limitations of language;
such limitations are hinted at in the aphoristic statements of the saints in our country. A proper enumeration of all such indirect influences of silence on our culture is a matter of specific sociological investigation and naturally beyond the scope of this paper. With the answer to our second question we have fulfilled our pledge of describing the role of silence in our culture.

Let us make a few general remarks now which may be repetitive. By analysing the way we have done the nature of any verbalistic culture we have been able to offer an explanation of the inevitability of the agony and restlessness residing in us. It is the agony of losing security and freedom through language, which language promises to offer. Thus however much every age lustfully announces it to be the 'most critical period in history', truly, the crisis never ends nor will it ever end in our form of culture. It began in the very beginning with the acquisition of language. We are not at all disparaging our linguistic achievements; we are only pointing to a malady which, by individual decision, we can momentarily escape, but can never finally banish from the entire culture which must be intimately connected with language. Before we finally close, let us strike a note of caution. We should not mistakenly try to interpret this world of silence in terms of our world of language. Let us not use dangerous phrases as "silence is more eloquent than language." Silence is silence and completely different from the kind of language. Silence is the limit of our world of description or language; and a limit can never be a part of the world of description or language; the "eye" cannot be a part of the visual field, or the "self" a part of the objective world, similarly, silence can never be a part of the world of language. Perhaps, in the light of what we have propounded, we can understand better the famous maxim of the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus: "Whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent"; let us also respect Ramsey's advice and not try to, 'whistle' out what we cannot say. Possibly, this world of silence explains our inherent love for mysticism. Let us speak and be silent. But let us not speak about silence. Let us not onfuse the two worlds to engage in fruitless verbalism
and barren flights of metaphysics. Silence will always be the
great redeemer—impacting mystic decision to our everyday
verbal commitments.

P.S. The specific study of a particular culture-pattern by
locating the order and arrangement of the silencers in a partic-
ular culture can be undertaken with interesting results by the
sociologists and anthropologists. Such a research will concretely
show the specific influence of silence on a particular culture-
pattern.

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Culture and Reality

Dharmendra Goel

1. Common-Sense View of Reality

The following linguistic proposal is made before we open our discussion of culture. We shall use the word reality to denote the following: (a) the set of objects that are asserted by descriptive statements arising out of veridical precepts, or extensional constructions of such statements; further (b) the set of the theoretical entities in addition to (a) asserted by valid scientific theories; and lastly (c) the set of events asserted by autobiographical declarations that ex-hypothesis are outside any public scrutiny or inspection. The proposal made above may sound somewhat arbitrary, but the justification for it is two fold and expresses our intention (a) to avoid equivocation in the use of the word reality, (b) to adhere as closely as possible to the conceptual-frame of ordinary life in our discussion of culture; of course, if as a result of the discussion of culture we find reasons to give it up altogether or modify it we shall readily do so.

It is argued that although at the back of commonly used map of the real world, we have these three sets of components, confusion often results in applying this map to various intel-
lectual and non-intellectual concerns of life or their products the word *product* is used in the widest manner). Philosophy attempts to reorganise this map and when successful explains it transparently.

II. *Domain of Culture*

The word culture does not stand for any single object, event or property. On the contrary, it denotes a domain that has several dissimilar elements. Here, before this domain with its different elements is sketched, the following remarks are made about the nature of culture.

The word *culture* is indiscriminately used to characterise a 'person' or a 'society', so that it stands for a group of properties to form a character as exemplified in behaviour of the particular individual or society. Secondly, *culture* could mean those activities or functions that are witnessed to constitute the cultural behaviour of an individual or his society. Still further one could mean by *culture* those various products that issue from the above mechanisms of cultural behaviour. If we confine ourselves to this last sense of the word we shall be including under culture all those non-organic elements of collective living that could be socially inherited.

We find for our present discussion it is preferable to look upon culture as a domain of created products, that individuals in groups possess, multiply and constantly improve.

The elements of the domain of culture are seen to fall under two major types. First are those which are simple and second are those that are formed out of the first, hence derived. The following three sets of simple elements belong to every domain of culture:—(a) material objects including tools, (b) intellectual concepts, (c) preferences and rules for actions. One may if one so likes call them (a') things (b') ideas (c') values or laws respectively.

The second derived type consists of those that are formed by different sorts of fusion that culture-behaviour brings about amongst some of the simple elements. The process of fusion can go on with elements belonging to the same set or may take
elements from different sets. In fact cultural life exemplifies this process of transfiguration continuously and there appears to be no limit to it. Re-fusion of one or more derived elements among themselves or with some remaining simple elements could result in the birth of even more compounded elements of culture. Here we take for instance language which itself is a complex element a product of co-ordination of objects, concepts and rules, gives birth to literature by fusion with elements like ideas and values, articulates its styles and forges out of these vital traditions that shape subsequent cultural-behaviour. The same could be said about the physical sciences, technology and medicine that are constantly enriched by the successive fusions of clearly known ideas and material experiments. As the recent history of culture reveals, such complex systems seem to multiply rapidly and improve their efficacy, when they interact. So do the system of norms and ideology that are formed out of relatively simpler element of human preferences.

The above review of these various elements of culture shows us as clearly as anything perhaps could that the theory of its reality is really not much.

III. Two Approaches to Culture’s Reality

While thinking about sets of elements in the domain of culture we had underlined its heterogeneity. Now to pass on to the question—if all the elements of a culture are real?

There are two different answers to this question. First that only material objects are real and every other element in culture must be interpreted to be a product formed out of learnt human responses. While eventually human responses themselves could be shown to be aggregates of inter-actions of material particles of some sort.

The second answer that suggests itself, here is, that we should use the word reality in such a fashion that we could take the different modes of givenness as may apply to different sets of elements of culture as equally valid—enforcing criteria of reality.

We reject both these strategies as inadequate. The first
answer is rejected for the following reasons; (a) The notion of a material object by itself is futile. To apply any single blanket status of reality to all of them may be even misleading. Truth is, that at least some of the elements are not entities that could belong to some general class. Domain as a whole is frightfully heterogeneous. It contains elements so different as say the Taj Mahal, a rule of law or an idea of number. As such no significant statement could be made that asserts or denies reality to nature of the elements that constitute culture.

However, a theory of culture often dismisses most of these elements and expounds a belief in the primary matrix of some sort that explains, if not all, at least some of the elements. These are the familiar materialist, psycho-analytical, vitalist, historicist or functional moves in the analysis of culture. There could be others. What can be shown to be the common error in all these theories is their preference for some segment of the domain of culture, further with some measure of collected evidence from the study of cultural history in their favour, whereby these theories have passed on to unwarranted metaphysical prescription. One cannot disregard some elements of culture and then offer a not sufficiently clear theory even though it is primitive. (b) However, if we explicate it in terms of statements of percepts, we know this does not take us far, as physical theory itself cannot do without inferred entities, and some hypothetical ones that are often counter-intuitive, to boot. (c) As for instance, the velocity or potential variation are no more percepts but their necessity in physical theory is beyond doubt. (d) Further, empirical percepts are often mutually discrepant and only through counter-intuitive concepts we order them into a system. (e) Rules and norms have a role in culture as much as concepts have. The structure, the property and the mode of givenness differ from one element of culture to another. So long as these elements differ in this respect, even if one could derive one and all of them with the aid of some undiscovered hypothesis from sensible percepts, this shall not explain as to how does such actual diversity of their known roles come about?
The reason for rejecting the second strategy is equally compelling: (a) To assign to every set of elements a different and a unique sort of reality is to be blind to the process of fusion which we know could issue in new elements, (b) value and law as such are not other objects or actions of tenuous variety; their vital role in culture is to offer a working standard for preference or a basis for our social prescriptions. Preferences or commands are acts of the individual or of his group. To include ground for preference among the very things that are preferred or specific preferences is incompetent. Value or law only act as a dispositional norm, (c) But (b) does not justify Platonism. The dispositional norm could be understood only and only through their application to relevant situations, and not in isolation, (d) Platonism is even more forcefully rebutted when we think of artistic expressions. Taking music for instance: ordinary sound could be transfigured into sublime expression by embodying rhythm in it. But we know as well that rhythm of music apart from sound is inconceivable, (e) To call all the elements in a culture equally real is no better either, for this only neglects the structure and inter-dependence of different elements as much as the first strategy.

IV. Reality of the Domain of Culture

Having so rejected the above two possible answers we concur with common sense that upholds at least in some sense (a) objects (b) concepts and (c) values are working in every culture. There is a possible objection which we ignore here, that is if these three sets of elements are actually independent and mutually exclusive. That they are somehow different in their roles in life of culture is presumed without demonstration. In the present paper, we seem to take it for granted that they actually work in culture differently. All of them are certainly not existence. Values and ideas do order our cultural behaviour but not at all the way the existents do. One’s role cannot replace another’s. But this should not be the ground for inferring that concepts in order to do what they have to, have got to be events of some other sort, or values some kind of ideas. It is profitable to recognise these structural differences of the variety of ele-
ments of culture, and this recognition should help the work on
the model for a valid ontology of culture. Without accepting
most of the ideas of Aristotle, we argue that his common-sensical
theory of four-fold causation, can assist us in explicating
cultural reality.

The following remarks present a tentative conclusion on this
subject:—

1. We do not see any need of dropping the linguistic pro-
posal about reality which was made at the beginning. That we
find no need for subsistents or transients for explaining the
elements of culture (like meaning and value).

2. We have distinguished between simple elements of cul-
ture and the more complicated ones. The latter are continually
formed out of the former. Only unilateral dependence applies
to these elements. For instance it is obviously true that no com-
plicated element could arise without its constituents being given.
But the converse does not follow. Even when we have all the
knowledge about the constituents being given. But the con-
verse does not follow. Even when we have all the knowledge
about the constituents, we do not succeed in predict-
ing what would these bring about as a result. So much for
naturalistic or any other deterministic theory of culture. We
cannot even if we try spell the entire domain of its possibilities,
all that is relevant in cultural process is not actual, yet.

3. We stress on the dispositional character of several ele-
ments of culture, say value, norm, form, tradition, or meaning
etc., (just to pick a few out of the many). None of them are
entities and certainly they do not have a similar role either.
Could we say anything more? Yes, some of these dispositions
apply to only one set of simple elements such as objects or con-
cepts or actions others to more than one of these, and still there
could be some cultural-disposition that could be relevantly
applied only to simpler dispositions like systems of knowledge
or patterns of art or codes of behaviour, to explicate culture.

4. Usually we go round and round the controversy about
the reality of some of the elements of culture simply because
philosophically we do not give up the theory of meaning which
limits every permissible discourse to existents,
5. Once, different dispositions are recognised as such legitimate elements in a discourse about culture, the puzzle, whether dispositions could stand up and be counted on the same level or they are on some other, with the elements that they order, remains.

6. So, like many other philosophical problems one could see why the puzzle about the reality of culture often arises, and how it can be met, by attending to the logic of concepts underlying the puzzle.
Culture and Language

S. Datta

Culture is the realisation of the value-images of the human soul through action. This realisation is both individual and social. The formation of the value-image is indeed a fundamental principle of reality. Born out of bare awarenesses, passing through the process of semiosis, these value-images acquire a determining character. Inarticulate or articulate symbols that express these images are the primitive constituents of a culture.

Human acquaintance with the world begins with bare awareness, which gradually becomes more and more significant. In this process the bare impressions get their locus outside as more or less fixed, and these become the referents. Repeated experience of the referents leads to the formation of images in the mind. But these images are fleeting, and the mind in the beginning is more or less a receptacle, not yet capable of exerting any conative pressure.

Then arises the conventional symbols—the names; and the uttering of these names brings in the images. Though in all languages there are certain basic phonetic components, and the manipulation of thought starts with the ‘natural signs’, conceptual thinking proper has got its basic material as ‘expres-
sive signs' or language. The 'natural signs' gradually become conventional and we get the 'terms'. Without these 'expressive signs' the development of conceptual thinking is not possible. Man surrounds himself with a realm of words where he assimilates and elaborates the realm of facts.

Human consciousness is creative, and its creativity is its freedom. But there is always the tendency in it towards greater freedom. Thus there are two opposing forces at work. One drags it towards the sensuous given the referent, the 'natural signs', and the other pulls it away from subservience to matter. It is because of these two forces acting simultaneously that symbolic forms range along a scale—some dominantly sensuous, and some dominantly intelligible. Normal human consciousness is unable to entertain any object having either the bare sensuous content or the mere meaning content.

When the receptive stage of the human soul passes into the stage of conceptual thinking, formation of myth in its most rudimentary stage begins. It is a psychical but a universal process. Formation of myth is an expression of freedom. Myth-making, therefore, is inevitable to the human soul.

Culture is the collective expression of human consciousness. It is a record of the souls' continuous enterprise in the seeking for the sensuous, and at the same time its continuous attempt to free itself from it. There is a morphology of consciousness in the act of creativity. Myth-making is the result of this bondage-freedom oscillation of human consciousness. When it oscillates towards freedom the images become more suggestive. The world of facts then gets transformed, taking a new complexion of meaning.

It has been said above that the value-images are born out of the experience of the human soul, its contact with the real world. But as the conceptual process develops, these images become more definite through the conventional signs or symbols. Language now appears to play its role in the formation of myths. Man now begins to create innumerable new worlds of his own liking. The combating forces of impression and expression gradually reach the stage when a self-conscious ego
emerges, and begins its oscillation between freedom and bondage. Images armoured with language now become significant constituents of new creations made by the human soul. The world of facts and the world of values are now merged into one. But though this code of configuration grows over and above the real world, it pertakes the form of the real world. Thus, though the world of myth rises above the real world, its figures and images are but the substitution of another form of materiality, a bondage to the sensuous. Myths are important determining constituents of culture, which is necessarily built upon both the factual as well as the speculative.

The creative expression of the human soul has three aspects (i) assimilation, (ii) elaboration, and (iii) communication. Communication is made through overt action. Language is a potent vehicle of thought, but it also acts upon thought; so that the factual world of myth suffers from reciprocal influences. This is the reason why there are diverse culture-patterns, living and growing in the same medium of human consciousness. The natural environment of a region produces particular types of value-images which get themselves oriented through language; then myths in their communicative aspect are formed into mythologies. Mythology with its conventional and traditional value-concepts gets mixed up with religion and acts upon human consciousness, which assimilates these concepts, elaborates them, and finally communicates them. A particular culture-pattern thus grows in a region centering around a group of persons having the same language and mythology.

Mythology therefore, is born out of an inherent necessity of the human soul, which must communicate through language. Thoughts create myths, language makes mythologies. Myth and mythology again condition the thought. This is how through myths and mythologies a culture-pattern is oriented. Language thus acts upon man invariably and outwardly. Man determines culture and is also determined by it.

It has been suggested that in communication three factors are involved—mental processes, symbols and referents. The referents are always intended referents. When a man com-
municates he manipulates his value-images from the standpoint of a particular culture-pattern. A man brought up in a particular culture has his habitual attitude towards words, which ultimately leads to conceptual configurations having significance, intelligible only to those who belong to that culture. Thus cultural patterns are world's conceptually generated out of the real world of perfection. These are born of experience, brought up by language, and sustained by the human souls' urge for freedom.

In the formation of a culture therefore, language is indispensable. In the scientific mode of recent culture-pattern, attempts have been made to take words as precision instruments. But it is impossible to get rid of the evocative aspects of words. Language is not meant for science alone. It is a tool, not only to bring definiteness to the homogeneity of impressions, but it is also a tool to transcend the connotative boundary of a symbol. Hence the world of culture will always have the matter of fact and the prosaic co-existing with the speculative and the poetic.

Language is the life blood of a culture. Therefore, the vitality of a culture depends on the vitality of its language. The vitality of a language lies in its power of expressing fully human souls' creative urge, its urge for freedom. If thought cannot express itself through the language, it is deprived of its freedom, it dies out. New value-images are not born, and the old ones lose their utility. Assumptions that are products of views no longer held, linger in the mind, like worn-out tools incapable of functioning effectively. This is how a cultural decay sets in. Great thinkers, poets, artists, saints give vitality to language and through language to culture.

Language is therefore, the most important determining factor in regard to the nature of a culture. Human consciousness and the world are there to act upon each other, and the language is born. It means therefore, that symbols are inevitable products of the contact between man and the world. But what is the relation between the human soul and the world so that symbols inevitably arise? Man wants to know the world and the result is origin of symbols. Knowing is therefore, symbolising.
Two Dimensions of Culture* — the temporal and the trans-temporal

Dr. D. C. Mathur

Human culture has been studied by distinguished scholars and thinkers drawn from the varied fields of anthropology, sociology, history and philosophy. It is a topic of perennial human interest. What could be more natural for man than to review, marvel at, understand and articulate the staggering and stupendous achievements made by him during the course of thousands of years since the dawn of civilization on this planet? After all—What is culture? In the broadcast sense, culture is man ‘added’ to nature. It is the sum total of the transformation of nature brought about by man together with a progressive understanding of and insight into what constitutes the fundamental nature of the human spirit. I am aware of the distinction which is being made between culture and civilisation for certain purposes and in certain contexts. But in the context of the problem which I wish to raise in this paper,

*This paper is the outcome of several formal and informal discussions with Dr. G. C. Pande, Professor of Indian Culture, and with Dr. Daya Krishna, Professor of Philosophy—both at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. I am indebted to them for several suggestive ideas here elaborated.
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taxed, though valid, is not relevant. 1 wish to include in culture not only the total pattern of ideas, ideals and values which inspire a particular group of people but also its external manifestation in the form of scientific, social, political, economic, educational, literary and religious institution. I shall not be concerned in this paper with the diversity of culture nor try to grapple with the causes of much diversity. It is beyond my competence to prognosticate and predict whether various cultures will retain their vigour, vitality and continuity with all the consequent richness, colour and gaiety it implies or they will all fuse together to give rise to a dull, drab and dreary hue. Recently the Snow-Leavis controversy over "The two Cultures—scientific and the literary"—attracted the attention of the thinking world towards what I regard to be a genuine problem. Stated briefly, it focuses attention on the growing divergence in the modern world between what is called the scientific culture' and the "literary or humanistic culture". The logic of the contemporary situation brought about by the enormously rapid progress in man's knowledge in the field of natural sciences and technology accompanied by increasing specialization is alienating 'the scientist' from 'the literary man'. The former is apt to regard all literary and humanistic pursuits as a waste of time or best an innocuous past time. The latter may retort that 'the scientist' is dealing with means without and adequate appreciation of human ends and aspirations and this may land us in an extremely dangerous and explosive situation. These two abstractions of "the scientific man" and "the literary man" threaten to grow into monstrous, diabolical spectres and the fissure in our culture portends to become a yawning chasm.

Now I want to argue in this paper that though Sir C.P. Snow has posed an important problem, he has missed the essential point because he conceives that the split in our culture is on the same 'horizontal' plane and he hopes that gradually the gap can be narrowed down through properly conceived education to enable the two 'spectral obstructions' to become human so as to understand and appreciate each other mutually and thus share a common heritage which is inclusive of achievements both
in the sciences and the humanistic disciplines. I wish to maintain that every culture—past and present—in the East or West shows a persistent internal tension between what I call the historical-temporal dimensions and the trans-historical or transcendental dimension. The tension is not so much between the various constituents of culture on the ‘horizontal’ (historical-temporal) plane as between the total historical dimension of a culture on the one hand (called here the horizontal dimension) and a transcendental dimension (called here the ‘vertical’ dimension). The former historical-temporal dimension of culture concerns itself with what can be achieved in time through a continuous co-operative endeavour of millions of human beings in the various field of science, art, philosophy and religion in order to make man’s life on earth progressively happier, better and richer. Here the main reliance has been on rational intelligence and experimental science and a robust faith, in the indefinite progress and perfectibility of man through properly organised social institutions of all kinds. Such was the strong belief generated in the Western world in the 17th and 18th Centuries—a faith in Reason and Progress—whose main foundation was laid by Newtonian science. So strong was the faith in science and reason that Alexander Pope’ sang:

Nature and Nature’s laws lay hid in night:
God said, Let Newton be! and all was light.

Nineteenth Century reaction against this simple faith in the rationalism of the age of Enlightenment shows that human nature could not be grasped in any neat rational formula. Romanticism which overtook Europe in the 19th Century came as a fresh breeze to free man and nature from such an excessive rationalistic and mechanistic stranglehold. And the Twentieth Century with its nightmarish experiences of the two world wars opened the floodgates of irrationalism and romanticism to such a degree as to shake man’s belief in his rationality and intelligence to its very foundation. Such a large scale failure of social and individual intelligence could not have any other effect. The seemingly opposite philosophies of Totalitarianism

and Existentialism are not unrelated to such an unnerving experience of the first half of our century. They share a common attitude—a deep-seated disdain for and a ‘debunking’ of Reason and romantic glorification of feelings and emotions.

‘Romanticism’ is a word which brings to our minds various shades and nuances of meanings, associations and experiences. It is surrounded by a ‘romantic penumbra’. No single and clear cut definition of such an elusive word could be given so as to do justice to the romantic spirit manifested in the diverse fields of art, literature, philosophy and religion. But we can understand in a vague manner what constitutes the quintessence of the romantic spirit and attitude. Romanticism has no patience with particular and partisan views. It glorifies the self as a whole with an over-emphasis on the emotional and passionate aspect of human nature. The romantic—whether an artist, philosopher or lover—is a dreamer, a visionary and a utopian. His is a restless spirit which seeks fulfilment in a total manner but fails to find it in any actual and concrete pursuit. He is constantly on the move and is attracted by the richness, colour and variety of life. The romantic ideal seems to be ‘round the corner’ but actually it is elusive, slippery and non-attainable. A passionate and a pathetic yearning for wholeness characterizes the romantic spirit. There is always something indefinite and unfinished about the romantic spirit. The romantic yearning is insatiable and can never be fulfilled by any finite object, pursuit or concern. In short, the romantic spirit is trying to move on a ‘vertical’ plane and thus reveals the basic trans-historical dimension of man. No concrete achievement in time in any field—science, art, philosophy or religion—can do justice to this perennial quest of the spirit for self-transcendence. Thus culture, when studied deeply, shows this continuing tension between what human reason and intelligence (individual and co-operative) have achieved in historical time in the various fields of science, art, philosophy and institutiona lized religion on the one hand, and what the human spirit longs for in a trans-historical direction. Romanticism and rationalism are inextricably blended together in human nature and their harmonization constitutes a problem of the greatest
magnitude in contemporary times because, on its adequate solution rests the destiny of the human race on our planet.

I want to show that this basic tension between the temporal and trans-temporal dimensions of the human spirit is exemplified not only in the fields of art, literature and religion but is equally manifested in the fields of science and philosophy. Recent researches have revealed that the most distinctive characteristic of man is his imagination which, I regard, is an ideal harmony of rational intelligence, feeling and emotion. It is imagination. Nurtured and nourished by man's progressive use of adequate symbols, that adds to man's ordinary humdrum perceptual world a dimension, range and depth without which he would be reduced to the level of the animals. It is here that reason and emotion, rationalism and romanticism coalesce and fuse into a combination which is very powerful in some gifted persons. Take away from a man's world his imagined goals, ideals, visions, myths, dreams and fantasies, and he will shrivel up and shrink in dimension. This is the central significance of the oft-repeated phrase that man does not live by bread alone. He does not live only in the present but 'looks before and after'. He celebrates and reconstructs his past experiences in drama, festival, folk-lore, legend and myths. He conjures up utopias and visions of a future which perpetually lure him—from the earliest time down to the contemporary world—science and technology notwithstanding.

Let us consider the broad areas of science, arts, philosophy and religion to show that in each one of them reason and romanticism are present in varying degrees—often in an uneasy equilibrium. I have mentioned above that only in a rarely gifted band of individuals there is an ideal and perfect blending of these two capacities. The majority of us evince a preponderance of one over the other. It is commonplace to mention that without imagination our scientific knowledge would have lagged behind miserably. Men of genius like, Newton, Einstein, Freud and others were not merely observing and staring at 'facts' but were always fascinated by a distant romantic vision—a 'unification myth', (and note that myths are not unreal)—a law or a theory so comprehensive that it
would 'explain' the whole of our universe. In Newton's law of gravitation, Einstein's field-theory, Freud's or Jung's concept of the unconscious we have a remarkable manifestation of imagination—a craving for wholeness, for total 'explanation'—which is the essence of romanticism. Thus in pure science, rational intelligence and romantic imagination are inextricably woven together, Science has not only increased our knowledge and extended our control over nature through rational and experimental techniques but has also shown us a vision of unification. Increased specialization and our concern with details has not dimmed that vision. In other words, science too has two dimensions—the temporal-historical and the trans-temporal. The former has extended our knowledge and control over nature through a progressive use of rational methods but with all this enormous knowledge and control man essentially remains unsatisfied. This is because even 'the scientific' man is attracted, in the vertical direction of a trans-empirical dimension, towards a goal which by its very nature is a romantic one and as such unattainable in any stretch of finite time however extended.

If what I have said above is true in the field of science it is all the more true in the spheres of art, philosophy and religion. An artist—whether a poet, novelist, painter or a musician—is inspired by a vision which he endeavours to express through a medium best suited to his genius. But no concrete work of art—however expressive—can ever do justice to the splendid vision of the artist. This is true not only of the so-called 'romantic art' but it holds good in the so-called 'classical' art of ancient Greece and the medieval Christian art and Indian religious art of the early Hindu period. 'Dionysian' and 'Apollonian' elements are never perfectly harmonized in any work of art—the classical Greek art notwithstanding. A poem, a novel, a play or a symphony is always 'greater than' what the informed critic (an appreciative and sympathetic one) is able to say what it 'means'. A psychological sociological or historical criticism of a work of art always falls short of the actual work of art, though it may help us in enriching our 'perception and appreciation'. It is only through 'imagina-
tive sympathy’ that we are able to recapture the original vision which moved the artist and shook him to his very depths. In short, the work of art is ‘more’ than any of its most suggestive and sympathetic criticisms and in turn, the artist is still greater than any of his works. No medium, no mode of expression, no series of successive symbolizations can ever fulfill the romantic vision of the artist of real genius. There is always something ‘unfinished’ about his life. Such is the very nature of the human spirit that the more it moves onward through successive realizations of its capacities in time, the more it experiences a felt dissatisfaction which is inexplicable and mysterious. This is the ‘Faustian’ spirit and Goethe himself is the best example of it.

Recent trends in ‘logical positivism’, in any first rate scientific theorizing, have failed to appreciate the ‘saga’, the adventure, the incredible ‘story’ of the progress of science in pushing our frontiers of knowledge to hitherto undreamt of ‘regions’ where it is difficult to distinguish between ‘fact’ and ‘fancy’, ‘reasons’ and ‘romanticism’. Not only this, ‘scientism’ in misconstruing the nature of man has dulled and blunted philosophical imagination and insight. I want to illustrate this from the field of philosophy proper as well as what is now ‘discredited’ as political philosophy or ‘mere ideology’.

When Athenian democracy had failed and Spartan military organisation had shown results Plato, the artist-philosopher in his youthfult days, projected with grand wit and subtle irony the vision of a ‘perfect’ state in The Republic. He saw the spectacle of Greek life and imagined a romantic ideal of social organization where every individual would do his work best fitted to his genius and aptitudes and thus contribute to the affective harmony of the whole. The philosopher-guardians will be rulers, the auxiliaries will protect the State from external and internal dangers and the traders will produce wealth. Thus social justice would be attained when every one will be just in the right place. Plato prescribed a full regimented education for the guardians. Physical education, a training in geometry and mathematics, music (to combine harmony with firmness) followed by a training in the dialectic of Ideas would give the
philosopher-rulers a thirty-five-year period of rigorous discipline. This entire 'theoretical' training would be supplemented by fifteen years of practical experience where they will have to face the rough and tumble of politics and rub their shoulders against others. At each level of training those who could not stand this rigour would be eliminated. At fifty the guardians would have become practical idealists and not mere feeble and ineffective dreamers. For these rulers Plato advocates a 'Communism of wives and property' and a scientific breeding of the fittest and the ablest to produce a progeny worthy of such a perfect state. Such was the vision of Plato. Karl Popper in his 'Open Society and its Enemies' dubbed Plato as a Fascist and a totalitarian and has taken Plato too 'seriously'. He has failed to appreciate the 'dramatic irony' which, as an undercurrent, underlines the entire narrative in the Republic. By painting such an Utopia Plato was at once showing the possibilities of human achievement as well as its limitation. He was not so naive as to fail to see that life in such a 'perfect state' would leave no room for freedom, initiative and privacy and that it would huddle together people in an unbearable contact. One could live by such a social ideal but certainly could not live in it.

Hence again we have an illustration of that romantic yearning for wholeness, a total solution of the myriad problems which face the humans. Such a romantic Utopia of Plato was nowhere in space—nor could it be achieved in the temporal dimension. It was a trans-temporal vision without which life would not be worth living and no progress would be possible. In Plato's Republic we have an admirable admixture of romanticism and a rational grasp of details—with the balance tilting in favour of the former.

Hegel, who has been universally acclaimed to be an arch-rationalist philosopher for his statement that 'the real is the rational and the rational is the real', has betrayed a strong undercurrent of romanticist yearning for 'wholeness' and 'all-inclusiveness'. The Hegelian Absolute Spirit in its peregrination (is it logical or historical?) encompasses the whole of the inorganic, the organic and the human reality and yet
is not identical with any one aspect of that reality. The Absolute Spirit has not patience with one-sided or partial views and its Dialectical march through the triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis leaves nothing outside its sweep. The whole of historical reality in its concrete aspects is at once suppressed and taken up and one has a feeling that here was a perfect synthesis of romantic idealism and concrete historical realities. But alas! what promised to be a revolutionary romantic idealism ended in a tame note when Hegel declared that the Absolute Spirit had attained its fullest self-conscious manifestation in the then Prussian state. What a strange romantic irony?

It is now common knowledge that despite the claim of Marx and Marxists to 'scientific socialism' the tremendous practical success of Marxism has nothing whatever to do with its alleged 'scientific' nature. Subsequent history has belied all Marx's predictions and prognostications and his 'Dialectical Materialism' has not followed the 'inevitable course' chalked out for it by History (with a capital 'H'). The reason is that Marx, despite his long and laborious studies in socio-economic history of the western world, saw a vision, a distant Utopia of a class-less society where the exploitation of man by man would cease—ushering in an era of 'real' freedom, economic and social equality, justice and peace. It is another matter that he thought that this goal could be reached only through a bloody revolution and an inevitable class-struggle. Here he showed himself to be a direct heir to the Hegelian myth of the Dialectic and its inevitable march to the cherished Marxist millennium. Here again is a glaring illustration, despite all protestations to the contrary, that though romanticism and revolutionary idealism is truly the moving force in history, yet the romantic ideal by its very nature is trans-temporal. The Marxist Utopia is nowhere nearer realization in any society on earth (including the Soviet and the Chinese) and Marx must be turning in his grave to find that the 'withering of the State' after the proletarian takeover is nowhere within sight. Such is the inherent logic of the romantic ideal.

Recent political thought blazed by Harold D. Laswell and followed among others by David Easton (The Political System)
and Weldon has shown a great and often an uncritical influence of behaviourism and logical positivism. Overwhelmed by the stupendous success of the scientific method in the so-called ‘hard’ sciences (natural sciences) they have sought to extend the same to the ‘soft’ sciences (economics, sociology and politics). A persistent though not very successful endeavour has been made to eschew ideal and speculative theorizing (known traditionally as political philosophy), to keep our values from a ‘scientific’ study of ‘political behaviour’ and declare with a flourish of trumpets that the goal of the ‘new’ political science is to describe and predict political behaviour with the eventual goal of controlling it. The new political science has pretended to bid goodbye to ‘grandiose’ philosophizing and ‘debunk’ it as ‘mere’ ideology and utopian dreaming. It has limited itself to the pedestrian yet more ‘scientific’ task of studying small groups, power-relations within them, degrees of freedom and coercion in specific groups, and voting behaviour of select ed peoples. Such a ‘value-free’ factual analysis is to be carried on with great care and almost passionate concern with the meaning of words and concepts used. Weldon writes,

"...there has been a persistent positivist opposition which has maintained that the recommended procedure of searching for the essential (my italics) meaning of justice and similar words is futile. It does nothing to help the solution of any practical problem. For this we need an accurate description of what actually happens, or tends to happen, in human associations. There is no sense in asking what ought (my italics) to happen, or what would happen under imaginary ideal conditions, and disputes on such points are purely verbal and a waste of time."

Weldon, therefore, condemns outright the theoretical foundations of democracy, Hegelian Idealism and Marxism as utterly worthless. Thus we are facing today in the contemporary world a complete rift between facts and values, political behaviour and political ideology, and almost an irresponsible permissive liberalism, neutralism and indifferentism in our attitude towards values. In such a situation all values are of equal worth and no value-commitment has any claims of superior worth over other such commitments. The unfortunate result has been that
a mass of chaotic data has been accumulated, absurdly trifling and petty researches are engaging excessive attention, the boundaries between the significant and the insignificant have been blurred, and all criteria of relevance have been thrown overboard. What criterion can there be to choose between, say, (to use unsophisticated common-sense vocabulary rather than the new 'scientific' vocabulary of Weldon) communism, and liberal egalitarian democracy? One suspects that behind the facade of 'scientific politics' and 'value-free' analysis there is an unacknowledged commitment to the liberal democratic ideal—"The Open Society"—without which no such 'factual' studies could be made possible. Such is the nature of man, such are the deepest needs of his spirit that without commitment to an ideal he would collapse in a debris of unrelated, chaotic mass of facts and his life would be dull and dreary. Romantic Idealism (though it is constantly in need of rational assessment) is such an elusive mistress that if it is turned out by the front door it creeps in by the back door. Hence even recent trends in positivism, 'scientism', etc., despite their tendency to depress political imagination and 'debunk' political ideology, have not been able to suppress the basic romantic aspiration of man. However, it has accentuated the tension between the two aspects of our culture—the idealistic-romantic on the one hand and the scientific-factual-temporal on the other hand. For it should not be forgotten that even the ideal of liberal democracy is essentially a romantic one and though a society may be lured by it, yet no historical society is able to realize it fully in any foreseeable time.

The contemporary situation of man on this planet under the threat of a thermo-nuclear holocaust has brought to a sharp focus the inherent tension in 'our' culture—human culture. It is most acutely experienced in that aspiration of man which is termed as 'religious' (now almost a 'discredited word'). It is largely because of the unresolved tension between the institutionalized forms of worship, ritual and ceremonies backed by a bewildering and seemingly conflicting creeds and faiths (conditioned by historical growth) on the one hand and a basic non-institutionalized, non-traditional, romanticist and transcen-
Two Dimensions of Culture—Temporal and Transtemporal

dental aspiration of man on the other hand, that most earnest and thinking persons in all walks of life have increasingly become apathetic not only to 'religion' but also 'to the fundamental 'religious experience'. No wonder, as Paul Tillich says, contemporary man has lost a most significant dimension of his—the encounter with the Holy, the 'Mysterium Tremendum' of Otto. The atheistic existentialist writers and philosophers like Sartre and Camus, through their literary and philosophical works of acute and sensitive analysis, have reminded us with a rude shock of the utter futility, absurdity and meaninglessness of our daily repetitious concerns in a world from which 'God'—the object of transcendent faith—is conspicuous by His absence.

Such is the impasse we find ourselves in. The most tragic and pathetic conflict between these two dimensions of our culture (in every aspect as shown above) has brought humanity on the cross-roads. Some will try to escape this conflict by clinging to traditional faiths and creeds and withdraw from the 'tragic-comic' world and leave the field to unscrupulous and cock-sure fanatics. The danger inherent in such a course is too night-marish to visualize. The other exit is through a 'flight' into the so-called 'practical' and routine tasks of daily life with a cynical indifference to all that makes it worth living. And this course is bound to make us feel sooner than later the terribly trifling nature of the pursuits with its consequent unbearable boredom. In this paper I have posed the problem but have no 'panacea' to offer, no 'tabloid' solutions to suggest and no super-tranquilizers to calm us down and 'recapture' that lost harmony between the transcendent aspiration and our daily concerns of running the world. The positivists, the 'scientists', the man of affairs may 'fiddle' with 'facts' (I can't say what 'facts' really mean to them) while our planet is under the threat of a conflagration. Our best hope (for there is nothing inevitable) is in such a happy synthesis of our transcendent yearning and faith, and an intelligent, cooperative, human and humane management of our worldly concerns that each activity instead of being felt as valueless, meaningless and insignificant is transfigured into something worth-while and derives its mean-
ing from such a union of the temporal with the trans-temporal. Here the romanticist and transcendental yearning of the individual will not make him a feckless escapist but will transform his entire personality and release his creative energies in such a manner that whatever work he does will bear the stamp of his freedom and spontaneity. Such an individual will be very much a man in this world but not of it. It is only then that humanity will advance not only in its explorations of Stellar space but also make an unending progress in the explorations of the human spirit. Perhaps I have ended on an optimistic note. The big question of our times is: Can this be done?

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If for nothing else, for sheer utilitarian consideration, religion has a strong claim for a pride of place in human culture. Early unsophisticated man used to think that through his gods he gets control of nature in the form of getting rains and other similar physical successes—both positive and negative. Apart from these, it has, for him, an immense dynamic value in that it generates confidence and hope, consolation and optimism in men, to make life, for them, worth living. Its moralizing and socializing effects have also to be counted. Again, a great biological importance attaches to religion inasmuch as by satisfying some of man’s fundamental needs and cravings it helps him in his struggle for existence. As such the truth of religion as an active element in human life at all levels and in every age, has to be accepted even by the most orthodox naturalist, however much he may disparage it as a sort of ‘anthropopathic behaviour’ regarding ‘non-existing gods’.

Both as an instrument of life, therefore, and also as a creation of personality, religion in its many forms and processes must be regarded as something universal, being coeval with humanity. And religion, which is never a finished product like
the self-sufficient "windowless" monads, is perpetually being influenced, moulded and remade by the creative personality of man. Speaking technically the role of a component actual entity, the individual, as the transforming force of the cultural metabolism through positive prehension has always been that of its factual substratum. Looked at from this side, religion is unquestionably one of the creations of the self like every other thing that belongs to culture. In the vast panoramic field of human experience, both individual and collective, religion has been the one universal object of appeal on the diverse situations of human existence. Its true nature, therefore, is best revealed in the milieu of sociality solidarism, harmony or attunement. These embody the basic ideologies of the religious life. The essential complexity of the concept of religion, feeding on its diverse items and multifarious aspects, could best be described, in terms of synthetic wholeness of the sociological configurationalist. Religion veritably is one of the expressions of the psychosocial gestalt of creative man. Academic interest by an intellectual analysis may at best lead to an abstract pulverization of this living dynamic wholeness of structure into its isolated contentual atoms. Yet religion is just an organic wholeness which is co-extensive with life. Human life is a multiplicity of trends and tendencies, and the diversity of its unending facets is perpetually bewildering. Religion, cross-sectionally and longitudinally, touches life at every point whether in the orgies of the savage where religion, in that suggestive phrase of Maret, is 'danced out', or else in the quiet contemplative- ness of an intellectual love of God which Spinoza so cherishingly espouses, where religion is most uniquely 'thought out'. It is essentially a social phenomenon, yet on many occasions its massive impact on the individual life reduces it to a purely personal affair. It fuses now into magic and again into morality but has always maintained its identity by being clearly distinct from either. It wells up from the very depth and intimacy of human feelings in the forms of beliefs and conduct, reason and emotion. And in the last analysis, the nature of the person would always determine the nature of his religion. But if it normally results in the depending of a devotional life edifying character, it is not often that its benedictions are spelt out in letters of human
misery, misdeeds, and cruelty through the villainy of some of its vile and despicable votaries.

Further, this intriguing set of peculiarities (which are normally associated with the religious concept), when submitted to the severest analytical treatment, yields an equally diversified array of views. In the matter of identifying religion, either wholly or partly, initially, subsequently or throughout, with morality we can recall the names of such authorities as Emile Durkheim, Wund, C. Bougle, W. Schmidt among others. The very antithesis of the above view is to be found in the classical works of Westermarck, Myers and others. Religion has been equated with family life in the objective studies of Tonnies. To accept the truth of this view is to deny the contending theory of the pre-religious nature of the primitive society as put forward by Levy-Bruhl—a view as unthinkable psychologically as it is undemonstrable anthropologically. One would rather like to accept the stand taken by Pareto on the basic question of the relation between the logical and the pre-logical. Here it is held that human behaviours are intimately dependent upon certain "residues" of personality which are their basic determinants. The residues which are nothing other than the constant "drives", are premordial non-logical and non-rational elements. Frazer seems to be immensely correct when he says that the superstitions are quite as natural and useful to the homo sapiens as are the rationality, logicality and the element of self-consistency in human nature. Culturally man has moved forward through successive stage of dawn-breaks and break downs. Magic, religion and science has each been initiated through a series of failures. The failure of magic is a call for religion and science; and more religion fails the more it consolidates the status of the scientific; and finally, the advancement of science pronounces the doom of magic, which at the same time, is instrumental to the decline of religion. In fact an eminent man of science in recent times, exhibiting a much greater degree of catholicity than scientists' are used to, goes to the extent of saying that value and significance are only projections of our spiritual nature on a valueless non-existent reality—a view perilously resembling, in certain
respects, the Father Surrogate theory based on the libidinous projections of childhood wishes. Freud is sure about the original identity of religion and Oedipus complex, from the dominance of the father in the primal herd, and from remorse when he was murdered by the young man. Whether it is the primitive awe at natural phenomena as suggested by Max Muller, or the reverential fear of old men and ancestors which Spencer upholds, or again, an animatedly universalised ghost spirit of Tylor's theory—all are alike in making religion basically an illusory childhood experience of mankind. Totemism, the mysterious dread of Mana the sacred, together with their avoidance in tabu, and an almost endless variety of other conceptions have all been put forward, in turn, as basic religiousness.

The fact of the matter is that religion is amazingly complex, and its comprehensive categories are, perforce, obliged to be elastic and somewhat indefinite, for the simple reason that religious experience is psychologically mediate, and each one of the religious genius would spell out the mystery of the Divine according to his own endowment—within the framework of his temperament and innate prejudices, his racial, historical and cultural legacies. To get over this dangerous, if delightful, vagueness which attends upon religion, modern intellect has attempted to drastically simplify the connotation of the term Religion, when cleared off the undefined term "God" and shorn off the usual theological concepts of self-existence, infinity and eternity associated with God, becomes simply a felt practical relationship with what is believed in as a superhuman being or beings. And he has also sought to indicate some of its most essential traits: studied objectively, the motives that supply the dynamics of the religious life are inevitably the basic human wants and desires—self-preservation, growth and development, well-being, self-realization, an ultimate belief in a supreme authority and owing to it a loyalty and dependence for the sake of human well-being. Belief in rituals, as different means of winning the favour of the supreme authority, are also the necessary accompaniments of religion. The system of beliefs, like every other human activity, takes a social form and is thus
institutionalized. On the subjective side, however, the religious experience is an inner response to what is believed as ultimately real. And the nature of this response, so far as it is genuine, has a certain persistency about it in that it usually leaves the experiencer restless for the reassurance of its continuity. The response, further, may be aptly described as the reaction of the integral person, i.e., it is the total response of the total being. It is, again, by far the most intense experience of which man is capable, signifying his profoundest concern. Yet it is basically practicalistic, involving as it does, a certain imperative—an implied commitment to a certain way of life and living. These, briefly, are some of the psychological factors regarding man's activity when he confronts, or is confronted by, the High and the Holy.

The root of the problem, however, lies further deep. Religion and society are both creations of man. Man is typically a responsive being, tremulously alive in every fibre to the whole compass of reality—external as well as internal. The environment impinges on man; and his interests urge him with an impulsive force. Men responds. And in responding he creates. Man is essentially a creative being. Creation consists in the construction and appreciation of significant forms by physical and mental manipulation. Such manipulation implies enhancement and blossoming of new values. Creativity is value-oriented; valuation is anthropocentric. There is a certain restlessness in man's innate responsiveness which implies a whole hierarchical range of human responses. The human individuality is continually making efforts to extend the bounds of his responsiveness creating newer values. Man is certainly a social being, but socialability, for that reason, does not exhaust his whole being. He is troubled by his inner impelling aspiration for transcending the social and stepping into the spiritual. From the physical to the interpersonal, and thence to the cosmic—the whole is the range of human creativity, and, as such, constitutes, what is called, the realm of human culture. Looking inwardly, it is to be described as the progressive enrichment and realization of man's spiritual nature—a pilgrim's progress of the human spirit. It is, therefore, hardly justifiable to attempt
to establish what has been called the religious interpretation of society, or for that matter, the social interpretation of religion, as being mutually exclusive and, in themselves, self-sufficient. Man inter-penetrates both the spheres, is organic to both, and the whole is just the expression of man’s creativity. Man—the indomitable human spirit—must be recognised as the glorified creator of this whole cultural configuration. It is in this direction that the final solution of the historic conflicts, as between the lay and the clerical, the social and the religious, will be found to lie. Both are inextricably interwoven with each other in the formation of the complexity of human culture. Thus, in no sense can religion be regarded as something alien to man. In his religious attitude man is but answering to the call of his inner nature. And it is a sure call which he cannot possibly deny. This urge for the spiritual as an impulse is no less powerful than any of man’s primitive impulses. It consists in an attempt on the part of human spirit to understand the ultimate grounds of certain values,—values which are “vital”, in Ortega Y Gasset’s sense, inasmuch as a whole age conducts its life and lives by them. A truly religious life is, therefore, a declaration of the glory of man’s creativity and an achievement of human culture.

II

Social heritage is by far the most significant factor which accounts for the fundamental divergences among men, and, as such, is the key concept of cultural anthropology. Culture is a complex of funded experiences which includes “inherited artifacts, goods, technical processes, ideas, habits and values.” Nothing which comprises the social, not even a single institution of society, therefore, could be properly understood except as a part of culture. Each single line of investigation concerning man as a biological organism in the discharge of his basic social functioning, necessarily, is, in the final analysis, an inquiry into the cross-currents of diverse cultural patterns which he happens to inherit. The study of any type of human activities, and any set of human ideas and beliefs, thus, are basically a comparative study of cultures.
Living, biologically, is a series of incessant demands. It demands of man a continuous alteration of his immediate environment. Thus, an artificial secondary environment must be created by him if he has to preserve his identity and maintain his proper growth. Construction of shelters, procuring and preparing food, roads and means of transport, etc., among other things, are needed in this respect, all of which depend upon weapons and implements. His inborn anatomical equipments alone would be absolutely insufficient for his efficient survival, and if he had to depend only on these, man would long have been swept off the face of the earth. Artifacts become an absolute necessity—even for the primitive man for the various vital needs—bodily as well as spiritual. The conception of the pure nature man, is only a myth.

But this whole paraphernalia of man’s material outfit, though useful and important for his effective response, is not yet complete and sufficient, in that it is not in itself a force. Thus what is necessary is knowledge, in the production, management and use of all these. They involve, further, certain intellectual capacities and ethical sense and discipline which are sourced ultimately in religion, the existing laws and the moral rules. There is also the development of a sense and appreciation of value following from the use and possession of these. Again, the handling and the effective use of them demand cooperation, which implies common work and common enjoyment of its results. Such community living is possible only in a particular type of social organisation. In this way, material culture needs a complement less simple, less easily catalogued or analysed, comprising of the body of intellectual knowledge, of the system of moral, spiritual and economic values, of social organisation and language. Culture, thus, as a well-organised unity of two fundamental aspects—a body of artifacts and a system of customs and beliefs—is, a reality sui generis.

What are regarded as the real component units of culture, having a considerable degree of permanence, universality and independence, are the several organised systems of human activities called institutions. Every institution must necessarily centre round a fundamental need which permanently unites a
group of people in a co-operative task, and which has its unique body of doctrines and its technique of crafts. But institutions, so far they are human institutions, cannot become exclusive existents functioning apart like the Lucretian atoms or the windowless 'monads' bereft of a 'pre-established harmony'. On the contrary, institutions are all profoundly inter-connected and mutually inter-dependent in that they always exhibit a synthetic character and a co-operative way of functioning.

What, then, is the place of religious institutions in the scheme of culture? The fact of human religiosity, as has already been pointed out, is ascribed, in turn to a specific religious sense of "instinct", to primitive animism or some pre-animistic conceptions, to fear as a primary emotion, to aesthetic rapture and a sense and feeling for the infinite, to the self-revelation of society through the super-individual ethos, being the emotional expression of the collective spirit of the group. From McDougall to Taylor and Marett, or from Wundt and Max Muller to Durkheim and Dewey, across the whole field of the psycho-sociological literature on the subject, they have made religion a kind of superimposition on the whole structure of human culture, which satisfies certain needs that are somewhat remote from those which satisfy the bare physical existence of man. Religion, we feel, is the appreciation and enhancement of a profounder notion of universal purpose, which, transcending the narrow limits of the spatio-temporal life, reaches us to the realm of ultimate values. And this is certainly cultural in nature, for culture which, as Spengler tells us, evolves the secret language of world feeling, is just the enrichment of the spiritual nature of man through creative contemplation.

Religion, however, can be shown to be intrinsically, although indirectly, connected with man's fundamental biological needs. It comes up, like magic, from an increasing cultivation of capacities of foresight and imagination. Having got over his purely brute animal nature, man is now involved in wider issues of personal and social integration. A whole new set of problems open up before him. Vague unaccountable anxieties, nameless forebodings and issues concerning human
destinies, and man's place in the cosmos begin to torment him deeply, once man starts acting jointly in a co-operative spirit, not only with his fellows but also with the past and future generations. Looked at from this side, religion is no longer to be regarded as connected only with the speculative and reflective aspects of human nature, nor can it be dismissed as purely illusory being a universal misapprehension of mankind. Religion would rather be found to have been born out of the real tragedies of human life, out of the perpetual conflict between the fondly drawn up human plans and the hostilities of a harsh reality.

Traditional religion of the old is mostly engaged in the sacralization of the crisis of human life. Every single crisis of human life—like birth, marriage, death and so on—implies an intensive emotional upheaval, deep mental conflict and a possibility of disintegration. Yet religious beliefs and rituals, so far as they are commonly shared and practised by the members of the community, have the stamp of common tradition, and are backed by supernatural sanctions, they consolidate and strengthen the bonds of human cohesion. On the ethical side religion acts as the most effective force of social control by sanctifying human life and conduct of which it plays the ultimate custodian. The dogmatics of religion acts as the strongest cohesive force between men. Religion, in the normal course, comes out of every culture, since human knowledge—the most potent instrument of culture—fails to control fate, and since deep-seated human sentiments, which are built up on the basis of long co-operative living, refuse to accept death and dissolution as final. The cultural call for religion is grounded in the fulfilment of certain primary needs which are of highest social value.

Altogether, culture is essentially an instrumental reality for the aid of man. It is the cumulative creation, by man himself, which extends the range of individual efficiency and power of action, and thus lends to it a depth of thought and breadth of vision unbelievable in any animal species. Culture, in this way, deeply modifies human innate endowments, yet, in doing this, it not only bestows blessings but also imposes certain res-
trictions in the form of obligations. 'Oughtness' arises in a life which was originally one of pure licentiousness, and demands surrender of many personal liberties to the common welfare. Together with this, man's capacity of funding experience and letting it foretell the future opens up new vistas and, at the same time, creates newer gaps which are to be satisfied subsequently in the systems of knowledge of art and of magical and religious beliefs. Man's adventure in a life of cultural progression goes on endlessly.

The above is only a faithful picture of the anthropologist's view of the cultural development of religion. And here is another form the pen of an eminent scholar of religious philosophy of our time. True religion for him is "supernatural, come down from Heaven with Him who is the author of grace and truth. It is not of man or of the world, or of a civilization or a culture: it is of God. It transcends every civilization and every culture. It is the supreme animating and beneficent principle of civilizations and cultures, while in itself independent of them all, free universal, strictly universal, catholic...." Maritain’s account of religion, full as it is with a freshness of intuitive insight, is probably the furtherest removed from the closely argued, fully documented yet cut-and-dry picture of the sociological scientist—Bronislaw Malinowski. Let us examine it from the cultural perspective. Culture, according to Maritain, is as natural to man as his capacity for reason and the virtues, of which it is the fruit and the earthly fulfilment. It is the fulfilment of a fundamental aspiration of human nature, but, all the same, it is basically the work of the spirit and liberty adding their efforts to the effort of nature. In this sense a culture is truly human and hence 'mainly intellectual, moral and spiritual development.' And the characteristic attribute of humanness lies in the fact that there is no solid rock bottom, no finished structure, no natural regulation of instinctive life in man, as in other animals. "The whole play of the instincts, no matter how numerous and powerful they may be, is open in man, and involves a relative indetermination which finds its normal completion and normal regulation in reason alone."
It was indeed a pathetic failure on the part of Freud to grasp this element of indetermination which is responsible for his description of human child as a polymorphous pervert. Man is the inheritor of a unique and unpredictable nature. He is certainly a finite creature; but he is not finite in so absolute a sense as would entirely shut him up within the four walls of his independent entity. On the contrary, man by virtue of his peculiar constitution, is at once a finite-infinite being who is conscious of his finitude only through the presence of an infinite nature within him. The human person has an infinite possibility of aspiration of endless dissatisfaction, and of limitless progress—possibilities that make him the genuinely human and rational creature that he is. "The truth", as Maritain puts it, "is that the kind of infinitude proper to spirit gives in man a sort of infinity, a sort of indetermination, to the very life of the senses and instincts which life is incapable of finding its natural point of fixation......elsewhere than in reason and the forms which reason produces......The truly and fully natural man is not nature's man, the uncultivated soil, but the virtuous man, the human soil cultivated by right reason, man formed by the inner culture of the intellectual and moral virtues. He alone has a consistency, a personality."

And culture is the expression of the properly human life in the sphere of the material, speculative and moral development. Culture, however, by its very nature is a fact of the temporal order. It essentially specifies an object—the terrestrial and perishable good of our life on this earth. Even at its highest, then, and at its best, culture must be subordinated to eternal life. But religion feeds upon, as well as feeds, culture; and, consequently, becomes particularised to some specific culture, antagonistic, therefore, to other cultures. The greatest tragedy of the religions, recorded in history, will be found to lie in a sociological collapse when nationalism sponged upon and corrupted religion. Religion was inevitably finitized and limited by being absorbed in a particular culture of which, thereby, it becomes only an element. In the last analysis, since culture is human, since culture is temporal, a religion which comes out of it cannot be the true or ultimate religion,
Yet all our natural religions, sociologically, are the flowering of culture. Herein lies the inherent contradiction of such religions.

The two divergent views on being closely examined, however, would be found to disclose a common ground at the bottom. Their meeting point consists in the forthright rejection by both of the orthodox naturalistic thesis. The conception of a pure nature-man, is, for both, only myth and an abstraction. The man of nature to realize his true being needs, in the one case, the supplementation from a social heritage, while, in the other, from a spiritual one. And both these stands are basically reconcilable. Religion and culture can both be viewed from a slightly different angle. What the people of the present century care for most in their different pursuits is either a certain amount of novelty in it, or else cultivating it only for its own sake. He is no longer troubled by the mighty life-problem of his predecessor: making reason and will of God prevail in their pursuits. For the more thoughtful, however, the culture that is most needed at this hour is one which believes in the infinite perfectibility of human nature and believes also that perfection lies in making reason and will of God prevail in our pursuits, although it might also include newness and the fact of its being undertaken for its own sake. To take culture in this sense is to appreciate its moral, social and beneficent aspects in their true light. And it needs also to be emphasised that the fullest significance of culture lies in religion—the 'voice of deepest human experience'. Religion, culturally speaking, represents the greatest single effort by which the human race is continually trying to perfect itself. The basic conclusions of religion are in no way different from that of culture—culture which is the embodiment of all the fruits of human experience in art, science, poetry, philosophy, history and religion. The kingdom of God is within you epitomizes the eternal voice of religion. And the language of culture spells human perfection through the internal conditions responsible for the balanced expansion of thought and feeling leading to the dignity, wealth and happiness of human nature over its mere animality. More explicitly: 'It is in making endless addition to itself, in the endless expression of its powers, in endless
growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensible aid, and that is the true value of culture." "Not a having and a resting, but a growing and becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion."

But this religion is not going to be one which is interchangeable with emotional morality, as Arnold would have us believe. For, morality, however glorified, can never become that typical attitude which is truly religious. What we call 'the moral' always implies a certain sense of reliance upon the activity of will to live up to the appeal of duty or of the good—a state of mind fully caught up in the Kantian phrase "I ought, therefore, I can." This attitude of a confident reliance of the will unto itself is nowhere to be found in the typically religious experience. On the contrary, it is replaced by the idea of "grace" as the favour of God. Translated in the religious language, Kant's dictum would read: "I ought, therefore, God can." A sense of dependence on something not-ourselves appears, then, to be the basic fact about religiousness. Psychologically, this attitude represents the inevitable back-swing from the morbidly exaggerated individualism of the modern man. It is, however, not a rise of any new capacity, nor the blossoming of a divine passion, but a deprivation, a fall, a failure, and to use that immensely significant phrase of Prof. Gilbert Murray, originally suggested by Prof. Bury in another context, "a failure of the nerve". Just that abandoning of individuality, at the still individually sensed pain and trouble of living, in a dazed tranquillized type of behaviour. Thus the awakening of the religious sense necessarily presupposes a certain softening of the human pride as preparatory to it—a Praeclaratio Evangelica. The psychological basis of the divine in the human breast is undeniably to be located in what Marett would call the birth of humility, or, in a feeling of absolute dependence of which Schleiermacher had spoken.

The sweep of the sacred is really more extensive. The unbelievable dimension of the reach of the religious in human nature has been unearthed by the Freudians through an analysis
of the intricate mechanism of the self's inner debate with itself and of the labyrinthian depths below the level of the conscious. Scientifically, according to Freud, religion is identifiable as a type of universal obsessional neurosis caused by conflicts of conscience repressed within the unconscious. There is here a vivid awareness in man of a general and individual insecurity. And in this innate feeling of helplessness in confronting the forces of nature outside, and the instinctive impulses within, may be located the root of religion. But then the man about whom Freud is talking is hardly the normal man. Freud's man is rather the imperfectly tamed beast desperately trying to domesticate himself. As it is, both Freud as well as Fromm fail to see man in the fullness of his complexity, and in his many dimensions—both in his grandeur and in his misery. Yet it is not all an attitude of diffidence and despondency; there is also a regeneration of hope and confidence as its obverse. Jung, taking a fuller view of the life of man, and believing that 'where there is a soul there is also religion', would make the latter rest on one's capacity to let oneself be profoundly affected by a power that transcends consciousness. This results in an experience of the numinosum and resurgence of pistis, and loyalty, trust and confidence towards a definitely experienced numinous effect. The inner Dionysus, which each one of us bears within himself, signifies 'the depth of the passionate dissolution of all human particularity in the animal divinity of the aboriginal soul'. It is a blessed and a terrible experience at once. This universal inner Dionysus must be wooed. And in holding the equilibration of these diverse forces and in ventilating the primitive urges of the collective psyche through mythical symbolism in archetypal forms, religion fulfils a vital psychological function. Yet, all these psychologists, in their various divergent theories, virtually tell us but one thing: that religion is not one thing but many—a veritable complexio oppositorum.

Looking at the whole issue objectively, therefore, we shall not be wrong in regarding religion as a culturally entrenched pattern of behaviour made-up of beliefs, emotional feelings which accompany such beliefs, and overt conduct resulting from such beliefs and feelings. Thus, a discussion on religion in the twen-
tieth century, is at bottom a discussion of the modern man's explorations in his search for faith. This search also involves his conceptions of life eternal. And both of these constitute the sphere of the Holy—the highest expression of human culture. The concept of culture also needs a brief re-examination from an objective standpoint. In the simplest terms it refers to a continually changing pattern of learned behaviour and the products of such behaviour, which include attitudes, values, knowledge and material objects; and which, further, are shared by and transmitted among the members of society. A culture thus is a functioning of dynamic units; and, the different traits, which are its constituent elements, are all essentially interdependent, mutually influencing and influenced by one another like the progressive configuration whose members are bound up by the logic of internal relationship. In this sense, it is immensely more than a mere mathematical summation of its individual parts—economic, racial, geographic, familistic, religious. Culture implies a functional integration resulting in a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action.

And there is nothing mystical about it. For, the story of evolution of man is not merely the account of the development of organic structure, but very largely it is also the history of the unfoldment of individuality through the diversification of a behaviour into a pattern and a way of life. And in this the social purposes and social control are the determining and organising agencies. As a matter of fact, the value of the social factor in the evolutionary history of man cannot be overemphasised, since it is the very progenitor of language and culture. Language is a multi-dimensional tool progressively employed in the development of culture. And Cassirer would go so far as to make it the very "actuality of culture", so much so that, according to him, the more richly and energetically the human spirit builds its language and symbolism the nearer it comes to its ultimate meaning and reality. The first beginnings of language, it is true, are lost in the darkness of the early history of the primitive man, but the services rendered by it in the development of man are pretty clear. It not only helped intensifying social interaction in various ways and thus made possible
sharper and firmer relations between individuals within the group, but, as a system of symbols, it made possible a new way of responding to the environment in so far as words are names for things and may be present when the things are not. Language thus as the vehicle of "reflective thinking" resulted in the more efficient determination of "purposeful behaviour". Organisation of life by purposeful behaviour through reflective thinking is productive of culture. The possession of culture makes an innovator of a man; and the capacity to innovate works always in terms of the cultural materials transmitted to him by his elders. It is therefore as much a social product as it is individual. But creative individuals can scarcely function independently of socially transmitted cultural traditions. And a cultural tradition is nothing but a socially organised way of life embodying techniques, customs, emotional fixations, knowledge and beliefs. Cultural innovations and cultural traditions jointly effect cultural growth. Such growth, strictly speaking, are integrations of innovations into patterns carried in traditions. Interpretation of culture, thus, is both an exposition of individual psychology as well as of history. To sum up, culture, as most social scientists would agree, "consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbol, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of actions, on the other as conditioning elements of future action." As only one element of human behaviour culture might imply at once either a logical construct of patterns or forms, or the 'norms' internalized in individuals as manifested by patterned regularities in abstracted elements of their behaviour. Taken merely as a tissue of externalities, culture is a precipitate of history, but as a "built into" the personality of which it becomes a part, it is concretely internalized.

We live in our deeds and not in years. It matters little, therefore, how long we live but live how. What is more
significant from such a standpoint is our deeper thought resulting in actions and deeds and not breaths—the physical constituents of biological living. Life in man is measured by the sincerity of his feelings and the dynamics and incentive to action rather than by his physical prowess and fineness of figure. Thoughts, feelings and deeds based on these constitute the intrinsic value of a people—its culture. Each culture is an organic macrocosm having its distinctive soul, personality or style. Each of these macrocosmic personalities has its own particular mode of expression in spatio-temporal forms. A culture is a soul that has its self-expression in sensible forms; but these forms are living and evolving. This culture is something majestic, grand and unique, in that it is wholly unlike any other thing in the organic world. It is indeed the one point at which man lifts himself above the powers of nature and becomes himself a creator. As a culture-making animal he lives his life in the full sense of the term, and is not lived by his circumstances. Such a life is the spontaneous, free, self-creative flowering of culture. All reality for man, as Cassirer reminds us, is ultimately cultural reality.

IV

As for the present-day culture, it can be safely asserted that it is concerned with individuals who are the tragic victims of circumstances largely of their own making. One could almost say with Emerson that things today are in the saddle and ride mankind. For, the present generation suffers from a certain emptiness in the heart, from a loss of sensitivity to the imponderable quality of the spirit, and a fateful collapse of the communication between the realm of tradition and the inner world of the individual. Rightly does the recent culture-scholar complain that we do not know how to pray, or how to cry, or how to resist the deceptions of the silent persuaders. And today there is hardly any community of those who worry about integrity. Are these not dependable symptoms which unmistakably suggest that the modern man has lost his contact with the dimension of reality that gives rise to religion? If religion can
be defined as an answer to man’s ultimate questions, the modern soul does not bother in the least about such questions. And the theological concepts and religious values of the bygone days are entirely out of tune with our present day outlooks, convictions and sense of value. Here, then, is a gaping fissure of hedious proportion greeting the modern man with a demoniac glee. There is something of a huge helplessness (to use a telling phrase of G. K. Chesterton) in the industrialised civilization which is pathetically incongruous with the intricate wholeness of contemporary metaphysics and religion. Perhaps, a sober utilitarian, theistic humanism in modern times can provide some degree of corrective equally to a sedate religious transcendentalism and an aggressive and ruthless sociological naturalism. The crisis of faith that has befallen the modern man has got to be recovered. His pagan hopelessness—which finds a typical expression in the bewildering question of Montaigne: Is man playing with the cat, or the cat is playing with man?—is to be transmuted into the Christian possibility through a profoundly valuable syncretic approach whose central fount lies in the oneness of faith and grace.

The unique status of man has to be reckoned with. Man is essentially a self-transcending being. As a product of creation, grounded he certainly is on a physical basis, but he has far surpassed all in his capacity of reflection and self-reflection. He is not tethered, like the animal, only to the sensation-objects, but has the power of having free ideas and the skill for creative imagination. Thus the physical world has a new meaning for him as comprehended by his reason and superior intellect. And the extent of this comprehension determines the extent of his freedom. Man, it has been said, is not merely a creature to be had by the world, but he, most significantly, has a world. This continual interplay in man of the physical, mental and spiritual is both a blessing and a peril to him. No creature, as the modern existentialist would tell us, is capable of such abysmal depths of loneliness, crime, bewilderment, and despair as man is. Yet man, by the organic development of his diverse capacities, always embodies the possibility of evolving a meaningful purpose of life. Such a meaningful life-purpose, when
enkindled by an awareness of his deep and abiding commitment to the world, can reach him to the highest strata of devotional life which, at the same time, is the highest level of existential self-realization. Such a realization is the supreme concern of man, and he achieves it at the religious level. Man is created to be oriented by an ultimate concern for God, says Paul Tillich. In a moment of "ontic shock", through a confrontation with the power of being, one's finiteness is overcome, all at once, in a final transcendence beyond the subject-object distinction. But this transcending mind of man has also been his perpetual danger. His ceaseless approximation towards the border-land of the boundless, his approach to the infinite, is only a progressive, if pathetic, realization of his own finiteness. It is only when the expanding reason of man is happily aided by a corresponding growth in the power of faith, that he can get an inkling of the final meaning of the enigma, on which he can stop to ponder. The cultural apex is the meeting point of the human and the Divine.

The materialistic humanism of the present-day liberals is seriously lacking in true human freedom. The free creative spirit of man delights in a perpetual self-transcendence in the different spheres of his being. By subjecting the spirit to drastic retrenchment and binding it down to the numerous artificialities of an industrialized civilization, what the liberals have provided for the common man is as much a mockery of this creative freedom as it is the furtherest removed from the truly human. True human progress demands not merely the freedom which deepens and broadens life but also the one which progressively elevates it. Elevation in the cultural progression implies the blossoming of a devotional life—a life which lifts, raises, ennobles and edifies the human spirit. Edification, which is building up of the spiritual life, culturally is the devotional self-transcendence of the human spirit. A true humanism which is keenly alive to these facts may not inappropriately be described as a theo-centric humanism. Transcending the entire contents of the mediaeval historical ideal of the sacrum imperium it marks the advent of the beatific and grace, as the supreme fulfilment of man's craving for freedom and self-transcendence. And if
there be, in this new humanism the somewhat supernatural ideal of a guiding light as the universal source of man’s enlightenment and progress, it would be far from implying that the source of this light could be brought down on earth to the level of man, making it the narrowly earthy light which neither illumines nor guides. What it suggests, on the contrary, is that this Holy light would be refracted in the earthy and sinful sphere of the socio-temporal to break forth into the soft radiance of an iridescent halo, to which the whole human race will look up for solace and comfort, for consolation, courage and hope. It is that fond hope which is cherished in every human soul—a hope, namely, that through an infinite patience of love the whole burden of man’s finitude would be shared and painfully borne till it is completely lifted up in a final self-transcendence. And it is a light, as Hegel tells us, ‘in which man beholds his own existence in a transfigured reflection in which all the divisions, all the crude lights and shades of the world are softened into an eternal peace, under the beams of a spiritual sun’.

This is man’s deepest belief; and belief is father to hope—that undying hope that has sustained mankind evermore. Religion is man’s pilgrimage in culture. For, pilgrimage is a declaration of belief, not a search for it.

REFERENCES

1. Eddington analysed religion to be plainly an experience of a spiritual reality, which springs from our spiritual nature. We construct, we are told, a “spiritual environment in response to our sense-endowed being.” In this sense, we “build the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our personality.”


3. Ibid., p. 219.


5. Human action, as the philosopher of culture reminds us, is known only in its realization; and only when it is realized that we become aware of its living possibilities, nay, its work is precisely that of seeking and creating ever new possibilities. “This seeking and creating is the achievement of the truly great the truly productive individuals.” (see “Naturalistic and Humanistic Philosophies of Culture” in The Logic of the Humanities by Ernst Cassirer; 1961, p. 87).

7. Careful analysis of the religious dimension of life had been the most profound interest of the prophets of Israel. The basic distinction in Judaism is between the self-regarding and other-regarding concerns: the reflexive and the transitive. On it depend two levels of being: God—the subject of pure transitive concern, and creation—the object of pure transitive concern. The animate, inanimate and spiritual are the three types of existences in the created order. The fact of having reflexive concern separates the animate from the inanimate: wherever there is life, there is hatred and avoidance of its own annihilation. Over and above this active reflexive concern of the living being, man participates in the transitive concern which is a regard for the other. An Heschel puts it "Human is he, who is concerned with other selves.... A stone is self-sufficient, man is self-surpassing.... Man cannot even be in accord with his own self unless he serves something beyond himself." (*Between God and Man*: p. 23). The presence of the deep transitive concern opens up for man a new ontological dimension: the dimension of the holy. Supassing the vegetative and the animal, man exhibits his deep transitive concern with God. And it is in this that the *Imago Dei* rests.
Religion and Culture

J. R. Puri

In the present-day world the study of philosophy of religion and of culture has become a highly specialized discipline. For, one who aspires to undertake an enquiry in this field must have a working knowledge of many areas: the history of religions (once called "comparative religion"), ancient cultural history and the history of religious institutions, historic and systematic theology, psychology of religion, social anthropology and social psychology besides those areas of philosophy which are covered by metaphysics, cosmology, philosophical psychology, historical and systematic ethics, value theory, epistemology and the history of philosophy. In addition, there should be a general acquaintance with researches in archaeology and the critical studies of "Sacred literatures". With such extensive knowledge required as the necessary pre-requisite, it is not surprising, that a conscientious worker in the field today will harbour a feeling of incompetence and diffidence. The general tendency, therefore, among professional philosophers, is to circumvent this requirement of catholic training and outlook and to be engaged in more promising and limited fields of inquiry. As a consequence, there has either been a comparative neglect of this field or careless judgments have been passed on religious questions.
WHAT IS RELIGION

When we think of religion, a number of things come to our mind, such as, worship places, sermons, prayers, creeds, rituals and so on. But these things do not constitute the essence of religion. For, they are not necessary to religion, and indeed some religions do not have them. Many claim that belief in God, in spirits or in supernatural powers is necessary to religion. But religions exist which reject such beliefs. Some assert that sacred doctrines, sacred places, sacred days or scriptures are essential. Yet others do not. Some believe that faith in miracles, in divine revelation and in personal immortality form the core of religion. Others deny this.

Each of these suggestions seems to be coloured by the specific culture of the person making it. It may be possible to define religion, if we can rise above our own culture and see what is common in the viewpoints of the various cultures. And yet the inherent difficulty seems to be that efforts to explore the nature of religion are hampered by uncertainties as to where the boundaries lie between what is inside and what is outside religion.

The solution to this problem may perhaps be facilitated, if we try to tackle it in terms of a few specific questions having a bearing on the subject. Is belief in God essential to religion? Is religion true? How did religion originate? In what sense are religious values higher?

The answer to the first question is negative, for some of the religions are atheistic in their attitude or at least non-committal. The Jains, for instance, disbelieve in God, although they lay great emphasis on the principle of ahimsa. Also, many of the Buddhists, the Vedantists, Confucianists and Humanists are avowed atheists. As for the primitive religions most of them have no conception of God, although they believe in many gods. The Vedantists considered God (Iswara) as a part of the absolutist system, but subordinated to the impersonal Brahman, so that ultimately God, too, is illusory. It is mainly in the Christian, the Hebrew and the Islamic religions that belief in a single personal deity is considered essential.
There are some religious creeds which believe in a plurality of deities. There are others which believe in their own single God and yet do not necessarily deny the existence of others. Still other varieties of religious creeds have belief in two deities, belief in deities which are unconcerned with human destiny or human endeavour and belief in an immanent and all-pervading power. Thus, polytheism, henotheism, deatheism, deism and pantheism as well as monotheism are all religions. Another attempt to define religions is in terms of the super-natural. But, then the distinction between the natural and the super-natural is not made at all in some religions, and not made clearly in some others, for some interpret the super-natural merely as a higher nature involved in nature. And, so the suggestion does not seem to be very fruitful.

Since no single factor has so far emerged as essential to religion, some have been led to conclude, even more generally, that the essence of religion consists in the belief in some higher power, to which man is subordinate. This conclusion seems, on the whole, sufficiently wide to win general approval. But this has been criticized by some as being too general to be significant, whereas others resent the view that man is subordinate to anything.

IS RELIGION TRUE?

The question whether religion is true does not mean an inquiry into each doctrine of each religion. It seeks, instead, to know if religion deals with something genuine, something real and not merely subjective. Various answers have been given to this question. Let us review some typical ones. These may be broadly classified under two approaches, the Western and the Eastern.

(a) Western Views

The Western realists believe that some religious reality exists independently of the knower. Religious knowledge is true to the extent to which it faithfully reveals that reality. Thus many such realists believe that God is not only real object (epistemologically) but is the most real being (metaphysically).
Obviously, for such realists, religious knowledge is most true, for it directly aims at what is most real.

The Western subjectivists on the other hand are of the view that either religion is false or that it has subjective truth. Some of them take religion to be mere superstition. They urge that as persons and cultures mature, they should dispense with these superstitions, as they do with bad dreams or childish ideals. There are others who, no doubt, consider religion as false, but regard it as natural and even necessary for human survival. For instance, Browne in his *This Believing World* considers faith as an illusion and religion as a specialised technique to realize this illusion.

For Santyana, religion is the poetry which we believe. According to him the need for believing is inherent and universal and represents a true demand of human nature. Therefore, the summary dismissal of religion as illusion will not do. Prayer, for him, denotes a sincere desire and if one ought normally to have a sincere desire then we ought to pray and have faith that the prayer will be answered. The various kinds of prayer—those of petition—of communion, of confession, of meditation, of concentration—may be regarded as expressive of different needs. Freud, too, sees religion as an expression of a need felt by fearful individuals, the need to return to the “safety of the womb”. Similarly, Thomas, finds a subjective basis for religious truth in the human needs for security, esteem, fellowship and adventure. The desire for security may be satisfied in different ways—depending on one’s personal needs and the kind of environment in which one finds himself. For instance, the earlier concerns for crops, progeny, health, protection from animals, etc., constituted the focal part of religious endeavour. As science progressed, agriculture, gynaecology, hospitals and guns modified the earlier needs and shifted the emphasis from hope for immortality to more enduring security. Also, individuals, who are ignored or despised by fellow-beings could find solace by feeling recognised as worthy by an unseen power. Or, they could get promise of re-birth and be assured of a new life with new opportunities.

Between these two extremes of realism and subjectivism
are to be found shades of religious epistemology. There are the dualists who hold that some religious objects are real while others are unreal. For example, God is real, but the Devil is unreal. Then there are sceptics and agnostics, who doubt or deny the possibility of religious knowledge. Again, there are the pragmatists who put religious knowledge to empirical verification. They prefer the experimental attitude to the dogmatic and consider the truth about religious objects as provisional. Lastly, there are the organicists who believe that religious objects, like all other objects, have both the realistic and subjectivist aspects. In their view, the existence and nature of God can neither be wholly explained nor wholly denied, either on realistic or on subjectivist bases alone. Nevertheless, they urge, that an experience so all pervasive among mankind should not be lightly dismissed because it is difficult to explain or because many easy explanations have proved inadequate or false.

(b) Eastern Views

Besides most of the types mentioned above, we find others with a new emphasis. There are not only many kinds and degrees of realism regarding spiritual beings, but also many interesting varieties of subjectivism. The Advaita Vedantists, for example, turn inwards in search of reality. Samkara urges that the intellect is incapable of delivering such knowledge, as it suffers from inherent limitations. It is through anubhava or mystic experience that reality could be realized. Anubhava reveals that all of the gods and even God (Iswara) himself, are illusory. Ultimate reality is to be sought after, not as an objective reality, but as a subjective reality. Since one's own inner soul (Atman) is God (Brahman), one cannot deny the existence of God without denying the existence of one's own self. And, although, what we do seek after is an object of our search, if and when we do find Brahman, we will find it as subject and not object. Thus although there is a true goal of religious knowledge, it is unknowable as an object, and is realised as subject freed from all objectivity. That is why, it is made available through mystic experience and not through intellectual knowledge, for the latter is bound by the subject-object relationship.
Similarly because of the limitations of the intellect to yield knowledge of ultimate reality, the Buddhists preferred to keep silent about the state of nirvana and called it ineffable. Since this state is beyond the categories of the objective and the subjective, the Buddhists are usually interpreted as denying reality to both the objective and the subjective realms. Not only, God, as an object to knowledge, but also man, as the subject of knowledge, is transitory and unreal like apparent objects. Thus, this religion seems doubly atheistic. And, yet, Buddhism is one of the oldest, most widespread and most profound of religions. Its emphasis is not on God, nor even on Buddha, the historical person, but on Bodhi the state of "Enlightenment".

There have been further inter-minglings of the Western and the Eastern ideals or religious knowledge, but in terms of what has already been discussed, we are perhaps now in a position to answer the question "Is religion true"? in the affirmative. For, notwithstanding all disputes in matters religious, surely there is something genuine to dispute about.

The Origin of Religion

The question of the origin of religion is not easy to answer. For it depends much on how we conceive religion. And, yet how religion is conceived will depend on how it is believed to have originated. Nevertheless, for the sake of convenience, views about the origin of religion may be divided into those which locate the source of religion outside the individual and those locating it inside though the line is by no means always easy to draw.

(a) The externalists see the origin of religion in something outside the individual. It may be in the none too friendly environment, or it may be in society or in some cosmic spirit. Primitive man was mainly motivated by the fear of hostile elements of nature or the elements the workings of which he did not quite understand. Phenomena such as earthquakes, typhoons and floods seemed to him to be set against him with inexplicable hate and bent on his destruction. According to others, the force or power which religious beliefs have over men originates in society. For instance, Durkheim conceives religion to be "the sentiment
inspired by the group in its members’. Such sentiment may be
established unconsciously through childhood awareness of the
greater wisdom of elders, or it may be the result of intentional
guidance of wise leaders or crafty self-interested rulers or
priests. In any case, religion so conceived, would provide that
ultra-rational sanction of that part of the conduct of an
individual where his interests clash with the interests of the
social organism and by which the former are rendered subor-
dinate to the latter, perhaps in the general interest of evolution.

Another well-known view traces the origion of religion to
some cosmic power. And, though many of the exponents of
this view find the chief substaining power of religion in man’s
fears of Hell, of the Devil and of God—there are others who feel
that God is good, or at least neutral. Hocking opines that presum-
ably religion is due to some emotional experience in which man
perceives that the hidden powers are really friendly or aus-
picious. Such people are motivated by the love of God rather
than by his fear. Also, these thinkers insist that belief in God
is essential to religion. For them, religion is not merely a faith
in an impersonal principle of conservation, but in a friend who
does not only care for them, but has the will and the power to
make their efforts successful. Some believe, that God implanted
a “yearning after righteousness” in man when He created him.
Some are of the view that man, born a dumb brute, is inspired
on hearing the “good news” that he has a “higher calling”
and so religion which now originates in individuals by mis-
issionary education was inspired at first through specific revela-
tions to especially favoured holy man. Some are not so sure if
religious virtue has its source in God’s grace, or in free-will
or in the revelations of holy men. But, all these views agree
that since the aim of religion is to help the individual to adjust
to something outside himself, the origin of religion lies in
something external to him.

(b) The internalists find the source of religion within human
nature itself, just as the subjectivists locate the object of
religious knowledge within the self. But here, again, differing
views of the nature of the self result in different theories of
origin. For instance, William James’, classification of men into
the "tough and the tender-minded" ascribes the source of religion to the feelings of inadequacy in the tender-minded to grapple with the problems of a hostile world without the aid of superior powers. Some hold that the biological instinct for survival arouses faith in survival after death. The Vedantist claims that reality lies hidden in the core of the self and the necessary pre-requisite to realize this reality is to abandon all possessions and to banish all desire. According to this view lack of wisdom is due partly to one's *karma* and in part to lack of courage to face one's inner reality. Since *Brahman* is *Atman*, the real self behind the apparent self, one must seek the source of religion by turning away from outward appearance and inward toward reality. Typical Vedantists are of the view that the Westerners hide from themselves by devoting themselves to objects of whatever kind they may be.

The last mentioned source of religion, which requires attention to be turned inward to the core of the self is perhaps the most important. It may be termed mystic experience for want of a better term. It should, however, not be confused with something mysterious or the miraculous. Nor should it be taken as something misty, foggy or confused. W.T. Stace in *Teachings of the Mystics* has expressed it in terms of knowledge or realization beyond the reach of the "sensory-intellectual" apparatus. He has also emphatically brought out in his *Mysticism and Philosophy* that the source of almost all the great religions of the world—Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Taoism—is to be traced in the mystic experience of their founders. William James expresses the same opinion in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, when he states, "One may say truly—that personal religious experience has its root and centre in mystical states of consciousness". And, even Bertrand Russell, who can by no means be accused of a bias in favour of mysticism in his famous work, *Mysticism, Logic and other Essays* says of mysticism, "This emotion is the inspirer of whatever is best in man".

In support of the truth or genuineness of these experiences, Stace has given extensive evidence of their catholicity. For mysteries separated by vast expanses of space and long periods of
time have given remarkably close accounts of their mystic experiences. This is perhaps the strongest argument in their favour and against these experiences being considered as illusory or hallucinatory, as has been done by many eminent scholars. Without going into details of the mystic experiences of the founders of the great world religions, it would suffice to bring out the salient common features in mystic consciousness. These features are:

1. There is one unifying or all-pervading reality.
2. It is non-spatial and non-temporal.
3. There is a sense of objectivity or reality about it.
4. There is an accompaniment of blessedness, peace and bliss.
5. There is a feeling of the holy, the sacred and the divine.
6. There is an element of paradoxicality.
7. The mystic state is ineffable.

Another point which is noteworthy besides the above mentioned common characteristics of mysticism in various cultures, ages and religions is the remarkable resemblance in their expression as regards the outward symbols of almost all the important religious phases. This in fact serves as strong external evidence for the objectivity and genuineness of the mystic experience for the non-mystic. For instance, some of these common outward symbols relate to experience of light and sound. In every Christian church, there is the church bell and candle sticks illumine it. In a Hindu temple too there is the bell and the earthen lighted lamp. In a Muslim mosque, there is no bell but the keeper of the mosque loudly invokes the name of God and in their holy shrines are to be found lighted candles. It strikes one as strange why the same or at least similar signs are to be perceived in all religious or holy places. Does this fact not suggest that these signs are symbolic of some common mystic experiences of the founders of these religions? The slight variations of these symbols only prove the unanimity of those experiences. For, being non-sensuous
and transcendental in character, they are bound to acquire variations in the process of being rendered in sensory terms or in the process of being interpreted in the sensory-intellectual apparatus.

(c) Besides the externalists and the internalists there are those who take a wider view and recognize "the two sources of religion" as for instance Bergson has done. Some thinkers tend to separate religious activities in two incompatible kinds, those of the heart, which cannot be formalized and those demanding ritualistic conformity. Others, see religion as an inter-action between the inner and the outer which requires constant mutual re-adjustment.

**RELIGION AND CULTURE**

In terms of what has been said above it is clear that religion is closely related to culture. Not only does religion greatly contribute to the culture of a society, but is in turn also influenced by it. For culture comprises of the intrinsic values accepted by the group and religion is concerned with nothing if not with higher values.

The question, however, arises, "In what sense are religious values higher?" Although "the higher" means something which is "up" or above, and therefore, superior, it does not make it clear whether they are to be identified with the supernatural, as many seem to think.

If superiority is to be regarded as something separate from inferiority, as the logic of external relations demands, then the view that a self can become higher than itself becomes unintelligible. Thus considered, the superior is the supernatural, towards which man can aspire and approach but never reach. If, for example, God is the highest value, then man can only strive towards him as an ultimate goal, but can never become one with him. For, the natural or lower cannot logically become the higher or supernatural. On the other hand, if the logic of internal relations is to be accepted, as some cultures do, then the distinction between the lower and the higher, the natural
and the supernatural is illusory, for ultimately all is one. The higher values would then be considered as "one's own higher nature," rather than in terms of "higher than one's nature." The religious quest would then be conceived, as the pursuit of the higher within one's own nature. Such, for instance, is the view of Vedanta. If one could realize with Sankara that "Atman is Brahman" or with Jesus that "I and my father are one" then the religious task is greatly simplified.

The question as to why man is in quest of higher values would be easy to solve, if we are to understand the nature of growth. For growth involves the giving up of the lesser for the higher. It implies rising up to one's full stature. Just as a seed loses itself in the process of becoming a plant, so also a self cannot achieve its fullness without losing itself (its lower self) in the process of finding itself (its higher self).

If the higher values are better than the lower values, does it not follow that in seeking the higher one ought to abandon the lower? In other words, once the religious realization has come, should one not devote all his energies and interests to the religious and withdraw them from the lower mundane realms? Two of the answers are worthy of our note:—

(a) Can the higher exist independently of the lower? And, is there one highest or many equally high values? One view has been preference for the highest over the higher is as necessary as preference for the higher over the lower. For logically, the higher being lower than the highest is still essentially lower and should be rejected. Thus, the demand is for purity and a perfect purity is possible only if all contamination with the lower is avoided. For he who has set his course upwards, but looks back longingly "is not worthy of entering the kingdom of heaven". Nevertheless, a counter tendency which also exists historically contends that each intrinsic value is unique and cannot be compared with other intrinsic values. Indeed, every one of such values is the highest in its own way and cannot be subordinated to any other. The supporters of this view admit that one should seek the highest values, but they deny that any one value is so high as to absorb or negate all other highest values,
The organicists adopt a via media between these two extremes. They contend that if the higher means the more inclusive, then that which includes both the higher and the lower is more inclusive than that which includes merely the higher. And the highest would be that which includes all the varying degrees from the lowest to the highest. Only then would it be the most perfect unity. Organic holiness consists not in abstract purity of the soul, but "in dynamic integration of soul and body, of self and environment, of individual and society, of man and cosmos". Mere atonement is not enough for the organicists, for the unity of at-one-ment with at-many-ment is higher for them than the unity in which the one remains separate from the many.

It follows from this that extreme individualism is as false as extreme totalitarianism regarding religious values. For, although on the one hand, each person is unique and has a supremacy over all else, on the other hand each also had a kind of cosmic dignity by participating in the uniqueness of cosmic unity. For, if it is true that "Atman is Brahman", it is also true that "Brahman is Atman". Thus the universe is as truly subordinate to the self as the self is to the universe. And, yet the self and the universe are so subordinated to their mutual inter-dependence that both their independence and dependence retain a kind of ultimacy.

(b) "Ought one to devote oneself entirely to religious values?" It is a question, which perhaps may be dealt with adequately by asking a counter-question, "Can one do so?" The answer to this question will depend partly on what we mean by religious values. If we must develop through the lower to the higher stages, as is true of all growth, then should an exception be made in the case of religious growth? For one who is growing, the next higher stage is genuinely higher. Howsoever much it may be lower than the highest, it is the primary goal at this stage. Thus, the primary goals of infants, adolescents, adults and the aged are genuinely different and cannot be crushed together in a single creed. Such single-creed religions may idealize a goal too high or a God too distant to be significant for a beginner. The Hindu doctrine of the four
stages of life illustrates this truth. For, according to it only at the fourth stage, after retirement, is one normally fit to attain consummation of the religious quest. But, success at this stage is to be expected only by those who have succeeded at earlier stages.

However, the process of growth from the lower to the higher has an inherent danger. One who grows up may develop contempt for the out-grown values, and consequently of persons still at home in the lower stages. He may, thus, become a kind of religious snob. The religious universe will become poorer to the extent that one condemns the other and mistakes such condemnation as adding to his virtue.

To sum up, in what sense can we call religious values higher? Thy are, in the main, those which constitute one’s own higher self, and consequently are sought after when they are known.

Yet, in so far as the highest is considered as inclusive of all lower values, one may put away but not despise childish things. Many will realise that there are higher values which for them are unattainable, but they should not be led to think that only those which are higher, are religious. One who teaches that the “religious” is unattainable preaches a doctrine of despair. Religious values are higher either because they are enjoyed as such (by an immediate inner satisfaction) or because they are steadfastly hoped for with a feeling of assurance that they can be realized. Thus considered, “the only real atheist is the quitter”.

A Critique of Religious Culture

RAM NATH SHARMA

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the essence of culture, to examine its different bases and to assess the value of a religious culture.

Culture is the most important means of social development that man has devised so far. It is a method for greater satisfaction and efficiency of the physical, vital and mental life of man in society, through a mass of social institutions which stimulate mutual co-operation in men through social laws and customs. With the evolution of culture, these institutions become more and more complex but when the structure becomes too complex, it crumbles under its own pressure, a phenomenon witnessed in the history of dozens of cultures in the past. A philosophy of culture, should diagnose the reasons of its past failures and their cure, if there is any. It should assess the gains and losses in this particular process, evaluate its contribution in man’s social development, determine its limitations and suggest ways to improve and fulfil its purpose. This is a vital need at the present juncture of the crisis in human culture.

Culture and Civilisation

Mere participation in the ordinary benefits of civilization
does not make a man cultured. In a civilized society itself men are distinguished according to their culture. Culture is really creative and not a simple aggregation of various activities. Thus, it is more than physical achievement or development in technique. This was the meaning of the ancient distinction between the cultured man and the philistine. This again is true of nations and ages. However developed they might be in their science, arts, and knowledge, nations may yet be uncultured, if they are governed by gross vital, commercial, economic view of existence. Thus, it is human aspirations that create a culture. There is a tendency in a ripening culture to withdraw itself from the life of the mere external world and concentrate more on the human element.

Culture and Vital Life

The vital element is essential to every culture. Life is the most severe and necessary test of the superiority of a culture. Existence is the first law of human life. A culture cannot survive without strong stimulus and motive, however high may be its achievements in science, philosophy, art and literature. Man is still a struggling unsuccessful hero in this world. A human culture which claims any greatness should help man in his upward efforts. It should inspire the terrestrial endeavours of man. It should result in a strong and successful organisation of life. All this depends on the essential vital element in a culture.

Culture and Mental Life

Mental Life itself is not culture. It requires a certain refinement, a turn within. A mental life governed by customary ideas, opinions, and prejudices, controlled by sensations and conventions, is contrary to the true ideals of culture. Without the freedom of spirit, without self-development, no individual or society can claim to be cultured. Nothing short of it, no compromise will arrive at culture. Thus, culture is the consciousness of life created by philosophy and religion, art, poetry and literature and social and political institutions. Philosophy formulates mind, religion formulates will, imagi-
nation and intuition, and creative intelligence gets expression in art, poetry and literature. Social and political institutions provide the outer framework for the working of external life. All these derive their cultural character and main ideas from the secret spirit in man.

**Limitations of Ethical Culture**

True culture has been often identified with ascetic and ethical modes of life. The limitations of such ethical cultures have been exhibited by the cultures of Rome and Sparta in ancient Greece. Life in Sparta and Rome was devoid of the delight of living. Philosophy, art and poetry hardly found any place. Aesthetic sense was distrusted. Sparta admitted only martial music and poetry. It was this puritanic influence which led even Plato to banish poetry from his ideal Republic. "Let it then", said Socrates, "be our defence now that we have recurred to the subject of poetry, that it was only to be expected that we should expel poetry from the city, such being her nature". Rome collapsed in the egoistic licence of the later republican and imperial nation. Sparta passed away leaving nothing attractive. The basic error underlying the ethical culture was the limitation of the freedom of the inner development.

**Limitations of Aesthetic Culture**

Besides the vital and moral bases of culture, another important basis has been found in art and the pursuit of beauty. Ancient Athens is the example of aesthetic culture. There were two distinct periods in the cultural history of Athens, first the Athens of Phidias and Sophocles and second the Athens of the philosophers. While the former emphasized art and beauty the latter emphasized thought. The determining forces in the Athens of Phidias and Sophocles were the sense of beauty and freedom and the enjoyment of life. Even thought and intellectual discussions aimed at the beauty of ideas. Even morality was expressed in terms of beauty. All this pursuit of aesthetic enjoyment without any higher or stronger discipline exhausted Athens within a century.
The weakness of aesthetic culture becomes even more evident in the case of Italy of the Renaissance. It was an efflorescence of art, poetry and beauty of life, hardly concerned with high thought and morality. This lax, licentious and immoral aesthetic culture of Italy led to its prostration and broke its backbone in the absence of thought, will and character.

Need of a Synthetic Approach

The failures of ethical and aesthetic cultures, like that of the vital and mental ones, are rooted in the psychological fact that both depend on two powerful elements which are required to be synthesized. To be of permanent value in the social development of mankind, culture should be based on a principle which may satisfy, harmonize and integrate the total man. All one-sided solutions, all working compromises are bound to fail ultimately before the uncivilized barbaric element present in every actual civilization.

Examination of Rational Culture

Such a synthetic principle it has been pointed out lies in the rationality of man. Reason, undoubtedly, is the highest self-governing principle at the present level of man’s existence. It has the superior virtue of being detached in its approach, analytic in its processes and disengaged in its principles. But its sovereignty has always been imperfect and struggling. One of the most widely acknowledged rivals of reason has been faith, specially that in religion. Men have always been realizing, and now seriously enough, that reason’s control over man’s entire large, complex and mysterious existence is not absolutely valid. There has been a vague sense that there are powers greater than reason, as shown by the recent para-psychological findings and the philosophical issues involved in them.

Revolt against Reason

Thus one finds several contemporary revolts against reason such as pragmatism, existentialism and instrumentalism. There is a revolt against the repression, minimization, mechanisation
and arbitrary control of life by reason. Existentialism indicates the non-rational bases of existence with power more profound than reason. This subjectivist trend of thought has visualized self as the secret and source of existence, the basis of the inner truth of life which cannot be subject to reason. This revolt against reason, on the other hand, has subordinated reason to irrational elements which have on the one side distorted the working of reason and on the other side led to frustration firstly, because of their compromise with lower nature and secondly, because of their insufficiency. The error of the rationalist is certainly to take it as the whole truth, but that precisely has been the error of all the other formulas which have been advanced to substitute reason. In fact, life is too complex to be governed by any one of these. The age-long efforts of a rational culture have done a great service to man. They have given him his philosophy, science, knowledge and reasoned arts. It was hoped by some that science will not only give man the secrets of nature but also the true principles of his own inner working. This, however, has proved to be an overestimation. Science has given a knowledge of processes but it has left the inner secrets untouched. Reason works through abstractions, division, analysis and generalization. It can create only working hypotheses or partially applicable systems. It becomes either 'empiric' or 'doctrinaire'. Thus, reason no doubt has its utility in culture, but it cannot satisfy the self-transcending nature of man. The heights achieved by reason are without depths.

Failure of Rational Culture

Thus, a rational culture cannot be the true culture unless reason includes the wisdom of all other power in man. The rational man is not the whole man. A rational culture cannot synthesize ethical and aesthetic tendencies. It is certainly a higher stage in the cultural progress of man. The failure of the present rational culture of man, exhibited in his present crisis, exposes the limitations of reason just as the failure of Spartan and Athenian cultures laid bare the limitations of will and feeling as governing the principles of man's existence. Thus
feeling, will and reason all have been given a chance to build up a culture worthy of man. Their failure does not in any way warrant their complete rejection since none of these had been without its merits. All these should be given their due place in man's life. The real problem is to find a governing principle which may harmonize reason, will and feeling, the cognitive, conative and affective aspects of man.

Need for Re-orientation of Culture Outlook

A philosophy of culture worthy of its name, should take account of the history of man's culture, note the failures of ethical, aesthetic and rational culture and try to find out a principle higher than all these. This principle should not be compromised since a compromise is always likely to be broken, which may again lead to the repetition of past failures. Mankind, however, has come to a stage when a repetition of history may lead to its very extinction. Barbarism has never been fully conquered by men. It rose again and again, now in the Turkish form, now in the German form. This see-saw of culture and barbarism is a game which mankind cannot afford any more. The invention of nuclear weapons, the improvements in the technique of rockets and missiles, have put such tremendous power in man's hand that a rise of barbarism in future threatens a disruption of the entire structure of human society and even its extinction. This fact is of immense importance for the modern philosophy of culture. This grim situation calls for a complete re-orientation in our cultural outlook. The leading philosophers of culture in our time describe it as the period of one of the greatest transitions from one cultural super-system to another. They agree that besides sensory and rational cognition which consists in a complete identification of the cognizing subject with the cognizing object, there is the spirit in man.

Religious Culture

A religious culture is based on a principle other than reason, and in conformity with the inner, integral principle point-
A Critique of Religious Culture

ed out by Sorokin, Spengler, Toynbee, Schweitzer and other important contemporary philosophers of history. This is the spiritual principle in man. The surveys of the processes of cultural growth by Toynbee justify the principle that the creative growth of the individual or individuals can lay the foundation of a great device which constantly enriches the whole growing society. Crisis in a culture is due to a challenge which remains unfulfilled. The challenge facing the modern man is the need of his evolution to the spiritual level. The self-transcending tendency in man always aspires for higher and more integral bases. Religious culture may supply such a basis at the present juncture. It is definitely an advance upon rational culture. It has been a dominant tendency in the east and in the west also. It has been more or less permanent. Religion has evolved along with the cultural evolution of man. In this evolution it passed through several stages. The initial primitive beginning in totemism, fetishism and nature worship gradually passed into the rational stage when everything was subordinated to creed rituals and institutions. This tendency was led to its absurdity in a complete denial of whatever is occult, supra-physical and spiritual. But, side by side, with this there was another tendency which tried to liberate the secret spiritual essence and to place it on a universal stage. This spiritual element was again developed in its exoteric and esoteric forms, the intensive method of religion. The amalgam of these two led to the evolution of great religions which had spiritual truth as their basis that persisted only so long as it was occasionally renewed.

In this long process of evolution, each great religion has helped mankind. Paganism has increased in the light of beauty, the largeness and height of man’s life and aimed at a multisided perfection. Christianity has given a vision of divine love and charity. Buddhism has shown a nobler way to be wiser, gentler and purer. Judaism and Islam have shown how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God. Hinduism has opened the largest and profoundest spiritual possibilities.

But what is needed now is not a cult or creed but a sus-
tained and all-comprehending effort of spiritual self-evolution. To serve this purpose man requires not one religion but a congeries of religions. A harmony between various religions is necessary but not the negative variety since a diversity in oneness is the law of the manifestation of spirit.

The anti-religious trends too have their truth but it is in their premises and not in their conclusion. This trend has its justification in the fact that religions and their exponents have everywhere been too often a force of retardation, oppression and ignorance. Churches, cults and creeds have supported superstitions, aberrations, violence and crimes for their own benefit. This, of course, does not give us any right to condemn religion any more than the crime and errors committed in the name of liberty are sufficient reason for its rejection.

The evils of religion as that of everything else in human life lie in its infra-rational parts. It is this which led the tolerant pagans to slay Socrates. Even Hinduism at one time was led to the persecution and hatred of Buddhists. Atheism and anti-religious trends are a reaction to the prolonged violence by religious fanatics bred by the passions and dark vital nature of these so-called religious men. In political as well as social and other spheres of life this so-called religion, which Shri Aurobindo rightly called "Religionism", stood against all reforms.

The Spiritual Religion

True religion is spiritual. This spirituality is not life negating. It, on the other hand, helps to purify life and to raise it to a higher level. Religion is a great mediator between spirit and nature. It prepares man's mind and body for the advent of spiritual consciousness. It is a necessary step between mind and spirit. It satisfies the total being of man. It perfects the physical, vital and mental aspects. The lower infra-rational elements in man cannot be transformed by rational or secular control. They can be transformed and enlightened by the illumination of spiritual religion. The success of religion as the basis of man's culture depends on this spiritual element in it. This spirituality is the very opposite of limitation, fixa-
tion and institutionalization. It is fulfilled by freedom, which means the power to expand and grow towards perfection.

The above analysis of the different bases of culture and the elaboration of the claim of religion to be a basis for man's culture so that he may successfully overcome the present crisis intends to present the closest relation between religion and culture.
Religion and Conceptual Evolution

A. Jamal Khawja

I. The Quest of Interpretation and Value

Man’s pursuit of the meaning and significance of his self in the universe may be called the quest of interpretation; his pursuit of the good the quest of value. The deliberate abjura-
tion of metaphysics as a super science does not entail the abju-
ration of the quest of the meaning or significance of the uni-
verse. This quest is distinct from the scientific quest of the rela-
tional structure and function of the universe. Science qua
science does not raise the question of the proper mode of rela-
ting ourselves to the universe or the attitude we should adopt
towards it. Indeed the scientific enterprise presupposes the
attitude of manipulation and exploitation of objects. It is
philosophy and religion that attempt this crucial task, each in
its own way.

A philosophical interpretation of the universe is a concep-
tual unification of man’s experience as placed in the universe
with a view to adopting a total response or attitude towards it.
A philosophical or religious interpretation is not a crude sci-
entific hypothesis. Nor is a scientific hypothesis a superficial or
fragmentary philosophical interpretation. A religious expres-
sion like "the universe is the reflection of the Divine Being or Reality" is not to be understood literally as the statement "the moon in the river is the reflection of the moon in the sky". Similarly, the expression "God is the creator of the universe" is not parallel to the statement "Mr. X is the architect or the builder of the Taj Mahal."

The above religious or existential interpretations of the universe unify our experience and give us a stable basis for adopting a total attitude. Without a conscious interpretative act an attitude would be arbitrary and without roots. It would be liable to be displaced by a contrary attitude without much resistance by the individual save that exerted by habit or custom. Thus the belief that the universe is the creation of God prompts us to view the universe as an ordered and purposeful whole, and to take life more seriously than we would, if we believed it to be a gigantic joke or a cosmic accident. The expectation of law and order in nature is strengthened when law and order as revealed by science can be viewed not merely as brute and inexplicable data but as the expected features of God's creative activity.

Again reverence for life can certainly be felt by individuals even without their formulating philosophical or religious interpretations of the above type. But the attitude of reverence for life is immeasurably strengthened if life can be viewed not merely as a cosmic accident or blind emergent, but as the creative and divine Nisus expressing itself in a myriad forms and hues.

It would be idle to pretend that man needs no support or stimulus in his quest of value. Pain, evil, death, tragedy and injustice are as much facts of life as their opposites. In the absence of an 'ontological assurance' of the ultimate supremacy of value over disvalue, the tragic dimension of life would inevitably tend to weaken man's quest of value. The certainty of death and the possibility that it may be the final nothingness tend to dissipate if not totally destroy the motivational roots of human striving. But if man can locate pain, injustice and death in a conceptual frame that implies their even-
tual and final dissolution, then his quest of value stands re-
inforced. This is precisely what is attempted by philosophical
and religious interpretations in their own way. A philosop-
hal interpretation reinforces existential attitudes by ‘deriving’
or ‘rooting’ them in a critical world view. A religious inter-
pretation reinforces them by an appeal to a world view accept-
ed on the basis of faith. A philosophical interpretation is sui
generis. It is neither a purely deductive nor an inductive activ-
ity and can never be proved in the above senses. But it has
its own logic and criteria of validity.

I would go so far as to say that all religious interpreta-
tions of the universe are a type of rationalization. But they
are not, therefore, ipso facto disreputable. If the quest of
value is indispensable for man, then the aim of reinforcing that
quest can never be disreputable. However, the job of reinforce-
ment may be done reputably or disreputably. Some attempts
at reinforcement may create an imbalance in the economy of
individual and social life through unduly encouraging some
values and discouraging others. To give a simple analogy,
some system of therapy may cure disease but produce some
metabolic imbalance as a consequence.

There is another criterion of the validity of an existential
interpretation. It may be called the criterion of ‘economy of
expectations’. Like a scientific explanation, every interpreta-
tion has logical implications or a characteristic implicational
field or manifold. The acceptance of an interpretation must
be followed by the acceptance of its field. The implicational
manifold may be more or less ‘economical’, in the sense that
it may extend to a larger or smaller number of ‘expectations’
from the course of nature and society. Now the greater the
area of the implied expectations, the greater is the risk of their
possible frustration by the actual behaviour of the universe.
Thus, if the accepted interpretation implies the expectation
that a Personal God will protect me from all accidents in peace
or in war, but I meet with a bad accident, then my interpreta-
tion will be likely to be disturbed, if not shaken. Of course,
I can always think of some plausible reason for the actual frus-
tration of my expectation. But it appears to me that the inter-
pretation which is the most 'economical' or implies minimal expectations has the minimum chances of frustration. Hence it is, in principle, more valid than interpretations with a larger field or manifold of expectations. At the same time, however, 'economy of expectations' cannot be regarded as the sole criterion of validity. The interpretation must possess a measure of 'reinforcement potential', which is its primary function. We may say that the criterion of validity is maximum 'reinforcement potential' combined with minimum 'economy of expectations'. In other words, the principle of Occam's razor is valid for existential interpretations.

It appears to me that no one interpretation can be accepted as perfect or final. Every interpretation has some limitations, even though it may provide maximum reinforcement to a particular value or set of values. Thus the interpretation that the universe is the creation of an all powerful and all loving God who has revealed His infallible wisdom in a scripture, reinforces to the maximum degree the value of discipline and obedience to proper authority. But such an interpretation discourages, to some extent, the value of independent reflection and enquiry.

However, the abandonment of the quest of interpretation in the face of this difficulty amounts indirectly to the abandonment of the quest of value itself. Hence, man must accept the burden of interpretative responsibility, just as he must accept life itself in spite of its tragic dimension.

The way out of this interpretative paradox and conceptual predicament is not the strategy of interpretative nihilism that prevails in some quarters of Western philosophy. The way out is the strategy of interpretative transcendence combined with a deep emotional commitment to some interpretation or other. This transcendence is an admission of the failure of finite man to conquer the opaqueness of his own self and the universe and to transform them into transparent objects. It is at the same time a hymn that man may offer to his own self and the universe. Not negative, but a transcendental silence is the only fitting response to the mystery and awe at the con-
The belief in the superfluity of religion or philosophy in the age of science is an illusion. We cannot help accepting some postulate on faith (rational faith if you like). Nor can we help accepting some interpretation of the universe and some scale of values or other. The attempted repudiation of philosophy or of religion is at bottom the repudiation of a particular philosophy or philosophies or a particular religion or religions. Hence, Erich Fromm's expression, 'frames of orientation and devotion', applicable to traditional religions as well as philosophical and secular thought-cum-value systems, is very apt and illuminating.

II. The Nature of Conceptual Evolution

Philosophical and religious interpretations as cultural products or organisms are as much subject to the law of change as are biological organisms. Change is not merely a fact of life but the law of life in all its fields. This gradual change in cultural organisms or configurations may aptly be called 'conceptual evolution'.

Conceptual evolution is the product of diverse factors—the intermingling of diverse cultural organisms or gestalts in peace and war, the progress of science and technology, the synoptic and critical activity of philosophy, the utopian function of art and literature and finally the irrepressible human quest of the Summum Bonum. This makes man strive for the better instead of being satisfied merely with the good.

The different spheres of human culture are organically linked, and change in one sphere spills over into all others. There is 'regional' resistance to begin with. But in the course of time significant change in any one sphere of human culture penetrates into the total cultural gestalt. To give only a very few illustrations, the invention of photography had its repercussions upon painting, the scientific formulation of the theory of evolution profoundly altered philosophy and Christian theology, the industrial revolution led to social, moral and economic revolutions and the advent of contraception is gradually influ-
enceing the norms of sexual morality. Religion as a segment of the cultural gestalt cannot escape transformation in this evolving universe. Even without our being aware of or giving our consent to change, the traditional religions of the world are being transformed under the impact of science and technology. The advocates of conservation cherish the illusion of a static finality because of their inability or unwillingness to concede that religion can be no exception to the universal law of conceptual evolution.

This illusion of a changeless and final religion arises through the tendency of words and names to persist in our living vocabulary in spite of changes in their concrete connotation. Even a radical connotative transformation or conceptual reconstruction may take place without a corresponding change in our linguistic habits or vocabulary. This is quite common and natural though highly misleading, since it tends to conceal the fact of change.

The flexibility of natural languages, the unconscious alterations, extensions and restrictions in the concrete content of words and finally the undetected employment of different persuasive definitions of identical words, like God, creation, religion, revelation, truth, freedom, justice, democracy, knowledge, etc.,—these are the factors that conspire to conceal the ubiquity of conceptual evolution.

Conceptual evolution is governed by the law of pragmatic selection. A philosophical or religious interpretation, that is, useful to man at a particular stage of his development is projected by his creative imagination working on the canvas of his total environment. The interpretation is simultaneously the function of his quest of values as well as of his environment. It is gradually accepted and incorporated by the social group principally because of its pragmatic potential. It grows and gradually realizes its full potentialities in the course of history. Meanwhile, fresh changes and developments occur and demand a fresh assessment of the total environment. A philosophical or religious interpretation which was useful once may cease to be useful at some other stage.
A useful interpretation is one that provides maximum reinforcement to the human quest of value and stimulates his joyous and creative effort without producing any conscious or unconscious disharmony or imbalance in the social or individual life of man. Like useful variations or mutations, a useful interpretation of the universe enables the individual in society to achieve a progressively more integrated, inwardly free and self-regulated, loving and productive personality orientation in Erich Fromm's sense.

Every religion, to begin with, represents a creative re-evaluation and transformation of the then prevailing values. It is dynamic and creative in the primary transcendental sense. But this creative break-through tends to lose its momentum after a lapse of time, though religion may and frequently does continue to be dynamic in the immanent sense. At this point in its history religion is transcendentally static, though immanently dynamic. It starts preserving the status quo. It, no doubt, strives after justice and the welfare of man. But the concrete content of these values is a reflection of the prevailing norms of a select elite. The religious tradition hesitates to undertake a fresh and critical scrutiny of those norms. This task is then taken up by the critical philosophers of culture or the prophets of a new value structure.

III. The Task of Conceptual Evolution

Conceptual evolution in the sphere of religion requires an adequate theory of the nature and function of religious symbolism or language. Religious dogmatism or conceptual stagnation on the one hand, and the total rejection of traditional religions on the other, are both the consequences of an inadequate theory of meaning, particularly of the language of religion.

Both the religious traditionalist and his hostile critic unconsciously accept religious statements or expressions in the literal sense. They both assimilate religious statements to descriptive statements. The only difference between them is that the traditionalist takes them to refer to a super-sensible world and deems empirical verification uncalled for, while the
hostile critic insists on verification. When that is not forthcoming, he brushes them aside as either meaningless or useless according to his style of positivism. An adequate theory of religious language would dispel conceptual stagnation no less than the unwarranted hostility to traditional religion. It would pave the way for conceptual evolution.

The religious use of language is *sui generis* and cannot be reduced to the purely evaluative, descriptive or poetic uses, though it may have points of contact with all these. Its typical feature is invocation of help and evocation of chosen attitudes. But there are other important features. The body of religious literature also consists of evaluative, prescriptive and *prima facie* descriptive statements. The traditionalist adopts the literal approach to all these types of statements and accepts them all. Indeed their total and unqualified acceptance is deemed by him to be the test of faith. The positivist or opponent of traditional religion also adopts the literal approach to all these statements and rejects them as meaningless, useless or false. But these types of statements cannot all be treated as literally true or false, valid or invalid.

The literal approach is certainly called for in the case of evaluative and prescriptive statements. But even here a clear distinction ought to be made between evaluative statements that deal with intrinsic values and those which deal with instrumental values. Scriptural prescriptions that refer to instrumental values cannot claim parity of status and obligatory force with prescriptions that refer to intrinsic values. Similarly the literal approach to *prima facie* descriptive statements is invalid. Conceptual perplexity arises precisely because of this blanket literal approach to religious statements.

The roots of this literalism lie in the failure to distinguish between the descriptive and interpretative uses of language. If the *prima facie* descriptive statements in the body of religious literature are treated as projected interpretations of the universe, then they cease to be truth-claims in the descriptive sense. They cease to compete with scientific truth claims for their acceptance and inclusion in the body of verifiable know-
ledge. When a poet describes the stars as diamonds on the robe of night, he does not expect this expression to be included in the body of astronomy or physics. Nor is the 'truth' of this claim incompatible with some other poetic expression. This does not imply that religious interpretations are merely poetic metaphors. This would mean the commitment of the same reductive fallacy of reducing *prima facie* descriptive statements in the body of traditional religions to the descriptive statements of science and commonsense. The *prima facie* descriptive statements in religious scriptures are neither pseudo-descriptions, nor poetic metaphors, but philosophical or existential interpretations of the universe.

Viewed in this light religious interpretations are true or false, not in the descriptive verifiable sense, but in the sense of varying degrees in which they intensify and reinforce the quest of value and our existential attitude to the universe. Thus a Christian or Muslim may accept the statement of the creation and fall of man, as enunciated in the Bible or Quran, not as a part of the language of astronomy and history, but as an insightful pointer to the significance of man in the cosmos, his potentialities of both good and evil, and the possibility of his spiritual growth. Similarly the description of the great flood and Noah's ark may be understood as an analogical assurance and reminder of the ultimate triumph of truth and justice even in a world flooded with evil and injustice.

The rationale behind the need and task of conceptual evolution is that though existential interpretations are neither true nor false in the scientific verifiable sense, they are valid or invalid in proportion to their capacity to reinforce the quest of value and generate an integrated, free, loving and productive 'personality orientation' as this concept is used by Erich Fromm. The task of conceptual evolution is precisely to examine the interpretations projected by the different religions from this point of view. The aim is to enhance their instrumental effectiveness and reinforcement potential. Such a critical examination shows that many concepts of traditional religions, for example, the concept of revelation, duty, justice, equality, God, creation, etc., as traditionally understood hinder
rather than promote the above type of personality integration. In all humility I may say that perhaps all traditional religions reveal an implicit, if not explicit, partiality towards one-half of the human population on the basis of sex. The traditional concept of revelation as a clear, comprehensive and absolutely perfect expression of the will of a transcendent God, strikes at the roots of man’s creative quest of value, under the guidance of God within man. Many observations of a similar nature may be made, but perhaps not in this paper. The point is that all these difficulties can be removed through conceptual evolution.

The task of conceptual evolution is a specialised one. Each traditional religion will have to perform it separately. It appears to me that the Christian and Jewish thinkers have gone the farthest in this respect.

IV. The Goal of Conceptual Evolution

The final goal of conceptual evolution in the sphere of religion is the emergence of a conceptual frame that can accommodate all the great religions, without attempting to displace or destroy them. Such a conceptual frame does not displace the great religions, but rather enables them to fulfil and complete their destiny. The concept of Islam, to my mind, no less than the concept of Sanatana Dharma, as interpreted by Radhakrishnan in his Recovery of Faith offers us just such a conceptual frame. Similarly, Tillich’s conception of ‘faith’ in his Dynamics of Faith provides us with such a religious framework. Radhakrishnan explicitly points out that the Sanatana Dharma, as understood by him, cannot be identified or reduced to any particular version of Hinduism as unfolded in its long history. The Sanatana Dharma or the eternal faith is as old as humanity and yet it must be fashioned anew by every age. Every historical or concrete version of this eternal faith must burn itself like the Phoenix, to be reborn in the authentic creative conscience of humanity. Man ceases to be religious if he ceases to evolve in accordance with the whisperings of his authentic and free conscience. To my mind, Islam is submission to this creative conscience—the God within man. Islam is
the perpetual striving to rediscover the eternal religion perpetually old and yet perpetually new. Stagnation or fixation means decay and eventual death of the creative quest of value and interpretation, which is here viewed as the essence of religious eternal human quest of value, or a particular conception of misplacement reification. A particular conceptual fruit of the eternal human quest of value, or a particular conception of God is equated with God. In the conceptual framework of Semitic religions, this fallacy may aptly be called 'conceptual idolatry'. The person guilty of conceptual idolatry, Mistakes a particular finite conception of God for God himself. Conceptual idolatry is much more difficult to detect than ordinary material object idolatry. But one is as innocent or as objectionable as the other.

Conceptual evolution does not aim to accomplish the impossible, to capture or contain infinity in finite conceptual models or symbols. The goal of conceptual evolution is not the projection of the final interpretation of the universe. No recommended interpretation can or need be accepted by all. The goal of conceptual evolution is the attainment of conceptual salvation or Moksha—the deliverance from the strife and tyranny of fragmentary and limited perspectives projected by man in his eternal quest of interpretation. Conceptual Moksha is found in transcendental silence or the negation of every projected image of the Divine. This negation is rooted, not in scepticism, nihilism or intellectual pride, but in the sense of mystery at the portals of the Summum Bonum. This transcendental negation of concepts or the utterance of 'neti neti' does not imply a negation of the value of conceptual symbols. Without symbols there can be no interpretation and without interpretation the quest of value has no conceptual support or foundation. As indicated earlier the function of an existential interpretation is precisely to reinforce the quest of value. Thus, man abandons conceptual symbols at a very grave risk. The admission of the unavoidable limitations of symbols must not lead to their total dismissal. Nor should the vision of conceptual Moksha and the desire for freedom from the strife of competing conceptual models prompt us to cut ourselves away
from a particular religious tradition. Whether we accept a Personal God or not, a sense of contact or communion with 'something more than the conscious self' is perhaps essential for the therapeutic function of religion, like the giving of solace, sense of security, strength and the assurance of the ultimate triumph of justice, etc. Now this 'Something, that is more than the conscious Self' must be grasped through some conceptual model that purports to refer to it.

A person whose philosophical scruples deprive him of living symbols of the Divine would perhaps fail to reap the pragmatic advantages of traditional religions. On the other hand, a person who abjures the task of conceptual evolution due to theological scruples would perhaps fail to reap the conceptual and also the pragmatic advantages of an open quest of value and of interpretation.

Without obliging man to cut himself away from the roots of his own religious tradition, conceptual evolution promises him entry into the kingdom of the Spirit. The shining vistas of ceaseless creative growth while rooted in his own religious tradition invite him to transcend the shadows cast by tradition on the path of man—the eternal pilgrim.

**SUMMARY**

I.

(a) The human quest of the existential significance of man in the universe is as indispensable as man's quest of value. Philosophy undertakes this quest critically, religion, in the usual sense, on the basis of commitment to an Authority.

(b) The function of philosophical or existential interpretations of the Universe is the reinforcement of the quest of value. Without conceptual support, this quest remains rootless and arbitrary. But the job of reinforcement must be evaluated according to definite criteria. They are 'reinforcement potential', 'economy of expectations', and 'balance'.

(c) No interpretation can be perfect or final. But this predicament must be resolved, not through 'interpretative nihilism' but through 'interpretative transcendentalism'.

II.

The gradual but inevitable change in cultural organisms includ-
ing religion may aptly be called 'conceptual evolution'. It is govern-
ed by the law of pragmatic selection. The illusion of finality is due
partly to 'linguistic conservatism'.

III.

Conceptual evolution in the sphere of religion requires an ade-
quate theory of religious language. Conceptual perplexity is rooted in
precritical literal approach to religious language in general, and the
failure to distinguish between descriptive and interpretative uses of
statements.

IV.

The goal of conceptual evolution in the sphere of religion is con-
ceptual salvation or Moksha, i.e., the deliverance of man from the strife
of conceptual models, without losing his roots in a religious tradition.
II

Concept of Freedom from the Indian Point of View

S. S. Barlingay

It is usual to consider "freedom" in relation to "bondage".1 "Freedom" is sometimes thought of as absence of the state of "bondage".2 But in this sense it is clear that though the word "freedom" is expressed in language as a substantive it is not logically a substantive but an adjective or adverb (which is always associated with the verb to be) or even a verb. "To be free" in this sense, requires a further preposition "to" or "from", for, "to be free" does not express a complete sense. Either something must be "free from something" or "someone must be free to be something." It is necessary to analyse these notions carefully. When one says that "A" is free from "B" the least that is understood is that there is no obstacle in the way of A from B. It does not, however, give any clue about the state of A itself, whether A is active or passive. On the other hand, it gives a sense that "B", which could have been active to destroy A's freedom, is not active. It is in this sense that we use sentences like, "A country is free from occupation", "A seat is free". "Free from" in this context means, unoccupied, vacant, etc., and carried

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primarily a notion of a passive state, though I am aware that the phrase "free from" can be used to convey an active state, as in the sentence, "I am free from prejudice". "Free from", thus, primarily gives a static notion of a relation like the relation of "north of" or "south of", as in the sentence, "Dubrovnik is to the south of Zagreb". There is, however, a small difference. Both the terms of the relation expressed by the phrase, "to be south of" are also static, whereas the term "B" in the sentence, "A is free from B", has a potentiality to be active.

However, the phrase, "free from" does not express the exact sense of the word "free". For when it is said that "A is free from B" what is intended to be described is some positive state of A. And exactly this is missed. This notion is expressed by the phrase "free to". "I am free to do" means that my activity can "flow the way I like in the direction of X, there being no obstruction from anybody or anything." The phrase "free to", thus, conveys the more important aspect of the notion of freedom.

Still I feel that the notion of freedom conveys something more fundamental than is conveyed by the phrase "free to". The phrase "free to" indicates (1) that freedom is essentially an activity, and (2) that it is a relation between the agent and something else. Now these seem to be true only with some limitations. In the first place "freedom" may not always convey a relation with something else, but may convey a relation with itself. And even when it conveys a relation with something else, a relation with itself may not be completely eliminated. Nay, it may be potentially present. If this is so, it means that "freedom" in its primary sense is a mode of the self or agent, an attribute of the agent.

This leads to the other point. "Freedom" is conceived as an activity, which indeed it is, as when a man makes some free choice. Nevertheless the implications of the phrase "freedom as an activity" deserves careful attention. It is an activity in the sense "being" or "existing" is an activity. It seems to be an activity which is presupposed by activities and non-activities alike.
Let me make my point clear. Assuming that "freedom" is essentially an activity, is it correct to say that a man is free only when he is doing something, some free activity? That is, when he is not doing anything will it be necessary to say that he is not a free man? Is it a contradiction to say that a free man is idle or sleeping? In other words, is freedom co-extensive only with the dynamic part of man's personality? I am afraid this cannot be so. This will lead to a double personality of a man. And a negation of an integrated personality is, indeed, a negation of freedom. In fact "freedom" ought to have a reference to the total personality of man in all its aspects.

Perhaps, it may be objected that the "agent" is never non-active. Even when he is sleeping, he may still be "active". It is for this reason that afterwards he may say that he had a good sleep. This may be so. But the point to note is that it is not activity in the ordinary sense of the term. "Sleeping" may pre-suppose an active state of the agent, in which the state of sleep is a part. And freedom, indeed, is concerned with such activity. But such an activity is not a first-order activity, as it is presupposed by every activity and non-activity alike and is the very essence of the doer or the agent. Such an activity does not point to any relation, but is the personality itself. This means that there must be a use of the word "free" without any preposition "to" attached. A free person can be simply free, even when he is doing "nothing", when he is at rest. I suppose this is the most important sense of "freedom", and it is presupposed when we use the phrases "free from" and "free to". When a human personality is in contact with the environment, his personality, and so also his freedom, is more or less checked by the environment. It is the limitation or possibility of freedom that is expressed by the phrases "free from" and "free to".

"Freedom" is usually regarded as an absence of bondage. But this should not lead us to the conclusion that "freedom" is not a positive concept. "Freedom" in fact, should be the natural state of the self, and it is only the "bondage" which should be its negation or limitation. This limitation is caused
when an individual self comes in contact with the external world including the other selves. This contact, however, leads to the notion that "freedom" is the negation of bondage. Since bondage is the negation or limitation of freedom, it should be possible logically to describe "freedom" as the negation of bondage. But what is necessary to understand is that "freedom" is essentially "a freedom" and not simply a negation of bondage, as the linguistic description suggests. It should, however, be remembered that as soon as the concept of freedom is extended beyond the individual self the activity and the relative aspects of freedom become more significant.

The formulation of the concept of freedom in terms of bondage has, however, its own value. Logically "bondage" can be expressed as "non-freedom" and "freedom" as "non-bondage". The proposition "A is free from B" is thus, expressible in the form "A is not bound by B"; "A is not free" means that "A is bound, of course, by something". Similarly, "A is free to do X", is equivalent to saying that A is not bound (by something else) not to do X. These logical formulations give a very important truth about the concept of "freedom". "Someone or something is not free" means that it is controlled by something or someone other than itself. If one is free one is controlled by oneself, uncontrolled by oneself being equivalent to "controlled by others". It should, however, be remembered that "other than oneself" is a very complicated concept. Any part of the total personality can at any time become independent and control the personality itself. In this respect man's temptations, wishes, and desires may become complexes and may control the personality itself.

The truth that freedom means control from within is very important in one more way. It points to the fact that freedom is not opposed to the laws of mechanics or dialectics. It points out that a free action does not mean an action unsubjected to the law of causality. A free man, say A, does something, say, X, which is a free activity. In as much as the activity X is controlled by A, it is certainly subjected to the law of causality. One can certainly say that X is caused by A, or X is the effect or product of A. If one is not able to say this,
in respect of A and X, then neither would A be a doer nor would X be A's activity. What makes A's activity, X, a free activity, in this—there is always a possibility for A not to do X but do something else, say X₁ or X₂ or X₃…Xₙ. If A does X and if X is a free activity then A controls X. That is, if A wants to do something other than X he is free to do it, though the other than X, say X₁, is also controlled by A. On the other hand if A's activity is not free, it means that A cannot do anything else except X. It is the activity X which controls A and so A is not free; his freedom is taken away and he has no choice. That the agent should not be controlled from without by the activity and that he should have choice of action is the most important aspect of the concept of "freedom". A free activity, in short, can be controlled by the agent.

Oftentimes it is thought that the concept of freedom is non-compatible with the laws of dialectic. It should now be clear that it is just a misunderstanding. If "causes" determine "effects", freedom is not destroyed. Freedom is negated only when the "effect" controls the causes. It is true that in the form in which the law of negation is usually presented it creates the impression that events are determined in such a way that there is no choice left—an event A becomes its contradictory, not-A. But it should be remembered that not-A is a formal notion. There can never be an event like not-A. The events can be only B, C, D, and so on, and B, C, D, etc., are contraries of A and not the contradictories. Thus, whether A changes into B or C or D does not affect the law of negation of negation, B, C, and D, equally being the contraries of A.

In recent times the concept of "freedom" is also used in the context of society. What should be meant by the freedom of society? Can a society be free? If it can be, in what sense can it be?

It appears to me that freedom or free activity essentially means an activity of Unity or totality conceived as Unity. Totality cannot be conceived as Unity unless the parts in totality are interconnected organically. I do not think that in the strict sense of the term it is possible to conceive of a society
as an organic Unity. Even when the aspect of unity is emphasised, "society" is essentially a multi-centred organisation where each individual acts as a reflex, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the society to act as unity. It is, therefore, difficult to conceive of freedom of society in the sense freedom of an individual can be conceived. Nevertheless where the society can stand as one man, freedom of society can be conceived in the sense we conceive of freedom of a man. This is, for example, possible when the whole nation stands as one man to defend against an aggressor. It is necessary to note that I have distinguished three senses of the word "freedom", the most fundamental sense being that in which it is used as an absolute non-relational attribute of a person. It is in this sense that freedom of society is hardly possible, for "the society" is not strictly a Unity. But in the sense in which we use phrases like "free to" and "free from", freedom of the society is possible. For, that a society is free to do a certain thing does not mean that there is a compulsion on every member of a society to do a certain thing. On the contrary what is really emphasised is the aspect of non-compulsion. Similarly, "society is free from ...." merely means that "every individual in the society is free from ....". It may in some cases even mean that "most men in the society are free from ....". That is, an individual in a society may or may not do a certain thing.

What then is meant by a free society? We have seen that the word "free" cannot be the adjective of 'society' qua society. For there is no society apart from its members. A free society then should mean a society where every member of the society is a free man. But if all men in the society are really "free" will the society be "free"? This is not impossible, but is certainly doubtful. For, it is conceivable that free actions of two free men may conflict and may lead to disorder or curtailment of freedom of one or all. "Free society" cannot, then, be conceived as an absolute notion.

The discussion so far stresses that the concept of freedom is essentially an individual concept. Since "freedom" entails choice, and since "choices" are likely to be infinite, the choices of two individuals may lead to conflict. It means that free-
dom of one may become incompatible with the freedom of the other. But this is only an egoistic conception of freedom, which self-contradicts the concept of freedom itself. For it is not the freedom of "A" or B or C, etc., that is the end. But it is the freedom of A and B and C, etc., that is an end. Since "freedom" is an essential attribute of personality, A's freedom must ensure the freedom of B, C and so on, even if it means curtailment of the activities of A.

The curtailment of individual freedom as a limitation of individual freedom points to its social dimension and thus enriches the concept itself by removing the contradiction. It is necessary to point out that what appears to be curtailment of freedom is, in fact, not the curtailment, for free action is not any action of random, but an action controlled by the self, personality. In a rational universe where a person understands the importance of others' freedom the choice will automatically be a responsible choice which will take into account the existence and freedom of other things. It is the real curtailment of freedom which negates freedom. A responsible action does not negate it.

Indian thinkers in contemporary times as in the past explicitly emphasise this point. They accept other persons or selves, and include other persons' freedom as a dimension of their own freedom. Service or duty towards the other is thus looked upon as a right of the person. Though "freedom" is meaningful only in the context of an individual, an individual cannot be thought of as individual qua individual. An individual is always an individual in a society. Even in Indian metaphysics, soul or jiva is inseparable or non-different from Brahman. This concept gives the necessary basis for the social dimension of freedom.

As one contemplates the notion of "freedom", two problems arise: (1) what is freedom? and (2) for whom is it? It is difficult to answer the first question. It is possible to describe situations where the concept of freedom is operative. But it is difficult to define it. This is perhaps for two different reasons. In the first place "freedom" appears to be a simple notion which does not allow any further analysis. Secondly,
the word "freedom" is so vaguely used (e.g., when it is said that real freedom is realised in socialism) that even when it is intended to describe situations where "freedom" is operative, it only represents a family of similar notions. In this sense it is not a single concept. It is a name given to number of mutually dependent concepts forming a whole and which has a range from the individual to society.

The second question, too, requires attention. Perhaps, the possible answer that can be suggested to this question is that by freedom we mean man's freedom. This is, of course, broadly true. And it is this answer which is presupposed in the above discussion. But the answer requires further analysis or clarification. If a man is imprisoned against his wishes does he cease to be free? Can physical force from the physically stronger man deprive the person with stronger will of his freedom? Does a martyr who dies for his nation (or for his cause) lose his freedom? The body of a man may act like any other piece of matter. But certainly body as such has nothing to do with freedom. Without suggesting in any way a ghost in the machine, I should say that the concept of freedom touches deeper than the body level. This is the notion of agent or Saksin. But "freedom" in its fundamental sense is an attribute or mode of his agent. Indian philosophy regards this agent always as free and stresses that it is only on account of ignorance that the agent thinks that he is bound. It will be interesting to point out that Gandhi used this notion in his technique of the freedom struggle. He pointed out that no brutal force in the world can bind a man with a strong will.

The analysis in the preceding paragraphs shows that "freedom" entails (1) control from within and (2) possibility of choice. The (2) entails (3) "the security for making choice". When by "freedom" is understood the freedom of man these factors take the form of (1) the security of individual life, (2) the possibility of individual development and (3) control not from without but from within. These are, however, crude and vague dicta. The individual's life cannot be completely secure. It may be susceptible to external attacks, e.g., from that of bacteria. It may also be susceptible to cer-
tain unconscious mental factors. A man, for example, may suffer from hysteria. Again, a man may become anti-social and criminal and whereas he may not want to respect others’ life and freedom he may demand such a security for himself. But evidently such a security cannot be granted. The security factor has its own limitations. Similar complications may arise even in respect of the second and the third dicta. “Control from within” is, again, a vague notion. What may be regarded as a control from within may turn out to be exactly its opposite. A man may become the slave of his own moods and fancies. But in spite of these limitations there is no doubt that the conditions enunciated above are important conditions for “freedom”. By adhering to these conditions, even if the individual’s freedom is sometimes impaired, it is safer to follow these dicta. Even if one errs, one errs on the safer side.

REFERENCES

A conference of philosophers was invited by Yugoslav Philosophy Congress and was held in Dubrovnik between 19th June 1968 and 23rd June 1968, to discuss “The Man Today”. The Conference was attended by philosophers from fifteen countries which included U.S.A., and U.S.S.R., East and West Germany, Poland and France. There was a lively discussion on different aspects of man. The papers were submitted in either English, Russian or German. Under the general title of “The Man Today”, the philosophers vigorously discussed the problem of co-existence, the problem of human freedom and the problem of technology. The discussion on “Freedom”, was opened by Dr. Barlingay by reading the paper printed above.

1. Moksa and Bandha are the terms used for freedom and bondage in Indian metaphysics.

2. This will be referred to again.

3. It will be interesting to recall here the dialogue between Gandhi and the American journalist, Louis Fischer. When asked his opinion about the traditional four freedoms, like the freedom of press, etc., Gandhi replied, they are all right, but freedom to be free is more important than the rest. It should be noted that the word “free” in the expression “freedom to be free” points to the non-relational use of the word and denotes that freedom is an attribute or mode of the self.

4. This truth is well recognised by the Grammar School of Indian thought when it regards the subject or doer as governing itself—Svatantrah karta.

5. It means that the concept of freedom would not apply to A and X,
The Place of Art in Civilisation

Mulk Raj Anand

There are certain activities of homosapiens, in all social orders, which arise spontaneously from human compulsions and help to make the order of relations called civilisation.

In this context, man appears not only as part of the species but also as an individual whose metabolic urges lie at the root of evolutionary change and development. The very inspiration behind the acts of the body-soul in satisfying human needs and interest also make for mutations involving the struggle to grow. In the absence of these organic changes human evolution can come to an end.

Thus, though the body-soul spontaneously aspires towards its own extension, every instinct, feeling, thought and action becomes part of the self perfection of the individual.

Until recently primitive religions concentrated on the salvation of the individual in his efforts at self realisation, through the various ways of prayer, involving cleanliness of body, equipoise of memory, concentration and intellect, proficiency in acquiring meditation, avoiding mental slackness, avoiding sense excitation before entering the trance.

But, contemporary research has tended to shift the en-
phasis from the brain-burdened mental potential, to the neuro-
physical, muscular and rhythmic complexes, which lie at the
root of human growth.

It is likely that these processes are even rooted in pre-
human motivations. Certainly, the alliance of the physical,
psychological and other human urges to outside forms gives the
cut for many of the processes which man initiates and which
become the source of civilisation.

If the deep inter-connection of mutational changes in the
evolution of the human species, is accepted as an hypothesis,
we can see the clear inter-connection between human needs and
interest and making of civilisations.

What are the chief motivations which show this basic inter-
connection between men and the society they create?

There seems to be about seven chief functions of the human
metabolism which compel action and initiate the struggle to
create any order of relations.

Let us enumerate these one by one:

(i) The first urge of man is to secure food and such a sus-
stenance as may enable him to continue to survive in this
universe, where other forms of life also struggle to continue
to breathe. The methods of creating food have differed from
hunting of animals and fruit gathering to eating vegetables,
cereals and other growths from the earth soil, the water and
the sky. Therefore, in all civilisations man has tried to evolve
means of production ranging from the flint, the stone axe, to
the bow and arrow, the gunpowder, the steam engine and the
oil tractor. The growth from the simplest tools for securing
edible commodities for the more intricately designed machines
has been often judged as the standard of growth from a simple
civilisation to a more complex and higher civilisation.

(ii) The second compulsion which inspires the human
individual to protect himself in order to grow, seems to have
been the need for shelter, against the inclement weather for
privacy, rest and procreation. This urge seems to have taken
the form of looking for covering such as tree bark, straw, cloth
and other more permanent materials which may ensure the wrapping of the body in some kind of comfort against the elements. Perhaps in this sense we can interpret caves, thatched dwellings, mud and brick houses or cement structures as clothes. The behaviour of the other species like bees, birds and animals in search of shelter makes this need a common urge for survival of all creatures. The difference is that while bees have a nervous ganglion, we have billions of nerve cells. And while the beehive is the most complex organisation of the shelter structure for the lower species, the problems of organisation of habitations for human beings go beyond the ecological equilibrium of the termite hill to the growth of vast cities like London, Paris, New York, Calcutta, Tokyo and possible future patterns like Chandigarh and Brazilia.

(iii) The third factor which human beings demand is the means of transportation from one place to the other, in order that they may be able to exchange goods and services, as well as enjoy the change of air from a relatively closed shelter to a wider area where there is more breathing space. This led the early societies to utilise the donkey, the mule, the horse, the buffalo and the yak as the beast for carrying of burden. Later, the wheel was invented, and came to be utilised in the chariot, the cart, the improved horse carriages, the tonga, the gig and the landau to the motor car and aeroplane. Many of these forms have survived from one age to the other and the habits of one kind of utilitarian transport have served through deep rooted psychological affiliations into even our own atomic civilisation.

(iv) The fourth decisive causation in all communities, from the most elementary to the complex, is the evolution of a minimum government, either commune, panchayat, municipal committee or legislature. This organisation is necessary to regulate the relations of the individuals in society, to render forth certain public services like sweeping the streets, the maintenance of roads, the supply of water and light, and the provision of space for the various village, semi-urban, or urban needs. The planning of townships with adequate means for the enjoy-
ment of leisure hours in gardens, parks, children's playgrounds, theatres and arenas of sport, all came under this kind of community organisation, enabling the individual to fulfil himself not only in his privacy but in and through society.

(v) The fifth need which has always arisen from the compulsion of the individual life, in and through society, has been the evolution of the rule of law. For some minimum rules, regulations, by-laws and laws became necessary to adjust the various contrary impulses of men. The basic human pattern, of course, makes every individual govern himself to a large extent but as one person's social interest enters into conflict with those of another, some minimum rules have to be established to govern the conduct of people for common benefit. The growth of the rule of law from the elementary councils of the village to the modern democratic order has come through a long series of struggles and is yet fairly primitive because of the emotional connection of one exuberant and powerful physical personality to aggrandise against others by the possession of physical power added by arms, men and money in excess of all other people. The art of government has often failed miserably because the earlier forms of mutual aid were forgotten in the psychopathic urges of one community being overrun by another or of one man to dominate the rest.

(vi) The sixth form of upsurge in the human potential is the kind of mutational change in social organisation, which the individual body-soul demands in its own individual growth. That is to say, there is an organic drive towards a higher, more co-ordinated and complex project, through the warp and woof of which we may extend our range of awareness.

This is evidenced in the planning of rural centres, in confederations of states, and now-a-days in the world organisations, which are being attempted to integrate the different communities of the earth into one world. Of course, so far, in the long run history of mankind, the sectional differences and local affiliations have prevented the coming together of the various states into the corpus of a universal brotherhood. All the same, in the 20th century industrial civilisation, there
is an awareness that the individuals, tribes, nations and races, must come together even by loosening or breaking down the frontiers, if the human species is going to survive into the 21st century A.D. Already, the railways, ships, and skyways connect the different parts of the world into an efficient network of relations, so that the vast spaces have become connecting links of the universe and the barriers are being obliterated. The elimination of war as an instrument of national policy will compel this togetherness in international relations in greater numbers of people even if the local sense does not disappear altogether.

(vii) The seventh compulsion which is self-generated by the intentional changes in the evolution of soul-body is the most subtle of all. It is a kind of urge for self perfection which makes man confront himself in all the intricate nuances of his inner life as well as the universe outside, in the effort to understand all those silent areas, the awareness of which makes him a true individual. Passionate psycho-physical interest in flesh and blood, the stream of consciousness, and all those processes of faculty and experience, which are ignored in the more elementary tasks of making civilisation, came within the purview of man. The process is called culture, from the metaphor which derives from cultivation of the soil. The intensification of awareness and the arousing of the deepest consciousness, by analysis of feeling, emotion and thought, becomes the way to renew the human sensibility. It takes the form of poetry, music, dance, painting, sculpture and architecture, which are disciplines of the creative life, through which man builds up certain godheads of perfection from within himself in order to contemplate the miracle of his own becoming.

The means by which man finds himself forced to evolve his higher impulses, feelings and ideas into recognisable images are variegated. For instance, the earliest aspiration to touch the great God seated above the sky took the form of an exteriorisation of aspiration itself in alliance with the vertical line of the temple. The elemental alliance with the sensorily impressive reality, and adumbration of the mothers’s milk-giving breasts, became the psychotype of the tower or mound. Bur-
nished gold became the symbol of splendour. Various basic colours are the recognition, separately or in combination of the colours of nature, necessarily absorbed in the body as a kind of psycho-physical sustenance to regenerate various organs of the sensibility. Thus orange the colour of Hindu religion is valued for its warmth; red is passion; green is soothing calm; yellow means happiness.

As the human individual grows he recognises the emotional affiliations with all kinds of shapes and colours. The combination of these shapes and colours, the organisation of forms or the disorganisation, is the special capacity of the intense genius of the creative artist in the pictorial and plastic arts, the capacity to synthesise and construct ever new structures from the material afforded by nature. Similarly, metaphor and imagery, based on ever new combinations of experience, expressed in words, make the texture of kinetic flow which is called poetry. And the striking of a variety of chords into an integral rhythmic movement creates the most far reaching of all arts, music, and its expression in dance, the nearest perfection of the metabolism into its language for affiliations with psychotypes, perhaps the highest forms of self realisation.

Somehow, the response to the creative perfections of shape, form, colour, words and diathramb not only makes the body-soul flow into the subtlest psychotypes but it helps to mould the function of each part of the human organism to recreate away from the static routine of life the balance-imbalance of movements, rotations and changes which extend the range of man towards his own perfection.

In so far as the creative arts create the ‘negative capability’, or the flavours of rasa, joy, exhilaration or resonance in the body-soul, the harmony in disharmony of life becomes a quality by itself, or the sum of qualities, a symphony for contemplation, a kind of release for the pent up tensions of the individual.

The discovery of the fact, that in spite of individual physiological differences, human beings find satisfaction in the creative arts by reaching to forms in their different ways, shows that they are always seeking connection, in spite of their separateness in the common heritage of world creative art.
Cultural and Art an Interpretation of an Aitareya Statement

AMITA RAY

Years ago when I was working as a young novice in research in the field of Indian art history, Professor Niharrajan Ray, my Supervisor, used frequently to draw our attention to and explain at some length, a rather well-known and significant passage of the Aitareya Brahmana which lays down at once a meaningful definition of art and culture, one of the earliest of such definitions attempted by civilized man, if we are to date the Aitareya Brahmana in about the eighth or seventh century B.C.

The passage purports to say in the main, that whatever is made by man (to express his inner desire), be it a chariot of a clay toy, a social organisation or a brazen object if it is chhandomaya, that is, if it is informed by balance and rhythm, proportion and harmony, etc., it is a work of art (silpa). Two conditions are here postulated: one which is evident from the total context of the Brahmanas and Upanishads, is that it must be an externalisation of an inner desire or kama, and second, such externalised object must be chhandomaya or endowed with rhythm, balance, proportion, harmony, cadence, etc.
But the passage does not end here. It goes on further to answer an implied question: Why does man make *silpa* (art)? The straight and unequivocal answer is: man makes art to cultivate or culture himself (*atmanam samskurute*). The question is pursued no further, obviously because the person or persons to whom these words were being addressed by a wise and venerable sage, knew the prevailing meaning of the word *samskara* (to improve, to heighten, by a constant process of culture or cultivation of the soil of life), and no further explanation was considered necessary.

My object here is not to try to unravel what really was meant by the word *samskara* or culture and how it operated in the context of India’s history and tradition, since Professor Ray has already done it, exhaustively and successfully to my mind, but to make a small and humble attempt to present and examine the position taken up by Professor Ray as to how art or *silpa* is meant to help a person to culture himself or cultivate the soil of his life so as to make of him a better man, a really cultured man.

Let me go back to the *Aitareya* definition itself, according to which an object of art is the concretised expression of an inner desire or *kama*, an inner wish generated obviously by interaction of subject (which is the individual human being in this case) and object (which is the evolving human society and the world of objects around). Art or *silpa*-activity of man, therefore, belongs to the third or *kama varga* of the four categories of the Indian tradition, a concept that is upheld by all later Indian texts and traditions.

*Kama* or desire in action can be creative as well as destructive in respect as much of an individual as of a society. If it is to be creative and result in the improvement of the individual and the human society, it has to be regulated and disciplined, or otherwise it would lead to destruction. This is as much true biologically as otherwise. Regulated and disciplined externalisation of *kama* leads to pleasure and happiness, joy and bliss; when not so regulated and disciplined it results in ugliness and misery and deterioration in human sensi-
tivity and sensibility and hence of human personality. The creative function of *kama* is, therefore, ethical in its basic aim and purpose, which is one of the reasons why ethics and aesthetics have never been differentiated in the Indian tradition. But how does one regulate and discipline *kama* to help it externalise itself so as to make it creative and not destructive? What is indeed the process and what are the principles involved?

Speaking biologically, *kama* is indeed the creative desire to procreate, to perpetuate the species. Its process of operation in the animal world is obvious and much too well-known, but what is not usually noticed is the set of laws or principles that govern such procreation and perpetuation. The laws or principles are those of rhythm and balance, of proportion and harmony, collectively called *chhanda* in Sanskrit terminology. But such creation is not *slāpa* or art, since these are laws or principles inherent in nature itself; their operation is natural and instinctive. There is no conscious human will involved in it, and hence no question of *improvement* or *sanskara* of the species or genus. Natural forces are blind and can, therefore, be destructive at times when natural laws are disturbed as not unoften they are.

To an extent the human animal too is a product of nature and all natural laws or principles in his case too, are in full operation. To that extent he is not very much different from an animal. But ‘man is also endowed with reason, a conscious volition and an individual psyche’, a natural fact that raises him above the level of an animal and imposes a great responsibility on him, which is not only to perpetuate but also to improve (*sanskara*) his species and its march towards progress by the application of the additional faculties he has been endowed with by nature. When this is so done by him in the matter of procreation and perpetuation of his species, the method is one of eugenies in modern terminology, when in the realm of social or personal life and behaviour, it is one of what we know as ethics. All this is culture or cultivation of the soil of human life which is man’s unalterable destiny. To the extent he is consciously endeavouring to improve himself, to
that extent he is an artist, but he is an artist not in the ordi-
nary sense, but in that of an artist in life, or a maker of life,
that is, he is a jivana-silpa. A mother who raises up her little
child in the image of her inner creative desires, is an artist
from this point of view; from the Aitareya stand-point she
would indeed be considered as such. And so is a builder or
maker of a society or state so long as that society or state is
an externalised expression of his inner creative desire. The
laws or principles of making or building are here in these cases
too, the laws by which nature operates itself, that is, the laws
of rhythm and harmony, of balance and proportion, of cadence
and melody, etc., in a word, of chhandas.

These are the laws that lie at the basis as much of ethics—
individual or social—as of aesthetics, that is, of the good and
the beautiful; indeed the two words are almost synonymous
in the Indian tradition.

In art too the same laws operate. For after all what is
art but a creative desire of man externalised and concretised
by man in terms of sound (in the case of music), of line, colour,
volume, space, light and shade, etc., (in the case of sculpture
and architecture), of words and sounds (in the case of poetry
and literature), and of lines, curves, movements, space, volume,
etc., (in the case of drama and dance), for example, all con-
sciously organised in accordance with the laws of rhythm and
harmony, of balance and proportion, cadence and melody, etc.
Material objects so organised and fashioned by man at the
bidding and behest of his inner desire, are what we call objects
of art. The quality of a particular object of art would depend
as much on the quality of his creative desire which in its turn
would depend on the quality of his vision, imagination, know-
ledge, experience and observation of life and nature, as on the
extent of the quality of balance and proportion, of rhythm and
harmony, etc., he can achieve in fashioning the object.

According to the Aitareya point of view, art is one of the
means by which one can cultivate or culture one's own self.
If art is what I have just explained, how does it help one to
do so?
The answer is a simple and direct one.

When the artist fashions an object in accordance with the laws that govern art, that is, laws of rhythm and harmony, balance and proportion, etc., unwittingly and unconsciously he is likely to imbibe somewhat of these laws in his life, and thus regulate and discipline himself towards a better life. For what after all do we call a better life, a cultured or cultivated life, but what in other words, is a balanced life, a life of rhythm and harmony, of cadence and proportion?

The same is true of one who beholds with interest and pleasure, a painting or a piece of sculpture, or listens to a piece of music, or witnesses the acting of a drama or presentation of a dance. Apart from its thematic content which is but a good or bad peg for the art-object to hang from, his aesthetic sensibility is aroused or not almost exclusively by the presence or absence of rhythm and harmony, balance and proportion, cadence and melody, etc. If he is a regular reader or beholder or listener, his sensibilities and sensitivities are increasingly sharpened by relatively good objects of art and increasingly blunted by the relatively bad ones, relative goodness and badness depending on the degree of achievement of the qualities already referred to again and again. The sharpening of human sensibilities and sensitivities through art is one of the many ways by which man can cultivate the soil of his life. It is this sense perhaps that the Aitareya seer states that by resorting to art activities man cultivates and improves himself (atmanam samskurute).

If this interpretation be correct I should believe the Aitareya statement is one of such truths as should hold good for all times and in all claims.
Literature as a form of Art

S. K. NANDI

In the present paper we propose to examine certain problems connected with literary works. They will be examined under the following three heads:

(a) What impact do the ideas of a work of literature make on its readers? The question arise in the context of some aspects of intellectual criticism involving the question of the external efficacy of art presupposing the division of aesthetic and intellectual judgments.

(b) Are form and content in art organically related?

(c) Hence the nature of organic unity to be examined.

As for the problems involved in (a) we take the words ‘reader’ and ‘critic’ as interchangeable and in the discussion to follow they may be so treated. Is the reader influenced by the substance of the poem and is he overwhelmed by its technique? If he is overwhelmed by the technique, the mission of poetry is thereby fulfilled. Are the content or the ideas as bodied forth by the lines of the poem not being taken seriously? This problem very recently reared its head up during the second world war and it centred round the ‘Pisan Cantos’ of
Ezra Pound being adjudged as the best work to be awarded the Bollingen prize. At that time the poet was under indictment of treason for his pro-fascist or anti-semitic broadcasts from Italy. No reader or critic even doubted the aesthetic excellence of 'The Pisan Cantos' but what they were worried about was the efficacy of the ideas as conveyed in those excellent aesthetic forms. Of course, here we are not concerned with the question of aesthetic insincerity (as there was none on the part of Ezra Pound) but herein the problem involved is not the poem which Pound wrote but the poem which the reader had experienced. This reference to the experience of the reader leads to a new and different problem—the problem of viewing the artist's world from the reader's individual point of view. We know that an individual personality stands out as a definite Gestaltqualitat. It is something which emerges as a result of the combination of the various characteristics that are too well known to need any repetition. It is equally true that personality is something which affects the functioning of all the phenomena—the nervous system, emotions, intelligence, memory, learning, motivation, etc. Personality is often described as the sum total of all these, as they function in an individual. Yet, as a result of a synthesis of all these, certain new qualities emerge which describe one's personality more adequately. Further, personality can also be considered as the inner tempo, a dynamic and integrating nucleus which determines and directs the functioning of all the phenomena such as emotions, intelligence, memory, learning, etc. This personality, in a way, determines the aesthetic experience of the reader. His experience in the matter is certainly not identical with that of the artist. This position will naturally anticipate a separation of the Canto's rhythm and diction, their effective use of a living colloquial language from their vicious and ugly emotions. It was Pound's considered opinion as would be evident from his own writing.

"In each age one or two men of genius find something and express it. It may be in only a line or in two lines or in some quality or a cadence; and thereafter two dozen or two hundred or two or more thousand flowers repeat and dilute and
modify.... Needless to say (their critical) presentation would be entirely independent of consideration as to whether the given passage tended to make the students a better republican, monarchist, monist, dualist, rotarian or other sectarian."

Really speaking this is not a non-assertion theory. Pound and his tribe think that the business of the reader is to assess not the ideas but verbal technique. Absolute formalism in art, if accepted, could make such statements acceptable. We have noted that the tendency in recent criticism has been to overlook a work's statements or presuppositions in the spheres of philosophy, ethics, religion, politics, etc. If art is considered to be completely divorced from all contexts, intellectual and volitional, such a tendency could be justified. In our view such a divorce is untenable and a critic in his truest function—that of explicator and evaluator is the servant of the literary work. An analysis of the work of art would reveal this unified character of the work of art. A work of art in the proper meaning of that phrase is not an artifact but a creature of the artist's total imaginative experience. We know of different levels of experience—two of them being the psychical level and the conscious level. Each such level presupposes the one below it, not in the sense that the lower is left behind when the higher is reached but in the sense that the lower is related to the higher somewhat as a new material is related to something made out of it by imposing upon it a new form. The higher thus contains the lower within itself as its own matter, the special principles of the higher being, as it were, a form according to which the matter is now organised. By this reorganisation the lower is modified in certain ways. For example, the transition from the psychical level to the conscious level entails the conversion of impressions which are the elements of which psychical experience consists into ideas, or (which is the same thing) of sensuous experience into imaginative experience. What converts impressions into ideas or sensation into imagination is the activity of awareness or consciousness. If this is so, there can be no ideas without impressions, for every idea is an impression which the work of consciousness converts into an idea. The impression from which a given idea is, as Hume puts it, 'derived' is not a past impression degraded by
mere passage of time into an idea; it is a present impression elevated into an idea by the work of consciousness. Wherever there is an idea or imaginative experience, there are also the following elements. (1) An impression or sensuous experience corresponding with it, (2) an act of consciousness converting that impression into an idea. So we may say, that every imaginative experience is a sensuous experience raised to the imaginative level by an act of consciousness. Or every imaginative experience is a sensuous experience together with consciousness of the same. The aesthetic experience is wholly and entirely imaginative, it contains no elements that are not imaginative and the only power which can generate it is the power of the experient’s consciousness. But it is not generated out of nothing. Being an imaginative experience, it presupposes a corresponding sensuous experience, where to say that it presupposes this does not mean that it arises subsequently to this, but that it is generated by the act which converts this into it. The sensuous experience need not exist by itself first. It may come into being under the very eyes, so to speak, of consciousness, so that it no sooner comes into being than it is transmuted into imagination. Nevertheless, there is always a distinction between what transmutes (consciousness), and what is transmuted (sensation). So the critic is not free to overlook the ideas as conveyed by the work. But the question remains as to how best we could deal with the ideas? A theory of non-assertion has been frequently advanced in this context meaning thereby that ideas in literature are not presented in such a way as to raise the question of their validity. But we must bear in mind that the raw material of literature is language and the essence of language is grammatical predication, the explicit and implicit linking of one thing with another. The relationship of grammatical predication to logical predication, to what aestheticians call ‘statement’ or ‘assertion’—is a delicate one and the criticism of literature becomes involved with problems for which the criticism of more directly sensory art mediums offers no exact and convincing analogies. Of course, no one would like to make us believe that literature puts forward ‘report sentences’. They convey ‘reflective sentences’ as well and if the work wants to argue, then the reader must be
willing to argue. And while arguing the reader feels that he has lost his case, the poet or the writer triumphs. If the reader has a feeling of triumph over the writer, that feeling must be justified. The reader must thoroughly probe into the technique of the work, the materials presented therein the relevant historical and biographical material, the literary theories and all other allied contexts relevant for a proper appraisal of the aesthetic form. Following Yvor Winters we could formulate five clear steps in the critical process:

(1) to state the relevant historical and biographical materials;
(2) to analyse the writer’s relevant literary theories as embodied in the literary work;
(3) to make a rational criticism of the paraphrasable content;
(4) to make a rational criticism of feeling, style, language and technique;
(5) to make a final act of judgment ‘a judgment of the poet’s judgment of his material. An appraisal and evaluation of the poet’s understanding of the situation he deals with are called for’.

It is plain that the first two steps are ancillary, though in a given poem they may be indispensable. Three and four are concerned with what Arnold Isenberg calls ‘understanding’—grasping the form and structure of a work imparted by the internal coherence of its ideas and language. Within this structure, paraphrasable content (ideas) and feeling, style, language and technique (language) are not so clearly distinguishable as Winter seems to suggest. Rather they have a relation of formal coherence of elements as is found in a musical composition. Winter’s fifth step refers to external validity and distinguished from the internal validity of ideas as a principle of form.

Dougherty prefers to call ‘sesthetic’ the kind of criticism which stops with this ‘understanding’. He does not deny that ideas are present in the work but holds that they are present
only as a larger unit of form and that only within the context of the work—within the art-world—may they be judged. We may, in this context, take the view as intellectual which seeks to pitt the artist's vision against the reader's own and pass a judgment on the artist and his views as expressed in the art work. This judgment may be philosophical, moral or just informative. We really agree with Dougherty when he holds that the aesthetic judgment must come first and it is clearly separable. An art work failing aesthetically can hardly claim any excellence on the strength of its 'ideas'. Similarly, if ideas are crippled and lame, the art work suffers on that score. If ideas look stable and ancient, the art work fails to elicit the approbation it deserves. An instance in point is the great Bengali novelist Sarat Chandra Chatterjee. In a wonderful art form he presented his ideas and they were very much appreciated in India because the ideas and ideals as bodied forth in the characters of his novels were considered revolutionary and epoch-making. Chatterjee's 'characters' revolted against the outmoded Hindu social customs, such as, prohibition of widow marriage and other forms of social injustices. But his ideas were not much appreciated intellectually in the West and those ideas looked stale and uninspiring to the Western readers as those reforms and revolts were matters of seventeenth century revolution in the Western hemisphere. So a good art form failed to impress the Western readers aesthetically as the ideas were nothing new, novel or revolutionary with them. The reader did not judge the art work in the context of the artist and the art work itself. 'Understanding' of the artist and his world of ideas were subjected to a fateful subservience to the ideas of the reader and thus a biased aesthetic judgment was the outcome. Apparently the disapprobation was due to the disharmony, intellectual in nature. But it may be argued that the aesthetic judgment was primary in importance. As a literary critic our first task was to look for internal harmonies and to point out inconsistencies in the world of the work. But to stop there and to leave the intellectual aspect of my reaction in the vague state of a warm human feeling or a slight sense of dissatisfaction is simple mental laziness. To stop half way and to cry a halt to the whole process
without reaching the end of the natural mental process is arbitrary and can be described as 'motivated'. The art experience, it should be remembered, persists and the fact is that it is largely the attitudes and the paraphrasable content. And these attitudes and paraphrasable content become a part of my total human experience. So we should note that while the aesthetic and the intellectual judgments may be distinguished, in practice they cannot be separated always. The absorption of the reader in the art world is contingent upon harmonies both within the work and in relation to his own personal beliefs and experience. On the one hand, the critic determined to make only the aesthetic judgement, limiting his attention to the elements of verbal and thematic form, may find that the prominence afforded ideas in a given work renders his approach unjust, inadequate and perhaps even ludicrous. On the other hand, the critic who confronts a work merely to extract its ideas is not a literary critic at all but a philosopher, sociologist, economist or historian. The aesthetic critic in extending his analysis to the totality of the work may find that to assess its statement, characterisation, plot or point of view, he must pass from an aesthetic judgment to an intellectual one and weigh the writer's experience against his own, the writer's attitude against his own. Thus intellectual criticism of art seems inevitable and some aspects of this intellectual criticism involve the question of the external efficacy of art. In determining the effect that an art work makes on its readers, if we take note of aesthetic criticism alone, the result will be nil. The external efficacy will be placed at naught as the reader will not be permitted to tell any way as that is not simply permissible under the terms of reference. The half-way house that aesthetic criticism seeks to build up is unrealistic and does not conform to the actual psychological processes involved in such aesthetic appreciation. The intellectual element must be seen in its proper perspective for the aesthetic reaction is the reaction of the whole man as psychophysical complex. While reading a piece of good literature, say Bankimchandra's Anandamath, Winter's five steps would require a thorough intellectual assessment of the work; without intellectual criticism the real worth of the novel and the tremendous external
effect it had on its readers will not be appreciated. Of course, it would be equally wrong to read literature simply on an intellectual level alone, for its ‘ideas’ only, or worse, for its maxims and truisms. The aesthetic understanding of a work must always be primary. But the reader consciously or unconsciously has some sort of a harmony or disharmony between the poet’s world view and its own. He is to decide whether the poet or the reader is in error. In cases of agreement, the reader has got to ascertain how far the intellectual agreement influenced his aesthetic appreciation. Many works of literature do not demand an intellectual analysis because their subject or their treatment, for one reason or another, created no intellectual disharmony in the mind of the reader. Again, we have seen there are some, which for their intellectual disharmony did not get the approbation which they otherwise deserved. Thus it may be said in the face of these contrary evidences that most literary works depend explicitly or implicitly upon some value system which we may or may not share. This, in a way, only explains the apparent anomalies in our art-appreciation. That is, how Catholics are more apt than Marxists to grasp the aesthetic coherence of Dante, and that is why liberal nationalists more readily accepted Anandamath as a piece of good literature than any of the communalists. But in both cases, in the case of the liberal nationalists or in that of the rank communalist, the external efficacy of art is undeniable as the whole function of the reader as critic includes both an aesthetic and an intellectual appraisal of the literary work. We do admit that the amount of attention required by each of these will vary with the work under discussion.

As the problems involved in (b) and (c) are similar in nature they are taken up simultaneously on the following lines. The very fact that in practice the aesthetic and intellectual judgments are not separated though they are often distinguished leads us to the tendency to formulate the ideas of organic unity in a work of art. In a recent review of the position, a modern critic quotes Harold Osborne observing as follows:

"When the theory of organic unity claims that any subtraction or addition would diminish the value of the work (of
art) as a whole, changing also the character of all the contained parts, it does not involve the consequence that every part is equally important when by importance we mean prominence or impact."

This statement involves three distinct principles which may be stated as follows: (1) Subtraction or addition would diminish the value of the work of art as a whole; (2) Subtraction or addition changes the character of all the contained parts of the work of art; (3) Every part of the work of art is not equally important when important means prominence or impact.

We start with (2), for in our opinion, it involves the central theme of the entire problem. This view that subtraction or addition changes the character of all the contained parts of the work of art has its origin in the 'Poetics' in the statement that "the transposral or withdrawal of any one of them will disjoin and dislocate the whole." Here although Aristotle has been referring only to plot but this" plot was considered by him to be the soul of tragedy. The insistence that any addition or subtraction dislocated the whole brings us to principle (1). The first two principles as stated above are inter-related and they point to the fact that the work of art fulfils the maximum unity, the unity consisting of internal relations. After Prasastapada, the ancient Indian commentator, we could explain this relation of part and whole, as obtaining between a part or aspect of a work of art and the work of art as a whole. Prasastapada, while explaining this concept of Samavaya brings non-causal relations under it and hence instead of following Kanada, we take the Prasastapada line of thinking and consider the relation obtaining between a part or aspect of a work of art to the whole as that of Samavaya or inherence. Members related by Samavaya are inseparably connected. Two things in the relation of Samavaya cannot be separated without at least one of them being destroyed as Samavaya is real coherence. This relation of Samavaya is not perceptible but only inferrable from the inseparable connection of things. We must bear in mind that the notion of inherence is the result of intellectual discrimination though an objective existence is granted to it.
It has its origin in abstraction and has no existence apart from substances. If maximum unity in the work has been attained through this relation of Samavaya, then any change will either dislocate the unity and thereby diminish the value of the work or it will bring about a complete change in the identity of the work by changing all the contained parts and thereby form a new unity possessing a different character with a different value. This subtraction or addition changes the character of the artistic whole as it changes the relation of the contained parts and consequently a different art-object emerges, with a totally different significance and meaning. Again when we say that subtraction or addition changes the character of all the contained parts of the work of art we mean thereby that any such change would mean a change in the larger context which constitutes the terms of reference for the aesthetic evaluation. In this changed context the parts assume new dimensions of meaning and significance. This idea of Samavaya or relation of inherence gives some undefined significance to 'form' and 'content'; they derive their mutual meaning with reference to the other and as such they could be hardly distinguished in their well-defined boundaries. Here we would be faced with semantic difficulties if we try to dogmatically ascertain therein individual meanings as the meaning and significance in each case is determined with reference to the other. In a given content the 'content' is largely dependent on the form for the total effect it creates and vice versa. This idea of Samavaya definitely connotes and includes the idea of organic unity so forcefully advocated by Plato, in his noted work Phaedrus:

"Every discourse ought to be a living creature, having a body of its own and a head and feet; there should be a middle beginning and end, adopted to one another and to the whole." Aristotle's most stringent criterion of unity followed in the wake of Platonic observations in point. While we characterise this unity in art as 'organic' we do not distinguish, unlike Aristotle, between essential and non-essential features. This distinction is a legacy of the 'entity-bias' of the Greek thinkers and it has nothing to do with aesthetic appreciation. The
reader as a student of grammar or rhetoric might analyse a literary piece into its essential and non-essential aspects or factors but so far as aesthetic appreciation of a particular work of art is concerned, every factor or aspect was equally important as the others. They combine in a particular way and in a given context. Thus they provide with 'unique individuality' which is likely to be lost at the slightest change even in some minor detail. This aesthetic unity in a work of art is peculiarly its own and it could be safely defined as the 'perfect unity' under the given conditions, technically known as 'context'. We do not share the view of Catherine Lord when she refuses to accept this unity as 'perfect unity'. We profitably recall an episode wherein Avanindranath, the master, asked his disciple Nandlal, to give a few bright touches to his famous work *Umar Tapasya* (Presence of Uma) while Nandlal was working on this famous piece. Avanindranath left Nandlal for the night while Nandlal sat for the whole night in front of his finished work to suitably accommodate his master's suggestion. Next morning Avanindranath hurried back to ask Nandlal not to disturb the unity of the picture even by the slightest touch of bright colours, which would upset the unity of the picture and harm its aesthetic excellence. So we consider this unity in a work of art, in a novel or a poem as absolutely necessary and any change in any of the constituents of the work of art would disturb this unity and change the total character of the work of art. Following this trend we hold that a good piece of literature can never be translated in a different language or transliterated in a different medium. That is why, Klaus Holzkamp raised the important 'functional problem', viz.: How can one's own experience appear to belong to somebody else? The obvious answer from our viewpoint would be that no reader could possibly imitate and graft in his imagination what the author wrote or said. He creates his own world as suggested by the author. There is no identity between the two but only a close proximity.
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Philosophy and Social Change

PREM NATH

From Parmenides and Heraclitus come two categories of thought, namely, permanence and change or being and becoming. Parmenides’ thesis, by denying change, implies historical nihilism while that of Heraclitus social change. In this regard history of philosophy broadly reflects three major orientations and preoccupations. One posits the unchanging and the eternal as the Reality and change as an illusion, resulting in lack of interest in the phenomenal and in consequence, in the social. The other swears by change, denying or at the least, ignoring the eternal and the transcendental, and as such concentrating on the social. The third maintains the transcendental as the source—reality from which human existence and social process derive and acquire meaning. Each of these perspectives with their variety of shades has theoretical and practical consequences for social philosophy and social process.

Social change is an incontestable cultural reality. It may be slow as in the stone-age or accelerated as in the technological age. Intellectual and manipulative stupidity, fear, quest for security or vested interests may check it as the creative and the experimental in man may accelerate it. Social change is sought through values, social institutions and social movements.
If values and institutions are cast in the rigid mould of authority whether of super-man or gods, and if the people slavishly follow those, the change in social ways is likely to be slow. In such cases tradition gets hardened and fails by its social purpose of consolidating the gains of previous social changes and of facilitating further progress.

Man makes a two-pronged adaptation; one to the physical forces and the other to society. In both cases the action is essentially creative although the level and dispersal of creativity differ from culture to culture and from individual to individual. As Animal symbolicum man creates symbols and values and communicates them to fellow-beings and in the process establishes rounds of changes in inter-personal and inter-groupal relations. Even by acting on nature he changes his own nature as Hegel would have it and thereby by nature of society. As a dynamic and creative being seeking fulfilment at one level at any rate, through inter-personal and group communication and sharing, he advances social change. In fact, in terms of value-judgment a culture would be moral in the broadest sense of the term only if it succeeds in cultivating the twin virtues of freedom and creativity within the framework of social justice.

All such theses as explain social change in terms of a single factor are one-sided over simplifications, whether it is pure Reason or any of the biological, psychological, economic and geographical determinisms, they offer at least unilateral account of social dynamics. Many social systems suffer from this fault while they claim to rest four-square on the whole truth. This lack of analysis of social change in cultural perspectives has always cost decadence and damaging accidents to society besides building—in the mental pose of helplessness in the face of growing or sudden complications in culture. Unless some puffed-up philosophy is preferred as a compensation for intellectual integrity it is not possible to see how philosophy as such can take an one-eyed view of social reality.

As in nature and in living organisms so in social dynamics it is the plurality of causes that produce an effect. "Social
changes,' as Morris Ginsberg rightly maintains, ‘are often due to a confluence or collocation of elements derived from different sources but converging at a given point.’ Although it is not always possible to exactly apportion the weight to different causes or to be able to trace the exact ‘sources’ yet it is a legitimate goal of knowledge to do that. This is a great intellectual responsibility and matching epistemological humility the want of which may leave social progress ever more fitful and eccentric rather than well-guided and well-controlled.

In our technological age, particularly when ever-multiplying innovations are changing the structure of human relations and of basic social institutions and through them eventually changing social values, it is imperative that the role and limit of technology be clearly defined and social planning and education so geared as to harmonise technology with worthy human ends. The consequences of technology in human control and out of control, respectively are bound to differ. Those factors, conditions and programmes of action which are calculated to bring about the aforesaid harmony need be continuously discovered. Or flight-from-technology philosophy, through psychological displacement, is bound to continue in her otherwise exaggerated right in going to the extreme of illegitimising all technology.

No less is the need to be able to tell the rational from the irrational forces of mind and to be able to recognise their respective pulls on social process. One of the failures of a purely rationalistic philosophy and matching education has been the neglect of emotions and the irrational in their calculus. It has been considered sufficient enough that given Reason, moral progress is for the asking, inevitable. This does not stand the test of either logic or historical experience, in action the human mind is a commingling of rational and elemental forces. As such the rational in action in society is not the same as the rational as abstracted in some philosophies. One of the qualifications of the rational in culture is ‘to make rational use of irrational forces’, as Julian Huxley puts it.

Different philosophical constructions are put on social change by adherents of different systems. The explanations
tend to become partial and dogmatic when a system hardens into orthodoxy as most of the systems generally do when they are no longer receptive to and assimilative of new kinds in knowledge. Such rigid systems as ever emphasise unproportionably only one factor blissfully ignored other equally valid factors that enter into the totality of causes making for change. Different philosophies of history show how often a system is constructed on one or two elements isolated from the rest in culture, and then turned into an absolute. But an individual, because of his inexhaustible potentialities and unpredictable creativity flowing into the stream of social life causing conflict and co-operation, love and hate and so on, is any time more than a system. That is why there is need to revise the image of man and society from age to age for social change implies the possibility of growth both personality-wise and knowledge-wise. Even on the assumption that the fundamental stuff of the universe is of a piece, material, spiritual, material-spiritual respectively, yet its manifold manifestations in organic and inorganic life cannot be ignored without loss to our understanding of the whole and to our capacity for calculated action.

While it is the legitimate province of social sciences to study empirically the processes of society including that of social change, philosophy would be failing in its moral responsibility and "historic mission" if it ignores the study and evaluation of the ongoings in society. The traditional problem of ends and means with which philosophy has always been vitally concerned is thrown in bolder relief when an aforesaid approach is made. As such ends and means can be better understood and formulated.

Historically, philosophy originated in man's biological and existential needs to understand, to adjust and to create. But the domination of logico-mathematical pattern and that of the model of natural sciences over philosophic thinking gradually removed philosophy away from the existential pole into the limbo of abstracted, categories, culminating in logical positivism or logical empiricism. This is not to say that logical empiricism has done no good to philosophy. It surely has to the extent it has made philosophy conscious of its responsibility
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in analysing and checking the categories against empirical data and correcting its excesses in imagination, its routinised thinking and its absolutes. But in refusing to consider the subjective and the qualitative in its one-track pursuit of the quantitative and the objective it leaves out a considerably great area of what is truly significant for human beings and consequently for their values.

Bertrand Russell, in the tradition of Plato and Aristotle, maintains that the "business of a philosopher is not to change the world but to understand it." In contrast to Marx's view that the essential business of philosophy is to change the world. The understanding part is common to both Russell and Marx as to any philosopher but the difference lies in Russell’s disinterested love of enquiry and Marx’s passionate philosophy dying to change the world. But even Russell cannot claim that in practice he has stuck to his own definition of a philosopher. He has been driven, by the exigencies of contemporary civilization at the brink of catastrophe, to play an active role in human affairs. He cannot claim doing that in the capacity of a pure citizen or as a simple human being because his social action from time to time derives from his world-view, from his philosophic image of man and his destiny. Besides, his profuse writings on education, morals, happiness, power, social order and so on are not mere analysis towards understanding but also prescriptions for social change. Distinguishing three types of power, he says, "... I only want one sort of power. I want power over opinions." Now, what is this "power over opinion" if not the urge to effect change in the opinion of others and through that to make for changes in social environments?

Philosophy cannot be absolutely or purely theoretical for as world-view or society-view it has a way of altering the beliefs and actions of humans. This is what Karl Mannheim calls "the activistic element in knowledge." His contention is that "after knowledge has been freed from the elements of propaganda and evaluation, it still contains an activist element which, for the most part, has not become explicit, and which cannot
be eliminated, but which at least can and should be raised into the sphere of the controllable."

"The activistic element in knowledge" can be more "controllable" if philosophy becomes conscious of its own unconscious as it were. Philosophy is both a creature and creator of culture. To the extent it owes its complexion to social impulses it must endeavour to understand them, i.e., to understand those historical forces that have shaped it. Besides, it becomes essential for it to come down from its high-caste pedestal to enter into communication with the categories of social sciences. In the process of evaluating those categories it can enrich its own heritage and insights not only in regard to the nature of means but also that of ends.

Existential elements enter into philosophy as philosophy enters into existence. But a gradual estrangement of philosophy from man and from life through abstractionism and formalistic logic is the source of the anaemic dialectic of most of contemporary epistemology. Any philosophy to be philosophy must reckon with the potentialities and ongoings of a culture. On the other hand, no study of culture amounts to anything unless it is philosophically tested. Albert Schweitzer rightly laments the triumph of pure reason leading to "the collapse of a world view" and to the utter incapacity of philosophy to reckon with man, society and civilization. Making ethics central to civilization and "reverence for life" basic to ethics, he restores to the "will-to-live" its lost spiritual dimensions. For him, a "world view is a product of life-view" and not the other way round." Another strong attack on pure reason is to be found in Kierkegaard who charges philosophy for having failed to take decisions.

The dichotomy of ends and means, in itself an unjustifiable division, has led to a queer logic. The end having been exalted to the neglect of the means, the philosopher, the high caste in knowledge is, therefore, concerned with the end and not with the means. And in concerning himself merely with the end he has suffered insight into the nature of the end itself as well as lost grip over the means. The ends and means are continuous and interlocked by mutual pulls. Both belong
to the "community of causation" in Kant's language, and together enter into the process of discovery of natural law. The understanding of natural law may change, as indeed it does, from time to time, yet there is no denying that re-discovery of natural law is regulative of social change, whether the natural law is Schweitzer's "reverence for life" or Gandhi's "non-violence" and so on.

The discovery of natural law is not to be arbitrary philosophic speculation pandering to the unconscious sentimental bias of a philosopher but subject to empirical verification. Distinguishing between "normative social theory" and "factual social theory" F. S. C. Northrop emphasizes that normative social theory cannot be entirely based on factual social theory and indeed it is constructed so as to be incompatible with social facts as they are." He advances a criterion of the true philosophy of culture which may be quoted at length:

"The verification of a normative social theory is to be obtained not by checking its basic philosophical postulates, either directly or indirectly against the facts of society either in the present or in the future but by checking them with the postulates of the philosophy of natural science prescribed by the facts of nature. When the relation between the postulates of the philosophy of culture and the postulates of the philosophy of nature is that of identity the philosophy of culture is true. When the relation is not that of identity, the philosophy of culture is false or incomplete."

While the aforesaid criterion suggested by Northrop has the merit of harmonising the normative social theory with the philosophy of natural science based on the facts of nature, the harmony is neither given nor static. Both the normative theory and the philosophy of natural science are subject to growth and to correction and as such the harmony between the two is necessarily evolutionary. The inescapable charge of philosophy is, therefore, to understand the extent and nature of this harmony in a changing context. However, what is important to note is that normative theory, since it is idealised and formalised, is comparatively less fluctuating in meaning and interpretation than the philosophy of natural science. For facts by them-
selves amount to nothing. It is the selection of facts, because of the very selective principle, shifts in emphasis, intellectual commitments, psychological predispositions and a host of similar factors, which lead to different conclusions. Nevertheless, this precisely is the function of philosophy to keep the conclusions of natural science under constant criticism. It must become "criticism of criticism", to use Dewey's telling phrase.

Of the significant questions in social philosophy are those of progress and values with which social change is vitally linked up. It is necessary to reconsider these problems from time to time and this philosophy can do if it sheds its absolutistic complexion. Since biological and social sciences have entered into the field to interpret the concepts of progress and values, surely new light has been shed on their nature which make it necessary to recast our notions of progress and values. To continue to define progress and values in absolutistic and finalistic terminology without making reference to empirical data is not only not to understand the teleology of social process but to fail to understand the nature of social change and consequently be at sea in not being able to evolve the right means for the realization of values.

Examination of political ideologies is another important area of the "criticism of criticisms". The subtle dialectic ideologies need be analysed down to impulsations and rationalizations lurking in the guise of logic and truth. A psycho-sociological study of different ideologies can surely be revealing and useful to any philosophic construction. As such philosophy must emerge as a critic of culture so that the vested interests of varied descriptions do not stand in the way of progress, nor social change is accepted simply because it cannot be helped or it is sought compulsively for the monotony of present life is just unbearable and so on.

As a critic of culture it must re-interpret the past to lay bare the factors that have stood in the way of a particular culture thus retarding its growth. Both the idealised values and functional values would have to be studied in comparison and the nature and extent of the gap between the two explained.
Also, it can be revealing to philosophic understanding of values if an attempt is made to explain why different people have developed different values and to grasp the framework of thought in which we can locate the universal social values, if any.

Philosophy of history is another significant area the study of which can be fruitful in as much as it formulates from raw experience the principles, impulses, reasons, motives, artifacts, etc., which have been regulative forces of change in society. But any philosophy of history becomes deceitful when it imposes over-bearingly its own scheme and demands the facts to fit to it. A critical study of the philosophy of history should be able to explain to what extent is social process controllable by human effort and the major factors—such as, individual leadership, co-operative techniques, etc.—responsible for it. Until the teleological in history is properly grasped and in full relationship to the present and the past, not much headway can be made in our insight of the dynamics of society. Yet another question of significance it must ask is: how far is history objective? In coming to grips with this problem a great help can be rendered to history by suggesting to it the means to the improvement of its tools and to those who deal with the social ongoings more articulately on the recommendation of historians. Any worthwhile philosophy of history should be able to reckon with the various turns and social changes in its corridors of time. Above all, philosophy must ask a fundamental question whether or not a philosophy of history is possible? A constant debate on this point is necessary lest philosophy of history assuming such philosophy as granted joins the community of formalistic systems making no appeal to historical experience.

Dewey has rightly emphasised the role of philosophy as a tool of action and has wrongly earned the accusation by Bertrand Russell that thereby his philosophy amounts to "philosophy of power." I have examined Russell's criticism in detail elsewhere. The long drawn-out divorce between thought and action is philosophically and socially untenable and has already caused a good deal of misery to philosophy and society.
A reconstructed philosophy should evolve the tools and criteria for examining the interrelations between thought and action for bridging the gulf between the two. Then alone social theory can escape the stigma of "idle luxury" and become "a guiding method of inquiry and planning". Until the hitherto neglected study of the interrelations of means and ends is seriously pursued, the ends would remain absolute ghosts. To be sure, ends and means inform each other. A logic for the philosophy of social change can be formulated on the basis of the reciprocity of ends and means.

In the chain of philosophic approaches to social change philosophy of education has an important role. Within the broad framework of the philosophy of culture, the school becomes a miniature society and agency through which the social problems are attacked and traditions and values examined tried in practice, consolidated and advanced. To allow one of the most important media of social change, i.e., the school to remain outside the criticism and techniques of philosophy and to leave it only to chance factors, to the whims of politicians in power or even to that psychological expertise which thrives on quantitative and statistical tests alone, is to fail by education as well as by culture. As such the emphasis of a progressive education movement in the school as a laboratory of human relations and values is in place.

Undoubtedly, the capacity to contribute to social change is rather marked in some individuals, be they scientists, philosophers, artists or social reformers. Nevertheless social change cannot be conceived in individualistic terminology. It is the end product of interaction conflicting or cooperative, between the individual and groups. In a fundamental sense each individual has potentialities of being an agent of change. He only needs the philosophic feed to be able to give direction to change. In our age of mass education and mass freedom, both education and freedom are likely to remain pseudo possessions if they are not nurtured by philosophic reflection and commensurate action. There is already such an overwhelming sense of crisis in our civilization. This crisis goes with the decline of philosophic reflection on the existential situation of man. The lack
of philosophic reflection on the one hand and the uncontrolled impulses and uncontrolled technology on the other aggravate each other. If culture is to come alive out of the crisis, philosophic reflection must be won back to play its vital role in restoring the lost sense of direction. As a part of university education and that of general education it must be liberally introduced and creatively reconstructed for basically the crisis in our civilisation is a crisis in philosophic reflection.

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The Universal and the Perspective in History

Prem Nath

The smuggling in and application of philosophic ideas of the universal and the absolute into the study of history has resulted in a variety of philosophies of history. What is common to all these philosophies is the universality and absoluteness of a certain single idea or form which moulds the process of history and gives it meaning. Whether it is the determinism of "vast impersonal forces" such as geographical, political and economic or a "teleological procession" in behalf of some transcendental plan, divine or spiritual, history in any case is condemned to a certain inevitability. In the case of bold generalisations made from the colossal contents of history the spirit of free enquiry is not violated so long as these generalisations are meant to be hypothetical and not final, subject to adjustment to new finds and interpretations in knowledge. It is when these generalisations become "transhistorical generalisations" and turn history into "meta-history", the a priori is to be seen at its complete self-fulfilment having fully imposed itself on the material of history to turn it into a grandiose scheme. Whether the 7th century belief in progress—linear, cyclical, dialectical, or the 18th century mechanistic interpretation of history as repetitive, an Hegelian dialectic or Kantian
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unfolding of nature's secret designs, Spengler's cycles of civilisation or Toynbee's challenge and response or Acton's progress towards liberty, etc.,—are all grand styles of thought freezing tight within their respective folds the heavy mass of history.

As in any other area of knowledge it is the legitimate task of a historian to arrive at a generalisation. This generalisation is broadly of two types. One based on a priori, faith, revelation, rationalistic logic or the like, the second derived from the facts of history. The first seeks its source and the "goal outside history", the second in the strands of time. The first, not taken seriously by "technical" historians, is proposed to be refuted in this paper for there is no warrant in history itself that it is absolutistic or that it embraces only one and final truth or that it can be cast into a rationalistic system. As to the second it ought to lay bare the nature of interpretation and generalisation in history, its limitations and potentialities. And this in the four-dimensional background of the nature of the historian, the nature of history, the nature of knowledge and the nature of man.

What is the task of a historian? In brief, to capture alive the past, as it were, to recognise and record significant facts and to interpret them meaningfully. But the facts of history are at a great distance from the historian, lying under the debris of multitudinous events, each event in turn having layers upon layers of circumstances unique to it. Though difficult yet it is precisely the task of the historian to salvage these facts and to rehabilitate them by putting construction on them. History is, therefore, not just a jumble of facts collected at random but a series of significant statements about them. To be sure, the statements are not narrative alone, nor isolated single judgments but together amount to a theoretical framework to hold the facts together. And yet new facts keep emerging for a historian, necessitating drastic changes in his theorisation even as his new-found theorisation recovers some of the discarded facts or accords new status and fresh meaning to the already established ones. As such there is a continuous dialogue between the historian and his facts, both informing each other. Consequently history becomes doubly a process, a pro-
cess in time of the interacting humans in a variety of groupings and a process in the mind of the historian who, if he is professionally growing, has a fresh feel about and new insights into the past. To invent an a priori to congeal the past with it is anything but being a historian.

Difficult as the understanding of the causation in social sciences as yet is, it is even more difficult in historiography. What caused a particular war cannot be adequately explained in terms of a single event or a constellation of them. However elegant be the narration of this war yet it can at best be the surface view of history. Mere literary grace and apt description of events do not make a great history. Profound history emerges when the historian brings to bear on his material the understanding of the rational and irrational forces of the times and of the overall climate, indicating the fears and the aspirations, the key categories of living and of social and political organisation. So long as the political and constitutional narrative cast in stereotypes of dynasties, kingdoms and wars remains the staple history, the understanding of the causation in history cannot but elude the historian. The causation can only be understood in the total context of the civilization and culture of the times. Even then a historian can get round only a part of the causation for many a substantial component in causation may go undetected and unrecorded and not easily lend themselves either to inference at a much later date. Even in the case of recent history when means of communication and techniques of historical investigation are at a considerable advanced stage, the exact causation dupes the historian. With the discovery of new facts and new material the historian's judgments have got to be revised. This precisely is both the challenge and the method of the historian. So limited are the facts of antiquity in terms of causation particularly, and yet so inexhaustible the potentialities that the historian, like any searcher after truth, cannot afford to take any set of facts and views for granted and as final. What is the place of accidents in history vis a vis causation? And what if it be said that history is nothing but a long series of accidents? The problem of historical accidents is of a piece with the rest of knowledge constantly at pains to probe into the mystery of accidents to
see if they can be explained in terms of causation. And if such accidents remain unexplained and unexplainable in causal categories, the two legitimate conclusions are that either progressive knowledge would lay bare the mystery of accidents in course of time or that a certain degree of indeterminism is a part of the basic reality of cultures and individuals as of the universe. In any case the historian has to meaningfully balance both the deterministic and indeterministic tendencies that have gone into the making of the past. In the final analysis the problem of historical knowledge becomes part of the general problem of methodology. The historical criticism while reflecting on the material and methodology of history should be able to help the historian to arrive at the constant and the variables in the corridors of time and to help him to discern the historically essential from the historically inessential.

Can the lonely historian do all this to document or narrate the events as well as to explain them in terms of anthropological sciences? This depends on the training of the historian. Evidently the significance of inter-disciplinary knowledge cannot be missed for any single discipline, if a comprehensive perspective is to be achieved. As such the historian is the better equipped for his task to the extent he has got hold of the anthropological sciences. By entering into communication with these sciences he not only enriches his experience and insight but improves his tools of investigation. Of course, this puts him under heavy obligation to keep revising and improving his perspective of period or of history as a whole in the light of the developing knowledge in anthropological sciences as relevantly applicable to the historical material. The inescapable condition of knowledge as being evolutionary makes revision incumbent in any field but the necessity that history must always be re-written is rather conspicuously built into the very structure of history.

With all the imagination of the historian, his literary gift of story telling, his love of the past, he adds new dimensions to understanding through his interaction with the anthropological sciences. Then he is not dealing with the past as dead
but with the past that has certain tendencies influencing the present which in turn is reaching out to the future. As such the interest of the historian is not strictly limited to the past but extends to the present and the future. Consequently, he not only unravels the past but also illumines the present and the future. In point of fact historical knowledge has direct bearing on social reconstruction contemporaneously. It is not less useful for future for by identifying tendencies it can, within limits, predict the future and thereby help control it. Industrial and technological revolutions, having brought, therefore, the ideas of social control and progress, historical knowledge can be more creatively used on behalf of these ideals. "Lessons of history" have meaning only in so far as they help us practically. The pragmatic philosophers have some justification when they demand that history throw light on the present-day problems and help to solve them. Their approach implies asking such questions of the past and using such categories of thought, as would coax the past into speaking not only for the past itself but also answering for the present even as by the same token the present can be hard pressed to speak for the future. In the bargain, all this makes the mission of the historian more meaningful and responsible and accords him the status of the educator in the broad sense of the term. This in no way implies that the truth about the past is to be twisted to suit immediate ends, however noble, but surely the past can be viewed and reviewed from so many vantage points to unfold different layers of truth. As a matter of fact, there is no readymade "truth in history". Whatever there is to "the truth" in history cannot be grasped in one stroke of thought or intuition. It must come through repeated and varied efforts at truth, fully exploiting the apparatus of historical enquiry. This at once raises two intertwined issues of relativity and subjectivity of historical knowledge.

Since history itself is rather dumb and speaks only through the historian, the uniqueness of each historian is to be reckoned with in regard to historical knowledge. The subjectivity of the historian in terms of his conscious and unconscious bias, predispositions, general direction of interest, values, existen-
tial and socio-cultural situation, etc., has to be matched against his potentialities and possibilities of objectivity as well as those of the subject matter itself. The objection that the psychological disposition or existential situation of the historian is irrelevant to the problem of historical knowledge is not as simple as it seems on the surface. Since the historian is concerned with the problems of man, compelling his own involvement, he cannot easily divest himself of the emotional overtones that accompany his investigation. Generally, no two historians would treat the same matter identically. The distinction between the “psychology” of historical interpretation and its “logic” is legitimate. But what can be equally legitimate to maintain is that historical objectivity cannot be compared to objectivity in natural sciences and is of even lower order than that of the social sciences. For it is, to a certain extent, possible in social sciences to control the conditions and cross check the results over a large area of population, the same is not possible in history for whatever has happened cannot be adapted to an experimental situation. Just as the self-same models of natural sciences cannot be exactly applicable to social sciences in the same way even the models of social sciences cannot exactly fit in the historical investigation. It is much nearer the mark, therefore, to talk of degrees of objectivity in historical knowledge rather than of absolute objectivity.

The degree of objectivity and guarantee of historical knowledge depend upon the historian’s intellectual outfit through his moral training, his emotional maturity, his capacity of becoming conscious of his own unconscious and so on. A certain minimum intellectual outfit-cum-temperament is essential for the pursuit of objectivity. Theoretically, there is no difficulty in stating that position but this statement cannot just by its issuance bestow objectivity on history. The historian must be prepared to make use of the latest techniques of historical criticism and undertake the process of checking and cross-checking his own conclusions with those of others and revise his own if and when necessary. This is in no way different from the process of knowledge in other disciplines except in absolutistic and idealistic epistemology. But this needs emphasis for the reasons that the language of the historian has not yet develop-
ed special categories of its own in a significant way as in other anthropological disciplines and that the emotional and literary overtones, however charming though, do not necessarily conduce to objectivity if not actually cut down on it.

In the nature of the situation, historical objectivity at best amounts to a working hypothesis to compete with other hypotheses. The best that the historian can do is to develop a perspective for such time as it can hold the ground in competition with other perspectives, all evaluated in terms of growing historical knowledge and of techniques of criticism and evaluation. He has to keep turning in his mind various sets of alternatives and then to choose from them those that logically appeal to him as dependable clues to historical investigation and knowledge. Consequently, his language would not be "verdict of history" type but more cautious and less generalising. It is the "path of least resistance" in knowledge to jump to hasty and unverifiable generalisations. But, for the conscientious and painstaking historian it is more honest to state his position in terms of a search after historical realities than a divine of the past and prophet of the future. The absolute truth may look more imposing and assuring less taxing to an investigator but is hardly as honest a position as that of a scholar who is painstakingly busy widening his perspective and while doing so only claims a provisional status of truth in relative terms for the view he advances. More than the choice between the absolute truth and the relative truth it is, in more than one way, a case of choice between egotism and humility in knowledge. There is always room for the correction of biased thinking which is at once a case for revisionism and evolution in knowledge and a hope for whatever relative objectivity that there is to historiography. Otherwise historical research has no meaning. By no means is the function of this research to discover new facts or interpret old facts afresh but just to fit them into a preconceived and stubbornly held scheme of history.

If perspective-making is the true task of the historian there is an obvious need to develop a methodology to match. Any new perspective would be preferable to an old one if it
provides new valid facts as well as new connections and inter-connections in knowledge, events, various historical times and geographical regions. That is to say, it is more comprehensive and logically consistent than the previous one is explaining the historical phenomena. Not only does it take into account the rational forces and the spiritual longings and aspirations of man but also his irrationality, stupidity and animality. The new perspectives in history must reckon with the hitherto ignored mass of humanity whose aspirations, sorrows, miseries and frustrations go relatively unrecorded and unaccounted for. These perspectives should be able to provide more knowledge of the historical humanity in its manifold aspects of personal inwardness and social, economic, political and educational ordering. Any such perspective should be able to unearth the forces at work in determining the course of history towards necessity and decadence on the one hand and towards freedom and progress on the other. It must examine an ideographic scheme to find out the effect of ideas on beliefs, attitudes and values in historical setting and also vice versa. It should provide a thorough examination of the dynamics of human behaviour in historical background, limited not only to a few individuals but dispersed widely over large sections of people. It would be only a one-eyed perspective of history if it only recorded and explained the power conflict and war, not the inter-learning and give and take in history. To complete the unfinished perspectives of the past to better finished ones then turns out to be the task of the historian and in fact the historians themselves know better than any one else that this is an unending task. It is in this limited sense that one can hope for the emergence of "universal history" and not in its original absolutistic and finalistic framework. The widening new perspectives emerging out of the re-evaluation and integration of a myriad of old unilateral perspectives have more potentiality to explain the present and throw light on the future. However, any perspective must not fail in taking full measure of the individual's freedom and creativity and its consequences for history. A history of the type of complete social determinism would be as one-sided as that of the absolute freedom of the individual.
Individual and Society

B. KUPPUSWAMY

The Reciprocal Relation Between the Individual and the Society

The relationship between the individual and society is one of the most intimate as well as the most perplexing relationship. It is as intricate and defiant of solution as the biological relationship between the egg and the chicken. While it is true that individuals make up society, it is also true that individuals are born into a social group and develop to be a part of that group. This leads to one of the paradoxes of life that while persons produce a society, societies produce persons.

A further aspect of the problem is biological. Man was by no means the first on earth to have formed or to have become a member of a group. The virus, bacilli and the amoeba are all to be found in groups. This is a fundamental biological fact. Man may have created certain social institutions which either promote a liberal and independent outlook or insist on conformist regimentation; but the group is by no means unique to the human society. What is unique is the amount of elasticity and variability and the formation of institutions. The institution of the family is common to all human societies from the tribal to the national. Similarly, the social influence of
the peer group is also something common to all human groups from the most bound to the most free. Thus the family influence as well as the peer group influence are responsible for conformities of behaviour as well as for uniqueness in behaviour. Even the most regimented society that we have had so far in human history, it may be asserted, has not been able to obliterate the uniqueness of individuals and variability among them in their outlook, attitudes, etc. The difference is only a matter of degree; in free societies there is an accent on the uniqueness of the individual and the development of individuality whereas in the regimented society the accent is on uniformity and conformity. This is where we find that there is a resemblance between the primitive tribal group and the most advanced regimented group. Both insist upon the utmost conformity and inflict heavy punishment on those who resist conformity and deviate from uniformity. Banishment, excommunication and isolation are the techniques used by both these types of groups to extort conformity. While probably in the tribal group conformity is obtained with hardly any damage to personality it is possible that the regimented group may cause a lot of damage which leads to attempts at subversion of the prevailing social order, which in its turn leads to a police society and strict vigilance, as in Fascism, Nazism and Communism. The constant need for vigilance in a regimented society is a proof of the tendency of man to revolt against the many restrictive conditions. It is an evidence of the vitality and the spontaneity of the human personality. Each society, whether Liberal or Fascist or Communist, needs the development of the personality of some of the members in the group for the fulfilment of its aims and objectives.

The relationship between society and the individual is a reciprocal relationship, though generally we tend to ignore the influence of the individual on society and become concerned with the influence of society on the individual. It is true that the influence of the society on the individual is obvious and perceivable as seen in food, clothing, house-keeping, and conduct, etc. The individual members of a society are very greatly influenced by the norms of the society to which they belong.
But we should also realise that the social norms, in the material as well as the cultural aspect, are greatly influenced by individuals. Apart from the impressive examples of individuals like Buddha, Socrates and Gandhi we should also bear in mind that every individual to some extent alters in a slight degree the social group in which he lives. The social institutions as well as the ways of life are not static: they are being continually altered by the innovators and by the deviators.

Socialisation

The infant who is a biological entity becomes a human being through the process of socialisation. He is born into a family and it is through the inter-personal relationship between the mother and the child and between the other members of the family and the child that he learns to respond to the other persons and ultimately acquires the social norms of the group in which he lives and thus eventually becomes a primary career of the culture of that group. Thus when the child is born he is not a person, he acquires a personality through his relationship with the other members of the family as well as the larger group into which he is born. He builds up his habits and develops attitudes and personality traits through these inter-personal relationships. In the first few years it is the family which is the most important social agency which operates in this field. By the time the child is three to four years old, he meets other children in the neighbourhood and responds to the demands and expectations of the peer group which becomes intensified when he goes to the school. Later he is exposed to the influences of not only the neighbourhood but of the larger society through various inter-personal relationships, social institutions, and finally mass media. Within a few years the child acquires not only the language of the group in which he is born but all the typical habits and attitudes which characterise the group. Though all these are learnt, he behaves in such a way as if he is a ‘natural’ member of that group. In other words he could as readily and as successfully become a ‘natural’ member of any other human group on earth provided there is the inter-personal relationship between the child and
the mother substitute and the other members of the family and
neighbourhood. Freud delineated the process by which the
infant, who is a mere creature with the impulses of the \textit{Id},
develops the ego by encountering the various aspects of the
physical and social reality and interjects into himself the be-
hests of the parents and thus builds up his super ego.

The efficiency, the success and happiness of the individual
depends upon the effectiveness of these human relationships
during the first few years of his life. The studies of children
with abnormal behaviour have now clearly demonstrated that
their abnormality results from their inability to adjust them-
selves to the other members of the society. Similarly, delin-
quency is the result of incapacity in inter-personal relation-
ships with the larger group of which he is a member and find-
ing satisfaction in inter-personal relationship with the nar-
rower peer group, the street corner gang. Family disharmony
as well as the disharmony in work relationship arises from
similar failures in the process of socialisation.

\textit{Individualisation}

Concomitant with the development of personality there is
the development of the self in the individual. He becomes
aware that he is distinct from the other members of the group
with whom he is having inter-personal relationships. Thus side
by side with the development of ‘social’ consciousness there is
also the development of ‘self’ consciousness. The two are inti-
mately related. In the absence of the social context there is
no possibility of the development of the self. This awareness
of the self arises from the roles which he has to take up in the
family, in the school and in society; gradually he builds up an
image of himself and thus becomes unique. This helps him to
understand others and thus become a more effective member of
the society in which he lives. Through individualisation he
becomes more autonomous and self-determining. With further
growth in the self he becomes less bound by the traditions and
customs of the group and less submissive to the authority of
others and develops himself by forming his own opinions. He,
thus, develops a sense of inner responsibility for his own con-
duct and becomes a free individual. The very aim of society, as in India, e.g., is the promotion of this individualisation. One manifestation of this is the great value that has been placed in Indian society on individuals who are free and liberated. A saint has always been placed at the highest in Indian society through the ages.

**Personality Formation and Frustration**

The inter-personal relationship even between the mother and the child is very difficult and leads to frustrations. Though the mother is very affectionate to the child and brings him up tenderly, she is also a hard task master. The child has to learn even during infancy the rules and regulations which the mother imposed on him. Psycho-analysts have now demonstrated that this process of social frustration helps in personality differentiation. From being a bundle of ‘wishes’, the child gradually learns to respond to the frustrations imposed on him by the mother through hard rules and regulations. Regulated behaviour is frustrating but it is very essential for the development of the personality and the smooth functioning of the society. Long ago the ancient Indians realised that the foundation of all human relationships consists of ‘raga’ and ‘dvesha’, love and hatred. Freud has now rediscovered this as ‘eros’, and ‘thanotas’. Even in the mother-child relationship, hate and love are very important components. It is through this struggle between hate and love that the personality is differentiated and formed. With growth a child has to encounter frustrations to many of his wishes. He has to face right through his life conflicting situations. It is only by facing these frustrating situations that his self becomes mature.

**The Four Aspects of Personality**

One of the great services rendered by Freud is to clarify the problems with which the child has to cope in order to become a human being and a member of the human society.

There is the fundamental biological aspect the *Id*, which dominates not only the life of the infant but even the life of the grown up people to a large extent. The important psycho-
logical aspect of these biological needs is the urgency with which they demand gratification. This leads to a conflict situation because the individual has to take into account the three other aspects before gratifying the biological needs, viz., the physical, the social and what may be called the holistic aspects. Freud took into account the physical and the social as entering into the formation of the ego. He also took into account the social in the formation of the super-ego. But there is the value aspect, the holistic aspect which we have to take into account since it has a very profound influence on the development of the individual as well as on the society as a whole. It is true that Freud took this aspect into account when he dealt with the problem of the ego-ideal but the problem of values and the development of the world view are much more than the mere ego-ideal affecting the values of life of the individual. They involve the whole history of mankind and the outlook regarding future of humanity. Thus the individual has to develop his personality taking into account these four aspects, viz., the biological, the physical, the social and the holistic.

The Rational Aspect

In this development the individual has to take into account the irrational aspect within himself and within the society and build up a harmony which is rational and also satisfying. This is a very difficult task to achieve. It poses many conflicts between the individual and society. As we have seen the child as well as the adult needs to gratify the biological aspect, but physical reality as well as society place a series of obstacles in his attempt. If he conforms to society in his attempt to obtain gratification of the biological needs, it is possible that the individual may become a mere automaton, conforming to social customs as well as to social prejudices. This may completely inhibit the development of his individuality and personality. It hinders not only the growth of the individual but also the development of society itself, because no society can develop if all its members are absolute conformists. It is the man who questions customs, prejudices as well as the ideals of the society in which he lives, who is in a position to strike out new paths
for the development of society. From this point of view the two great tasks of education are to help the individual to become a well-adjusted member of society and also to help him to develop his own personality. The neglect of either task results in a tragedy to the individual as well as to society as a whole.

System Approach to the Individual and to the Society

The system's approach to the problem of the relationship of the individual to society will help us to understand some of the paradoxes in the relationship. The child attains his individuality through his interaction with various social systems like the family, the school, his religious system, the state and so on. Society itself is persistently attempting to become more and more of a system, so that there is a harmonious and balanced growth of the individual's as well as the group's composing society. Thus, we can think of three different kinds of systems which are operating at any given time: the individual as a system; a person who is trying to integrate all the various levels of desire, feeling, thought and action.

In a relatively primitive society the individual probably achieves coherence between the various aspects of his personality easily because of the keen demand to conform to the social norms; the limits of tolerance to deviation are very narrow and if the individual deviates from the social norms to any considerable extent he may find himself either ex-communicated or annihilated. Within society itself we have groups which may be small or large. Society can be looked upon not only as composing individuals but also as composing groups of individuals. Each group whether it is a family group or the play group or the neighbourhood group or the caste group is having its own norms and imposes them on the individuals belonging to it. The individual also strives to conform to the larger group to which he belongs, whether it is the national group or the professional group which knows no international borders. Thus we may try to understand the relationship between the individual and the society in terms of the attempts on the part of the individual, the small group to which he belongs and
the larger group to which the small group belongs. All these three are trying to maintain a certain harmony, stability and a sense of unity. Inevitably conflicts arise within the individual himself or between the members of the small group or between the various groups composing the larger society, conflicts arising out of desires which are at cross purposes; there will always be attempts on the part of the individual as well as the groups to overcome these conflicts and to regain the balance. Thus we have as it were wholes within wholes, each trying to become a more complete whole by making the necessary adjustments. When these adjustments are not effective we have mental breakdown of the individual or social tensions between the groups composing the society.

Altering the Individual or Altering the Group

Just as an individual grows up from infancy to old age and thus attains a dynamic unity with constant changes taking place within him, the society is also a dynamic unity with constant changes taking place either because of innovations within the group or because of innovations by other groups which confront it. However, it must be recognised that we can speak of these dynamic aspects either in the individual or in the society only in the relative terms. It is possible for the individual to alter himself to the minimum extent possible in order to make his adjustment to the group in which he lives. Similarly, the group itself may make minimum changes so that it is maintaining the stability and continuity with the least changes possible. We can look upon the traditional society as one in which there are minimum changes in the society as a whole as well as in the members composing that society. That is why customs and traditions and conformity play a very important part. The educational system in such a society will take all the necessary steps to make the individual conform to the social norms which are already laid down. Such a society does not encourage its members to question these social norms and customs. However, it is impossible to assert that any traditional society is absolutely static. It can only be said that relatively it is more static than dynamic.
On the other hand in a modern society attempts are made to bring about radical changes within society with the hope that these radical changes will help to increase the prosperity of the society as a whole and the members composing it. In the modern authoritarian society the blueprint is drawn up and all attempts are made through education, police enforcement, etc., to make individuals work to actualise the blueprint. Any deviation either by the individual or by a small group is severely dealt with. Thus the modern authoritarian society like the primitive society tends to become a closed society. On the other hand, any society which chooses the democratic way attempts to keep it an open society so that changes are brought about in the social structure and social order without drawing up any blueprint. It is a society which does not believe in a fixed order, but is open to changes depending upon the innovations both in the physical and in the social system. The task of such a society is to educate the individual not to conform to the existing social system but to be ready to change with the changes which may be taking place in the society. Thus, the individual as well as the society as a whole operate as open systems, so that there is a constant transformation in the society as a whole as well as in the groups and in the individuals composing it.
Islam and Arab Culture

S. Maqbul Ahmad

In this brief paper I have attempted to build up a picture of the origin and growth of the moral concepts and cultural values among the Arabs of the pre-Islamic times and the impact of Islam in this respect. I hope this brief survey which neither claims to be philosophical nor very profound but a simple statement of facts will help carry the dialogue forward on the comparative study of various cultures of the past and present.

In ancient Arabia, even though many Arab-Muslim historians have described this period as an age of ignorance and paganism, there had developed certain concepts and values among the bedouins or nomads of the hinterland. Although these bedouins were generally divided into tribes the basis of which was blood-relationship (asahiya) and the large majority of them lived on pastures and camel-rearing, some parts of Arabia had settled tribes also whose commerce and trade was the profession of the people, and even agriculture practised on a minor scale. Such pockets were either in southern Arabia around Yemen and Taif. In the north, there was the desert which separated the peninsular Arabia from Syria and Iraq. Although the Arabs of the south were merchants and sailors
and came in contact with other civilised nations of the contemporary world like the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Indians and the Persians, the Bedouins of the central and the interior parts never came in direct contact with them; the Greeks and the Romans considered them uncivilized and as such not worth the bother of even being conquered. The Romans conquered Egypt and Syria and parts of northern Arabia building important Roman towns there, but did not like or care to venture into the mysterious sands of the deserts of central Arabia as of Hijaz.

The Arab Bedouins, safe from foreign invasions or intrusions, had, therefore, developed over centuries their special ways of life, moral concepts and values which they cherished and lived by. Data of these are available in ancient Arabian poetry developed before the rise of Islam in Arabia. The general term used by the Arab poets to describe the qualities of a good and true Arab from their point of view was Murv’a (manliness). They divided Arabs into two categories: ‘Arab at Ariba’ (the pure Arab) and ‘Arab at Mustariba’ (the Arabizated Arab). The bedouins were very proud of being Arabs, and purity was judged from a genealogical point of view. The concept of purity was all the more emphasized for there was continuous intermixture with the Abyssinian blood in the south or with the Persian in the north. A well-known Arab poet of this period called Antara of Dhubyani who is described as a highly romantic personality, was not allowed to marry his beloved cousin for he had some Abyssinian blood in him. Once he fought in a battle with his father against another tribe. His father urged him to fight bravely for he said that although he was pure on his father’s side, he had to prove by fighting victoriously that he was also pure on his mother’s side who was an Abyssinian lady. This anecdote will show how intensely the Arabs cherished the idea of purity of blood. What they called Murv’a and which every upright and true Arab should possess included the quality of ‘courage’. But courage or fortitude (hamash in Arabic) had also acquired a certain connotation and meaning. Fortitude did not mean that a man should continue to fight his enemy till death even after realiz-
ing that defeat was imminent. To escape from the battlefield in such a situation and to fight again when it was more opportune to do so, was also an act of fortitude.

Besides 'fortitude' the concept of Murv'a also included the quality of generosity and hospitality. It was a sign of murv'a (or being 'cultured' if we like to apply this term to this Arab concept) for a man not only to be generous by way of sacrificing his possessions for the happiness and good of others and for the needy, but also to be hospitable to any one who entered their settlements or doyar. A well-known Arab poet of this period called Hatim who belonged to the Tribe of Tay and was the son of a rich man, was once asked by his father to take his camels to the grazing grounds. By the evening when he returned home, he had arrived back with hardly any camels left with him, for he had generously distributed them to his friends and acquaintances. The concept of hospitality was practised not only in the traditional sense of entertaining any one who entered the tent, but also in respect of even one's enemies if they happened to arrive; they were then given full protection and hospitality for their period of stay. Chivalry was another great virtue that the member of this tribal society whose history can be traced back to at least 500 B.C., possessed. It was this Arab quality that ultimately reached Spain through the conquering Arabs after the rise of Islam, and spread in medieval Europe. Again uprightness of character, straightforward behaviour, truthfulness and fearlessness were some of the special characteristics of the members of this society which may be described as free and liberal. There was no government or administration as such, but each tribe elected a Shaykh or chief who acted as the wise-man or arbitrator in tribal affairs, but if he failed in his duties or if the tribe was displeased with him, a new leader was elected in his place. But freedom of thought and action prevailed, and this the Arabs had developed to such an extent that they sometimes even cared little about the sanctity of their religious beliefs and practices. An important Arab poet who was also a rich man once wanted to avenge the death of his father. He first went to the temple to seek permission of the idol he worshipped. The custom was to draw
arrows indicating ‘yes’ or ‘no’ about the act to be performed and were kept by the side of the idol. The poet drew the first arrow and it said ‘no’. He drew a second time and it gave a similar answer, namely, he should not avenge the death of his father. So, he drew a third time and the same answer was received. At this he became furious and threw an arrow at the idol saying, ‘“you would not have given this answer, if it had been the case of your father”’, and he went out and avenged the death of his father. Thus, even their attitude towards religion was of a light character and of a mundane type. The most important element of their society was, however, the poet in whom they believed as their true friend, guide and philosopher. But I will come to him a little later. Taking an oath to perform certain acts and then fulfilling it as best as they could was a common feature of their life. A poet who had once been harassed and imprisoned by the enemy tribe took the oath that he will kill at least a hundred men of that tribe. It is said that in battle against his enemies in which he was alone, he killed ninety-eight men, then he was overpowered. He flung his sword at the 99th man, and when he was killed, one of the enemies kicked his body and received an injury in doing so. Later, he died of that injury and he was the 100th one.

These little anecdotes drawn from ancient Arabian traditions and poetry may be exaggerated in some cases, but they do throw considerable light on the qualities of the Arabs and on the values they cherished. The most important source is the Arabian poetry of this period and there is no reason to disbelieve the facts of life described in it for it is considered by critics as being a very frank, objective and a matter of fact description of the Arabian life and conditions as existed then. It is for this reason that it is said that ‘poetry is the register of the life of the Arabs’.

This brings me to another aspect of the life of the ancient Arabs—the various forms of their social and cultural life. As I said above, the poet was considered to be the most important figure in a tribe. When a poet was born, they celebrated the occasion with great festivities and the family to which he belonged felt extremely proud for a poet was esteemed high in
the society. He was supposed to possess supernatural powers and extraordinary intelligence. He was something comparable to the oracle of the Greeks. He was a sooth-sayer, a philosopher and a guide. He could by his powers of the word create conditions of war or help to establish peace between the warring tribes by utilizing the secret powers of his poetry. Arab poets are said to have brought to a close wars that had lasted for as long as forty years on issues like horse racing. Writing was not in vogue at this period of Arab history, but each poet had a rawi or a ‘narrator’ who was a professional man. He committed to memory the different pieces and recited them to the tribes. Sometimes a poet was himself a rawi of his own poetical creation. But the system of narration was so perfect and efficient that it was said that ‘poetry travelled faster than the arrow’. The measure of the growth and the potential qualities of the Arabic language at this period may be judged from the fact that by the time Islam came to the Arabian scene, namely, the beginning of the 7th century A.D., thousands upon thousands of couplets had already been created by Arabian poets which are extant today and form the cherished literary heritage of ancient Arabia. They had developed their own forms and styles which had a lasting effect on the subsequent Arabic poetry right down to the Middle Ages. The qasida or ‘ode’, haja or lampoons and ratha or the dirqe were the common forms.

Thus, although these Arabs had their own concepts of morality, religious beliefs and practices, they indulged in poetry writing, enjoyed poetical assemblies and competitions. This is how the Arab bedouin expressed himself and gave vent to his artistic talents in pre-Islamic Arabia. They had also developed a form called saja or rhymed prose and the Quran is supposed to have this style. If sports could be included in the realm of cultural activities, then the Arabs’ second love was horsemanship and at the great annual fair near Mecca the two main items were horse-racing and poetical competitions. It is said that the best and the choicest pieces of poetry were written down in golden letters and hung on the sacred shrine of the Kaba in Mecca. During the whole period of the classical
pre-Islamic age, only seven odes had attained this high honour and are known in Arabic literature as al-sab a ul-muallayat.

I have presented this aspect of the Arab life rather in detail to illustrate the fact that the ancient Arabs were not totally a barbarous or a pagan people. They had certain concepts, qualities and value of life. I will now pass on to the second phase of Arab history.

With the rise of Islam in the 7th century a new ideology—religious, social and political—was adopted by these Arabs. Ancient religious traditions and beliefs were discarded to give place to the new monotheist concept. Old outer forms of worship were replaced by new forms and practices. Politically also new concepts, such as, Arabian replaced the old ones of blood-relationship. But what was significant in the changing structure of the society was the growth of certain new values of life and the discarding of some of the old ones. The teachings of the Quran and the guidance of the Prophet had made a great impression on the mind and thought of the people in this respect.

Islam presented to the Bedouins a new concept of life and new sets of moral codes and ethics. The basic concept was that it was a hidayah or 'enlightened guidance' for those whose life was 'misguided'. This 'guidance' which strictly speaking was in the tradition of earlier Semitic religions claimed to be 'most perfect' leading its followers to ultimate happiness and salvation. It was, therefore, presumed that the Arabs before Islam led a misguided life. Here one may ask: what were these Arabs misguided in? Was idol-worship by them a 'misguidance' in the eyes of Islam or was it their social and moral life and cultural pre-occupations that were regarded as acts of misguidance? The term applied by Muslim historians for the Arabs of the pre-Islamic times is jahl or jihata (ignorance, illiteracy, etc.), which is used to counterpose the term Islam usually interpreted as 'submission to the will of god'. It was the ignorance (in a very wide sense) of the pre-Islamic Arab that Islam sought to remove, and sought to establish in its place hilm (prudence, sagacity or self-control). The means to achieve
this objective were the fresh codes of social and moral behaviour. Piety (zuhd) and fear of God (taqwa) were the two corner-stones upon which the whole structure of Islamic morality was raised. Again, the new concept of morality was defined as al-amal-al-salih or ‘good deed’, which has been repeatedly mentioned in the Quran and in the Prophet traditions. Again good deeds are defined and enumerated in the scripture in different places and embracing actions like charity, kindness, justice, assistance to one’s relatives, orphans, and the needy, etc., etc. Besides, the Prophet also laid great stress on acquiring knowledge. An overall picture that emerges from the fundamental thought underlying the original teachings of Islam would be that Islam sought to turn the pre-Islamic Arab into a ‘prudent’, educated, god-fearing, pious, kind and charitable person. It sought to transform the total personality of the man and to turn him into a better man than what he was before. I would again not use the word ‘cultured’ here, but leave it as a point for discussion. The reason for this is that Islam, while emphasizing the moral and ethical aspects of life, discouraged and dissuaded the Arabs from over-indulgence in certain forms of activities which we term cultural. This may have been done to train the people in self-control and not that the things were denounced as being bad in themselves. For example, the Arabs were rather over-indulgent in poetry and almost governed by the whims and wishes of the poet. Hence, the Quran denigrates them by pronouncing that ‘only the misled people follow the poets’. The art of creating poetry was not denounced, but it was the type of poet who existed in ancient Arabia that was rejected. Thus, gradually, almost all the creative arts like painting, music, dancing, sculpture, etc., were discouraged or prohibited by Islam.

Throughout the subsequent history of the Arabs we find that the Arabs retained many of the ancient values of life while acquiring new ones given to them by Islam. An ancient concept that persisted was that it was the desert-bedouin life and environment that had in it the finest of Arab traditions, and hence after an old custom, children born in towns were sent away by parents to the deserts to be brought up by bedouin
nomadic women. It was also believed that the purity of the Arabic language was retained only by the bedouins of the deserts. Hence, the child would learn pure Arabic and classical poetry. The Prophet himself was taken away by a bedouin woman who was a poet herself, who sent away by his father to the desert with the same objective in spite of the fact that Damascus was the capital of a vast Islamic empire, and full of social and cultural life. Again soon after Islam, foreign influences like the Greek, Persian and the Indian began to have an impact on the social and cultural life of the Arabs, and in spite of the restrictions imposed upon them by Islam, they continued to enrich their cultural heritage by indulging in fine arts and poetry. They became acquainted with Greek ideas on fine arts, literature and other subjects and were also familiar with Persian and some Indian values and concepts. The Arabs showed their talents in almost all fields of fine arts, literature, etc., with one important exception, namely, drawing or making an image of a living being for this was tantamount to interfering in the work that exclusively belonged to god. Thus, painting, sculpture and similar arts were never encouraged at least in the early stages of Islamic history. The genius of the artist, however, expressed itself in other forms like geometrical designs in architecture, in miniature arts, etc. It was only in modern times that sculpture and painting began to be adopted by the Arab artist as means of expressing his genius and talent.
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